

December 2019

Dunia

THE MAGAZINE OF UWC SOUTH EAST ASIA

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“

A strong influence on the students at UWC is undeniably the teachers. Our teachers are good. They're qualified, they can teach. Obviously. But there's so much more to our teachers than that—they're almost as eclectic as the students. Passionate, inventive, and all-embracing. I don't know what sort of dark machinations UWCSEA utilises to find such characters for teachers, all I know is that it works.”

Stella Mackenzie, Grade 11 student,
speaking at the UWCSEA Open Days in September

Dunia

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UWCSEA Perspectives

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Reflections of a newcomer

**By Carma Elliot CMG OBE
College President**

As we head for the end of term, I have been reflecting on the things which I have been part of as a new UWC family member, and which have had the biggest impact on my thinking. Chief among these, in November, I attended the governance meetings for UWC International at UWC Atlantic College in Wales. Those of you who have seen photographs will know that the very first of the United World Colleges has its home in a medieval castle on the Atlantic coast. It is a dramatic setting, with a distinct feeling of Harry Potter and Hogwarts, and indeed our deliberations had some of that dramatic intensity, with the long-term sustainable future of the movement our main topic of conversation.

But in the midst of that intensity, there was a moment that for me defined what it has been to join UWCSEA and the UWC movement. In the 14th century dining hall, visitors from around the world gathered together to raise their voices in a song in the Welsh language, which we learned phonetically as we went along. It was a rousing anthem, celebrating the culture and spirit of Wales, and though I'm sure there were some who found their tongues challenged by the double consonants and, to our ears, flattened vowels of this ancient Celtic language, everyone found celebrating the spirit of Wales easy. It was very moving to see and hear everyone joyously embracing a culture not their own, and for those few moments everyone in the room was Welsh (or wanted to be!).

It put me in mind of the UN Night and CultuRama celebrations at UWCSEA in Singapore. In the same way, we see students perform dances that are not from their own culture, and there is no sense that the South African dance is only for South Africans, or that Irish dancing is only for the Irish. The idea that all cultures are accessible to those from other cultures is profound; that we can know and understand each other to the extent that there is no proof of passport required to participate in a celebration of a culture or nation—that is truly liberating. In this age where fear of cultural appropriation can sometimes (and often rightly) make us question our right to participate in some cultural expressions, it is encouraging to see our students work together and slip into cultural celebrations that are not, strictly speaking, their own.

Why does the UWC community do this so easily when other communities can't? The answer lies in the relationships between individuals and groups that is at the heart of the whole UWC ideal. Lester B. Pearson said in 1964, "How can there be peace without people understanding each other; and how can this be if they don't know each other?" UWC is about bringing people together so that they can start to know each other; and in knowing each other, they come to understanding; and with understanding comes not just acceptance but celebration. It seems so simple, and yet so necessary.

During the meetings at Atlantic College I was frequently asked for reflections on my first months at UWC. How was I finding UWC? Of course the answer is

that I am finding it fascinating and am enjoying it immensely. I explained that I was spending time meeting individuals and groups to build my understanding of UWCSEA and more closely define my role as President, and my potential contribution to the College. I have attended meetings with government Ministers; spoken in the Primary School about adoption, and the perspectives of an adopted child in class; and delivered a keynote speech at the Women in Leadership in Education Conference in Hong Kong. I have met with incredibly generous donors and senior volunteers; and spoken to individual students about their interest in a diplomatic career. And I enjoyed the riotous alumni reunion in my first few weeks, which gave me the opportunity to meet and hear from a small number of our far-flung alumni who returned to Singapore to celebrate 'milestone' anniversaries this year.

What all these interactions had in common was something that is my biggest takeaway from my first few months at UWCSEA: the quality of the relationships in our community is truly very special. Both within and between stakeholder groups there is trust and respect, and a strong sense of community shaped by a commitment to mission. It is a community which is purposeful and seeking positive impact in all that it does. Of course there are occasional tensions—that is a function of a community holding itself to account. But fundamentally, we rely on the quality of our relationships to ensure the peace and sustainability that is our common purpose. This is what allows us to have the more

Lester B. Pearson (1964). "The Four Faces of Peace and the International Outlook: Statements", McClelland and Stewart.

difficult conversations and to still dance together the next day.

The central relationship in our community is the student-teacher relationship. In schools, there is always a lot of discussion about teachers: how we know when they are successful; how to look beyond grades and scores to measure their impact on students; and how we ensure that all teachers receive useful feedback that supports their professional learning. Governors recently spent time with educational leadership discussing our approach to teacher professional growth. Throughout the conversation, what was never in question was the importance

we all attach to that central student-teacher relationship.

As in all things, it is good to use students as a touchpoint. Earlier this term, I heard students speak at Open Days about their experience at UWCSEA. Each of them, in different ways, spoke about the influence their teachers have had on them. Sometimes they described the sparking of passion in a particular subject. Sometimes they spoke of a life lesson a teacher supported them through. Each time, the significance of that relationship shone through. An alumnus recently described one of his teachers in the 80s (who only left the College a few years ago) as the person “who gave me the

skills that made it possible for me to survive life, then and now.” What an extraordinary compliment.

I finish my first term at UWCSEA with a strong impression that it is the nature of our relationships that make us who we are. The relationships between individuals are at the heart of the UWC mission and our College is doing much to provide that the individual becomes the universal. The Māori culture has an expression “He aha te mea nui o te ao. He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata” (What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people). UWC has always known that and knows it still today.

UN Night Māori haka dance



Paths to bilingualism

Bringing life to a family language plan

An interview with Pilar Jimenez, Head of Home Languages and Teacher of Spanish, Ellie Alchin, Director of Teaching and Learning at Dover Campus and Oscar Gallego, Head of Languages A, High School Spanish and Home Languages Coordinator at East Campus.

It will come as no surprise that while UWCSEA is an 'English medium' school, where the main language of instruction is English, we are a multilingual community. It almost goes without saying that our community has a complex language profile. Our mission-driven admissions policy asks us to bring together as diverse a cohort as possible with the aim of promoting intercultural understanding.

Recognising that to successfully achieve our mission, we need to do more than simply enrol students with diverse backgrounds, passports and language profiles, the five-year UWCSEA strategy launched in 2018 identified further developing our capacity in Diversity and Inclusion as a key to long-term success. The increasing complexity of the language profile of our learners had already prompted the introduction of the highly regarded Home Languages Programme (HLP) on both campuses, as well as the extension of the English as an Additional Language (EAL) Programme into our Primary Schools. The work of bringing the UWCSEA Strategy to life is in furthering our understanding of, and consciously selecting and embedding, approaches to language learning that are in line with our mission and the needs of our community.

This year, part of this work on Dover Campus has meant gaining a deeper understanding of our community's language profile so as to make better informed decisions around allocation of effort and resources. A survey, sent to Dover parents in Term 1, revealed that 58% of the respondents communicate at home in two or more languages. And that between them, the 831 families who responded (representing 1,138 of the 3,000 Dover students) speak an astounding 94 different languages at home. Further, while 42% of families only speak one language at home, that language is not always English.

Complex profiles = complex aspirations

This very complex language profile inevitably gives rise to an equally complex set of expectations around language learning. Driven by our desire to understand more fully the expectations of our community, the same survey asked parents what matters most to them (for their child's language education), to which the top five responses were:

1. Learn a foreign language
2. Maintain a home language as well as learn English
3. Learn two foreign languages

4. Develop sensitivity in communicating with speakers of other languages
5. Study a home language within the school day instead of learning a new foreign language

There are many considerations that go into the mix of creating, maintaining and developing bilingualism in children—whether they are learning a language which is spoken at home or not. For many, the idea of learning an additional language is an exciting proposition, while others hope that their children will be able to attain a high level of competence in two or more languages—if they would only apply themselves at school, and if only the school would offer that language in the timetable for younger students.

Eowyn Crisfield, a specialist in bilingualism, language learning and teaching, and bilingual education visited Dover Campus for four days in November. Coinciding with a professional learning day, Eowyn conducted workshops and training for all teachers and, in a session with parents, shared her research-based approach to successfully raising a bilingual child. For those who were not able to attend her evening session, this interview focuses on sharing some of Eowyn's insights and strategies for families based on our UWCSEA context.

For simplicity's sake, Eowyn uses the term bilingual to mean two or more languages, and we have adopted this approach in this article.

Exploring definitions

For many, being bilingual carries the aspiration to 'speak like a native—with complete fluency and an impeccable accent', making it an ambitious aim for bilingual families raising children away from home, let alone for learners whose parents are monolingual. But some definitions are more pragmatic, incorporating both competence and functionality.

One definition, admittedly on the functional end of the scale but perhaps useful for context, comes from Carder (2007), who defined bilingualism as "the ability to understand and use two (or more) languages in certain contexts and for certain purposes." However, with so many in our community already bilingual, it is likely that many families will be seeking what Harley (2013) and Grosjean (1997) describe as 'productive bilingualism', which is the ability to competently express thoughts and speech in more than one language.

Whichever definition you prefer, setting parameters looks and feels much more achievable than the lofty 'indistinguishable from a native speaker' aspiration, particularly for the potential bilingualist, since we learn best when we understand the reason for learning and have a realistic goal in sight.

Family commitment comes first

Developing 'native speaking' proficiency in a language can be likened to developing mastery in a skill such as a musical instrument, dance style, or specific sport. It takes multiple and sustained opportunities to identify interest, experimentation to select a specialism, followed by expert instruction, continued skill development, some reflection, and many more hours of practice in all types of settings and contexts, to truly excel. And only the most motivated will pursue the skills to true mastery.

But how does mastery happen? The answer lies in intentionality. It requires identifying a goal and planning a realistic pathway to achieve it. And, if necessary, revising the goal along the way.

Which brings us to the idea of a Family Language Plan.

Family Language Plans, according to Eowyn, are not just for families with aspirations of 'native level' proficiency in multiple languages. While she believes it as an essential ingredient in sustained success for families with complex language profiles, Eowyn recommends all families set out a Family Language Plan, even if the goal is communicative competence in a second language. That way everyone knows what they are aiming for.

Key considerations when making a plan include:

1. Which languages do you want your children to master, and why?
2. Which level of mastery are you aiming for in each language? Are you going to be satisfied with attaining Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) or are you prepared to support your child in the long-term and far more difficult task of attaining what educators describe as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)?
3. Are you open to these goals changing in the future, for example if you move country?
4. Have you identified your available support network—and what else may be required to achieve your goal (i.e., schools, family members, tutors, travel)?
5. Realistically, how much time, effort and money are you willing or able to invest?

Developing bilingualism requires commitment above and beyond arranging lessons and having conversations at home

and with family. Students can accomplish amazing things, provided they are supported by their families, and given multiple opportunities to learn and apply (practise!) their learning.

How can parents support their children?

Find as many ways as possible to regularly use the languages being learned, whether your child is a 'foreign language' learner from a monolingual background or a bilingual student who speaks multiple languages at home. Strategies and activities, based on the age and needs of the child, both in the classroom and outside, in a variety of contexts are crucial, including:

- Talking about language to raise interest in language learning, awareness of how language functions in society and cultures, and the benefits of bilingualism
- Encouraging a caregiver to speak to the child in the target language
- Consuming media – reading, listening to audiobooks, or watching movies and TV shows together in the target language (subtitles on)
- Learning the language yourself and practising it with your child
- Arranging playdates and other social interactions with other children and families who speak the target language
- Encouraging your child to share what they are learning, or to teach you
- Ask them to take you through their completed language homework
- Regular (possibly immersive) exposure during holidays – using the language in context, extending the limited settings of home and classroom, can make a big difference

Academic literacy skill-focused classes such as our Home Language Programme are often a key part of the support infrastructure for students from a bilingual family. Classroom instruction is, however, only one element of a successful family language plan. Even the most tailored programme is going to have limited benefit if the learner is not able to make use of the language in authentic contexts outside the classroom and the more transactional language exchanges that typify day-to-day use at home. Families who are aiming for CALP proficiency will need to create further opportunities for their child to use the language in authentic academic contexts.



Options for monolingual families

Can children realistically become bilingual if the family only speaks one language at home?

The answer to this depends on what is meant by being bilingual and, to a large extent, the commitment outside of school that the family is able to make. Individuals who come from a monolingual family are able to become bilingual if they have enough exposure to the additional language. This is where Carder's (2007) definition of bilingualism—"the ability to understand and use two (or more) languages in certain contexts and for certain purposes"—is likely to be more achievable, for everyone involved.

Eowyn described the need to provide a foundation of solid infrastructure and long-term, consistent support with demonstrable benefits to the learner. Because sometimes the benefit of learning another language is not as obvious to our children as it is to the adults around them!

What are some of the most effective ways for children from monolingual families to learn languages?

Immersion has proven to be very effective, but is not always possible or practical. Sending a monolingual child to a school with an immersive bilingual programme—where they study 50% of their subjects in the target language—can lead to bilingualism for students from a monolingual family. However, a variety of factors influence outcomes, including

how much exposure to the language children will have outside their classroom, and how motivated the students are to learn and use the language. Because our students come to us with such diverse linguistic backgrounds and goals, immersive bilingualism is not a suitable model for UWCSEA.

How often do children need to practise a language in order to become bilingual?

This largely depends on the level of proficiency you are aiming for. Communicative ability is very different to an ability to use the language to study and communicate in an academic context.

Families who are monolingual and wish their child to become bilingual in a language they are learning at school typically find they are required to make an enormous commitment outside of formal schooling if they decide they want more than 'communicative bilingualism' for their child. Eowyn presented research suggesting that an individual can attain BICS-level proficiency in 1 or 2 years if they are *immersed* in a language. Being able to use a language at a level of CALP proficiency, where students make meaning and communicate academic tasks in the language, i.e., hypothesise, justify, classify, infer, can take between 3 and 9 years in an *immersive* language learning environment.



Can children retain a home language(s) if much of their formal learning is in English?

Yes, those who come from a bilingual family are able to retain their bilingualism if they have enough exposure. If one parent speaks to the child consistently in one language, another speaks in another and the child speaks a third language (in the case of many UWCSEA students, English) at school, it is perfectly possible for them to grow up speaking three languages with BICS-level skills—though in reality, English may still end up being their dominant language.

Whilst they can retain communicative proficiency, children will not develop CALP proficiency in their home language without deliberate, sustained effort. This is especially challenging when they are not learning all their subjects in that language at school, or are not able to use the language in their day-to-day life outside of transactional exchanges with parents or caregivers at home.

If you could debunk one myth about learning multiple languages, what would that be?

A common misconception is that it is much better to learn languages when we are very young. While it's true that children's brains have a higher plasticity and it can often be easier for them to learn another language than it is for an adult, this is often expanded to encompass the notion that young children are sponges for absorbing languages and that you just need to immerse them in the right environment and expose them to as many languages as possible if you want them to grow up multilingual.

Unfortunately this belief is not supported by evidence. Humans have a finite capacity to absorb different languages, and age-appropriate proficiency in a dominant language is essential for cognitive development. A four-year-old being exposed to five languages at once is unlikely to develop age-appropriate proficiency in any of the languages.

Students can grow up to be bilingual if they are exposed to two (or even three) languages at home in the early years. The key here is 'exposure' to the languages. A child will not become bilingual with a couple of hours a week of exposure in a language; it requires sustained and regular opportunities to use the language.

Is it advisable to learn more than one additional language if you are already learning English and have a strong home language? Should you take the opportunity to learn another as a foreign language?

This depends entirely on the child, and on your family situation. Consider a bilingual five-year-old, who speaks Japanese and French with their parents, but who is new to English. They attend an English-medium school while in Singapore and are receiving EAL support there. If it is likely

they will return to Japan in two years, Chinese lessons may not be the best option. Instead, it would be better for them to focus on learning English while maintaining Japanese and French.

Compare this situation to a Grade 11 scholar, fresh off the plane from Colombia, coming from a Spanish-speaking school where she learned English as a second language. While having to cope with all her subjects in English, which is her second language, she is eager to retain her connection to her cultural identity. For this student, it makes sense to continue to develop her Spanish at a high proficiency (which keeps open the option to return to Colombia to study) and to take English as a second language subject, rather than trying to pick up a third language.

But other bilingual students who are learning English are eager to learn a third language. For many of these EAL students, the foreign language class is the one lesson where they feel that they are at the same level as everyone else. For these students, learning a new language can be a great way for them to feel successful.

If families intend their child to study in their home language at university, what are the considerations? Is it realistic?

In order to be admitted to the university course of their choice, students need a strong CALP-level knowledge of their home language. Further, to be able to successfully move to living in their home country, they will need both communicative ability and cultural understanding to adjust to being surrounded by native speakers—perhaps for the first time in their life.

If this is a likely scenario for your family, a family language plan will help you proactively plan to keep this option open and achievable for your child. In addition to the list of support activities, some families also consider engaging conversationalists, arranging any required tutoring to be done in the home language or even planning with their child for a gap year or 'working holiday at home' that will enable them to hone their language skills before they start university.

Recommended further reading

Eowyn Crisfield's blog: www.crisfieldeducationalconsulting.com/blog
Baker, Colin (2014) A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism
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DEVELOPING SELF DETERMINATION

An effective approach to nurturing both wellbeing and activism

By Nick Alchin, High School Principal and Deputy Head of Campus, East Campus

Greta Thunberg's inspiring activism may pressure reluctant politicians into meaningful steps on climate change. She is rightly a role model for many young people around the globe and it was hard not to admire her bravery and eloquence, when she said to global leaders at Davos in January, "I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day."

However, fear and panic can be toxic, and while it may spur some like Thunberg to activism, it may simply paralyse others. I am not alone in worrying that fear is not generally a helpful motivator, and can lead to apathy and despair; in 2017 the American Psychological Association reported that our psychological responses to climate change, like conflict avoidance, helplessness and resignation, were growing. So much so that climate psychiatry is emerging as a new specialism for mental health professionals. As BBC journalist and emerging science researcher Britt Wray notes in her 2019 TED Talk, they are getting work at a time when some high schoolers don't want to apply to university any longer, because they can't foresee a future for themselves.

That 1.4 million school students went on strike in March to protest about climate change shows they feel they have few

other options left; Wray describes this as students around the world ... "screaming for change in the piercing voice of despair." 'Despair' is, I suggest, not what we want, and it not itself likely to lead to sustainable change. Our challenge remains to educate students so they know the facts and to guide them so they develop energetic activism rather than slip into paralyzed apathy.

At UWCSEA, as we discuss how we can best equip our students to deal with what sometimes seems like a tsunami of distressing news and events, we have found that activism and wellbeing both rely on three things (taken from Ryan and Deci's Self Determination Theory)

1. **Autonomy:** the feeling one has choice and willingly endorsing ones behaviour
2. **Competence:** the experience of mastery and being effective in ones activity
3. **Relatedness:** the need to feel connected and belongingness with others

There's a lot to say about these, which were initially identified over 30 years ago by Ryan and Deci in their impressively persuasive body of work. And if these ideas seem suspiciously like the Dan Pink's from *Drive* or Martin Seligmann's from *Flourish*, that's no coincidence. Ryan and Deci's work pre-dates and underlies these two much more well-known authors, and many others, who

have made their own versions of these ideas accessible to a wide audience.

These abstract principles can very effectively guide thinking and actions on very practical issues. They are how we can feel able to act in meaningful ways in the world; by connecting with like-minded people; by being competent to effect change; and by having the autonomy to direct our own lives. These are foundational to both action and wellbeing.

As I've explored the topic of wellbeing, I've come to see this issue of 'activism' as intimately linked to 'wellbeing'. Neither quality is one you can seek directly; in fact both emerge from the three underlying elements. We describe the way we deliberately attend to the cultivation of these principles in our community as the UWCSEA Culture of Care and Wellbeing outlined on the facing page.

Over the previous school year, the leadership teams have clarified and made explicit our thinking. And even after a few weeks of this school year we were already seeing the power of these three principles. As the year progresses, we continue to look for opportunities to embed these principles into life on campus, reviewing and tweaking as we go. For now, I am hopeful they may provide an effective way of addressing twin goals of wellbeing and activism, but in an optimistic way. Watch this space.

References

Thanks to Ellie Alchin for making the link between self-determination theory and activism.
 Barclay, E. (2019) Photos: kids in 123 countries went on strike to protect the climate. Vox | Neuding, P. (2019) Self-Harm Versus the Greater Good: Greta Thunberg and Child Activism. Quillette | Clayton, S., Manning, C. M., Krygsman, K., & Speiser, M. (2017). Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association, and ecoAmerica. | Ryan, R. and Deci, E. (2017). Self-Determination Theory Guilford Press | The Guardian Our house is on fire Fri 25 Jan 2019 | Wray, B. (2019) How climate change affects your mental health. TED | University of Rochester Medical Center, <https://www.urmc.rochester.edu/community-health/patient-care/self-determination-theory.aspx> 11 Dec 2019

Nick's blog, On Education, shares his thinking and ideas:



UWCSEA culture of care and wellbeing

At UWCSEA, we aspire towards a culture of care where there is a shared commitment to cultivate wellbeing. While we acknowledge that feelings of wellbeing are personal and will vary between individuals, the College is responsible for providing the conditions for community wellbeing to flourish. This includes opportunities to feel connected, autonomous, and competent—for students, staff and parents alike.

The nature of UWCSEA's holistic learning programme means that we look forward to responsibilities in each of the five elements. In turn, this can create pressure points over the course of a school year and so these principles are best understood over a period of time, rather than at any specific moment.



Connected

We feel connected when we feel known by others, heard by others and cared for by others. This means we seek to provide opportunities so that we feel:

Cared for, and that we have opportunities to care for others;

United by a strong sense of shared purpose



Autonomous

We want to feel we can self-regulate our actions, where possible, and make our own meaning of events. This means we seek to create a culture so we feel:

Empowered to make choices with regard to our own individual wellbeing

We have opportunities for self-awareness building and reflection



Competent

A sense of competence arises when we feel effective and that we can continually develop craftsmanship around our work. We recognise that our ambitions to seek excellence across a broad range of educational experiences places significant demands on us, and we understand and recognise that we cannot all be experts in all areas. We seek to create conditions so that we feel competent because we are:

Supported in achieving growth

Able to match the demands on us with our capacities

BEING WELL

Shedding light on youth mental health



Photos provided by: Nüwa

With increased global attention paid to the nuances and complexities of mental health and mental illnesses, UWCSEA has been actively discussing and contributing to external conversations on wellbeing, to understand how it is shaped within the context of young people's lives.

The College's strategic commitment to wellbeing is ultimately woven into the UWCSEA culture of care and wellbeing (see page 9), and different elements of our learning programme. A strong central pillar of this is the focus on enhancing personal growth and resilience of our students and school community. Whether this is done through counselling or peer support, or through awareness-building events and activities that the College initiates and supports, its effects ripple out to our students, staff and parents.

One such event was a recent community dialogue, HeART of the Matter, held to coincide with Mental Health Awareness week in October. Over 60 members of the UWCSEA community gathered at IDEAS Hub on Dover Campus to explore art therapy and its uses in mental health and emotional recovery. The event featured a variety of student-led arts activities, and two panel discussions featuring Adrian Pang of theatre company *Pangdemonium*, Joshua Gooley, neuroscientist specialising in the effects of sleep deprivation, child psychologist Emma Waddington, youth worker Joe Chan from REACH youth services and other specialists in the field of arts therapy.

Said Danielle Solk, Art Teacher at UWCSEA Dover and one of the co-organisers of the event, "I wanted to do something that would help the students while highlighting the usefulness of the arts in sustaining wellbeing. The arts are often viewed as a secondary subject despite their enormous importance in giving young people a voice."

She continued, "It's really important that kids see their parents learning about this at the same time so that if the time comes that people want to talk about it, it's a normalised subject. Everybody is affected in one way or another—whether it's them directly, or people they know, or their family members."

Mental health is not a 'good to have': it's a must-have. UWCSEA recognises how necessary it is to remain at the forefront of institutionalising practices that promote mental health, to ensure that all in our community are well taken care of.

The background of the page is a light-colored, textured surface. It is decorated with several green fern fronds, some at the top and some at the bottom. Scattered across the surface are several smooth, rounded stones in various shades of brown and grey. Two small, round, white candles with yellow flames are also present, one in the upper right and one in the lower right.

Asking for help

By Hanmin Lee, Grade 12, Dover Campus

The first time I remember hearing the words 'mental health' in a classroom was in Grade 7. My life skills teacher taught us that, just as we'd see a doctor for colds or use plasters for cuts, it was important to care for our mental wellbeing. As my 13-year-old self did with most things, I assumed I was still years away from having to worry about it.

High School came, however, which was when I began noticing more and more people around me feeling strained. For some of them, it seemed like they had entirely forgotten what it was like to be themselves. That point also came to me a few years ago. I felt plagued with emptiness and a sense of complete disconnection from everything around me.

There wasn't a concrete reason for me to feel this way—I had great teachers, financial security, friends and family. But for some reason, an intangible something left a gaping hole inside me. I always knew help was there for me, but I decided that staying silent was the best option.

It was overwhelming trying to hold in everything. I think the reason so many of us try to keep things in is that, at some point, we assume we've lost our merit to ask for help. Only when I broke my silence and reached out for help did I start to piece together what was actually going on in my head. After having conversations with the people around me, I realised that my perception of mental health couldn't have been more wrong. I found that 'me too' were the most comforting words in the world, and the more 'me too's I heard, the less reserved I became.

I've taken a more active stance on mental health over the past few months, and I've been surprised at just how many people have had a story to share with me. I've noticed that, in an odd way, mental illness is like the clubs we have in school—you don't really pay attention to who's there at first, but take a closer look and you'll be surprised to find the most unexpected people as members. Anyone can join, regardless of where they're from or how old they are. This 'mental health soc' has a catch though—every single member is tricked into thinking that they're the only member, no matter how many of us there really are.

We're all a part of the same, wider community, and let's be honest—it's a stressful community to be in sometimes. But it's also what gives us those dearest little qualities to hold onto whenever we're overwhelmed. Our minds are supposed to be messy, and it's natural for us to make the wrong choices sometimes. Honesty alone is by no means a guaranteed cure for mental illness, but it's something that points us in the right direction. I'm sharing this for the sake of my past self, the people who have shared their experiences with me, and those who find themselves struggling right now—let's work towards an open community, where our actions are driven by compassion and acceptance.



INSPIRATION FROM THE OUTSIDE

Emerging patterns in students' personal growth experiences on outdoor expeditions

By Christopher Wolsko, PhD and Michael Gassner, PhD,
Oregon State University - Cascades (OSU)

Findings from the ongoing longitudinal investigation into UWCSEA's Outdoor Education programme are demonstrating substantial and consistent changes in students' skills and qualities. This update offers a glimpse into the elements of the UWCSEA learner profile that students report they are developing most, and points to how the College's Outdoor Education curriculum in the Middle and High School provides the avenues for this growth.

About the OSU study

This comprehensive evaluation aims to understand the effectiveness of UWCSEA's expedition programme, by attempting to answer some challenging and complex questions on the emotional, psychological and overall wellbeing impact of our Outdoor Education programme on our students. We hope it will give us further insight into what we have observed anecdotally and learned through experience: that outdoor education experiences have a positive, long term impact on students that stays with them and is transformational.

The researchers are experts in experiential education and social psychology. The benefit of a longitudinal study lies in the ability to analyse patterns that emerge over time. It gives us an in depth perspective on student learning and over the last few years has affirmed the role that resilience, commitment to care, and communication play during expeditions. Findings shared each year offer glimpses of emerging themes, and have already helped us to refine our programme. For example, the decision to redevelop the Grade 8 expedition into "one continuous journey" was affirmed by students insights and onsite programme evaluation work by the researchers. The research also provides insights into some of the interdependencies between elements of our learning programme. Data collection will continue for another two years.



Resilience

At the forefront of students' experiences across all expeditions, resilience manifests in multiple ways: individually, socially, and physically. It is most often reported when facing challenges, especially new ones. Whether cognitive, emotional or physical, students most often comment on:

- being optimistic and confident when faced with challenges,
- persevering in the face of those challenges,
- having courage in unfamiliar situations
- a perceived ability to transfer some aspects of resilience to life outside of the expedition

The five-day Grade 7 kayaking trip around Pulau Sibu stands out. As one student reflected:

I am able to successfully meet new challenges in my life because after going to the Sibu trip I learned that if I get my mind to do something out of my comfort zone, I can do it and it [sic] absolutely worth it. I feel like I have also become more of a risk-taker because I would've never challenged myself to go rock hopping when the current of the ocean was strong.

The Sibu programme also encourages students to work together, and to take care of one another in challenging circumstances. This results in the simultaneous cultivation of resilience, collaboration and commitment to care. Interestingly, students perceived that these traits were much better experienced on the outdoor education trip than in a school setting. This speaks to the value of allowing students to experience and further develop profile traits outside the normal school environment:

This trip made me more caring about others and how to make the world a better place ... I managed to [be] social with various people on the trip making me aware of people's problems and understanding them as we have more interaction on trips than class. This also gave me a chance to be in the other person's shoes for a while.



Commitment to Care

Caring for the natural world is a key characteristic that the expeditions seek to develop. This is particularly prevalent in students' reported experiences on the Grade 6 expedition to Pulau Tioman, which has a great deal of time spent in nature undertaking different, but relatively short duration activities on their five-day itinerary. This time outside, whether on land or in and on the water, is very meaningful to students. An appreciation for nature, if not explicitly an aim of the Tioman trip, is certainly something students experience. Many students commented on the impact that the Juara Turtle Project had on them.

We were in a rainforest and on the water for most of the time, I felt like "Wow, this is the world we live in and it isn't just the city that we see every day ... I felt passionate about the environment and that I want to become more involved in helping the environment ... when we visited the turtle centre, I found myself really concerned about the environment and even felt like crying after watching a video of the plastics that a turtle ate, which is something that I could never imagine myself to do if I have not gone on this trip, as I felt myself as part of this natural world.

And another student:

I am committed to helping the environment and animals. Whilst on the Tioman trip we learned a lot about turtles and I felt a deep connection to them. Weirdly enough, on the same day, my mother found a turtle crossing the street that was abandoned with scars on its nostrils which led to deformity. Ever since we have been taking care of him and love him so much. I feel that it is my duty to help animals any way I can, and the environment.

Some students expressed a desire to take what was learned beyond Tioman while mentioning how very meaningful the trip was to them.

I felt more passionate about shaping a better world during all the learning we did on sea turtles and all the consequences they have to face due to the increase in human development. I guess I have more of the urge to spread awareness around to others so that they can take action and responsibility in helping to save the turtles.

Scan the QR code to learn more about the methodology and to read previous updates.



Communication, Collaboration, and Self-Management

A full 11 days, the Grade 8 trip is a significantly longer expedition, and offers students the opportunity to interact with peers from both campuses, as well as in unique cultural environments. These enhanced challenges especially encourage resilience, communication, collaboration, and self-management. In a reflection that is representative of many from the same year group, one student's comment illustrates a progression in collaboration and communication outside the classroom environment:

I have been able to work with many people throughout this trip. I have seen this because we always had to be in groups for different things such as the cooking or the rafting. Especially during adventure week. This has really pushed me to collaborate with different people I don't usually talk to and it has also helped me to learn a little bit more about the people in my class. I have been able to communicate with everyone and work effectively. At the beginning, it was a little bit hard, but as we had to put this skill into more practice, it became easier and it was also really fun.

In a common theme across grades, another student described the significance of learning outside the classroom:

Not only have I bonded with my mentor class as a whole, but there are a few people in my class who I've been more involved with, expanding my usual group of friends. Most of my close friends are not even in my class this year. But all it needed was time, and a different environment, other than school. Doing activities where we were supporting each other was crucial. At the end it brought us all together, and people noticed the good in me as well, which made me want to carry on that relationship more strongly, feeling trustworthy and balanced all at once.

The conditions of the expedition that pushed students to communicate and collaborate also encouraged self-management. Appropriate to students' development, the Grade 8 trip affords the opportunity to cultivate this trait:

I think being in Chiang Mai taught me a lot about having to be independent, especially in adventure week. We had to cook our own food every day, and set up our bivvies pretty much on our own, otherwise we wouldn't have food to eat or a place to sleep. Also when we were out during the day we had to use our own initiative to help each other and work together.

Scan the QR code to learn more about UWCSEA's Outdoor Education Curriculum.



Understanding service



It's a typical day in K2 (if there is such a thing). Students are learning about ACRES (Animal Concerns Research and Education Society), the Infant School Global Concern (GC) in connection with their Unit of Study 'Feathers, Fur and Fins.' With a focus on endangered animals, Mr Matthews, a Grade 4 teacher and ACRES volunteer, has visited the class to speak to the children about the organisation. Later that afternoon Lucas happens to lose his tooth. Before bed, he writes a letter, "Dear Tooth Fairy, can you please give me money to help ACRES Animal Rescue Centre?" The generous tooth fairy fulfils his wish. Lucas is able to give his tooth fairy money to ACRES.

By Keri Benefield, Primary School Service Coordinator and Robert Adcock, Infant School Curriculum Coordinator, Dover Campus

This anecdote describes age-appropriate action by just one of our students as a result of our service learning curriculum. One of the five elements of the UWCSEA Learning Programme, the Service programme is directly linked to our mission and begins with our youngest students. While the donation of Lucas' tooth fairy money directly supported one of our GC partners, all our students are involved in learning opportunities that are created within our curriculum and linked with College and Local Singapore-based community service projects. UWCSEA's links with our community—whether College, Local or Global—are an integral part of our written Service curriculum, which describes age-appropriate learning outcomes that are achieved through opportunities for participation in each grade level.

While the context of service learning is different in each grade, and looks different in practice between our two campuses, the curriculum standards remain consistent throughout the College. All students, regardless of campus, or grade-level or learning activity, are striving for learning in each of the three standards.

K–12 Service Curriculum Standards

1. **Awareness:** By developing awareness, skills and qualities, individuals can become determined global citizens who recognise their ability to enact positive change.
2. **Sustainable Development – Systems Thinking:** Individuals and groups can plan to engage effectively in the sustainable development of local and global communities.
3. **Taking Action – Being Changemakers:** By taking informed, purposeful action, individuals and groups can

act as changemakers, contributing to the sustainable development of local and global communities.

While the standards are consistent across the College, conceptual understandings and benchmarks differ between school sections and grades. Naturally, 'enacting positive change' and 'plan to engage effectively' as expressed in the standards above, will manifest differently according to a child's developmental understanding.

So what does it look like in action? The examples from the Dover Infant School on the opposite page illustrate the carefully designed learning experiences that support the teaching of specific concepts and benchmarks. The K–12 Service Curriculum Standards which are used to shape these experiences were in turn influenced by Catherine Berger Kaye's 'Cycle of Service Learning', which describes how the learning emerges: a process of initial investigation and preparation leads the student to take considered action, which is followed by reflection and, finally, consolidated through demonstration (*Dunia*, December 2018, pages 6–7).

Indicators of success

A true indicator of learning is the transfer and application of understanding into different situations, both in and out of school. For Lucas, in his K2 year, his learning transferred to his tooth fairy experience and donation. This will look very different for a Grade 11 on Project Week. While not all students will go on to pursue a career that could be described as 'in service', our Service curriculum is designed to help students develop an understanding of the power of service. It specifically hopes to empower UWCSEA students to recognise where they can (and should) take action for good, and to demonstrate that they can, individually, take responsibility for, and contribute to, shaping a more peaceful world with a sustainable future. Regardless of their life path.

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K1 Local Service:
Child at Street 11



Conceptual Understanding:
The way an individual takes action can lead to an outcome that supports individual or group wellbeing.

Benchmark: Take action and reflect on its outcome.

Learning experience: In K1, students explore the 'Child's Right to Play' as expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They enact this by designing play experiences for children from the Singapore preschool Child at Street 11. Students from this organisation are invited to interact with K1 students on our campus over four Discovery Time sessions. For each visit, K1 classes take turns to host the Child at Street 11 guests and guide them through activities. In addition, K1 students visit a local supermarket to purchase healthy snacks to share with their guests before they arrive.

Throughout this service, K1 students practice kindness, patience and responsibility with their new friends.

K2 College Service:
Our School Community



Conceptual Understanding:
By thinking about others in their community, individuals can develop skills and qualities that build a sense of fairness, kindness and respect.

Benchmark: Practise actions that are fair, kind and respectful.

Learning experience: In their first Unit of Study, 'Our School Community', K2 students inquire into actions that are fair, kind and respectful. They gain an awareness of the roles and responsibilities of specific staff members, including cleaning staff, groundskeepers and Sodexo cooks.

After meeting these individuals and learning about the value and importance of their roles in our College, K2 students prepare a special thank you in order to express their respect and gratitude. Students take action by brainstorming ways to thank the staff while reflecting on things that they have learnt about the staff members, making the action personally relevant.

G1 Local Service:
Lions Befrienders



Conceptual Understanding:
By investigating systems within natural and built communities, individuals can identify possible needs and consider actions for sustainable development.

Benchmark: Brainstorm and analyse possible actions for the sustainable development of a community.

Learning experience: Grade 1 classes make weekly visits to Ghim Moh Lions Befrienders, visiting the centre every five weeks on approximately six visits across the year. Prior to the visits, students develop an awareness of how the organisation serves senior citizens through presentations from teachers. The students then interview their Lions Befrienders to collect information on the types of activities they would like to do throughout the year. This enables students to plan actions based upon informed and relevant choices for both parties.

Emphasis is placed on reciprocity: engaging in service benefits us as well as our partners as we learn from them and broaden our perspectives and understanding of the world.

Infant School Global
Concern: ACRES



Conceptual Understanding:
The way an individual takes action can lead to an outcome that supports individual or group wellbeing.

Benchmark: Share action with the goal of inspiring others.

Learning experience: In K1, the GC connects with the Unit of Study 'Living and Non-Living' in which students define 'living' and 'non-living' and explore the common fundamental needs of living things.

In K2, the Unit of Study 'Feathers, Fur and Fins' explores the similarities and differences between different animals through direct observation, questioning and research. Students then consider how these features support survival, and the GC is introduced as students explore how they contribute to the survival of animals in Singapore.

In Grade 1, ACRES is linked to the Unit of Study 'Animal Habitats' when students learn about humankind's responsibility towards animals and their habitats.

A photograph of three young people, two women and one man, smiling and posing together. They are wearing traditional clothing. The woman on the left is wearing a colorful, patterned top. The woman in the middle is wearing a maroon top with a pink collar and a pearl necklace. The man on the right is wearing a yellow and black patterned shirt. They are standing in front of a building with a balcony.

SPOTLIGHT ON ...

UWC DAY A RALLYING CALL FOR CHANGE

The spirit of “Generation Greta” flows through the UWCSEA community every day, but was especially evident at the UWC Day celebrations across both campuses on Friday, 20 September. Themed ‘Climate of Change’ this year, UWC Day is a chance to honour and put into practice the values and mission that unite the UWC community around the world—of peace, sustainability, positive social change and a better world.

Through workshops, science experiments, a spot of community gardening, exhilarating performances and informative displays, the College community came together to put into motion the values of sustainability which we espouse daily.

LEARNING TO STAY SAFE

A proactive approach
to student empowerment



By Carla Marschall, Head of Curriculum Development and Research, and Lia Gould, Child Safeguarding Lead

In response to the needs of young people who are learning to navigate our increasingly complex world, safeguarding practices across educational institutions, including international schools, have continued to evolve. At UWCSEA, long-term members of our community will recognise some of the more visible measures we have introduced in the past several years in response to our ongoing commitment to ensure the wellbeing of our community. The list is extensive and includes such things as: security registration of all campus visitors, spot checks of ID while on campus, running all local and overseas trips through our CIMS database, revised guidelines on taking and sharing photos of students, displaying designated safeguarding lead posters, the move to Google messaging for instant messaging communication with students, and even the introduction of a bus tracking app by transport provider Yeap.

While we do our best to ensure the campuses are safe environments for the children and young people in our care, part of our systemic response is the proactive empowerment of our students. This has been enhanced by the integration of Safe Behaviours learning as part of our Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum. As part of our PSE Strands Personal Safety, Digital Safety and Healthy Relationships, elements of the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum have been modified for our unique school and national context and added to our programme. This world-class, evidence-based child safety programme, developed by the South Australian Department of Education, is used by a number of international schools around the world. Adapted after careful review of available resources, it provides UWCSEA with a robust international benchmark for safeguarding learning.

Why do students need to learn about Safe Behaviours?

At UWCSEA, keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. This extends to a responsibility to ensure our students are equipped to make sense of the world around them and to make decisions that maximize the safety of themselves and others. It is based on the foundation of developing respectful relationships, in keeping with our belief that all children and young people have a right to:

- be treated with respect and to be protected from harm
- be asked for their opinions about things that affect their lives and to be listened to
- feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other children and young people
- understand as early as possible what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'



What does this look like in the curriculum?

Safe Behaviours learning has been integrated from K-12, as part of our PSE curriculum. When introducing concepts around Safe Behaviours, teachers use age-appropriate language and accessible, relevant activities to explore the themes of having a right to be safe and making choices to keep ourselves safe.

Within these themes, there are four focus areas, which are examined in growing complexity in accordance with the age of the learners:

1. **The right to be safe**, e.g., understanding the rights of the child
2. **Relationships**, e.g., understanding what positive, healthy relationships look like
3. **Recognising and reporting abuse**, e.g., what constitutes unhealthy or dangerous situations that put young people at risk or in harm
4. **Protective strategies**, e.g., assertive communication and problem-solving strategies to navigate potentially risky and dangerous situations

Scan the QR code to access age-specific factsheets for parents, guardians and care givers.



The Extended Essay journey and interdisciplinary

By Uzay Ashton, EE Coordinator and Teacher of High School English, East Campus

The Extended Essay (EE) is an integral part of the two-year IB Diploma Programme (IBDP), making up one-third of what is known as the IB Core, comprised of the EE, Theory of Knowledge (ToK) and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS). At UWCSEA, we introduce IBDP students to the EE in the middle of their Grade 11 year. Over the course of the next 12 months, students conduct independent research on a topic and subject area of their choice, demonstrating their passion and intellectual initiative by writing a 4,000 word paper worthy of any first-year university course.

In 2016, the International Baccalaureate introduced the World Studies Extended Essay (WSEE) which “gives students the opportunity to undertake an interdisciplinary study of an issue of contemporary global significance” (“Interdisciplinary Essays”). Since then, full diploma students around the globe have been looking into ways in which they can combine their passion for two diverse subjects and apply it to one of six areas of study: conflict, peace, and security; culture, language, and identity; environmental and/or economic sustainability; equality and inequality; health and development; or science, technology, and society. The opportunity and challenge to identify and investigate an interdisciplinary topic has led to some fascinating EEs in recent years—and has also inspired teachers to support students in finding a unique research question that sparks their intellectual curiosity and personal passions.

The EE Process

To support students in their EE journey, we have developed a year-long process that provides them with the information, inspiration and insights that they need to be successful. To introduce the EE in Grade 11, we like to assume that students have no background knowledge regarding the EE; that way, all students receive the same foundational information at the same time. The process begins with an introductory assembly early in Term 2 of Grade 11 where we answer common questions about the EE such as: What is it? How does it work? How long does it take? Which subjects can be used? What are the deadlines? Students are then encouraged to start thinking about topics they'd like to pursue before attending two different carousels.

Heads of Department prepare to host carousel sessions, which offer a 20-minute glimpse into what an EE looks like in their specific subject area. Ahead of the carousel process this past year, I ask teachers to help create examples of research questions on the same topic but through the lens of different academic subjects.

Stimulating topics and questions

The sample topic I gave was bees. Yes, bees. It's a topic which I hold near to my heart; as the most important pollinator of food crops, it's essential that we keep the honeybee population alive and thriving throughout the world. I wanted

to know how our teachers would formulate a research question around the subject of bees, so I posed this question: “Pretend I am a student who wants to study a passion of mine: bees. My problem is that I don't know which subject area to select for my EE. What type of question could I research if I were to register in your subject area?”

I received many responses from a wide variety of subject areas, but the two that stood out the most for me were the ones submitted for a WSEE:

- To what extent do wildlife documentaries employ the language of bias in their descriptions of behaviour amongst bees? (English A and Biology)
- What are the ecological and commercial opportunities for the adoption of stingless beehives in Singapore? (ESS and Business Management)

The various examples—of both single subject and WSEE research questions—help to stimulate students' thinking around potential topics.

Carousels and research skills

As they attend the carousel sessions, the students learn more about their options. For instance, students attending a Language A carousel learn that there are three different categories that can be explored; in a History carousel, they will learn that their topic must focus on the human past and be at least ten years



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research

old; for Mathematics, students will learn that any topic that has a mathematical focus can be used for an EE: it doesn't have to be confined to the theory of mathematics itself.

Students also attend a mandatory Research Skills Workshop hosted by our Middle and High School Teacher Librarian; this offers them the chance to learn more about the many research databases that are available to them through our extensive library. Students are then given some time to further consider their ideas before submitting their proposals a few weeks later.

World Studies EE

For those students who choose the interdisciplinary WSEE, they are also expected to show how their research question is contemporary in nature (i.e., within their lifetime), relates to an issue of global significance, and can also be demonstrated through a local manifestation. A local manifestation can mean a distinct place (e.g., Toronto, Canada), a localised issue (e.g., air pollution surrounding a specific airport), or a particular text, art form, or genre (e.g., Cubism).

In an effort to apply the WSEE concept this year, one student looked into the global significance of exercise and the human body through the lenses of both Dance and Biology; more specifically, she researched how ballet training can change a dancer's lower limb structure. The student's enthusiasm for dance coupled with her curiosity in biology led her to this unusual yet intriguing research idea.

This is the beauty of the WSEE: it can transform an area of passion into an area worthy of academic study and critical thought.

Teacher supervisors

The full EE experience for all IB DP students is supported by teacher supervisors. Each student is allocated to a teacher supervisor who will mentor and guide their EE journey. From this point forward, the supervisor becomes their first line of contact: all meetings and reflection sessions are held with the supervisor.

In the beginning, the supervisors guide students to a focused research question deserving of academic study. Students meet with their supervisors a number of times over the course

of the next 12 months for informal check-in sessions. In addition, they also meet officially three times for mandatory reflective conversations, which result in three additional writing tasks: an initial reflection (descriptive), an interim reflection (analytical), and a final reflection (evaluative).

Dedicated EE days

In May of Grade 11, students are off timetable on EE Writing Day and use this opportunity to meet with their supervisors, attend workshops, conduct research, perform experiments, and begin writing their drafts. Supervisors often provide snacks, comfortable work spaces, and words of wisdom and encouragement for the students who are eager to put a dent into their first drafts, which are due the first day back after the summer holidays.

At UWCSEA, students submit their final drafts in their Grade 12 year on EE Celebration Day, which is typically the first day back after October break on East Campus. Students are encouraged to come to school dressed as their EE topic and enjoy food and festivities together with their supervisors and parents/guardians (I'd like to add that all the food is donated by very generous Grade 12 parents! They clearly know how to feed a room full of young adults!). And just like that, their EE journey nears an end.

Value of the EE

Our students are not just researching an area of interest; they are researching potential solutions to real issues within our communities, our societies, our world. As teachers, parents and guardians, we can support our students by guiding EE conversations towards ideas that are stimulating and that challenge students to become advocates for the type of education that acts as a force for good in the world.

Works cited

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EAST CAMPUS Black Box Theatre

A room of many faces—no two productions held in the dynamic space look the same. Supported by a team of theatre-trained teachers and professionals, including student interns from a partnership with Republic Polytechnic's Arts and Theatre Management programme, our students across the Arts disciplines in Middle and High School experience the makings of a production from start to finish, as close to industry-standard as possible.



Flexible space

Configuration options in the Black Box have a vast impact on audience experience. Examples include a 'theatre in the round' set up (where the stage is centred with the audience arranged on all sides), a 'thrust' configuration (where the stage is surrounded by audience on three sides), and a 'traverse' set up (similar to a catwalk, where audience are seated on either side).



Soundscaping

For an encompassing surround-sound, speakers can be directionally positioned anywhere in the theatre—whether hanging from a rig on stage, or under the seating rack. Music students also get involved in composing music for productions, by interpreting production briefs, applying appropriate musical styles, and experimenting with mixing sound design and orchestration.



Scenic workshops and set design

UWCSEA's scenic design process is a unique feature of the theatre programme. Professional set designers and scenic artists work with our teacher/directors to create designs for productions. These are then built on site in our scenery workshop and constructed on the stage, giving students insight into the experience of professional theatre making.



Costume design

Helmed by an in-house Costume Designer who supports the fabrication and management of costumes for productions across the campus, our on-site wardrobe department adds to the creative process of bringing productions to life.



Read three students' reflections on their involvement in the Grade 12 Drama production of *Behind the Beautiful Forevers* (BTBF).

Pictured: The set design for BTBF, which depicts the hardships and relationship struggles in the squatters slum of Annawadi bordering Mumbai Airport.



Culture of Giving

Philanthropy emanates from every corner of our community. Students, staff, parents and alumni are generously giving their time, talent and treasure. Our culture of giving is at the very heart of what makes UWCSEA not just a great international school, but a great United World College.

Time and talent

Hundreds of community members volunteer their time and talent to the College. From chaperoning a Primary School class field trip, to acting as a buddy for a family new to the College, or giving countless hours of professional expertise and enthusiasm to the Parents' Association, Parents' Action for Community and Education, the Foundation Parent Ambassadors, the Foundation Leadership Council, or the Board of Governors, volunteers are the backbone of the College. They are essential to turning the College's greatest ambitions into reality.

Treasure

Collective giving advances the UWC mission and enriches the transformational UWCSEA learning experience in the classroom and beyond. Donations to the UWCSEA Fund support three priorities: scholarships, sustainability and teaching and learning.

Scholarships – uniting people, nations and cultures

At the heart of the Scholarship Programme is the core belief that to have a positive impact on the world we need to encourage and enable young people who have the conviction to be agents of change. Through school fees, families contribute to UWCSEA's Scholarship Programme and with the generosity of additional gifts to the College, the UWC Refugee Initiative and the UWCSEA Staff Scholarship Fund, the College community is able to welcome increasing numbers of scholars of great promise and potential.

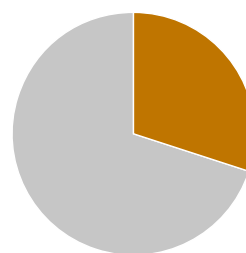
Thanks to the support of the community:

108 scholars are receiving a UWC education

- 101** scholars from 57 different countries at UWCSEA 56 at Dover Campus and 45 at East Campus (Grade 8–12)
- 2** at UWC Mostar College (funded through the UWC Refugee Initiative)
- 1** at UWC Atlantic College (funded through the UWC Refugee Initiative)
- 2** at Waterford Kamhlaba UWCSEA (funded through the UWCSEA Staff Scholarship Fund)
- 2** at UWC Mahindra College (funded through the UWCSEA Staff Scholarship Fund)

\$836,607

Raised in 2018/2019 for the UWCSEA Fund



30%

Parent participation

For a scholar, a UWC education opens doors to unimaginable opportunities; giving them a chance to take their dynamism and commitment to new levels, personally, socially and globally. A scholarship provides a remarkable chance for students to gain not only the qualifications that will set them on a lifelong path of success but to develop the personal qualities and skills that will help them to grow as responsible and resilient individuals who value service to others and a commitment to care.

Our scholars add to the diversity of UWCSEA by sharing their traditions, their community and their stories with fellow students. Living and learning with these students brings to life global issues, an appreciation of differences and a deeper understanding of specific cultures and nations for our whole community.



57 countries across the world are represented by scholars at UWCSEA

• Argentina • Belarus • Belgium • Bhutan • Botswana • Brazil • Burkina Faso • Cambodia • China • Colombia • Denmark • El Salvador • Estonia • Ethiopia • Fiji • France • Georgia • Germany • Ghana • Greece • Guatemala • Honduras • Hong Kong • Hungary • India • Israel • Italy • Jamaica • Jordan • Kazakhstan • Kenya • Laos • Lithuania • Malawi • Malaysia • Mexico • Myanmar • Namibia • Netherlands • Peru • Philippines • Portugal • Russia • Senegal • Serbia • Sierra Leone • Spain • Sri Lanka • Taiwan • Tanzania • Thailand • Uganda • Ukraine • Uruguay • USA • Venezuela • Vietnam

Would you like to know more about our current scholars? Come along to one of the many events where you can chat with them about their journey to UWCSEA. Our annual Dinner with Scholars, Home Away from Home dinners, and Cooking with Borders are all opportunities for our community to make connections. All events are advertised in *eBrief*.

Sustainability – creating a sustainable future

The College is committed to ensuring that environmental stewardship is a major part of every child's education. Gifts directed to sustainability initiatives give students hands-on opportunities to build their environmental skills and knowledge to become the eco-entrepreneurs of the future.

In 2018/2019, initiatives funded included: Solar for UWCSEA, the Dover Green Heart, and a variety of projects touching on: campus-wide composting, marine conservation, biomimicry and biodiversity conservation, zero-waste practices and a garden on the roof of Nelson Mandela boarding house.

Teaching and Learning – exceptional learning experiences

Today, teaching and learning programmes require more adaptation and innovation than ever before. Gifts to Teaching and Learning extend the impact of our holistic, values-based curriculum, providing unique opportunities for staff and students to deepen their knowledge and passions. Investing in our professional development for teachers and the continued enhancement of our educational programme allows UWCSEA to provide an unparalleled learner-centric experience, both inside and outside of the classroom.

Teaching and Learning Initiatives funded in 2018/2019 include: IDEAS Hub at Dover, longitudinal study into the impact of the UWC experience by Harvard Graduate School of Education, experiential artist-in-residence programmes and a Chinese Culture and History Programme



Class Giving

In May 2019, thanks to the Foundation Parent Ambassadors, parents, teachers and students, we saw over 40 classes join forces to make an end of year gift. Classes came together to raise funds for projects that allowed students to address world issues in real life—installing a solar panel, planting an endangered tree or actively supporting education for UWCSEA.

Thank you to everyone for supporting UWCSEA! Your generosity is what makes our Culture of Giving so powerful www.uwcsea.edu.sg/supportus

Additional giving initiatives: Reunion Class Giving, Graduate Class Giving and comprehensive Major Gift and Corporate Stewardship programmes.



Life after UWCSEA: Pushing boundaries to inspire peace

Photos provided by Casper Øhlgers

By Casper Øhlgers '19, UWCSEA Scholar from Denmark, and Alexandra Touchaud, UWCSEA Fund Engagement Manager

After graduating last year Casper Øhlgers, UWCSEA scholar from Denmark, could have been forgiven for heading home for well-deserved holiday. But, imbibed and emboldened by the UWC values, Casper and a core team of UWC alumni, set to work on a project that was close to their hearts—running a Peace Conference in Denmark.

The beautiful paradox of UWC is that celebrating our differences is one of the things that unites us. We form a powerful community of shared values and ideals—and many graduates report the challenges and frustrations of transitioning to life 'out in the world' where they find increasingly polarised societies, where lines are drawn between 'us and them'. Casper and his team had faced exactly this as they returned to Denmark—major schisms in the community where immigrants were finding great difficulty integrating. These alumni drew on their skills and experience working on Initiative for Peace (IfP) conferences and planned a project in Casper's home town of Roskilde. Casper shares an update of his experience:

During the summer, I set up a new IfP Conference in my hometown of Roskilde in Denmark. The conference was facilitated with UWC alumni from both Dover, East and the UWC Thailand campuses.

We decided to do an IfP conference—inspired by the IfP curriculum at UWCSEA—because growing xenophobia and direct racism in the public discourse about refugees and immigrant in Denmark is a stark contrast to the ideals of the UWC movement.

In short, we wanted to take lessons learned through our UWC experiences and implement them directly into a local setting to make a tangible difference.

The three-day peace conference that we held in Roskilde, included youth of refugee status as well as youth with Danish ethnicity. Connecting youth of different backgrounds and actively seeking common ground through peace-building activities, made the conference turn out successfully.

All the facilitators and I learned many lessons in the process of making our very own IfP conference outside of school. It takes courage to believe in an idealistic project in a setting where no where near everyone is convinced that the UWC values should be strived for. Therefore, I'm very proud of my team of facilitators and the brave participants who spent time with us.

From UWCSEA Dover:

- Agnes Bjørn Andersen '20 (Danish scholar)
- Marta Shcharbakova '18 (Belarusian scholar)
- Zoë Wilson '18
- Anna Kurth '18
- Casper Øhlgers '19 (Danish scholar)

From UWCSEA East:

- Anna Donova '19
- Anna Hopkins '19
- Éva Muquet-Vaillant '19

From UWC Thailand:

- Caroline Søgaard '19 (Danish scholar)

Changemakers in action. Thank you to these passionate young alumni—for challenging our societies to be better and more inclusive as they spread a message of positive social change. May the ripples of this work continue to spread far and wide.

IfP is an initiative to train young people to become peace-builders, with the aim of facilitating peace conferences for youth from areas of conflict or post-conflict, ultimately inspiring them to become peace-builders in their own communities.

Casper is also part of the HundrED in Helsinki initiative, which seeks and shares inspiring innovations in K12 education to improve education and inspire a grassroots movement by encouraging pedagogically sound, ambitious innovations to spread across the world.



Greater than the sum of its parts: Students reflect on their journey to WMC

The World Mathematics Championship (WMC) Qualifiers or SEAMC is an annual intensive three-day event involving hundreds of students from various South East Asian schools. Student mathematicians from Dover and East reflect on their participation in the invigorating and challenging competition.

East brings home the Warry Cup

By Arunav Maheshwari, Grade 10 and Justin Chan, Grade 11, East Campus

When it comes to exciting school events, a mathematics competition is rarely the first thing to come to mind. WMC is the rare exception. Every year, the best mathematical minds from schools of all stripes gather for a vigorous weekend to stretch their problem-solving capabilities.

It goes without saying that the event is fertile ground for the formation of unbreakable friendships with individuals sharing a common passion for mathematics.

The current organisers of East's WMC programme (James Matthew Young, Arunav Maheshwari and Justin Chan), guided by Ms Tippi Zhu, worked hard to produce a gauntlet of training, testing, and teaching that enabled this year's performance. Every Tuesday after-school, the team would meet to learn new concepts, ranging from geometry to number theory to calculation techniques. The underpinning goal of the curriculum is to inculcate the ability to combine and apply techniques in unfamiliar situations; building mathematical competence not just for the competition battleground but also for future learning.

Unparalleled in our school's history at the competition, the results were outstanding. Aside from a panoply of 24 medals collected by the entire school team, our own Arunav Maheshwari came in first place, three other students (James Matthew Young, Justin Chan and Wooseop Hwang) placed in the top 20, and a further four (Saransh Malik, Aayush Dutta, Judy Cui and Steve Hai) earned golden tickets to advance to the WMC Finals in Melbourne in December.

But the grandest achievement was announced at the end of the award ceremony. Accompanied by a great shout of joy came the announcement of this year's victorious school: for the first time ever, UWCSEA East won the prestigious competition, taking home the revered Warry Cup.

Maths for fun?

By Cheng-Syun Michael Lee, Grade 11, Dover Campus

While some fly overseas for sports, there are others that fly overseas to compete in ... maths. That was the experience for 15 Dover High School students on the final days of school before the half term break.

Compared to a traditional maths competition where you sit down and fill in an answer card, the WMC is a whole new experience. Upon arrival, many of these math heads are pitted together immediately to collaborate across schools—a terrifying prospect. It was truly a sight to behold, over a hundred teenagers arranging themselves with speed and accuracy, attempting to create a target number in the shortest amount of time.

Each of the nine rounds require unique aspects of logical thinking and communication; from presenting your team's math problem a UN sustainable development goal, to a relay-style series of math problems, the emphasis on teamwork was unparalleled to any other maths competition.

Two Dover students, Karen Xinchang Liu and Ikhoon Eom entered the competition as their first WMC qualifier, yet they walked away with a gold medal each, as well as invites to the WMC finals at Melbourne University. Amelia Ying Xin Chong, a new participant, said: "Initially I had been pretty nervous about how I would perform in the competition. Yet among the great people, both from our school and other countries, the atmosphere was incredibly supportive even whilst maintaining an element of competitiveness. It was incredible to see such enthusiastic people come together, and this was what made the event really worthwhile."

Our mathematicians accumulated 20 medals and eight students received an invite to the Melbourne finals; special mention to Soumyaditya Choudhuri for placing 3rd and receiving the black medal. A spectacular job to all our mathematicians!

A man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark trousers, stands on a dirt path in a lush tropical rainforest. He is leaning his right arm against a moss-covered tree trunk. The forest is dense with green foliage and mossy ground.

SAFEGUARDING BIODIVERSITY

Conserving
tropical rainforest and plant
species in Malaysia

Dr Dzaeman Dzulkifli '04 is the Executive Director of the Tropical Rainforest Conservation and Research Centre (TRCRC) in Malaysia, a non-governmental organization whose mission is to safeguard and halt the loss of plant species in Malaysia.

TRCRC's expertise is in forest restoration, where they work on different landscapes with partner organisations of all different types. "We do this through our conservation sites, called Tropical Rainforest Living Collections, in the Malaysian states of Sabah and Perak. We safeguard our forests' most endangered tree species and develop both off-site and on-site conservation strategies within the landscapes where they occur. We align ourselves with emerging restoration needs in the region, ranging from national plans such as the Central Forest Spine (CFS) and Heart of Borneo initiatives, to working with corporates who own large land banks where some of these species occur, as well as private landowners and townships," he says.

Dzaeman is a committee member of Malaysian Environmental NGOs (MENGO), an association tackling a wide range of environmental issues, while TRCRC contributes the secretariat to the Malaysian CFS consortium of NGO's who work to address issues created by forest fragmentation on peninsular Malaysia. Within the region, TRCRC is part of the South East Asian Botanical Garden network, a programme managed by Botanical Gardens Conservation International. "We play an active role in capacity building throughout South East Asia's botanical gardens so as to support their conservation efforts. We are about



We will have a better world when humans and the environment we live in can better co-exist.”

Dr Dzaeman B. Dzulkifli '04

to partner with the World Resources Institute Indonesia and IDH Indonesia, which is a sustainable trade initiative, to develop a mechanism to better manage peatlands in order to reduce haze issues throughout the region,” he added.

A typical day for him can include the development of new conservation initiatives with various State governments, and being out in the field searching for and collecting endangered tree species. He does this in addition to running an organisation of 50 staff.

When asked if he feels that the TRCRC is making a difference, he says, “Our Living Collections hold a wealth of endangered tree species that we have painstakingly cultivated from ever-diminishing populations. We are safeguarding, even increasing these populations each, while developing ways of reintroducing them back into the wild. Each and every programme benefits our forested landscapes and we constantly look for mechanisms to expand our impact. Our collective effort takes us one step closer to achieving our goals. I have a great team who are very committed and this is what drives our organisation and the successes we have achieved together.”

Arriving at UWCSEA as a Boarder, Dzaeman lived first in Mahindra House and then Senior House. In Grade 11 he moved to the Jakarta International School where he completed his final two years. He says, “Struggling with dyslexia, my parents decided to move me to Indonesia where they were based, so that I could get support from my family.” Dzaeman went on to complete an undergraduate degree in 2007 and a PhD in 2014.

Maintaining his relationship with UWCSEA in the years since he left, he connected with Nathan Hunt, the College’s previous Director of Sustainability to discuss possible collaborative projects, and has given groups of Grade 11 students the opportunity to become involved in the work of TRCRC in Sabah during their Project Week.

“We are grateful to have UWCSEA students come and experience directly what it takes to restore forests,” he says. “Schools play a major role in a person’s life, and the things we learn from school will determine how we live life. UWC can and should be an example of how we can live and learn sustainably in each and every way possible; from the carbon footprint of the campus all the way to sourcing the most sustainable food, to even being a zero-waste facility. One of the most direct ways it can work towards being a carbon neutral school is offsetting its emissions with initiatives that sequester carbon, such as forest restoration initiatives.”

UWCSEA is constantly looking at the role it can play in sustainability. Some of our better-known initiatives include energy efficient air conditioning systems, rainwater collection and re-use for irrigation and toilet flushing, solar panel installations, vertical wall gardens, automatic lighting, the removal of tetra-packs, bottled water and other disposable plastics from campus, composting food waste and converting used cooking oil to biofuel, and the planting and nurturing of rainforest trees on campus.

Dzaeman’s interest in rainforest conservation comes from many

different places. “I had a family that exposed me to the great outdoors from a young age. Growing up on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, I was always exposed to the wilderness. Biology and Geography were two of my favourite classes at UWCSEA, not just because of the subject, but also the enthusiasm of the teachers. Going out and learning practical applications during field trips was one of the best experiences I’ve had. It was those experiences that informed my decision to pursue a career in safeguarding our natural environment. In addition, my peers came from many different backgrounds and were interested in many global topics. Seeing them pursue their dreams gave me the push to do it myself. The whole experience of being in an environment such as UWCSEA gave me the confidence to follow my dreams,” he said.

His message to young people now is straightforward. “It can be difficult to see a career that has a positive impact in the world and that you are able to sustain yourself in, but there are social enterprises out there and corporations with positive social impact that are gaining momentum around the world. You just have to look for them. If you can’t find one that supports your cause, consider starting one yourself. We will have a better world when humans and the environment that we live in can better coexist; when we ensure that our activities on this planet are as sustainable as possible. We have only this planet, and its resources are finite. We need to save ourselves—the planet will carry on, and it will do so without us if we don’t adapt.”

“SO AWESOME, SO WONDERFUL!”

A circus extravaganza and
so much more

**By Kate Levy, Head of High School
English, East Campus**

“There aren’t many events at the College like this: across countries, across campuses, across schools ... K1s sat next to Grade 12s, watching UWCSEA and Blue Dragon kids as authentic peers and performers, trying their best, making mistakes, recovering and being genuinely celebrated for all of it in front of parents, teachers, fellow students and visitors.”

Niki Dinsdale, University Advisor,
East Campus

As a Global Concern (GC) group we know how generous the community can be—and we know the power of partnerships.

For 15 years at Dover and eight years at East, UWCSEA has worked with the Blue Dragon Children’s Foundation in a variety of ways to raise awareness and funds for their work with street children, impoverished families and victims of trafficking in Vietnam. In recent years, visits have focused on shared creativity, and our creative collaborations have flourished since we began welcoming Blue Dragon to UWCSEA.

Blue Dragon staff tell us of the importance of this trip for their children. The week-long visit supports building confidence, developing aspirations, and builds pride in representing Blue Dragon and children like themselves. And every year, our school community

is keen to welcome our Blue Dragon visitors and help make the trip a success. In the past, they have joined our students in photography projects, musical collaborations, as participants (and this year’s winners) in Dover’s UWC’s Got Talent show, and on stage at East’s CultuRama.

But this year was different. This year was special. This year was circus.

Our Blue Dragon visitors—eight children, three social workers and two circus trainers—showed us just what partnerships can achieve by collaborating across continents and countries. Travelling with Blue Dragon was Bunthoeurn (pictured above) whose visit was sponsored by Norwegian agency Norec. A circus trainer from Phare Ponleu Selpak (PPSA), a Cambodian NGO that uses performing arts to help street children, Bunthoeurn’s visit is part of a three-year exchange and partnership between the two NGO’s and one of Blue Dragon’s most successful outreach programmes, as Phare trainers share circus skills with Blue Dragon, and hip hop dancers from Blue Dragon spend time in Cambodia.

In the midst of this was East’s Circus Skills Club; where Junior, Middle and High School students meet weekly to leap, dangle, catch and tumble. It’s one thing to fail again and again in a safe space of trusted friends and teachers—

and another thing entirely to do so in front of trained professionals, your peers and your community. But that is just what our circus skills students agreed to when they were asked to create a circus show with our Blue Dragon visitors. This led to all sorts of amazing experiences for everyone who bravely stepped on stage before an audience of 300—such as the student jugglers who performed with a professional Phare circus performer, and Shay, a unicyclist in Grade 6, who said “preparing for the circus with Blue Dragon was a lot of fun! We got to show each other our circus skills and socialise. I think everyone had an amazing time!”

But, of course, like every good partnership, everyone who gave got something special in return. Ultimately, it was the audience of the Imagine Dragons circus show that witnessed the most colourful collaboration of all: stunning performances by our talented students and young visitors, which left us wowed and proud as a GC, and so very grateful to everyone involved. Funds were optimised and exciting opportunities were created. Or as 13-year-old Trang wrote in a thank you card to UWCSEA: “Our trip is so awesome, so wonderful. We all work together well.” And that perhaps sums this all up; there is something that is egalitarian about the uplifting nature of the whole experience; we did all work well together.



Photo provided by: Nguyen Thanh



Scan the QR code for a full account of their week-long visit, and discover the other connections created across our community:

Host families from East and Dover | East: Art, Music and PE Departments | IB Geography | GCSE Global Perspectives | Grade 4 classes | Sustainable Enterprise Consultants | Because I Am Focus Group | Memory Project | Coding for Good | Music and Language Department Interns | Assembly presentations in Grades 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 | Dover: Blue Dragon GC | Dance and Drama Departments

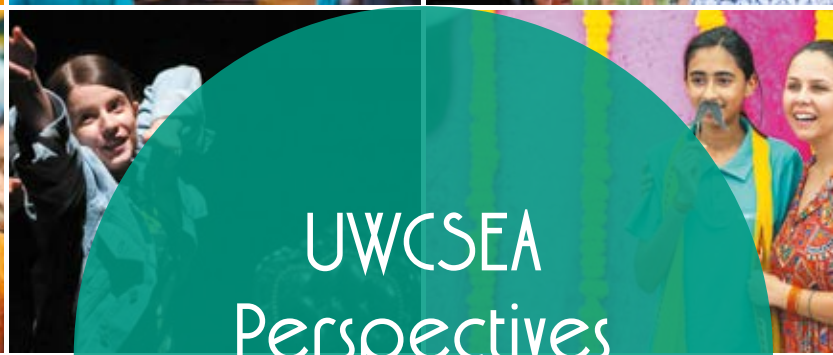


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UN NIGHT AND CULTURAMA

UN Night on Dover Campus and CultuRama on East (front cover) wowed everyone with high-energy dance performances as well as delicious food from around the world. These spectacular annual events celebrate the diverse multicultural community at UWCSEA.