



## ***On Better Serving Our Community***

***Article contributed by Dr. Maggie Koong, Head of Academy***

One of our missions at VSA is to nurture a community that **ACTS** to make a better world. I have witnessed many of our students take the initiative to explore issues in our local and global community and take the responsibility to create change. As Jack Ma, founder of Alibaba, says, a successful leader does not just need EQ and IQ but also LQ. LQ is the quotient of love and is what distinguishes human from machines. It is an intrinsic value that allows and encourages us to create and develop solutions for global issues. It is instated in us to make a difference and act to better our community.

I remember being involved in different community work and roles while I was growing up. Since I was young, my family will organise weekend activities for my siblings and me to visit elderly homes or to volunteer at charity events. There was always a wave of satisfaction when our work was able to bring a smile to those we helped. These experiences created a lasting impression on me, and throughout my adult life I have served on multiple NGO committees and advocated for many global agendas, especially on the betterment of women and children wellbeing. I have made trips to visit UNICEF projects related to the good cause for children, and as President of OMEP I have conducted work to advocate for quality education and reaffirm the importance of equal access to quality head start education. I want to share this joy and instate these values in my own children as well as students at VSA.

As an IB School, our Diploma students are required to complete a CAS component of the programme. The three strands of CAS are to encourage students to participate in activities involving Creativity, Activity, and Service. The **Service** component is to challenge students to show initiative and contribute to their communities, and to also foster balanced and caring individuals. The VSA community has been involved in several large scale service projects, such as our collaboration with the [Wu Zhi Qiao programme](#). Wu Zhi Qiao (Bridge to China) is a [charity](#) focused on improving the human and concrete infrastructure in the Mainland, and our students have travelled to remote locations to help in the actual construction of these bridges and buildings. The Stark Foundation is a well-established group within our school and has also executed a number of in-school fundraising activities and events for local charities. Our RAD Days aim to raise awareness for rainforest conservations and raise money for charities around the world. VSA also recently made a donation to The Masarang Foundation to support the Tasikoki Wildlife Rescue and Education Centre in caring for animals. During the school suspension period our Year 12s and Year 10s continued to put their education in action by engaging in community projects, the [Economics Study Guide](#) and [Kiva Competition](#) respectively. All proceeds raised from the study guide was given to underprivileged groups affected by the coronavirus crisis in

Hong Kong, and Kiva is a platform where students can claim a loan to subsidise their proposed community project.

These are only a few examples of community work that has taken place around our campus, with many other projects happening concurrently. Our PYP Exhibition is an example that showcases our students' action and awareness on global issues. For three consecutive years, our exhibition has revolved around SDG Global Goals, with in depth inquiries into the Gini Coefficient, Gender Equality, and Peace and Collaboration. On a personal level, Year 4 student, Erin Lee, has taken it upon herself to set up a Blog that advocates "*Acting For Good*". Through her online platform she shares ideas on how we can do small acts to make big changes.

Join me, your teachers, and peers to help build a giving school. As a group we have so much more influence and ability to make a difference and impact at a local and global level. As said by Sir Winston Churchill, "*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give*", let's take action and make a difference for our community.