



LEYSIN AMERICAN SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

Vol. 36 No. 1 / SPRING 2022

panorama

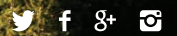
A MAGAZINE FOR OUR GLOBAL FAMILY

*Return
to the
Mountain*

CELEBRATING
61 MAGICAL YEARS



HAVE THE **SUMMER** OF A **LIFETIME**



HIGHLIGHTS OF LAS SUMMER IN SWITZERLAND

Hiking and Biking in the Swiss Alps | Indoor Skydiving and Parapenting | Boating & Tubing on Lake Geneva
S'mores around the Campfire | Trips to Zermatt, Montreux, Gruyères | Art, STEM & Language Classes



LAS Summer in Switzerland lets students create a program tailored to their interests. Students select a morning program as well as clubs, afternoon activities, and evening socials. Regular excursions allow students to explore Switzerland while realizing the LAS mission of "developing innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world."



LAS SUMMER IN SWITZERLAND
las.ch/summer summer@las.ch

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Parents of LAS Alumni:

If this magazine is addressed to your son or daughter who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please notify the LAS Advancement Office. Thank you.

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Anna Rubio '91

Anupy Singla SP'18, '19

Francis Yasharian

What do our abbreviations mean?

Our guide below explains the shorthand you'll see throughout the *Panorama*.

LAS Leysin American School

LASER LAS Educational Research

BEC Belle Époque Campus

MMAC Magic Mountain Athletic Center

ICE Innovation, Creativity, Entrepreneurship

JOHN SMITH '98

John's graduation year from LAS was 1998.

JOHN SMITH S'98, '99, '00

John attended summer camp at LAS in 1998, 1999, and 2000.

JOHN SMITH P'14, '16

John has two children who attended LAS and their graduation years were 2014 and 2016.

JOHN SMITH SP'18

John has a child who attended summer camp at LAS in 2018.

JOHN SMITH G'22, '24

John has two grandchildren who attended LAS and their graduation years were 2022 and 2024.

Reset for the Future

Greetings From the Magic Mountain
to Our LAS Global Family

By Dr. Marc-Frédéric Ott, Head of School



The last two years have given us a unique chance to reset and find new opportunities amidst the challenges. We have used this time to consider the future of LAS and make considerable strides in three areas: the LAS vision, our governance structure, and external relations.

It sure has been a strange and unforgettable couple of years on the mountain and in the world at large. As I reflect on the last two years at LAS, I realize that while our community has faced previously inconceivable challenges, the times we find ourselves in also offer unprecedented opportunity.

Thanks to the LAS School Board's guidance and support, the Leadership Team, along with community-wide involvement, spent the past two years developing a comprehensive strategic vision. **The new LAS vision is built on three pillars: Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship (ICE), Whole Child, and Global Family.** In tandem with our mission to develop innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world, the LAS vision guides our direction as we look to the future. You will be hearing more as we live out our vision in the months and years to come.

Recently, LAS has made some exciting structural changes to the governance of the school. As you will read about later in this edition of the *Panorama*, LAS has brought in more voices to guide the direction of the school and has clarified the roles of our historical governing bodies. The LAS School Board and LAS Foundation Board (both based in Switzerland) continue to oversee the operation of the school and have brought on new members this year. Having been dormant for several years, the US Advisory Board has been revived and now brings in the voices of alumni from LAS's entire history, while managing LAS's US non-profit foundation. The International Council was established in the fall of 2021 and brings together members of the LAS family from around the globe to advise the school. Read more about how these organizations weave together to build a strong foundation for LAS in C. Ryan Joyce's article on page 38.

It is exciting to witness a new dynamic atmosphere in external relations! Ira Miles P'24 (Director of Admissions & Financial Aid) and his team have done remarkable work leading

to the largest admissions waiting list in many years, even without the ability to travel and welcome visitors. Michelle Turner P'22, '24 (Director of Marketing & Communications) and her team have professionalized our website, social media, print and email correspondence, and more. C. Ryan Joyce (Director of Advancement) and his team are actively connecting with alumni and are gearing up for the 61st Celebration of the founding of LAS. And I also want to recognize the extraordinary work of Sabina Schwedtmann-Lynch (Dean of Academics), and her team, Paul Fomalont (Dean of Students) and his team in student and residential life, and our wonderful operational departments for all the work they do supporting our students on campus every day.

Finally, a note that my brother, Christoph Ott (Head of Operations), is on sabbatical this year. In December 2021, Christoph announced that he would step away from all operational responsibilities at LAS and seek new professional opportunities elsewhere. While we will miss Christoph in the day-to-day operations here at LAS, I am thrilled that he has decided to remain on the LAS Board. Christoph will continue to contribute to our long-term development based on his experience at LAS and his upcoming professional ventures.

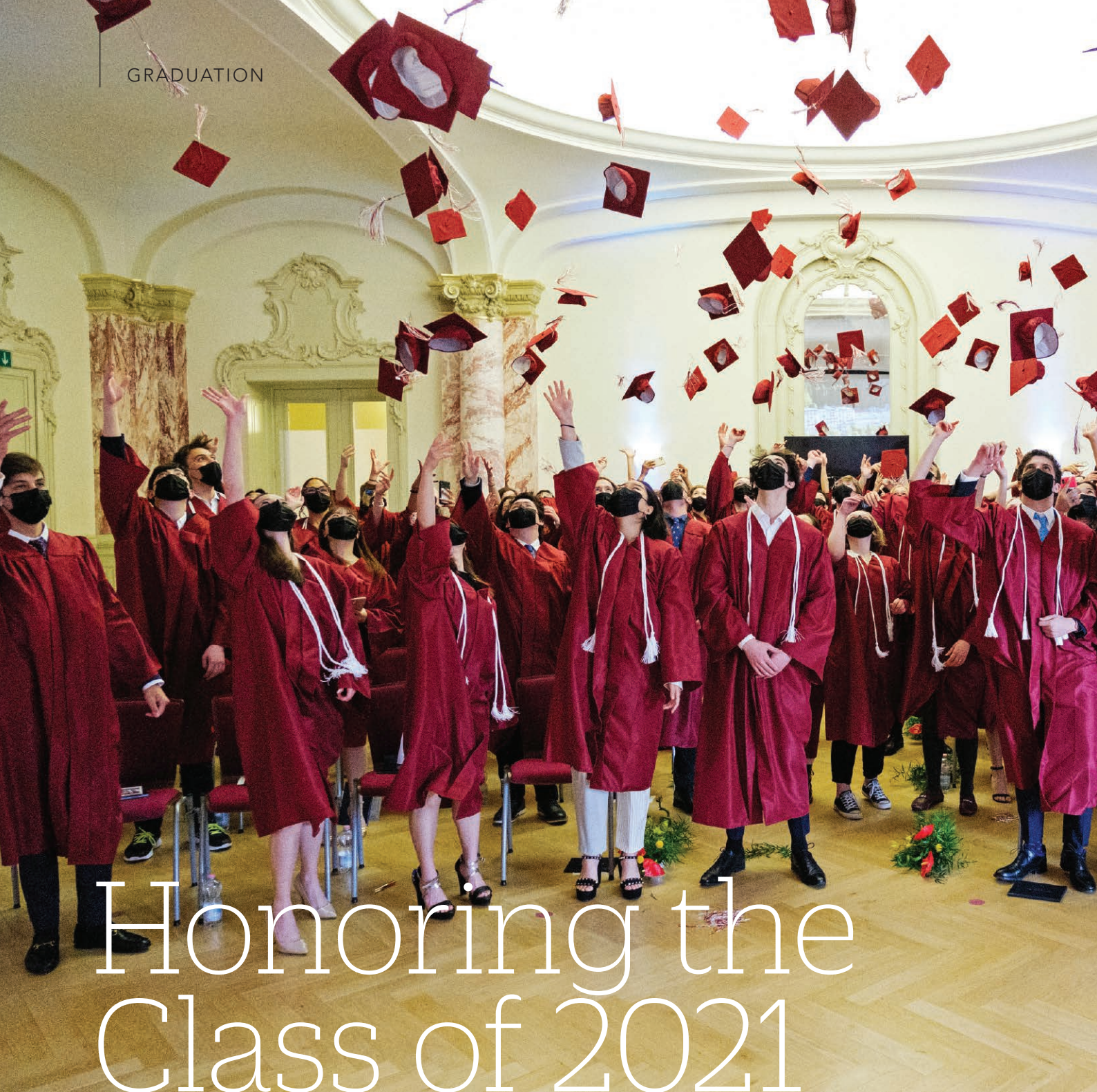
Everyone continues to do powerful work in supporting the LAS community and we are excited to welcome our global family back to the Magic Mountain for the 61st Celebration June 16 -19, 2022!

Thank you for your support and trust and I wish you all the best!

Warmest regards,



Dr. Marc-Frédéric Ott
Head of School



By Chris Taylor, Director of Academic Learning

"May you live in interesting times" is an English expression that is claimed to be a translation of a traditional Chinese curse. The graduating class of 2021 certainly lived through interesting times during their final two years at LAS; they may have even claimed that it was all a little too interesting. Imagine online learning, no cultural trips, limited travel, no banquets, and no hugs or even handshakes.

We were determined, however, to make sure that the Class of 2021 were not deprived of the opportunity to properly

celebrate their graduation. And so it came to pass that on a hot afternoon in May the Grande Salle in the Belle Époque was decorated with flowers and bunting, music wafted from the speakers, and the Class of 2021, dressed in scarlet graduation robes, processed in to be honored and rewarded for their hard work and achievements.

The ceremony contained a lovely mix of speeches and music and an opportunity for every single student to walk to the front and receive the diploma they had worked so



Emma Magnuson '21 receives her diploma.

hard to earn. We acknowledged our valedictorian and our salutatorian and the whole event was streamed live to parents who celebrated with much clapping and cheering and shooting of party poppers when their student left school behind them and entered the adult world. Perhaps there was even a feeling amongst the students that all this was extra special and memorable; after all, who gets to graduate during a worldwide pandemic? It was hard to decide if it was families or teachers or students who were more proud and relieved to have made it to this point after two years of dislocation and uncertainty. There might even have been a few tears...

When the students threw their caps into the air in a wild outburst of happiness, it was as if the pandemic were just a rumor. The day was such a welcome return to normality, a time when we could really celebrate our students' achievements and bid them farewell in the traditional way. It hardly seemed to matter that all those scarlet robes and mortar board hats were accompanied by those little black COVID-19 facemasks.

Below, from left: Student body president Bartosz Poltorak '21; Suzanne Zeideh '21; Ahmed Amodi '21 at the alumni luncheon.



Immersion in Switzerland

Fall Cultural Trips in Our Very Own Backyard

By James McKenna, Director of Student Life

The fall of 2021 saw the return of cultural trips for students to enjoy and discover more of Switzerland. Destinations included a trip to the Swiss-Italian city of Lugano, the more remote and picturesque region of Appenzell, as well as the beautiful lakeside town of Interlaken in the awe-inspiring Jungfrau Region.

Students enjoyed a variety of authentic and exciting activities throughout the week. Highlights of the Interlaken trip included a visit to the Trümmelbach Falls, a hair-raising cable car ride to the top of the Schilthorn, a sunset raclette rafting experience through the canal waterways of Interlaken, and a high speed jet boat ride on Lake Brienz. But when students were asked what they enjoyed most about the trip, the consensus was the opportunity to free fall 85 meters at 120 km/h off a glacier canyon in Grindelwald. This was certainly their most memorable experience that will live with them for the rest of their lives.

Tucked away in the northeastern part of Switzerland is the beautiful Appenzell region. Known for its rolling hills and famous Appenzeller cheese, students

had a wonderful time experiencing one of Switzerland's most authentic and traditional regions. Highlights of the trip were taking a gondola ride up to the Ebenalp and enjoying a traditional Swiss style fondue lunch at the Aescher Restaurant, one of Switzerland's most photographed restaurants due to its precarious position on the side of a mountain.

Students also had the opportunity to visit the town of Appenzell itself, a charming car-free town with brightly painted wooden buildings and wrought iron signs, and a perfect place to wander and explore the Swiss picture-postcard. In addition, students visited the Seerenbach Falls, Tamina Gorge, and relaxed in the thermal waters of the Tamina Therme Spa. It was a perfect way to unwind, rejuvenate and recuperate after visiting and hiking up Mount Säntis, the highest peak in the Alpstein massif, a peak that stands at around 2,500 meters above sea level.

To round off the trip, students were treated to a more unusual excursion with





a visit to the Einsiedeln Monastery. The imposing abbey, dating back to 964, has a typical Baroque style facade with its own micro-city. The abbey has many of its own workshops, gardeners, even a forestry department, and its own separate administration. Students were given a guided tour of the abbey and grounds, learning about its importance and role in the region over many centuries.

Did you know that Switzerland has its very own little Italy? Lugano was the much favored destination for our younger grade students to experience and enjoy. Immersing themselves into the Italian way of life, students really enjoyed the variety of Italian culinary choices of restaurants and cafés Lugano has to offer. Other highlights of the trip included a boat cruise on Lake Lugano in an original wooden style passenger ferry. Whilst taking in the spectacular fall scenery of the steep mountainsides that surround Lake Lugano, students enjoyed a nice early evening dinner cruise on the lake.

Stretching themselves out of their comfort zones, students also enjoyed a full day out in the nearby Monte Tamaro. With breathtaking views at 1900 meters above sea level, students zip-lined, navigated their way through a ropes course, and slid their way down the mountain in an Alpine coaster. To finish off the day, a fun time was spent at the nearby Splash & Spa Aqua Park.

Overall this year's fall cultural trips were a great success. Many students had the opportunity to visit and experience some of the most amazing and beautiful places Switzerland has to offer. We are already looking forward to the spring cultural trips!

Clockwise from top left: Students enjoying Trümmelbach Falls in Lauterbrunnen; The Einsiedeln Abbey is a landmark in the founding Swiss canton of Schwyz, from which Switzerland derives its name; Saas-Fee is a popular student excursion destination for early skiing in the fall; Students enjoying a rafting trip and fondue dinner on Lake Brienz in Interlaken. Facing page: Brave students can paraglide from 3,000 meters or higher in Zermatt.



Student Leaders Impact LAS Culture

*By Jennifer Miles P'24, Associate Dean of Middle School & Prep Years and
Eric Turner P'22, '24, Director of Residential Life*



LAS has a long-standing tradition of a student council, a leadership body by the students, for the students. The purpose of the student council is to represent and address the needs and interests of the entire student body at LAS, acting as a voice for the student-led stewardship of LAS.



The LAS Student Council (StuCo) gives students an opportunity to develop leadership skills by organizing and carrying out school activities and service projects. As an example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, StuCo's role has grown more important and is vital to the development of our school culture, identifying activities and events are both fun for students of all ages while also making sure these events are COVID-safe for the whole community.

Four executive officers are determined by an election at the end of the previous school year: President, Vice President, Chief Information Officer, and Chief Events Coordinator. There are also dorm representatives who are nominated for that position by their residential life peers. These representatives are responsible for voicing student ideas and concerns from their respective dorms and also publicizing and garnering interest for events within their dorm.

In recent years, StuCo has sponsored many fun activities, including dodgeball tournaments, the Faculty Family winter banquet, and the Halloween costume contest. These students also take an active role in guiding school leadership in an effort to maintain our student-centered culture at LAS. StuCo has been working with leadership to implement uniform changes and has also made suggestions as LAS invests in impactful new campus designs.

StuCo collaborates with members of the Advancement Office to foster an attitude of appreciation for our faculty and students. To that end, the LAS community was thrilled when StuCo successfully brought specialty coffee trucks to the front doors of the school and advocated for delicious ice cream machines in the dining halls.

Perhaps one of the greatest skills students build through self-governance is managing a successful and impactful transition of leadership. Each year StuCo designs a legacy for the outgoing senior class. As part of this, their responsible hand-off of projects and initiatives to the StuCo members for the subsequent year creates a self-perpetuating culture that emphasizes school spirit and student involvement and fosters a strong student presence in decisions that greatly impact the whole community for years to come.

Left: The 2021-2022 LAS Student Council, top row: Phoenix '22, Jakub '22, Oliver '22, Aara '23, Lucas '22. Bottom row: Heloisa '23, Pamela '23, Xander '25, Benedetta '25. Not pictured: Yung-Cheng '23, Yosuf '23; Above: StuCo Vice President Aara '23 and Member Xander '25.

At Leysin American School, nearly a quarter of the student body is involved in the LAS Leadership Program. In addition to the students who serve on the LAS Student Council as the executive officers and dorm representatives, student ambassadors and senior proctors also advise our discipline decisions and mentor younger students both academically and socially.



This year's senior proctors and ambassadors chose the motto "Leadership Above Self" to illustrate the way in which our residential leaders take time from their own academics, activities, and social lives to make sure that the students living in their dormitories feel welcomed and well-adjusted at LAS. New students and families met many of these student leaders when they moved onto campus in August, and every new student who has joined since the start of school has had a student leader show them the way to the dining hall, campus store, the MMAC, and their classrooms.

Student leaders at LAS provide an invaluable bridge between the adults and the students; they are vital to all of our outreach efforts to the student body. This February, a group of senior proctors organized a Valentine's Day dance for the junior and senior classes and, earlier this year, a tenth grade student leader created a new online method for students to select snacks for their dorm store. Other leaders have organized hikes, birthday parties, and academic tutoring sessions to help the students in their dormitories.

At LAS, we could not be prouder of our student leaders and the faculty who take time to advise them. Without this group of people the school would not be the vibrant, energized institution that it is. Even though we have just started the second semester, we are already looking ahead and planning for even more participation from our student leaders in the 2022-2023 school year. The program continues to grow and thrive, and we are excited to see what new heights the students achieve in the future.



Above: Two of our student leaders prepare to welcome new students for the 2021/2022 school year. Left: Student leaders foster school spirit during our Halloween celebration. Right: LAS Student Ambassadors welcome new students to campus at orientation in August.



Science at LAS

Sustainability and Innovation in Action

By Alice Jackson, Science Department Head; Rachael Passant-Coy and Ben Jackson, Science Teachers & Project Drawdown Coordinators

From the laboratory to the mountain, science at LAS embodies the innovative, creative, and entrepreneurial spirit of our students. New science department head Alice Jackson, along with the entire science team, continues to develop a science curriculum in which students apply their learning as responsible citizens in the real world.

For the students on the Savoy campus the focus is on lab science, developing the practical and scientific skills that will set them up for success for their entire scientific career. This year, the team is premiering two new classes: Pre-AP Chemistry and Pre-AP Biology. These courses prepare students for the Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) classes available in grades 11 and 12 at LAS and build a strong foundation of skills while also fostering inquiring scientists in the lab and beyond.

On the Belle Époque campus, students have seen great success in their IB courses. Their work in the classroom and lab transfers to the unique Leysin environment and our faculty facilitate opportunities for field studies, including working with local environmental groups.

The Alpine Institute at LAS was founded by John Harlin in 2014 to foster a holistic education using the world around us. He, alongside former LAS science teacher Daniel Patton, developed a citizen science project called Leysin Environmental Transect Study (LETS) which surveyed our local mountain and contributed data to a number of open source projects, such as iNaturalist and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. LAS students monitored phenology, decomposition, and the migration and presence of baby trees in Leysin and contributed this data to a global data pool for scientists to use. More recently, LAS has

Students retrofit old bikes with electric pedal-assist bicycle kits to help students and faculty commute around campus with less carbon impact.



worked with Alpes Vivantes and Nos Voisins Sauvages to survey campus for hedgehogs, as they are great indicators of biodiversity, collecting data to contribute not only to students' IB internal assessment projects, but also a global survey of hedgehog distribution.

In 2018 the focus shifted from climate research to solutions to climate change. Project Drawdown (drawdown.org) is a Penn State University initiative proposing solutions to reverse climate change by 2050. Drawdown identifies high carbon-producing industries, measures potential carbon reduction, and proposes scientifically-researched innovative changes to "draw down" carbon from the atmosphere. Led by teachers Rachael Passant-Coy (IB Biology) and Ben Jackson (Integrated Science), the science team began to utilize Project Drawdown solutions around campus with both students and staff.

In 2019 LAS held an Earth Expo where students were asked to choose one of the Drawdown solutions to implement at the school. Using caucus-style voting, the students chose to replace fossil-fueled transportation between campuses with the electric bikes, prompting Ben Jackson and Sarah Graham (an ELA and Psychology teacher) to start Green Machines.

Drawdown has identified transportation as a major carbon contributor and suggests electric bicycles as an effective solution to sequester 1.31-4.01 gigatons of CO₂ from the atmosphere in the next 30 years, saving an estimated 0.61–1.88 trillion USD in lifetime operating costs.

Though Leysin is a small village, the Savoy and Belle Époque campuses are 1 km and 100 m vertical distance apart, resulting in many students taking taxis and staff driving between the two. Green Machines takes old bikes from the local community and retrofits them with electric pedal-assist bicycle kits. Students in the Green Machines activity are provided with the tools and mechanical training needed to successfully and safely convert and maintain the electric bicycles to make this commute even easier.

As a cross-curricular collaboration, Green Machines partnered with Jeremy Gleason's Edge Entrepreneurship class to develop and test a management system for the bikes that allows community members to reserve Green Machines to use, as well as communicate to student mechanics about necessary maintenance. Students in the activity are developing spatial reasoning and mechanical skills while students in the entrepreneurship class are gaining real-world experience through implementing models that generate feedback in real time.

Another way that LAS is reducing carbon emissions is through a campus-wide shift toward a plant-based diet. The Eco-



Students care for the animals and maintain the Beau Site garden.

Schools activity, run by Head of Modern Foreign Languages Stéphanie Ameri, has worked closely with Chef Fabrice to introduce meat-free days, use Impossible meat substitutes, and plan to incorporate student recipes for plant-based food in the dining hall menu in higher frequencies.

At LAS we are lucky to have a community garden near the Beau Site dormitory where we grow vegetables, keep bees and chickens, plant flowers for the pollinators, and compost food waste from the dorms. The garden is used as a teaching tool for both the IB Environmental Systems and Societies class and the Savoy science classes, where students experiment with best practices for organic growing and permaculture.

All planting is carefully planned: planting partners condition the soil, crops are rotated, bare soil is filled with cover crops, and the soil is given time to rest and re-fertilize. Long grass is cultivated so the bees can pollinate, reseeding the grasses and alpine meadow flowers. A chain link fence was recently removed to replace with a hedgerow, and our latest project is to plant 30 fruit trees to reclaim grazing land that was cleared when the Beau Site building was constructed in the 1900's. We plan to create silvopasture, where cattle graze under the fruit trees, and increase the productivity of the land, developing a more sustainable agriculture system and providing habitat and food for birds and insects.

These are just a few examples of cross-curricular initiatives that promote collaboration, skill-building, and innovative thinking that results in real impact on the planet. By modeling sustainable practice and innovation, we believe we are contributing to the sustainable future of our compassionate, responsible citizens of the world, empowering the next generation to look at their world with open minds, creative thinking, and hope.

Building Upon a Strong Foundation

Nurturing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) at LAS

By Nunana Nyomi, DEIJ Coordinator & University Advisor



As a new resident in the community, I am struck by the overwhelming warmth everyone at LAS has shown me. There is something very special about the family-like nature of life on the Magic Mountain. Everywhere I look, I see individuals living out the LAS mission of developing innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world. I'm humbled to be in such a vibrant environment and serve in my role as DEIJ Coordinator to nurture and build upon ongoing efforts to embody our institutional mission more fully. Working together, we will continuously strive to make LAS a place where everyone can thrive as their full selves.

I grew up as a Third-Culture Kid (TCK) and have lived in six countries. My teenage years were spent in boarding school and it feels fitting to be back in a similar setting to that which was

so formative for me. While these experiences gave me a high level of cultural adaptability, they also made me acutely aware of what it felt like to be the 'other' in a community. Upon entering professional life, I felt compelled to advocate for equitable and inclusive practices. Most recently, I worked for the Council of International Schools where I advanced initiatives supporting 1300+ school and university member institutions to take active leadership in sustaining inclusive, diverse, equitable, and anti-racist learning communities. I hope to bring my perspective to add to the excellent work which has already started within LAS.

I am so proud of the significant DEIJ groundwork which was laid at LAS last year. C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement, outlined several proactive steps taken by alumni, staff, and students in the previous edition of *Panorama*. I would like to especially thank Bill Carney '69, Alicia Shamji '16, Sultan Aldabal '16, Teresa Tolo '17, and many alumni contributors who lent their time and perspectives to propose concrete actions to tackle racism, discrimination, and injustice. These perspectives led to the formation of a 20-member DEIJ Committee of LAS staff. Among many actions, this group updated institutional policies regarding discrimination as a disciplinary issue, developed a

clear anonymous reporting protocol for students and staff, and established common definitions of DEIJ with the support of a consultant (Dr. Liza Talusan) who also engaged with student leaders to upskill their capacity to make change. Newly formed and existing student groups such as the Technicolor Fellowship (LGBTQIA+ group), the Human Rights Club, the DEIJ Student Council, and the LAS Student Council have provided essential avenues for student voice to shape DEIJ efforts. These courageous collective efforts have provided a solid footing for further growth.

The DEIJ Committee is working on several initiatives, including increasing community awareness about DEIJ principles, sharing tools and resources, fostering collaborative efforts between student groups, and making a conscious effort to improve staff and student diversity from underrepresented groups. Additionally, we hope to make progress towards a broader strategic plan for embedding DEIJ into existing institutional strategies. We already have a strong foundation for DEIJ at LAS, but in the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward". Together, we will keep moving forward on the path towards greater diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice at LAS.

Slavisa Arsic Retires

The LAS Campus Renovator

By Doris & Steven Ott,
LAS Foundation Board Members



Slavisa Arsic P'97, '97, G'22, 24 is a man of many talents. He is at once an architect, interior designer, civil engineer, manager, accountant, and much more. But upon his retirement from LAS after 36 years of dedicated work, I'd like to focus on Slavisa's role as the LAS Campus Renovator.

After beginning at LAS on February 6, 1985, Slavisa proved to be a star pupil under then-Chief of Maintenance Alain Schneider and was appointed Chief himself in 1993. Leading a team of six assistants, Slavisa oversaw huge changes for the campus during his tenure.

Slavisa's appointment as Chief corresponded with rapid growth at LAS. During those early critical early years, the campus grew exponentially through the purchase of most of the buildings that make up LAS today: Beau Site, Vermont, Beau Réveil, Lutetia, the Mont Riant guest house, and finally the Belle Époque. Slavisa planned and executed the renovation of Savoy, adding the sixth floor to the building to expand dormitory capacity, the extension of the library and dining room, the arts center, squash court, and black box theater.

Perhaps Slavisa's greatest contribution to our campus, though, was the renovation of the Belle Époque building. LAS bought the building in 2008 from the Schiller University group that had operated the American College of Switzerland there. The building was in a decrepit state with leaking roofs, broken down piping and electrical systems, and a basement that was unchanged from the Grand Hotel days (the former name of the building) that was needed for classrooms. The daunting plans called for one year of construction, followed by a second year of finishing the work while the building functioned to meet the needs of about 100 students.

Perhaps Slavisa's greatest contribution to our campus was the renovation of the Belle Époque building.

Recognizing the need to expand the team for this huge endeavor, Slavisa recruited an additional 35 workers to bolster the crew of about a dozen experienced LAS team members. The crew accomplished so much in a short time: stripping the old tin off the roof before insulating and retiling it, mastering scagliola marble renovation to restore the pillars in the Grande Salle to their former glory, laying thousands of square meters of parquet flooring, pulling many kilometers of internet and electrical cables, and building dozens of faculty apartments and student dorm rooms. When visitors today admire the Belle Époque building, a historical monument in Switzerland, they see the dedication and work of Slavisa Arsic.

Slavisa has had a tremendous impact on LAS and particularly on the campus that we all enjoy today. As he begins his well-deserved retirement, Slavisa is remembered as a dedicated contributor to LAS, a friend of the Ott family, and a respected citizen of Leysin.

Slavisa's two daughters, Violeta '97, P'22 and Sanela '97, P'24, and their husbands continue to be active members of LAS staff and are much appreciated within our school community. The entire Arsic Family will always be a part of the LAS Family.

After a year's hiatus due to the pandemic, the LAS Summer in Switzerland and LAS Summer Edge programs were back in full force in 2021.

*By Janna Johnson, Interim Director of LAS Summer in Switzerland Programs;
Brian Tynan, LAS Summer Edge Coordinator & Social Studies Teacher;
and Millie Lemesle, LAS Summer in Switzerland Office Assistant*



hello
summer

LAS Summer in Switzerland lets students create a program that is tailored to their personal interests and aspirations. Students select a morning program as well as clubs, afternoon activities, and then gather together in the evening for social time. Regular excursions allow students to explore Switzerland and take in the culture, sights, and sounds of cities like Geneva, Bern, Montreux, and Lausanne.

This year, we welcomed nearly 200 students to campus over the course of three two-week sessions for LAS Summer in Switzerland.

LAS Summer in Switzerland allows students to enjoy all the wonders the Magic Mountain has to offer while also creating a schedule that is tailored to their personal interests. After their morning program, students choose from a variety of afternoon activities and clubs. They can move their bodies in yoga, hip hop dance, or ice skating, play sports like soccer, volleyball, basketball, badminton, American football, take in the local scenery on foot with hikes to Eagle's Nest or on horseback in the village, or get creative with tie dye, sidewalk chalk, ukulele, or guitar lessons.

Evening activities such as karaoke, beach parties, sports nights, and bonfires are planned so the entire camp can join together for social time, and regular trips allow students to explore Switzerland, taking in the culture, sights, and sounds of cities like Geneva, Bern, Montreux, and Lausanne.

Special excursions are a highlight of the program! While students enjoy many activities on the mountain, there are trips each session that bring students to locations around Switzerland. There is white water rafting and canyoning in Château d'Oex, skateboarding and trampolining at the Alaïa Chalet, alpine coaster rides at Glacier 3000, taking in the views on the Golden Pass Scenic Train, sightseeing in Gstaad, as well as bowling, surfing, and fun on a local high ropes course.

During the second week of each session the entire camp goes down to the town of Villeneuve to spend the afternoon and evening by the lake. Students and staff enjoy paddleboarding, swimming, and banana boating on the water. For those who prefer to stay on land, there are volleyball tournaments, bike tours to Montreux to see



the Château de Chillon, and a walking tour of old town Villeneuve. As a special treat, activities leaders Bob and Sally Ackerman serenade everyone with live music.

One Sunday after returning from their special activities, the students were treated to a delicious barbecue on the front lawn of the Belle Époque. They then walked up to Prafandaz where they were able to play games such as badminton and soccer, play music with the Ackermans, make s'mores around the campfire, and enjoy the view of Lake Geneva as the sun was setting.

During the first session of this summer students in the Mountain Leadership program went to Maison de Salins in nearby Ollon for an overnight camping trip. The weather was lovely for the hike, but the sky seemed to open up as soon as the group made it to the campsite. Water poured down, and the group even had to briefly take shelter from the rain and thunder, as they set up camp. Students and staff kept their spirits up, talking and laughing while, unbeknownst to them, their tents were slowly filling up with water. Some of the tents even disappeared into the forest, taken by the wind.

Even though it might sound like the trip was a bust, everyone had a great time and students showed great maturity, helping each other by helping make dinner, sharing the snacks they brought, tidying up the tents, and making sure everyone was as dry and warm as possible.

Above: Summer students enjoying the high ropes course at Adventure Park in Aigle; Left: Paddleboarding on Lake Geneva is a weekly LAS Summer in Switzerland evening activity; Facing page: Summer students hiking up to Cabane du Moutonnier for an overnight hut trip.



LAS Summer Edge emphasizes self-discovery, highlighting the LAS mission to develop innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world. Each week of LAS Summer Edge explores one of these traits in depth, introducing students to inspirational speakers, taking them on company visits, and letting them try fun activities that push their limits. This impactful student-driven program gives students the opportunity to leave their mark on LAS.

Speakers this year came from the environmental sector (POW – Protect our Winters), human rights and responsible entrepreneurship (SolidariTee), and the creative arena (Mark Erickson and Gergana Marianova). Our guest speakers explored the critical issues of climate change and people living with refugee status with our students. Mark and Gergana worked on design thinking projects with students in order to help them take ideas from conception to creation.



Above: There is snow even in the summer at nearby Glacier 3000; Left: Summer students often raft down the Sarine river in Château-d'Oex; Below: Ziplining through the air in nearby Aigle.





And, of course, LAS Summer Edge students enjoyed their fair share of epic Swiss adventure days! One such day began with a hike to a local farm for a brunch and lesson on cheese making. That was followed up with a field lesson with a local glaciologist at Glacier 3000. And the day finished with a family style dinner at La Fromagerie in Leysin.

Per tradition, each session ends with a banquet and talent show with all the students. To put a cap on the summer, students in the final session are treated to a fireworks show over Beau Site.

Did you know that children of LAS alumni can access a special 15% discount on the LAS Summer in Switzerland programs? If you are interested in more information about the LAS Summer in Switzerland and LAS Summer Edge programs, please contact us at summer@las.ch or visit the website www.las.ch/summer.

Below, right: Students can ride horses just a short distance from the LAS campus at the Manège de Leysin equestrian center; Below, top: Hikers on their way up to Riondaz, the fastest peak to reach from LAS that gives you 360 degree views of Lake Geneva and, on a clear day, even Mont Blanc; Left, bottom: An LAS Summer Edge student using design thinking to install a 3D art project that still hangs in the Beau Site garden on campus.





61ST CELEBRATION

Return to the Mountain

REMEMBER THE MAGIC

*By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement and
Katy Maguire Lushman, Assistant Director of Communications & Advancement*

In a few short months we will welcome alumni, current students, former and current parents, former and current faculty, and friends back to LAS for what will certainly be the greatest global family reunion in our history. From June 16-19, 2022, you will have an opportunity to reunite with classmates, show your family the stunning view from Eagle's Nest, hike the Berneuse, stay in the dorms, reminisce with former faculty members, and make new memories on your Magic Mountain!



CELEBRATING

61

MAGICAL YEARS

We have had an overwhelming response to the 61st Celebration invitation and over 1,000 of our Global Family members will be gathering together in Leysin this June! We know so many of you are excited to return to the Magic Mountain and we can't wait to welcome you back.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Katy Lushman (klushman@las.ch, Assistant Director of Communications & Advancement) or C. Ryan Joyce (cjoyce@las.ch, Director of Advancement).

The 61st celebration will be free of charge—just make your way to campus and we'll take good care of you while you are here. On Saturday evening we will officially launch our largest and most comprehensive campaign in history and at that time we will ask for your support as we move LAS even further down the road of excellence.

We cannot wait to see you in June of 2022!

61st Celebration Schedule

The fully complimentary 61st Celebration events run from **Thursday, June 16 through Sunday, June 19, 2022**. You're welcome to enjoy Leysin before or after the event, but please note that our campus is only open to guests during the event itself.

Thursday, June 16, 2022

Afternoon: Registration

Evening: Casual Global Family Dinner

Friday, June 17, 2022

Morning: Registration, Breakfast & Brunch on Campus, Optional Activities

Afternoon: Optional Activities, Apéros at chalets throughout Leysin

Evening: Dinner by Decades in Leysin Restaurants for Alumni & Faculty, Dinner on Campus for Guests

Saturday, June 18, 2022

Morning: Breakfast & Brunch on Campus, Optional Activities

Afternoon: Optional Activities

Evening: 61st Celebration Banquet

Sunday, June 19, 2022

Morning: Breakfast & Brunch on Campus, Check Out

FAQ

Who can attend the 61st Celebration?

We are welcoming our entire LAS Global Family back to campus for the 61st Celebration: all current, former (school and summer) students, parents, faculty and staff, as well as your families are not only welcome, but encouraged to attend!

We do ask you to keep this within the LAS family, so try not to bring guests unrelated to LAS. But if you'd like to bring a prospective LAS family, just contact us at advancement@las.ch and we would be delighted to have them.

What's the best way to get to Leysin?

The train is the best way to travel in Switzerland. The Leysin-Vermont and Leysin-Feydey stations service the LAS Savoy Campus while the Leysin-Grand Hôtel station is directly behind the LAS Belle Époque Campus.

LAS will run shuttles from Geneva airport (GVA) to LAS on Thursday, June 16 and from LAS to GVA on Sunday, June 19. Email us at advancement@las.ch if you'd like more information.

Please note that there is no parking on campus and very limited parking in Leysin, so travel by train or airport shuttle is highly encouraged. LAS shuttles will be running all over campus and into the village throughout the event.

How might COVID impact the 61st and my travel plans?

As the COVID situation around the world continues to improve, we are excitedly planning to host the 61st Celebration from June 16-19, 2022!

This said, we highly encourage everyone to purchase travel insurance and/or refundable tickets to protect yourself against any unforeseen disruptions to travel or the event. While we are optimistically moving forward with our plans for the 61st, we cannot predict what future restrictions may occur. We will inform all registered attendees of any COVID regulations that will impact the event as soon as they are known.

In order to ensure the best possible experience for everyone at the 61st Celebration, all attendees must agree to adhere to all Swiss and LAS COVID policies in effect while on the LAS campus and at all LAS-sponsored activities.

COVID continues to impact travel in ever-changing ways and it's important that you stay up to date about the restrictions that might be in place from your location to Switzerland. We have some links to help with this on our 61st Celebration website.

Where can I stay in Leysin?

We had an overwhelming response to our 61st invitation and all of our on-campus dorm housing is now full, but there are lots of other options of places to stay in Leysin and nearby. We have a full list of options on our 61st Celebration website. Please contact your preferred hotel or other accommodations directly to book.

What are the details for the meals during the event?

ALL meals that are part of the 61st Celebration weekend are complimentary!

The **Thursday Night Global Family Dinner** is family-friendly and casual: there will be live music and everyone is invited! For the **Friday Night Dinner by Decades** all alumni, former faculty, and current faculty (and up to one guest) are invited to reunion dinners at restaurants around the village! Choose your decade (1960s, 1970s, 1980s, etc.) and dinner is on us. (Childcare and meals for all other guests will be provided on campus on Friday night.) The weekend will culminate with the **Saturday Night 61st Celebration Banquet**, a formal dinner for all attendees and guests high-school aged and up to celebrate the 61st Anniversary of LAS and launch SUMMIT: A Comprehensive Campaign for LAS. (Childcare and meals for kids will be provided on Saturday night.)

On Friday, Saturday, and Sunday there will also be breakfast and a warm brunch served in both the Belle Époque and Savoy dining rooms for everyone.

What types of activities will be offered on Friday and Saturday?

Both family-friendly and adult-focused activities will be offered for you to enjoy! Think: hikes on the mountain, tours through the village, trips down to Lake Geneva, activities at Lower Sporting, we'll have lots of options to choose from.

If you plan to do outdoor activities while you're here, having good footwear and layers of clothing for various temperatures and weather is a great idea. You can certainly bring any of your own outdoor equipment, but we also have equipment available for all LAS-sponsored activities and our friends at Hefti Sports will be open if you would like to rent additional equipment while you're in Leysin.

tinyurl.com/61stCelebration



Which events and activities are family-friendly?

The Thursday Night Global Family Dinner is open to everyone, as are the daytime activities on Friday and Saturday—we'll have plenty of activity options that will be fun for kids and families. Childcare will be available during the Friday and Saturday activity times if parents want to participate in an adult-focused activity.

The Friday Night Dinner by Decades and Saturday Night 61st Celebration Banquet are for adults, but childcare (as well as dinner for the kids) will be provided both evenings. Our LAS Summer in Switzerland staff will be providing activities and childcare for children of any age during the event.

What is SUMMIT and will you be asking me for money while at the 61st?

SUMMIT is a moment in our LAS history. At the 61st Celebration Banquet, we will officially and publicly launch SUMMIT: A Comprehensive Campaign for LAS. SUMMIT will mark the most historic fundraising campaign in our 61 years focused on Innovation, Creativity, and Entrepreneurship (ICE).

A campaign of this nature requires support from all walks of our community and we will be asking everyone at the 61st Celebration Banquet to consider pledging a gift to SUMMIT in order to continue allowing LAS to thrive now and in the future. However, this will not be a fundraising event where people shout out donations. Instead, this is an opportunity to show your support for LAS privately via a pledge card. Keep in mind that LAS is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization, so all donations are tax-deductible.

If you would like to talk about how you can make an early contribution to SUMMIT, please reach out to C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement (cjoyce@las.ch).

Who is coming to the 61st?

We have had an overwhelming response to the 61st invitation and are happy to report that we have over 1,000 alumni and members of our Global Family representing every single year of our 61-year LAS history who will be at the 61st. You can see a list of some former faculty who have confirmed their attendance on our 61st Celebration website and we have also created a private Facebook group where you can connect with other attendees; find it on Facebook by searching for "Leysin American School 61st Celebration."

Are there any options after the 61st if I want to stay in Switzerland?

While the LAS campus is only available during the 61st Celebration (June 16-19), we know that many of you will be coming to Leysin early or staying after the event is over. We have options for you.

LAS Summer in Switzerland Begins June 26 for kids ages 10-18

Our summer programs have been running since 1949 and they allow kids ages 10-18 to explore the Magic Mountain and surrounding areas through fun activities and excursions. There are three two-week sessions to choose from, beginning on June 26, 2022. And yes, children of LAS alumni can access a special 15% discount. Email us at summer@las.ch for more information.

Skyline Challenge with the Harlin Family June 20-25, open to adults and kids ages 12 and up

The Harlin Family (connected by three generations to LAS) is developing the Skyline Challenge, a week-long excursion to hike and climb some of the most iconic peaks in the area. This is an option for families wishing to enroll their kids in LAS Summer in Switzerland but is also available to adults and kids 12 and over who are interested in a guided hiking tour.

Tour de Suisse with LAS Faculty June 19-26, ages 13-18

A perfect option for families who would like to enroll their kids in LAS Summer in Switzerland, this tour will perfectly bridge the gap between the 61st and LAS Summer in Switzerland. This trip will take students to various locations throughout Switzerland and activities will include hiking, exploring nearby glaciers, shopping, and maybe even skiing (yes, you can ski in Switzerland in the summer!).

Kids Day Camp with LAS Faculty June 20-22, ages 7-12

This three-day day camp will allow your kids to get a taste of what life on the mountain is like for our LAS summer and academic year students. The camp will run from 09:00-15:00 and families will need to be staying locally to drop kids off in the morning and pick them up in the afternoon. All activities will be on the LAS campus and in the Leysin village and will include hiking, activities at Upper and Lower Sporting, arts activities, and of course...sampling local cheese.

Please note that all post-61st programming will be dependent upon demand and each program will have associated costs.

Still have questions about the 61st Celebration?

We're happy to help! Please reach out to Katy Lushman (klushman@las.ch, 61st Celebration Coordinator) or C. Ryan Joyce (cjoyce@las.ch, Director of Advancement) at any time.



LAS in the



Remembering Our First Years

By Shona Bell McCarthy, Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Events

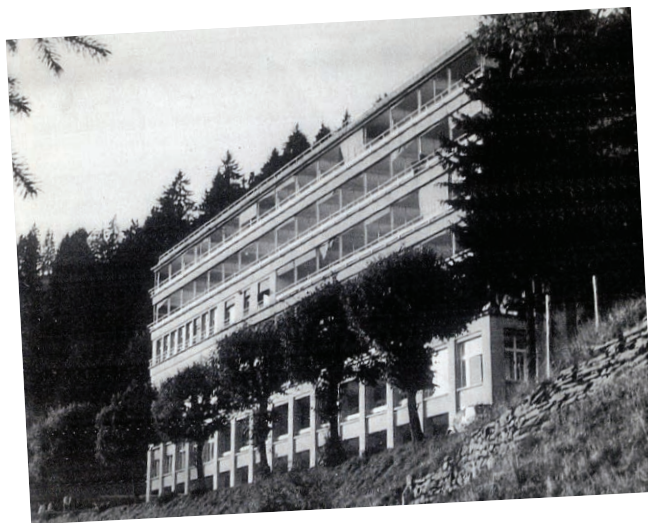
They came together on the steep slopes of Leysin: curious, resilient third-culture kids mostly from American families spread across the globe. Family commitments had brought them overseas, most far away from their country of origin. State Department kids, oil kids, diplomat kids, all with varied cultural experiences and a tremendous amount of go-with-the-flow energy, this eclectic group of adolescents arrived into the optimistic uncertainty of the first years of Leysin American School.

Having scrambled to read the Count of Monte Cristo, Dubliners, and Dr. Zhivago from the hefty summer reading list and to acquire thick warm clothes from their residences across the globe (you try finding a wool skirt or sweater while living in Libya!), they arrived into the arms of a family of young faculty and staff, ready to embark together into an educational experience like no other.

As the administration and faculty spent the year sorting out a school structure (and enjoying their own adventures on the Leysin ski slopes) the students forged a school entirely their own. In the

recently refreshed Savoy building, once a tuberculosis recovery center, nearly 100 students lived, ate, laughed, and studied that first year. With the girls' dormitories on the lower floors separated from the boys by a level of classrooms and shared common spaces (not to mention separate gendered staircases), students maximized the capacity of student life within and beyond Savoy's walls. In a few years' time, as the school population grew, the older girls would move into a small chalet near the Savoy.

In town, students spoke their best French and quickly learned which restaurants they could schmooze a glass of wine from (Les Orchidées—the drinking age was 16, after all!) and which were faculty hotspots filled with kind but watchful eyes (Vagabond). And while the students began to call Leysin "home", the village slowly grew more accustomed to the sudden arrival of young people of various backgrounds, ethnicities, and traditions. At one point, the mayor sent a request that LAS students more properly tuck their shirts in when out and about in town.



The Savoy building has been the heart of the LAS campus since its earliest days, serving as dormitory, classrooms, and dining hall from 1961 to today.



From cultural trips to time on the ski slopes, music lessons, laughter with friends and loving faculty, the LAS experience is much the same today as it was back in its earliest days.

Separated from their homes and from the variety of cultures they'd grown accustomed to in their childhood travels, this gangly group of children bonded deeply through an assortment of creative, mischievous shenanigans. Having learned how to rappel down the rocksides behind campus, students cleverly evaded the nighttime Savoy locks by simply rappelling down from their rooms and hopping down the road towards town.

After one group of students found a mandatory trip to a Geneva auto show particularly dull, they provided explicit feedback in the form of a faculty member's car tastefully delivered into the Savoy lobby. A car show, indeed!

And Leysin American School slowly shaped itself around the students and their (mis)adventures. Where there had initially been few-to-no rules, structure began to emerge. Six months into the first year, the table wine disappeared from the evening meal service. Rappelling ropes were no longer kept in student dorm rooms. Check-ins became a frequent means of ensuring students actually arrived at their aforementioned destinations. Faculty posted up at the movie theatre and local bowling alley, on the travel bus, and, of course, atop and below the ski slopes to do their best to wrangle student attendance across the weaving pathways of Leysin.

And yet, in a fashion that has remained true to LAS through the decades, a level of flexibility and trust between the faculty and students remained. These were smart kids; when they took risks, they were innovative. When they snuck out, they were clever. And for the most part, they had fun, were safe, and still showed up ready to learn in class the next day.



Inspired by the Ott's International Ranger summer camps, a pre-cursor to the school-year program, LAS has continued a tradition of cross-cultural community building activities throughout the decades.

And so the early tendrils of a global family began to ferment. Students bonded over the figure-it-out-as-you-go experience, becoming a tight-knit group with no cliques in sight. Together they celebrated holidays, mourned large and small tragedies, and danced endlessly. With parents far away, key faculty members became the parental figures and role models we now know as *in loco parentis*, many still beloved to this day. And though the classes of the early 1960s lost touch during the decades that followed, they came back together in 1997 for an LAS reunion in Las Vegas—and hope to gather once more this coming summer back at in Leysin—and felt like almost no time had passed. Still, they were, and are today, a global family.

Have a 1960s LAS memory to share? Send it to alumni@las.ch.



LAS Global Family reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada, USA in 1997. We look forward to once again gathering so many of our 1960s alumni this June for the 61st Celebration!

Photo from the archives of Bruce Bordett '66.

1962-1963



MOST LIKELY TO SUCCEED

Arlene Foreman
Win Stiles



MOST POPULAR

Jo Boatman
King Penniman



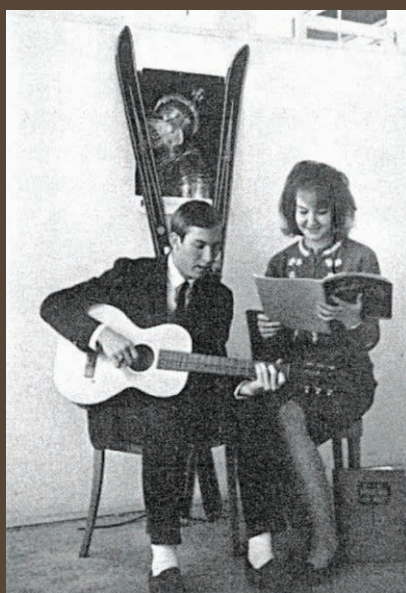
CLASS FLIRT

Janet Chapman
Miguel Barrios



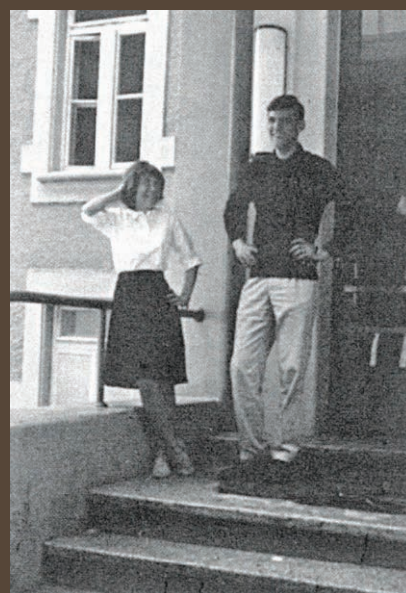
BEST PERSONALITY

Marcia Anderson
Bill Penniman



MOST TALENTED

Amy Granowitz
Win Stiles



BEST LOOKING

Gail Wheeler
Bill Penniman

Introducing the LAS Giving Guide

The Annual Fund Explained

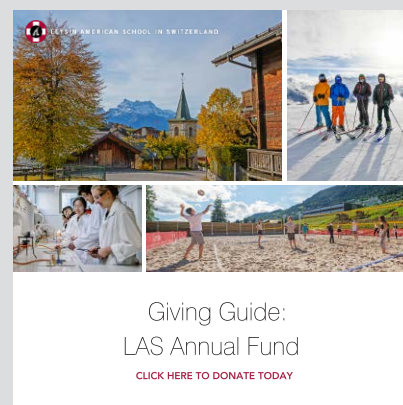
By Dr. Ben Walker, Associate Director of Annual Giving & Stewardship

Last year we raised more money and had more participants than ever in our LAS Annual Fund Campaign. Join us today to help make history again, and help secure our school as one of the world's best international schools.

The LAS Annual Fund is the fundraising cornerstone of all excellent schools. You can now learn all about the Annual Fund in our new Giving Guide.

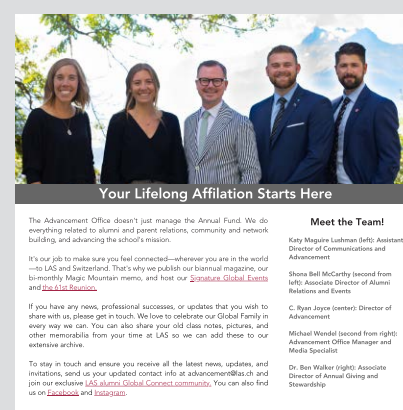
We celebrate every gift from our alumni, parents, faculty and board members, because every gift makes a difference. Participation is our priority, and all donations raised go to supporting scholarships and the acceleration of non-budgeted projects that enhance our campus and learning experience.

View and download the LAS Giving Guide at www.las.ch/advancement/give-now.



Giving Guide:
LAS Annual Fund

[CLICK HERE TO DONATE TODAY](#)



Meet the Team!

Katy Maguire (left): Assistant Director of Communications and Advancement

Shona Bell McCarthy (second from left): Associate Director of Alumni Relations and Events

C. Ryan Joyce (center): Director of Advancement

Michael Wendel (second from right): Advancement Office Manager and Media Specialist

Dr. Ben Walker (right): Associate Director of Annual Giving and Stewardship



The Impact and Importance of Giving

Your donations help transform lives, and we are profoundly grateful. Your generosity and loyalty to LAS make a world of difference in the lives of current and future students.

The Annual Fund also supports non-budgeted projects at LAS. With your help, we can accelerate projects and enhance our programs today.

We are incredibly grateful that our alumni, parents, faculty, and board members donate every year. To help highlight the importance of your donation, we want to share how we invest your money.

We are an ambitious school, but we don't just want to sit amongst the leading international boarding schools in the world—we want to be a global leader in the international boarding school community!

Last year we had the highest level of parent and alumni giving in school history. With your support, we are doing some fantastic things, so let's make history again this year!

Supporting Scholars

The Annual Fund supports up to 12 full tuition scholarships each year



One third of all students receive financial assistance



Motivations for Philanthropy

We are striving towards a shared, ambitious goal of continuous enhancement of LAS. However, everyone has their own reasons for giving. These are some of the most powerful motivating factors behind LAS philanthropy.

Paying it forward

The gift of education, friendships, networks, and opportunities is precious. Help us provide amazing opportunities to children from all socio-economic backgrounds around the world.

Participation matters

The level of participation is a measure of a school's health and strength. It shows that our Global Family community believes in the direction of the school, and it is a powerful message to those who have not yet given.

LAS pride

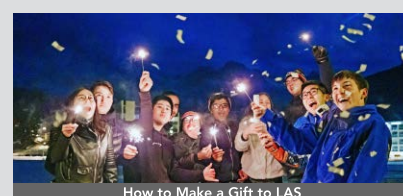
Only 7,000 people in the world have received an LAS education. It is a rare and powerful privilege. We ask you to consider making LAS one of your philanthropy priorities.

Expanding our circle

Success begets success. A high level of philanthropic giving attracts attention and interest in our school, strengthening the reputation and value of an LAS given.

It's fun!

Our work is important, but we don't take ourselves too seriously. We are here to advance the mission of LAS by empowering you to support your alma mater. This includes building our community and staying in touch wherever you are in the world through our Global Signature Event Series and online program.



How to Make a Gift to LAS

Once you have committed to donating, sending us your gift couldn't be easier! You can make a gift to the Annual Fund by:

- [Going online](#) to our giving platform for either a one time or regular gift
- Contacting the Advancement Office (advancement@las.ch) to make a bank transfer to LAS
- Donating through giving stocks and securities
- Matching your gift through your employer

The Advancement Office is here to support you at every stage of becoming an LAS donor. Never hesitate to get in touch if we can help—we look forward to hearing from you!

We will be in touch with every donor to thank you and update you on how your gift makes a difference.

Don't forget to share with your fellow LAS network that you have donated. Celebrate and be proud that you have contributed to the continued flourishing of our great school!



Questions? Reach out to Ben Walker, our Associate Director of Annual Giving & Stewardship. He can be contacted at:

bwalker@las.ch
t. +41 22 372 08 21

Advancing Into the 61st

By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement

It is no surprise that during one of the most trying and challenging times in all of our collective lives, the LAS Global Family has come together in an incredibly meaningful and impactful way. In our nearly 61 year history, we have never seen such generosity, such a willingness to give back, to donate, to encourage classmates and fellow parents to do the same, and to do so with remarkable enthusiasm. During this time of digital reunions, Zoom lectures, video parent-teacher conferences, and a serious lack of face-to-face contact, we were delighted and honored to hear from so many of you and we are so grateful for your interest in reconnecting with LAS, staying in touch, and joining a record number of donors from across the world in supporting our efforts to keep LAS at the forefront of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship.

Excellent schools raise money for excellent causes and we are no exception to that. At LAS we proudly ask for our Global Family from all walks of life to support our efforts in the following areas: Student Scholarships, Enhanced Programs, and Capital Projects. In fact, over 35% of our student body this current school year benefits from scholarship funds thanks to the very people listed in the pages ahead—this is incredibly important! We have current students who donated to support fellow classmates, and donors who are grandparents of alumni who want to pay it forward for the next generation. We have current parents

who see the intrinsic value of having an economically diverse school, and alumni who give to allow future alumni the opportunities given to them. We have faculty and staff who give back monthly from their paychecks in order to support our community. I'll say it again, this is incredibly important and an effort we will never shy away from.

Perhaps you've been on the fence about giving back. Perhaps you've thought, "I could never give enough to make an impact." I am here to let you know that you absolutely can make a very significant impact regardless of the amount of your donation. Why? Because every name on this list represents community, care, and coming together for a common cause. I promise you that your name on this list of donors will inspire someone

else to follow your lead. Your name on this list says, "LAS is an important part of my family's life and I want to support these efforts to continue to reach far and wide in order for the LAS mission to remain in the hearts of former, current, and future generations of students."

In order to show you just how your donation goes from you to the school and then how it immediately makes an impact, please take a look at the LAS Giving Guide on the opposite page. We always want to be crystal clear with you and we hope you find this helpful.

Please know how grateful we are, how humbled we remain, and how much we appreciate all you do to support the Magic Mountain.



The LAS Advancement Team, from left: Katy Maguire Lushman (Assistant Director of Communications & Advancement), Shona Bell McCarthy (Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Events), C. Ryan Joyce (Director of Advancement), Michael Wendel (Advancement Office Manager), and Ben Walker (Associate Director of Annual Giving & Stewardship).

Roll of Donors

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** Indicates current and former academic year and summer faculty*

Thank You, Anthony

I am so proud of my dear friend and now former colleague, Anthony Leutenegger. In early January 2021, Anthony approached me about his interest in exploring a career outside of education after nearly six and a half years in what he has often said has been his dream job at Leysin American School! Having traveled the world together and spent countless hours chatting, I had known this was on his mind and have always wanted to support him, while also hoping he would hold on for one more year...and then one more year after that! At the end of a very emotional January chat I knew Anthony was ready to take the next big leap in his career and we were here to support him.



While Anthony's last day in the Advancement Office at LAS was in June, he continues to live on campus with his girlfriend, Emily, and now works from home in a new-to-him field: cryptocurrency. We still have regular chats over coffee and he's still very much a part of the LAS Global Family here on campus.

Please join me in thanking Anthony for his incredible service to LAS, his beyond enthusiastic school spirit, his unmatched care for our alumni community, and his deep and meaningful relationships with everyone he came in contact with. As I wrote in my speech for his official goodbye celebration: "Anthony, you are a member of the LAS family forever. You are our buddy, our brother, our friend. Go be ambitious! We all cannot wait to follow the future of Anthony...it's going to be pretty darn awesome!"

Lots of love, my friend! —C. Ryan Joyce

Returning to the Road

Greeting Our Global Family

By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement

This semester, the Advancement Team has a limited travel schedule and we hope to return to our larger alumni events around the globe soon.

We are encouraged that travel is becoming easier and while we know that COVID-19 isn't going to disappear anytime soon, we are learning how to take the proper precautions so that we can begin to get back more "operations as usual."

With that said, we are testing the waters for what travel is going to look like for us moving forward. We have a limited travel schedule to a few places to begin to meet with individuals and smaller groups, while modifying plans as needed when the global COVID situation dictates. You can see our travel plans (as well as our virtual events!) on our Global Events Series page.

If you see that we're going to be nearby, drop us a note (advancement@las.ch) if you'd like for us to arrange to meet up for a coffee or a chat! Remember, we'll come to you when you are most comfortable.

We hope to get back to our usual larger alumni events soon, and we will keep you in the loop as those opportunities arise.

In the meantime, we hope you'll make plans to come to the Magic Mountain June 16-19, 2022 for the 61st Celebration. We are excited to be able to host this event on campus, where we are well-versed in health protocols with larger groups of people (our students!) and look forward to seeing so many of you then.

Left, from top: Rajat Kochhar '03, Elvin Aliyev '10, Thomas Keen '09; Hannah Keen '12 and Romy Backus '02; Below: Members of the LAS Global Family gathered in Istanbul for a pop-up dinner.



Join LAS Global Connect

Welcome to LASconnect—your alumni platform—to reconnect with fellow LAS graduates, act as a mentor to new graduates, and leverage your personal network.



lasconnect.ch

The Guiding Voices of LAS

Diversifying Our Governance Structure

By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement

Governance at LAS has never been stronger and more diverse than it stands today. Over the course of the past year, the LAS Advancement office, in conjunction with the LAS School Board and the Ott family, has taken a large step in enhancing our boards, building a stronger foundation for the future, and tapping into the incredible talents of our LAS Global Family. The goal, set forth by Chair of the LAS School Board, Stefanie Ott P'18, was simple: using the strength and insight of the LAS School Board, establish a council and advisory board made up of some of the great leaders in our community. What came of this was the LAS United States Advisory Board and the LAS International Council. On the subsequent pages you will meet the various members of these leadership committees and by scanning the QR code on the next page you will be able to read a full biography of each board and council member. A full board and council report on the progress of various initiatives will appear in the next issue of the *Panorama*. We are thrilled and honored to be working with such incredible thought leaders and we look forward to the truly remarkable work ahead.

On June 15, the day before the start of the 61st Celebration, the LAS School Board, US Advisory Board, and the International Council will meet for a half day strategic planning meeting to strategize ways that LAS will continue to remain excellent for the next 61 years...and beyond!

As always, we are grateful to everyone in our Global Family who volunteers, donates, attends events, stays in touch, mentors, and serves in leadership positions. To find out how you might be able to stay involved in our community, please reach out to me, C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement, at: cjoyce@las.ch.

Meet Our Newest LAS Board Member

Sarah Wohnlich Kane

Education

Bachelor of Science in Economics and Politics, University of Bath; Master of Science in Applied Neuroscience, Kings College London (in progress)

From

Northern Ireland

Current Location

Zürich, Switzerland

Passports

United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland, Switzerland

Connection to the School

Worked with LAS Board Chair Stefanie Ott at Deloitte

Family

Lives with Swiss husband and daughter in Zürich

Hobbies

Sailing and skiing, depending on the season

Educational Philosophy

"I'm a real believer in the notion of growth mindset. As lifelong learners, our responsibility in the world is to continue to remain open to new ideas and that starts in childhood. As a school, we create that interest and build the skills for our students to continually learn and be open to the world."

LAS School Board

The LAS School Board oversees the strategic planning and major decision making for LAS.

LAS School Board Members



Stefanie Ott P'18
Chair



Pascal Stefani P'18
Vice Chair



Marc-Frédéric Ott



Christoph Ott



Jeff Paulson



Sarah Wohnlich Kane

Scan the code below
to read the
biography for any
LAS Board Member



LAS Foundation Board

The purpose of the Foundation is twofold. Firstly, it supports the mission of the school by offering a high-quality international education to students at the secondary level. It also fundraises as an additional source of income for the annual fund, scholarships, various projects, and capital campaigns.

LAS Foundation Board Members



Doris Ott
President



K. Steven Ott
Vice President



Stefanie Ott P'18



Maurizio Fabbri



Philippe Baudraz

LAS International Council

The LAS International Council is a diverse group of global leaders who advise, assist, and articulate the development of the school in the international market, and help to expand awareness of LAS's strength in developing innovative, compassionate, and responsible citizens of the world. They are experienced professionals able to provide high level guidance and support to the LAS Board.

LAS International Council Members



Stefanie Ott P'18
Chair (Switzerland)



Mustapha Atiku
Abubakar '12 (Nigeria)



Molly DeFilippis
(United States)



Pablo Herrera P'21
(Spain)



Erikzhan Issengaliyev '98
(Kazakhstan)



Pradeep Khimji '83
(Oman)



Ana Loehnert P'20
(United States)



Christoph Ott
(Switzerland)
ex officio



Marc-Frédéric Ott
(Switzerland)
ex officio



Emma Pinto P'15,'18
(Mexico)



Inna Smirnova 'P22
(Russia)



Ken Takayama P'18
(Japan)



Jin Yongxue P'23
(China)

LAS United States Advisory Board

The LAS United States Advisory Board is a diverse group of professionals living in the United States who advise, assist, and articulate the development of the school in the US market. The United States Advisory Board advises the LAS Leadership Team on Advancement, Admissions & Marketing topics.

LAS United States Advisory Board Members



John Sutton '98
President



Jorge Flores II, AIF® '94
Finance
Committee Chair



Peggy Love '66
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Committee Chair



Emma Miller '07
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P'23, '25



Anna Rubio '91



Anupy Singla SP'18, '19



Francis Yasharian

Virtually Gathering Our Global Family

*By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement and
Shona Bell McCarthy, Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Events*

It can be said, without exaggeration, that we may have had a closer and more meaningful connection with our alumni since March of 2020 than in quite some time. Obviously, nothing will ever be more powerful than a face-to-face meeting, reunion, lecture, or simply a coffee or tea in your living room. However, the pandemic forced all of us into quieter spaces craving human connection, longing for a time that once was, and hoping for a brighter future. I know I found myself reaching out to university friends for the first time in years, connecting with distant family members who were in a far tougher position than I was in Switzerland, and slipping into habits and rituals that I had set aside for a busier life. I think this probably sounds familiar to many of you and it is with this in mind that we have very deliberately and thoughtfully created a series of Zoom events over the course of the 2021, curated for our Global Family from our pioneer alumni from the 1960's to our most recent graduates...and plenty of current and former teachers along the way. Speaking of teachers, it means a lot to them to be able to see you all after so many years.

While we truly cannot wait to see you in person very soon, keep in mind that LAS is just a click of a button away and you will be virtually transported back to the mountain and all its magic!

Alumni Zoom Event Number 1: November 27, 2020

Are you smarter than your teacher?
Trivia, stories, laughs, games, prizes
with Jamie Skove P'16, 20, and
Pablo Brisance

Alumni Zoom Event Number 2: February 13, 2021

A photographic trip down memory
lane with Kim Oppenheim P'16, 20,
Richard Campanaro '95,
and Fred Sharp

Alumni Zoom Event Number 3: May 15, 2021

LAS, The Early Years with
Doris and Steven Ott

Alumni Zoom Event Number 4: November 5, 2021

An ESL (ELA) Memory Lane
Zoom Event with Mark Fryer P'26
and Aaron Deupree

*Ben Walker, Katy Maguire Lushman, Mark
Fryer P'26, Aaron Deupree, and Shona Bell
McCarthy greet alumni from across the globe
during the ESL (ELA) Memory Lane Zoom
Event in November 2021.*



It means so much for teachers to see alumni
after so many years.



"It's always good to know
that students who once gallivanted
through the hallways of LAS are still
willing to connect up and reminisce
about the good old days."

Pablo Brisance, ELA Teacher



"It was great to see what
wonderful adults they have become.
And I can't wait for the
opportunity to meet up in person...
hopefully in June."

Mark Fryer P'26, ELA Teacher



"It's really lovely to see different
groups of alumni joining
each of the events, to find out what
they're up to now, to see them
interacting with each other,
and to hear their reflections on
their time at LAS."

Emma Dixon, Registrar



"It's incredibly meaningful
and nostalgic to visit with you all
and to see how you've all grown
into adults, taking on
new challenges but remembering
your roots here at LAS."

Aaron Deupree, ELA & English Department
Head and Teacher

Have an idea for a virtual event?
Send us a note at advancement@las.ch

Finn Hovem '10

By Andie Flett P'25, Director of the Alpine Institute & Theory of Knowledge (TOK) Teacher

I'm catching up with Finn Hovem to hear about his unconventional career and the radical adventures he's had, and ask him about his time as both a student and a staff member at LAS, especially his time outdoors.

Hi from the Magic Mountain, Finn! So tell me, what have you been up to for the last eleven years since you left LAS?

Well, I graduated from the University of Tromsø with a bachelor's degree in Societal Safety and Environment which focuses on the human factors in risk analysis to create a framework that can be applied to emergency preparation and crisis management, for example with avalanche snow safety. Since I am interested in skiing, I wrote my thesis on how different trends in avalanche danger ratings affect how we perceive avalanche danger [for extra credit; read Finn's thesis at <https://arc.lib.montana.edu/snow-science/item/2817>].

At the same time that I was finishing my degree, I was skiing a lot. I came back to Switzerland to take part in the Patrouille des Glaciers, a big ski mountaineering race in the Alps, and I was also doing a lot of steep skiing and some first descents. In retrospect, I realize I was focusing on adventure, uncertainty, and the unknown. This is what really appeals to me even more than skiing fast, doing tricks, or competing.

I ended up in New Zealand and then South America to do some adventure skiing. Eventually I found my way back to Norway to work with Lyngen Experience, guiding ski trips in the Lyngen Alps, and I began pursuing my international mountain guide certification (IFMGA) via the Norwegian Mountain Guide Association (NORTIND), which will take me a few years to finish.

In addition to guiding, I work part-time with the University of Tromsø on human factors research, the Norwegian avalanche warning service (Varsom.no) with snow observations, and as a freelance writer for *FriFlyt*, a Norwegian ski magazine.

Wow, so you've been keeping busy! Was all of this part of your plan when you were in high school at LAS?

The lifestyle I have now was my dream, but I just assumed that I would go to engineering school and do what was expected of me.

How do you feel about your plans having changed?

When opportunities come up, you've got to take them!



Ski touring out the back door of the Lyngen Experience Lodge on Stor-Galten in the northern part of the Lyngen Peninsula in Norway. Photo by Bendik Skogli.

How do you handle that level of uncertainty with your plans?

With uncertainty comes freedom. You can choose between high certainty and less control or a path where the outcome is unknown but if it does work out, it will be really exciting.

When I was in high school and then working at LAS, I wasn't sure that a career in the mountains was a realistic goal, but it's working out for me. Everything that you do in life adds up; it's all good experience that gives you wisdom and contributes to who you are, what you do, and how you approach life.

How did LAS prepare you for such an unconventional career path?

Growing up with two nationalities (American and Norwegian) and living in different places as an expat, I didn't always have a true sense of where home was. One of my biggest takeaways from LAS is that everyone is unique, there is not one right way to be. It's pretty simple: be good, be kind, treat people with respect, and do what you want to do, so long as you are not harming anyone else.

My life may be considered unconventional, but convention is wrapped up in language and culture. What's nice about LAS is that you combine people from different places and cultures, and all of those people have different conventions. In that way, LAS is unconventional. Once you've experienced many ways of living, it's easier to do what you want to do and not worry so much about what others are doing.

As a student at LAS, did you spend a lot of time in the mountains?

I chose to go to LAS because of the ski program, the location, and the access to the outdoors. I went skiing at every opportunity and went on every trip that was offered. I felt privileged to be in Leysin.



Another day in the office, Finn leads participants in an avalanche course.



Climbing a 400 meter route above the Norwegian Sea on Presten in the Lofoten Islands. Photo by Andreas Widlund.

What did you learn about the outdoors while you were here?

My experiences at LAS inspired me to learn more about snow safety and winter sports. Now that I am working in avalanche education, researching decision making, and ski guiding, I can see how the avalanche awareness courses I took with Roger Payne and the Leysin ski guides provided me with a foundation of what to be aware of and what the hazards are when out in the mountains.

How do you want to see the outdoor programs at LAS evolve?

It's great to see the programs evolve so that students who have more experience can go out with local guides for high quality avalanche education and more personal challenge.

What's your most memorable moment from your time in Leysin?

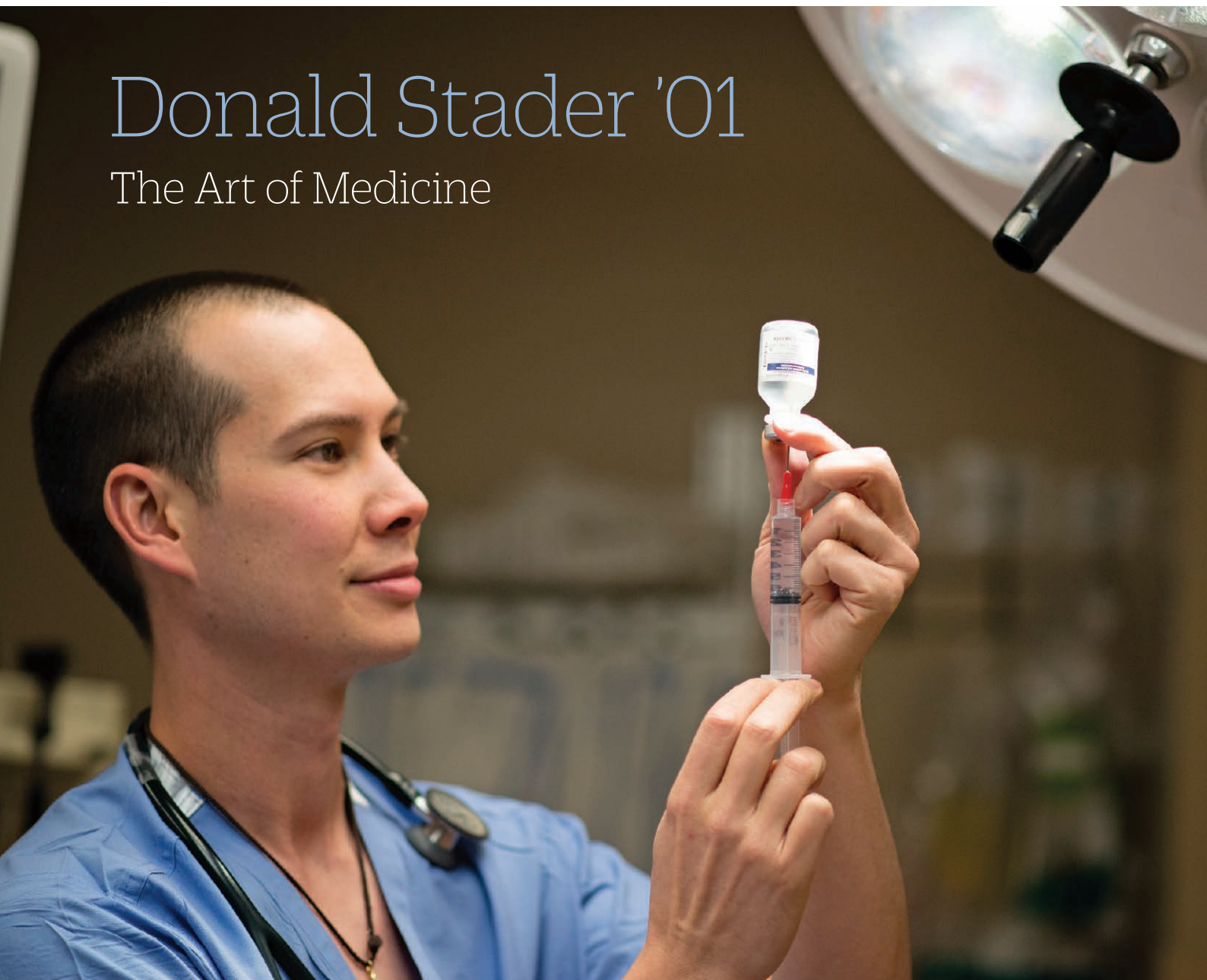
I remember a Saturday morning when it was a beautiful power day but my IB Physics class was going to CERN for a field trip. So I woke up super early and skied until 10:00am and made it back just in time to catch the bus to Geneva. At the time I was sad to leave the ski hill, but it was actually a great field trip. I remember being amazed that I could have both those experiences in the same day!

Do you have any plans to return to the Magic Mountain?

I always visit Leysin when I'm in Switzerland and it's great to always feel so welcome. Leysin is like home to me.

Donald Stader '01

The Art of Medicine



By Katy Maguire Lushman, Assistant Director of Communications & Advancement and Shona Bell McCarthy, Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Events

When you first meet Don Stader you can't help but notice that while his CV is impressive, he's genuinely a kind, thoughtful guy. Graduating from LAS in 2001, Don went to the University of Mary Washington with his eye on a medical career. Facing eight years of medical school and residency, he took a moment for a "gut check." Still relishing his fond memories of the time he spent at LAS as a student, he returned back in a faculty role. First splitting his time between the development office and substitute teaching, he eventually

became an integrated science and ESL science teacher with a focus on chemistry.

After his time as a faculty member at LAS, he went to Baylor College of Medicine and soon emerged as a leading physician in emergency medicine. An experience with a patient drew his attention toward the opioid epidemic, his and other physicians' role in it, and later into documentary activism. He produced the award-winning films *24/7/365: The Evolution of Emergency Medicine* and *Palliative* and is chair of the Colorado Naloxone Project.

This alumnus and father of three sat down with Katy Lushman, Assistant Director of Communications & Advancement, to reflect upon his LAS experience and his path beyond the Magic Mountain.

What was your experience like as a student at LAS?

Leysin is a magical place. I had a lot of incredible educators and basketball coaches that were really influential, and LAS empowered me to be entrepreneurial, to be a leader, and to contribute and give back to my communities.

How was your experience as a faculty member different from being a student? How was it similar?

I suppose one major difference is that as faculty, I never got breathalyzed!

As a faculty member it was fun to be in a mentorship role; I enjoyed helping others develop themselves and chase their dreams rather than being focused on my own aspirations. It was beautiful being able to see the same community from two perspectives: my roles were different, but the community was the same and the relationships I created as both a student and faculty have lasted over 20 years.

Favorite LAS memories?

I miss powder days; I'm in Denver partially because I developed a skiing habit at LAS. I miss the Fromagerie and going on cultural trips with friends. I really enjoyed athletics and have lots of memories of the basketball team. I

was a good student but also got away with an awful lot...that's part of the magic, right?

How did you become interested in the opioid epidemic?

Honestly, from my own mistakes. I used to treat pain very liberally with opiates thinking I was practicing good medicine. One day, I treated a patient in the emergency room who had overdosed on heroin and she revealed that her addiction had begun when she was prescribed Percocet for an ankle sprain. Earlier that same day I had prescribed Percocet for a different patient with an ankle sprain, and it all just clicked for me.

Treatments for addiction and overdose have existed for decades but are underutilized by clinicians. People are dying because we are not using the tools we have. That drives my passion to educate and help create change, because there's an opportunity for us to do better, and we have to do better if we want things to change.

Medical providers have varying reactions to this work: a lot of providers realize this is a serious problem, but some see opioids as safe drugs and worry that this is overblown, concerned we're not treating pain adequately. There are huge moral implications of pain and suffering.

How did you get from what you were doing in medicine to the more creative space with your films?

People don't realize that medicine is extremely creative; it's often called the "Art of Medicine." My desire to get into film was that it was an avenue to communicate with a large group of people to create social change. I think film is a way for people to digest complex ideas; it has the power to get people to emote and become conceptually curious. There's a lot I want to change in medicine, and film is a way we can start to address these issues.

Can you tell us how your life now compares to where you thought you'd be when you were a student at LAS?

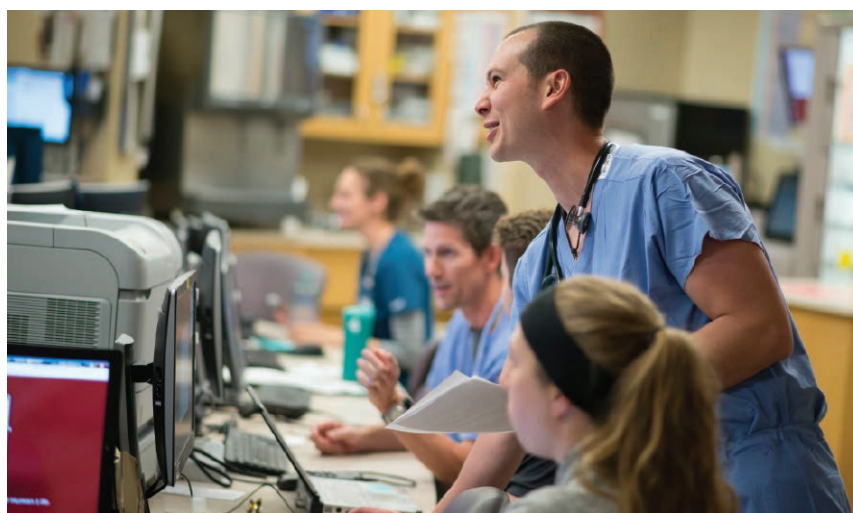
Being a physician is a tough job, especially in 2020-2022, and there's been a lot of heartache and tragedy, a lot of sadness and anger about the recent hesitations around science.

But I've been extremely fortunate; I've always wanted to be a clinician. It was what I was working toward while a student at LAS, and now I'm living that lifelong dream. I never knew that I would become passionate about addiction, but sometimes life puts you on an unanticipated path.

What advice would you give to current students?

It's important to know yourself and at LAS you have the time and freedom to explore that: what brings you joy, what makes you excited, what pisses you off, what your dreams are and what you want to accomplish. Then you have to work your ass off to get there; but if you work hard, you have the ability to make an impact.

Don not only works as an emergency physician, but also helps address the opioid epidemic through his consulting work and by producing award-winning documentary films.



Bill Carney '69

First Recipient of the Alumni of the Year Award

By C. Ryan Joyce, Director of Advancement

A new tradition has begun: the LAS Alumni Association is excited to honor our very first Outstanding Alumni of the Year, William Carney, from the class of 1969.

The Outstanding Alumni of the Year Award will be presented to an LAS alumnus or alumna each year to recognize their individual personal achievements, contributions to their industries or professions, and service to their community and the greater good of the world.

Entrepreneur, professor, board member, disc jockey, and community leader are just a few titles Bill goes by. Growing up in New York and then moving to Freetown, Sierra Leone, Bill has lived and worked all over the world. A graduate of Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, Bill began his career as a Planning Manager in Africa for General Motors, he subsequently spent the next few years traveling the continent doing market analysis and working on distribution channels. Bill was named the first recipient of the General Motors International Fellowship and the company sponsored his

MBA at IMI in Geneva, Switzerland (now IMD, Lausanne). Unsurprisingly, he graduated at the top of his class. Since then Bill has become a university professor himself, working with the Hult International Business School, he founded a record studio in Geneva which has expanded into Laughing Bear Productions, has DJ'ed on the Swiss radio air waves hosting the "Dr. Bill Show" for an audience of over two million people on Friday and Saturday nights, and has consulted for large companies and NGOs across the world on marketing and DEIJ (diversity, equity, inclusion, & justice). He also works with the Human Library, a Danish not-for-profit organization with the goal to create better understanding of diversity in order to create more inclusive and cohesive communities across cultural, religious, social, and ethnic differences.

Beyond Bill's incredible and diverse professional career, he has put much of his time and energy into supporting LAS, his alma mater. Bill has been an alumni induction speaker, a DJ for three proms, donated his professional services as a marketing expert during our admissions retreat, and now is advising LAS on DEIJ. Bill also serves on the LAS United States Advisory Board. He has two children and spreads his time between Boston and Geneva.

We were delighted to honor him with this award at our 2021 graduation ceremony, where the entire LAS parent and alumni community had the opportunity to hear Bill offer a few words of advice to our graduating students. Thank you so much Bill!



Alumni Updates

From Around the Globe

By Shona Bell McCarthy, Associate Director of Alumni Relations & Events



Bruce Bordett '66

Bruce began his career at WGBH TV in Boston working on PBS classics like *The French Chef* (with Julia Child), *This Old House*, *Zoom*, and *The Victory Garden*. He transitioned to working in corporate tech for the likes of DEC, IBM, and Lotus, finally starting his own video production business in 2001. Now “mostly” retired, he keeps busy with some of the more meaningful of his small business projects: family heritage stories, memorials, weddings, and the like. Bruce came to LAS when his parents moved to Spain for his dad’s shoe manufacturing work, and these days Bruce and his wife Marcia continue to explore the world. Following Marcia’s retirement from Lesley University a few years ago, they took to the skies for adventures to New Zealand, Australia, Scandinavia, and Eastern Europe. Perhaps his most exciting update to share with the LAS community is the birth of his first grandchild to his only daughter, Sasha, and the joy of spending time together in Marblehead, Massachusetts (USA) with the whole family.



Missy Greene '74

Having experienced a life-directing “I’m going to be a potter” epiphany during the fall of her single year at LAS, Missy has not just pursued a tremendously successful pottery career, but has also built a happy and fulfilling life along the way. After bouncing around schools following her departure from LAS (always wanting desperately to return, of course!), Missy enrolled at New England College in New Hampshire, USA for a BA in visual arts; there, she further honed her ceramics skills and spent a few years living in a teepee to save money on rent. Upon graduation, she moved back to Guilford, her hometown in Connecticut, to teach pottery classes; over the years, she drew inspiration from indigenous artforms and lifestyles from her travels around the world, including Lapland and the native peoples of the American Southwest as she developed her own ceramics style. At her very first craft fair booth, she quickly realized that her lucrative artwork could be her passion and livelihood simultaneously, and so began a tremendous career in the ceramic world, with works collected by the likes of the Smithsonian. Missy and her husband Eric — with whom she shares two sons — live in Deer Isle, Maine, where together they run Yellow Birch Farm, have alpine goats in memory of her fond times in Switzerland, host farm-to-table dinners on her hand thrown dinnerware, and where she has her pottery studio and gallery. Missy’s pieces have recently been acquired for the permanent collections of the Bowdoin College Museum of Art and the Louisiana State University Museum of Art, and you can view her pottery at melissagreenepottery.net.

Photo ©Jean Fogelberg



Merzad Jamshidi '89

Merzad Jamshidi draws a clear path between his time at LAS and his career successes today. As the Regional Director at International Association of Operative Millers of the Middle East and Africa Region, he sees the adaptation skills he once developed in his dorm room, classrooms, and across the slopes of Leysin come to light as he navigates various cultural traditions and environments in his day-to-day work. Today, Merzad remains connected with Switzerland not just through fond memories but also through his business, which includes operations in the northern, German-speaking part of Switzerland. He maintains a tremendously international lifestyle, traveling to and working from the likes of Dubai, Oman, Turkey, and Iran while predominantly located in the state of Virginia, USA, where his young daughter has just begun high school. Merzad remains “very happily” married to his wife of sixteen years, Ladan, a pharmacist. Looking forward, Merzad hopes to work with LAS to support alumni reunions in Iran.



Blaise Hefti '99

When we last heard from Blaise Hefti, he and his LAS sweetheart, Vanessa, had just recently been married in June 2014 and were expecting their first child in May 2015. Today in 2022, Blaise and Vanessa have two young children and a booming family business: Hefti Sports, located right here in Leysin, which Blaise took over from his father André in 2010. Now in its third generation, business at Hefti's is doing well despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, and Blaise is thrilled to see more and more people heading into the outdoors as COVID has made indoor life more of a challenge. On the business side, Blaise is working to combine Hefti's signature high quality customer service with modern digital shopping methods to optimize year-round outdoor gear accessibility to all who come to Leysin. He's excited by the upcoming developments in the Leysin commune, including the current plans for a new train station next door to the shop at the télécabine. Looking into the future, Hefti's is working closely with the commune to continue diversifying the outdoor activities available to Leysin visitors, with a special focus on summertime mountain biking. He's excited to continue to grow the partnership between Hefti's and LAS for student and staff outdoor gear. On a personal level, Blaise is always looking for more time to spend with Vanessa and their kids and is hopeful to take six months off to travel to see family in the United States as well as his LAS global family around the world.



Harika Saylam '01

Following her graduation at LAS, Harika studied at the University of Richmond, Virginia, where she completed an undergraduate degree in economics and art history. From there, she followed her expected path in a finance job in New York City, but found herself bored and restless. Remembering her fondness for watching her aunt, a professional dancer, dance throughout her childhood, Harika decided to try dancing for the first time as a new pastime. Almost immediately, she realized that she'd discovered a new passion. Leaving New York for Paris, Harika achieved a masters in Economics at Sorbonne University before working at HSBC bank. Finding her job at HSBC underwhelming, she decided it was finally time to return home to Turkey after a full decade of being away. There, she got married and had her first child. In getting back to herself after giving birth, Harika returned to dancing and never looked back. She danced through two more pregnancies, and ultimately became a popular dance and yoga teacher. Together with a friend, she started TapasBarre, now a well-known yoga and dance studio in Turkey offering in person and virtual classes in addition to retreats, which she now runs with a team of five women. Recently, Harika wrote a book in English called *A Journey to the Paradise of the Birds*, inspired by the mythical Iranian bird. All the income from the book goes to support refugees. She hopes one day soon to choreograph a dance based on the book and turn it into a professional performance. You can find Harika on Instagram at @harik_ush.



Pavlo Kononenko '05

Pavlo began his tenure at Harvard with every intention of following Steven Ott's footsteps and becoming an engineer. But during his liberal arts college experience, he found himself drawn to Harvard's economics department instead. Declaring a passion for business and majoring in economics, Pavlo went on to become Vice President of Harvard Student Agencies, one of the largest student-run corporations in the world. He spent two years working for a Boston fintech startup before returning to Harvard Business School. From there, he went on to Boston Consulting Group where he discovered a passion for working in the innovative healthcare space and later, while running a medium-sized assisted living business, received a crash course in crisis leadership when COVID hit in 2020. Pavlo is currently working for one of the largest clinical research organizations called PPD, now part of Thermo Fisher Scientific, where he's involved in setting strategy for a company that runs clinical trials for cutting edge vaccines and treatments. Pavlo is based in North Carolina where he lives with his wife and their one-year-old child. In his spare time, Pavlo dedicates himself to volunteer work; the recipient of generous financial aid at both LAS and Harvard, Pavlo felt it was important to pass that goodwill on to the next generation. Through Ukraine Global Scholars, Pavlo and his colleagues empower the next generation of Ukrainians to attend top schools around the world, contributing to Ukraine's human capital development.



Ana Clara Martins '16

Despite receiving her early-action application acceptance from Stanford during her senior year at LAS, Ana knew she needed to take a pause between high school and college. She took a gap year back home in Brazil, working a variety of jobs and making great friends, all of which helped her better understand herself and her dreams. At Stanford, Ana majored in political science, which included an internship involving field work in economic development in New York City. Her internship serendipitously coincided with Amazon's move to New York, and she and her team were placed on a project with Amazon, her first exposure to the tech world. Upon her return to Stanford, she carried her newfound interest in tech and finance with her, adding business engineering and finance optimization to her course load. Noting the discrepancy between the technology and innovation she'd been exposed to through school and her internship and the tech work happening in Brazil, Ana was inspired to create access for her fellow Brazilians. Together with a team of Stanford students, Ana raised over one million dollars from venture capital firms, banks, nonprofits, and healthcare companies to create an innovation conference to bring people from Brazil to Silicon Valley, where they received mentorship from US peers. Inspired by her fundraising work, Ana now works for Atlantico, a venture capital firm focused on empowering projects in South America and, more specifically, Brazil, where she plays a hands-on role in providing funding to projects in her home country and beyond.



Yi (YY) Yang '21

After graduating from LAS in 2021, YY spent some of her summer traveling around Switzerland with her five best school friends in celebration of their graduation before moving from her home in Germany back to Switzerland, this time to enroll at Glion, a top hospitality school just outside of Montreux. Though there is still a part of her that feels as if she's just on school break and could return to LAS at any moment, she's equally excited to be moving forward in her life with a newfound interest in hotel management. Luckily, though most of her LAS friends have spread off to different cities around the world (with many in the NYC area), they're all excited to hopefully return to Leysin for a winter holiday vacation together. As she reflects on her recent time as an LAS student and her new alumni status, she's found that "once you're at LAS, you're always going to be there, no matter where you go."



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