

# TASIS TODAY

Fall 2020

A Magazine for Alumni and Friends of The American School In Switzerland



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200 Years of Service to TASIS

# TO THE TASIS COMMUNITY OF ALUMNI, PARENTS, FACULTY, AND FRIENDS AROUND THE WORLD,

As we confront the many issues affecting our very existence in these historic and unprecedented times, we at TASIS are committed to keeping the **light on the hill** shining in all we do.

My mother, Mrs. Fleming, often spoke about the challenges she, her parents, and their school faced in the Great Depression of the 1930s. Think also of the devastation of WWI and the Spanish flu preceding, and the Great Depression itself lasted over a dozen years (1929-1942). Only 100 years later, we are facing many of the same challenges, with no clear solutions, other than realizing that we all must “gird up our loins” and unite to mitigate and overcome enormous dangers and evils. The pandemic has brought not just America but the world to its knees, with no clear sign of a way out, as poverty increases and lives are lost. There is rage in the streets in America and in many other countries in the world against the many injustices perpetrated against their citizens and the less fortunate, with the moral obligation to make them right. Our beautiful world is being destroyed through massive pollution and abusive consumption of our resources. These are all moral challenges confronting every citizen, and a major reason we have a substantial [civic literacy requirement](#)\* for graduation. “Knowledge without goodness is dangerous,” the founder of Phillips Exeter Academy, John Phillips, wrote in 1781.

“When the going gets tough, the tough get going,” my mother would say. We are each called upon to do whatever we can to help the aching world. And this is a long-standing focus of a TASIS education, animated by the Golden Rule, “to do unto others, as we would have them do unto us.” This is the great central tradition of most Anglo-American independent educational institutions, and we neglect it at our peril.

For noble service to our institution, I would like to express deep gratitude to the retiring TASIS veterans who, combined, have given 200 years of service to building on Mrs. Fleming’s legacy and vision. Most recently, Howard Stickley successfully joined forces with other Swiss independent schools in getting the IB to reverse its damaging, computer-driven grading for IB students. The IB has admitted error and put things right, so our students can pursue their top choices, such as Cambridge University and Imperial College in London.

Also see the articles on the pandemic ([pages 30-40](#)). We sent 700 students to their homes around the world in March and continued all classes and school activities online, including an impressive [virtual Spring Arts Festival](#)\* and a memorable [virtual graduation](#)\* that included an inspiring collaborative performance of “Alma Mater” from *MCF, What a Life!*\* Our teachers were heroic in switching from live classroom teaching to online instruction, no easy feat.

In early September, we welcomed international students from more than 60 countries with live classroom teaching, but we are ready to return to hybrid or distance learning if necessary. We have very rigorous safety protocols\* in place and quarantined students who came from “hotspot” countries. Our community is adapting very well. My mother would be proud.

Regarding this year of social ferment—like 1848 or 1968—TASIS has always fought prejudice and been a welcoming community to all. Please see the [Board’s Position on Social Justice](#)\*, which reiterates and elaborates upon our long-standing commitment to a just, kind, unprejudiced community.

I would like to thank our excellent [Board of Directors](#)\* for their dedication and wise counsel in these particularly challenging times, with regular Zoom meetings. And I thank our indefatigable, dauntless Headmaster, Christopher Nikoloff, as well as our dedicated Faculty, who are being tried by this crisis.

I trust the individuals composing our larger community will help us “Get Back on Track” with our campus development by donating whatever you can, large or small, so we can proceed with building the much-needed hybrid sports field in the center of campus, and eventually a basketball court and swimming pool. We need your help more than ever as we have had to divert precious resources for campus restoration, security, parking, and substantial virus-safety measures above government standards.

With gratitude for much loyalty and support, I send all good wishes and blessings to everyone in our worldwide TASIS Community, near and far.

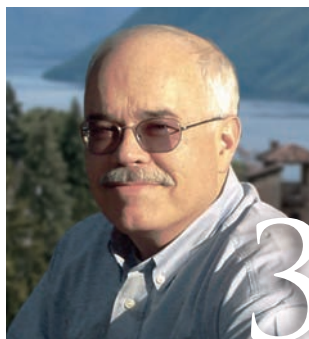
**Lynn Fleming Aeschliman ’63**  
Chairman of the Board

**\* Visit the links  
below to learn more  
about the topics  
referenced in this letter.**

**Civic Literacy Requirement:** [tasis.ch/civilliteracy](https://tasis.ch/civilliteracy)  
**Virtual Spring Arts Festival:** [tasis.ch/artsfestival2020](https://tasis.ch/artsfestival2020)  
**Virtual Commencement Ceremony:** [tasis.ch/graduation](https://tasis.ch/graduation)  
**Performance of “Alma Mater”:** [tasis.ch/almamater](https://tasis.ch/almamater)

**Our Opening Plan:** [tasis.ch/2020openingplan](https://tasis.ch/2020openingplan)  
**The Board’s Position on Social Justice:** [tasis.ch/socialjustice](https://tasis.ch/socialjustice)  
**Board of Directors:** [tasis.ch/board](https://tasis.ch/board)





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# THE SPIRIT OF TASIS

*Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff on the start of this special school year*



During these historic opening days of school, I have been working outside as much as possible. Why? This month marks the first time all students and teachers have been on campus together since March 2020. We do have some students who haven't yet arrived, whether due to travel complications, required quarantine, or other delays. Thanks to the resourcefulness of our teachers and the ambition of our students, classes can continue with these learners through the long reach of technology. But the majority of students are here, and this is a historic moment for the School. I have the best office in the world—the campus itself—and working outside gives me the best view in the world, not only of our beautiful buildings but of the TASIS spirit, only too willing to rise again with the return of our community to campus.

Some things have changed, of course. We have a new, expansive parking lot, that ably absorbs our stream of vehicles both in the morning and afternoon, siphoning traffic from the busy Collina d'Oro hopefully to the satisfaction of our neighbors. The grass on our new field is growing like gangbusters. We moved the famous swings to a grassy area between the Palmer Center and the basketball courts. I love those swings. I see students from grades 2-12 on them all day long.

There are other changes too. Each class has plexiglass on the desks, providing some horizontal protection between students. Most of the students and all of the adults are wearing masks most of the day. We have had to alter or

move our co-curricular classrooms and spaces like visual arts, performing arts, physical education, to ensure proper spacing, ventilation, and individual use of materials. In classrooms, lunches, and advisories, we have assigned seating for contact tracing purposes.

We opened up new dining spaces to ensure distancing between our diners, and we have made significant improvements in the dorms by adding bathrooms and reducing occupancy in each room. We have required Covid-19 testing of all our boarding and day students. These changes and more were implemented to increase safety on campus, especially at the beginning of the year, when we welcome back everyone from all over the world.

I am reminded of the famous quote from *The Betrothed*: "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change." In many ways, and in the most important ways, all of these changes allow us to remain the same. I see students enjoying each other in the plaza outside the Palestra, beneath the towering M. Crist Fleming Library. I see students and teachers engage with each other in the classroom in the endless search for truth. I see students and faculty enjoying dinner at twilight on the De Nobili Terrace. I hear discussions about Global Service and social justice percolate through the community. There has even been an adventure—students who cleared quarantine spent the weekend before school began in St. Moritz. The spirit of TASIS flourishes, even in adversity, and education exists to nourish the human spirit.

I believe that we are all seekers, and in one way or another, consciously or unconsciously, we are seeking some form of truth, goodness, and beauty, some way to uplift the human spirit beyond our immediate self. This is central to TASIS's mission, to join with all of the seekers throughout history who have sought ways to make the world a better place, to lift the human spirit. We are together again as a community, and that work can continue, even flourish, in the most trying of times, not only as we come together, but because we come together.

Thank you to the entire TASIS community for your indomitable spirit!



# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE VIRTUAL COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY ON MAY 30, 2020



## *Introduction by Headmaster **Christopher Nikoloff***

I'd like to offer my congratulations to our extraordinary class of 2020 on the tremendous achievement of your graduation. This achievement is not diminished by the fact that we cannot celebrate together at this time; in fact, the way that you have handled the challenges of the last few months is a demonstration of the TASIS values we hold so dear and makes this graduation all the more meaningful. You have shown resilience, courage, and commitment to scholarship; all values Mary Crist Fleming, our Founder, hoped to foster in graduates of TASIS.

No matter where you are around the world, the TASIS community is together in spirit, and I look forward to the

time when we can celebrate this milestone in person. So once again, congratulations to the class of 2020 on this very special graduation, and I hope that you enjoy the 2020 TASIS virtual graduation ceremony.

## *Comment by retiring teacher **Nilda Lucchini***

What a fantastic number, 2020! For so long we have looked forward to it—you as the class of 2020, and me as the year of my retirement. I was asked to say a few words because, just like you graduates, I will begin a new chapter of my life now that I have completed my years at TASIS.

I remember the spring semester of 2016 when I met with 30 of you who were in eighth grade to explain

and outline your four-year high school academic plan. I remember how eagerly some of you wanted to enroll in nine courses—more than the class periods we have! And for some others, the first question was, “How many free periods am I going to have?”

It’s amazing how these four years have gone by. But time passed differently for all of us this spring. You are not only the class of 2020 but also the class of Covid-19. You were challenged in so many ways. You had to leave school with just three days’ notice. You had to sacrifice great traditions and activities you so looked forward to: Prom, the Senior Banquet, Senior Week, and many other celebrations. You are the class that had to learn to live with uncertainty, not knowing when you will be able to return to campus and say a proper goodbye to best friends and your teachers. To quote Mrs. Fleming’s 2003 yearbook message, “I sincerely hope that your education at TASIS will enable you to cope with changes that are forced on you and also to help you initiate change for the better in your own life and the lives of others.” You have already proven that you can cope with the changes forced on you and I know you will initiate change for the better as you go out into the world. Live your life to the fullest. Don’t waste your time. Best wishes.

*Comment by retiring teacher **Howard Stickley***

Congratulations, TASIS class of 2020. Well done for having completed the last year of your pre-university education. For some of you, it’s been quite a long haul, having joined the elementary school many years ago. And now I also know what it feels like to be leaving, as I too am leaving TASIS this year.

I’m sure that many of you are somewhat anxious about what lies ahead of you. However, I’d like to assure you from many many years of experience watching TASIS students graduate and seeing what they’ve done afterwards, that you’ve been extremely well prepared by a TASIS education for what lies ahead.

I hope that you, like me, will consider yourself fortunate to have spent some time in this community on the Collina d’Oro. I also hope that you look back fondly on the time that you’ve spent here, and that you’ll keep in contact with the people that you’ve met, and that you’ll remember that you’ll always be welcome back here at TASIS.

Today is about you. It’s your graduation. But it’s also about your families and it’s also about the TASIS community. It gives me great pleasure therefore to see six students graduate who are the children of seven students I taught in the 80s and 90s at TASIS.

I wish you success in your future endeavors and I hope that your TASIS education will allow you to take on the challenge of making the world a better place, and that’s quite the challenge! Take care, and always remember that TASIS is your family.



# EMBRACING MISTAKES

*An excerpt from Giulia Meregalli's Valedictory Address*



I'm grateful to every single person that has helped me receive the extraordinary honor of delivering the valedictorian address for the class of 2020. Delivering a commencement address is just a responsibility, or so I thought until I remembered who will be listening to this speech. This is an audience that has gone through similar struggles, experiences, and opportunities as I have throughout these four years of high school. Classmates have turned into friends, their parents have turned into family, and teachers have turned into lifetime mentors. This is not an ordinary speech to an ordinary audience. These are my friends and family, all of whom I have to impress. So, this is not just responsibility; it is an honor.

About six months ago I remember saying to my friends how lucky we are, as a class, to say that we would graduate in the year 2020. About six months ago, I was sitting in my room, stressed and nervous at the thought of knowing I'd have to sit the IB exams in May. About six months ago I saw my friends and teachers every single day, and let me tell you, I took that for granted. About six months ago never would I have thought that the senior class would be where we are today, kilometers away from each other. 2020 has really been a year for the books. In January the Australian bushfires nearly destroyed the South Coast of the country, the world almost got to experience WWII, and the first coronavirus death was recorded. All in January. And this pre-recorded speech is part of a ceremony that takes place through a screen on the day of what should have been one of the most memorable moments of our lives.

Yes, this situation is not ideal and it isn't remotely close to what we all wanted or expected. But even though we are kilometers away from each other, we are all present in this moment as the student body and as friends.

Today I want to share something very important that I have grown to learn throughout my nine years at TASIS. A lot of you may know that I am competitive and always strive to be the best version of myself. I do not like to make mistakes because I am a perfectionist. When in 10th grade I had to choose my IB classes, I did not know what I wanted to study at university, but what I did know was that I wanted to choose the hardest courses as I thought that meant excellence and success.

So naturally I chose HL Math as one of them. However, three months into taking the course I regretted my decision. I understood that excelling in classes requires true passion, in addition to just commitment and studying. I was making mistakes and not getting the grades I was used to. So I pushed and pushed myself to improve, so much that at one point I was exhausted and unhappy. I did not enjoy my other classes and prioritized math above subjects I enjoyed learning. It was at that point that I understood that taking the hardest and most challenging class did not promise nor mean I was set for excellence.

Mistakes are not necessarily an indication of failure, but rather a motivation that advises you to change. Mistakes should be acknowledged, understood, and embraced. This was a focal revelation that I will carry with me through life. So, I dropped HL Math and focused on what I truly was passionate about. Even then I made mistakes, mistakes that I now view as a reflection of what I should change to help me improve and better myself.

Now, I'm not here to tell you that mistakes are fun, they surely evoke negative emotions. So why discuss the advantages of mistakes? Simply because mistakes bring change. We should embrace and understand mistakes in order to learn and improve.

Especially in this moment of global uncertainty, with this commencement address, I want to motivate all of you, including myself, to seize all opportunities that are presented to us, and if none are presented then to go and create them. Not all opportunities will be great, not all will prove to be successful. But as long as we learn from our mistakes, we will be able to improve and prompt change.

So today, I wish you all nothing but new beginnings. I wish for you to turn your dreams into goals. Congratulations to the Class of 2020, we made it.

*Giulia Meregalli '20 spent lockdown at her home in Lugano. She received an offer from the University of Cambridge in the UK to study Land Economy, which includes law, economics, and real estate. Originally from Italy, Giulia has been at TASIS for nine years and speaks Italian, English, Spanish, and German.*





# GRADUATION AWARDS 2020

**Excellence  
in Art:**

**Sude Ademoğulları**



**The Bertha Seifert  
Award for Excellence in Music:**

**David Weng**



**The Kay Hamblin Award  
for Excellence in Theater:**

**Laura Kockara**



**Excellence in English  
as an Additional Language:**

**Xingling Liu**



**Excellence in  
Modern Languages:**

**Giulia De Cristofaro**



**The Cynthia Whisenant Award  
for Excellence in English Literature:**

**Nensi Hasanbelli**



**Excellence  
in History:**

**Maria Mastronardi**



**The Shah Akbar Khan Award  
for Excellence in Mathematics:**

**Omar Rahal**



**Excellence  
in Science:**

**Airi Barnes and Omar Rahal**



**The Salutatorian  
Scholarship Award 2020:**

**Nensi Hasanbelli**



**The Valedictorian  
Scholarship Award 2020:**

**Giulia Meregalli**



**Headmaster's  
Award:**

**Airi Barnes**



**The ECIS Award  
for International Understanding:**

**Moritz Mohr**



**The Jan Opsahl  
Service Award:**

**Giovanni Volpi**



**The Michael Ulku-Steiner  
Leadership Award:**

**Giulia de Cristofaro**



**The H. Miller Crist Award,  
our top award:**

**Omar Rahal**



To learn more about this year's winners, visit the TASIS News section on our website.

# WITH GRATITUDE FROM TASIS

*2020 has been a remarkable year—not least because TASIS is saying arrivederci to six special people who have enriched our community in countless ways. Read on to learn about their commitment to our School. We are grateful for their devoted service.*

## *Berkley Latimer - 15 Years*

### A Passion for Others

Some people have an uncanny ability to make anyone feel comfortable no matter the situation. And while his personality is legendary, **Dr. Berkley Latimer** also has an impressive resume: a Master's and Ph.D. in European History from Duke University, a lengthy and distinguished career both as a teacher and administrator in prominent independent schools across the US, and a passion for international education. Berkley served on accreditation teams across the US and was a member of the Test Development Committee as well as a longtime exam reader for the Advanced Placement Exam in European History. He spent much of his career at the esteemed St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, holding the McFadden Endowed Chair in European History and serving in a variety of teaching, administrative, and curriculum development roles.

But it is Berkley's ability to connect with people that resonates most. He is a Southern gentleman with all the charm and good graces that the term implies. He genuinely cares about education and understands the many layers that are necessary to ensure a global school like TASIS succeeds and brings out the best in its students, faculty, staff and community.

Berkley became part of the TASIS story via TASIS Foundation Board Vice-Chairman **David Hicks**, who recommended him to **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63** to take on the role of Director of what was then the TASIS Summer Language Program (TSLP). In 2000, the program was re-named the TASIS Summer Program (TSP) and Berkley spent five summers as leader. When the Lugano Board of Directors was formed in 2005, one of Lynn's first choices was Berkley. "He served as an outstanding Board member and Secretary for 15 years, bringing to bear his excellent education, experience, talents, wisdom, commitment, and loyalty to TASIS."

"He would make the rounds," **Bill Eichner** recalls, "and has made many friends on these rounds, and the affection the Admissions, Communications, and Alumni teams have for him is palpable. Through his lively conversation and interest in everybody's business, he spreads joy wherever he goes. We will miss the frequent visits of this cultured man, who knows school culture so well."



### With Deep Respect

*by Alexandra Heumann Wicki '80*

Berkley and I began serving on the TASIS Board of Directors in 2005; we first bonded over fire drills and fences. We are both prone to bouts of laughter leaving us tearfully gasping for air and avoiding each other's eyes on many occasions. I don't think we have ever disagreed on anything of consequence.

Berkley embodies all the qualities I admire. He is genuinely humble. Despite his many academic and professional qualifications, he rarely references them. He has a remarkably sunny disposition and is infectiously optimistic; I don't remember ever seeing him in a bad mood. (Though I have experienced Berkley distracted by hunger, but nothing that some pâté and a few nuts could not remedy.) He is witty with a joyful and sometimes wicked sense of humor. I also deeply respect his sharp mind, radical common sense, and powers of empathy. Berkley is as sincerely interested in others as he is in a seemingly endless array of topics, and I know him to be a caring and thoughtful friend.

We have spent many hours together poring over manuals and protocols, and even travelled through the US together as part of a headmaster search. From dozing in a middle school social studies class in California, to strolling through the gorgeous St. Paul's campus in New Hampshire, meeting engaging and engaged TASIS community members in Montagnola, or sequestering inside on beautiful summer days on either side of the Atlantic to work on the Board Policy Manual, my time with Berkley has always been delightful and entertaining. I am forever grateful to Lynn for bringing Berkley to TASIS.

**To learn more about Berkley, view our special tribute book, *The Noble Sundial*, at [tasis.ch/berkeleytribute](https://tasis.ch/berkeleytribute).**

# COLLECT, CONNECT, CREATE

## *Kim Nelson - 18 Years*

“I have always told my students that they are so lucky to have the opportunity to study photography in high school. The minute they walk through the classroom door their shoulders should release and the pressures of the day should disappear.” **Kim Nelson** understands how creativity can be a welcome respite from the rigor of a heavy academic day. “I’d tell them photo class should almost be like the comma in a sentence: take a breath and relax, step away from academics and explore.”

In nearly two decades of teaching at TASIS, Kim inspired hundreds of students to see the world differently. “My mantra was that they should *collect*—discover ideas, impressions, and skills; *connect*—use their camera skills, build their awareness of light, improve their PhotoShop skills; then, *create*—pull everything together to make connections and create engaging photographs.” These three Cs resulted in consistently impressive AP portfolio results, and many of her former students have gone on to study photography at university and even become professional photographers.

Kim grew up in a houseful of cameras. Her father was an avid amateur photographer who preferred a 1950s Leica or medium format camera before moving to Canon (like her father,

Kim is also loyal to Canon). She received her first camera in junior high, a Kodak Instamatic, and her love for photography began. During her time at Luther College she took a photography course that introduced her to the darkroom and she became more seriously interested

in the medium; beyond that, Kim is self-taught.

While Kim took some education courses in college, she didn’t think teaching was for her. She spent many years as a camp director at Wilderness Canoe Base in northern Minnesota (where she also met her husband, former faculty member and administrator **John Nelson**). “It was a beautiful area where every day was a photograph,” she recalls. Part of her role involved designing and creating the promotional material, and Kim traveled the Midwest with her slide projector and slide carousel sharing the story of the camp. “There was a shift at that point to my approach to photography,” she says. “The stand-alone beautiful photographs were still interesting, but now I needed to share the story of this place with the images I would place in a brochure or presentation.”

In 1986, Kim joined John at TASIS to work as a college counselor, dorm parent, and yearbook advisor. “It was a tough year,” she recalls. “We left, and I didn’t think we’d ever return abroad.” But then in 1989, John took a job at the JFK Schule and they took their infant son, **Johannes ’07** and moved to Berlin. A few years later, their son **Christopher ’09** was born. Then they moved back to Minnesota, where they worked at Shattuck-St. Mary’s for a decade and Kim rediscovered her passion for teaching photography and storytelling through images.

But John wasn’t finished with international education quite yet, and in the fall of 2003 they moved the family back to Lugano. “It was rough at first for the boys and me, but obviously things worked out. I have been here ever since, and the boys are both now international educators—Chris in Japan, and Johannes in the Dominican Republic.”

At TASIS, Kim continued storytelling through photography, and anyone who has skimmed this





magazine since 2003 has seen Kim's impressive work. "To be a successful photographer for TASIS, the image needs to unpeel and share a part of TASIS's story," she says. "It didn't matter to me if I shot a photograph of the view from campus or captured a student or teacher engaging in a conversation." Kim also played an important role with marketing, communications, and admissions, helping to share the TASIS story to a worldwide audience via the School's social media channels.

So what makes a good student photographer? "Some kids have a natural sense of composition and are aware of shape and form," she says. "Many times they are not able to articulate why they even took the photograph. Beyond that, it is about practicing and engaging in discussions about photography." With the advent of sophisticated smartphone cameras everyone can, theoretically, shoot technical images. But the next step is more difficult.

"How do you create a photograph that makes a person pause, question, and linger? Some students can become very good technicians, but their photographs

will lack impact and fall flat. They need to have that light bulb moment or successful series of photographs where the design elements/light come together. As a photography teacher, you try to make the students aware of how to bring out the nuances."

For Kim, leaving the daily rhythm of life at TASIS is bittersweet. "Though most of my job involved shooting photographs for our communications team and keeping social media channels populated with fresh content, my favorite part of everyday life was working with my colleagues in the Şahenk Arts Center," she says. "I was lucky to work with such talented and creative artists."

Kim and John have been working on their lakeside home in Grand Marais, Minnesota for years, and can now properly settle into their home. "I am excited to live where the seasons are very distinct - winter is full-on with very cold temperatures and deep snow, spring struggles to make an appearance, but being able to see these changing seasons is great," she says. She has a darkroom and digital workspace to build, and hopes to volunteer with the Grand Marais Art Colony. "It's time to discover my next chapter."

## ALUMNI TRIBUTES TO *Kim Nelson*

### **Because of You**

Mrs. Nelson was the person who inspired me to progress and strive for a new angle in everyday life. What I did not realize back then is her dedication and desire to see all angles carry on beyond our photography classes and outings. Mrs. Nelson, thank you for making me a better photographer, better leader, and better human being. It is hard to put in words how you were able to lead your students to re-discover themselves and become better in almost every aspect of their character, but that is what happened. I saw it over the years with so many students of yours. You, your love, your passion, compassion, and patience have settled in the hearts of so many of us. From all of us, your students, I thank you for everything you gave and

taught us. TASIS was what it was for me because of people like you. —**Artem Bulashev '12**

### **The Beauty in Everything**

Mrs. Nelson introduced me to photography in 10th grade and taught me to look for the beauty in everything, whether that be in patterns, scenery, or people. As a photography teacher, she was the first to show many students, including me, a creative outlet which we were completely unaware of before. Her support in my creative and academic endeavors in and out of the classroom made her a fantastic teacher, but her compassion and welcomeness made TASIS feel like a home. Thank you Mrs. Nelson, for everything.

—**Tomson Carroll, '15**

### **A Place in My Heart**

To my advisor and one of the best teachers I've ever had: Thank you for always making us laugh, for all the talks we had during our advisor meetings, and for all the cookies you brought to class. You're an amazing person, and will always have a place in my heart. —**Leyre Fernandez '18**

### **Team Nelson**

I first met Mrs. Nelson at an advisor group meeting with Mr. Nelson when I was in 9th grade. Later, she became my advisor. I have very warm memories of both of my advisors and I confidently say that I have been lucky to be on the Nelsons' team for four full years!

I used to be quite shy as a kid and generally kept everything to myself. Mrs. Nelson always managed to create an atmosphere that encouraged trust and communication. As reserved as I was, I felt comfortable talking to her. For me, Mrs. Nelson was not only a helpful counselor; her honesty, support, and friendship made an important contribution to my overall high school experience, and I believe many students would share the same feelings. I have always seen Mrs. Nelson as a person who truly loves her profession, and I feel grateful that growing up I had the opportunity to meet such an extraordinary teacher. Mrs. Nelson, thank you for being there for me when I was your advisee and for finding the right words the last time we talked.

—**Alexandra Krasnoperets '15**

### **More than a Teacher**

I cannot imagine my TASIS experience without Mrs. Nelson. She was one of the most amazing, kind, loving, and caring teachers at school. She was more than a teacher, she was like a mother to many of us. I always loved coming back to TASIS and seeing her smile so full of love. Thank you so much for all your hard work, your love, and your patience! —**Valeriia Bezbogova '16**

### **Supportive and Inclusive**

I met Kim when I started taking digital photography in my sophomore year. She has always been excited about art and life and was a great role model. It was nice to be introduced to photography and art in a supportive and inclusive environment. Kim was one of my favorite teachers at TASIS and I still enjoy catching up with her even after so many years. —**Berfin Ataman '09**

### **A Strong Bond**

Mrs. Nelson was one of the people who made my years at TASIS so memorable. I developed quite a strong bond with her throughout my photography classes, along with other students from that class. Our class cohort became very close. I always looked forward to going to class to chat with her, work on our projects, and try new things such as developing photos in the darkroom or going outside to shoot light-writing pictures. My encounters with Mrs. Nelson were always full of jokes and laughter, and were reflective of a genuine teacher-student relationship. It is evident that Mrs. Nelson cares deeply for her students, and while I am sad she will be leaving TASIS, it is a very well-deserved retirement. Love you, Nellie! —**Gabriella Cova '15**



*Kim with Gabriela Cova '15*

# EDUCATION, RESPECT, AND GOOD MANNERS

## *Nilda Lucchini - 35 years*

*“Very early in my relationship with Nilda, she made it clear to me that she doesn’t work for headmasters. She works for TASIS.”* **Christopher Nikoloff, May 2020**



*Nilda with her husband Dario and daughter Tatiana '00*

For over half of her life, **Nilda Lucchini** has worked tirelessly to make TASIS a better school. Her official roles as teacher, Modern Language Department Chair, Day Student Dean, Associate Academic Dean, Curriculum Coordinator, and Accreditation Coordinator are only a part of her contributions to TASIS. Nilda has been a trusted colleague, source of wise counsel, and strong advocate for students throughout her 35 years at the School.

Nilda was born the seventh of eight children to a family in Leon, Nicaragua. Her father was a lawyer and professor at the University of Leon, and her mother was a housewife dedicated to her husband and kids. Before Nilda was born, her father decided to become a cotton farmer, a wise financial decision for a man with such a big family. “My house was always full of people, relatives, friends of my parents or my sisters and brothers.” The perfect training for a job at a boarding school; “you’re used to having so many people around and living in

each other’s pockets! I have very beautiful memories of this time.”

Nilda’s father was a strong believer in “education, respect, and good manners.” Everyone in her family was eventually sent to England to learn English and have an experience abroad; for the boys, as soon as they finished high school, and for the girls? “As soon as they had their first boyfriend, they were out of Nicaragua immediately!”

Nilda wanted to go to France to learn French, but was sent to a Catholic school run by nuns in Bayswater, London, to improve her English, and then spent a year at the London School of Economics. Soon after, her father had his first heart attack. She met him in Miami, where he was receiving medical treatment, and once he was healthy, they reached a compromise: she could go to France, but only if she first achieved a language certificate in English, so she returned to Oxford to study for her Cambridge First Certificate (FCE). Here she met her future husband Dario, who was also learning English.

After a swift courtship, Dario went home to his native Switzerland, and Nilda enrolled in a French course at the Institut International de Rambouillet. She and Dario remained in contact and she visited him in Montagnola twice. “It was too much for my father,” Nilda said, “and I had to go back to Nicaragua.” For the next year, she attended the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) de Nicaragua in Managua. And then Dario came to Nicaragua for his holidays. “He asked me, ‘why don’t you come back to Europe?’ And I told him, ‘Because of you, I’m not allowed to go back to Europe anymore, unless I get married.’ So he said, ‘let’s get married.’ We got married two weeks later.” That was 43 years ago.



Nilda moved to Switzerland in January 1977. At this point, Nilda could speak Spanish, English, and French. Soon after she learned Italian and German. As a child, Nilda used to play ‘teacher’ with her father’s many empty medicine bottles as her students, so it seemed natural to explore working in education. Nilda’s first job was at the Benedict Language School in Lugano. When she had her children, son Ronnie in 1978 and daughter Tatiana in 1982, she stopped working for a few years, until she met **Anne Frost**, whose children were also at the Montagnola school. At the school’s end-of-year picnic, Anne asked Nilda if she would be interested in a job teaching Spanish at TASIS that fall. Within days, Nilda met then-headmaster **Chris Frost**, and the rest is TASIS history. Working at TASIS and having a family didn’t stop Nilda from completing her BA in 1996 and her M.Ed in Educational Leadership in 2002.

Nilda has very fond memories of Mrs. Fleming, who doted on both her and Dario. “She used to say, ‘Nilda, you can enjoy the evening, now Dario will stay here with me.’ Dario learned how to prepare the Old Fashioned very well and they enjoyed having one or two together!” Nilda also recalls a meeting for parents she hosted as Day Student Dean where the refreshments included soft drinks in plastic glasses. “Oh my God,” Nilda says, “I don’t know how she found out about the plastic glasses, but the following day, Mrs. Fleming called me and told me that I should never use plastic glasses to invite parents in such an informal way. She always wanted everything to be beautiful. I understood and appreciated her even more after that. In a way, I am like that, too!”

Nilda has also appreciated **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman’s** continued dedication to keep TASIS values at the heart of the School. “We, the TASIS community, have learned the importance of this lesson: *times change, values don’t.*”

One of Nilda’s mantras is something her father said to her often as a child. “The only day you cannot improve, Nilda Mercedes, is the day that you die.” She has taken this to heart, always trying to learn from others and inspire others to improve, too. This has extended to

coordinating four accreditation cycles for TASIS, which has felt like an important role for Nilda. “It helps TASIS realize what we are doing, why we are doing it, and how we can further improve our school.”

Retirement will bring a sense of calm to Nilda’s life after so many years of fulfilling numerous roles at TASIS. She is looking forward to dedicating more time to her family: husband, children, and grandchildren, and getting back into her hobbies of reading, sewing, and dancing. Once things open up, Nilda will travel to Nicaragua as soon as she can. Sadly, Nilda lost one of her sisters in June and was unable to go home for the funeral, so her next visit will be bittersweet. Her extended family is dotted across the world, from Canada to the US and London, and her sister’s death made her realize how much she misses her family.

That said, Nilda will always have a family at TASIS, too. She has a profound love for TASIS and for people, and her natural charisma has won her many friends and admirers. As she says, “TASIS is like a family, even if it is bigger with more people than when I started, it is a true family.”



To learn more about Nilda, view our special tribute book, *Nilda: TASIS At Her Heart*, at [tasis.ch/nildattribution](https://tasis.ch/nildattribution).

# ALUMNI TRIBUTES TO *Nilda Lucchini*

## **A Beloved and Charming Friend**

I admire Nilda for her strength, straightforwardness, and vivid spirit. She never gives up fighting for what she believes is right and fair. She has always put the students' interests first and this has been widely appreciated by families. In her I found a precious advisor, a person of great support, and a beloved and charming friend. —**Lavinia Cosattini Romani '90**

## **A TASIS Institution**

I am honored to have studied with and been taught by Ms. Lucchini, and the least I can do is to thank her for all the hard work and professionalism she always put into her work. I came to TASIS as a freshman and graduated after four years of boarding school. Ms. Lucchini taught Spanish and it was my favorite language at the time. Being in Ms. Lucchini's class was always a joy. Her way of teaching, making jokes, and communicating with the students commanded both interaction and respect. Her smile was often motherly and comforting for me as I was away from home most of the time. Her way of calling me into the office for a simple "chat" were always moments where I would reflect on my studies, taking her advice as gold.

Ms. Lucchini was named by us as "a TASIS institution" around the school, with her radiant smile for everyone and her little heels tip-toeing around, always asking "Is everyone ok here? Shouldn't you be in class?" She knew what students needed and her door was always open for a chat or a pep talk.

Thank you, Ms. Lucchini, because without you I would not be the person I am now—and especially I would not speak perfect Nicaraguan Spanish! With all my love. —**Margherita Conti '11**

## **A Most Remarkable Teacher**

Mrs. Lucchini was truly one of the most remarkable teachers. She had the ability to be endlessly warm and caring, as well as earning the utmost respect from all of us students. I always knew I could turn to her, and I also never wanted to let her down. This is a wonderful quality in a teacher as it made me go the extra step when otherwise I would have given up. I am so lucky to have been one of her students, and I know that everybody at TASIS who had the fortune of learning from her feels the same way. —**Jack Savoretti '01**

## **Long-term Effects**

Mrs. Lucchini is one of the teachers I remember most

fondly from my time at TASIS, and, to this day, she's the one who comes to mind when people ask me "How come your Spanish is so good?" —**Tomaso Grossi '10**

## **My Mother, My Teacher**

Everyone is born with a mum and I have been fortunate to have the world's best mum. In my dictionary, a mother is one whose special love inspires you every single day, who fills your heart with joy in her thoughtful ways. My mother was born with this talent and happened to be the perfect fit in her role at TASIS for many years...which is a lifetime. A big thank you to the TASIS family for giving her unforgettable experiences!

Since I was young, I remember my mother being committed to TASIS at any time of the day and night. After a long day of work, I remember her leaving at night, as late as 11pm, to do her rounds of the dormitories to check on boarding students.

Every time I step onto the TASIS campus, since the age of five, there would always be someone telling me "Your mother is gorgeous", "She is so great", or "What are we going to do without her?" I always felt so proud to hear such kind remarks.

During my high school years at TASIS I attended Spanish classes where my mother was my teacher. This was a lovely and weird experience—especially for her! Of all the school courses I have taken in my whole life, this is the only one I could not fail. She managed "the personal conflict" well and the outstanding result of my AP Spanish exam was evidence. It must have been such a relief for my mother!

TASIS went through many changes to achieve the success it has today, and my mother never gave up on her students. In fact, she even completed her Master's degree while balancing work and taking care of our family. My grandfather, her dad (her inspiration in life), always ingrained in her *si te atrevez a enseñar ... no dejes de aprender*, which translates to "if you dare teach ... never stop learning"—and so she always did.

*Madre mia*, you were always there for all my key accomplishments and major milestones, and you are the engine behind many of them. You are simply the greatest treasure I have and I can't wait to spend even more time with you going forward.

*Te adoro madre mia!* —**Tatiana Balmelli Lucchini '00**



# HOWARD'S GREAT ADVENTURES

*Howard Stickley - 39 years*



Adventure has always beckoned **Howard Stickley**. Whether playing as a child in the churchyard beside his boyhood church to dodging mercenaries in West Africa to driving primatologist Jane Goodall in the middle of a snowstorm from Interlaken to the Zurich airport in a TASIS van, Howard's life is a menagerie of fascinating moments.

Howard grew up near Wembley in northwest London, where he attended the John Lyon School. He sang in the church choir at St. Mary's, a church at the summit of Harrow on the Hill which dates back to 1087, and spent much of his free time on this lush hillside. His time in the school choir was the gateway to travel, in Europe and the US.

As a teenager, Howard considered joining the British Army, but instead went to study at the Polytechnic of Central London (now the University of Westminster). He grew his hair long and focused on geography and environmental sciences, and while he was there he thought that teaching could be a good option. He also thought about writing textbooks; "In my younger teens I remember thinking how poorly history books were written for students, and I got the idea that somehow I was going to write textbooks which were more user-friendly." But the seed had been sown, and he enrolled in a PGCE course at Canterbury Christ Church College.

Around this time, he and a friend spent a month interrailing around Europe. They were traveling from Austria into Switzerland and missed their train, so ended up in the youth hostel in Chur. "The warden at the hostel asked if we would like to travel onward with some Swiss girls who had a car. Because we'd been traveling for a month on a train, we thought it would be nice to do something different. And then we saw the warden go over to the girls and ask them if they'd take us with them. Bit of matchmaking there!"



Of course, one of the girls was **Lauretta Genasci**. A ride to St. Moritz turned into becoming pen pals, which turned into Howard and his brother staying with Lauretta's family for a Christmas ski trip. A month later, Lauretta was in the UK staying with Howard's family, and learning English. "It was quick," he says with a smile.

After receiving his PGCE, Howard moved to Airolo, Lauretta's hometown, where he worked as an English teacher and did a number of odd jobs (he was even an Alpine cow herder!) as they both saved to go traveling. Lauretta's dream was to travel to South America, and Howard wanted to explore Asia, so they split the difference and chose Africa. "The idea was to go from London to Nairobi from September to January, but in January we were still in West Africa." This was in the very early days of overland travel. Their truck had broken down, there was an earthquake, they were caught on opposing sides in a civil war in Benin, and they had to sit on the border of Zaire for a month because the guards thought they were mercenaries—because actual mercenaries had used similar trucks to enter the country. They had their passports confiscated in the middle of the Congo jungle. Needless to say, they didn't get to Nairobi until May.

In Nairobi, Howard went to the post office to fetch their mail—in those days, people would send letters to your destination—and had a letter from a friend

in Airolo whose niece had worked for Mrs. Fleming. "She decided she was going to get me a proper job and said she'd written to Mrs. Fleming." Howard had to write two essays about his philosophy of education; he still has them! And when he got back to Europe in June 1981, he had an interview with then-headmaster **DeHaven Fleming**, and secured a job teaching Math, History, and English.

So began a career of nearly four decades with TASIS. Howard has held a number of roles spanning from teacher to department chair to administrator to IB Coordinator and College Counselor. Students close to him will remember his delectable brownies (and no, he won't share the recipe).

Many alumni will remember him as the environmental guy before "eco" was trendy. Howard's interest in protecting the environment dates to his childhood, when the London fog would mix with pollution, creating thick grey smog. He started Environmental Awareness Week in the late 90s to help the community begin to consider the consequences of their actions. Events such as Toad Patrol, all-green dress code day, presentations during assembly, and an Environmental Knowledge Bowl were popular events. The week continued until 2002, when Lauretta tragically passed away from cancer, and Howard focused his energy on his sons.

But perhaps the most lasting influence Howard has had is with his trips to Africa with students. He designed the trip so that all the funds other than flights went to support the local economy. In Zambia, the students built mud huts for destitute women and AIDS orphans, planted trees as part of environmental projects, worked on educational projects with local schools, stayed at a local hotel, and spent their money locally. In Botswana the students went on a safari with a longtime friend of Howard's, a former elephant poacher who was the first black man to own a safari company in Botswana and is now President of the Botswanan Guides Association. Showing students how the money for trips is used responsibly to develop the local economy is as important as the work itself.



*The long friendship and devotion of Mrs. Fleming and Howard*

This leads to the first project Howard is considering post-retirement: a Master's degree in Responsible Tourism Management. "Responsible tourism can lead to economic development and environmental conservation," he says. "It can mean helping people earn the money to give their children an education. Birth rates drop when you educate girls, and these sorts of things are important for improving people's lives and our planet. And I hope I can contribute to projects I have supported by developing greater expertise in the subject."

This idea germinated during a sabbatical from TASIS from 1993-1994, when he and Lauretta took their sons, Luca (then 5) and Martino (then 3), and went to Wamba, Kenya to help install fuel-efficient ovens at

local schools. They travelled around the world while Howard studied environmental education projects. He felt fortunate to be given this opportunity by the School and to be able to spend so much time with his family while exploring an interest which had many spin-offs in the ways he was able to contribute to TASIS on his return. His stories from this time are remarkable; a particularly lovely one was when they were in the Samburu area in northern Kenya. "I remember driving the only television in the village and a generator across the country to the top of a local mountain, so 200 of the local Samburu warriors could sit in their traditional clothing, with their spears, and watch the football World Cup. They needed their spears in case they met lions while walking home!"

The Master's degree will formalize Howard's commitment to sustainable eco-tourism. "It is a nice thing for me to go there and feel useful!" Howard has had to postpone a trip to southern Africa this year, where he was planning to do the Fish River Canyon hike in Namibia and spend time in the many national parks of South Africa. "I love spending time at water holes in Africa," he says. "My love of watching animals I suppose comes from my years as a biology teacher. I'm looking forward to the peace that you can have being on your own in the African landscape. There's nothing quite like it."

Howard also hopes to indulge his love for Switzerland. He is looking forward to doing more hiking in the mountains. He is also an avid skier and former Fleming Faculty Cup winner; "I'd always come second to **Paul Greenwood**, until he stopped skiing because of his knees. Then **Mario d'Azzo** came along and I'd come second to him. I don't know what happened in 1998, but I won both the ski and snowboard race!"

Howard remains close to his sons. **Martino '10** is living in Lugano and **Luca '07** is getting his Ph.D. in Geneva, so staying in Switzerland has that advantage, too. But retirement for Howard is merely a gateway to more adventures as he inspires all of us along the way.



To learn more about Howard, view our special tribute book, *Howard's Quest*, at [tasis.ch/howardtribute](https://tasis.ch/howardtribute).



# ALUMNI TRIBUTES TO *Howard Stickley*



## **Peaceful, Caring Energy**

When I think of Mr. Stickley, a calming wave comes over me. During my five years at TASIS, he inspired me to put into action my deep concern for mother Earth and continue to raise awareness about our ecosystem. I fondly remember being welcomed into his home, baking at his house with his lovely wife (the late Lauretta), seeing his babies grow up. Visiting TASIS as an alumna felt familiar amidst all the changes because Mr. Stickley was still there radiating the same peaceful and caring energy he always has. I have a photograph of a little Martino I printed onto a rock with liquid light decorating my stairwell as part of my TASIS memories! TASIS will not be the same without Mr. Stickley's steady presence; he's part of its backbone. I am grateful to have had him as a teacher and mentor who encouraged me to remain curious. —**Gina Van Hoof '96**



*Emma Gabbiani '15 with Marianna Barbieri '15*

## **The key to my survival**

Most of my TASIS memories include Mr. Stickley. He was both my teacher and advisor, and without his guidance and support I would not have been able to survive the IB or attend my dream university in London. Whenever I go back to Lugano, I always try to stop by his office to hear some of his British jokes and have a bite of his amazing brownies. TASIS won't be the same without him but I cannot wait to follow all his travelling adventures through Instagram! —**Emma Gabbiani '15**

## **With Great Respect**

During my four years at TASIS I had Mr. Stickley as a teacher for a few subjects. I was afraid of him since he had a reputation for being strict and demanding, which served me well since I was always prepared for his



classes! I did have great respect for him; he was always fair and competent in his subjects, and this was always one of his great qualities. He is one of the teachers I remember most vividly! —**Federico Stroppiana '88**

### **Howard's Superpower**

I arrived at TASIS in the fall of 1997, straight out of college and without teaching credentials, full of enthusiasm but totally lacking in any practical experience. I was assigned to teach middle school lab science and ninth grade physical science. I experienced some real challenges with classroom management in my middle school class during my first months on the job and was at a loss as to how to right the ship. Howard was my department chair and took time to sit in on my class, offer some observations about why certain students were not behaving appropriately, and made concrete suggestions about how I could change seating arrangements, modify my own response to student actions, and restructure time management in the class to bring better order to the classroom and achieve better learning outcomes. This input helped me (and my students) survive my first year of teaching. At the time, what I appreciated most was Howard's patience with me. I was quite distressed at how the class was going, but Howard didn't appear to share this distress. He was completely confident that the situation was easily fixed and this confidence was transmitted to me through the wise and useful advice he provided for dealing with my classroom challenges.

At the time, I was simply relieved that Howard was able to coach me through some difficult moments in my first year of teaching. My impression of Howard was that he was totally unflappable and always knew how to handle any situation. With an extra two decades of teaching under my belt now, I can see more clearly that Howard's superpower is his ability to combine kindness and professionalism. He expects excellence from his students, his colleagues, and himself, but always views his students and colleagues as whole people who deserve (and often need) warmth and kindness. It is a simple recipe but one that few people are able to follow, day after day and year after year, as well as Howard. For that reason, Howard's approach has remained with me across more than 20 years of teaching as one that

I am always striving to achieve. I am very fortunate that our paths crossed when they did and I wish Howard all the best in his well-earned retirement, which I am sure will remain busy and fulfilling! —**Jonathan Payne, former faculty**

### **A Legacy of Adoring Students**

I arrived at TASIS in September 1984 and was placed in ESL 4. I was turning 14 and had come from a Catholic girls school in Venezuela where all my classes had been in Spanish. Most of those in the ESL class were older and had been at TASIS for three or four years. Aside from one other Turkish student, they were all male and supremely confident. To add to the mix, a handful of them could only be described as troublemakers.

Apprehensive, I arrived very early in the morning to my first class. As the boys strutted into the room, I became completely terrified. A young, thin, bespectacled British teacher walked in at 8:00 sharp. There was something intangible but reassuring about his presence. He told the boys to hush in Italian, smiled broadly at us all and introduced me, as the newest arrival, to the others. Instantly, all my fears disappeared. Mr. Stickley was soft spoken but didn't tolerate nonsense, even if he was always up for a laugh. Somehow, with a mixture of kindness and fairness, he managed to control the class perfectly, tame the troublemakers, and convey his passion for the English language and the texts we read. One of the books we read in class was Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Thanks to Mr. Stickley's wonderful insight and the discussions he led, it became a favorite of mine.

I continued to see Howard often throughout my four years at the school. His lovely late wife Lauretta was my advisor and as I loved both sciences and Howard, I took his Ecology course too. He was the kind of teacher you always remember: inspiring, funny, and supportive. My happy memories of studying at TASIS are intrinsically linked to moments with him. As he goes off on new adventures, he leaves a legacy of adoring students who were all supported and pushed to excel by the kindest teacher on the planet. I am proud to be one of those students and feel exceedingly lucky to have been taught by him. —**Ariana Neumann '88**



*Howard and Laurretta at 1986 prom alongside Anne, Chris Frost, Barbie Mott, and other faculty*

### Lessons from the Mountains

When I signed up for Mountaineering Skills with Mr. Stickley, I never thought that this courteous and soft-spoken gentleman would take me on some of the most thrilling adventures I would experience at TASIS. During our group escapades I felt the unparalleled adrenaline rush of rock climbing in Bellinzona, and had my hair stand on end when I heard a glacier crack. But above all, I learnt of the bliss of simply sitting in silence on a snowy mountain summit. His understated leadership gave me not only the confidence to tackle any mountaineering challenge, but also taught me that staying calm in the face of fear is the best way to overcome perils of the everyday kind. Quite a few life lessons for one afternoon activity. Thank you, Mr. Stickley, for giving my education so much more than knowledge! —**Jeanette Del Valle '86**

### A Strong Reference Point

I consider myself to be very lucky to have had Howard as a part of my life in many different ways. As a teacher first, at a time when I was so young and far away from my family, our teachers at TASIS became a strong reference point, a guidance, an example to follow. Years later, our lives crossed again, again at TASIS, when he became a new reference for my daughters

during their IB path. Elegant, reserved, he is always available to help with his wisdom and intelligence. I wish him now to continue what he always loved to do, travel the world, particularly to his beloved Africa. —**Lavinia Cosattini Romani '90**

### So Much More Than a Teacher

Howard has had an enormous impact on my life during and after my TASIS years. He was my teacher, advisor, and mentor. As my biology teacher, he taught me the scientific way of thinking, which has shaped the way I view my life. As an advisor, his calm, understanding, and reasonable approach always helped me get through the troubled teenage years. He always listened, and tried his best to understand, which made a huge difference in my life at the time. He might be seen as a distant person, but if you are lucky enough to get to know him closely, you get to see the most pleasant, funny, and welcoming individual. He has shown me and everybody else around him how to stand tough and continue on, tackling more responsibilities, no matter what life brings. He has been so much more than a teacher for me and for many other lucky TASIS students. I am very grateful to have met you. Thank you for all you have done and I wish you all the best in this new chapter of your life. —**Omer Capkinoglu '04**



### **Part of the Family**

I first met Mr. Stickley (who insists I call him Howard, and despite being a 32-year-old doctor, I continue to struggle with this) as a 10th grade student in 2002. I had been 'bumped-up' to his AP Biology class surrounded by students much older than me. I suppose that's why he took pity on/a shine to me! As time continued that year in TASIS, I learned of the huge loss the Stickley family was experiencing. I was in admiration of Mr. Stickley's work ethic, compassion, and ability to care for his students, despite it all.

When I decided to move to Botswana with my family, instead of staying at TASIS, I thought I should let my "favorite" teacher know. Once again, in true Stickley fashion, he was supportive of the decision and excited for my new adventure. So excited that he invited me to join him and his boys, Luca and Martino, on their camping safari through Southern Africa that summer... and what a time we had. It was a magical trip, clocking up about 6000km, four countries, the "big five", several Harry Potter books, the entire His Dark Materials collection (yes, all four of us cried to the audiobooks) and uncountable barbecues. I will always be grateful for this experience when, for a few weeks, I was included and felt part of the (very amazing) Stickley family. With all my best wishes on your retirement, may the adventure continue. —**Maeve Gallagher '05**

### **A Positive, Indelible Impression**

When I sat down to write this note, I thought it would be relatively easy to gather my thoughts and piece together a proper 'thank you'. But the words I strung together felt inadequate, rattling, hollow. How do you say thank you to the person who changed the trajectory of your life? Such a lofty statement might sound like hyperbole,

but that happened when I joined you on the service-learning trip to Africa in the summer of 2007. Without it, I likely wouldn't have pursued a career in international development, traveled extensively across the continent, or called it home for eight wonderful years. As a teacher, your ultimate gift to me was your willingness to share your knowledge of the region, pushing the walls of the classroom to the plains of the Kalahari, the swamps of the Okavango, and the mouth of the Rift Valley. It left such a positive, indelible impression on me, and I can't thank you enough for being my first guide to the continent. Cheers to you, Mr. Stickely! Have yourself a nice glass of pinotage to celebrate. You deserve it. Hopefully, our paths will cross again in the shadows of Table Mountain.

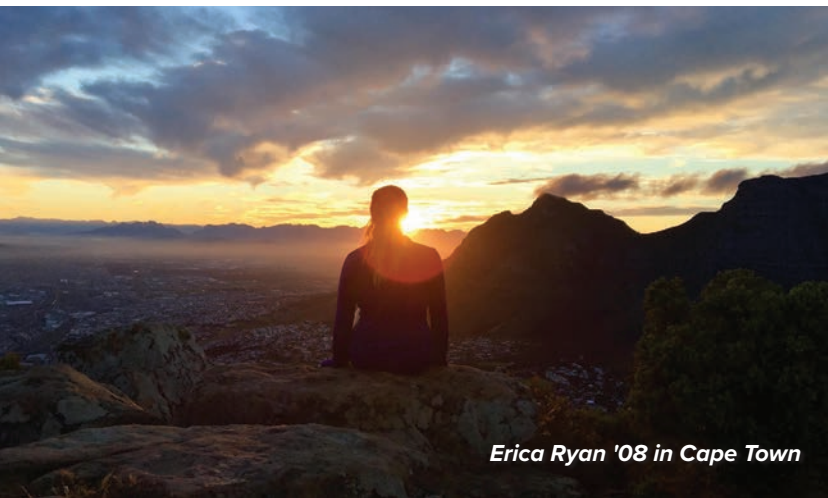
—**Erica Ryan '08**

### **A New Outlook**

During my three years at TASIS, Mr. Stickley was the single most influential teacher I had. It was as a result of one of Mr Stickley's trips to Africa that I found my passion for conservation and sustainability, and it gave me not only a new outlook but also a life path. Two years later, when I thought it would be impossible to receive an offer from the university I wished to attend, his words of encouragement and his support were vital. It was a luxury to meet him in London a few years later, when he was continuing this legacy with another group of students. Oh, and let's not forget his shortbread! —**Ana Muñoz '09**

### **A Unique Impression**

Just wanted you to know that you and your wife were an inspiration to me and my siblings in the outdoors as much as the classroom. I had a great time hiking the National Park and visiting your in-laws for some fresh Alpkäse. Your love for the outdoors left a very unique impression on me. I have visited Africa many times and every time I go on safari, I think of my early education at TASIS and the love of the outdoors that was instilled by your wife and you. I even studied some Zoology at university. Not sure if you remember, but in my sophomore year Mrs. Stickley took care of me for three weeks while I had the chicken pox in the old infirmary. Her love and care for me during what could have been hard for a kid was outstanding and made me feel special. I wish you the best in retirement and I hope you keep your hiking stick close by and get out there and enjoy the mountains. Best Wishes! —**James Dempsey '87**



*Erica Ryan '08 in Cape Town*



# THE BUCKET LIST

## *Paul Greenwood - 42 years*

*“I’ve pretty much done the things on my bucket list,” says **Paul Greenwood**. Anyone who has been on campus since 1978 has undoubtedly had a conversation with Paul about something fascinating that he has done—be it discovering a new climbing gorge, finding a secret place for off-piste skiing, or, more recently, flying a plane.*

Originally from Yorkshire in northern England, Paul went to boarding school at age 13. His parents had taken their honeymoon in Switzerland just after the war, and took Paul to the Alps for ski trips when he was a teenager, so his love for Switzerland began early in his life.

Paul attended Cambridge University and then took a summer job teaching waterskiing at a boys camp in Maine. Afterwards he worked as a junior manager in a large Scottish conglomerate, living in Tokyo and Hong Kong for a few years. “But I couldn’t help thinking about the wonderful time I’d had at the camp in Maine,” he remembers. “I was a bit disillusioned with business and decided teaching would be more worthwhile, so I went back to college and did a teaching credential.”

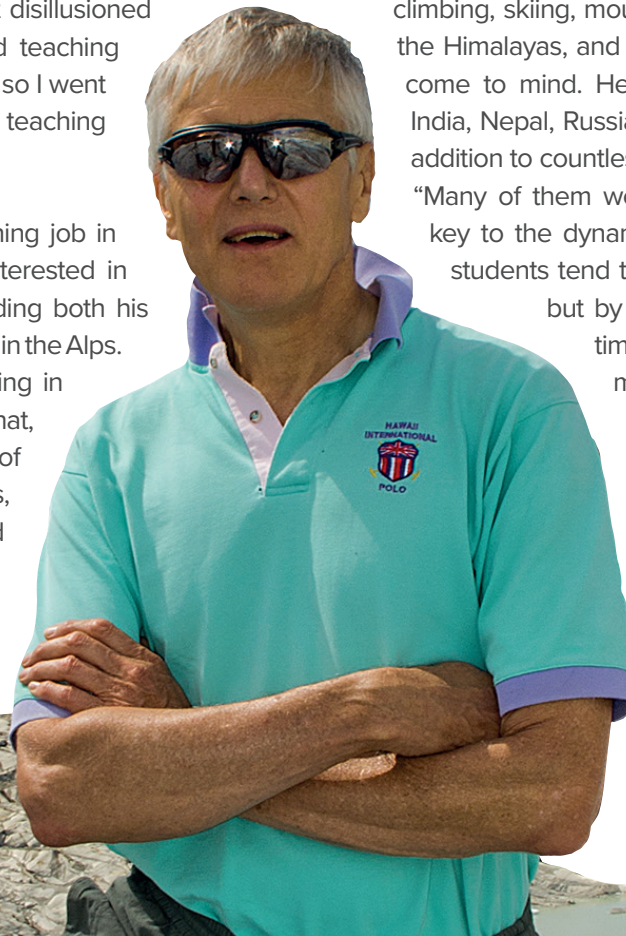
It was during his first teaching job in the UK that he became interested in climbing, and began spending both his winter and summer holidays in the Alps. “After three years of teaching in England, it occurred to me that, as I was spending so much of my salary on trips to the Alps, I’d do better to come and live here.”

Paul began his TASIS tenure as Dean of Students, then Assistant Headmaster. “That might have been a good time to look for a headship, but the location was too important to me and I didn’t want to go somewhere else,” he says. “I’ve been climbing down the administrative ladder ever since, first as Administrative Dean then In-Pro Travel Director, then full-time teacher, and then part-time teacher.” He has taught both mathematics and physics and had a stint as Math Department Chair as well.

Travel has been a lifelong passion for Paul. He has particularly enjoyed the smaller trips with students: rock-climbing, skiing, mountain biking, scuba diving, hiking in the Himalayas, and visiting teams of research scientists come to mind. He’s taken students to China, Egypt, India, Nepal, Russia, South Africa, and the Maldives, in addition to countless European and Swiss destinations. “Many of them were solo trips, and I think that was key to the dynamic,” he says. “With multiple adults, students tend to go off on their own for ‘free time’

but by yourself you spend so much more time with the students. The School has moved away from single adult trips for reasons of safety and liability, but I think something has inevitably been lost.”

Like many teachers who come to Lugano, Paul sees the value in introducing students to the outdoors. “Fresh air and exercise are healthy, and challenging yourself with an activity like rock-



climbing produces growth in all sorts of ways,” he says. “That sounds a bit cliché, but I’ve found outdoor sports very rewarding and it’s been a pleasure introducing other people to them.”

Of course a highlight of Paul’s career was working for Mrs. Fleming. “What a character she was!” he says. “The School had much more of a family feel when it was smaller so we all got to know her quite well. She was always the center of attention of course, but had a way of making you feel like you were the center of attention and she seemed to do that with everyone,” he recalls. “She was always at home making speeches. Sometimes they would become quite long and I remember an impromptu sweepstake at one of the faculty banquets for guessing how long the speech would be. But however long they were, they never seemed to drag and there was something about her personality which kept the audience attentive, even enthralled. And of course she

was sometimes quite outspoken and not above a risqué remark from time to time.”

Paul embodies the idea of a lifelong learner, and he has been dabbling in flying off and on since getting his gliding license in Hawaii in 1993, his skydiving license in Arizona in 2005, and the first 100 flights of a paragliding course in 2007. In 2016 he learned to fly a power plane and completed his Private Pilot License in 2017. “This has to be one of the more spectacular places in the world to go flying,” he says. “The airport is only ten minutes away and I can fly around the Matterhorn or the Eiger and be back on the ground within the hour, in time for tea.”

Paul will remain in Ticino in his retirement, and with the youthful energy and vigor that is reminiscent of Mrs. Fleming herself, he will surely continue to embrace life with joy. Indeed: it’s time to write a new bucket list!

## ALUMNI TRIBUTES TO *Paul Greenwood*



*Paul with Monica Landoni '15 and Alice Landoni '11*

### **Sharing Exceptional Moments**

Mr. Greenwood—or Paul, as I call him—entered my life when I was just a teenager. He was my Physics teacher and helped me achieve goals that as an IB student seemed extremely hard. He has always been exceptionally available and understanding and always pushed me to accomplish my best. Throughout the years, Paul became a friend and shared exceptional moments with me and my family. We spent quality time in front of a cup of tea, we went rock climbing, and even spent Christmas together in 2015. Now that Paul is entering this new stage of life, I wish him all the best. Good luck with everything, Paul! You will always find a friend in me. —**Alice Landoni '11**

### **Cherished Memories—and Pencils!**

As a teacher, Mr. Greenwood was able to transmit his great passion for the subject he taught,

and he was always there to help. As a friend, he has always made himself available to listen and understand everything I shared with him throughout the many years I've known him. I am so glad to have extended this student-teacher relationship to one I can call a friendship. Paul, I can never thank you enough for the support you've shown me on so many occasions. I will always cherish the moments spent together, the conversations in de Nobili in front of a cup of tea, everything that you've done for me... and, of course, the pencils I earned after a hard physics test! You are an amazing and dedicated teacher and friend. Please know you can always count on our friendship. —**Monica Landoni '15**

"Science is a process, it's a way of thinking," was one of Mr. Greenwood's great philosophies that has infused my life with curiosity and inspiration both while taking his physics courses at TASIS, and well beyond. When I began as one of Mr. Greenwood's physics students in 2006, new to TASIS and far from home, little did I know that I would be so blessed to have a teacher/mentor/friend that would shine a beaming light of understanding, while also helping to establish in me a continuous awe and wide imagination for the unknown. He started me down a path that would lead to my future, a Ph.D. in materials physics (2018) and a career as a research scientist.

Even while teaching hard sciences, Mr. Greenwood showed a great deal of warmth, humanity and good humor. You could always count on his good British humor and jokes, surprisingly not as dry as most, to be present rain or shine – during quizzes, lectures, or frequent demonstrations. This was not least of the reasons why I always looked forward to the hours of Physics with him. It was quite a treat when he invited me along with a few other committed physics students to visit Oxford, his alma mater, for a physics symposium. I will always remember that experience fondly as my first scientific meeting, which opened my eyes to a great community.

Beyond the pursuit of scientific understanding, I remember Mr. Greenwood as a great explorer and adventurer. I was always impressed by his passion for testing Newton's laws of motion through activities like biking, running, swimming, and most recently flying planes! To me, TASIS only has ONE physics teacher, an ideal that I will bring with me throughout my life as a scientist and adventurer, Paul Greenwood. Keep in touch! —**Caroline Gorham '07**

### **Friendship Through the Years**

Paul started at TASIS way back in the day....I don't recall the precise year, but I left Lugano in 1979 for TASIS England, and Paul was already settled on the Collina d'Oro. I did not meet up with him again until my wife Linn and I visited Lugano several years ago. And there, once again, was that tall, quiet, confident, competent man, still and always the gentleman, the same wry smile, the same calm mien, inspiring confidence. I would enjoy hearing a week's worth of his tales of these 40 some-odd years. Paul, our lives, mine, other colleagues, and decades of TASIS students are finer people for having known you. Enjoy "retirement", whatever that brings you. And, if the pandemic ever allows it, come visit us in the lovely hills of western Massachusetts. For you, our latchkey is always out! —**Peter Stevens**, Headmaster, TASIS 1975-79, Headmaster, TASIS England 1979-82

### **A Memorable Presence**

Paul Greenwood is a part of TASIS. A tall, standing presence like a Green Wood Tree... can't imagine TASIS without him around. His roots are a part of the School's foundation! I remember him not only as the strictest when it came to check in on weekends, but also as being adventurous enough to take us caving, and being there as a calm adult presence when we came into trouble on InPro. I imagine we'll still see him in our memories when we visit campus for years to come. —**Gina Van Hoof '96**



# A TESIS LIFETIME

## by Fernando Gonzalez

*Fernando González has been associated with TESIS since 1972 in several instructional, administrative, and executive roles. A graduate of Phillips Academy Andover, he holds a B.A. from Harvard University in visual studies and studied architecture at the Harvard School of Design. He was chairman of the art department at TESIS, was administrative director of the TESIS Schools for 20 years, served as interim headmaster of TESIS England in 2004, and has also served on the governing boards of all TESIS schools, including the Puerto Rican school TESIS Dorado and TESIS Portugal, both of which he founded, and the TESIS Foundation. He lives with his wife in Puerto Rico, where he is president of the TESIS Dorado School and restores houses through his company, Design & Build. Below, he shares his TESIS story.*

As I approach my 50th year with TESIS, I reflect fondly on my many wonderful memories and challenges that changed a one-year leave of absence from Harvard Design School in 1972/73 into a lifelong experience. Without question TESIS transformed my life and presented me with opportunities most people can only dream of having. TESIS and Mrs. Fleming defined my life and that of my family, for which I am eternally grateful.

It would take an entire book to describe what TESIS has meant to me over the past 48 years, but I will share some highlights and insights which will hopefully explain why my commitment and love for TESIS has remained steadfast throughout my lengthy career. Perhaps in so doing, I will also touch on some of your own experiences which made TESIS special for you.

While teaching art at Phillips Academy, my Andover classmate **Topper Lynn**, who was the TESIS Admissions Director, visited and spoke to me about the possibility of teaching art in Europe. I was intrigued but was about to begin my architecture graduate program at Harvard. A year later, a contract arrived in the mail with a handwritten note from Mrs. Fleming,

whom I had never met, saying, "I have heard such high praise from a close friend that I am offering you employment at The American School in Switzerland as Chairman of the Art Department for the next academic year. I want you to create the finest art program of any school in Europe." Thus began my love affair with MCF who became my second mother, mentor, and inspiration even after her death in 2009. Even today I think of what she would do before making a decision.

The opportunity to build an art program from scratch and spend a year traveling in Europe to see firsthand the great works I had studied in art history was too great a temptation. Furthermore, my Design School instructors strongly



encouraged me to take a year off, advising me that it would only strengthen my background in architecture. I had spent a summer traveling in Europe and fell in love with Italy. During my senior year at college, I decided to study Italian, where I met my future wife. When I told Mrs. Fleming that I would be bringing my fiancée to Lugano, she suggested that it would be inappropriate to live together in a boarding school environment and “strongly recommended” that we get married. A teaching contract for my soon-to-be wife followed and TASIS became our honeymoon. Little did I know at the time that Mrs. Fleming’s vision of “Europe as a classroom” was about to become my own.

My first visit to the Lugano campus two days after my wedding was a huge disappointment. Not only was the campus in pieces from having combined the Vezia and the Montagnola campuses into one, but with two weeks left before the start of school, there was no way I thought the campus would be ready. Secondly, the art facilities which I was supposed to convert into the best art program in Europe were in the absolute worst location on campus and would not work for the program I had in mind. I soon learned my second lesson from Mrs. Fleming: “Do not take no for an answer!” Upon sharing my concerns with the headmaster, he said that he was not in charge of campus developments and that I would have to discuss it with Mrs. Fleming. An appointment was set for the following day which I approached with great trepidation, not knowing whether I would become the shortest-term employee in TASIS history. However, her charm immediately put me at ease and when she asked me to make the drinks, including her beloved Old Fashioned, which I had no idea how to prepare, she said, “Young man, anyone who is going to work for me has to be able to make an Old Fashioned!” I was amused many years later when this anecdote was included in the musical about her life, *MCF: What a Life!*

Before long I was absorbed in her fascinating world and soon she knew my entire life story and that of my family, in which she took genuine interest. This was a crash course in MCF 101: her ability to connect with



people, from a corporate CEO to a maid, by making them feel like the most important person in the world, is legendary. Over the years, I often marvelled at her ability to motivate people by making them think her ideas were theirs.

Our conversation finally led to the purpose of the meeting when she said, “Now, what can I do for you?” When I explained that my plans for the art department would have to be curtailed and that the art facilities were not adequate to realize her dream, she replied immediately, “That will not do...let’s take a walk.” Within 10 minutes of touring the campus to show her a cramped ski storage closet which was to become a photo lab and the back end of a temporary prefab building with paper thin walls that was converted to an art studio, Mrs. Fleming understood my concerns immediately.

By the end of the tour, the art studio was relocated to the lovely brick vaulted ground floor of Coach House which was flooded with natural light where student art work could be easily displayed at the heart of the campus. The new photo lab took over a section of the chemistry prep room and a nearby bathroom was added as the film developing room. I was stunned that what would, in most schools, take months to change had been done in a day. I quickly realized this was a woman who knew what she wanted and did not hesitate to make it happen. I also was convinced that MCF would serve as an outstanding role model and provide challenges and opportunities of a lifetime.



Despite antagonizing both the math and science departments by stealing their spaces on my first day on the job, I soon became part of an extremely close-knit team of extraordinary educators who were adventuresome, dedicated, talented, hard-working, and above all loved their subject matter and working closely with students. Many of them have remained my closest friends over the years. Above all else, it has been the quality of the faculty and the relationships we have built that have made my career at TASIS so rewarding. It is the special community we built, along with diverse and motivated students who were willing to be challenged. Many of the students from my earliest TASIS years have stayed in touch and become friends. And my two sons, who are TASIS England graduates, are the best reflection of what a TASIS education represents.

One of the highlights in my early years was the addition of an architecture course to the curriculum which enabled me to take a class of 12 students to

the South of France to design an abandoned hamlet of six 18th-century buildings into holiday homes. I fell in love with the Ardèche and Les Tapies, which, over the years, I purchased and restored into an artists' community. For the past 15 summers I have co-directed the very successful Les Tapies Arts and Architecture Program alongside TASIS England master teacher **John Smalley**. Its success is based on MCF's formula for starting a school: find a beautiful property, attract the best faculty who will serve as role models and have a passion for teaching, create a challenging program of studies and activities which will stretch the students, and sprinkle these ingredients with a generous dose of tender loving care to nurture and bring out the best in the students. I particularly enjoy the opportunity of being back in the classroom again and working closely with students which brings my TASIS career full circle.

I have been fortunate to have been involved in helping to create new TASIS schools around Europe, including TASIS England, TASIS Greece, TASIS Cyprus, TASIS France, as well as TASIS Dorado in Puerto Rico. The latest venture, TASIS Portugal, is proving to be my greatest challenge because converting a commercial shopping center into a beautiful TASIS campus in less than a year is a huge undertaking. I once asked Mrs. Fleming if she had any regrets in her long, successful life and she responded immediately: "I only regret the things I did not do, not the ones I did." I have tried to emulate this positive approach to life in my own career.

My TASIS experience has been a richly rewarding journey full of opportunities, challenges, friendships, successes and, yes, failures, which have made me grow and reach for the next goal. When I asked Mrs. Fleming at the age of 92 for her blessing in starting TASIS Dorado, she said: "Fernando, if it is in your heart you must do it and, if I was 10 years younger, I would do it with you!" It was this *joie de vivre* that made working with MCF such an inspiration and a privilege to have played a part in helping her realize her dreams, which often became my own.





# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

## OCTOBER



*Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff engaging TOK students*

### Head of the Class

TASIS Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff found time in his schedule to deliver engaging lectures to five Theory of Knowledge (TOK) classes in early October, marking the first time he has served as a classroom teacher since his appointment as Headmaster in June 2017.

Mr. Nikoloff, who studied English and Philosophy as an undergraduate, centered his lectures on Aristotle's Virtue Ethics, inviting students to explore questions about ethical thought, virtue, and the definition of happiness.

"The current TOK curriculum does not have much to say about Virtue Ethics, so I was asked to contribute due to my minor obsession with Aristotle," he explained. "I am always astonished at how relevant his ideas remain today."

## NOVEMBER



*TASIS Speaker Series: Dr. Janne Sirén '88*

### TASIS Speaker Series: Dr. Janne Sirén '88

**Dr. Janne Sirén '88**, the Peggy Pierce Elfvin Director of the renowned Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo, New York, opened the 2019–2020 TASIS Speaker Series on Monday, October 21.

"I owe a great debt of gratitude to all my TASIS teachers, but especially **Horst Dürschmidt** and **Mark Aeschliman**," he said. "They literally have changed the world, and continue to do that. And I hope TASIS understands and gets it because the work the arts and humanities faculty does is tremendously important. Ideas migrate. They migrate with you. You are the torchbearers who will take them to new places."

Dr. Sirén's three-day visit also included spending time with six IB and AP visual arts classes and

enjoying a meal at Grotto Flora with the students and faculty members who serve on the TASIS Speaker Series Committee.

### A Christmas Carol

Charles Dickens' tale continues to delight readers



and audiences some 176 years after it was first written. This TASIS production, performed from November 15-17, brought the tale of compassion and empathy to life, delighting audiences for all three performances. The company spent Fall Academic Travel on a theater retreat in Torino, Italy, where they dug into the characters, staging, and design, and their hard work paid off!

## JANUARY

### TASIS Speaker Series: Thomas Sparrow

The second visitor in the TASIS Speaker Series was journalist and author Thomas Sparrow, who delivered an engaging talk entitled “Journalism in Times of Fake News” on the evening of January 28. To help students better understand what a career in journalism entails, he explained that the five duties of a journalist are to explain realities responsibly, to

hold powers and authorities accountable, to be a bridge between societies, to provide context, and to serve as a forum for public debate.

He went on to discuss that the two greatest challenges for journalists today are coping with



the fake news epidemic—noting that while it is true that journalists do make their share of mistakes, the media remains a vital element of a democracy—and navigating complex relationships with politicians. He also spoke about how the ascension of social media has dramatically altered the landscape of journalism. His tips for students about how to approach news are relevant to us all:

- Think about what news you consume.
- Use different sources for the same story.
- Ask people around you and have discussions.
- Be curious but careful.
- Leave your comfort zone.

Over the course of his three-day visit, Mr. Sparrow also connected with students in a number of classes, including IB Literature, IB Economics, IB Theory of Knowledge (TOK), and AP United States Government and Politics.



## FEBRUARY

### International Week turns 25!



Although there are earlier references to “International Day” or “International Night” scattered throughout our archives, the first reference to “International Week” we could find was in the 1995 yearbook. And throughout these 25 years, the activities have celebrated the myriad cultures and nations that make up our community.



This year, 62 nations were represented during the annual Parade of Flags which kicks off the week. As ever, a highlight was the HS Food Fair and MS Brunch, both of which featured cuisine from over a dozen countries. What could be better than learning about cultures through food?

### TASIS Speaker Series: Sara Rosso Cipolini



On February 17, Planhotel Hospitality Group President and TASIS Board Member **Sara Rosso Cipolini** addressed the senior class with a talk called “Happiness Is Our Goal”. The talk challenged students to think deeply about the purpose of business and what it brings to the world as well as the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) vs Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Ms. Cipolini also visited a number of classes over the course of her two days on campus, including IB Business Management, IB Literature A, and IB English B.

**Read on to learn about life at TASIS since February, 2020.**



# YOU FIGHT ON

## TASIS AND COVID-19

*I believe that's what education is all about! No matter what is destroyed around you, what temples crumble, what values go out of style, what sand castles are washed away on the shore, man rebuilds—you start again—you fight on!* —Mrs. Fleming, 1992

Years from now, we will look back on this global pause and, hopefully, find the truth, the goodness, and the beauty that came from this time—the same *verum, bonum, pulchrum* that was humming in the back of Mrs. Fleming's mind when she created a school where the world would come together.

Our alumni stretch to 143 countries on every

continent, and each of us will remember our own corners of the world during this remarkable time in history. But what binds us together is our shared corner of the world, the Collina d'Oro. This is the story of how the TASIS community came together to get through it with the indomitable spirit and distinctive verve that Mrs. Fleming herself embodied. She would be proud of us.

## VERUM (TRUTH)

*Hold onto the timeless values that...we have tried to instill in you—a love of beauty, a search for knowledge and the excitement of learning, truth, honesty...a dedication to these values will make life meaningful for you.* —Mrs. Fleming, 1995

TASIS began communicating with our community about Covid-19 in late January, with a note from Headmaster **Christopher Nikoloff** indicating that the School was already in discussions with risk management partner Healix and keeping a close eye on Covid-19 developments. Normal life continued throughout February, and students were able to attend their spring Academic Travel trips (including Ski Week), though due the outbreak in northern Italy, many trips were re-routed through Zurich. On February 25, Ticino announced its first positive Covid-19 case.

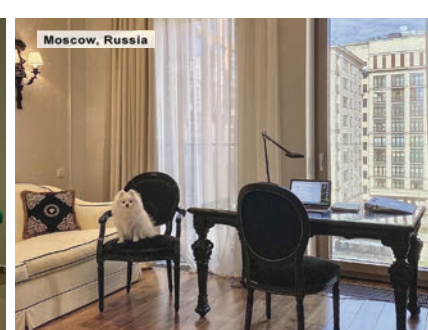
Initial responses on campus included temperature checks and frequent hand hygiene reminders, though the School kept close tabs on what was happening both in Ticino and in Italy (where, at this point, things were rapidly changing; schools in Italy closed on March 5). The School sent clear messages to the community nearly every day during this critical phase to ensure families were aware of all possible outcomes. An initial idea to house boarding students who



*Holly Wiens teaches a Middle School student in May*

couldn't travel home for Spring Holiday at the Fleming family estate in Tuscany was soon expanded to a two-week trip to Verbier, but these were abandoned in light of the jarring news on March 7 that nearby Lombardy, along with 14 Italian provinces, was effectively "closed".

On March 8, TASIS announced a shift to a distance learning model beginning March 16. This decision was not taken lightly, and was the result of discussions between



the Board of Directors, administrators, and academic leaders. It was a bold move, as Ticino was still weeks from federal or local school closures, but it was the right one; all of our boarding students were able to get home or join their families in a safe place. At the time, TASIS was hoping to return to normal by April 20, after spring break.

By March 25, the situation in Ticino and worldwide was escalating, and TASIS decided to resume the distance learning model after spring break until everyone could safely return to campus. Advanced Placement exams had been shifted to online, and the International Baccalaureate had canceled its 2020 exams. During this time, TASIS held extensive conversations with families and teachers to ensure distance learning was working for our students.

On April 17, just before the end of spring break, TASIS announced that high school students would complete their year with the distance learning model. While disappointing, this decision aligned with federal and cantonal guidelines, not to mention international travel restrictions and the general uncertainty that was facing the world. Middle school boarders also continued with distance learning.

On April 29, the Swiss government announced that Pre-Kindergarten through 8th graders could return to school on May 11. The Headmaster was in constant dialogue with parents, students, teachers, the Board, and others as the School decided how to proceed, and ended up with the best of both worlds: on May 25, campus opened for students who wanted to be back on campus, with stringent social distancing guidelines in place, while families who weren't ready to return could continue with distance learning. The final two weeks of school looked a bit different to normal, with smaller class sizes, a two-meter distance rule everywhere from classroom desks to queuing for dismissal, morning-only classes, and mandatory mask-wearing when in a crowd where social distancing was difficult.

The elementary school opened with 110 students (62%) on campus and 68 continuing distance learning. Middle school opened with 52 (44%) coming to campus and 67 continuing with distance learning alongside the 20 middle school boarders. Around half of the teachers came back to campus, though teachers of special subjects (PE, art, and music) continued teaching online in the afternoons.

Feedback was positive; one parent commented, "I find it helpful that [students] can reflect on what happened with their teachers as guides because, all in all, they have managed to live through it with great serenity and did not necessarily perceive the gravity." Another said, "They have been brilliant! Both teachers and staff at TASIS deserve a huge applause for their hard work!"

Despite the upheaval, our community was determined to keep at least a few TASIS traditions alive—even if only on a screen. The Virtual Arts Festival took place from May 21-24, and on May 30, our graduates were treated to a poignant ceremony (more about these in Pulchrum, below). MS Intern **Vitor Mendez** created a delightful video for the Middle School students, with particular focus on the 8th graders, featuring speeches, messages from teachers, a slideshow, and an epic dance party.

In early June, and for the first time since Mrs. Fleming brought her Frog Hollow students to Europe in 1955, the School decided to cancel the Summer Programs. Visa and travel restrictions for students, veteran teachers, and program directors were a major obstacle, but more importantly the integrity of the program could not be guaranteed with such continued uncertainty. However, the School was able to run a pilot academic program called the TASIS Summer Institute for current TASIS students, including a variety of preparation seminars for IB classes, SAT Math and English, and Academic Writing.

The silver lining for cancelling the Summer Programs was the opportunity to complete some campus renovations without disrupting any programs. Improvements were made to our dining and dormitory facilities and the parking capacity has been expanded. Next up, if we can raise the money, is an enlarged hybrid sports field, basketball court, and swimming pool.

In early September we welcomed over 240 boarding students and 420 day students to TASIS. Managing quarantine, testing, and safety has meant months of collaboration by many people in our community. We start the 2020/21 academic year cautiously but with optimism and gratitude.

# BONUM (GOODNESS)

*Think of the power for good you actually possess.  
Develop it well and use it. —Mrs. Fleming, 1998*



Times like these often bring out the best in people, and we've seen our community thrive in unexpected ways throughout lockdown and beyond.

**Far Apart, Closer than Ever:** In the early days of distance learning, teachers, students, and parents worked together to create an emotional, uplifting video that gave viewers a glimpse of distance learning life. Our alumni also submitted clips for a look at how our global community spent lockdown. Have a look at [tasis.ch/closer](https://tasis.ch/closer) and [tasis.ch/closeralumni](https://tasis.ch/closeralumni).

**Surgical Masks from China to Ticino:** In June, the compassionate efforts of TASIS families in China and Noble Wings Switzerland resulted in a donation of 10,000 EU-certified surgical masks to Ordine dei Medici del Canton Ticino. **Bill Eichner** helped Noble Wings with the complex logistics of transporting masks from Shanghai to Ticino, and the donation

directly helped doctors who worked with Covid-19 patients.

**TPA Car Parade:** The Wednesday before the School reopened, the TASIS Parent Association organized a Faculty and Staff Appreciation Car Parade to thank employees for their commitment and hard work. Countless cars, decorated with thank-you signs, balloons, flowers, and children shouting from windows, drove up the Collina d'Oro to wave at their teachers, who lined the pavements outside campus. A stand of treats was set up just outside the gate to bring everyone some cheer.

**Faculty Spirit: Trivia Nights and Food:** Trivia nights have experienced something of a renaissance during lockdown. Math teacher and Global Service Program director **Danny Schiff** and dorm faculty **Borana Sarcevic** hosted several virtual trivia nights to keep faculty spirits high.



Middle school dorm head **Matthew Beckwith-Laube** began baking bagels for our community in mid-March. Despite lockdown, he somehow procured the ingredients for proper bagels and offered contactless pickup in the Belvedere Salon.

Administrators and the kitchen staff prepared Easter treats for staff working on campus. They also managed a Cinco de Mayo lunch; faculty and staff picked up their takeaway Mexican food to mariachi music and huge smiles from everyone!

**Andrà tutto bene:** In mid-March, singer and songwriter **Jack Savoretti '01** reached out to his fans in Italy. “I wanted to know how they were doing...and to feel connected, we wrote a song together. I’ve always wanted to write a song in Italian. I don’t have the use of the language, so I asked them to write it with me, via Instagram Live, which we did, and we have a song, and I hope you like it. Sing it, sing it loud!” The result is “*Andrà tutto bene*”, a moving celebration of the way Italy came together—particularly through music—in these



most challenging of times. “Every word belongs to [my Italian fans], and their incredible attitude of solidarity and positivity in such an unprecedented time.” Jack announced that all proceeds from downloads of this song would be donated directly to San Martino di Genova, a hospital on the front line of Covid in northern Italy. On September 1, Jack presented a check for €30,000 to the hospital, with the promise of more to come.

## PULCHRUM (BEAUTY)

*We are blessed indeed to live in one of the most beautiful places in the world...  
so breathe deeply and daily inhale, for we believe you can store it, can reserve it to fight the  
ugliness in the world; to meditate upon it when you face a tough situation...  
be thankful for the beauty we live in and that surrounds us. —Mrs. Fleming, 2003*

As soon as it was announced that boarding students would not return to TASIS, faculty and staff began buzzing with ideas about how to ensure at least some of the annual events that mark the end of a school year went ahead. Nearly every student in our community is active in the visual or performing arts, so talk of a “virtual Arts Festival” was rife for weeks. In early May the Performing Arts and Visual Arts departments contacted the Communications team about how to make this ambitious goal happen.

One of the biggest delights of the Arts Festival was a gorgeous rendition of Ben E. King’s “Stand By

Me”, a collaborative project that included dozens of students, parents, teachers, and staff, who had to learn how to film high-definition video worthy of a TASIS performance.

The Performing Arts are showcased with a number of videos, many of which were filmed and directed by the students. The Middle School Drama and Musical videos are a joyful homage to why children respond so well to performance. A number of students performed remotely for the community in an Instrumental and Vocal Studio Performance video, and the Finale Concert featured solo and

instrumental student musicians performing excerpts from Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera*.

The Visual Arts are celebrated with over 40 galleries of student art, including portfolio pieces sent to the AP and IB. A scroll through these galleries showcases the deep talent that is fostered at TASIS. Explore everything at [tasis.ch/artsfestival2020](https://tasis.ch/artsfestival2020).

While our seniors got to celebrate their involvement in the arts, they missed out on a few other rites of passage. But the School was determined to give them a graduation to celebrate both a resilient group of students and the commitment TASIS has to ensuring every student feels special on one of the most memorable days of their lives.

The virtual graduation ceremony was a collaborative effort between the students, teachers, administrators, Performing Arts department, and the Communications team. The order of events for the YouTube video was similar to other years, only this time was enhanced by a lively chat taking place simultaneously, where students congratulated each other on awards, gave one another shout-outs, and shared memories. To enhance this year's ceremony, students in the graduating class sent in videos with messages of support and love to each other, which made for poignant moments. Board Chairman **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman** called it "a fabulous and most memorable graduation...my mother would be very proud, as am I."

## CURATING AND CREATING VIRTUAL EVENTS

How do you go from crazy ideas in an email chain to polished, joyful, emotional online events? We sat down with Director of Communications **Mark Chevalier** to talk about how his team pulled off these feats while also keeping the usual communications tasks going.

**When did you begin preparing for the virtual Spring Arts Festival? How long did it take to do everything?**

Our department's involvement began in early May, about three weeks before the festival kicked off on May 21. We put about 40 hours into the visual arts

side. We needed to find a way to showcase a great deal of student artwork spread across the three divisions. This primarily consisted of me collecting, photographing, organizing, and properly labeling 40 galleries and **Brendan Shea**, our talented Webmaster, creating a Visual Arts section within the broader Spring Arts Festival page he built on our website. We had more than 150,000 total photo views of all the artwork over the course of the four-day festival, so I'm glad we were able to find an effective way to share the fine work done by Visual Arts Department Chair **Martyn Dukes**, all the art teachers, and, of course, all the student artists.

On the performing arts side, I'd estimate closer to 60 hours—and of course that is on top of the hundreds of hours the Performing Arts Department put into it. Department Chair **Samantha Forrest** and all the music and drama teachers did a great job collecting video clips from students and mixing the audio, and they also took several of the projects all the way to the finish line. **Daniele Bagutti** and **Alessio Di Tonno**, for example, did a remarkable job building out the collaborative "Stand by Me" video, which was a huge success. And Elementary and Middle School Theater Director **Matthew Frazier-Smith** worked really hard to put together the two Middle School drama pieces. I don't think any of those three had much experience with video editing before this festival, so my hat goes off to them.

Other projects—such as the Instrument and Vocal Recital and the Finale Concert—were quite difficult to piece together and presented a lot of logistical challenges. We relied heavily upon **Milo Zanecchia '08**, who is an outstanding filmmaker, to help. We never could have pulled this off without his efforts!

**What was the ultimate goal of the festival?**

The ultimate goal was to find a way to do justice to all the work our student artists had already put into their projects this year—and to provide our community with a bit of sunshine during these dark times. I don't think anyone would have faulted us if we'd simply canceled the festival and cast our eyes toward next year, but that isn't the TASIS way.

And sure, it took a lot of hard work from a lot of adults on campus to make this happen, but let's be clear about one thing: It always starts with the students. There are so many talented students at TASIS who were ready to go when they saw the

direction this was moving in. Life moves fast at TASIS, so I often wonder if we step back often enough to take a look around and say, wow, these are some really remarkable kids we have here.

And then from there it takes some really good teachers to cultivate that talent, to push these students along and provide them with opportunities to show what they've got.

The third layer is the storytelling team. Our job is to take all of the magic happening and bring it to life.

**It was obviously a huge success, but was there a specific moment when it was all worth it?**

The moment I knew it was worth it was when I saw “Stand by Me,” the first video we released. It was uplifting to see so many members of our community involved in one project—including all of the Elementary School students that Master Teacher **Melody Tibbits Zanecchia** works with.

Another big highlight was the *Living Room* virtual dance concert. Sweet November Dance Company Director **Julie Frazier-Smith** took on the huge challenge of offering our community a live dance performance, and she and her team of performers succeeded with flying colors.

There is something about this pandemic that has brought out the best in people, and I sense a powerful energy bubbling at the surface. I really look forward to seeing what we can do as a school and as a community in the coming years.

**What brainstorming went into creating a virtual graduation?**

We had a pretty good idea what pieces would be included in the ceremony from the outset, so the challenge was figuring out the best ways to present them. Milo Zanecchia and I had quite a few conversations about that before and during the process, and the final product was much more polished because we were able to draw upon the expertise of **Alex Zanecchia '02** (sound engineering) and both **Jacopo Riva** and Brendan Shea (graphics). The most challenging part was trying to figure out the best way to use graphics, music, and transitions to weave the discrete pieces together and make it feel like one cohesive “ceremony.”



*Elementary students singing an emotional "Stand By Me"*

**How was the turnout?**

During the premiere of the ceremony on YouTube, we had a steady 160 viewers—mainly the graduating students, their families, and some members of the faculty and administration. The students were making full use of YouTube's chat feature. They seemed really pleased with the presentation and were congratulating one another as the awards were announced, which was great to see.

The views shot up quickly soon after the ceremony as well. We passed the 1500 mark on YouTube within 72 hours, and a lot of people watched at least some of the ceremony on Facebook and Instagram as well. The overall response from our community has been very positive.

**What was the most satisfying part of the project?**

This is really all about the students in the Class of 2020, so to see that they enjoyed the virtual ceremony was the most satisfying part. We know it's an incredibly tough blow for them to miss out on their Senior Prom, Senior Banquet, and Graduation, so we really wanted to do our best to give them the send-off they deserve. It's clear to me that they recognized this and appreciated it.

*To learn more about the 2020 Arts Festival and Graduation, visit [tasis.ch/artsfestival](https://tasis.ch/artsfestival) and [tasis.ch/graduation](https://tasis.ch/graduation)*



# A TEACHER'S CORONAVIRUS DIARY

*We asked 2016 Master Teacher Award winner **Amy Bloodworth** to keep a diary for us of how she and her students adjusted to distance learning. Amy teaches science, coding, and robotics to TASIS Middle School students. Amy, alongside ES and MS Instructional Technology Coordinator **Tim Venchus** and HS Math teacher, Technology Academy Leader, AP Coordinator, and 2017 Master Teacher **Kerry Venchus** make up the Technology Committee, which worked tirelessly to help quickly prepare our teachers for the move to distance learning.*



## March 12

This morning I ran two online sessions for teachers on using Zoom to deliver live lessons. In typical Montagnola fashion, just as the meeting started, a helicopter came by to move trees. It made hearing each other a little tough!

Remote learning seems really weird right now. It's eerily quiet when you are used to the organized chaos of kids. I wonder if this is how it feels before troops get deployed on a mission? Anticipation, fear, excitement, inevitability, uncertainty—it's odd. As the meeting ended there were calls of 'good luck' and 'see you on the other side' and 'let's do this'. We are all a little out of our depth in this

unprecedented situation. We will be fine; these are incredibly talented people who will give the kids everything they can and then some.

On a personal note, homeschooling my own child, Arlo, is not going so well. This is his third week out of school and the novelty of spending all day at home and learning online is definitely wearing off and wearing all of us down. This is a good experience though, for planning my lessons. It really is essential to change things up and I'm now trying to work out simple experiments that the kids can do from home so that we can still keep that practical element of science.

### March 16

We are up and running! It's been a bit hectic this morning juggling teaching my lessons, homeschooling Arlo, and fielding all the emergency last-minute tech questions from teachers. I'm sure it will get easier but right now it feels like it's going to be a long week!

I sent a survey out to kids over the weekend to see how they were doing, how they were feeling about Monday, and if they needed any help from me to get set up and ready.

This was one of the replies: *My life is now horrible, all of my best friends have the coronavirus.*

It's spreading fast here in Ticino and everything suddenly seems a lot more serious. People know real people who matter to them with the virus. Switzerland has shut down everything except food stores and pharmacies. Serious lockdown has begun.

Also most of the students who responded rated their current happiness as 5 or lower out of 10. It reminded me that I need to make time to talk and be in each other's company, for them to ask questions and offload their worries. I'm hoping it's just first week nerves and that once we've had a week of lessons and they have a bit more structure than the last few days they will start to feel more positive.

I feel so grateful for the beautiful Montagnola views from my window. Beauty really does lift the spirit, and the feeling of community here is palpable. I hope these are things we can hold on to when all this is over.

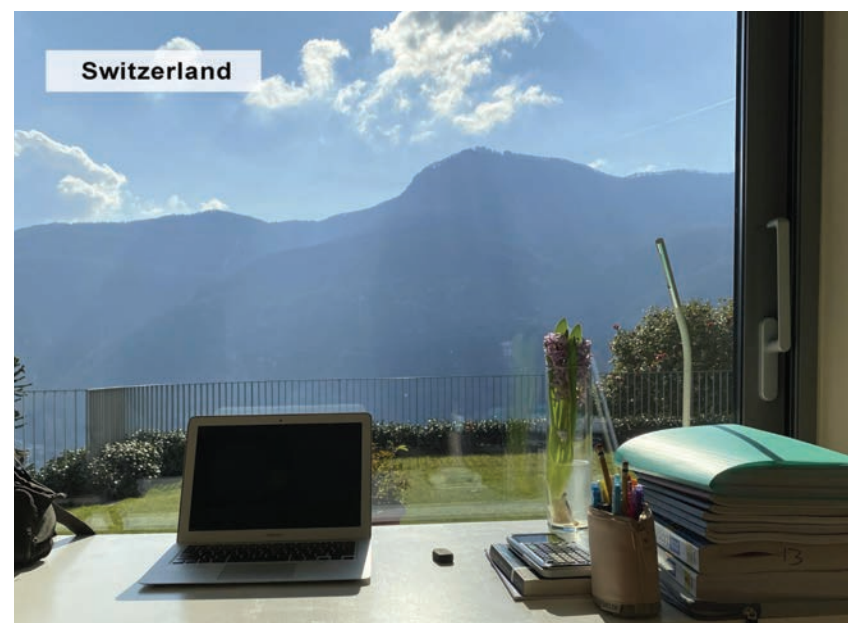
Later...I'm a teacher running live lessons, my husband is a teacher running live lessons, my son is a learner taking live lessons: we may have overloaded the system! There is now a large chart on the wall for everyone to schedule their lessons around each other. I knew all those highlighters and sticky labels would come in useful!

### March 17

Tuesday was an epic crash. Trying to teach, help teachers, students, and parents with tech issues, and homeschool Arlo proved too much. I went from being an expert juggler to looking like a broken human being! I sent out an SOS email to my middle school colleagues. The outpouring of love and support was overwhelming; I really do work with the best people. They quickly divided themselves into expert tech teams and helped each other out. **Tim Venchus** needs a medal, and a trophy, a plaque, and a pay raise after all this is over. No one has done more to get us all teaching online. I actually think he might be superhuman!

### March 18

Nobody has emailed me for help! Counselor **Mary Cate Hauenstein** is posting meditations and mental health-boosting resources for us all. Everybody is slowly coming to the realization of how tough this is and how long it actually might last. We are all rethinking ways to create educational opportunities for kids away from their computers. The kids as always adapt quickly. We did our first live online experiment this morning. It was great! With no set lab equipment at home the kids cleverly used their creativity to come up with equipment solutions: measuring jugs, eggs, kitchen scales, and salt at the ready!





### March 22

The teachers are at breaking point. We are working from morning till late late at night trying to make this a success. We are teaching every class live, whilst simultaneously ensuring the kids don't spend too much time at their computers, whilst simultaneously writing all our reports. Factor in queuing for an hour to buy food (on a good day) and homeschooling our own kids and it's a struggle. I'm finding things tough and I am technologically in a good place; there are loads of teachers for whom this is so far out of their comfort zone.

### March 25

I just had to look up that date. Every day is merging into the next like an apocalyptic Christmas and I've completely lost track of time!

With the novelty of online teaching and learning wearing off after the excitement of the first week, I've decided that we all need to work on a more

positive mindset, including me! Online learning can't just look like what we do in the classroom, so I'm spending a lot of time thinking about what this looks like on a long-term basis. I've decided that this is a huge opportunity to develop some great new curriculum. I've been doing some research into online schools; what they do, how they do it. There definitely needs to be more fun! The kids were feeling a bit low on Monday and some of the kids who have no brothers or sisters at home are feeling quite lonely. I decided to have a meet and greet with everyone's pets to cheer them up and get on track for the week. It was fab! I met dogs, cats, birds, and lizards. It reminded me again that kids need time to just be kids sometimes, and we have to make time for that. We laughed, and it was good!

This week is definitely smoother in terms of tech issues. Almost all the kids are now pros at turning work in online and navigating their way around Zoom. I'm currently having fun thinking of plans for next week. Frankly the world is our oyster these days and the kids need a little more passion, a little less screen time, and a little bit of choice so that they can start to feel in control of at least something again. It's time for them to discover their inner scientists.

## Lesson: Discover your inner scientist

In 1665, The University of Cambridge temporarily closed due to the bubonic plague. Issac Newton had to work from home and he used this time to develop calculus and the theory of gravity.

Now is the time to unlock your inner scientist! One lesson every week we will focus on getting away from our screens and following our own scientific interests. Take a photo or video of your science in action and upload it to our Google classroom.



This went amazingly well! The kids made rockets and ate Oreos in the shape of all the moon phases.

We also heard that both our MS and HS computer science classes are through to the third round of the Mission Space Lab competition. Their code could well be running on the International Space Station (ISS) as I type! It's happening over the Easter break and then they will have thousands of pieces of data to deal with when we get back to virtual school in the next few weeks.

Space is a great topic for this time because we can learn a lot about living in relative isolation and what's important for survival and wellbeing from our journeys into space and life on board the ISS. It's topical and lends itself well to remote learning. I should give a huge shout out to both NASA and ESA for the incredible work they are doing in giving us access to their data and resources and connecting kids with space scientists right now. It's really every teacher's dream for their students to be inspired by real scientists!

The biologist in me says until there is a vaccine, life just isn't going to go back to normal as we knew it. I'm moving forward with the mentality that this is for the long term: what does great teaching and learning look like in the long term online? I guess it's a 'prepare for the worst and hope for the best' scenario. It's tough being a science teacher online because so much of what we do is practical and I still want to retain that as much as possible. So much learning happens through practical experience in science so it's finding a way to achieve that with limited practical equipment in a remote scenario. My experiences as a parent during this time have also taught me that it's so important for kids to spend time away from their screens doing practical, physical, creative, exploratory, passionate work. School simply cannot look like eight hours of homework a day!



**Amy Bloodworth**

18 May · 2



Never let anyone tell you that kids can't do anything they set their minds to. My kids took this photo! Changing the world one line of code at a time. You see Cyprus, I see the blood, sweat and tears, hours of work, lines of code, and the hope and joy of 5 teenagers.

**#Cyprus #MissionSpaceLab #AstroPi #ESA**

**#RaspberryPi #TasisComputerScience**

**#ICriedLikeABaby**

**#TeachingIsTheBestJobInTheWorld**



## May

We are just about clinging to the knowledge of what month it is but the days have now merged!

It's been a while since the last update. We are really into the swing of things now. **Brett Merritt** and I have become a lean, mean, planning machine for 6th grade science and the students are loving their engineering challenges. There is a good amount of competition between the classes as the videos of their experiments roll in. It's nice for the kids to feel part of a year group as well as just their class. My computer science students are working through their data from the ISS and writing up their reports. In short, the end is in sight! It's hard to

believe how far we have all come since the early days of lockdown. Restrictions are easing and everything is in bloom. I'm enjoying sitting in the garden out the front of our apartment block. I can see my students skateboarding and walking their dogs, and teachers running or out for a walk. It certainly feels like we are less alone!

We have just heard that elementary and middle schools will be allowed to reopen. As I have a lung condition I will be continuing to teach remotely until the end of this semester and will work with the students who are unable to return yet. I'm so jealous of the live teachers! I'm desperate to get back into my live classroom again, but I understand that it's important to be cautious. For the last two weeks of the semester we will be following discovery projects. I'm a bit apprehensive about tackling something new again; planning new projects always takes far more time than people appreciate.

We have decided to create digital time capsules with the MS students. This is such a monumental period in their lives, in all our lives, that it will be really good to spend some time reflecting on how our lives and the world has changed during this time.

The optimism and positivity of kids never fails to astound me. Their time capsules are filled with wonderful memories of quality time spent with their families, their hopes for the future of the world's climate, and the positives of stepping back from capitalism. Maybe we all needed a bit of enforced time out to work out what's really important. I hope we can carry these memories with us and not let them fade as we find ourselves once again in the post-lockdown world.

### June

We made it! Never before have I felt such exhaustion or longed for the summer break so much. I feel like I could sleep for a week! It's strange finishing the school year without the same closure, no grand goodbyes, no bells rung. My heart breaks for my beautiful Lanterna girls and all the seniors whose special memories were stolen from them by this virus. I had tears in my eyes most of the way through the virtual commencement, for what you had lost but how overwhelmingly stoical you were about it all. What beautiful speeches and sentiments and community spirit. It is often said that what doesn't kill us makes us stronger. The strength of this year's seniors is really something to behold!



*Amy Bloodworth working with elementary school students on a robotics project in fall 2019*

# LIFE ON THE COVID WARDS

*Back in May we interviewed two TASIC grads and medics working in different London hospitals. We hope you find their experiences as moving as we do.*



**Jake Figi '14** is in his final year at the University College London medical school. He has been volunteering on the Covid wards at a major London hospital since his clinical placements were cancelled in mid-March.

## **On being a volunteer medical student in a pandemic**

I think we've been prepared as best we can be. For me, I enjoy and pride myself on my practical skills. Taking bloods, cannulating, suturing, assisting in surgery. Right now my medical knowledge isn't essential—the responsibility for care ends with the doctors I work with, so if I have a gap in what I know they will always be able to fill it (or refer to the hierarchy above us). But, with my clinical skills I can be useful. The most time-consuming jobs are all things I am well equipped to do—a patient who has poor veins can take up to 45 minutes to get the proper blood sample. Or writing a discharge summary is easily another 45-minute job.

## **End of Life (EoL)**

The most difficult thing we come across is death. I think I can speak for everyone that that has been the hardest, and two things in particular.

The first is the separation and isolation for the patients and their families. Elderly, dying patients tend to have old and vulnerable spouses and even children. When someone is EoL we offer the family a chance to come into the hospital. Because I work on a Covid ward the rules are only one person may be in at a time for up to 15 minutes. Swaps can happen every hour. And this is only offered to EoL patients. But, because of the age and vulnerability of the family, many wisely opt to not come. So, the family is stuck at home while their husband or wife, father or mother is dying. And that person dies alone. We try our best to get around this. We were donated a tablet and I've set it up so we can use Skype. But the usual protocol is that I'll go in, check on the patient, make them look a bit better (comb their hair, sit them up) and then a colleague will pass me the tablet and I'll introduce myself to the family. I'll warn them that their relative will not be very responsive, if they have a mask on for oxygen, or if they are agitated, and then I'll hold the tablet for as long as they need to essentially say their last goodbyes.

The second difficulty around the deaths is when we have young people dying. Specifically, we had one young person (mid-30s) come in before Covid even hit the UK. They ended up catching it while in hospital, recovering, then a few days before discharge they got a separate infection. They needed surgery but would require an intensive treatment unit (ITU) bed to be allowed the surgery. The ITU team deemed them unfit for a bed on ITU so they were stuck on the ward with us with no options. They had already deteriorated severely and all we could do was work closely with the palliative care team to try to make them comfortable. Our patient held on for quite a few days and every day it was terrible watching the suffering. A few of us on the doctor's team would help the nurses with changing the patient just to try to give an extra helping hand. This patient didn't die from COVID, but they certainly died because of it.



## Learning Points

One of the biggest things is just learning how to be a doctor. I know I am not a doctor of course, but since lockdown I've learned more about how to be a doctor than the last 4.5 years of med school have taught me. I got to put into practice the compassion, empathy, communication, and so many more skills we are taught to develop. Holding the hand of a scared old lady who is in pain and waiting to die. Bringing in a tablet with Churchill's VE day speech on the 75th anniversary of the event to a patient who remembers listening to it live. Telling families how their relatives are doing in a way that they can understand and in a way that gives them the appropriate amount of hope or expectation. Further to that, practice in keeping my head calm and my hands steady in emergencies. Close experience

with death and the process of dying. This has taught me a great deal about how to help someone who's dying. What to look for in their pain or movements so they can be given more medication. How to make them more comfortable and give them as much dignity as we can provide.

## On TASIS

I never was the most academic at TASIS. I think I maybe barely scraped into the Dean's List once in middle school. But for me TASIS was my cultural education, and I've benefited from that nearly every day since I left. And it's so relevant in a place like London where multiculturalism is everywhere you look. When it comes to medicine, it just adds to the confidence in interacting with people from other places.

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**Shila Tursini '05** studied medicine at University College London before getting her M.Sc. at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. She had been working as a clinical fellow in reproductive health in London before being shifted to a major hospital to help with Covid patients.



## How it feels to be working on the frontline

From a team perspective, it has been challenging. I work with different people every day and I am very much a stranger so it has been quite lonely. It is a weird combination of scary, heartbreaking tragedy, and lonely work. At the same time, there is a sense of wanting to be at work and helping people. There is also definitely a dichotomy between being at work, where so many lives are being lost, and then coming home and seeing people sitting in the parks, drinking beers and ignoring social distancing. I have been asked on several occasions "is it actually serious" and "I think the government is inflating the numbers of deaths", and I have no answers to this. This is a tragedy that is unseen by many groups of people.

The mood has changed greatly since the beginning. Speaking to some colleagues on ITU, the first two weeks [of Covid] were some of the hardest in their career. I think there was a lot of fear and anxiety at the start, hearing about shortage in protective gear, uncertainty about this virus, our own mortality, and how to treat patients affected by this. But we have developed protocols and support systems so the mood and the job has improved. We feel that we can

tackle the issues a bit better and we know a bit more about what to expect. Because we have redeployed so many doctors, it is actually really well-staffed, which allows us to focus on each patient better, carry out conversations with families, and look after each other a bit more. But there is definitely a fear of a second wave and what that might look like.

### **On being prepared for a pandemic**

A few years ago I started doing a diploma in conflict and catastrophe medicine. Strangely, I find that it is the concepts more than the actual information to be useful. They taught us a different approach to medicine, more from the point of view of military medics, and they talked about managing infectious diseases like cholera in unstable settings. I think a lot of the principles should have been applied early in this pandemic management.

### **These are weird times**

My daily saying is, “these are weird times”. Everything is weird, all of this is unbelievable. Certain governments’ responses to this situation have been unbelievable. The amount of loss, the tragedy that has affected so many people, and how people cannot grieve as they normally would be able to. People not being able to attend funerals of their child who died alone in intensive care. Losing your patient despite having used all the best supportive therapy and medication available. Your patient never seeing your face when you speak to them because you are wearing layers of face masks and visors. Nurses unable to go to the bathroom for many hours because they are in full PPE (protective equipment). Politicians who have never even come close to PPE telling us how to use it and that we should only use one per shift. Almost running out of oxygen in a modern hospital. Approaching national shortages on critical care medication. I never thought these things would happen when working in a developed country.

Honestly, I think the most important skill during this pandemic was humility. It did not matter what grade of doctor, what specialty or what your views were,

at the start of your shift, you just had to fulfill that role to the best of your ability.

This pandemic has definitely shown some incredible sides of society; people coming together to sew scrubs and make visors has been so touching. I have been lucky that I have not directly experienced PPE shortages but I know a lot of colleagues who have and it is unbelievable. Again, as doctors, we are told to treat every patient as if they were a member of our family, and I would extend this advice to the government, to treat NHS staff as if we were part of their family. Would they accept such PPE shortages for their loved ones?

### **On TASIS**

I do not know if others would agree with this, but TASIS taught me a lot of self-discipline and humility that have helped me every day though this pandemic. Regarding self-discipline, I definitely do not have as much as I would like, but TASIS taught me tricks to getting my job done and about the importance of completing my responsibilities.

I think the key thing I learned at TASIS, however, was humility. I made so many mistakes, as you should when you are a teenager, and I was supported and guided through them by wonderful teachers and friends. TASIS taught me about teamwork and that there are times when you need to be a leader, and times when you need to be a good follower. It definitely taught me the importance of a good attitude, even when that is the last thing you want to have.

Also, the ability to live with people from all different cultures and backgrounds has definitely been helpful as I’ve worked with different teams every day during this pandemic. This is going to sound so cheesy, but I was lucky enough to meet Mrs. Fleming when I was at TASIS and I truly admired the passion she threw into everything she did. On darker days, I try and channel some of that unadulterated passion into what I do. If that fails, I follow her second tip to a long and happy life: Jack Daniels.

# What else can we do for them?

Help make the world more sustainable?  
And our portfolio too?







For some of life's questions, you're not alone.  
Together we can find an answer.

# A NEW CREST



1956



1960



1969



1973



1999

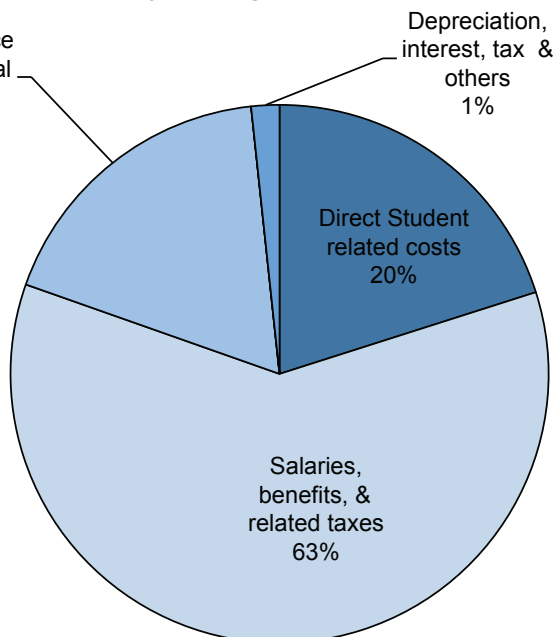
In late January, Tasis announced a new crest for the Tasis family of schools. The impetus for the new crest sprang from the [Tasis Foundation Board's](#) desire to see the Tasis motto—*Verum, Bonum, Pulchrum* (Truth, Goodness, Beauty)—included within the crest itself. With the support of the Tasis Foundation Board, we worked with [Weymouth Griffin Design](#), an American design firm, to find a way to weave the motto into the existing crest. Weymouth Griffin's illustrators also redrew the four symbols on the crest—the tower (culture), the lamp (wisdom), the sun (truth), and the book (knowledge)—made minor adjustments to the typography, and modified the color layout while retaining the blue-and-red color scheme that defines the Canton of Ticino and inspired the original Tasis crest in 1956.

Blue and red disappeared from the Tasis crest in 1960 and remained absent until 1999, which is the last time the crest was altered. Kate Gonzalez, Director of Alumni Affairs at the time, discussed the evolution of the crest in the introduction to [that year's Tasis Today](#), noting, "The red, blue, and white colors reflect our ties to the United States, Great Britain, Switzerland, and the Canton Ticino, the original inspiration for our first seal in 1956."

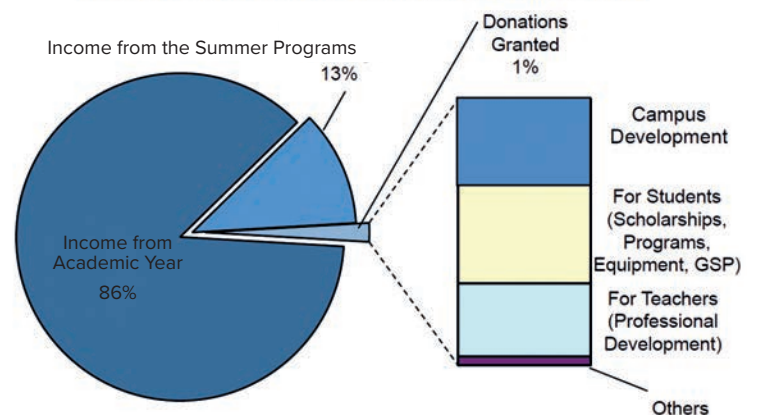


## Financial Report

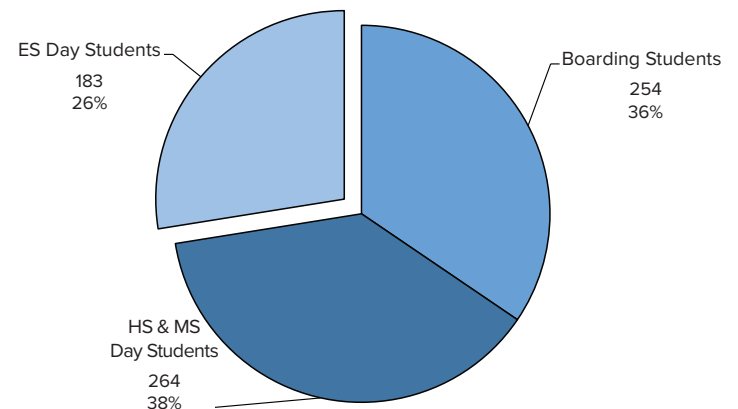
### Tasis Operating costs - June 30, 2020



### Tasis Operating Income and Fundraising 2019-2020



### Tasis Students 2019-2020, average number 701



# GREEN TASIS



On September 20, 2019, millions of students and workers in more than 100 nations walked out of their schools or workplaces and took to the streets to demand an end to the age of fossil fuels. While TASIS understands the intent behind this global climate strike and sympathizes with those who chose to participate, the School opted to move forward with its own Day of Climate Action—an intentional and educational approach designed to help each student reflect upon how we can all be better stewards of the environment.

“Inspired by the vision of its faculty, TASIS chose to dedicate a day to classroom instruction in all subjects and all grade levels on environmental issues followed by specific actions, such as

launching improvements to the School’s recycling program, that can help move TASIS closer to carbon neutrality,” Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff said. “These initiatives are in keeping with Mrs. Fleming’s dream of TASIS playing a role in making the world a better place.”

## Day of Climate Action, Week of Climate Activism

On the morning of September 20, the High School held a special assembly that featured a video of Greta Thunberg addressing the United Nations, introductory remarks from the Headmaster, and an engaging keynote presentation by Dr. William



Sawyer, a senior computational scientist at the Swiss National Supercomputing Centre who has worked tirelessly to inform the public about the need for drastic action to address climate change. Tasis seniors **Daisy Bachofen '20** and **Ella Hauptman '20** spoke about the importance of recycling and conservation, and a preview of follow-up events provided by Tasis Green Team leaders **Dr. Jill Sawyer-Price, Valerie Bijur Carlson, and Keith Izsa**. The day's events even made the local RSI news program *Il Quotidiano!* (See the News archive on our website to watch.)

The Day of Climate Action was followed by a week of awareness and activism (a throwback to Environmental Week; see below) with several anchor events, including a sustainable foods-themed dinner, a community nature run, and the installation of new recycling bins around campus, all designed to foster collaboration among teachers, administrators, and students.

Our Elementary School science students debated food chain situations, weather phenomena, and human impact. ES art students made climate change signposts to plant around campus and drew "I love my planet" pictures, and math students examined mathematical data that supports the science behind climate change.

Middle School English students collected dying plants and replanted them, brought in plants from home to care for, and created a garden theme in their classroom. Art students created flowers made from plastic bottles.

Our High School science students calculated their personal carbon footprints, examined how climate change affects transpiration in plants, and studied atmosphere modeling. Theater students did a Broadway Green Alliance exploration and acted out environmentally-themed monologues and scenes. Spanish students prepared oral presentations about climate change. And photography students created the wonderful poster on page 45.

## Earth Week 2002

### Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April

**19.30 Toad Patrol** (Meet in the Biology Lab. Return before check in.)  
Come to help save toads and frogs near the School. They migrate from the forests where they hibernate underground during the winter to local breeding ponds. See the toads, and the breeding pond. This is only open to those students who have not yet come this year. Tell your dorm resident that you will be out until about 21.30. Dress warmly. If it is raining, dress appropriately as we will still be going.



### Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> April

#### Environmental "Green" Dress Code Day

Get into the environmental spirit !! Today you should wear green !! Win a prize for the best / most green clothes. If you are out of dress code and not wearing green (a pair of green socks and blue jeans is not enough!!) you will be asked to make a donation to an environmental project and will have to change your clothes.

#### School Assembly

The Environment Club Presentation - Tasis Students and the Environment

Selection of teams competing in the Environmental Knowledge Bowl.

Prizes for Environmental Green Dress Code Day

Why a Fast to Help the World ?

#### 18:30 Environmental Knowledge Bowl (Salon)

First Round

This annual competition between 2 houses begins today.

Come to support your house team.



## The Original Tasis Eco Warrior

**Howard Stickley** had Tasis thinking eco long before it was en vogue. Howard came to Tasis in 1981, in the early days of environmental awareness. Not long before that, he had taken environmental sciences courses at university in the UK at a time when there was only one part-time environmental newspaper reporter in the whole country. "Few people knew anything about the environment in those days," he recalls. He explains how he grew the activism movement at Tasis.

A love of the outdoors, a concern for the environment, and humanitarian issues have been an important part of my time at TASIS, and shaped my involvement with trips into the great outdoors, environmental education, and confronting poverty and inequality through development. **Jay Long** and I organised the first Environmental Awareness Day in the early 80s, and the Ethiopian famine led to me organising a Famine Awareness Day a few years later.

The TASIS Environment Club was created around that time as an after-school activity with numerous trips and activities in the local area with the World Wildlife Fund. By 1991, the Environment Club was a well-established and popular activity and the enthusiasm for environmental issues led to a successful Environmental Awareness Day.

TASIS teachers said at the time that they could not teach about environmental topics in their classes as there were few resources available. There was obviously a need for increased education about the environment outside of the classroom. After a sabbatical year, during which I researched environmental education projects around the world, I returned to TASIS eager to develop environmental awareness on campus. In 1994, we began the annual Environmental Awareness Week which was held every year from 1994 to 2004. By 2004, environmental issues had spread throughout the curriculum and teaching resources were more readily available so it was decided that a full week of activities was no longer necessary.

Around that time, the Cancer and Malaria Educational Organisation (CAMEO) Club, which was concerned with first world/third world medical problems, was started by **Masa Yo '04**, and my focus moved to humanitarian issues and the role that volunteering and responsible ecotourism can play in conservation and development in third world countries. I began to offer trips to Zambia and Botswana.

## Sustainable TASIS, 2020 and Beyond

*TASIS Master Architect **David Mayernik** discusses the eco credentials of his stunning building designs*

From the first master plan of 1996, the TASIS campus has been developed as a sustainable community. At the broadest levels, that has to do with land use—preserving open green space by concentrating buildings into a village environment—and the related aspect of walkability. Developing the campus on sloping ground makes the experience of moving between the buildings not only exciting, but healthful. The campus is built to be durable, with ecological clay block walls as the standard form of out-of-the-ground construction, and timber roof framing; not only appealing for their traditional character, these systems of construction are long-lasting, sustainably produced, and non-toxic, not to mention attractive and sympathetic with their environment. Privileging natural light and air starts with building planning—relatively narrow footprints and multiple exposures facilitate daylighting and cross-circulation—and extends to operable windows and shutters. As part of a group of buildings crowning the campus village, the MacDermid Center will weave together positive open space, a variety of exposures, and the enriching ambience of music in the piazza to complete TASIS's sustainable community of buildings, a beacon of prudent planning and a model of how we can live together and with the environment.



*David Mayernik's Global Village has been designed with sustainability in mind.*



# FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

*While many alumni count TASIS as an influence that has shaped their lives, few can pinpoint the exact moment when their lives are inexorably changed. But **Todd Drummond '87** remembers exactly when it was: a spring break trip to Russia in 1985.*



*In January of 2020, Todd became the Director of Assessment and Education Services at the American Councils for International Education in Washington, DC. Before that, he was a Principal Researcher at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) in Washington, DC. His most recent international development work has focused on Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan. Prior to this he was the Acting Director of the Office of International Studies in Education at Michigan State University and in 2011, his Ph.D. dissertation won the Gill-Chin Award as the most outstanding dissertation in global studies at Michigan State University. “I can say for sure that, like many TASIS alumni, my TASIS experience shaped my future path,” Todd says. Read on to learn more about Todd’s fascinating life.*

**It seems your life’s trajectory was decided on a 1985 trip with Bill Eichner to the Soviet Union. Can you tell us about that trip, and what about it made you so fascinated by the country?**

That TASIS spring break trip led by **Bill Eichner** was an incredible adventure. In the spring of 1985, Communist Party Chief Konstantin Chernenko had just passed away and Gorbachev had either not been announced as his successor, or was perhaps just announced as the new party leader. In any event, those were the last days of the Soviet Union, times of turbulence and uncertainty. Little did I suspect that nine years later I would move to Kyrgyzstan (a former Soviet Republic in Central Asia), where I would learn Russian, get married, and eventually stay for 12 years.

At the time of our trip, there was still a sense of mystery about the Soviet Union. We were probably the last generation to be raised with a real fear of the Cold War turning hot, so it was incredible to discover the friendliness of the Russian people. Of course, the history—the Romanov palaces, Orthodox churches, and museums were all fantastic. There were also many mis-adventures during those two and half weeks: for example, the awkward communication between us and Russian black marketeers who tried to buy our jeans—right on the spot! The opaque politicized answers of our official guides puzzled us. Then, there was the stuffing of all kinds of Soviet military souvenirs into our undergarments (amulets, patches, pins, hats, watches, belt buckles, etc.) in order to get through customs upon exit. We thought we were real James Bond types, or smugglers on a dangerous mission. Of course, things were not so funny when a classmate’s passport disappeared while we were clearing customs (another classmate discovered it in her purse when we touched down in Austria). As we departed, she was taken into custody and left behind! At the time it was scary and high drama—especially for her—but upon her release from her adventure she became the “legendary spy hero of Montagnola”, a survivor of real





*Todd and his wife Natasha*

KGB interrogations! I was certainly intrigued enough by my experience to want to go back and I pursued some Russian history courses in college.

### **Take us through a timeline of your life, from leaving TASIS to today.**

Since completing my sophomore year at TASIS in 1985, international adventures have continued to be a big part of my life. The TASIS experience certainly shaped my future, both in terms of my outlook on life and my career choices; TASIS plants seeds that come to fruition later in life. After TASIS, I never thought twice about going off to live in distant countries, or the challenges of navigating different cultures or languages, it just became something I took for granted and treated as normal. Like many TASIS students, I studied abroad again in college and studied European history and foreign languages. I did an internship with the State Department in Turkey right after graduation. After completing a master's degree, I spent three years in the Peace Corps teaching English in a small town in northern Kyrgyzstan. For me, making the choice to serve in the Peace Corps seemed like a natural next step in my journey to explore the world. Peace Corps was indeed "the toughest job I ever loved," but I never hesitated for a second to join. Peace Corps service was challenging physically, emotionally, and intellectually, and required lots of patience during an intense cross-cultural adaptation process.

After completing Peace Corps service, between 1998 and 2000 I had the privilege of leading US State Department-funded educational exchange programs in Central Asia. From 2002-2005, I led the introduction

of a new university admissions system in Kyrgyzstan on a USAID-funded project, and was honored to receive an award from the president of the republic, Askar Akayev, for my stewardship of this work. After leaving Central Asia in 2006 I completed my Ph.D. and went back into international development work.

### **How was your philosophy on international education shaped by Mrs. Fleming and your experience at TASIS?**

TASIS is the ultimate immersion into a world of powerful experiential learning at an age where the mind is open to the possibilities. It would be difficult to replicate this kind of learning in one's home culture. I think the shaping that goes on, however, is an evolutionary process as you mature, at least it was for me. I can't say that I did not appreciate TASIS at the time, but I do recall that I was not happy about being sent to TASIS at the start of my sophomore year: Giving up my friends, the opportunity to get a car at the age of 16 in the US—these things seemed like such priorities. By the end of my sophomore year, however, it was sinking in just what an amazing experience TASIS was: the cross-cultural friendships, the weekend and in-program travel opportunities, the incredible learning about the world. I definitely left TASIS with a sense of profound sadness.

Obviously, international education has remained a big part of my life and I have had opportunities to support others on their journeys as Mrs. Fleming did for us (in smaller ways of course!). I have had opportunities to work in Africa, Eurasia, Eastern and Southern Asia, and Central America in the areas of literacy assessment and have also led study abroad in places such as Russia and Vietnam. I am an absolute believer in the power of the type of education that only experiences like TASIS can provide and I have grown more and more appreciative of TASIS and Mrs. Fleming's gift to us over the years.

### **Are there a few common tenets of education that you've found that exist in every culture and country? How can these help promote cross-cultural understanding?**

Cross-cultural understanding comes through opportunities to interact, live together, work together,

and learn together. I do believe there is a common desire in most cultures for education through profound cross-cultural experiences. What differs, however, is that for most students in the world, such opportunities are limited. It was not until I began to spend time in less-developed countries that I began to appreciate how privileged we are for having had the TASIS experience. Because I first experienced Kyrgyzstan through my Peace Corps adventures, I was able to see some realities I would not have seen living an expatriate lifestyle in the capital. The 1990s were difficult times. I remember needing to wear my winter coat and hat inside my classroom while teaching. Books and supplies were in limited supply, and teachers worked multiple jobs to survive. While the Soviet education system had many good qualities, the students in school after the collapse faced challenges their parents did not face. In the winter, food choices were quite limited. I spent a lot of time recovering from various illnesses.

The collapse of the Soviet Union, particularly the economic and social instability, however, was of course hardest on the people in my community, not me. In addition, most of my friends, students, and colleagues had tragic life experiences in their families that shaped their world views. The older generations had lived through famine, war, political persecution, mass unemployment, and lived difficult lives compared to what I had known. I certainly learned a lot from the people around me.

And, despite all their difficulties, my students and colleagues saw the opportunity to interact with me as their cross-cultural opportunity. I was the first English speaker most of them had ever met, including the English teachers. It was clear that they shared the same desire to learn about me as I did to learn about them. They spoiled me and showered me with lots of attention. How true it is that sometimes those with the least to give, give the most? The difference between my experience and theirs was that I was afforded the opportunity to learn while living in their culture, while most of them would never leave their hometown. It makes you appreciate all you have been given. I think as international educators, we need to do more to provide a broader spectrum of the world's population

the same type of learning opportunities we have had.

**You've spent a lot of time in Kyrgyzstan; what about the country (and indeed the region) do you find so compelling?**

Kyrgyzstan has been called the "Switzerland of Central Asia" and it is an incredibly beautiful place. There are snow-capped mountains and scenic mountain lakes throughout most of the country, a great place for adventures off the beaten path. My wife and I love to be outdoors, hiking, and fishing, and Kyrgyzstan offers so much in this regard. The people are resilient, tough, yet incredibly warm and unimaginably hospitable. One of the greatest joys of my life is Russian literature and I would not have the ability to read so many great works in the original language without my years spent studying Russian.

Perhaps a bit shocking to some, I find Kyrgyzstan to be a place of great social freedom on the interpersonal, daily level. Other TASIS alumni who live outside the US can probably relate to that. The divisiveness and polarization of political life in North America has increased to a point where I can honestly say that people in some otherwise "authoritarian" countries in some ways have more actual freedom of speech than we now enjoy, at least in terms of what can be openly discussed in public. In Kyrgyzstan, I found civility around discussions and debates with acquaintances and colleagues. I am not talking about freedom to criticize "the state," but freedom to argue your views on politics, religion, etc. in the company of those who don't agree with you. Friendships are not based on political party associations and no one ever looked around to see which way the wind was blowing before they shared their views. Most people there judge you based on your character, how you treat your friends, your parents, whether or not you are honest or reliable. There is far less concern about your "personal politics," which has become so acrimonious in North America. In that sense there is freedom for deep discussions on topics that matter, and a very engaging intellectual life to be had. Perhaps the above reflections speak more to what has become of us here in North America, but it is what has stuck to me in the years since being back and what I miss the most about Kyrgyzstan.

We know our children's future is being rewritten. What will change in years to come? We cannot say, nor can we be sure that traditional ideas will do for today and do for tomorrow. Is sustainable investing the solution for them?



**For some of life's questions, you're not alone.  
Together we can find an answer.**



# WHEN TIME STOPPED

*Ariana Neumann '88 on researching her New York Times-bestselling book*



The canon of Holocaust literature runs deep. Readers remain fascinated by this point in our collective history and the millions of silenced voices; perhaps it is our familiarity with what happened during this horrifying time that gives us the appetite to learn more, as if another perspective might hold the key to how mankind could have allowed this to happen.

Some voices, however, refuse to be silenced. Hans Neumann's is one of them.

Hans's story is a detective story, a thriller, and a family saga, with his daughter **Ariana Neumann '88** at the helm. And while Hans' story spans nearly a century, Ariana's begins in 1979, with a curious 8-year-old girl who is obsessed with Enid Blyton and Nancy Drew and the Hardy Boys, who forms a detective club with her cousins and discovers an ID card, with her father's photograph, a stamp with Hitler's profile, and a name which was not her father's.

So began a decades-long journey of discovery that culminates in the fascinating book *When Time Stopped: A Memoir of My Father's War and What Remains* (Scribner, 2020), which has received countless excellent reviews from the likes of Michael Palin, John le Carré, and the New York Times Book Review. Written with the

pace and twists of the best of thrillers, the book is a glorious family saga that follows Hans from his home in Prague to assuming a new identity in Berlin where he hid in plain sight, and across the sea to Caracas, Venezuela, where he spent the next five decades of his life. Ariana didn't even know her father was Jewish; she had gone to a Catholic school before attending TASIS.

"This whole thing wasn't originally meant to be a book," Ariana says. "It was very much a personal journey. I've spent my whole life trying to solve the mystery of my father." While Ariana's father told her nothing about his experiences while he was alive, he left her a box of letters, documents, and objects that were the starting points for her research. She found the box on her first trip to Caracas after her father's death, a few months after the Twin Towers fell and the birth of her first child. It took nearly a decade to be in the head space to take this story on; it's as if Ariana knew the enormity of the task ahead.

In 2010, Ariana started asking questions. And she began to discover an incredible story of a man who somehow survived by pretending to be someone else, of a family that lost 25 of 34 family members in the Holocaust, and of the incredible reach of kindness during that dark time. "It is incredibly unusual because most Jews who escaped hid or were able to go further south or west. Very, very few decided to go to Berlin to hide in plain sight." Hans was 22, incredibly bold, and a bit of a prankster. "Once I decided I was going to solve the mystery, I had to learn everything about this younger version of my father," Ariana says. "Stepping into that persona of detective allowed me to leave aside a little bit of me as the daughter, of me as the granddaughter of these people who had horrendously difficult lives."

Boxes began arriving, filled with letters and files and history, from her grandparents' home in the Czech countryside and from long-lost cousins and aunts. She had everything translated and began piecing together a daunting story. Ariana contacted everyone she could with varying results. In her book, she writes, "Memories, like

misfiled documents, are not always where you expect to find them.” She would spend hours speaking to people, often without success; “we have these narrative threads we weave through our lives and we tie them together in ways that are magical, but not always logical,” Ariana says. “It’s difficult to figure out what you have to ask, you have to let people reminisce and talk. But if you let people connect the dots they need to connect, eventually you will remind them and discover something. Memories are not linear; they are just a mosaic.”

Part of what motivated Ariana was her anger at what had happened. “It was such an injustice that all these lives, not only my family’s, but all these other lives, were cut short. I felt that if I put them into a book and immortalized them in that way, they would get a little bit of their life back...just a tiny iota of a life, but somehow it felt like a victory against these horrendous people that silenced so many.” Keeping the story factual was important. Ariana was determined to keep the depictions of the cities and the camps true to what they were, and her father’s telling of his time in Berlin was taken directly from his journals. “I couldn’t fictionalize the history,” she says. “You think of the numbers and you’re horrified, but it’s the individual stories that are largely untold, the tiny little daily battles that they fought, the tiny daily horrors that you miss when you read the history books.”

The story extends to the time after the war, when her father arrived in Venezuela in 1949 to a place that was open and accepting of refugees, and a place where he thrived. In his lifetime, Hans founded and headed several companies and cultural organizations, including the Zulia Contemporary Arts Museum Foundation. “He was incredibly grateful to his country,” Ariana says. “He wanted his philanthropy to focus on ideas, art, and education.” Despite the atrocities he witnessed, he was able to give back to a place that gave him a new life.

Her father’s new life included a new wife, Ariana’s mother, and then Ariana, who grew up among a legendary collection of modern art and parties that included intellectuals and cultural leaders. Things between her parents were beginning to deteriorate when Ariana was 13 and her best friend was sent to boarding school in England; Ariana decided she wanted to go to boarding school, too. Ariana’s mother, who had been to boarding school in England herself, refused to let Ariana even

consider the UK, so they decided on Switzerland, visiting a dozen schools before choosing TASIS. “I liked the freedom of being at an American school, and Lugano is so beautiful, and the campus is just stunning. And my father was adamant that my school had to have computers, and TASIS taught computer science in 1984. He was always thinking of the future and potential.” She attended school from September 1984 until graduation in 1988.

“The culture Mrs. Fleming created at TASIS was so open and international. I’m a bit of a mutt—I’m Venezuelan, but I don’t really look Venezuelan, and I’m Catholic, but I’m not really Catholic as it turns out I’m half-Jewish,” she says with a laugh. “I had always felt like an outsider everywhere, and TASIS was completely embracing of everyone, no matter where you came from, and no matter what you believed in. As long as you were open, kind to others and wanted to learn, you were fine,” she recalls. “There are very few times in my life where I haven’t felt like a mutt, and one of them was at TASIS.”

Ariana is still in touch with many of her classmates, some of whom she was able to see during her book launch events in the US early in the year. A particularly lovely story involves Ariana’s senior year English teacher, **Marnie Stetson**, who won an advanced reader’s copy of the book through a Goodreads contest and saw Ariana at her launch in New York City. “She had seen my name, tried for the book, and got it! She came to hear me speak and it was really, really lovely.” Ariana is also still in touch with her history teacher and advisor, **Steve Loesche**, and her very first ESL teacher, **Howard Stickley**.

“TASIS really resonates with me,” she says. “I describe it in the book as a place where I was really happy, and I was. It was a wonderful place to be.”

There is great bravery in Ariana’s writing, which is emotional without being overly sentimental, despite the closeness of the story. “It makes you realize that we’re in control of so little that you have to focus on that little bit of light, that little bit of happiness and joy.” She cites a letter of her grandfather’s which talked about food that had fallen to the ground, but he snatched it up and ate it anyway. “That’s what life is about. You focus on the solutions, not the fact that it’s covered in dirt. You can have beauty in the same place where you have the most terrific darkness.”

# PUSH-BUTTON INGENUITY

*"If you want to awaken betterment, I believe what Thomas Edison believed... You have to fail your way to success."*



So says **Stan Sehested '71**, whose decades of experience as a corporate communication and public affairs executive has led to the publication of his book *Push-Button Ingenuity*, which provides insight into innovation, creativity, and techniques to "turn brainstorming sessions into answer-fests".

Stan, who lives with his wife in Texas, grew up in an expat family and lived all over the world. He learned Arabic and French as a child which came in handy

when working for several global energy, petrochemical, and media companies, and during trips to Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. This has given him unique insight into how creativity and communication can connect people.

So why put your professional life lessons into a book, and why now? We asked Stan to tell us how it came about.

**TASIS Today:** "Communication" is a particularly interesting field for those of us who have lived in numerous countries or in communities like TASIS which include people from many different places; what works with one group of people might fail with others. How has your upbringing impacted the way you view communications, and have your experiences with other cultures led to you becoming such a renowned communications professional?

**Stan Sehested:** Having lived my formative years in many foreign cultures has affected my outlook. First, it has made me very patriotic about the US. Being American is a great privilege. I've seen how different cultures place emphasis on different things. In the US we value diversity. In many foreign cultures there is a drive for more homogeneous thinking. While living and traveling abroad, I kept seeing desires to do things in a traditional way. I resisted that thinking and favored individuality and independent thought. Too much insistence on organizational control and productivity will eventually stall problem-solving. You can't move farther and faster by just perfecting the "same-old same-old". I guess I developed an aversion

to "group think." Writing my book was about unwinding all the misnomers out there about how to arrive at ingenious solutions to problems. If you want to awaken betterment, try hard and be explicit about what you want to accomplish. Tackle problems with a fresh, beginner's mind.

**TT: Why is creativity important to businesses operating in 2020? How might creativity and communication help businesses survive and, ultimately, thrive post-Covid?**

**SS:** Why do we need creativity and innovation? Two reasons: To successfully compete, and to make betterment happen. Change is happening fast, and we have to keep up with trends like mobile computing, the trend toward accessing things versus owning them, reorienting industry to adopt low quantity, just-in-time digital fabrication schemes versus mass production, etc. Getting on a continuous improvement track allows you to create new and improved products, invent better services, create new technologies, develop novel business models, improve policies, communicate more persuasively, and lots more. Without creative thinking, we are doomed to mediocrity and complacency. Honestly, to author new things in the face of so much blistering and ongoing change, we need more than logic. The first step is getting permission to innovate, then learning the techniques to think differently.

**TT: Turning things back to TASIS, how do you feel your experiences there have impacted your life?**

**SS:** My TASIS experience imprinted many things on me. Respect for instructors and scholarship; the vitality of teamwork in all things, not just in sports. I played basketball at TASIS with a passion (we killed Leysin and dominated the round ball tournament in Milan!). I learned to do the little things well at TASIS so I was better prepared to tackle the big things, and I learned in life you're gonna need help. To get where you want and need to go, you have to befriend and respect others. Maybe most of all, TASIS taught me to never quit. Stand your ground. Be resolved to set high goals and be someone who will step up when times or circumstances are hard.

*Push-Button Ingenuity* can be found at [Amazon.com/books](https://www.amazon.com/books).



# POETRY LAUNCH

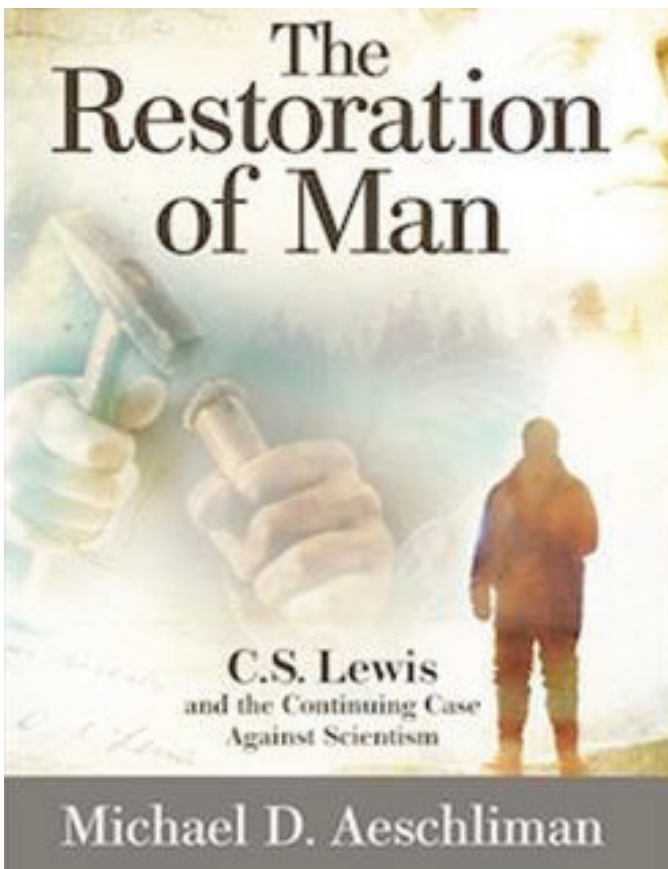


Congratulations to former TESIS teacher **Kiki Petrosino** on the publication of her fourth poetry book, *White Blood: A Lyric of Virginia* (Sarabande, 2020). The collection is receiving high praise and was named a must-read poetry book of 2020 by The Millions and a National Poetry Month book for 2020. Kiki was named a National Endowment for the Arts Fellow in 2019 and received the Al Smith Fellowship Award from the Kentucky Arts Council. Kiki is Professor of Poetry at the University of Virginia. Her work has been widely published and she has received the renowned Pushcart Prize.

## NEW EDITION FOR AESCHLIMAN

Congratulations are in order for TESIS Foundation Board member **Dr. Michael D. Aeschliman**, whose first book—*The Restoration of Man: C.S. Lewis and the Continuing Case Against Scientism*—was re-released in the fall of 2019. The new English-language edition was published to glowing reviews in National Review. A French edition (Paris: Pierre Téqui) of Dr. Aeschliman's book includes reprints of several of his essays on French writers.

A widely published author (about 185 publications) on both sides of the Atlantic in English, French, and Italian, Dr. Aeschliman is Professor Emeritus of Education at Boston University. He holds a B.A., M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University in New York City. Dr. Aeschliman retired in January from his role as Professor of Anglophone Culture at the University of Italian Switzerland, where he has taught since its foundation in 1996, marking the end of his distinguished 50-year career in education.



*Dr. Michael Aeschliman with his wife, Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63*



# WE CELEBRATE A LEGACY GIFT



We continue to be grateful and humbled by the incredible legacy gift from **Donald MacDermid '61** that will build the Donald MacDermid Center and establish an endowment fund for the Fine and Performing Arts. The building will provide world-class practice spaces for our students as well as a glorious Piazza delle Arti which will join the spaces between the MacDermid Center and Şahenk Fine Arts Center, giving our students an inspiring outdoor space for community gathering. Donald understands our commitment to *verum, bonum, pulchrum*, and his remarkable **goodness** and generosity will ensure that students have a **beautiful** space to learn and find their **truth**.

## HEADS TOGETHER

Three former headmasters gathered in Maine on September 10th to celebrate Mrs. Fleming's birthday! Pictured left to right are **Peter Stevens, Linn Stevens, Sharon Creech, Anne Frost, Lyle Rigg, and Chris Frost**.



## PLAN B WEDDING

On August 14th, 2020 **Permele Doyle '05** married William Garner Robinson of New Orleans at her family home in Millbrook, New York. Their wedding was meant to be a grand affair in Puglia with a large group of family and friends, but the couple adjusted plans to have an Episcopal service on the steps of St. Peter's Church, which Permele attended as a child. This was followed by an outdoor luncheon for 25 at her parents' home. "Plan B was even more special than Plan A," Permele wrote. The couple will live between New Orleans and New York.

We featured Permele in the 2018 edition of TASIS Today. She is the founder of Billion Dollar Boy, an influencer marketing agency that employs 50 people in New York and London and is a global leader in the fascinating world of Instagram and social media marketing.



# CHANGES ON CAMPUS

*Things are looking a little different on the Collina d'Oro!*

In early 2020, Ca Pietra, the stone house in the middle of the field that has been home to Admissions, IT, Summer Programs, Communications, the Health Center, College Counseling, and a variety of administrators throughout the years, was bulldozed to make way for an expanded parking area with room for large buses to enter and safely turn around. This had been in the cards for many years, and in fall 2019 many offices around campus were shifted around, including our Alumni Office, which has moved from Casa Fleming to Villa de Nobili.

The new Alumni Office is located to the right of the entrance to de Nobili when approaching from the Casa Fleming steps, in the old science labs underneath the Headmaster's office. We share an entrance with the Summer Programs Admissions team. This lovely space is filled with light and it's wonderful having large windows along one of the busiest thoroughfares on campus—we are in the thick of it now!

In recent years, TASIS has expanded its campus security so it's not possible to just wander the campus. We welcome your visits, but it's helpful to know when you will be coming so we can ensure someone from our team is around to request guest passes and show you around. Email us at [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch), or fill out the campus visitor form on the website. If your visit is impromptu, ask the duty person at the main gate to call the Alumni Office and we will do our best to look after you.

All of the above is, of course, subject to any current Covid restrictions, so please get in touch so we can discuss possibilities.

Aside from the new Alumni Office, de Nobili is also home to the new Health Center with private beds and plenty of space for wellness, the Learning Resource Center, and the College Counseling offices. The old College Counseling office in Certenago is



now a spacious conference room. Casa Fleming is home to our Admissions team; **Bill Eichner** and **Emily McKee** share the space that was once **Mrs. Fleming's** and then **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman's** office. Upstairs is home to the rest of the Admissions and Communications teams.

Some planned campus developments had to be put on hold due to Covid-19, such as the installation of the new sports field. Since summer programs were cancelled as no non-EU students and staff were allowed into Switzerland, we could do major restoration work on campus, such as moving the communal sewage pipes, replacing all of the heavy plaster ceilings that covered ancient beams on the ground floor of de Nobili, and installing 16 new bathrooms in Monticello, along with more exciting developments such as a new ice rink on the lake-side of Belvedere. Plans are to eventually build a new swimming pool and basketball court on the hill beyond the new parking lot as soon as possible

You truly have to see the campus to believe it, and we welcome you to visit anytime. Our multilingual alumni team includes **Yvonne Procyk**, **Zuleika Tipismana**, and **Michelle Arslanian**, and we would be delighted to welcome you home!



# HONOR ROLL OF DONORS 2019-20

## DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM JULY 1, 2019 TO JUNE 30, 2020

### IN GRATITUDE FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

A big thank you to the alumni, parents, faculty & staff, and friends of TASIS who have made a contribution to the School this year, whether by donating their COVID-19 refund or supporting the Annual Appeal, the Endowment, or another fund. Your support brings direct benefits to our students and is greatly appreciated more than ever this year.

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**With ongoing appreciation and gratitude to Jan Opsahl '68 for his unwavering dedication and support**

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**With great appreciation to Irina and Andrey Rappoport (parents) for their spontaneous and timely donation in recognition of this need.**

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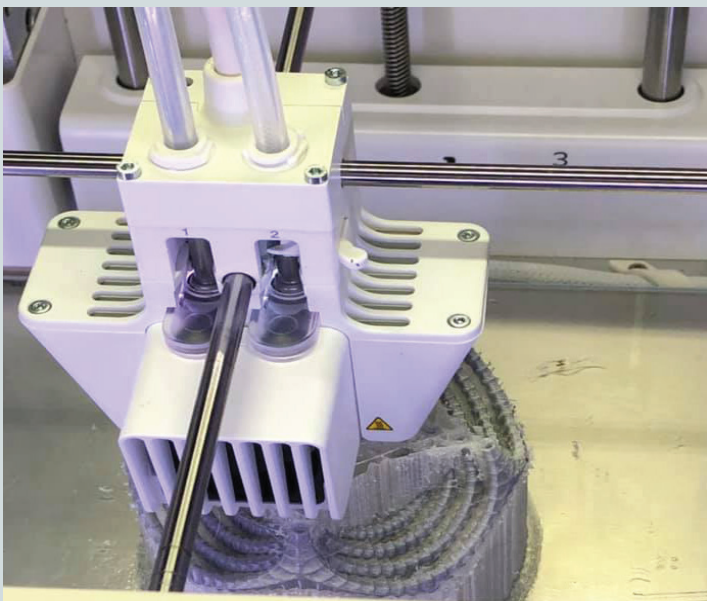
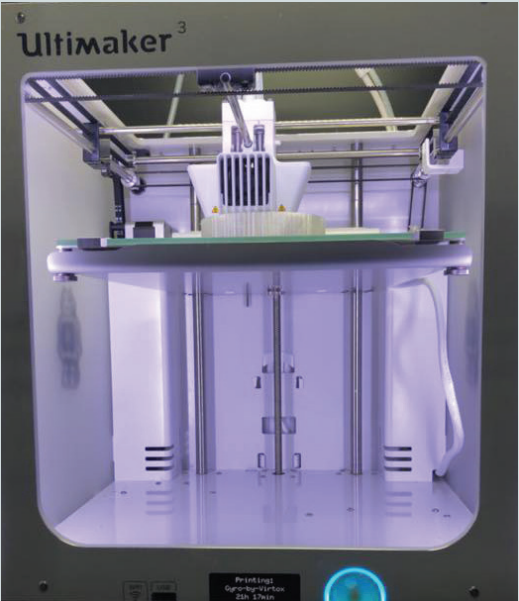
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We're grateful to  
Steve Mauro PG'84  
for donating a 3-D  
printer to TASIS to  
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We can't wait  
to see how our  
students use their  
imaginations!



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# DELIGHTED ABOUT *HAPPY JAIL*



It's 2007, and if you were using the internet you probably saw the video of orange-clad prisoners dancing en masse to Michael Jackson's "Thriller". It was one of the world's first viral YouTube videos, and has been viewed over 60 million times.

The inmate dancers were from the Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (CPDRC) in the Philippines, where the inmate exercise program includes choreographed routines to pop music. Filmmaker (and Filipina-American) **Michele Josue '97** recalls seeing the video 13 years ago and "felt a familiar Pinoy pride and immediately recognized that this extraordinary program was perfectly emblematic of the Filipino people and our love of music, dance, and performance," she says. "The fact that this was all taking place inside a jail was also fascinating to me. I was really excited about exploring a story that had this provocative combination of grit and complexity but also these wholesome elements of song and dance." Michele spent nearly three years creating *Happy Jail*, a Netflix series that does a deep-dive into the CPDRC. We sat down with Michele to ask her more about the series.

**How did you get involved with Netflix? Did you initially see it as a documentary film or did you always see it as a series?**

Our agent for [Michele's award-winning 2013 film] *Matt Shepard is a Friend of Mine* brought *Happy Jail* to Netflix's attention fairly early on in the process. We definitely looked to Netflix as the ultimate, ideal home for *Happy Jail*, given the groundbreaking and diverse content they're known for. So it was a dream come true to have Netflix acquire the show and to have the opportunity to share this important story with audiences all over the world.

Initially, *Happy Jail* began as a straightforward portrait of the CPDRC jail. But little did we know that our project would take a surprising turn and deepen in ways I never could have anticipated. Filming of the series began in 2016 when President Duterte took office and his Drug War began. In real time, our cameras captured how CPDRC was thrust into a new era of controversy and criticism. So we had to pivot from documenting the CPDRC's dancing program to truthfully bearing witness to this monumental time in the jail and the Philippines' history. We had to completely surrender to what was happening, and just adapt and follow the narrative as it was unfolding. The unpredictability and pace was a worthwhile challenge. That's how *Happy Jail* ended up becoming a series.

## **What has the response been in the Philippines? And with the Filipino diaspora?**

The response to the show in the Philippines and among the Filipino-American community has been overwhelmingly positive. As the first Netflix documentary series filmed entirely in the Philippines, *Happy Jail* is a uniquely Filipino story told by a Filipina filmmaker that will help usher in more Filipino content into the mainstream. Since premiering on Netflix, the series has given viewers in 190 countries a window into Filipino culture and the untenable situation occurring in its prisons. As evidenced by the positive reviews and countless, heartfelt messages, there's been a massive outpouring of support for the inmates and the jail officials who strive to improve the





inmates' quality of life. Beyond a renewed interest in the Dancing Inmates, *Happy Jail* has enlightened people worldwide and allowed them to connect to this crisis in a more human way. I hope the impact of *Happy Jail* is one that is global and long-lasting.

### What's next?

I think this pandemic has shown us all how tenuous everything is and how, as I've heard someone say recently, the one truth of life is its impermanence. So lately, I'm really reflecting on the power of my voice, what I want my legacy to be, and what good I can contribute to the world.

I've been reflecting on how my formative years at TASIS laid the groundwork for who I am today and who I am as a storyteller. I know that in many ways TASIS inspired in me a passion for using our diverse voices to help shape a more compassionate, empathic world. Since the death of George Floyd and the subsequent swell of support for the Black Lives Matter movement, that passion has grown exponentially.

So in terms of what's next, I've been working to advocate for real change in my community and in the film industry. Artistically-speaking, I'm developing new documentary and narrative projects that speak to my authentic



experience and point of view as a Filipina-American woman of color. I'm looking to transition into narrative film, and I've been writing a script inspired by my own family and what it's like growing up Filipina-American. I've also always wanted to make a film based on my experience at TASIS. In fact, that was what my TASIS Senior Banquet speech was about.\* So of course that's a project that is close to my heart that I'm excited to bring to fruition.

*\*Editor's note: Michele's speech and her pursuit of film studies inspired Lynn Fleming Aeschliman to hire her to make the film Pushing All the Buttons, using lots of old footage and interviewing Mrs. Fleming. This film is still well worth seeing! Watch at [tasis.ch/history](https://tasis.ch/history).*





# THE LOKAL PERSPECTIVE



*Francesco Catemario di Quadri, left, and Lokals cofounder Alexander Mitzman*

What makes a perfect holiday? This is, of course, subjective, but for many seasoned travelers it's the people who make a place particularly special.

**Francesco Catemario di Quadri** <sup>11</sup> knows this; indeed, it is the core of his business, Lokals, an app that connects travelers to locals through interests they have in common. The concept allows for authentic immersion into a local culture via its people, and allows travelers an insider's perspective on their favorite activities. "We want to connect you with someone who can take you around a city or a country for a few days and help you get to know a place with your preferences as the focus. We connect people to people. This is the spirit of Lokals," says Francesco.

"There are lots of platforms trying to steer the travel and tourism industries towards 'living like a local' via a combination of accommodation and experiences, but that presents a lack of understanding of what people actually want: authentic and intimate experiences, and this requires meeting, interacting, and rubbing shoulders with local people, sharing and learning from them, not attempting to become them," he says. "Memories of

travel you hold dear enough to cause nostalgia are likely made up of instances of interactions with people. If people make places, who better to interact with than with local people?" Personal, intimate, unique. And, let's be honest: enviable, and Instagrammable.

So what was the catalyst for this a disappointing holiday? "Actually, quite the opposite," Francesco says. "In 2016 I was in Portugal for a few months during the summer. Some friends came to visit, so I showed them around Lisbon, took them to my favorite places, really a bit of everything. And they left and told their friends, who then also came, and I did the same thing. And they told their cousins, and they came. I ended up spending more than two months showing people around the country. And I realised I could get paid for this, and that anybody could put their local knowledge and time up for sale. Because the best trips I've had are those where I've experienced things with people from there."

Developing the algorithm was a tricky part of the process. "When you're selling your time as a local person, you have to consider multiple factors. Everyone has the freedom to price themselves at a particular

daily rate. We don't dictate any of that. And of course the rate will be different if you give a client a morning tour and spend the afternoon on a yacht than someone who takes people to vineyards or walks them around a city." The app includes a pricing simulator to help the lokals estimate a competitive rate, and allows users to search by group size, budget, language, and activities. "When you match with someone, there's an element of preconceived ice-breaking; you are connecting with someone who likes the same things you do, and they are offering their time to you as a service to focus on what you want to explore." A rating system will ensure lokals are on their game, and the company will do background checks on all new lokals when and if possible. Lokals has also invested heavily to ensure that the app is privacy and data-compliant in nearly every country in the world.

Francesco is a typical TASIS kid: half-Italian, half-Portuguese, born in Switzerland, speaks five languages. He left TASIS after five years and finished his education at Singapore American School, then went on to attend the prestigious Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. After architecture placements in Singapore, Lisbon, and Paris, he returned to Lugano for a year-long stint at an architecture firm before taking a job with Arquitectonica in Miami, where he spent two years designing cutting-edge residential and business premises.

It was in Miami where he met his Lokals cofounder, Alexander Mitzman. "We'd only known one another a few months, but we were out one night and talked about traveling and living in different places, and he said if he came to Portugal he'd love to have me show him around, and if I went to New York he could do the same. One thing led to another, and we decided to do it together."

Francesco quit his job and moved to Lisbon in November 2019 and started focusing on Lokals. And, like most with an entrepreneurial spirit, that's not all he's got up his sleeve. "I'm not an architectural designer at an office anymore, but I founded another startup that's doing magnetic modular furniture that requires no tools, screws or instructions to assemble or flat-pack it," he says. "I'm also working on a series of

books with architects around the world." But for now, the focus is on Lokals, and how to make a big splash in a post-Covid travel space.

"People like to use the word 'disruption,'" Francesco says. "There is an element of disruption because this is a platform that connects people to people. But there's also an element of inclusion, because existing travel and tourism businesses can sign up through our business portal and use their staff as lokals. We don't want to fight existing companies; we want to work with them."

Even before the recent global lockdowns, Lokals was thinking of other ways to share experiences. "There are many ways to travel without leaving your house. For example, you could learn to cook Portuguese food with a chef from Lisbon, or do a Zoom wine pairing with a Napa Valley winemaker, or learn how to small-talk in French with a lokal from Lyon. These are possibilities that we are exploring—'travelling' remotely."

Francesco credits his TASIS experience with his diplomacy skills. "The biggest influence for me was the diversity at TASIS," he recalls. "I learned that you can't always please everybody, and you have to communicate with people differently. You get used to how others think. This exposure to multiculturalism, all in one place, is incredible." Francesco remains in touch with many of his classmates, and is a regular at their Saturday night Zoom cocktail parties.

When global lockdown lifts and we're once again able to explore the world, Lokals will be there. Portugal has seen a large surge of travelers arriving post-lockdown, which coincides with the company's plan to launch in Portugal before the end of 2020. This will likely be followed by Greece and then other European capitals, reserving the US launch for a later time. "People have precious little time off, and they want the most authentic experiences possible," Francesco says. Despite what has occurred, "the desire to travel, discover, and be elsewhere will only rise. I believe this is the future and the rebranding that the global travel and tourism industries need. We must shift from a service-based industry to an industry based on social currency, and the independent value and knowledge of people connecting to share it."

# PARABÉNS, TESIS PORTUGAL!



By the time you receive this magazine, the newest member of the TESIS family will have opened its doors to over 245 Pre-Kindergarten to middle school students in the beautiful town of Sintra in Portugal. This is the largest opening number for any TESIS school in history—Mrs. Fleming would be so proud!

Like all TESIS Schools, the academic program at TESIS Portugal is oriented towards the classical liberal arts tradition, and is fortunate to have the deep cultural riches of the Iberian peninsula as an extension of the classroom. The Early Learning Center (Pre-K to K) employs both Montessori and traditional teaching methods focused on play and creativity. Extra activities such as forest school and outdoor learning

allow children to explore using all their senses. The Elementary School uses the Core Knowledge curriculum, buttressed by Singapore Math (the school employs a full-time specialist) and Next Generation Science Standards. The Middle School focuses on Cambridge Lower Secondary, a widely-recognized program that challenges students to expand their learning as they prepare for high school.

Another way the school will challenge young scholars is by including Visible Thinking as part of learning engagement. This philosophy, designed by Harvard University's Project Zero, is focused on enhancing student learning by teaching students to reflect on their thinking as they try and understand how



they learn best. The goal is to create better thinkers by developing “thinking routines” to help children approach problems, consider solutions, and creatively solve them. Headmaster Keith Chicquen says, “Our goal is to teach students to reflect on and understand their own thinking in ways that allow them to discover how they learn, and to be better situated to show what they know to the world.” One of the core routines is one that adults could benefit from, too; I used to think.../... but now I think...

Other standout programs ensure students are stretching themselves beyond academics. Countless studies indicate that students who study music also perform better in their other subjects, and all children in Pre-K through 3rd grade will learn to play the violin together, promoting teamwork and social development alongside musical proficiency. Children will also learn coding through robotics, computer science, and app development courses. Chess will be a key activity for all students, as it promotes critical thinking, strategizing, and memory (and is a hugely popular game in Portugal—every public park has a number of concrete chess tables, and they are always full!). Finally, students will attend yoga classes to promote mental and physical wellness as well as relaxation. And, of course, students will study languages. Pre-K to fifth grade students will study Portuguese. In middle school they will continue with Portuguese but can add a second foreign language: Spanish, French or German. English As an Additional Language is available for non-native speakers.

“While TASIS is new to Portugal, the name and reputation of the TASIS schools have attracted families, and we are ahead of projections for enrollment,” says Aimee Gruber, Director of Enrolment Management and Marketing. In fact, interest has been so great that the school has already added second Pre-kindergarten, Kindergarten, and First Grade classes. Thanks to interest from local parents, the school has extended to two sections of grade 7 this year, instead of in 2021 as initially planned.

The international nature of TASIS is a big draw for families, too. Approximately 30% of the students



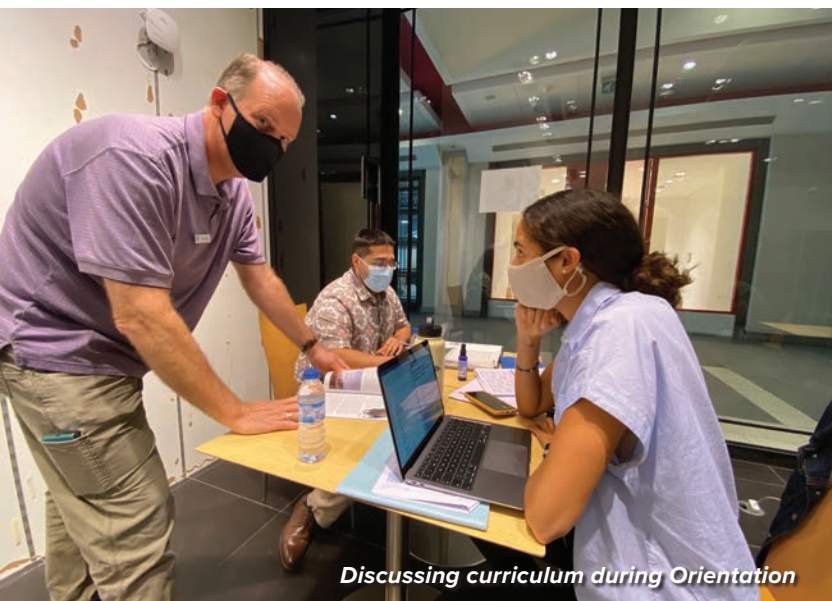
*Headmaster Keith Chicquen surveys the building work*



*TASIS Portugal socially distant faculty meeting*

are Portuguese or have one Portuguese parent. Other nationalities include children from the US, UK, Netherlands, China, Brazil, Russia, Italy, Canada, Finland, Estonia, and South Africa. Twenty founding families are new to Portugal.

The founding team has been working hard to tell the TASIS story through a number of online channels. Since January 2020, Keith has been writing thoughtful blog posts about academics, updates on school construction, and educational philosophy. He has also held a weekly “Coffee with Keith” event every Thursday night featuring various teachers and board members who discuss topics which are interesting to



*Discussing curriculum during Orientation*



*TASIS veterans Isabella Boutros and Gina Anderson*

prospective families. “These webinars have been a great way to introduce members of the TASIS Portugal founding faculty to enrolled and prospective families,” Aimee says. All episodes are available on the TASIS Portugal website and YouTube channel.

Some 400 teachers from around the globe applied to be part of the founding faculty. Keith is particularly proud of the exceptional team of educators he has been able to curate. “With so many talented teachers applying to join TASIS Portugal, I couldn’t help but hire the best of the best”.

Two of the founding faculty members will be familiar faces for some. **Isabella Boutros** has been part of the TASIS Summer Programs staff since 2014 and is teaching Science to grades 4-7. “I absolutely love everything about TASIS,” she says. “Its mission, values, care, and attention to each and every student are all reasons I am here. There’s something really special about the opportunity to help build a new TASIS school while being able to rely on my knowledge and experience from working at an existing TASIS school to contribute to its growth.”

Bella received her MA in Education in 2020 from McGill University in Montreal. She has taught middle school science in Washington, DC, Massachusetts, and Canada. “Being part of a founding faculty is something that I’ve never done and never imagined that I would

be doing at this point in my career,” Bella says. “I am so excited to meet and learn from my colleagues and to leave my mark on my courses. I am also excited to meet my students, to learn from them, and watch them grow as we build a community together.”

**Gina Anderson** joins the TASIS Portugal team from Salt Lake City, Utah. After teaching at TASIS Lugano both during the academic year and the summer Middle School Program, Gina returned to Utah for her M.Ed. She will be serving as the Core Knowledge Coordinator for grades Pre-K to 5 and will help coordinate the after-school program.

“I had some really wonderful experiences at TASIS and always hoped to return in some capacity, but the timing or opportunity was never quite right,” she says. “I have been involved with the founding of two other schools in my career, as a teacher and an instructional coach, and it’s very rewarding to be part of something from the beginning and helping build the school culture from the ground up. Also, I have a decade of experience working with Core Knowledge—it was actually because of Core Knowledge that I discovered TASIS in 2007—and I am so excited to return to my first love: a Core Knowledge school!”

We congratulate Keith, Aimee, and the entire TASIS Portugal team for their extraordinary efforts to open our newest school. We can’t wait to tell the story of their inaugural year in these pages in 2021!



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# ALUMNI REUNIONS

## ALL-CLASS REUNION IN LONDON, NOVEMBER 1, 2019



1. Mary Hart Danby catches up with Chantal Gordon 2. Howard Stickley, Jonathan Molen '15 3. Kristen Jackson Seymour TE'82, Fiona Clarke TE'82, Jan Opsahl '68, TASIS Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff 4. Karl Christiansen reconnects with his students 5. Kristen Jackson Seymour TE'82, Gloria Nussbaum, Francesca Schnagl '15 6. Maria Shinkina TE'10, Elizabeth Jarvis '95 7. Olga Tsepoukhova '03, Karina Kim '02 8. Former TASIS Hellenic faculty Gary Jervis, Eleni Makri, Gilly Halfpenny, John Goodall 9. Usevalad Baskin '11, Bill Eichner 10. Riccardo Cazzago '13, Dmitry Garanin '14, Ginevra Giacomini '13

## REGIONAL ALL-CLASS REUNION IN TOKYO, NOVEMBER 16, 2019



Twenty people, made up of TASIS alumni from the 90s and 00s and a few of their kids, got together for a dinner in Tokyo on November 16. As in past years, the date was chosen to coincide with Bill Eichner's annual marketing visit to Japan, and was hugely enjoyed by all.



# ALL-CLASS REUNION IN WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 22, 2019

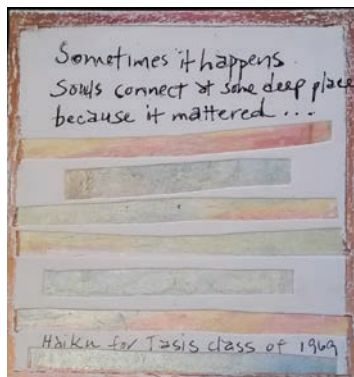


1. Mike Esman '69, Peggy Keshishian '69, Nancy Hubbard Carty '71, Ellen Doscher Terpstra '69 2. Lisa Farrell, Jen Haldeman Ramirez '83, Rachel Palkendo Dougan '84, Stephanie Niblock Cohen '83, Rebecca Perry Damsen '83, Tania Shetabi Nordstrom '82, Yvonne Procyk 3. Ali Massoudi '74, Jenny Han McCambridge PG'95, Bahram Solhjoui '75 4. Bill Eichner, Iskender Besen '88, Haley Boehning PG'90 5. Bill Eichner shares fun memories with Todd Drummond '87 and his wife Natalia 6. Steve Flores, Elena Isella TSLP'00 7. Peggy Keshishian '69, Elisabeth Malcolm 8. Mikah Meyer is hoisted by Gaby Cova '15, Claudia Zittle '15 and Claudia Gago Ostes '15 9. Jonathan Brand, Mike Foland '03 10. Larry Wile '88, Michele Jordan Wright '88 11. Peggy Keshishian '69, Betsy and David Bennett 12. Summer program staff! Greg Gardner, Liz Cunningham, Patrick O'Connor, Taline Baltayan, John Haley, Marg Villeneuve, Harry Egner, Patrick Gardner, Jim Haley 13. Yee Hun Kim '12, Avery Wu

Visit the alumni  
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to see more  
photos!



## CLASS OF '69 , CHICO HOT SPRINGS, MT, SEPT 15-18, 2019



Members of the Class of '69 organized a wonderful celebration for their 50th anniversary, getting together for three days in the Chico Hot Springs Resort in Montana. In all, 22 alumni congregated to catch up and reminisce while taking in the beautiful vistas and extraordinary light offered by Montana. The reunion kicked off with a dinner in Grandma's Garden at the resort and continued the next day with a full day in Yellowstone National Park, just one hour away. The exceptional guide—Rod from Iowa—offered endless info and anecdotes about the nature, geological features, and wildlife, making sure that some of the most iconic and scenic areas of the park were covered.

With the next day being windy and quite chilly, many opted to bob about in the hot springs at the Resort while others drove into nearby Bozeman to visit the Museum of the Rockies. Gifts were presented at the final group dinner, including an original sign off a TASIS van that has been "looked after" in California for the past 50 years, ahem ;) . In an enchanting final touch, Andy Wainwright's wife Paula prepared a beautiful Haiku that summed up this special reunion.

## TASIS CYPRUS, ALEXANDRIA, VA, SEPT 13-15, 2019



Twenty-seven alumni from TASIS Cyprus (TC) congregated in Alexandria, VA, for a fun weekend in September 2019. The last reunion had been in 2006, so there was a lot of excitement about this one—especially as TASIS Director of Institutional Advancement Bill Eichner, who has been with the School for nearly 40 years, was able to join in on the Saturday night.

The weekend kicked off with a tasty dinner at a Greek-Cypriot taverna on Friday, then Saturday was spent in ad hoc small-group outings before meeting up all together for the main reception that evening. The attendees all had TC in common, but actually four TASIS schools were represented: Cyprus, France, Switzerland, and England! The slide show and 80s music playlist prepared by Sharon Stewart Nasr TC'86 provided a perfect soundtrack to the evening. Yearbooks and other memorabilia were on show, but the most vivid memories were arguably created by Bill Eichner's stories from Academic Travel mishaps, which had everyone crying with laughter!

As the reunion wound down and the glow of memories set in, there was general consensus not to wait so long for the next get-together. Perhaps in Cyprus next time?





## YOUR STORY IS VALUABLE

By Ollie Rasini '99

In mid-November 2018, I was asked to come to TASIS “to share my story and passion” with the Middle School community.

My first instinct was: Yay! (This is often my first instinct.) TASIS was my home for six years: I was prefect, class salutatorian (for what that's worth), gave all the speeches, did all the plays, took all the trips. I loved it.

But “share your story with the middle school community” meant I had to speak. In public. As myself. Of course, on stage I have done all kinds of embarrassing things: but that was in character. As myself? Ugh.

And “share my passion”? Improv has trained me to say exactly what I am thinking in any given moment, so that doesn't always make me a great role model for children. What am I even going to say?

And, more importantly, what am I going to wear???

Needless to say, the experience was wonderful.

I was nervous before going on stage at the Palmer Center, but I received such a warm welcome from students and educators alike that I instantly felt at home. The students were enthusiastic, vocal, and asked a ton of questions. [Drama and Music teacher] **Matthew Frazier-Smith** and Dean of Student Affairs **MJ Breton** were perfect hosts and mediated the conversation expertly. When it was over, I wished it had lasted longer. (By the way, I ended up wearing my only clean pair of black jeans. Not sure if patch pockets are legal dress code now. I decided to risk it.)

Role models are so important for young people. I had some wonderful teachers at TASIS who were fantastic role models as teachers and educators, but what about other jobs? I didn't know any actors growing up. My parents weren't actors. And even if they were, there are thousands of ways to be an actor, how was I supposed to know about them? There are plenty of books and blogs of course, but having an actual person tell you about their life choices is a different thing. Sometimes inexperience pushes us into a generic vision of things: I'm going to be the kind of actress that gets an MFA at Yale and then lands a job on Broadway. I'm going to be the kind of actress that moves to LA and gets an agent and stars in films. I'm going to start with improv and go on SNL and become a standup comedian. These are sort of generic paths. But what about the actor who studies clowning and becomes a clown tour guide / town council member in a small town in the Alps? What about the ballet dancer who goes to acting school, acts in classical theatre for several years, then gets her M.A. in movement therapy and works to bring theatre to



the lives of people with disabilities? I never would have imagined these paths if I hadn't met someone who lived them.

In theatre as in many fields, there's a lot of competition. And often our default mentality is to compare ourselves to those around us, even though those people have had a completely different background than us. Is there a faster way to disrespect ourselves? Each of us is different and each one must find his or her own way. Which means combining our passions, talents, opportunities, and (of course) flaws and handicaps in a totally unique way.

Environment plays a key role in all of this. As legendary improv teacher Viola Spolin writes, “no one teaches anyone anything. [...] If the environment permits it, anyone can learn whatever he (sic) choosed to learn; and if the individual permits it, the environment will teach him anything it has to teach.” (Improvisation for the Theater, 1963)

TASIS for me was the ideal environment. We were surrounded by beauty, by art, by people who appreciated art, and most importantly, by artists. The Arts Festival was a chance to meet professionals from many artistic fields. We used to have John Watts come to our drama class every year and teach us about Shakespeare: his passion was contagious. In college we had actress Kate Burton and playwright Eric Bogosian come and speak with us. The most fascinating thing was just hearing them talk about themselves: how they had spent their time after graduation; their ups and downs; how they had stumbled upon their careers. And perhaps the most valuable stories that my teachers told us in class were based on their own life experiences.

If you're a student, the best advice I can give you is to look around, ask questions. When you get out of school, find people whose work interests you and bug them with your questions or ask if you can meet them for coffee. More often than not, people will be happy to share their stories with you.

And to my fellow alumni: if you can, take the time to make a visit to campus and talk to current students. You will be surprised at how valuable your stories are.



# AN ENDLESS ADVENTURE

*Wendy Banning '73 is a pioneer in the field of outdoor education. Co-author of the book *Lens on Outdoor Learning* (Redleaf, 2010), Wendy is Director of Learning Outside, a North Carolina-based organization that gives children experiences that encourage meaningful interactions with nature by integrating the arts, sciences, and humanities with the outdoors. Below Wendy shares insights into why nature is important to a child's education.*



## Why nature is the perfect classroom

Children are quintessential experiential learners. They want to understand how the world works; it's part of their essential wiring. It is in their nature to investigate, examine, and work to make sense of everything they encounter. Children continually show that their predisposition is to pursue active exploration, hands-on, supported by open-ended play.

Nature is ideally suited to the active, multi-sensory approach children bring to learning. She offers them endless changes to notice, sounds and sights to wonder about, things that invite them to take a closer look. She invites their creativity with endless "loose parts" to incorporate into their play—acorns, sticks, pebbles, pine cones. She welcomes their busy bodies and their need to stretch themselves and to attempt new challenges.

One of the things I notice, again and again, is that children who have not experienced success in the traditional classroom flourish as learners in nature. Nature invites children to notice things and to pursue investigations that interest them and that inspire their individual curiosity. In their quest to figure things out, children dig deep. They engage in complex processes, creative problem-solving, persistence when one approach does not render the information sought.

They readily engage in more open-ended dialogue, posing questions or proposing theories. They seek opportunities to collaborate with others, and they engage in more inventive, holistic, and divergent thinking. Learning becomes a quest, a motivating journey instead of just a destination. No question is the wrong question and most questions don't come with just one right or one wrong answer. Nature is complex; her answers are often not black or white, they're gray, and each question and each answer is tied to something more, something yet to be discovered.

Nature is also our home. As human beings, we are inexorably linked to all living things and to the environment and resources nature provides. Our relationship with the natural world is an essential one. Like any relationship, it requires time and access to form. We all protect the spaces we love. By providing children with ongoing opportunities to actively connect with nature, we not only meet their needs, enhance their lives, their learning, their wellbeing, and their health, we also lay the foundation for their futures. We help them secure a lifelong relationship with the natural world; a love affair that will ensure they return again and again, as adults, to nature as their go-to place to refuel, to have fun, to stay active, and to learn, and as a place they are committed to preserving and protecting.

## On TASIS

I fondly remember **Angelo Piattini** and his endless supply of fresh rolls with cheese. I remember so many amazingly beautiful hikes. I remember visiting the Roman bridge at Val Verzasca and how it took my breath away. I remember everyone playing Buck Buck outside on the field near the Bubble. I remember being a freshman (there were only 16 of us) and feeling very homesick. I remember **Max Page** and how he made us memorize poems that I still remember to this day. I remember **Monsieur Dufour** and how deeply he helped us to go into understanding the characters in the novels we read. I remember **Akbar Khan**, who was never my teacher, but who was such a presence. I remember amazing trips to amazing places. And I definitely remember studying in our beds, after lights out, with the sheets over our heads so we wouldn't be caught, determined not to show up to class the next day behind on our reading.



### On Mrs. Fleming and education

MCF had a dream. She pursued it with positive commitment until she actualized it and then she worked tirelessly to expand its impact. I think she modeled that having dreams is important and that pursuing them is something you have to fight for if you want to make them real. I was definitely cognizant of her history and her determination.

I have pursued two professional dreams, both on a way smaller scale than Mrs. Fleming's, but equally meaningful to me as her larger dream was to her. I have founded two successful nonprofits in education; an independent school and my present endeavor, Learning Outside. Both were a quest to provide children with a more holistic way to learn and engage with the world around them, with one another,

with others they had yet to meet, with our global community, and with our planet. Both have been about creating confident, engaged, caring individuals committed to having a positive impact on the world around them.

I think everything we choose to do is linked to every experience we have along the way. Nature was always a primary driver in my life because of how I was raised and who raised me. Teaching was, in many ways, a career I stumbled into, not a career I planned. Yet, it turned out to be the happiest fit imaginable. Working in education is an endless adventure; each day offers new opportunities to stretch, new possibilities to explore, and new things to learn—you're never done.

[www.learningoutside.org](http://www.learningoutside.org)

## DEVELOPING KEY SKILLS

When **Roberto Scilipoti TH'88** left TASIS Hellenic, he initially studied pharmacology at the University of Hertfordshire. But his alma mater called him home, and he ended up spending a decade working at TASIS Hellenic and then the International School of Athens in a number of roles, from teacher to distance learning coordinator to university placement advisor.

Since leaving ISA in 2011, he has been working at Hellenic American Educational Foundation Athens College, where he teaches IB Biology and IB Environmental Systems and Societies as well as serving as the Approaches to Learning Coordinator for the school's IB program. "My role is to assist students to develop key skills that will assist them in their learning such as social skills, communication skills, research skills, and self-management skills. This is done with the collaboration of all the teachers and is going really well!" Since 2009, Roberto has also been an IB examiner and technology moderator.

"Since I was a student, education has changed in the sense that it is more IT-friendly, and there are many online tools that teachers can use to assist with learning." He admits, however, that the core elements of education are the same. "A love for learning, inquiry, and collaboration remain the most important tenets. It's just that there are many more tools that educators can use."

He still looks back on his years as a TASIS student fondly. "They were the most memorable years of my life! The international nature of the school and how, under one roof, there were so many different nationalities and cultures was truly amazing!"





# A NEW HEADSPACE

Imagine moving from Melbourne, Australia, to take up a dream post at Stanford University. You arrive in northern California and within a week, “shelter in place” takes effect. **Cristiane Cunial '78** spoke with us a couple of months after she began her new position. At that point she had yet to meet her colleagues in person and had been living on her own in Stanford housing. But her enthusiasm for the job and her new life was palpable.

After a fascinating, peripatetic life that had her criss-crossing oceans for a few decades, Cristiane settled in Melbourne and began working for a well-known youth mental health charity called [headspace](#) [sic]. Her six years as a project manager and senior advisor left her in good stead and in March 2020 she took up a post at Stanford’s Center for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing as Implementation and Operations Manager for the project — one that will certainly have a new level of challenges as it launches in a post-lockdown California.

Part of Stanford Medicine’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, the Center for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing aims to find “a new culture of adolescent wellbeing across the United States that builds skills, resilience, and opportunities for a healthy path into adulthood.” The goals are to provide early mental health support, educational and community partnerships, and a focused mental health and technology program that spans social media and online support.

Cristiane says there are quite a few countries trying to implement similar services, and providers are frequently in touch discussing ways to better their services and approaches. Stanford began research for the project in 2016, and will have seven sites around California that are funded and ready to go. The centers will generally use the same model of integrated youth mental health care that can then be adapted to suit local needs, but overall the



framework will remain to encourage prevention and early intervention. “Early intervention acknowledges that mental health challenges may develop at a young age and these services provide individuals the tools to manage their needs,” Cristiane notes.

The state of California has supported the project with an initial four years of funding, but finding a way to ensure future funding in a country without a public health service will be challenging. “We’re trying to re-create this service model that is working well in countries with a national health care system but the funding element in the US is tricky. We have to work out how to make it sustainable.” The network of centers will work with the same model and will be able to collect data to help California learn about the mental health needs of young people and best practice in integrated youth mental health care.



Born in Australia, Cristiane moved to Milan and then back to Sydney when she was 9. At 15 Cristiane came to TASIS. After graduation she attended Sarah Lawrence College and spent several years in New York working for a large performing arts festival; on a trip with the festival to Paris she met her ex-husband, a violinist, who coaxed her into returning to Italy. Cristiane had four children and raised them in Northern Italy, but after a trip to Sydney decided to return to Australia. In 2005, she started working in the NGO sector in Melbourne and, eventually, started working for headspace.

“After I had my kids I became interested in bilingualism, and ended up running an English immersion school for local children in Italy. This led to research in cultural education as well—we were teaching expat and Italian students—which led me to an MBA that focused on international business.” Soon after getting her MBA her family returned to Australia and Cristiane found her passion, which was working with disadvantaged young people; she began her headspace work collaborating with the service while running youth services. “There’s no point working with a young person to get them back into education or a job if they have mental health issues, and collaborative and integrated programs like these give young people pathways to a better way, because no one can do the whole lot on their own.”

The initial California centers are in Palo Alto and San Jose, with other sites being announced later in the year. “It’s interesting, because mental health needs vary significantly depending on income, race, and other variables. The model opens up access to all people; it’s a model that is tried and tested, and it’s up to us to keep that integrity.”

So how can we support our young people who have lived through Covid, particularly those who have missed out on so much? “Speaking to them, at their level, is key,” she says. “Younger children may not understand the gravity of the

situation, but certainly teenagers get it, and they need to grieve the loss of this time in their lives.” She says that it’s about acknowledging the experience, assessing the grief, and keeping communications channels open to talk about it. “There’s a thought that the second wave of Covid will be mental health, and it’s because all those protective factors we had in place have been under stress. And we’re together in an enclosed space. Adults cannot decide, okay, what will help young people? Young people are experts in their own care and can identify their own needs,” she says. “Adults need to be asking, ‘what’s going to help you?’ Then they need to follow up with matching those needs. That’s profound, putting the emphasis on shared decision-making rather than adults deciding what’s going to be good for them. We have to be open to hearing solutions from them and then acting on them.”

Cristiane has had to look after her own mental health, too. Cristiane’s family remains around the world; she has children in Melbourne, a son in Spain, and a stepdaughter in Italy, so the family spent many nights on Zoom. She’s bought a bicycle and has begun riding around her Redwood City neighborhood. And she’s keeping up with TASIS friends, too.

Cristiane was at TASIS for three years, and remembers it as being a great equalizer. “At the time there were only around 200 of us. There were lots of Iranians, Indians, Americans with parents stationed in the Middle East, Italians, and we were all in this amazing place.” She loved the frequent travel and recalls intimate dinners at Casa Fleming. She also remembers that it was the first time she was introduced to American culture; “when I finally got to the States for university, it felt very familiar. And because I had known people from all over the world, it was easy to culturally adapt. Anyone who goes to TASIS becomes very culturally intelligent and adaptable, and that is hugely important in life.”



# A BETTER WAY OF BEING

"I really believe that optimism is a strategy," says writer, changemaker, and social entrepreneur **Mary Valiakas TH'99**. We are speaking in May just as the world is turning inward, and Mary somehow takes the stresses of the moment down a notch. "If you embrace optimism as a strategy, you have to look at the facts, and reality, and think, how do I find the cracks and the light peeking through?" she says. "I've always had this sense that a better way of being is possible, and it's not naive."

Her optimism finds expression through the two organizations she founded. The arts & culture development agency, Oi Polloi, focuses on community innovation, and Terraform, a London-based media agency and consultancy, helps businesses become a force for good. She also works closely with The People Who Share, which focuses on making the sharing economy mainstream. Together, these organizations tell the stories of what Mary calls 'the next socioeconomic paradigm.' "Many people around the world are thinking in a similar way. How do we benefit the maximum number of people? How do we design our societies? How do we change the way we do things?"

Originally from Athens, Mary grew up with a Greek father and Hawaiian mother and attended TASH Hellenic from 1993 to 1999. "It was a big family," she recalls. "And I'm still really good friends with a lot of people I went to school with. We're all really

tight." After graduation she studied writing, literature, and publishing at Emerson College in Boston and holds Masters degrees in Eastern Philosophy from Bristol University, and Creative Writing and Personal Development from Sussex University. "It was always about stories," she says. "Even my Buddhist Master's was about metaphor and simile. So storytelling has been the underlying thread throughout my life."

And as a storyteller, Mary believes that what the world experienced this year with Covid-19 could lead to an irresistible plot twist. "I call this the age of crisis," she says. "We are being called

to expand our identity, our sense of who we are. We're being called to recognize that we're all just people.

We are wired for empathy." Mary feels that the first step is a shift in our values and belief systems, and knowing we can be better is the first step to tapping into our humanity and working towards a common goal. "We have to change the way we live and work.

We need to consider what it means to be a responsible global citizen.

Right now, with Covid, we give people space. Longer term, we need to consider, for example, how many times a year it is appropriate to fly. If we all focus on one thing, we can make it right again."

Mary proposes to do this by harnessing the evolutionary power of story and her nation's heritage. You'll hear her talking of 'rebooting Greece as a beacon of civilization', and using the country's heritage as the birthplace of western





civilization to prototype new socioeconomic ways of behaving. “When you grow up in Greece, you’re told that we invented everything. But this can be a hindrance,” Mary says. “A lot of Greeks think they’re amazing just because of what the Greeks have done historically, without having achieved very much themselves. But the way the country is structured can hinder people from achieving and fulfilling their potential because there isn’t much industry. If you’re ambitious, you can’t really go anywhere in Greece.”

That said, Mary remains ambitious for her homeland. “We’ve inherited this heritage, so what now? How do we turn this into a good thing?” She believes that with so much poor leadership around the world, and Greece’s sterling track record throughout the pandemic, highly-skilled Greeks from abroad will return home and mobile millennials will flock to the country. Meaning the time is ripe for the Greek brand to become not just relevant, but central to the progress of humanity once more.

She’s setting out to achieve this through *Oi Polloi* which seeks to address global crises and challenges at the local level. Central to this endeavor is the Greek cultural value *filotimo*, or a love of honor and noble virtues. With *Oi Polloi*, Mary seeks to redefine how societies operate by encouraging the many to act as one. Her goal is to help communities rediscover and rebuild their identity, purpose, and financial backbone by spreading the sharing economy.

A key project for *Oi Polloi* is what she calls Hope Flows Then Grows, which will “symbolically unite cities around the world and shift the western zeitgeist from ‘me’ to ‘we.’” The first phase is to place a fountain in multiple cities around the world as a “universal symbol for abundance—an overflowing of ideas, expressions, and art. Our version of the Olympic torch.” These fountains will mark the intent to reimagine society from the local level up, using local artists so each will reflect the place. “We can still be unique in a cohesive world,” she says. “Globalization made us think we need to be the same, but we don’t.”

Mary is pitching Hope Flows to mayors around the world, and is making a documentary series about it titled *The New Billionaires* (i.e. those having a positive impact on a billion+ people). “The municipal level is the highest level of government over which a citizen can have actual influence, and mayors are still in touch with their populations. This is a way we can unite cities around the world as they commit and make a statement to create a local economy based on the needs of the many. So shifting from scarcity to abundance.” Critically, the project aims to celebrate the tapestry of participating cultures that take on this challenge, through a worldwide music and arts movement focused on the theme of unity in diversity. “In a world in thrall to short-termism, this has to create buzz in the now, but have the same kind of unifying cultural energy of the roaring 20s, 50s, and 60s. We’ve lost sight of who we are. This should help us remember, and build something long-lasting”.

For Mary, her time at TASIS was a bit like the world she wants to see. “TASIS shaped me because we had people from everywhere, and we were exposed to these cultures at such a young age. People were just people,” she recalls. “Fourth or fifth down the list was where they were from. I didn’t even know for some of my friends! That is a huge influence, and it shaped my character that we’re all people, and we all have our quirks.” And, ultimately, it is the individuals, with all our peccadillos, who will come together with others and change the world.

It’s an ambitious goal in current times, when the pain and suffering in the world can seem insurmountable. But Mary believes in the power of the local. “We each have capacity for evil, but we also have capacity for incredible good. I think if we shift our attention from destructive things to constructive or regenerative things, then the good in humanity can also shine through.” She admits that this may seem counterintuitive to many. “So far [society has] been based on a colonial mindset of smash and grab, but there isn’t anywhere else to go to smash and grab. We’re all here, sharing this overcrowded planet. So we’d better start working together.”



# ALUMNI *Class News*



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**Class Agent: Rick Mayne** fhmayne@optonline.net

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**Vacancy for class agent** – contact alumni@tasis.ch to learn more about taking on this role.

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**Vacancy for class agent** – contact alumni@tasis.ch to learn more about taking on this role.

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**Class Agent: Joe Cook** jacook4646@yahoo.com

**Stan Lipin** writes, “Hi everyone! Just wanted to let all of you know that we are surviving the pandemic so far. We managed to get out of Milan in mid-February to Tel Aviv where the situation has been somewhat better but where we still feel the abnormal effects of isolation and constant pressure of caution. We are planning to return to Milan in July where the situation has greatly improved and perhaps we will go to the Dolomites and the Tuscan coast. Wishing you all a safe and healthy summer!”

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**Vacancy for class agent** – contact alumni@tasis.ch to learn more about taking on this role.

**Marcia McCormick Davenport** shares, “In the wilds of the Coronavirus pandemic, I am safely ensconced in my Irish cottage in the tiny village of Bruckless. I was

‘cocooned’ from March to beginning of June, very limited, but now I can travel at least in Donegal. It’s been a difficult transition for an inveterate traveller! I keep a limited presence with my priestly ministry in my local parish. I had a wonderful al fresco birthday party (73!). I enjoy keeping up long-distance with five grandkids; still hoping next year for a real visit. I stay in touch with other TASIS friends by Facebook and email. *Ciao* all!”

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**Class Agent: Chuck Kitsman** ckitsman@aol.com

**Debby Webster** enjoys splitting her time between Hawaii and Colorado, and updated us in January and June: “I’m doing very well. I had my second knee replaced in August and it was a great deal easier than the first one which was done in June 2018. I’d like to be taking long walks and playing a little non-competitive tennis, but that’s not in the cards quite yet so I’m having to content myself with playing mahjong and doing a lot of reading and writing. I had a memoir accepted for publication in a literary journal at the end of last year. I won’t be writing the Great American Novel any time soon, but it was gratifying to see my name in print. Vail was one of the earliest places to have lots of Covid cases appear, but luckily we were in Hawaii then. We have a very strong healthcare system for such a rural area and the hospital handled the local cases well. We returned to Colorado in mid-May and the trip took almost 20 hours due to no direct flights and long layovers. We were masked and armed with Clorox wipes, hand sanitizer, and disposable gloves. The saddest part of the pandemic for me has been that my second grandchild, Blake Webster Warner, was born on May 4 and I still haven’t been able to hold him. Thank

goodness for FaceTime so that I’ve been able to see him on the screen.”

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**Class Agent: Chuck Kitsman** ckitsman@aol.com

**Virginia Brooks** writes, “Social distancing is fairly easy for *plein air* painters. We just go further afield. Arizona is filled with wonderful, remote locations, and most of them are within a day’s drive. I rarely saw another person out there. This time I was painting under a shade tree on the Mexican border. Many thanks to the Alumni Office for the video you produced; ‘Far Apart, Closer Than Ever: The Alumni Edition’ was exceptional. And it encouraged me to enjoy all of the other videos on the TASIS site. It’s a great look at what has changed, and what will never change at TASIS.” **1 • Chuck Kitsman** sent an update: “First of all, it doesn’t appear that here in the US things were that much different from elsewhere. There was little travel by air or car, hotels were empty, and restaurants were closed to dining though carry-out became very popular. Our Gov. Abbott (Texas) allowed restaurants to provide liquor and wine “to go,” and we had friends buying quarts of margaritas during this period. With so many hourly workers struggling to keep their jobs we found our tipping became very generous, and we paid our household help several times not to come to work as these folks are among the most vulnerable in our community. My second thought has more to do with the psychological effects of the pandemic and what we did to protect ourselves. Wearing a mask seems to do more than just serve a prophylactic purpose. It creates a social barrier with others you encounter, and is something we will be dealing with for quite a while. I’m quick to smile and say hello to

people I encounter, which is fairly common in the Southern states. I find myself doing less of that now and it certainly changes the social dynamic around here. Georgia and I have been able to play some golf during most of this time; physical distancing is pretty easy to practice out on the course and it has been good to be out in the environment. Carts needed to be sanitized, no one handled our clubs, and swimming pool foam noodles were cut into short pieces and kept in the holes so that you didn’t have to reach down far to fish the ball out of the hole after you sank a putt. They’re gone now and frankly I miss them.”

**68**

**Class Agent: Pamela Springer Bryant** ohsaycanuc@cox.net

**Pam Springer Bryant** met up with **Meredith Schulz Hodges** in fall 2019 at Meredith’s ranch in Colorado which has award-winning donkeys and mules. Meredith gives tours of the ranch, and anyone who is interested can call 800 816 7566 to schedule a visit, or visit [www.LuckyThreeRanch.com](http://www.LuckyThreeRanch.com). **2**

**69**

**Class Agent: Pamela Carrillo Jackson** pjackson@tectron.net

**Wendy Jester Garling** writes, “I continue to research women’s stories from Sanskrit and Pali literature. In spring 2021 my second book will be coming out through Shambhala Publications (Penguin Random House): *The Woman Who Raised the Buddha: The Extraordinary Life of Mahaprajapati*. Would love to see classmates visiting Boston; I can be reached at [wendy.garling@yahoo.com](mailto:wendy.garling@yahoo.com).” **3**



# ALUMNI *Class News*



6

## 70

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 71

**Class Agent: Scott Whittle** [incal@earthlink.net](mailto:incal@earthlink.net)

**Evelyn Gustafsson** is still living in the Lugano area and is now retired. "I have a dog, now 13. I wouldn't want to live elsewhere. Lockdown wasn't so bad, because in Ticino everyone did their best by respecting the rules. Though I did lose a dear friend. In 2016 I met up with **Cindy Engisch Lisner** and we correspond occasionally. I also correspond with **Clifford Clavel '72.**" • **Charles Hodgkins** reconnected with **Nicla Mambretti** in March in Nice. "We had lunch and talked up a storm, mostly in Italian. At 80 she is such an amazing person." After that, Charles and his wife spent two months in Todi, Italy, a small town in the south which happily was not affected by the coronavirus scare. "We were here last year for a month when my wife Kathryn attended Italian classes at La Lingua La Vita. This year I'm also taking classes because, even though I'm relatively fluent, I need to refresh my knowledge of Italian. We're having a great time." • The "circa '71" reunion that was scheduled for May in Napa Valley had to be postponed, unfortunately. Stay tuned for info about new dates, and contact Charles Hodgkins at [charles@sailingmischief.com](mailto:charles@sailingmischief.com) if you'd like to know more.

## 72

**Class Agent: Patricia Mullen-Rempen** [TrishRempen@gmail.com](mailto:TrishRempen@gmail.com)

**Dennis Cockrell** recently retired and has some great plans. "I will be

walking the Camino de Santiago starting in mid-April. I will walk the Camino Frances route, starting in St. Jean-Pied-de-Port in southern France, and will continue through Santiago de Compostela to Finisterre on the coast then up to Muxia. Approximately 560 miles. I have allotted a rest day each week of my Camino so I can stop and enjoy the experience, see the sights, and have a glass of wine or two." • **Claudia Bates** writes, "I am a happily retired social worker after working in homelessness, community mental health, hospice, and international adoption. I have been married forever. I now immerse myself in serious houseplant care and serious parrot care. I have four successfully launched sons and two grandsons with whom I am privileged to spend much time. I miss my hugs from family and friends!" • **Elisabeth Jaenicke Powers**, better known as Weezie, lives half of the year in Berlin and the other half on the Greek island of Skiathos where she and her husband **Darcy Powers** have the beautiful Villa Maestrali. The Villa is available for rent: if you fancy a break in the Aegean, check it out at [villamaestrali-skiathos.com](http://villamaestrali-skiathos.com). 4

## 73

**Class Agent: Wendy Barton Benson** [wlbarton3299@gmail.com](mailto:wlbarton3299@gmail.com)

## 74

**Class Agent: Kathy Gamble Pilugin** [dulcinea\\_q1@me.com](mailto:dulcinea_q1@me.com)

**Larissa Shmailo** tells us, "I am well and healthy in New York and co-hosting a popular Zoom reading series called Lit Balm, a literary relief in a time of stress. I am promoting a new novel, *Sly Bang*. I have a Wikipedia page now. I am in contact with **Zarina Charlesworth**, **Kathy Gamble Pilugin**, and **Jon Goerner '75.** 5

## 75

**Class Agent: Linda Jaekel Avery** [Averylin@aol.com](mailto:Averylin@aol.com)

**Hans Figi** is living in upstate NY on a farm, and is very proud of his sons, updating us that **Jake '14** is ending his fourth year of medical school at University College London. Younger son **Lucas '16** just finished at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis but sadly his graduation ceremony was cancelled. • **Jeanie Cunningham**

wrote in May: "Good news: it looks like the Three Generations of TASIS Alumni (**Steve Maloney PG '61**, **Alicia Brauns '82** and me) will be at it again! Steve asked me to write a song for the Guide Dogs of the Desert. We were scheduled to go into production on March 21 but California was shut down on March 16th so we had to put it off. However, we are planning on beginning the music production this week via remote recording. Hope to meet up with Alicia in L.A. for part of the recording so that we can get some good video footage, but the rest of the musicians will be recording from their private studios and hopefully will have partners around with cell phones so we can ultimately make a video of the remotely recorded song. Other than that, I've just been asked to become Vice President of the Steinway Society of Riverside County ([steinwayriverside.org](http://steinwayriverside.org)), an organization I've been a board member of since 2013 when they recruited me to set up their Ukes In Schools program (now in its 7th successful year in six different schools and hopefully expanding to more in the Coachella Valley). For our annual big gala, I asked a dear friend of mine, Capt. Robert "Hoot" Gibson (a retired NASA astronaut who flew my music in space and is himself a musician) to come to Palm Springs and perform with four of my Uke students, one of my guitar students, two of my rock band students, the founder of Steinway Society RC, Ruth Moir (who is 86) on electric guitar, and me on lead vocals & guitar and Hoot on guitar and vocals. It was a huge hit! I'm mentoring a number of young musicians, a few of whom I'm sure could become stars if they stick to it long enough and don't get discouraged. Occasionally I perform here and there but more often than not, I'm spending my time prepping the next generation of rockers by teaching them everything I know from singing while dancing, songwriting, recording skills, microphone techniques, how to sing without getting polyps, performance skills, video editing...you name it. Wish I had a "Jeanie Cunningham" when I was their age, but am grateful to have been mentored by Ike Turner when I was just starting out. We owe it to future musicians and audiences to teach all we can how to be the best performers we can be!" • \*Note: Unfortunately, the anniversary

reunion that was due to take place in and around Santa Rosa in May had to be postponed. Get in touch with **Linda Jaekel Avery** to find out about the plans to reschedule!

## 76

**Class Agents: PK Fields** [pkfields@earthlink.net](mailto:pkfields@earthlink.net) and **Daisy Bilbao** [daisybilbao@bellsouth.net](mailto:daisybilbao@bellsouth.net)

**Lorri Fien** reported in July: "**Cristiane Cunial '78** and I spoke on the phone at length in early June. It was great to hear about what she's doing as well as what's happened since TASIS. She now lives about an hour away from me in Redwood City, and I gave her recommendations for restaurants, stores, parks, things to do from my sister-in-law who also lives in Redwood City. I plan to see Cristiane later this summer when it's legal for us to mingle and go out more."

## 77

**Class Agent: Rick Mullen** [rdmullen@verizon.net](mailto:rdmullen@verizon.net)

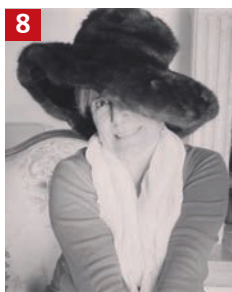
**Suzanne Price** visited campus and it felt like a homecoming. "It was wonderful to see all the new building and development that has occurred since I was there last. Also wonderful to see the diversity of the students and the vibrancy of the school. TASIS has a way of sinking into our souls."

## 78

**Class Agent: Heidi Nickels** [heidiv29@gmail.com](mailto:heidiv29@gmail.com)

**Valerio Leone** writes, "Not much has changed from my last news. I retired from my job and moved to Monte Carlo, spending more time traveling around the world and still car racing. In 2019 I won the FIA Historic European Formula 3 Cap and became European Champion. In February 2020 I left for three months of travel around the world. Unfortunately, due to Covid-19, I had to modify my original plan and I have still made it without a single day of quarantine or real lockdown. I spent the last month and a half of the trip in Santa Monica, California waiting for an available flight to get back to Europe. Now waiting for the new racing season to start." 6 • **Heidi Nickels** wrote, "My husband, Jim Fredrick, and I recently purchased a small berry farm in Penrose, Colorado. Blackberries,

# ALUMNI *Class News*



raspberries, and gooseberries are planted, along with an apple orchard. We'll be adding greenhouses, bees, and chickens to the mix. Happy to host any TASIC alumni if you find yourself in southern Colorado." • **Cristiane Cunial** took on a new position at Stanford University, and made the move from Australia right before the world hunkered down to combat the coronavirus pandemic. Among other things, it meant that it was weeks before she could even meet her team of co-workers. **7**

## 79

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 80

**Class Agent: Antonella Noseda** [anoseda@swissonline.ch](mailto:anoseda@swissonline.ch)

## 81

**NouNou Taleghani** [nounou@stanford.edu](mailto:nounou@stanford.edu)

## 82

**Class Agent: Tania Shetabi Nordstrom** [tsnordstrom@yahoo.com](mailto:tsnordstrom@yahoo.com). **Irene Smith** sent a charming message to **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman**: "I am still in Palm Springs working in Thermal at the BMW Performance Driving School selling corporate programs. It's provided me a job for the last 20 years, and sometimes working at a place for a long time you need to continue your motivation. I've been putting on **Mrs. Fleming's** hat so that some of her clever wit & wisdom can inspire me. I'm sending well wishes and letting you know that you are being thought of and I want to thank you for all of your efforts to continue the TASIC heritage." **8**

• **Tania Shetabi Nordstrom** tells us, "In November, I took the opportunity to combine a lovely visit with DC-based TASIC alumni **Rachel Palkendo Dougan '84** and **Stephanie Niblock Cohen '83** with the TASIC DC Alumni Reunion. Flying in to join us was **Rebecca Perry Damsen '83** and **Jenn Haldeman Ramirez '83**. Prior to making our way to the TASIC event, we met up with **Lanny Breuer** (Faculty 80-82) for a cocktail. We really enjoyed connecting with **Yvonne Procyk** and **Bill Eichner** and you know how I love to make new alumni friends! It may not be St. Moritz, but in February we connected with **Barry Begoumian** and **Eemen Sahebdivani Salehi '83** for a ski trip to Mammoth, California. It's the first time the three of us have skied since we were in St. Moritz!" **9**

• **Gretchen Schaefer** sends her greetings to the class of 1982. "I am living with my parents still and we are in Nokomis near Sarasota, Florida. We are doing well with everything going on in the world. My email is [swgfarm@gmail.com](mailto:swgfarm@gmail.com) and I am also on Facebook as well. Hope everyone is doing well, and please keep in touch."

## 83

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role. **Stephen Brooks** and his wife, Shelli, recently celebrated their 31st wedding anniversary and celebrated with their two adult sons, Connor and **Gaven '16** and the couple's parents and in-laws. Stephen also celebrated his 26th year of maintaining an active insurance, casualty, workers' compensation, and employer liability defense legal practice in New Orleans, Louisiana. While Stephen's busy schedule does not often permit extended

periods away from the courtroom, he and Shelli have plans to travel to Istanbul, Turkey next summer to visit classmate **Ferit Sahenk** and his wife, Dianne. Stephen adds that, thanks to social media, he now stays in regular contact with many of his classmates and, of course, welcomes a reunion in New Orleans if anyone is interested. **10**

## 84

**Class Agent: Jeff LaDriere** [jeff@ladrierebuilding.com](mailto:jeff@ladrierebuilding.com)

## 85

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

**Jon Harmer** is retired and living in Canada. "I'm putting my son through college and enjoying hobbies and interests that I was unable to enjoy as much when I was working. My wife and I work quite hard on our garden. We enjoy greenery and making rockeries among other landscaping projects."

## 86

**Class Agents: Maggie Hammad Boyle** [maggie\\_boyle@yahoo.com](mailto:maggie_boyle@yahoo.com) and **Denise Mobley** [dmobley415@comcast.net](mailto:dmobley415@comcast.net)

**Maggie Hammad Boyle** writes, "Jeff and I are still living in Katy, Texas, outside of Houston. Our daughter Gabi just finished her junior year at the University of Texas at Austin and our son Jacob finished his freshman year at the University of Texas at San Antonio. They were both not too happy with having to come home early for the Covid quarantine, but we are all doing well. Unfortunately our summer plans have been canceled like everyone else's, but we were able to reopen our two Massage

Heights locations for business again. We keep in close touch with **Denise Mobley**, **Debbie Anderson Rupert**, **Kelly Stoddard Wood**, and **David Zappa**. Last year **Rob (Lippy) Lazar** took a position in Cairo, Egypt at the Cairo American College and we were hoping to see him this summer. Maybe next year!"

## 87

**Class Agent: Alex De Bruin** [adebruin1@live.com](mailto:adebruin1@live.com)

**Alex de Bruin** reported in April "On our end we are all in good health. Four of the five boys are with us. **Alexis '12**, who was in Australia for a semester abroad from his Cornell MBA program, decided to ride out the storm in Singapore. As you can imagine, under the circumstances, Paris is very quiet. But being Paris the boulangeries, butchers, cheese stores, and perhaps more importantly the wine stores are all open and well-stocked. So we are not suffering too much. Apart from work and homeschooling, plenty of games playing is going on with various family members holding illustrious titles such as Prince of Catan, the Poker King, Conqueror of the world (Risk), Chessmaster, El Presidenté (a card game), and not to leave out the prime game of Backgammon, a game of skill where the luck factor is extremely volatile and impressive at times among various family members (I can tell you a story or two!)."

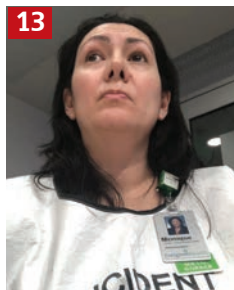
## 88

**Class Agent: Laura West Presnol** [Lpresnol@hotmail.com](mailto:Lpresnol@hotmail.com)

**Lisa Evans** writes, "I am in the process of changing careers. I have the opportunity to work for a large energy company called NRG." • **Janne Siren** issued a weekly Directors Vlog during the Covid-19 pandemic to



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get around enforced isolation and connect with the Albright Knox Art Gallery public. "Team AK has been working remotely for five weeks and, like people around the world, we miss our normal daily interactions, the social rainbow of multisensory connectivity. Screens are great, but also quite clinical. We are, of course, becoming increasingly proficient in using a range of digital platforms to conduct meetings and conversations." • **Michael Brunnschweiler** moved to Hanover, Germany in 2018 for work and is currently enjoying flying private airplanes and traveling with the kids. "Our oldest daughter graduated from the international school this spring and will be attending university in Holland in the fall. Two more to go. Besides flying, I'm enjoying biking the Alps when time permits." <sup>11</sup>

## 89

**Class Agent:** Lori Romero Ketter  
ketterfamily4@gmail.com

## 90

**Class Agents:** Franca Marena Gullett fmarena@aol.com and Ken Tobe ken.tobe@nihonshokuhin.co.jp  
**Carlo Gari De Aldama** wrote: "My music career has taken a positive turn the last two years with my indie pop band Parkes. We have released one album in English called Generation Monochrome and we will be releasing a second album in Spanish in October 2020. I learned to play the guitar while at TASIS and I want to encourage TASIS students to learn how to play at least one instrument. Music opens inaccessible doors in unimaginable ways. The adventures and friends you make will stay forever in your heart and thoughts and the faculty that look over you will stay with you as long

as you live. Believe me, I needed not to be a nerd to appreciate throughout the years how important the teachings and memories of these human beings have been for me during my adulthood. Stay well and long live TASIS." <sup>12</sup> • Unfortunately, the original plans for the **30th anniversary reunion** of the Class of 1990 have had to be postponed. Franca and Ken will make new plans for 2021 when the global situation improves, and look forward to seeing everyone at that time. Stay tuned for more info, and stay in touch!

## 91

**Class Agents:** Kristina Malcolm kmalcolm44@gmail.com and Gina Jose Heydari ginajose@hotmail.com

## 92

**Class Agent:** Miki Schroder Nava miki@mikinava.com

**Sophie Desplaces** reported from Covid quarantine in April: "In Paris we don't have an age limit on movement, but it is strict. We need to either fill in a paper or an electronic form to leave the house for food shopping or walking the dogs. At least I am able to take mine out three times a day. We tried our first TASIS Zoom reunion recently. I am well, trying to keep busy. Lots of spring cleaning and cooking. I crave sushi, but it will have to wait until the liberation" • **Miki Schroder Nava** had planned a reunion for early June in Mallorca, which unfortunately had to be postponed. "So sad about this, but totally out of our control. After all this is over we will need ONE HUGE PARTY. So let's keep in touch and we will be sure to plan an alternative date when things look more positive." Miki survived quarantine in Milan where the lockdown was strict, with everyone required to stay

indoors for many weeks, not even allowed out for a walk. • **Monica Bushore Gablehouse** writes, "I'm a COO at EvergreenHealth, the first US hospital to discover community-acquired Covid-positive patients in late February, and I was the incident commander when the CDC arrived. I was last on campus in summer of 2019 with my daughter, **Nicolasa Ruyle**, who attended the summer program. And prior to that for our 25th class reunion summer of 2017. Great memories!" <sup>13</sup>

## 93

**Class Agent:** Paula Quijano quijano.paula@gmail.com

**Christian Matthaeus** has three girls and is living in North Carolina.

## 94

**Class agent – Hege Shanor** hege.shanor@gmail.com

## 95

**Class Agent:** Nicole Pearson pookiefruitz@hotmail.com

**Lizzie Jarvis** tells us, "In the midst of London's lockdown, I started a new job as Operations Director at Canopy Simulations, which provides simulation software to the motorsport, automotive, sailing, and aerospace industries. My daughter is now the age I was when I arrived at TASIS, and my son will start secondary school in September."

## 96

**Class Agents:** Gina Van Hoof gvanhoof@gmail.com and Francesca Nicotra mf.nicotra@gmail.com

**Toshie Yamashiro Kahane** writes: "Last summer, I was back in Japan visiting all my family and friends, including my TASIS family, and this summer we can hardly leave our house, let alone the country! We still live in Texas, an hour north of Dallas. Thankfully, we live in a nice house in a great neighborhood but even then, it's taking a toll on everyone. I'm grateful to live in comfort amidst the global pandemic, but it is hard to not be able to socialize or travel like we normally do. In the midst of all this, I have video-chatted with my TASIS friends around the world. That had saved me from the overwhelming

feeling of isolation when we were in lockdown, repeating our daily lives like Groundhog Day. Adaptability is something I am good at but this is still hard to wrap my head around. Not sure if this is the kind of update you wanted but here it is! The picture is of me and the kids out on the lake while we were camping for the first time." <sup>14</sup> • **Sara Conklin** wrote in August 2019: "I have been in Brooklyn, New York since 2000. I was with the Cipriani Group for 11 years then left to open Glasserie in 2013, a Middle Eastern/Mediterranean restaurant in an old glass making factory in Greenpoint. The following year we opened Glasserie Events, which holds large scale weddings and corporate functions for up to 500 guests. The companies are doing great, life is good, and would love to know of anyone passing through town."

## 97

**Class Agent:** Kevin McMenamin sincap2@gmail.com

## 98

**Class Agent:** John Procter johnoprocter@gmail.com

**Cris Girao Shenk** writes, "I've lived in Los Angeles since 2005. I met my husband while doing an MBA at USC and we now have two sons, Santiago (6) and Benjamin (4). I've worked in marketing, real estate, and currently in e-commerce, and have recently added 'elementary school teacher' to my resume throughout the pandemic. I'm still in touch with my closest friends from TASIS and we love getting together whenever possible." <sup>15</sup>

• **Veronica Kennedy** is director of Business Capture at SOS International LLC.

## 99

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact alumni@tasis.ch to learn more about taking on this role.

**Collin Hughes** writes, "My wife of almost eight years, Kari, my 6-year-old son Anton, and my one-year-old son Enzo are all doing well here in West Seattle, Washington! I'm working from home for a tech company and painting/drawing when I have time. We had a joint birthday party last weekend for me and Enzo. My brother **Soren '97**

# ALUMNI *Class News*



is also working from home nearby with his wife and three daughters and is doing well. It's disappointing we can't spend time with each other and other family / friends or travel, but we know we're lucky. Other big family news is that our sister's son Calvin is a rookie for the New Orleans Saints! Exciting! So the nephew of two TASIS graduates is in the NFL!"

**16 • Francesca Caparas** shares, "This year I was awarded a Fulbright grant to spend five months teaching and doing research in the Philippines in 2021. Hopefully the Covid situation will have settled down by then, but in any case, I'm looking forward to spending more time in the Philippines. I hope that everyone is staying safe and healthy in their respective corners of the world."

## 00

**Class Agent:** **Tatiana Lucchini** talucchi@hotmail.com

**Christina Miles Bertucchi** is co-chair of the Art Department at Charles Wright Academy in Tacoma, Washington, and took her students to Florence and Rome last year. On the personal front, baby Sophie arrived in December 2019 and is the apple of everyone's eye, including big brother Adrien. \* Unfortunately, the **anniversary class reunion** scheduled for May 2020 could not take place as planned. We look forward to seeing everyone in Lugano in May 2021 instead! Contact **Tati Lucchini** for more info.

## 01

**Class Agent:** **Caroline Rothstein** caroline.rothstein@gmail.com

## 02

**Class Agent:** **Daniella Einik** daniellaeinik@gmail.com

**Calvin Hsu** got married in December with seven of his classmates in attendance. **Mei-Ling Klein** was also able to join them, and reported, "It was quite an elegant affair. I was so happy to see him and seven other alumni at the wedding."

## 03

**Class Agent:** **Remington Franklin** rfranklin@resolution-ent.com

**Stephanie De Vos** launched her new communications company in spring 2020, De Vos Communications Ltd.

## 04

**Class Agent:** **Masa Yo** masa.yo@gmail.com

**Steve Ellsworth** and his wife visited campus in September 2019. Steve works for a company that supplies firefighting materials. **17**

## 05

**Class Agents:** **Eda Aksoy** edaksoy@gmail.com, **Can Doganci** candoganci@gmail.com, **Maitri Shila Tursini** maitri.tursini.09@ucl.ac.uk

The **Class of 2005** held a virtual 15th anniversary reunion in May, and had such fun that they had more meetings in the weeks and months that followed. **18 • Eda Aksoy** writes: "I actually moved to London mid-pandemic for a new role with Google Arts & Culture, and am looking forward to seeing **Shila Tursini**—our true hero!—soon."

## 06

**Class Agent:** **Hailey Parsons Minder** haileyparsons@gmail.com

## 07

**Class agent:** **Denise Chiang** Denise731@gmail.com

**Julian Moloney** is enjoying life in southwest France, in the Dordogne, where he opened a restaurant in summer 2019. Visit [www.walnutbistro.com](http://www.walnutbistro.com), or @walnutbistroeymet on Instagram, and drop in to visit him if you are in the Bergerac area! He and his wife Chelsea came to visit us on campus in February. **19 • Jacopo Bordin** tells us: "In my last year of high school, then-economics teacher **Max Gyga** identified the job of strategic planner as an ideal job for me. I moved to San Francisco to study just that, and lived there for 10 years working for ad agencies on projects for Skype, Intel, Facebook, LG, EA, and the Olympics. After one year in Amsterdam working on brands like Heineken and McDonald's, I moved to Italy to set up a family and become the head of strategy for Grey, a major advertising agency network. Would love to thank Mr. Gyga and the entire TASIS school for the opportunity and memories." **20**

## 08

**Class Agents:** **Chingiz Aliyev** caliyev90@gmail.com, **Oriana Zoghbi Harb** orianazh@gmail.com and **Consuelo Marzi** consumz@hotmail.com

**Anderson Micheluzzi** reports, "Since returning to Brazil after high school, I graduated in logistics and business, and currently work in my family construction company. In 2015 I became the main director of the company, and I've worked on important national projects. Today we are building a ferris wheel, similar to the London Eye, called Big Wheel in Balneário Camboriú. Next year we are going to build another one in the state of São Paulo. We also built the Collina d'Oro residence in my hometown, and I'm proud to say that I keep living in Collina d'Oro. TASIS literally changed my life!" **21**

• **Annie Badavas Wyatt** had her first child on December 23, 2019. His name is Arthur Franklin Wyatt. • **Annika Gutbrod Simon** had her first child on May 26, 2020. His name is Bennet Caius Alexander Simon. "Our hearts are full and we look forward to introducing Bennet to the TASIS community at the next reunion." **22**

• **Julia Fox** got engaged last November 2019 to Josh Tohl. • **Olivia Martin Youngblood** welcomed her first child on May 29, 2020. Her name is Harper James Youngblood. • **Orianna Papin-Zoghbi** moved to the New York area and founded her own company (AOA Diagnostics) focused on healthcare consulting.

## 09

**Class Agents:**

**Serge Bollag** contact@sergebollag.com and **Stefano Cremasco** stefanocremasco@gmail.com

**Katia Zambon** has graduated from med school in Milan. Many congratulations! • **Maurice Michel** wrote, "I am currently in my residency in internal medicine at the University Medical Center Mainz in Germany. Luckily, we were not as severely affected by the Covid outbreak as other regions and hospitals. However, it was still a new experience to suddenly go from 'clinical routine' to an 'emergency plan', as the hospital was preparing for a rapid increase in patients. After the shutdown ended my girlfriend and I were able to travel to Switzerland for a little vacation and we got to enjoy some hiking in the Swiss Alps. I hope everyone is well!" **23**

## 10

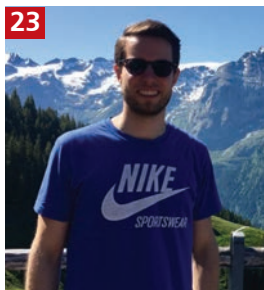
**Class Agents:** **Sylvie Coll** sylviecoll@gmail.com and **Anna Shabalova** annashabalova@yahoo.com  
**Matheus Marino** writes, "After



# ALUMNI *Class News*



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graduating in International Relations from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and working for a year in Charlotte, North Carolina, I'm once again close to Lugano. I've finished my Masters in Supply Chain and Procurement Management at MIP Politecnico di Milano and I'm working at Boston Scientific in Milan. During this challenging period of Covid-19 I had the privilege to work from the Dolomites at my girlfriend's family house and was able to enjoy several walks in the mountains. **24**

• Sadly, the **10th anniversary class reunion** scheduled for June could not take place as planned—but it's just postponed till a better time. Contact **Sylvie Coll** to find out more about the new plans.

11

**Class Agents:** **Mark Pate** swisscheese007@gmail.com, **Marco Rosso** marcorosso@me.com and **Katya Brovkin** katerina.brovkin@gmail.com

12

**Class Agents:** **Alexis De Bruin** alexisthegoalie@gmail.com, **Blair Darrell** bkdarrell@gmail.com, and **Mark Schrotter** jmschrotter@gmail.com

**Carlo Pagani** writes, "My mother and I are now living in Costa Rica. I am currently working here for a company called Vortice that deals with air treatment such as air conditioners and dehumidifiers. Northeastern University was great, I made friends I feel like I will have for life, and that is priceless!" • **Alexis de Bruin** graduated from Cornell University with an MBA in May and is now working in investment banking in New York City. • **Kilian Gyax** is living in Tahiti, Polynesia, working in the tourism industry (and surfing). His

brother, **Stefan '08** lives in Sydney, Australia and is working for a biotech company. Here they are visiting their parents in Dubai. **25**

13

**Class Agents:** **Samantha Hercules** sami.hercules@gmail.com and **Sarah Wyler** sarah.wyler13@gmail.com

**Sarah Wyler** writes, "During this period I spent my time working in an elderly home to help out the medical team. I also spent a lot of time with my family and of course my best friend (Lyka, my 11-year-old dog). I'll be going back to nursing school in September for my final year and hopefully by 2021 I'll be a nurse." **26**

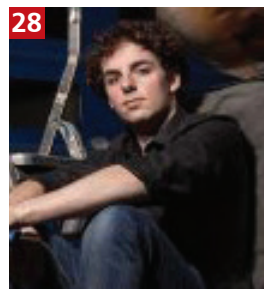
• **Rodrigo Castillo** is spending summer 2020 working as an intern at the US Congress.

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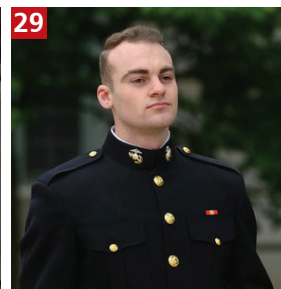
**Class Agent:** **Ryan Osgood** ryanleeosgood@gmail.com and **Giacomo Braglia** giacomobraglia@ticino.com

**Gaia Do Amaral** writes: "It has been four years since I moved to Denmark! In January 2020 I finished my degree in Global Health and Nutrition and I am applying for a Masters in Italy. Due to the Coronavirus situation the Masters has been postponed to January 2021. Last September I went to Ghana for a month for some volunteer work. My first thoughts were my service learning trips to Zambia and Botswana during my two years at TESIS. It was (as usual) an amazing and unforgettable experience!" **27**

• **Giacomo 'Jack' Braglia** had an installation of his sculptures at Forte dei Marmi (Tuscany) in summer 2020. Entitled "Conversations with a Changing World", it demonstrates Jack's increasing interest in using his artistic skills to highlight topics of social concern, including racism and



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environmentalism. 'Twin Bottles' is one of those, highlighting the current difficulties with plastic waste. **28**

15

**Class Agents:** **Nathaniel Brener** nbrener@mac.com and **Tomson Carroll** tomsoncarroll1996@gmail.com

16

**Class Agents:** **Edo Italia** eitalia27@gmail.com and **Pablo Tello** pablotellozulu@gmail.com  
**Lucas Figi** graduated from Annapolis (USNaval Academy) May 22 and is now a second lieutenant in the US Marine Corps. **29**

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**Class Agents:** **Raid Husni-Bey** raidbey1@gmail.com and **Aida Loggioldice** aidamercedes99@gmail.com

18

**Class Agents:** **Nick Barbieri** nicolab441@gmail.com and **S hiva Mirchandani** smirchandani.18@gmail.com

**Bryan Soh** reports, "Following graduation in 2018, I enlisted in the army as part of mandatory National Service in Singapore. I subsequently was selected to undergo the nine-month Officer Cadet Course in Officer

Cadet School, before commissioning as a Second Lieutenant on 14 March, 2020. I'm currently a Platoon Commander in an infantry battalion in the Singapore Armed Forces, serving my remaining eight months of National Service." **30**

19

**Filippo Cipolini** filippocipolini@mac.com and **Aurelia Dochnal** aurie@dochnal.com

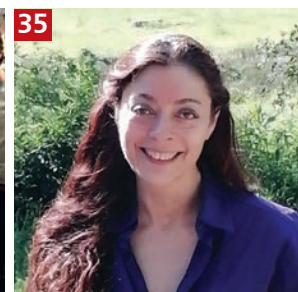
## Post Graduate

61

**Class Agent:** **Mimi Trieschmann Nesbit** jtnesbit@att.net

**Steve Maloney** wrote to us from quarantine in April: "Yvonne and I are fine, all hunkered down in Palm Springs. I have been super busy in my role as the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Palm Springs Art Museum. Like all non-profits we have cut back and closed operations until all clear to re-open. We will reorganize and skinny down and reopen most likely later in the fall. Also I am keeping busy putting the final touches on my book *Take Me Home Huey – Honoring American Heroes Through Art*. We are staying in close touch with **Jeanie Cunningham '75** who is five minutes away from us, also **Alicia Brauns '82**

# ALUMNI *Class News*



in L.A.” • **Elizabeth Harris Pritchard** writes: “Luckily I am able to see fellow PG61 **Jill “Mimi” Trieschmann Nesbit** here in Chicago a couple of times a year. **Martha Sproat Fields** has moved to Wisconsin and Mimi and I plan to visit her. After retiring from being a CPA and teaching at DePaul University, I am now involved with various organizations and volunteer preparing taxes for low income clients. I also take classes at Northwestern University in their OLLI program. Right now, my husband Barry and I are staying close to home with Covid-19 in the area and the state. As I write this, Illinois and Chicago are still in semi-lock down, but it is looking like some easing is coming.” • **Mimi Trieschmann Nesbit** lived in her home in Winnetka, Illinois for 30 years. She now enjoys condo living in Northfield, Illinois. “I was 38 years a widow and then met Larry, a widower and retired firefighter and paramedic. He is my earth angel and truly my hero, saving my life when I had two heart attacks and quadruple bypass surgery. All is well. We spend our winters ‘snowbirding’ in Arizona. My three daughters live in California, Virginia, and Illinois. I have three thriving grandsons. Larry and I had the pleasure of seeing **Betsy Brown Phillips** and husband John in Houston. Happily, **Liz Harris Pritchard** and I get together whenever possible. Life is good. Best to all my classmates.” • **Joyce Nassar Leary** says, “Life is busy with grandchildren, golf, and bridge. We have managed through this social distancing and my grandchildren were able to learn from home. They have all grown so much and managed this virus well. Travel has been put on hold....hope to get to the west coast before too long. I have two of the four children living there. I have been healthy and enjoying my new tricycle at the

Seabrook beach in New Hampshire. Hope all are well.” • **Martha Sproat Fields** tells us: “A year ago I retired from work and moved from Jacksonville, Florida to Cedarburg, Wisconsin. Seems like I went the wrong way, right? But it was to be close to one of my children and her family. It was time to move and no regrets. The virus and staying in was very easy for me since that is what I was doing anyway! I have two other children, Sam, who is teaching English in Japan, and Joe, who is married with one child, Alice. They live in the Boston area. Love visiting when I can. A few of us returned to Lugano for Mrs. Fleming’s 90th Birthday! It was fabulous and she remembered each of us! She will never be forgotten!”

## 62, 63 and 64.

We would like to appoint class agents for these classes. Are you interested in helping out? For more info, email [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch)

## 65

**Class Agent: Rick Bell** [rickbell@delawareinc.com](mailto:rickbell@delawareinc.com)

## 66

**Class Agent: Ned Lynch** [nedleigh@gmail.com](mailto:nedleigh@gmail.com)

**Mary Seyfarth** writes: “After 70 years and three generations in the family house in Highland Park, Illinois, I have downsized. The house is a gem, designed by my grandfather in 1913, but the north roof was 50 years old and some pipes were original, etc. Upkeep-Upkeep-Upkeep. Moving is a four-letter word: W.O.R.K.!!! But I am glad to simplify. I started to make masks for a Halloween party in 2019. The bird masks started as a kind of theater prop, but they multiplied this

winter as we were all quarantined. The materials I use are ‘everyday’: crayons and paper bags. Low materials with lofty thoughts, copied from images of real birds. I love the characters they become... that is the art.” 31 • **Cindy Crabtree** sent a festive photo with **Charlie James** and his wife. 32 • **Elisabeth Acer Crawford** writes, “I have been busily and happily settling into Providence, Rhode Island and all the cultural opportunities that it has to offer and that I love. Shakespearean Society, Grace Episcopal Church Choir, Alliance Française, the Athenaeum (one of the oldest libraries in the US), The Players (one of the oldest community theaters in the US), and wonderful neighbors. I have a precious Maltipoo puppy who is very friendly. I’m training her to be a Therapy Dog. I am the enthusiastic liaison between my church and the Alliance Française as we prepare to celebrate the first ever full French Epiphany Service. French carols, French organ pieces, and the Alliance will host a galettes des Rois/champagne soirée afterwards! I believe this to be the beginning of a special, new Providence tradition!” 33

## 67

**Class Agents: Geoff Parker** [gspkr@mac.com](mailto:gspkr@mac.com) and **Susan Lo Forti** +1 415 860 6401

**Maude Glore** reports, “We are stuck at home! Also having another grandson in September. **Robert Hux ‘99** has three, Ben Hux has three, and William Hux has 1.5!”

## 68

**Class Agent: Kathy Sanders-Phillips** [ksandersphillips@aol.com](mailto:ksandersphillips@aol.com)

*\*From 1972 onwards, the High School Class Agents serve the PGs as well.*

## 83

**Andrew Ferren** is relocating to Lisbon this summer and we are delighted that he is considering Tasis Portugal for his kids. “Our kids have gone to Spanish schools thus far and we automatically applied to the Spanish school there as it would be free and also had a looming deadline. But I’m very intrigued by the idea of giving them the Tasis experience. We actually had thought about Tasis Lugano as an option for them when they are a bit older. They would definitely benefit from the boarding school experience and my one year at Tasis was so pivotal to my academic interests and later my career.”

## 00

**Meg Smith Aeschliman** and **Adrien Aeschliman ‘99** welcomed baby Leo John Jackson Aeschliman on June 14, 2020. Congratulations to the happy family! • **Najia Buhatem Maluf** shares with us, “Big dining time in Rio de Janeiro, as (from left to right) **Gill Zahn ‘01** and family drove from Sao Paulo, **Priscila Amaral ‘02** and family flew from Capetown to Brazil, I flew from Sao Luis, **Maria Santiago PG ‘99** flew with her son Vinicius, and **Rodrigo Santos ‘02** came from Belo Horizonte! Great time catching up with Tasis friends, and hoping to make it at least once a year!” 34

## 07

**Jeffrey Danoff** and Ashley Danoff welcomed baby girl Piper Conroy Danoff on April 7, 2020.



# ALUMNI *Class News*



## Fleming College

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**Mimmi Wischkowsky** writes, “I was going to become an interpreter after my experience at Fleming College but instead of spoken languages, I went into the study of a universal language called dance. I reside in Dallas, Texas, teaching dance and movement therapy. I am married, have a daughter who is a veterinarian, and two grandchildren. I miss the old times in Lugano, which will always be close to my heart. Maybe my grandchildren can carry on the Swiss tradition and get the fabulous schooling that you all provide.”

## TASIS Hellenic

98

**Costas Gavras** has a beautiful 200-year-old Cycladic house on the island of Naxos, which is available for booking through Airbnb (search for Sagri 1818). “For more than 10 years I have been living all year round on the island of Naxos, and would love to host TASIS alumni. There’s even a special discount!”

## Swiss Holiday

64

**Rosamond Phelps Baiz** visited the campus 55 years after she attended Swiss Holiday! Rosamond lives on Long Island where she has a vineyard.



## TSLP/TSP

86

**Mariam Al Idrissi** is married and her daughter Ekaterina is 12 years old. 35

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**Ipek Kotan** writes, “It was a busy few months in the studio and I’d like to share the highlights with you. Since the summer, I’ve been working on a commission by Cartier, a collaboration with a Dutch documentary filmmaker, and finally my new line of architectural and decorative tiles which I showed at Decorex London from 6-9 October in London. A few months ago I was approached by Atelier 27 Paris which specializes in art curation about a commission for Cartier Dubai for their VIP room. Meanwhile Dutch documentary filmmaker Thijs Adriaans and I had been talking about making a short film for a few years and we had even set a date over the summer for September. So the Cartier commission being right around that time was really serendipitous! After many years of focusing on the sculptural vessel form—with which I am still quite enamored—I wanted to see my glazes on a different form. Tiles are quite interesting in the way that can be arranged in a number of combinations and configurations creating a mosaic of texture and color.”

## Former Faculty

**Michael Horak** says, “Marta and I began 2020 near Naples, Florida, visiting my uncle, Mirko Valenta, who had his 100th birthday on January 2. The picture enclosed is from the dinner we had with him that evening. I sang Sinatra’s ‘It Was a Wonderful

Year’ and ‘My Way’ in Mirko’s honor. ‘Happy Birthday’ was sung in English, German, Czech, and (finally) Polish! Things were OK back in Prague until early March, when the government issued lockdown orders. From then until just this week, masks were a mandatory part of our apparel in public, and they remain so even today for us when we go shopping or enter other confined spaces. I have been teaching online classes since 9 March and will continue this way for the foreseeable future. Retirement from most of my teaching looms at the end of June. Hard to believe I first taught English through a TASIS connection in Lugano during the summer of 1972! That was the year my mother introduced me to her dashing colleague, **Shah Akbar Khan**. The rest is history ...” 36

**Jeff Klein** takes up a new position this fall as Associate Dean and Director of the Programme Grande Ecole and MSC Programs at the Burgundy Business School in Dijon. He had planned to open a B&B in the Dordogne, but withdrew his offer because of the inauspicious timing with the pandemic taking off at that precise moment. Plan B sounds pretty good though!

**Fanis Malakondas** (former TH staff) reported at the end of April that schools in Athens had been closed since March 11. “We have had online lessons since then and are progressing well, though virtually.” It was mid-May before ISA (which now occupies the TH campus in Kifissia) could welcome students back to campus. HS and MS students returned on May 18 and the primary and kindergarten opened on June 1, all with strict hygiene protocols in place.

**Ronald Newell** (former CDE faculty and son of long-time CDE director **Betsy Bacon Newell**) met up with **Lynn and Michael Aeschliman** for lunch in November and sent us a picture holding his daughter Charlotte, while her mother, Tracey McManus, looks on. 37

**Phytos Papaioannou** (former TC and TSLP faculty) is now an Educational Inspector at the Ministry of Education in Nicosia, Cyprus.

**Gerald Roy** got in touch with a tribute for **Howard Stickley** on his retirement, and shared an update. “I joined TASIS in England when it was first started in

1976. From 1979 to 1981 I was at TASIS Hellenic, then on to Lugano under **DeHaven Fleming**. Great years. I continue to teach although at the college level now and I so much enjoy the challenge. I have been at Indian River State College for five years. A month ago I had a student I taught in Greece contact me after nearly 40 years. How about that? If anyone wants to keep in touch, my email is groy@irsc.edu or girdroy@aol.com.”

**Tom Shepanzyk** writes, “This year I am at Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia, about 70 miles west of DC. It is a great Catholic college, even smaller than TASIS but filled with a family-like atmosphere. I serve as assistant chaplain and teach Theology classes. In addition I help in parishes in the area, so it requires total commitment. The people around are terrific. Strong families with numerous children; eight to ten children is common here and they keep the faith. Most children are home-schooled or in small Catholic schools.”

**Peter Stevens** visited the UK in fall 2019 and writes that despite a bout of ill health, “it was a marvelous trip, focusing on the christening of our grandson Peter, now two years old. Other than this, Linn continues to paint and I continue to offer volunteer services here and there: two school boards of trustees (one where I am acting Chair), and a local charity which raises funds to support kids in schools in this rural area of western Massachusetts where we live, and a few other ventures. All this while developing a new business that will be off the ground in a couple of months.”

**Chris Tragas** reports, “It’s great having the time to enjoy life and the family, especially our grandson, and looking forward to the arrival of our granddaughter in early June!”

**Robert Winer** wasn’t able to join the Class of ’75 for their reunion, but sent best wishes to them with an update: “We still live in Clifton, Virginia. Our sons are grown and gone. Ben received his Ph.D. from Princeton and is now in a postdoc program in molecular biology at U.C.S.F. Ari is working for the Department of Labor in D.C. Give our best regards to your classmates. We wish them continued success.”

# ALUMNI *Class News* - IN MEMORIAM



**Alexandros Benveniste TH '98** passed away on September 25, 2019. The sad news came from his brother Philip.



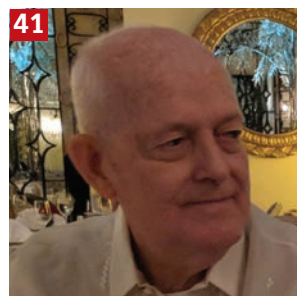
**Douglas Coombs (former faculty)** passed away in February 2019 from pancreatic cancer. Doug taught at TASIS for two years, and in 2016 he joined the Late 70s Faculty Reunion in Massachusetts. He is survived by his wife Jean and three children. His son James Coombs wrote, "My father always spoke very highly of his time at TASIS, and the people he met during his stay there. They were some of my favorite stories from his time of being an adventurous person. I am thankful he got the opportunity to reunite with everyone a few short years ago."



**Steven Folsom '75** passed away in June 2015, in Vermont. Steve loved to travel and, having a great ability to ski, lived in France for some years where he served on the ski patrol in Chamonix. In his free time Steve loved getting together with his friends for musical jamming, as well as writing poetry; a number of his poems are published in the book, "Wake Up Call." **38**

**Piera Galli (former staff)** died on April 9, 2020 at the age of 71, after suffering a second stroke. Piera 'kept house' at Casa Fleming and attended to Mrs. Fleming for many years, including being her travel companion in her later years to make sure Mrs. Fleming could continue to move between her three residences in Lugano, Tuscany, and London.

**Joe McPherson (former Headmaster, 2001-05)** died of a heart attack on September 25, 2019. A graduate of Harvard College, the Center for Research and Communication in the Philippines, and Georgetown University Law School, Joe served as a lifelong educator, most recently as the founding Headmaster of the Brookewood School. He was instrumental in the development of The Heights School and the founding



of its Potomac campus, where he served 29 years including 13 years as Headmaster. He was a Knight of Malta and extremely active in literary and artistic circles. We send our deepest condolences to his family and friends. **39**

**Suzanne Simard Miller '66** passed away in October 2019 while visiting her second home in Honolulu. She is survived by her husband of 40 years, Michael Miller, sons Scot and Michael, and two grandchildren. **40**



**Robert Sears '62** passed away in early 2020. His brother Fred wrote an obituary:

"Robert Morgan Sears, brother of **Diana Sears Panconesi '60** and **Frederick Sears '59** mercifully died in the Philippines after fervently battling cancer for 15 years. He loved life, work, friends, and family and enjoyed trying new things; he had an interesting trait of revisiting people and places that he lumped together as 'traditions' that he used as a way to keep alive many memories. Some examples of his spirit are found in his first year at TASIS, then at the Villa Verbanella in Minusio, when Robert, on a dare, actually locked an enraged group of teachers in the teachers' lounge. Later, at the ripe old age of 50, he took up breakdancing in the provinces a good distance from Manila, with a younger crowd. Robert was the first five-year alumnus of TASIS. From Lugano, he went to Colby College in Waterville, Maine and then spent four years as a Disaster Control Officer in the US Air Force, earning a Bronze Star for his actions in Vietnam. He next went to work for the Merrill Lynch brokerage company serving in Milan, Lugano, Rotterdam, Tehran, Dubai, and the Philippines where, after opting for early retirement, he took a

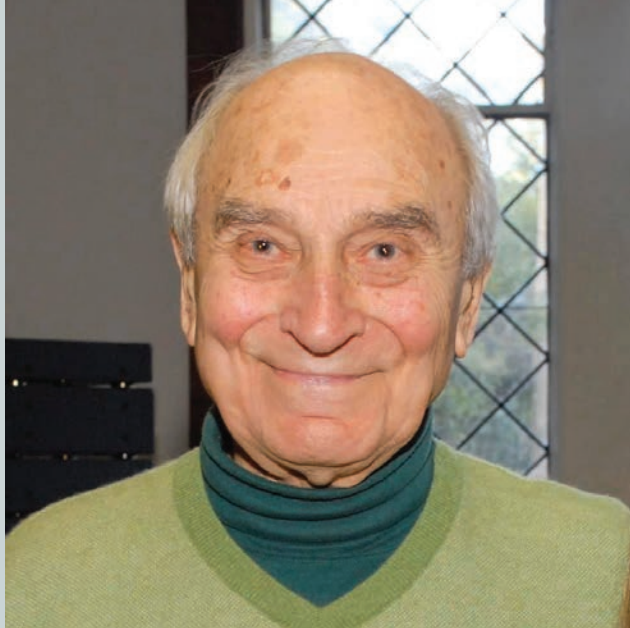
job as the Executive Director of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and retired a number of years ago, although he remained an active chairman of a number of NGOs. Robert devoted considerable time and effort to helping a number of young people primarily through education. It started slowly by helping street kids to get a better life through work skills like driving a car, and that morphed into close involvement in directing and supporting Education Funds. The Covid-19 quarantines have prevented us from being with him in his last days and we are still waiting for the opportunity to say our final farewell at his graveside." **41**

**Jose Seminario '87** died unexpectedly on July 5, 2020 from Covid-19, and is greatly missed by family and his many friends, including his TASIS classmates who have been paying tribute online. TASIS heard from classmate **Todd Drummond**, who wrote "This is a sad day. Jose was a good friend and I have many special memories of him from TASIS. He and I wildly celebrated my 16th birthday together at St. Moritz in January of 1985. We traveled together a bit, and got in some trouble along the way. He was a fun loving, funny guy, and great to be around. May he Rest In Peace." The alumni team also has warm memories of Jose from reunions in Houston and Lugano, and is deeply saddened by his premature death. Pictured above with Chris Muncy at the Lugano reunion. **42**

**Sondra Duncanson Vastine FCF '74** from Glenside, Pennsylvania, passed away on August 27, 2019, and is survived by her husband Steve Vastine. She was a graduate of the Dana Hall School in Wellesley Mass, and attended Parsons school of Design in NYC.

**Nancy Faulconer Cockerill PG '63** passed away peacefully on June 19, 2019, at the age of 75. Nancy lived in San Francisco for a number of years before moving to Richmond, Virginia, where she became a successful award-winning realtor and remained active until her retirement.





**George Marchi (former faculty ARTE + FCF)**  
passed away on October 23, 2019.

George ran ARTE, the American Repertory Theater in Europe, with the late **Robert Wilson**, and the Drama Program at Fleming College Florence. George grew up in San Francisco, and was one of the survivors of the Leopoldville troopship disaster, sunk by a U-boat in December 1944 off the coast of France. George went to U.C. Berkeley after the war via the GI Bill, where he joined the newly established Dramatic Arts program. He helped found Actors Ensemble in 1957 before joining Fleming College Florence, then taking on roles in Greece and the US. George finished his career as the well-loved librarian at Rooftop School in his native San Francisco.

George was bright and active into his 90s, with a wide circle of friends and interests (he even acted in a few independent films in his later years) only being struck by dementia in the last few years of his life. In the last 15 years he contributed to the organization of the Actors Ensemble archives along with his friend Bill Martinelli, sadly also recently deceased, which are now safely ensconced at the Berkeley Historical Society.

**Sue Bodine Bolea FCF74** writes: "George and I saw each other for dinner and fun sometimes, less often as I would like. I visited him in the hospital a month before he passed away. He was just as delightful and mischievous as ever. As far as the acting community, I met some of his friends from Greece, and Jerome and I have networked on visits. George and I went to see the Actors Ensemble productions when we could. There he was always treated

with fanfare and respect, especially during the summer plays in the park. He got to choose the winner of a drawing and did so with great panache."

**Heidi Flores, FCF Administrator**, writes: "It was so long ago when I knew **George Marchi** in the long bygone days of Fleming College Florence (FCF) at the splendid Torre di Gattaia, Florence, 1972-77. He was Theatre Arts Director and he fell into that role passionately, persevering against all the odds to get a play off the ground with the scant means at hand. He had come to Florence via Greece, where he had met Richard Boardman who joined him later to be his assistant, stagehand, prop-finder, poster artist, and someone to share his sudden bursts of laughter.

When I first met George I was secretary for the College. I felt intimidated by his intense facial expression, his brow constantly furrowed, his theatrical manner, but as I got to know him a whole new world opened up to me. I remember an enthusiastic performance of Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* by his drama students, attended by many members of the thriving international community in Florence. Other memorable productions were Tennessee Williams' *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* and Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, all performed by FCF students who seemed to rise to the occasion exceedingly well.

I also recall travelling with the group to put on a performance of a Shakespeare play (alas, I cannot remember which one!) in Venice, in Piazza San Zaccaria, on a hot summer night. None of the organizers seemed to remember that the play would be performed that evening! Nothing was ready. We ended up scrambling with hammer and nails pulled out of one of the mythical Fleming VW vans to put up the stage that same afternoon. George was impassive throughout the preparation, a resolute look on his face, certain that the show would go on. And a successful, well-attended performance it was. Thank you, George, for the awesome memories. Rest in peace."

**A Zoom memorial will take place on Saturday, October 24, 2020; 10AM San Francisco time. To join in, email [suebolea@gmail.com](mailto:suebolea@gmail.com) to get the invitation link.**

# TASIS SUMMER PROGRAMS 2021

[summer.tasis.com](https://summer.tasis.com)

## Summer in Lugano—at TASIS!

The TASIS experience is transformational. Our summer programs capture the TASIS magic, giving children from ages 4 through 18 a new way of looking at the world.

The summertime TASIS community is a vibrant, eclectic mix of children and staff from more than 60 nations, speaking over 30 languages. A combination of classroom learning, sports, performing and visual arts, and an extensive travel program make the TASIS Summer Programs the perfect introduction to TASIS.

### TASIS SUMMER PROGRAMS LUGANO (AGES 4½-18)



Courses include Languages (English, French, Italian), STEM/STEAM, Musical Theater, Digital Photography, Academic Writing, Short Story, IB Prep, Math Skills, Lean Startup, Fine Art Portfolio, Architecture & Design, Fashion & Textile Design, La Cucina Italiana

- Outdoor sports in lakes and on mountains
- Excursions exploring the best of the heart of Europe
- Located on the picturesque, award-winning TASIS campus with stunning views of the Alps

### TASIS ENGLAND SUMMER PROGRAM AGES 10-17, ENGLAND



Located on a beautiful campus 18 miles southwest of London Courses in Geometry, Writing Enhancement, STEM, Debate & Public Speaking, EAL, French, IELTS Review, TV Production, London through a Lens, Fashion & Textile Design, Drawing & 3D Design, and International Business

- Weekend travel throughout Britain

### LES TAPIES ARTS AND ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMS AGES 13-17, FRANCE



Hands-on study in architecture, painting & drawing, and photography

Excursions draw on the cultural richness of the South of France. Idyllic location in a beautifully-restored, 17th-century hamlet in the Ardeche

### TASIS SUMMER INSTITUTE AGES 14-18, LUGANO

Launched in the summer of 2020, the TASIS Summer Institute aims to help rising freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors prepare for advanced levels of study—including IB and AP courses. A variety of academic offerings ranging from short, 2.5-hour courses to two-week, 30-hour courses are offered both online and on the TASIS campus in Lugano. More specific information will be shared in advance of summer 2021.

The live classes are reserved for day students who attend TASIS during the academic year.



# THE M. CRIST FLEMING LEGACY SOCIETY

## LIVE TODAY. PLAN FOR TOMORROW. STRENGTHEN THE FUTURE OF TISIS.

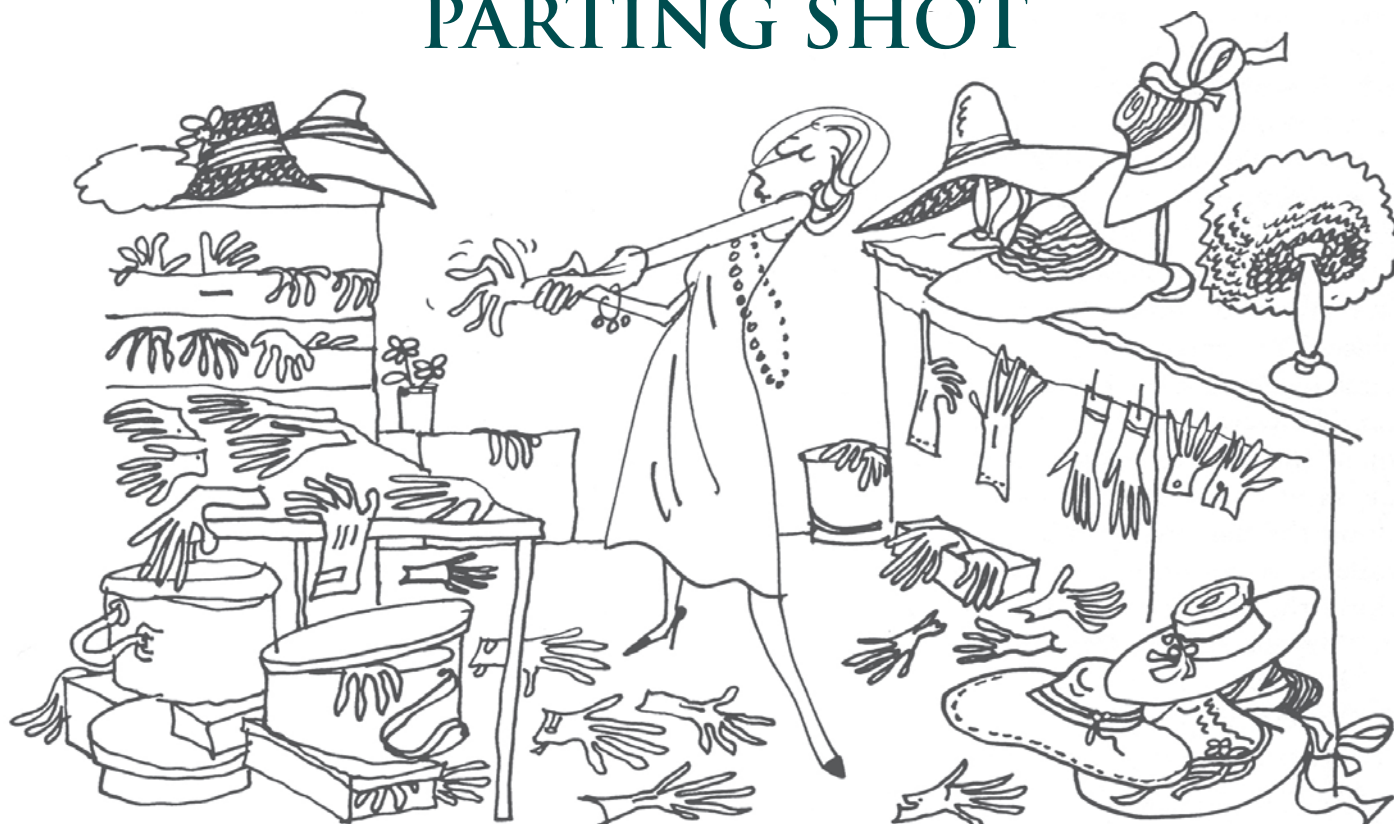
Naming TISIS as a beneficiary in your will provides a future source of support for students, faculty, and programs at no cost to you now. Planning a gift now through a will, trust, or retirement asset provision can enable you to establish an endowed fund or offer general support to the School beyond your lifetime. If you have already made provisions for this, please contact us so that we may celebrate your generosity in your lifetime.

**We are grateful  
to the following  
announced or received  
bequests through  
wills and estate plans:**

Paulise and Rick Bell PG '65  
Chris Draz '70  
Richard Jensen '73  
Helen Kochenderfer '75  
Donald MacDermid '61

Nicholas Major PG '68  
Dieter Metzger '74  
Ned Lynch PG '66  
Nick and Maggie Miles  
John E. Palmer '64

## PARTING SHOT



***Mrs. Fleming was a trendsetter even without trying...she wore gloves before they were a preferred pandemic accessory! We think she'd be partial to a floral face mask.***



# UPCOMING REUNIONS

## **All-Class Reunion in San Francisco**

St. Francis Yacht Club, 6:30 – 9:30 pm

**Saturday, March 27, 2021**

## **All-Class Reunion in New York**

The Yale Club, 6:30 – 9:30 pm

**Friday, November 19, 2021**

## **Class of 2000 – 21st anniversary reunion**

Lugano

**May 21-23, 2021 (rescheduled from May 2020)**

## **Class of 2020**

### **Live Graduation Celebration and One-Year Reunion**

Lugano

**June 11-13, 2021**

*Information correct as of August 30, 2020* 😊