



## Ismael Plet '20 | Amsterdam, Netherlands

*As he settles into his fourth and final year at VES, Ismael Plet reflects on the life he has built at VES and his personal journey toward full stature. That growth includes being selected to serve in the top student leadership position—Head Counselor.*

### **“I’m focused on making my way toward my own full stature.”**

#### **The VES Community Means Family and Honor**

*At home he was focused on basketball, but when Ismael came to VES he was able to find balance in all of his pursuits. In addition to honing his basketball skills, he also finds himself much more actively engaged with the community of students and faculty. Through dorm activities, academics, residential life and weekend fun, Ismael is happy getting to know the people around him and building meaningful relationships.*

“At VES, I realize how much people care about me and are here to help. I never hesitate asking for support from my dorm head, my advisor, my local host Mom and my teammates.”

“It is such a blessing to have my family in Amsterdam, but I also have so many families in Lynchburg who

have welcomed me. I no longer feel a guest in their homes—more like a son. I know their family and their friends. I truly feel cared for.”

“But it is also important for me personally to remember where I came from. I never forget that I represent my family and the Netherlands, but now I also represent VES and my host family every time I step onto the court or go out to dinner in Lynchburg. This is very motivating for me every day.”

#### **On Being a Leader**

*At VES, our international students become part of the fabric of the school. Throughout his time at VES, Ismael has endeared himself to students and faculty alike through his hard work, commitment to everything he embarks on at VES and most importantly, his embodiment of the VES ideals of character: humility, honor and integrity, engagement and excellence.*





“Serving as Head Counselor is an incredible honor and gives me a platform to do things that are important to me. Being able to engage people—particularly new students—so they feel part of our community is important.

I was influenced by great student leaders when I was a freshman. Now I’m happy to be able to do what I can to model the school’s ideals, help our new students come out of their shells, learn the ropes, feel comfortable, let them know they are cared for, and understand the full scope of opportunities for them at VES. I feel this is my way to give back to the school that continues to give me so much.”

### On Academics & Time Management Skills

“VES has taught me to place importance on academics and to manage my time. There is time for studying and time for relaxing and socializing. I have come to realize that just a little extra time on my studies makes a big difference in my performance. I am naturally curious, and I’m finding that putting in the extra study time leads me to enjoy my classes more!”

*When asked how he came to this shift in mentality, Ismael acknowledged the importance of his basketball coach, Darko Sedlar.*

“My coach sat me down and helped me to understand the importance of working hard, not just on the court, but in everything I do.”

### On My VES Legacy

*As Ismael looks ahead to the next phase of his journey—college—he strives to leave a positive mark on the VES community and the Lynchburg area.*

“My personal success is not mine alone. And consequently, by being my very best, I hope that I will help those who come behind me. It makes me feel I’m not alone. I honestly think this VES community is unique. I feel so connected to this place. I love this honorable community.”

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