



ISB Alumni Magazine

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Joanna Cole
Communications and
Marketing Manager

Kayla Chen
Community Relations
Coordinator

Tom Fearon
Alumni Magazine
Writer and Editor

sEason Wu
Graphic Designer

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Head of School Message



Dear Alumni and Friends,

Do you remember your final weeks at ISB? The pride of marching in the Seniors Parade; the sense of accomplishment at your graduation ceremony; the mixed emotions hugging friends destined for new challenges in different corners of the globe.

Of course, these are feelings not mutually exclusive to students. As parents, faculty, and staff, we all feel at home in the ISB community and experience angst when it's time to bid farewell. The reason is simple. ISB is not just a school; it's a family. It's where students discover their true potential and passions. It's where parents see their children grow into compassionate, engaged, globally-minded citizens. And it's where teachers discover the rewards of their calling every day, one student at a time.

In this issue of Rui Long, you will read about the outstanding achievements of your fellow alumni. Although each person profiled has taken a different path in life, all have pursued their interests and, in many instances, ventured outside their comfort zone.

Now, I find myself in the same situation as I prepare to "graduate" from ISB and take on a new challenge in Jakarta, Indonesia. Over the past seven years, ISB has allowed me to achieve everything I ever imagined as an educator. Although there are many things I will miss about ISB – the caring parents, passionate faculty and staff, and enthusiastic students – I know that I'll always be a part of this extraordinary community through the ISB Alumni Association.

Once a Dragon, always a Dragon!

Warm regards,

Tarek Razik, Ed.D.
ISB Head of School

Next Steps for ISB's Class of 2017



Graduates from the Class of 2017 have matriculated at the following colleges and universities at the time of publication. The list does not reflect matriculations for students who opted for an alternative year, who are performing national service in their home countries, or who will be beginning their studies in the Southern Hemisphere in 2018.

Agnes Scott College	Colby College	Laurentian University
Albion College	Colorado College	Lawrence University
Algonquin College of Applied Arts & Technology	Columbia University (3)	Lehigh University (2)
Allegheny College	Concordia University (5)	Les Roches
American University (3)	Cornell College	London College of Fashion
American University of Paris	Creighton University	London School of Economics
Aston University	Dartmouth College	Loyola Marymount University (3)
Auburn University	Delta State University	Loyola University Chicago
Augsburg College	DePaul University	Macalester College
Babson College	Drake University	Marist College
Barnard College	Drexel University (5)	McGill University (2)
Baruch College	Duke University	McMaster University
Bates College	Durham University	Michigan State University (2)
Bennington College (3)	Eckerd College	New York Institute of Technology
Bentley University (2)	Elon University (2)	New York University (7)
Binghamton University (2)	Emerson College (3)	North Dakota State University
Bishop's University	Emory University (1)	Northeastern University (12)
Bocconi University	Erasmus University Rotterdam	Northern Michigan University
Boston College (4)	Fashion Institute of Design	Northwestern University (2)
Boston University (9)	Fordham University (3)	Oberlin College (3)
Bowdoin College	Franklin and Marshall College (3)	Occidental College (2)
Brandeis University (4)	George Mason University (4)	Old Dominion University
Brigham Young University (6)	George Washington University	Pace University (2)
Brown University (3)	Georgetown University	Pennsylvania State University (6)
Bryn Mawr College	Grinnell College (2)	Pepperdine University
California College of the Arts	Hamilton College	Pratt Institute (3)
Cardiff University	Haverford College (2)	Purdue University (7)
Carleton College (2)	Hofstra University	Queen Mary, University of London
Carnegie Mellon University (3)	Hong Kong Polytechnic University (2)	Queen's University (2)
Carroll University	Hong Kong University of Science & Technology (5)	Radford University
Case Western Reserve University (3)	Hope College	Reed College (2)
Central St. Martin's	IDC Herzliya-Raphael Recanati Int'l School	Regent's University London
Chapman University (2)	Indiana University, Bloomington (4)	Rice University
College of Charleston	Ithaca College (2)	Ringling College of Art & Design
College of William and Mary (2)	James Madison University (4)	Rochester Institute of Technology (2)
College of Wooster (2)	Johns Hopkins University	Rutgers University
Chinese University of Hong Kong (2)	Kalamazoo College (2)	Saint's Mary's College of California
City University of Hong Kong (4)	Kenyon College	Santa Clara University (4)
Clark University (3)		Sarah Lawrence College

Savannah College of Art & Design (3)	University of California, Santa Cruz (8)	University of Southern California (5)
School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2)	University of Colorado, Boulder	University of St. Thomas
School of Visual Arts	University of Denver	University of Stirling
Scripps College	University East Anglia (2)	University of Texas, Austin
Seattle University (2)	University of Edinburgh	University of Toronto (10)
Seoul National University	University of Exeter	University of Utah
Simon Fraser University (4)	University of Florida	University of Virginia (2)
Skidmore College (3)	University of Georgia (2)	University of Warwick
St. Edward's University	University of Glasgow	University of Washington (9)
St. John's College	University of Hong Kong (4)	University of Waterloo (2)
St. John's University	University of Hawai'i, Manoa	University of York
St. Olaf College	University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana (5)	Vassar College
Stanford University	University of Iowa	University of Vermont
Stevens Institute of Technology (2)	University of Kent (2)	Villanova University (2)
SUNY/Albany	University of Leeds	Virginia Tech (3)
SUNY/Fredonia	University of Leicester (2)	Wagner College (2)
SUNY/Stony Brook (3)	University of Maastricht	Wake Forest University
Suffolk University	University of Manchester	Washington & Jefferson College
Sungkyunkwan University	University of Mary Washington	Washington State University
Syracuse University (3)	University of Massachusetts, Amherst	Washington University
Temple University	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (4)	Wellesley College (2)
The New School (4)	University of Minnesota, Duluth	Wesleyan University (2)
Trent University	University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	Western University (3)
Tufts University (4)	University of North Dakota	Western Washington University (2)
Union College (3)	University of Notre Dame	Whitman College
United States Air Force Academy	University of Ontario University Institute of Technology	Willamette University
University College London (2)	University of Oregon	Williams College
University of Aberdeen	University of Ottawa	Worcester Polytechnic Institute (2)
University of Birmingham (2)	University of Pennsylvania	York University (3)
University of Bristol	University of Pittsburgh	
University of British Columbia (11)	University of Puget Sound (2)	
University of California, Berkeley ((4)	University of Reading	
University of California, Davis (14)	University of Richmond	
University of California, Irvine (8)	University of Rochester (4)	
University of California, Los Angeles (6)	University of San Diego (3)	
University of California, Merced	University of San Francisco	
University of California, Riverside (3)	University of Sheffield	
University of California, San Diego (12)	University of Southampton	
University of California, Santa Barbara (10)		



Find Your Path or Stop at Nothing to Make It



It's an honor to be here today to say a few words, and I thank you for the opportunity.

With this honor, I do have a responsibility, especially to you, Class of 2017.

Are you ready for your last ISB teacher rant?

OK, here goes ...

You've worked diligently the last 12 years. You've written all the exams and filled out all the college apps. You've been accepted to college or university, and you're absolutely ready for your Senior Trip to celebrate in some tropical beach or far-off world with fancy and exotic foods.

But, before you leave, let's analyze – your favorite English class verb – a few important people and works.

I'm going to start with a quote.

A very wise and soul-full man once sang:

"I don't know KARATE, but I know KA-RAZY."

That song is "The Payback," and the man is James Brown. I'm a

huge James Brown fan and recently read a book about him entitled *Kill 'Em and Leave*. Born in 1933, James had an affinity for music and dance. No one in Georgia – or the rest of the world,

Speaking to the Class of 2017 at their graduation ceremony, ISB high school English teacher **Bradford Philen** reminded seniors that ISB's vision is an enduring blueprint for personal success and service to society. Mr. Philen paid tribute to ISB's newest alumni and encouraged them to make a positive impact on the world in the following speech.

for that matter – was ready for his style. He was inventive and courageous, determined and, at times, uncompromising, but he was a visionary. He went on to produce and record over 200 albums before his death in 2006.

Now, you may be wondering what in the world James Brown has to do with you.

Just bear with me here. I'll get there.

Brown was many things. On the stage, he was the wild and entertaining Godfather of Soul. He'd wear a cape and rocked a perm or a Jheri-curl and made everyone marvel in awe at his moves and sounds and soul. You could argue he was rough around the edges,

but he was also a man who stood and fought for the rights of others. While he publicly argued against the Vietnam War, he also performed for the troops abroad and advocated for the support of re-

turned veterans who suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder; after Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, he performed a concert live on television to calm the nation in a time when America was ripe with racial tension and violence; he also wrote the song "Say it Loud –

I'm Black and I'm Proud," which became the anthem for the children of the Civil Rights Movement.

Amazingly enough, James Brown was raised in immense poverty and left school for good after the sixth grade. He never made it to this stage where you sit today.

I challenge you, Class of 2017, today to reflect upon the meaning of this degree and to not forget your place in the world in the same way that James Brown didn't forget his. Despite his trying circumstances, he fought for personal success and then used his fame and platform to inspire change and positivity.



I realize we all have our own obstacles to overcome, and whatever your next one is, I hope you move through it with focus, vision, diligence, and perseverance. But, let's be honest. Here, we are all very privileged, and you must not forget it: your plight in life, your many opportunities, your privilege in the world. As our school vision states, ISB students will "model integrity and seek opportunities to serve with compassion and conviction." While you have finished your school work here at ISB, your dedication to this principle continues.

While role models are undeniably important, what's perhaps more important are the stories. What do we learn from them? Consider literature for a moment. Reflect upon some of the stories you've read – and analyzed. You've lived through them in your own, unique way – each word, line, stanza or paragraph, act, or chapter.

Maybe you'll recall the moral and social dilemmas that Steinbeck explores in *Of Mice and Men*. Think back to Holden's inability to deal with the death of his brother and share his true emotions with those around him in *The Catcher in the Rye*. Remember how stupid Romeo and Juliet are? Ha, but we can admire their idealism. What about Achebe's fearless and stubborn Okonkwo and how he struggles to understand and fit in his drastically-changing village. How do make sense of the internal and political conflicts embedded in Seamus Heaney's work. Poems like "Personal Helicon," and "The

Tollund Man." Or, perhaps you were touched by the work of Toni Morrison – *The Bluest Eye* or *Be-loved* – and how mankind seems to always exist somewhere between beauty and filth, love and sorrow, hope and hopelessness.

Life is about stories. Take heed in them. Cherish them; take them with you. If English and all your classes have taught you anything, I hope it's inspired and challenged you to observe the world with an open mind and a willing spirit to understand and empathize. You'll need this as you leave our cozy, comfortable Shunyi bubble and set out in the world to interact with folks from all walks of life, from all types of places and backgrounds, and with all types of stories.

I have one more quote for you. It's from my Dad. He's 82. Dementia and the early stages of Alzheimer's are slowly taking his memory and attacking his ability to do the day-to-day tasks that he once never thought twice about. He comes from southern Alabama and grew up in poverty, much like James Brown. My Dad's parents were sharecroppers and he has stories about subsistence farm-life that I'll never truly understand. My Dad was the first in his family to graduate high school. He went on to earn his PhD.

His stories always end with his line "find a way or make one." I won't forget his words, and I'm sure I'll share them with my son Khalil. "Find a way or make one."

Class of 2017, you all have brilliant minds. Ladies and gentlemen, sitting here before us, we see:

Future doctors and nurses.
Lawyers and politicians.
Engineers and scientists.
Artists and writers and journalists.
Entrepreneurs and ... maybe even a few teachers ...

Class of 2017, I implore you to use your place in the world and platform to advocate for whatever it is in the world that speaks to you with as much vigor and "ka-razy" passion and conviction and drive as James Brown. Do it well, but do it right. Stand for your needs, but more importantly, stand for the needs of others. Be real and honest. Become the person that you aspire to be, so that your parents and ancestors of the distant past will smile and say, "that right there is my child, my blood." This degree will most likely lead to others, but remember the degree is only important in how you use it to put forth positive change in the world.

Class of 2017, I challenge you today to listen to my dad's inspiring point that even dementia can't take from him: "Find your path or stop at nothing to make it."

Thank you!

Taking Care of Business



As Asia CEO of global construction materials giant Xella, **Lei Jin ('02)** is building his passion-driven career brick by brick.

High school years are a formative period for every teenager. Apart from stressful studies that culminate with the daunting college admissions process, there are other social and cultural challenges inherent in the third-culture kid experience.

For Lei Jin, these pressures came to a head in the summer of 2000 when he moved with his family to Beijing. Lei, who had just completed tenth grade in the US, felt isolated in his new surrounds at Lido apartments.

Not knowing anyone and with the start of school still days away, he headed to a local gym to unwind and shoot hoops.

“I was by myself and there were half a dozen other guys playing a game. After about five minutes, they all came over to my side. I thought, ‘Oh crap, they’re going to beat me up; they must be territorial,’” he recalled.

However, Lei was greeted with smiles and handshakes from the “guys,” who included brothers John and Jeremy Alexander, Ari Lee, Rezhan Majid, and Christian Bedard.

Seventeen years later, the friendship that started out on the basketball court is as strong as ever.

- “We’re still best friends and try to meet up every year. They made the transition [to ISB] easy. On the first day of school, they showed me around and we hung out,” said Lei.
- “I think that sums up the ‘ISB experience’. People accept you with open arms because they know what it’s like to move from school to school. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you’re from; you’re part of the community.”

Rising Up

Today, Lei is the one who brings people together in his role as the Asia CEO of German building materials company Xella Group. His role requires him to manage business in the world’s fastest developing continent, where raw materials such as those manufactured by his company are in constant demand.

- “I think the biggest challenge that I face as an American-born Chinese is aligning communication styles and bridging those gaps. Even though there are a lot of similarities between myself and Chinese (stakeholders), there are a lot of differences, too,” said Lei, who is based in Shanghai.

After graduating with a finance degree from Oklahoma State University in 2005, Lei worked as an analyst at IBM in Tulsa for a year. Realizing his passion was working with people and not “staring at a computer screen,” he sought advice from his university’s career services team and eventually applied at French building materials multinational Saint-Gobain.

After completing six months of full-salaried training in Boston, Lei braced himself for a mandatory North America posting – hopefully beyond Middle America.

- “I knew I didn’t want to be in Boise, Idaho. I wanted to be in a big city where my value is. I lucked out, a lady left in Los Angeles so I went there,” he said.

Lei didn’t waste time making an impact in his industrial sales role, being named rookie of the year and cementing his place in the top 5 percent for sales.

Return to China

After learning Lei spoke Chinese, management posted him to Shanghai where he took on the role of business development manager. His company played an integral role in China’s mammoth railway expansion by providing railgrinding stones, which are used to smooth rail tracks.

Lei was charged with establishing distribution channels and working with local officials. For a 26-year-old, building guanxi (personal connections) among stakeholders on projects worth hundreds of millions of dollars was a huge step up.

- “I didn’t know anything. I knew I probably had to do a lot of drinking,” he laughed.

“I was lucky because the company already had teams across China. My job was to go with the local guys and visit local bureaus. As the OEM (original equipment manufacturer), we provided after-sales service and technical support.”

Having been in his current role at Xella for just over a year, Lei considers himself fortunate to be pursuing his passion as a professional.

- “I’m generally fascinated by business. I like doing business not because of money, but because it’s fun, challenging, and interesting,” he said.

Runway Success



From cover girl to college studies, **Stephanie Murphy ('10)** has balanced her modeling career with her passion for psychology.

Global travel, international friendships, and cross-cultural experiences are hallmarks of the third-culture kid experience, but for Stephanie Murphy they continued after her ISB days and into her modeling career.

From New York to Milan, Stephanie's early years after high school involved appearances on the catwalk, catalogues, and magazine covers.

“[Modeling] was something I fell into. It gave me a lot of opportunities to travel and work around the world,” said Stephanie, a second-year psychology student at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia.

Television shows often portray the modeling lifestyle as one of jet-setting luxury and extravagance, where competition and conflict regularly boil over among those seeking to make their fortunes.

However, the reality is less exciting.

- “It’s not all it’s cracked up to be. It’s not very glamorous at all,” Stephanie explained.
- “There is always camaraderie [among models]. I never had anything but friendship with the girls I lived with. We only ever supported each other and there was never any bitchiness.”

Of course, this isn’t to say modeling is an easy career path. The pressure to maintain a certain body image coupled with constant travel mean Stephanie is now more focused on other pursuits.

- “I quite like big cities, so I never had any problems with the travel. There were some other challenges, however, when it comes to stupid things like weight and living in

a superficial world. Those are some of the reasons I’ve withdrawn from nowadays, because it’s not very sustainable.

Raised on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, Stephanie attended ISB from grades 3 to 8. Her mother Mandy was an eighth-grade English and humanities teacher at the school, while father Jeff was a dolphin and seal trainer at the Beijing Aquarium.

After a brief stint at a local Chinese school, Stephanie was among the ISB students who made the Lido-Shunyi transition. Her fondest memories include traveling to Switzerland to perform with the Honor Choir and camping on the Great Wall in seventh-grade during an aptly named “I-will-not-complain” trip.

Although she completed high school back in Australia, Stephanie said ISB and Beijing always held special places in her heart. In 2011, she returned to the city and was overwhelmed by its transformation.

- “I used to live in west Beijing where there weren’t any foreigners. I couldn’t recognize any of the streets. The whole area had changed so much. After the Olympics, it looked like Beijing had gone on steroids.”

Squad Goals



As the founder of elite basketball camp Global Squad, **John Alexander ('01)** uses his expertise and experience to help international students realize their hoop dreams.

In the annals of basketball history at ISB, few names stand out more than those of the Alexander brothers. John, Jeremy ('02), and Joe ('04) all honed their games on the concrete courts of the Lido campus during the late 1990s. Each went on to be recruited by colleges in the US, with Joe going a step further when he was picked by the Milwaukee Bucks in the 2008 NBA draft.

While Joe's success is etched in ISB folklore (his #11 jersey was retired in 2008), John's own achievements in the sport are as impressive as they are pioneering.

The eldest of the brothers, John remembers the jolting transition from playing sibling pickup games in Beijing to returning stateside for the first half of his senior year in high school.

- "When I was growing up in Beijing, basketball was not as big as it is now in China. There was no access to high-level trainers, nor exposure or pathway to play college basketball," he said.
- "If there had been a basketball program when I was in school – even though my brothers and I did play college basketball – I think it would have helped us a lot," he added.

John's brief stint home worked. He was recruited by Washington College, a Division III school in Maryland, where he made an impact on court until injuries cut his career short.

After graduating with a business degree, he found work as an insurance salesman. The company targeted college athletes like John, offering them performance incentives that appealed to their competitive nature.

- "It was fun to compete [at work], but I didn't want to talk about insurance all day. It wasn't my passion," he recalled.

John pivoted to another direction, trying to launch a solar panel and energy auditing company that was ultimately "a complete disaster."

As his brothers' college careers took off, John returned to sales – office supplies, this time – to make ends meet.

In 2008, he decided to put his basketball brain back to work on a new challenge by training local youngsters. What started out as a part-time gig gradually grew through word of mouth.

- "I thought I'd give it a shot. If it failed, I'd be right back where I was anyway. If it succeeded, I'd be doing something I enjoy and could hopefully live a comfortable life. Mostly, I just wanted to be in control," said John, who lives with his wife and two young daughters in Frederick, Maryland.
- "It was hard at first – I'd work 14 to 16 hours a day – and I wasn't

making much money. But I stuck with it and began building a good reputation through parents of kids I trained," he said.

From neighborhood clinics to an internationally renowned camp, John's passion has evolved into Global Squad. With 35 high-level coaches and training staff, the program offers international students a taste of US-style competition – and valuable exposure to college recruiters.

"When I was growing up in Beijing, basketball was not as big as it is now in China. There was no access to high-level trainers, nor exposure or pathway to play college basketball."

Based at The Hill School in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, Global Squad is an NCAA-certified camp held each July. The program lives up to its name, with its alumni over the past six years representing nearly 50 nationalities.

Students attend the camp for various reasons. Some want to sharpen their skills to cement a spot on their high school varsity team, while others have realistic prospects of attending a Division I or II college – and even turning professional.

For international school students in Asia, the college ball dream is still an elusive one. Despite "Linsanity," Yao Ming, and China becoming the NBA's largest overseas market, the Middle Kingdom isn't on US college recruiters' radar.

However, for a growing number of parents of kids at Global Squad, basketball is a useful foot in the door to elite universities. Two Global Squad graduates currently attend California Institute of Technology, the top university in the world in 2015, where they have roster spots on the basketball team.

Like the Alexander brothers, Global Squad has a close connection to ISB. Since its founding, it has held five Chinese New Year camps at the school.

And while Joe is busy playing professionally in Tel Aviv nowadays, Jeremy, a software developer (and amateur bodybuilder), supports John through designing and maintaining Global Squad's website.

For John, Global Squad is an example of the rewards of vision and determination – something his camp instills in its players.

- "It had always seemed like a pipe dream at the time, but I'm glad that I made that decision. I knew I had the experience and passion for it, it was just a matter of working hard to make it happen," he said.

Jumping Outside the Comfort Zone



Justin Bedard ('01) knows better than most the powerful role a community plays in empowering youth. A social entrepreneur, his work with the JUMP! Foundation combines global-mindedness and experiential learning.

Justin Bedard is a pioneer whose legacy can still be seen today both at ISB and in Beijing. He helped start the school's first baseball team, introduced a rock climbing program in the middle school, and volunteered as an ice hockey coach.

In December 2016, he returned to ISB to create another "first" by establishing a Global Leadership Center for the JUMP! Foundation, an experiential education provider. For Justin, co-founder and executive director of the nonprofit social enterprise, the landmark partnership brings his relationship to ISB full circle.

The feat is even more remarkable when you consider that his connection to the school came perilously close to ending almost 20 years earlier.

■ "I was actually expelled from ISB halfway through grade 9 for academic reasons," he recalled.

Facing an uncertain crossroads, Justin discovered the importance of a supportive community.

■ "My father was on the school's Board at the time, so it was very hard on the family. My support network rallied behind me. The guidance counselors said they would help me and others who knew I was a force in the community for

service projects came forward and convinced the principal to change his mind," he explained.

Justin made the most of his second chance, completing his International Baccalaureate (IB) certificate. His commitment to his studies continued at the University of Guelph in Canada, where he made the dean's list and immersed himself in outdoor and service activities.

"Something I learned from that experience was not to define yourself at any point in your life. The importance of always challenging yourself and growing as an individual was ingrained in me at ISB."

Headquartered in Bangkok and with offices around the world, the JUMP! Foundation manages development projects to empower youth. Programs have been carried out in Nicaragua, Kenya, Thailand, and China, while others are earmarked for Myanmar, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The success of its programs with international schools is made possible through the kind of collaboration and support that Justin benefited from at ISB. In addition to Justin, the JUMP! Foundation's founding Board featured two other ISB alumni in Ari Lee and Peter Luk (both '01).

■ "One of the great things about international schools is that when kids are done, they go through university, travel the world, and end

up working in different places. You always have somebody to connect with, or somebody who can introduce or recommend you," said Justin.

In addition to an education and lifelong friendships, Justin said ISB broadened his horizons through experiences beyond his comfort zone. His pursuit of diverse passions included rugby, Model United Nations, photography club, and drama that inevitably overlapped.

On one occasion, baseball training had to be canceled because more than half the

team had a rehearsal for the high school play.

■ "Something I learned from that experience was not to define yourself at any point in your life. The importance of always challenging yourself and growing as an individual was ingrained in me at ISB," Justin said.

■ "Even though I could be considered an expert in youth development and education based on my experience over the past decade, I feel like my next step could be running a ranch in Chile, starting an IT firm, or becoming a baker. That's the element of what ISB taught me: the power of being true to who you are, but not being fixed to one model."

Cancer Survivor Recounts her Battle After Helping Sister



When **Cara Chew ('02)** was diagnosed with non-Hodgkins lymphoma in December 2015, it marked the start of six grueling cycles of chemotherapy. Her courage and positive attitude throughout her treatment inspired other patients worldwide.

She was the main caregiver for her lymphoma-stricken younger sister when Cara Chew, 32, was herself struck with the same disease in December 2015.

The news of her own illness came just two months after their father had undergone heart bypass surgery.

- *'I don't have time for this' was her first thought upon being diagnosed with diffused large B-cell lymphoma.*
- *"I was more stressed than sad," she added.*

Having to balance the role of caring for her sister and father while maintaining her job as a marketing manager simultaneously was hard on her.

To mark World Cancer Day, which occurs on February 4 annually, Cara was encouraged by her friend, fellow lymphoma survivor Beng Harng, 38, to submit her story to Stomp via e-mail.

She was first featured on Stomp on Feb 1 as part of its campaign to raise awareness for cancer.

"You're beautiful, don't ever think otherwise."

Not wanting to aggravate her father's condition post-surgery in the intensive care unit, she told him only about a week later. But thankfully, "he took it like a guy and urged us to move forward", she said.

After sharing her condition on her Facebook page, a high school senior at ISB sent her an encouraging message about other survivors and how they coped with cancer.

- *"That really got the positivity ball rolling and set the stage for my first chemotherapy session," Cara added.*

She continued to document all six cycles of her chemotherapy sessions extensively on Facebook, Instagram, and her blog.

Through these platforms, she befriended cancer patients worldwide, receiving and providing mutual support to them.

Her Christian faith also helped her pull through the ordeal. "I believe everything happens for a reason so I decided to have complete

faith in God instead of worrying," she said.

This thought stayed with her throughout the chemo sessions, which involved oral and in-vitro medication, which she had to go for once every three weeks.

She was an exercise buff, visiting the gym at least thrice a week, but the chemo sessions tired her out easily.

Cara, the oldest of three sisters, also suffered from bouts of memory loss.

Her youngest sister, Catherine, 26, had to stick post-it notes around the house to remind her to switch off all electrical appliances. She once forgot to switch off the stove after cooking.

Having taken care of her younger sister during chemo sessions helped allay Cara's fears for her own chemotherapy.

- *"I was more prepared psychologically and emotionally for what was to come."*

On having to lose her luscious locks from the chemo sessions, she said her Greek boyfriend provided assurance and encouragement to embrace her baldness.

- *"You're beautiful, don't ever think otherwise," he would tell her over the phone every night.*

He would also wake up early or sleep late, due to the difference in time zones, to remind her of her medical appointments.

The experience has taught her to let go instead of always planning for everything.

- *"Sometimes, it's all right to drink coffee and do nothing for four hours. We're always so busy being productive and stressed in our society."*

While she is glad to have been a caregiver, she noticed that people often ask only about the patient. Having been in both positions, she feels it is tougher being the latter.

- *"You don't understand what they're (cancer patients) going through but you have to attend to their every need," she said.*

- *"It really takes a physical and emotional toll on you. It's a pity there isn't a World Caregiver Day. It sounds selfish but the irony is that you have to take care of your own health first before you can look after another's," said Cara, who now practices tai-chi daily.*

Note: This article was originally published on February 4, 2017, by The New Paper.

Read more at Cara's blog: smilesandcocktails.wordpress.com/ or follow her on Instagram (@smilesandcocktails)

On the Fourth Estate's Frontline



Alice Li ('10) is a dual Emmy Award-winning video journalist at The Washington Post who discovered her passion behind the lens while studying film at ISB.

Since joining The Washington Post as a video journalist in 2014, Alice Li has developed a reporting repertoire as diverse as her storytelling skills.

She has covered the political rise of US President Donald Trump, luxury private jets, star-studded galas, prisoners' rehabilitation, and modern medical training. The style of her reporting is equally versatile, spanning articles, photos, videos, and even Snapchat montages.

In June 2016, Alice won two Emmy Awards for her reports on police shootings and the heroin epidemic. The latter story was part of a yearlong series during which Alice explored the story of a young Maine man who had fatally overdosed.

“For me, the most important thing to remember is that I’m just there to listen. You do these stories where you parachute into other people’s lives and ask a lot from them, and I think sometimes you need to find that line between asking too much of somebody and knowing when to pull back,” she said.

One of the biggest challenges of her work is fulfilling multiple roles as an interviewer and multimedia specialist.

“In the moment, you’re focusing on what people are saying along with whether your shot is framed correctly and if audio levels are OK. There are so many things going through your head at the time,” she said.

Alice knew she wanted to pursue journalism after graduating from ISB. When she was accepted into Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, her sights were firmly set on magazine writing.

A turning point came during her sophomore year, when Alice produce an audio slideshow about an abandoned hospital in Chicago’s northern Ravenswood neighborhood. It was there that she interviewed two middle school boys scrawling graffiti on the side of the derelict building.

Her project earned high praise from one of her professors at the

time, acclaimed documentary filmmaker Brent Huffman.

“He asked if I wanted to turn it into a mini documentary. At the time, I thought that was crazy. I had obviously taken Mr. O’Reilly’s film class (at ISB), but it had never occurred to me to combine film and journalism,” she said.

Internships followed at television

“The overall experience was eye-opening. There were times where you as a reporter would be tempted to predict the future, but that’s not part of the job.”

documentary production companies in Chicago, Johannesburg, and San Francisco, before Alice switched to news at The Washington Post.

“My internship [at The Post] was difficult, but it helped me become a much faster shooter and editor,” she said.

“One advantage of video is that it’s something that’s still quite new, so it’s easier for young people to get their foot in the door at organizations like The Washington Post,” she added.

Last year’s US presidential election took her out of her comfort zone as a journalist. Many voters, already distrustful of the media, were emboldened by buzzwords like “alternative facts” and “fake news.”

The political frenzy and rapid pace of shooting and editing

was “crazy to say the least,” said Alice.

“The overall experience was eye-opening. There were times where you as a reporter would be tempted to predict the future, but that’s not part of the job,” she added.

Under the Trump Administration, journalism has faced growing constraints due to restricted access to key officials and public distrust in some sectors of the mainstream media.

For Alice, these challenges underscore the importance of her profession and the need to keep people informed through truthful, objective reporting.

“The election demonstrated there were many people who did not believe the facts. Social media has made it so easy now to live in your own bubble of whatever news you want to receive. The role of journalism feels very vital now. I also think we need to be careful not to fall into the same traps we have over the past year,” she said.

King of the Court



Bringing people together through a shared love of sports has allowed **Rezhan Majid ('02)** to build thriving social, intercultural communities in Malaysia.



Basketball has always been more than a game for Rezhan Majid. Nurtured in the main gym at ISB's Lido campus, his passion for the sport sustained him during his finance degree at the University of Illinois Urbana Champaign. Now, it and other sports are at the core of his growing business that promotes physical and social wellbeing.

- "Sport has always been a microcosm of life. Trying to accomplish a goal through teamwork and bringing people together. I think people naturally want to be a part of a community or team. Sport brings all that together in one experience," he said.

When Rezhan returned from the US to his native Malaysia in 2009, he quickly discovered the basketball scene was fragmented and disorganized. Despite the country being a cultural melting pot, sports have traditionally been segregated; soccer is predominantly played by Malays, while Chinese lean toward basketball.

- "The leagues that they had here were pretty sub-par. As harmonious as life is here, the only league I could join was literally called the 'Non-Chinese Basketball League.' The facilities, management, and overall experience was just terrible, so I decided to start one with a couple of people here," he explained.

Rezhan and his co-founders launched StatSports League in early 2014. The competitive basketball league prides itself on being open to all, with games played in top venues and a web-

site that gives players statistics and video highlights.

- "We made it more exciting for the casual weekend warrior," said Rezhan, adding there are plans to launch a league in Singapore.

Not content to rest on his StatSports laurels, Rezhan is also the CEO of Sports Bandits. As Kuala Lumpur's first social sports community, it features traditional offerings including basketball, volleyball, and flag football in addition to other fun options like ultimate Frisbee and archery tag.

For Rezhan, both ventures share many of the values he learned at ISB.

- "Being integrated and bringing people together is a requirement for my life. So many of us from ISB are used to that: when we walk in a room, we kind of need that multicultural feel," he explained.
- "It gives us a lot of validation to know the market wants it and we feel justified in what we're doing. Ultimately, what we want to do is not just grow the sport and our business, but grow the industry."

Rezhan and elder brother Rasul ('00) were both born in Beijing, where their father served two terms as Malaysia's ambassador to China.

Many of Rezhan's fondest ISB memories involve basketball, although his high school ambitions in the sport suffered a setback

due to a footwear fiasco.

- "My dad isn't a big sports guy and he didn't get the fact I needed proper basketball shoes. At the time, there weren't any Nike outlets or The Village (at Sanlitun), so I headed to Silk Street and bought a knockoff pair of shoes that had no traction. I played terribly in the tryouts and was cut from JV," he said.

Another cherished sporting memory was when he was persuaded to join the volleyball team. After a mass senior exodus, the team was being rebuilt under the guidance of veteran ISB coach Bujar Kumi.

- "We were a mix of kids from different classes, most without any experience playing volleyball. At tournaments while other teams warmed up on courts, Coach Kumi would take us out to the soccer fields and we'd be rolling around practicing our volleyball dives. It was bizarre, but it instilled something special in us and we ended up being pretty good," Rezhan recalled.

The alumni network has also been a boon for Rezhan's business endeavors.

Last year, he partnered with John Alexander's Global Squad to launch ASEAN's Top Baller. Scouting the best high school talents in Singapore, Penang, Jakarta, Manila, and Bangkok, the program gives one lucky student a sponsored flight and entry into the elite academy.

In the Fast Lane with Camille Cheng



When Beijing hosted the 2008 Olympics, then 15-year-old ISB student **Camille Cheng ('11)** tried to see every swimming session from the bleachers of the Water Cube. Eight years later, she made her own mark at the Rio Olympics representing Hong Kong in the 200-meter freestyle and 400-meter medley. She shared her experience of competing at the pinnacle of her sport.

What are some of your fondest memories of your time with ISB's swim team?

That's a hard question... I would have to say all the competitions like China Cup and APAC with my teammates. For me, getting to race is the fun part of swimming and to share that with my teammates that became some of my best friends were memories that I will always cherish.

For many athletes, becoming an Olympian is the pinnacle of their careers. Was it always an ambition for you as a competitive swimmer?

When I first started swimming, the Olympics was always a dream but never something I ever believed possible. Not until I went to college and really improved did I think to myself, "I want this and I think I can actually do it" and it became a realistic dream.

What were your personal goals for Rio?

In terms of swimming, I wanted to swim best times, aiming to make the semi-finals in the 200m freestyle but unfortunately didn't quite perform like I had expected and hoped for. However, I didn't want how I performed to ruin my overall Olympic experience so I didn't let myself get too disappointed - participating in 4 events was already a huge accomplishment for me, more than I could've ever imagined.

What was your reaction when you found out you had made the Hong Kong team?

My first reaction after seeing my time was relief. I got the time that I needed to qualify. Afterwards, I was very grateful and happy. I have a great support system that has pushed me, challenged me and supported me to get to that point. Looking back now it took a while for it to all sink in because I had qualified in December and still had 8 months till the actual Olympics.

What was the atmosphere like at the Olympic Village? Is the relationship among Olympians, especially swimmers, one of camaraderie or competitiveness?

The Olympic village was great. All the top athletes across all sports from every country all in one place, it was very special to be among that. I would say that the relationship among Olympians is definitely one of camaraderie for the most part. However, I think that amazing things happen when people are pushed and challenged and that a lot of the top athletes get to where they are because they are competitive. It's all positive and healthy competition.

Reflecting on your time at ISB, what were some of the most important lessons you learned and how have they helped you in your current life?

Two of the biggest things that I learned at ISB: the idea of balance and striving for excellence. Although swimming is a huge part of my identity, there are other things that make me who I am and other things that I enjoy. I believe that having a balance allows me to be more well-rounded and that I can learn new and different things about myself that then I can translate and reapply to other parts of my life. I would say that there is a culture of excellence at ISB and so I'm very motivated to keep learning, growing, and striving to be become the best Camille that I can be.

You majored in psychology. How important is mental toughness in swimming and do you feel your studies have given you an edge?

Mental toughness is extremely important swimming, especially when it comes to racing for me. I feel that my studies have helped me develop into the type of swimmer I am today. I've learned a lot about myself and my strengths and weaknesses and how to work on a team and how to lead and all these things are skills and experiences that I tap into when I have hard times in training to push and motivate myself. When I race, I tend to be an overthinker and start doubting myself so learning strategies to cope with those things.



How were you introduced to swimming and who were your idols in the sport?

I spent my afternoons at the pool when I was growing up in Hong Kong, I loved being in the water but it wasn't until I moved to Beijing did I start competitively swimming. I was in PE class and the swimming coach at the time, Coach George, saw me swim and told me to try out for the team and I've been swimming ever since. I would say my idol growing up was Natalie Coughlin - also a Cal bear! Since then however, I've had many more.

How do you unwind from the pressures of competition away from the pool?

I think the biggest thing that has helped me with the pressure is surrounding myself with people that I care about and care about me and enjoy ourselves doing other activities separate from swimming. Swimming already takes up a lot of our time and so being able to check out from swimming helps me become more engaged when I need to compete or train. Some of my favorite things to do are go to the beach, arts and crafts and spend time with friends.

And finally, you're a UC Berkeley alumna along with HK teammates Yvette Kong Man-yi and Stephanie Au Hoi-shun. Is it just a coincidence or is there something in the water over there?

UC Berkeley has had its fair share of HK swimmers, even before us three, there were HK swimmers that went there too. I think we all have our own swimming journeys and we all happened to end up there together which has been very special. I'm thankful to be able to share it with them.

Cool Gunnings

From Beijing to Brazil, Middlebury to Highbury, internationalism and a passion for football have defined **Tom McCann's ('02)** career.



“Expectations are high and we are intrinsically linked to team performance. The reality is that the food tastes better when the team wins.”

When it comes to job performance, most of us are masters of our own destiny. Our actions and efforts determine whether we've done our work well and satisfied key stakeholders.

However, Tom McCann ('02) knows his fate is also heavily impacted by the scoreboard at Emirates Stadium. As the Head of Premium Sales, Service, and Operations at Arsenal Football Club, Tom is responsible for ensuring fans in 7,000 club-level seats and 150 executive boxes have an exceptional experience at every Gunners home game.

- *“Expectations are high and we are intrinsically linked to team performance. The reality is that the food tastes better when the team wins,” he explained.*
- *“Some of the pressure is unavoidable. We can be perfect on the night, but if the team loses it inevitably impacts people's experience. By the same token, if we make a few mistakes but the team wins 3-nil, people tend to go away remembering the football,” he added.*

Living just 10 minutes from the stadium, Tom describes his position as being firmly in “dream job territory.” A lifelong Gunners supporter, he knows fandom and professionalism are best kept separated.

- *“A big challenge for me is trying to make sure work doesn't impact my relationship as a fan. Arsenal has always been the thing I do for fun. Even when I was living in Beijing, I'd*

get up at 3:45 am to watch the European games,” he said.

Arriving in Beijing in 1997, Tom enrolled at ISB together with his younger brother James ('08), who works in sales support for North London football rivals Tottenham Hotspur.

The family originally planned to spend three years in Beijing, although the boys' parents would ultimately stay for 16 years.

- *“There's something magnetic about Beijing. People come from somewhere else and then very quickly that becomes their base. We had classmates go to Hong Kong or Shanghai for a year, only to come back to ISB because they were happier. It's really unique,” Tom said.*

Beijing brimmed with adventure and a sense of newfound independence. It wasn't uncommon for Tom to squeeze into a taxi with three or four ISB classmates each from different continents.

- *“Even then, as a 13- or 14-year-old, that sense of internationalism wasn't lost on me. I knew it was special,” he said.*

Being in Beijing also instilled in Tom skills as a cross-cultural communicator that serve him well today. His involvement in Model United Nations enhanced his critical thinking skills and global-mindedness.

- *“It helped me develop the ability to engage and relate with a wide va-*

riety of people from different backgrounds. I always felt like I was an ambassador for the UK at ISB. I was the only UK national in high school, so people drew conclusions about the UK based on what they thought of me,” he said.

One of the most influential figures at ISB for Tom was his tenth-grade English teacher Mary Stein, who was “militant about spelling, grammar, and punctuation.” Those who took her class will remember a booklet containing definitions of literary terms that students needed to memorize.

- *“It was a really tough year and I'm not sure many others would cite her as their favorite teacher, but looking back I know I owe her an awful lot. She taught us discipline and, above all, she taught me how to write,” he said.*

After graduating from ISB, Tom considered studying hotel management at Lausanne, Switzerland, before settling on Middlebury College in the US. Having lived in London and Beijing, two of the biggest cities in the world, the sleepy Vermont town provided a change of pace as he completed his BA in International Studies.

Additionally, the college's emphasis on personalized learning and diversity on campus provided “an extension of ISB,” said Tom.

Naturally, the “magnetism” of Beijing returned after university. After a brief stint teaching English and just before starting to write for Time Out Beijing, Tom returned

to London for an internship with global sports management company IMG.

This opportunity paved the way to an internal transition to the newly opened Wembley Stadium, where Tom managed sales and oversaw hospitality operations.

In 2012, he embraced a new international challenge in Brazil. Over the next three years, he developed stadium hospitality business for a joint-venture company in a posting that culminated with the 2014 FIFA World Cup.

As one of the world's most valuable sports teams, Arsenal's success is built on team effort. Behind the scenes, Tom said an identical formula is in place whereby the best people are in the best positions.

- *“One of the things about working in sports, especially football, is that there are a lot of people who just want to work in the industry because it's perceived as glamorous, but may not necessarily have the requisite skill-set for their specific roles,” he said.*

- *“Arsenal bucks that trend – it's full of people at the very top of their game. Our marketing director is ex-Diageo (a global alcoholic beverages multinational). Our IT director was on a panel recently with counterparts from Google and Microsoft. That's the calibre of individual that's here, and to be a part of that is quite humbling.”*

The Path Less Taken

For most ISB alumni, there is a “blink-and-you’ll-miss-it” gap between high school graduation and the first day of university. However, there are benefits to taking time to explore new paths (and new passions) before college. **Kevin Zhou ('16)** shares his experience of taking a gap year in South America.



For the bulk of my gap year, I’ve spent my time in the wide-open spaces of Patagonia in South America. For the past seven months, I haven’t spent more than a week in the same place. At the time of writing, I have traveled overland from the southernmost point of the South American continent to the Atacama Desert.

During that time, I’ve become comfortable in a variety of outdoor skills that range from cooking to climbing. I’ve been stunned by the beauty of the natural world, dazzled by the vibrancy of the few cities I’ve visited, and continue to be amazed by the kindness that local people have shown me.

Now, as my trip nears its end, I am thinking of what I will be bringing home. Over the coming weeks, months, and years, I will probably forget the people I’ve met in the hostels and the hikes I’ve done.



I cannot bring home the peaks I’ve climbed. Attempts to recount my time in the mountains invariably bring about a sort of confused indifference among friends and family. It almost seems that the experiences and connections to the places where I’ve walked, paddled, and climbed have no place in my daily life.

However, the lessons I take away from this adventure are far more important. Living outside has a way of getting one back in touch of the basics. In the mountains, I am thorough, organized, and prepared in ways that I was rarely ever pushed to be in the “real world.”

I cook my own food and consciously select the place where I sleep every night. I put care into tending to my wounds and repairing my gear. I’ve learned to count every contour line on the map and at any given moment have my rain gear accessible.

In the mountains, the consequences for failing at basic tasks are far more immediate; the



impact of leaving things half done is immediate felt. In a way, it is good that the wind and the cold were my “teachers”; the fallout for not being prepared in everyday life can be far less obvious and far more impactful.



Learning to climb has taught me how to place protection on rock and set up a rappel, but more importantly how to face down my fear and perform. I’ve learned to push forward and preserve even when every fiber of my being tells me that I can’t go higher. In

the future, the challenges I face won’t be as immediate or rewarding as a mountain or a pitch of rock, but the summit belongs to those who push for it.

Most importantly, I learned how to enjoy things for what they are inde-

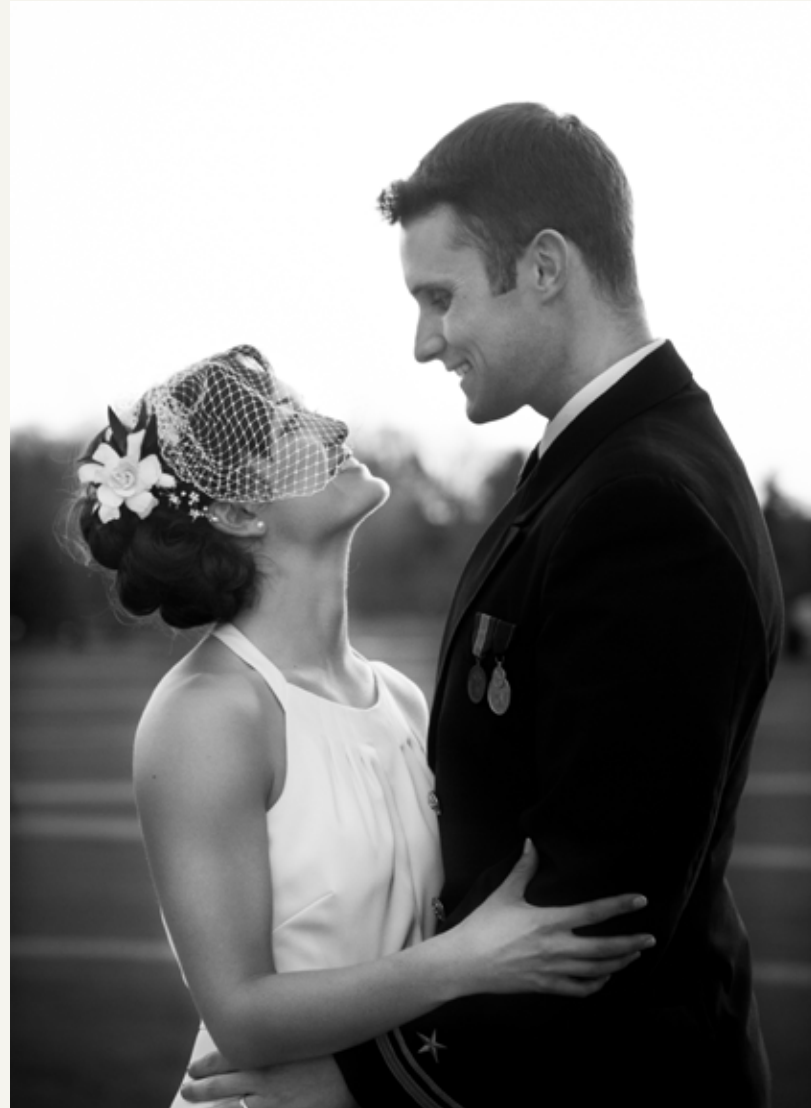
pendent of what my expectations originally were. I learned that although adventure is excitement, elation, and exhilaration, it is also fear, frustration, and occasionally boredom.

Eventually, I realized that it was the lows that made the highs and the emotional challenge was in some cases greater than the physical one. In the mountains, I found strength that I didn’t know I had and weakness in myself where I least expected. In the end, some of what I did was exactly as I dreamed it.

However, far more was unpredictable – and I would not have had it any other way.

Wedding Bells

Nicholas Len ('05) married **Rebecca Len** (née Burnham) on March 10, 2012.



ISB sweethearts **Seth** and **Sarah Raatz** (née Bonczyk), both from the **Class of 2007**, married on December 27, 2014 in Plymouth, Michigan. Seth's parents, Stephen and Holly, were both teachers at ISB.





A warm welcome to our newest alumni!

**Dr. Tarek Razik (2010-2017) &
Dr. Mark Hardeman (2012-2017)**



北京顺义国际学校
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF BEIJING

中国北京顺义安华街10号 邮编: 101318

No. 10, An Hua Street, Shunyi District, Beijing 101318, P.R.China

Telephone: 86 10 8149 2345 | Facsimile: 86 10 8046 2003

www.isb.bj.edu.cn