A Journey to Become a Well-Rounded Individual

Academics Develop the Brain, Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) Develop the Heart

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There has been a great deal of anxiety that Artificial Intelligence (AI) might soon replace human labor and achievements. The acquisition of knowledge, which took humans decades to perfect, is now seen as insignificant compared to the nearly infinite database that can score the top ten percentile of the U.S. Mock Bar Exam and the top one percentile of the Biology Olympiad. However, no matter how much it understands text, interprets images and provides answers, it cannot replace humans due to its inability to reflect on itself and strive to offer virtuous values to society.

Humans can live as balanced individuals who can understand and cooperate with others by the harmonization of physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. This idea is at the heart of holistic education, which then leads to the creation and maintenance of a healthy society. The International Baccalaureate (IB), a set of internationally-recognized educational programs, lays its foundation on holistic education. By developing inquisitive, knowledgeable and caring young individuals, the program helps to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

Cultivating the Mind to Live Authentically in Society

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP), which is an option for students in their last two years of high school, includes required activities such as the Theory of Knowledge course, an Extended Essay, and CAS. CAS is composed of activities that require Creativity, Activity and Service. CAS allows students to reflect and understand the impact of their actions on themselves, others and the wider community. Through CAS activities, students learn how to make their lives more abundant and valuable and how to connect more closely with their community and society.

At many schools, students are required to spend at least 18 months working on CAS through five stages: Investigation, Preparation, Action, Reflection and Demonstration. This 18-month journey can help develop these students to be productive, caring, civic-minded members of society even 18 years later.

Although each stage is essential, "Reflection" is considered the essential core step of CAS. Many people go through most of these stages in their lives, but consciously taking the step to reflect on what one has learned is often missed. In their interviews, students reported that they not only looked back on and thought about the activities that they had planned and executed, but they also looked forward and set goals for their future.

An Integral Part of the Curriculum

Time management is key when planning a CAS project and experience, and while many schools which do not have CAS included in the instruction time, other schools include it as part of the student's timetable. This allows them to work on CAS concurrently with their academics, which then helps them to work and reflect on each stage consistently.

In addition, CAS Coordinators monitor each student's CAS activities and actively communicate with them to provide informative feedback on their project. They provide students with guidance and opportunities to form new habits, experience new challenges, and become contributing members of society. The CAS Coordinators almost act as second parents, helping to develop and nurture students' minds.

Students Thrive Through CAS Activities

The Butterfly Effect of an Individual's CAS Activity – David Jung's CIECO Project



For David Jung, a student, his team project CIECO left a significant mark and long-lasting effect. CIECO introduced a "Reusable Cup Circulation System," encouraging students to reuse plastic cups using QR codes in Chadwick's school cafeteria. This new and novel system allows students to rent reusable cups at the cafeteria and track their return after use.

Their Reusable Cup Circulation System inspired a great deal of student participation, won an international sustainability project competition, and has been featured in English-language newspapers. Although David will soon graduate and become a university student, his environmentally-conscious solution is expected to continue to be actively used in the school cafeteria.

An Ambitious Start to a CAS Project – Ruby Kim's "HER" Project

Ruby Kim, another student, is taking her first step in her CAS activity. She is currently organizing a team project called "HER," which aims to help women in South Korea from low-income backgrounds who are affected by period poverty. Ruby and her teammates have carried out fundraisers to provide low-income women with sanitary pads. Additionally, they plan to educate their peers on the process of menstruation as well as discuss women's issues in the community. The team's primary goal is to support people in need in the community and create a better understanding of gender issues. They also hope to have the opportunity to speak on women's rights issues in South Korea.

In an ever-changing and diverse society, the 18 months of CAS activities create a foundation for students to live healthy lives as well-balanced people.



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Choco Escaño Picornell currently serves as an Upper School Psychology and TOK teacher as well as the CAS Coordinator at Chadwick International. She has extensive experience with IB DP curriculum, accreditation and examination assessment and over 20 years of experience teaching Diploma Program Psychology and TOK. She believes that every student is unique, and teachers need to connect with each student to discover who they are and develop their capacities.

Chadwick International requires students to begin CAS at Grade 11. Chadwick's CAS program places special focus on the quality of the experience that its students take away. Unlike schools that do not include CAS in instruction time, Chadwick incorporates CAS into students' timetables to enable them to enjoy the full benefits of the program at each stage. Chadwick International provides a space for them to grow into reflective, respectful individuals who can take good care of themselves and others and lead social change.