

ZIS

For the ZIS community
– at home in Zurich
and around the world



Winter
2023/24

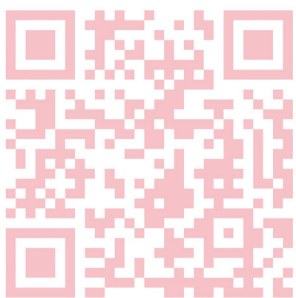
- Our community: the race to zero
- Why language learning is key
- New home, new traditions
- The future of work is change
- ZIS Campaign hits its target

Voices

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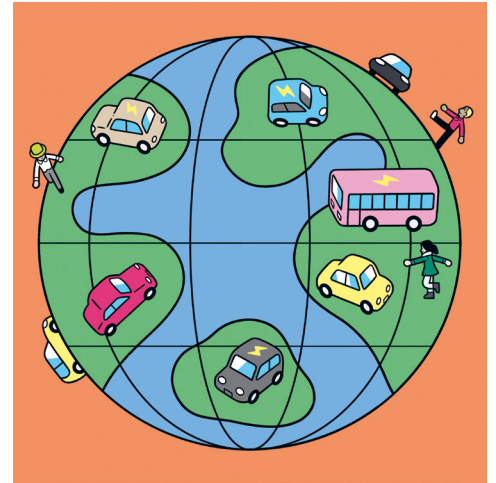
**Winter
2023/24**

**For the ZIS community
– at home in Zurich
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the contributors and not
necessarily those of Zurich
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ZIS Voices is produced
on behalf of ZIS by YBM

News



• Philanthropy

Campaign target surpassed

A massive thanks to everyone who helped us to exceed the CHF 5 million target for the Campaign for ZIS: Building the Future of Learning.

The success of the campaign builds on the incredible legacy of philanthropy at ZIS. Back in 1963, a dedicated community of parents and educators recognised the need for a school. So they raised the money and founded it themselves. Sixty years on, the philosophy of generosity has endured down the generations and has enabled us to carry on building - last year we opened the doors to a new learning community, our Secondary Campus.

“The new building has opened up a world of opportunities for collaboration between students, teachers, parents and the wider community,” says David Wood, Middle School Principal. “The Secondary Campus embodies that synergy.”

“Our entire community came together and contributed: naming a space, helping out with and attending the Gala, donating prizes or adopting a tree,” says Michaela Seeger, Director of Community Relations. “The Board of Trustees, the ZIS Foundation Board and the Campaign Committee took on this huge and complex project with incredible enthusiasm and efficiency. My heartfelt thanks go out to you all.”

And the work continues. Our ambition for the future is to focus on sustainability across transport, energy, food, recycling, vendors and sustainability education throughout the whole school community.

To learn more about philanthropy at ZIS and how to support, go to zis.ch/support/philanthropy

• Socials

#ZISExperience
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The school is proud to celebrate its 60th anniversary this year – 60 years since 43 “bright and eager boys and girls” made history as our founding students. Today, ZIS is a leading international school that has made a mark not just in Switzerland but around the world, and we’re grateful to all who have shaped the school across our first six decades. We look forward to the continued strengthening of our community in the years to come. Check out the updated interactive timeline at zis.ch/uploaded/timeline

Catherine Jolly named ZIS Deputy Director



Lower School Principal Catherine Jolly will become our next Deputy Director, as Mark Schulz will retire at the end of the school year after 15 years at ZIS.

Since joining ZIS in 2018, Catherine, who holds a Master’s in Educational Leadership and an MBA, has helped guide and support the strengthening of programmes and curriculum at the Lower School, while overseeing a number of complex challenges, including most recently the launch of the bilingual pathway. She has also taken on increasing responsibilities for all-school initiatives and has had numerous interactions with the Board of Trustees, including serving on the Director Search Committee.

“I feel both privileged and excited about the opportunity to continue to serve the school community and the dedicated employees who step up every day to meet the needs of our students,” says Catherine. “The opportunity to continue to learn from Mark during this year is invaluable, and I look forward to contributing to the future stability and growth of this wonderful school.”

Incoming Director Elsa Hernández-Donohue played a part in the recruitment process. She says: “I look forward to working with Catherine, building on the wonderful work that is taking place at ZIS in support of all learners. Catherine’s vision for the role is one that resonated with us as it values relationship building, honouring the work done to date, and building cohesive teams across the school.”

Carpool app for ZIS goes live

ZIS families and employees at both campuses have been quick to sign up to the new carpooling option, introduced in partnership with HitchHike, a leading carpooling company based in Switzerland.

This free-of-charge service offers an additional option to enable members of our community to reduce their carbon footprint, and lowers the number of vehicles on our campuses.

Parents can connect to share journeys for their children, creating carpool groups exclusively with other ZIS parents, and ZIS employees can arrange to travel together, although they cannot offer carpooling with students.

“We acknowledge the challenge of traffic congestion during peak hours, which can lead to delays, safety hazards and increased air pollution,” says Stefan Mühlemann, Chief Operating Officer and member of the ZIS Sustainability group. “Carpooling presents an effective solution to alleviate traffic congestion, fostering a safer and more sustainable environment for everyone. By encouraging parents and employees to carpool, we aim to decrease the number of cars on the roads and enable smoother traffic flow.”

For more information and to sign up to the carpool app, visit the website at go.hitchhike.ch/zis



The benefits of carpooling:

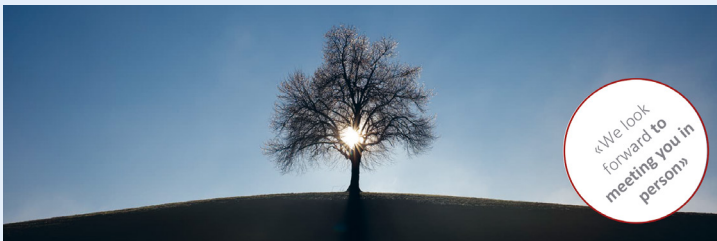
- Conserves resources and protects the environment
- Shares the cost, making commuting more affordable
- Helps build social connections within the community
- Creates a more flexible transport system



Connecting people
and places to make
the world work better



www.iss.ch



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From the Director



Lisa Lyle

My term in culture

I have been reading
Community: The Structure of Belonging by Peter Block, in which he defines community through small group conversations.

I have been listening to
the audiobook *Tomorrowmind: Thriving at Work with Resilience, Creativity and Connection – Now and In an Uncertain Future* by Kellerman and Seligman.

I have been cooking
delicious vegan bowls from the vegetarian specialists Love and Lemons (loveandlemons.com).

Creating a sense of belonging is a core part of our mission – and crucial if we are to create engaged, diverse and innovative future citizens.

• Photography **Billy Howard**

Not so very long ago, people lived in small, nomadic tribes. We made our way towards needed resources and worked hard to avoid dangers. Fast forward to the 21st century: today many factors lead to displacement and relocation, including political unrest, famine, forced labor or voluntary pursuit of better employment opportunities.

For those of us at ZIS or working internationally, long gone are the days when we lived near where we were born or grew up, around folks who shared many of our life experiences, perspectives and values. We now engage daily with those who speak other languages, practice other faiths and make different assumptions about all sorts of things. While there are huge benefits to this new social salad – including a greater range of perspectives on issues, the ability to find novel solutions and the daily surprises and learnings to delight us – we are often not quite sure what to expect.

A *Harvard Business Review* article from a decade ago concluded that “inherent diversity” can bring out of the box thinking to solve critical issues. However, without acquired diversity traits, these other perspectives can fall on deaf ears or not be shared at all. In companies where a diverse range of perspectives are sought and valued, innovation and belonging can flourish. A commitment to inclusion and belonging benefits every person in an organization.

At ZIS, our commitment to creating an environment in which everyone can thrive is deeply rooted in our mission and values. For each person to fully engage and benefit from our learning community, they must feel a real sense of belonging, and this is especially true for our students. Our research shows that the vast majority of students report a strong sense of belonging

The *Harvard Business Review* concluded that “inherent diversity” can bring out of the box thinking to solve critical issues

– but about 10 per cent do not. As a percentage that doesn’t seem like a lot, but to imagine there are some 130 students who don’t feel a sense of belonging is heartbreaking. Not only does it mean that they may

not fully benefit from all the learning opportunities that are on offer, it likely also means that they may be unhappy and isolated.

Beyond these concerns, if we are to develop true global citizens, individuals eager and prepared to contribute to the communities and workplaces they will join, then we must ensure they have the skills and desire to work collaboratively in cross-cultural communities. These acquired skills can be learned and must be taught. And accountability for the respectful behaviors necessary must be balanced by the opportunity to engage in restorative practices to earn one’s place back in community.

At ZIS, we are on a journey to ensure that each person feels a deep sense of belonging, and we invite each member of our community to join us. **Z**

Community

• Illustration **Carla McRae**



Forbes 30 Under 30

ZIS celebrates Ria Bhutoria, Class of 2011 (2006-08), for her outstanding achievement as a *Forbes* 30 Under 30 honoree. Through her work as General Partner at Castle Island Ventures, Ria has made significant strides in the finance industry.

According to *Forbes*: “The Kolkata, India native started her career as an equity research analyst covering fintech at Credit Suisse. She later joined stable coin issuer Circle to build the company’s research platform. At 26, Bhutoria became director of research at Fidelity Digital Assets, the \$4.5trn asset manager’s crypto arm. Besides investing with Castle Island, she is backing female and nonbinary founders through the decentralised collective, Komorebi.” Congratulations, Ria!

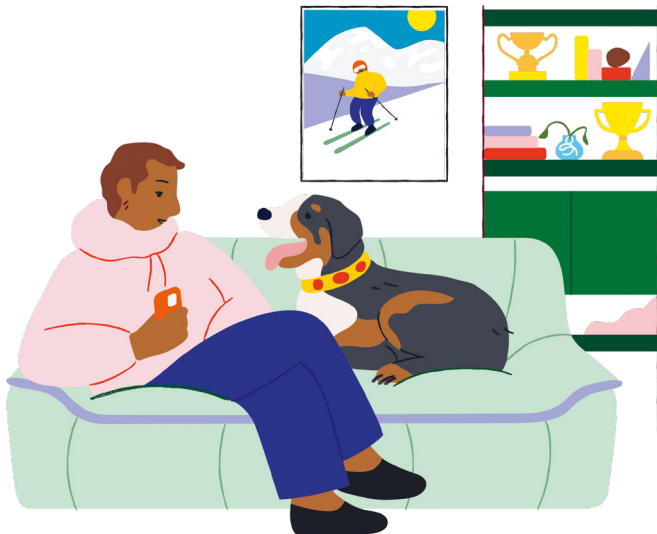


John Mattern Award – Tony Keys honoured

The John Mattern Alumni Award for Faculty Committee offers its congratulations to this year’s honoree, Tony Keys, who taught math at ZIS from 2003 to 2022.

Every year our alumni community is asked to submit a nomination for an alumni faculty or staff member who provided an exceptionally high degree of individual attention to, and concern for, students in all areas of school life. Based on the nominations and the quality of the testimonials, Tony became a popular choice. Alumni have described him as humorous, committed, empathetic and unanimously loved by all of his students.

zis.ch/one-zis-community/alumni/john-mattern-award



ZIS Gazette

• Reunions

Two reunions are being planned for 2024: a 10-year reunion on 13 July, organised by members of the Class of 2014: Sarah Hansen (2006-14), Triston Upton-Smith (2007-14), Stella Nuber (2002-14), Nina Mossbacher (2010-14) and Dvir Shalem (2007-10); and a 20-year event, planned for the Class of 2004 by Pete Morgan (2000-04) on 3 August.

• Small nation, big stage

Congratulations to Sophie Velicer, Class of 2016 (2013-16), who became the first senior athlete to compete for Chinese Taipei in cross-country skiing at the World Ski Championships in Planica, Slovenia.

• Rowing success

Suzanne E. Rapetti-Hunsicker, Class of 1982 (1977-82), took the Swiss Rowing championships in Lucerne by storm in July, when she won gold in the Mixed Masters Double category with her rowing partner, Laurent Grandidier, and earned silver in the Masters Eight.

• In good voice

Christina Keller, Class of 1999 (1997-99), has had a high profile recently, delivering a “career highlight” guest lecture on creativity and innovation at Harvard University, as well as speaking on various topics at the St Gallen Symposium.

• Book launch

Gustavo Bondoni, Class of 1993 (1982-1985), was in the UK recently to launch *Amalgam*, the final book in his Emily Plair trilogy aimed at teenagers.

Got something to say? Tell us your news by emailing alumni@zis.ch



Fowler Stillman 1937-2023

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Fowler Stillman, an exceptional teacher who made a profound impact on our community and touched countless lives.

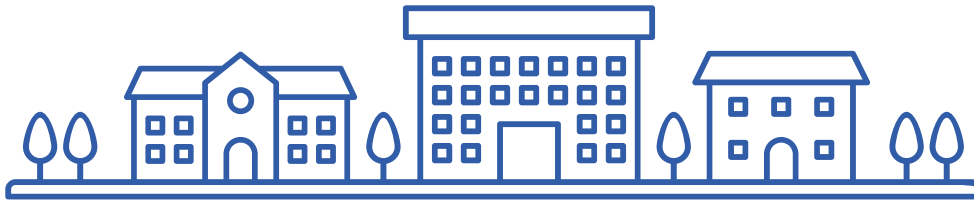
Fowler was recruited by our school's first Director, Dr. John Mattern, to teach Biology and serve as our ski team's coach. Between 1967 and 1989, he also taught additional Science subjects and coached a variety of sports.

Beyond teaching and coaching, Fowler was an exceptional mentor and colleague. It came as no surprise that he was chosen as the first recipient of the John Mattern Award for Faculty and Staff, celebrating his dedication to teaching.

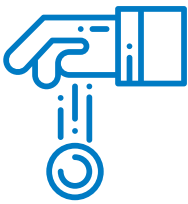
“We have lost an exceptional teacher, one who has had a profound impact on our community and touched countless lives,” says Lisa Lyle, Director. “He will be deeply missed, but his memory will live on through the generations of students who carry his teachings and values forward.”

We offer Fowler's wife, Ellie, and the entire family our most heartfelt condolences and sympathy at this difficult time.





The ZIS Building the Future of Learning campaign raised a massive **CHF 5,123,055**



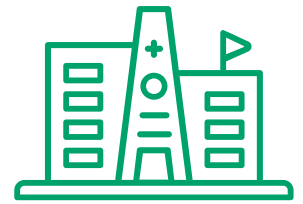
The average donation was
CHF 6,201



544
donors
contributed



4
foundations
donated



26
companies
donated



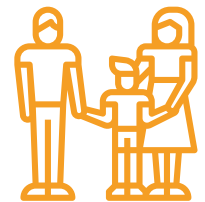
31
alumni
donated



59
past families
donated



67
employee
families
donated

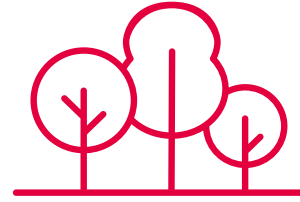


357
current families
donated



9

donors named brand-new state-of-the-art spaces



62

trees around the campus were adopted by donors



185

items were gifted for auction at the Gala



265

people attended the Gala



of the Board of Trustees participated



of the Leadership Team participated

“I love the concept of the new Middle School but, for me, the building itself isn’t the most compelling part of the proposition. It’s about the future it represents: the potential for children”

George Quinn, alumni parent

Thank you

The ZIS Building the Future of Learning campaign raised a massive CHF 5,123,055 towards the development of the new Secondary Campus, and was made possible by the incredible generosity of our whole community. To all our donors: thank you.

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Ludovica Dubini
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and Benjamin Dickow
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Oliver and Svetlana Diener
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Lunoe-Stoustrup Family
Lurye Family
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Malach Family
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Connections: From hardship to friendship

When Tamara Gutermann and Dominique Stelling reconnected after 20 years, it was as if they'd never been apart.

• Words **Jo Caird**

Food and books: two of life's great pleasures - and two threads that run through the friendship of **Tamara Gutermann**, Class of 1989 (AISZ 1986-89), and **Dominique Stelling**, Class of 1989 (AISZ 1984-89). "Tammy always had this fantastic, warm lunch - she'd put a packet of risotto in a Thermos and pour boiling water over it in the morning, and by lunchtime it was piping hot," recalls Dominique. "I'd always jealously peek over to it because I just had cold meat between two slices of bread! And, of course, I started copying her."

The two didn't have many classes together, but English with Miss Freeman was a highlight. It was there that they bonded over a book, *The Women of Brewster Place* by Gloria Naylor, a story of seven black women living in the inner city in the northern United States. "We were so moved by this story," says Dominique. "It touched our hearts so deeply. It just blew us away."

As students at an international school where, says Tamara, the atmosphere was diverse, open and accepting, the relationships between the Brewster Place women spoke to them. "The bond between these different women who went through hardships together but had a deep commitment and bond - that's what we felt in the school."

But the pair also felt a kinship with the prejudices the fictional women faced: both had experienced bullying and racism growing up in Switzerland. "The story was really about strength, courage, perseverance and trauma, and overcoming and finding the strength in the human spirit," says Dominique. "It was a survivor story."

After they left school, Dominique and Tamara went their separate ways: Dominique to the US, while Tamara lived in Israel. But 20 years later, they both found themselves back in Zurich. "I'm walking through a department store and I bump into Tammy at the make-up counter!" remembers Dominique. Tamara's mother watched as the two caught up. "We only spoke for about five minutes and, afterwards, my mom said: 'Twenty years in five minutes - it was a treat to see that.'"

The two started meeting up again and decided to organise a school reunion: ZIS alumni flew in from all over the world. Then they rekindled their love of good food and started a gourmet club with friends and fellow ZIS alumni. Every six weeks or so, a member of their group chose a new restaurant where everyone would eat. "And we still do that," says Dominique. "We still have that bond."

These days, the talk is just as likely to be dominated by new challenges, such as parenting. "But sometimes we just continue a conversation that started at ZIS," says Tamara. "What makes our friendship work is honesty, patience and accepting the other person as they are." Dominique agrees. "There's no pretending with Tammy. I don't need to put on lipstick and say everything is great. And that's something we got from ZIS - we were encouraged to be individuals, to embrace our differences. If you can be your own person, you can value another person for their uniqueness."

How to show that value? Last year, Dominique bought Tamara a special birthday present: a new copy of *The Women of Brewster Place*. **Z**



Tamara Gutermann, Class of 1989 (AISZ 1986-89), and Dominique Stelling, Class of 1989 (AISZ 1984-89).



These days talk is as likely to be dominated by new challenges such as parenting – but sometimes it feels that they are just continuing a conversation from school

24 hours... in Las Vegas



Globetrotting DJ Gil Glaze – also known as Gil Glasenberg, Class of 2012 (2001-12) – shares how to have a ball all day long in the world's greatest party city.



09.00

Breakfast – if you can!

Vegas isn't an early morning city! But the Wynn hotel has a legendary breakfast buffet. Or try Egghead – a cool takeaway specialising in egg dishes.

11.00

A work of art

If art is your thing, check out some of the works displayed around the streets and hotels – but really, the whole city is like an art installation. Or Topgolf is a great Vegas highlight; it's a golf range built in the style of a bowling alley.

13.00

Chill out

It's hot in the desert, so pick a cool spot on the Strip for lunch. I like LAVO, an Italian restaurant with hand-crafted cocktails.

19.00

Foodie heaven

For dinner, Beauty & Essex is speakeasy style – there's a secret door in a shop that takes you to the restaurant. Or Cathedral, a French restaurant, has a very cool, beautiful interior.

22.00

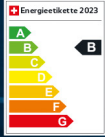
Let your hair down

Party time! My favourite club where I've played is Omnia. Or go for a pool party with a big-name DJ.



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The future of...



Sally Henderson, Group Head Talent and HR Strategy Execution at Zurich Insurance Company, says being true to yourself is vital in a changing world.

• Interview **Lucy Jolin** • Illustration **Helen Green**

change in the workplace

Sally Henderson on how to prepare the next generation for the new world of work

Encourage lifelong learning

Set an example, and always be open to learning new skills, hearing new points of view and taking on new challenges.

Nurture their passions

As a parent, think about how you can support your child's passion and help steer them in the right direction. People have got to like what they do. If it's a passion, people perform.

Don't project your experiences

The world is very different now from when you entered the workplace. Help your children to take stock of where they are and what they want to be – but bear in mind that their path is likely to be very different from yours.

From the standard career path to jobs that don't even exist yet, and from nine-to-five in the office to virtual working – the world of work is changing at an incredibly fast pace. And these days, change within an organisation isn't a single project, or technological leap forward, or event: it's a way of life. It's continuous.

AI is the latest change to impact working lives – this technology will create opportunities and risks! But in 2023, change is a feature, not a bug. And while it might sound like a contradiction in terms, what we have now is 'continuity of change'. It means that employers are seeking people who are comfortable with this new world.

So who are we looking for? Of course, deep technical skills will always be important. And in an increasingly data-rich world, those who have the ability to interpret, analyse and think through a data lens will have an advantage in the job market across the world. Currently, the demand for technology and data science skills outweighs supply, and with technology advancing continuously, this is a candidate-led market. Gen Z and Gen Alpha are digital natives and will be more digital-forward than prior generations, giving them an advantage as they enter the job market.

But non-technical skills will be increasingly valuable, too – being a good collaborator, for example. Companies used to have neat hierarchies like family trees, with roles and responsibilities clearly defined. Now, organisations need to be agile, innovative and less hierarchical to enable innovation and to operate at pace. Teams are often more fluid and designed like a series of overlapping Venn diagrams where people come together with purpose. That means everyone has to work effectively with many different kinds of people. Agility is also critical: having a growth mindset, open to learning and adaptive to change, being curious and taking in new and diverse

These days, change isn't a single project, or technological leap forward, or event: it's a way of life. It's continuous

ideas. Organisations must innovate: they can't stand still while everyone else is moving on. Bringing together diverse ways of thinking will help to drive that innovation.

Nobody knows what's around the corner and

I don't see that changing any time soon! Companies need individuals who are comfortable with ambiguity, and can navigate a clear path to an outcome. This future workplace might sound like a confusing place in which to determine where we each fit. But in HR, we talk a lot about being your authentic self, and there's really something in that. I think it's hugely valuable for those thinking about what they want to do to reflect on who they are, what they are good at, and what areas they need to work on. What are your passions? What do you care about and enjoy doing? What individuality will you bring to a very collective environment? Rest assured: everyone has something to bring to the table. The more we start to understand the value we can bring, the more we will find our place in this complex picture. **Z**



Our tradition



From baking Grittibänz to the arrival of Samichlaus, Swiss traditions lie at the heart of our community – in school and beyond.

• Words **Jo Caird** • Photography **Kate Peters**



ions



His eyes are often wonky, his belly misshaped and his legs bowed. Sometimes his outfit features elaborate detail, and other times it looks as though he may have no outfit at all. But, no matter what shape or size he might come in, nothing gets us in the mood for the holiday season more than the smell of Grittibänz being baked in kitchens across Zurich.

These little bread people, made with sweet dough, have been a traditional part of a Swiss Advent for as long as anyone can remember. At the Lower School, the youngest students mark the tradition by shaping and baking their own Grittibänz using dough prepared by parent volunteers - a festive addition to the weekly baking routine.

And **Ritu Monga**, a Lower School Parents' Association (PA) member between 2014 and 2019, remembers the first year her children got involved in the Grittibänz tradition at school, when her youngest **Arhaan Chadha** (Grade 8) was in Preschool. "The kids ate all the raisins and chocolate chips so we didn't have anything for the eyes," she recalls with a chuckle. Grittibänz are still a favourite afterschool snack for Arhaan and his brother **Ishaan Chadha**, Class of 2026 (2013-21), though Ritu leaves the baking side of things to the professionals these days. "The ones they get from the shops have chocolate inside so they're definitely more exciting," she admits.

But Grittibänz is just one of the ways that Lower School students usher in the winter season. Another longstanding tradition is the Räbelichtli parade where students cheerfully make their way through the woodland next to the Lower School, lit-up turnip lanterns in hand, with the joyful sound of Swiss-German songs cutting through the chill evening air.

Ritu remembers the parade being "very sweet", but she also remembers the event for the tremendous amount of hard work she put into it. Because every year, for the six years she was involved in the Lower School PA, she organised the hollowing out of 600 of those turnip lanterns, ready for the children to carve shapes in them. "That was not an easy task," she says with a laugh. "The smell of those turnips! The parent volunteers and I would get dizzy with the fumes."

Ritu says it was worth it, though, because it helped her boys feel at home in their new environment. "Sometimes it can be hard to integrate into Switzerland and this was such a nice way to do it," says Ritu. "The school is a very welcoming, warm, international community, so it's really special to be connected to the local community through these traditions."

Then there's Swiss Storytelling Night, held - in ZIS style - on the same evening as the parade. Begun in 1990, Storytelling Night sees primary schools and cultural venues across Switzerland hosting storytelling evenings. And at the Lower School they do things a little differently, as Lower School Principal **Catherine Jolly** explains. "We take it a step further! We want to show how we value all the languages spoken by the ZIS community so ours is a multilingual Storytelling Night."

From German to Spanish and from English to Hindi, parents, teachers and students settle down in classrooms after nightfall with pillows and comforters brought from home to listen to all manner of stories. Naturally, cosy fires roar in digital hearths on the interactive whiteboards throughout the school. "It's one of my favourite events because it's just magical," says Catherine. "It's such a lovely thing that the families are just enjoying stories together."

The Lower School was unable to host the joint Storytelling Night and the Räbelichtli parade in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic, so last year was particularly special. Three hundred families took part, "more than we'd ever had before," says Catherine. "It's an event the community has really embraced and wants to be part of."

A little less than a month later, on 6 December, new faces appeared at the Lower School, in the shape of Samichlaus, Switzerland's version of Santa Claus, and his black-clad helper, Schmutzli. As is traditional across



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The school is a very welcoming and warm, international community, so it's really special to be connected to the local community through these traditions

Students Sofia Martinez Justo, Lucie Gatier, Daniel Hyeon-Jun Chan and Beatrice Invernizzi make Grittibänz with their teacher Marigona Buqa



Switzerland, the pair emerge from the woods, bringing treats for those who have behaved well, and reprimands - always gentle and firmly tongue-in-cheek - to those who haven't.

"It was really exciting when they visited," Arhaan remembers. No wonder. As his mum Ritu recalls: "The children were always amazed when Samichlaus knew all their names and what they'd been getting up to!" Ritu confesses that she wasn't quite as amazed: as a member of the Lower School PA team she organised multiple sets of parents and school staff to dress up as the magical pair each year.

The December celebration is particularly special because so many families can relate to a similar tradition in their own culture, as **Carol Rafferty Bouchard**, mother of **Lindsay**, Class of 2013, and **Colin**, Class of 2015 (both 2006-9 and 2011-15) and an active member of the PA, recalls. "The kids enjoyed it and the parents enjoyed it. We probably had a party ourselves afterwards in fact!"

A special - and rather more involved - tradition for Grade 3 students is the Singing Christmas Tree. Every year, primary school children from across the Canton perform Christmas songs on a specially shaped stage on Werdmühleplatz, in the centre of Zurich. The performances take place over a month, and schools take their own slot. Donning green

and red costumes before climbing up to the multi-level stage, students sweetly resemble bright baubles dangling on a tree.

"All the local schools come and we're very much part of that tradition, but because we're an international school, we will always sing songs in both Swiss German and other languages," explains Catherine. "Zurich is a very cosmopolitan city, so it's wonderful to see these students singing in Swahili and Spanish to Swiss German and English. It's really lovely to be part of that."

Carol's children joined the school too late to take part in the Singing Christmas Tree themselves but she remembers the concerts with great fondness. "Christmas time in Zurich is so special - if I was going into the city I would always go by the Singing Christmas Tree. The kids who took part would talk to me about it when I visited the school and they absolutely loved it. Most would have seen it before it was their turn, so to then be part of something that they had seen was neat."

It's a wonderful way to prepare for the holiday season, and traditions like the Singing Christmas Tree, Räbelichtli and Grittibänz baking also provide meaningful opportunities for learning.

"The German team, for example, can do some teaching up to these events to try to give the children the history and what they're rooted in," says Catherine. "We don't want them to just be these events that happen - we want the kids to understand why they're there, and why they're important."

The result of that understanding isn't just educationally well-rounded students who are curious about their surroundings - though that's certainly one of the outcomes of such a strategy. It's also children and families who feel truly part of their local community. "You're away from your own traditions and most of your family," explains Carol. "Some years we didn't go back to the US for Christmas. But you were there, in Zurich, and you were seeing the Grittibänz in the store, the Singing Christmas Tree, Räbelichtli, all of it, and it was a way to have these traditions, even if they were going to be transient. You felt grounded, part of the community that you were in." **Z**

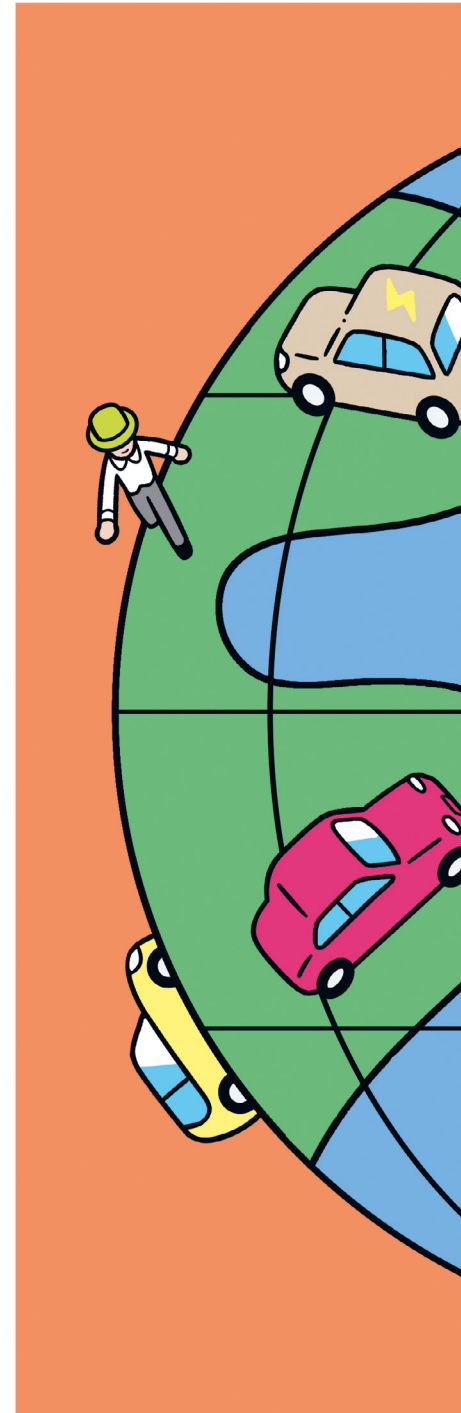
Join us in person or on Facebook Live for Grade 3's Singing Christmas Tree performance on 10 December at 17:30 CET. Watch online at fb.me/e/3qnYoolmU



THE RACE

Members of the ZIS community all over the globe are working – from the boardroom to the ocean to the biochemistry lab – on sustainable solutions to some of our planet’s biggest challenges.

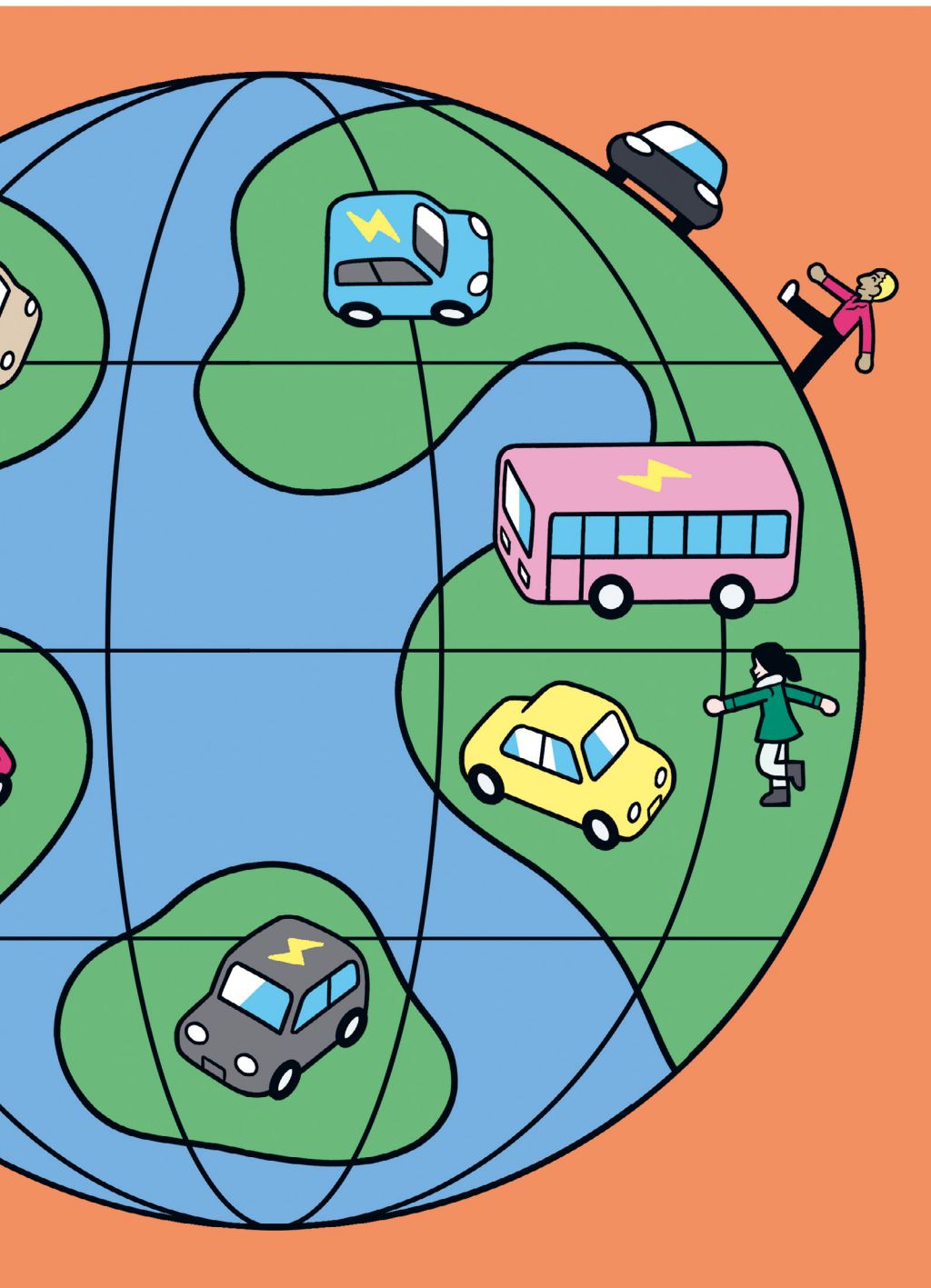
• Words **Lucy Jolin** • Illustration **Studio Takeuma**



TRANSPORT 0

ZIS is challenging its whole community to reduce car journeys by two thirds – introducing a new car-sharing app, increasing the Village Liner bus capacity and encouraging students to explore and champion public transport options.

TO ZERO



We all know the world is in danger, but where to start? How about the ocean? In fact, start with the phytoplankton. Why? Because according to Sophie Zweifel, Class of 2016 (2007-16), these sea-growing unicellular plants are the ultimate carbon dioxide killer. Of course, if you've never heard of phytoplankton, don't worry, you are not alone. "They're not cute like a dolphin, or fluffy like a polar bear, and you can't really relate to a single-celled floating thing, so they pass many people by!" she says.

Although Sophie grew up in landlocked Switzerland, she always loved the ocean. The documentary, *The End of the Line*, which exposes the harm done by overfishing, inspired her to become an ocean chemist. She took her Integrated MChem at the University of Edinburgh and is now Doctoral Candidate in the Environmental Engineering department of ETH Zurich in the Stocker Lab, devoting her research to the potentially game-changing qualities of phytoplankton.

With help from these microscopic organisms, the oceans absorb one third of carbon dioxide emissions in the ocean and produce about a third of our oxygen. As they are the baseline of the food chain, they are essential to the ocean's ecosystem, but they also contribute to the Earth's biogeochemical cycles. "But very little is understood about them," Sophie points out. "For example, at one stage of their life cycle, a major group of phytoplankton grow a calcium carbonate shell, which is very expensive in terms of energy. We don't know why they do that - and it's one of the questions my PhD is asking."

The ocean is constantly changing, says Sophie, both because of climate change and natural processes. “We can hope that biology is adaptable and will be able to adapt to these changes. But ultimately, we don’t really know what’s going to happen. And if we can’t understand the basics, forming models will become very difficult.

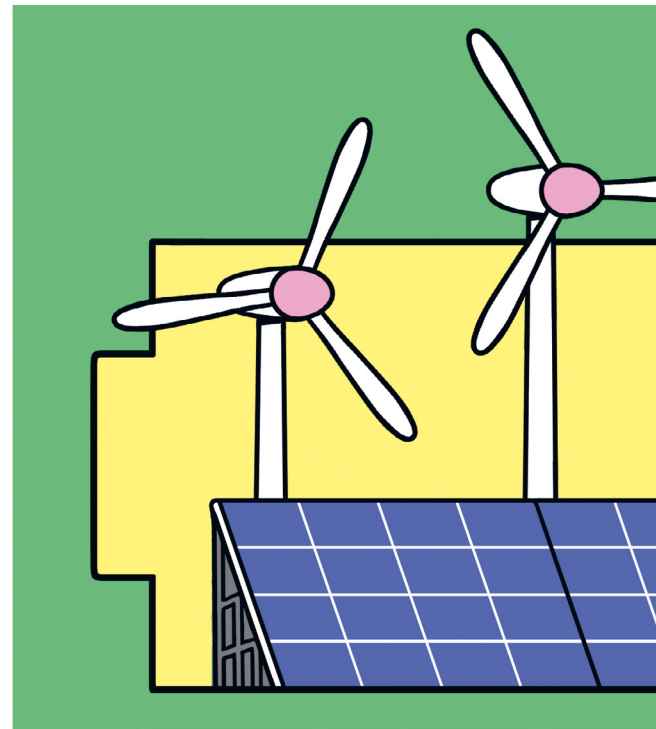
“Large phytoplankton blooms - sometimes so big they can be seen from space - are included in a lot of these big models, because they contribute to the systems. Understanding smaller processes helps us look at the bigger processes and understand those better.”

Also looking to the sea for sustainable inspiration is **Matthew Perkins**, Class of 1997 (1991-97), who spent a decade working in the seed genetics field before founding the sustainable seaweed startup Macro Oceans. Right now, he points out, the world is reliant on petroleum-based products - from clothes and cosmetics to computer components. Industries, too, are heavily dependent on chemicals made from petroleum, and all these products will need to be replaced - soon.

“We are going to see a huge leap in all things bio as a replacement for petrol,” says Matthew. “Bio could be things like terrestrial agricultural crops, bacteria that ferment things, fungi or algae - aquatic life forms which are also aquatic plants, such as seaweed. We were intrigued by seaweed, as it’s existed for thousands of years as a food for humans. The Japanese eat 30 different kinds of seaweed each week.”

FOOD 0

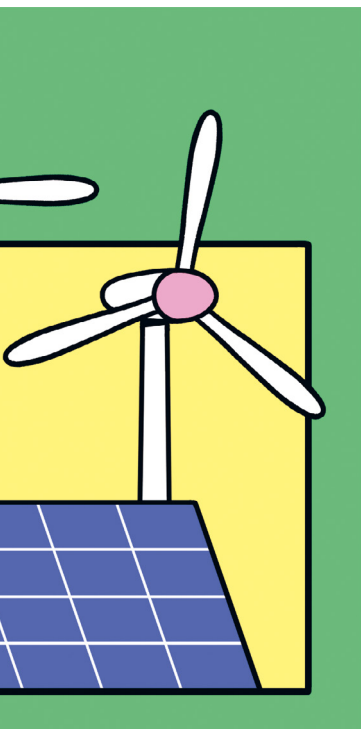
ZIS is committed to ensuring that its food is locally sourced, minimises packaging and reduces waste, while making sure that any waste is disposed of sustainably.



Ten tons of seaweed equates to one ton of carbon removed from the atmosphere

Seaweed, Matthew discovered, is an intriguing crop. Not only does it grow in the ocean without needing additional nutrients, but it also processes excess nutrients, which reduces ocean acidification. It produces oxygen, which benefits marine life and, like phytoplankton, it’s very good at carbon capture - 10 tons of seaweed equates to one ton of carbon removed from the atmosphere. But most excitingly, it’s also a carbohydrate-rich crop, meaning that it’s a perfect substitute for corn, including in the composition of fibres, animal feed and fuel. So Macro Oceans was born. Its purpose: to develop the technologies necessary to process seaweed effectively and at scale, and to create product formats for western industrial markets.

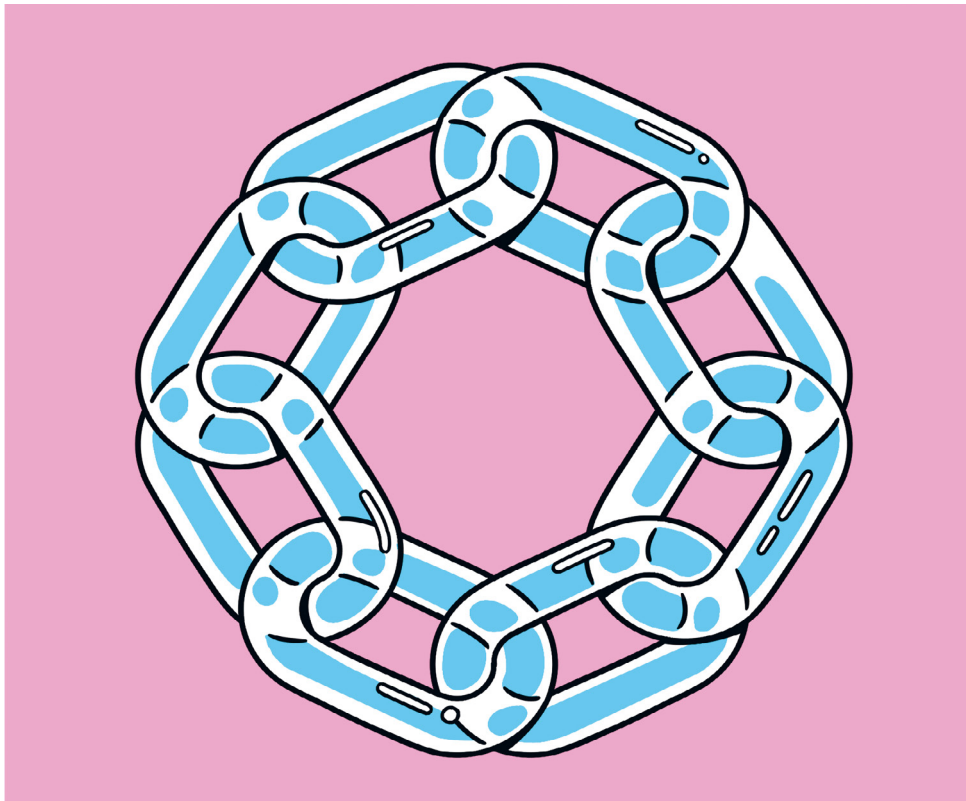
Of course, having the idea is just the beginning. The practical problems involved in kelp farming and processing at scale are immense. “When you harvest seaweed, you have to pull it all out of the water in roughly six to eight weeks,” Matthew points out. “Once it’s out of the water, you can’t just leave it, because it will rot very quickly. So, you can either freeze it, or dry it. Both those things are inefficient, expensive and energy intensive. That’s why we invented a process to store wet seaweed at room temperature for up to 12 months. You must be sure that by trying to solve the original problem, you’re not making an even bigger mess of things.” The company started selling its first product - a cosmetic ingredient for skincare applications - this summer.



Don't wait for the current generation to solve this problem for you. Get out there and make the change you want. You're way more powerful than you imagine

ENERGY 0

ZIS is switching to 100 per cent renewable energy (to be delivered by 2030), introducing a geothermal temperature control system, only buying renewable energy and installing solar panels across both campuses.



SUPPLY CHAIN 0

ZIS is reviewing its relationships with all suppliers to ensure that its sustainable supply is robust, and is working to address environmentally friendly practices with its top 10 providers.

It's proof, of course, that at least half the battle is getting innovation and science into the real world, where consumers and businesses can make use of it. Which is where changemakers and entrepreneurs, such as Pauline Op de Beeck, Class of 2011 (2001-09), come in. She spent six years at The Carbon Trust, which partners with leading businesses, governments and financial institutions to accelerate their route to net zero. This year, she became Environmental Portfolio Lead at the Apparel Impact Institute, an organisation that aims to spur collective action in the fashion industry to select, fund and scale projects to reduce environmental impacts.

Like Sophie, Pauline was inspired by a documentary. She was 13 and a student at ZIS when she watched Al Gore's climate change film *An Inconvenient Truth* - and it sparked a lifelong passion for sustainability. "At 13, I didn't understand how the world works," she remembers. "I thought: how can these businesses just do this? This is terrible. Today, experience has taught me that you cannot simply just change things from one day to the next. If you did so, you would become insolvent immediately."

Nonetheless, the past few years, she says, have seen a shift in how business thinks: leaders and managers are beginning to realise that life will be very different as climate change takes hold. Getting to net zero is no longer about just doing the right thing, or a nice-to-have on the annual report. It's something businesses will have to do - because their way of working is not compatible with a net zero future where, for example, certain raw materials may simply not be available, or supply chains might be permanently disrupted. "We live on a finite planet with finite resources. So obviously moving to a circular economy makes sense because at some point we will run out of resources. It's future proofing businesses or countries against not just climate change, but also resource constraints."

Businesses are also realising that many of the changes they will have to make are, overall, positive changes. "Yes, they are difficult to implement, but they are inherently good things to do and have financial, social and wellbeing benefits," says Pauline. "People can see that there are benefits associated with aligning to net zero. And that's being taken into consideration, along with the financial perspective, which is ultimately what affects change."

Nobody said changing the world was going to be easy but, says Matthew, everyone can bring something to the table. "We're not going to solve the climate crisis with seaweed alone. We need hundreds and thousands of things to change at the same time. Many are going to fail, which is a part of innovation. We must be willing to try a lot of things, and hope that some will be impactful and scalable. So don't wait for the current generation to solve this problem for you. Get out there and make the change you want. You're way more powerful than you imagine." Z

zis.ch/sustainability



TRE PPEN WITZ



Learning a language means opening yourself up to a new way of seeing the world – raising curiosity, not judgment

• Words **Pamela Evans** • Photography **Kate Peters**

“Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things,” wrote the famed 20th-century American journalist Flora Lewis. And it’s something that **Katie Ditchfield**, Class of 2019 (2005-19), took to heart during her time learning German at ZIS. “The practical use of the language really helped to motivate me to learn,” says Katie. “I swam for a local team for many years, and it was crucial for connecting with my teammates, and understanding what the coach wanted from me.”

Katie has just graduated from the University of Warwick with a degree in International Management, during which she opted to take German courses in addition. Having studied on the international track, she achieved higher level German for her IB Diploma, and during her degree had a placement year at KPMG in Cologne, working entirely in German. She has just begun a graduate role within commercial banking in London and hopes to continue using her German, professionally and for fun, in the future.

“At ZIS, all the teachers were so enthusiastic about German, which really helped,” she says. “I started at the school aged four, so I’ve been learning it all my life. Although the bank where I currently work doesn’t have a presence in Germany, the country is a huge hub for banking and business. I’m sure it will always be a useful language in that environment, and overall, speaking German has opened up so many opportunities.”

Talk to any parent considering a move abroad and they’ll tell you that the chance to immerse their children in another language is a major plus point. At ZIS, students at all levels – from complete beginners to fluent speakers – access a rigorous and effective German programme that ensures they can make good – and swift – progress.

“Language is more than just acquiring a new set of vocabulary and grammar structure,” says **Claudia Monnet-Schleuter**, Head of World Languages at the Secondary Campus. “Learning a language means opening yourself to a new way of seeing the world. When we’re able to perceive the world through more than just one lens, it makes us more open minded in our interactions with others – it raises our curiosity rather than our judgment.”

In the Lower School, German teaching begins in Preschool. Making learning German fun is always vital – but particularly for this age group. So games, personal projects and exciting stories are central to everything. Topics grow with the students – from talking about family in Grade 1 to discussing conflicts with friends in Grade 4. And, of course, there is an emphasis on using German in real-life situations.

“Local integration is a key goal for both the school and the German department,” says **Elena Salassa**, German lead. “So we have lots of field trips to places like local farms, or the Technische Hochschule, where we encourage the students to use their German. For example, during one of the field trips, it was great to see Sami in Grade 5 engaging with members of the local community when building an igloo with his friends. And when Mr Salierno, our local police officer, came to do traffic training, it was delightful to see how engaged two little Kindergarten children, **Hanna** and **Elena**, were, and how many questions they asked.

Treppenwitz

A staircase joke

Some words in German have no direct translation in English: here, the term refers to coming up with the perfect response or comeback just too late, after the conversation has ended and you’ve moved on – you are already on the next step.

When we're able to perceive the world through more than just one lens, it makes us more open minded in our interactions with others

"There are also many parents that are new to Switzerland who are learning German alongside their children. This comes in particularly handy for both sides when learning new vocabulary and practising challenging grammar topics. What is more fun for kids than correcting their parents?"

Philip de Wit (Grade 5) arrived at ZIS in September 2020 speaking only Dutch. He had two new languages to learn - English and German - from scratch. Three years into his German tuition, Philip has progressed from speaking no German at all to Level B. "The teachers have all really helped me," he says. He is particularly enjoying being able to use his German in everyday life. "When I go to a sports camp or get groceries or go into town, I can speak German to people. I understand when people or children speak German to me and I feel I could ask for help if I need anything." He's also keen to expand his language range and learn French and Spanish, too.

"As few people speak Dutch outside the Netherlands, the importance of learning foreign languages was always clear to us," says Camilla Perera-de Wit, Philip's mother. "I have great admiration for the progress that children make at this age in learning new languages, which I have seen with my three children over the past three years in both English and German. It enables them to build new friendships and feel connected to their surroundings." Small classes and individual attention have been crucial to Philip's progress, she says. "The teachers are able to focus on the individual. With Philip, vocabulary learning was crucial: he gets a test every week and focusing on that learning curve has helped him get to the next stage. There is also a lot of focus on speaking and interaction, which is very helpful too."

Once they reach Middle and Upper School, ZIS students continue to be taught using a communicative approach, emphasising the interaction of students with each other, the teacher and the wider world. "It is less about grammar drills - though structure and grammar have to have their place in the classroom - and more about application," says Claudia. "We use authentic materials as students progress. For example, at the intermediate level, we switch from adapted easy readers to novels for young adults or children. By then, students have the language competency to deal with those, and the stories are much more engaging to them."

A playful attitude is key, she says, with students encouraged to just get out there and try to communicate. "In speaking activities, it's more about just getting your message across. When we go to a country where we don't speak the language fully, it doesn't matter whether our grammar is correct, as long as the other person gets what we want to say."

Teachers are always looking for new ways to make their classes interesting and stay up to date with the latest thinking. "Teachers see themselves as learners, too," says Claudia. "Just this year, we've adopted a new way of teaching grammar in a visual and kinaesthetic form. And we're always trying to extend our local connections and seeing



Lower School Principal Catherine Jolly says that learning a language in an international school brings extra benefits

"International schools try to value, embrace and build up the importance of all languages. It's not just about getting up to speed in English or German as quickly as possible. It's about who you are - as a child and as a family. And that means valuing the language you speak at home, as well as the languages you learn. In fact, research shows that if a child has a strong home language, learning another one is much easier.

"That's why at ZIS, along with our language teaching, we encourage parents to set up Wednesday afternoon language clubs to enable students to speak in their home languages. We educate parents to ensure that they know the importance of reading and speaking in their home language. And we are also working with Zurich canton to help our pupils access external home language lessons and sessions within school hours. At ZIS, all languages are important - because they are an important part of who you are."

Erbsenzähler

Peas tally

A pedantic person obsessed with precision and fine detail – a pea counter. An equivalent in English might be a 'nitpicker'.

A red tray with a white plate of peas and a yellow bowl of pea soup. The peas are arranged in a grid on the plate. The text 'ERBS ENZÄ HLER' is written in large, bold, red letters on the right side of the tray.

ERBS
ENZÄ
HLER



Learning German enables our students to build new friendships and feel connected to their surroundings

Sprachgefühl Language feeling

The instinctive or intuitive grasp of the natural idiom of a language. If you have *das Sprachgefühl*, then you subconsciously recognise what is grammatically accurate, just as you would with your native language.

how we can use our environment more effectively – Zurich’s libraries, theatres, festivals and cultural events – or creating connections with local schools and clubs.”

And once students start thinking about their future careers, German often becomes key. Emma Parkinson (Grade 12) spoke no German when she joined ZIS in Grade 4, aged nine. She found the ZIS approach to German language learning highly effective. “I really enjoyed the little scenes or skits we had to come up with around themes or topics, or books we’d read. Reading German books was also so useful, and I learned a lot about German culture from them, as well as the language. And, of course, we were encouraged to speak it. For me, that’s the most important part.”

After graduation, Emma hopes to go to university in the UK, and then return to Zurich for a PhD or Master’s. “I want to study biochemistry and lots of pharmaceutical companies are based in Switzerland and Germany, so German is definitely a very useful language for me,” she says. But her biggest German achievement, she believes, was getting her Swiss passport – for which she had to take an exam about Swiss culture and history written entirely in German. “That would have been impossible for me if I hadn’t started learning German from such a young age.”

And whatever career path students choose to follow, the values they learn in their German classes will stay with them throughout their lives, says Claudia. “The open-mindedness, curiosity, risk taking and tolerance which language learning encourages are vital to creating a supportive and inclusive environment at school. But what pleases me so much is that our students then become great ambassadors and take these values out into the world.” **Z**



My passion

Grade 12's Victor Legenne is fascinated by the potential of repurposing materials for new uses.

- Words **Clare Thorp**
- Photography **Kate Peters**

As a passionate football fan - he supports Arsenal and France - Victor Legenne was glued to last year's FIFA Men's World Cup. But it wasn't just the matches he was interested in. One of the Qatar stadiums was particularly unique, created from 974 shipping containers - the first ever temporary World Cup stadium. After the tournament, the stadium was dismantled, and the containers sent to be repurposed in countries in greater need of the materials.

"When I heard that they could build it and then take it down and transport it I thought, that's really impressive," says Victor. "It's a totally new approach to buildings. Normally

when we build something, it's permanent, and then we wait for it to wear or we break it down."

It's about finding new materials that are accessible and not expensive

Examples of sustainable architecture like this are something Victor, Grade 12, is exploring as part of his International Baccalaureate Higher Level Design Technology

course. "I've been thinking about the idea of using containers and repurposing them for low cost to provide homes for people. I'm also exploring the use of better-quality materials, so that builders don't resort to buying poor-quality materials that can impact the environment."

It's perhaps no surprise that Victor has such a passion for design technology - as a child he loved playing with LEGO, Play-Doh and Jenga. And thanks to his parents taking him

to museums and galleries, he has long had an appreciation of buildings. Inspiration is all around, especially as one of his favourite architects, Sir David Chipperfield, designed the extension to Zurich's Kunsthaus gallery.

His school projects - which include an IB internal assessment inspired by the innovations in stadium building and his IB extended essay on how changing the ingredients in concrete might make it more sustainable - allow him to combine several of his passions: football, architecture, sustainability and, importantly, helping others. "Last summer, I went by myself to Tanzania where I did some humanitarian work and helped rebuild a school that was hit by a tornado. It really inspired me to want to help others, especially people that don't have the capacity to help themselves."

Repurposing building materials offers not only the chance to make the construction industry more sustainable, but also to assist with housing and infrastructure in disadvantaged countries. "We produce around 30 billion tonnes of concrete every year," says Victor. "Instead of always producing new materials, why not try and reuse old materials? That's where the idea of containers comes in, because so many of them get discarded when they're no longer suitable for transport."

For Victor, architecture can and should be about more than just beautiful buildings. "That is important, but for me what counts the most is that everyone has the opportunity to stay safe and healthy. It's about finding new materials that are accessible and not expensive to provide homes to the people that don't have the same opportunities." **Z**

Park im Grüene

Popular with children and adults alike, the oasis of green space offers a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle of Zurich life.

- Words **Jo Caird**
- Photography **Genossenschaft Migros Zürich, Thomas Entzeroth/Anja Metzger**



Canton



Regina Lanford has been visiting Park im Grüene since her ZIS days, and now comes with her daughter.

There's a path behind Regina Lanford's house that leads directly to her favourite spot in the area - Park im Grüene. Having lived in this same beautiful part of the world for the last 36 years, she's made the 15-minute uphill hike too many times to count, yet says she still never gets tired of it.

"The path is quite special," says Regina, who taught History between 1987 and 2012. "It's relatively steep and has a very Japanese aesthetic: overarching trees, rocks and, when there's adequate rainfall, there's water which tumbles down. It's a wonderful aerobic workout."

Regina likes to take the path to the park, do a little shopping at the Migros supermarket across the road - "limited to what

I can carry in a backpack" - then have lunch at the restaurant in the park.

"I eat at the very nice salad buffet, looking out over the park, then I'm home within 15 minutes," she says.

Regina's first experience of Park im Grüene was through the school.

The park serves a wide audience. For me, it's the best of what Switzerland can offer: a beautiful free facility for everyone

"We used to have department meetings there sometimes, or occasionally you'd meet with a colleague," she recalls. Meetings took place at either the Migros restaurant or the Duttweiler Institute, named after Gottlieb and Adele Duttweiler, founders of the Migros supermarket chain, whose country estate has been known as the Park im Grüene since they gifted it to the public in 1946.

Originally comprising 4.5 hectares of parkland and meadows, and including the stone house and the straw house, the park has developed over the years, and now regularly hosts popular cultural events.

But it remains a favourite of young families, with its Punch and Judy show, donkey rides, miniature train and playground - a particular favourite of Regina's granddaughter (now aged 18) who she used to take to Park im Grüene during her visits from the United States. "She also enjoyed the wildlife in the pond, trying to collect frogs or snails or whatever it was at the time. Sometimes we would go up with a picnic."

These days, Regina goes to Park im Grüene with friends, or with her daughter when she's visiting. "It's a very good starting point for lovely short hikes in Thalwil and Rüschiikon, and towards Adliswil. If you walk past the park, you enter a lovely wooded area and then a small valley with a farm where you can buy local produce."

Visiting is always an uplifting experience. "It's very animated, seeing the children play and senior citizens meeting and discussing. The park serves a wide audience. For me, it's the best of what Switzerland can offer: a beautiful free facility for everyone." **Z**

My working day

**Pete Morgan, Class of 2004
(2000-04), Composites
Engineering Technology
Instructor at Bellingham
Technical College.**

• Interview **Clare Thorp** • Photography **Brooke Fitts**



It's funny how some things come full circle. When I was at university, I watched some students building skis in the engineering department as part of a project. As an avid skier - an interest that was really cemented during my time at ZIS - I thought it was the coolest thing. So much so that it motivated me to take engineering classes and pursue a degree in Industrial Engineering Technology. Now, more than 15 years later, I teach a similar ski-building class as part of my job at a technical college, getting students excited about building things in the same way that I was.

I've just finished my eighth year of teaching. Before that, I worked for Boeing as a CNC (computer numerical control) programmer, which involves programming robots to do automated tasks. In my role, I used CAD (computer-aided design) software to simulate how robots would lay down carbon fibre on moulds, primarily for the groundbreaking 787 Dreamliner plane. I was proud to be a part of that, but when the opportunity came to teach a new programme geared towards aerospace manufacturing in Bellingham, Washington, the same town in which I went to university, it was an opportunity I couldn't turn down.

Bellingham is a fantastic place, with plenty of outdoor activities. The town has a great cycle network and I bike just about everywhere. We're also lucky to be close to Mount Baker - famous for holding the world record for the most snowfall in a season - so I ski in winter. My love of planes also extends outside of work - about three

years ago I got my pilot licence, so I enjoy taking friends up and marvelling at the views.

And I love the job. I teach two or three classes a day - each one usually starts with a lecture or tutorial and then we go into the lab for some hands-on experience. Students often pick up the step-by-step process quickly, but then run into roadblocks - perhaps a programming problem or a machine itself is having issues. So there's lots of troubleshooting, and I find my ZIS experience incredibly useful. My teachers inspire me as an instructor today; they taught me the value of critical thinking and communication - and the community connections were really valuable.

Things are never boring, and I'm often learning something new from the students, too. One project we do involves building small autonomous cars that drive around the room using ultrasound to gauge how far away they are from things. Another group put a sensor on the car that could tell where the most light is in the room - the idea being that you could put a houseplant on it and it would always seek out the spot with the most light.

I really enjoy seeing students so engaged, but the rewards go even further than that. I recently received a note from a graduate thanking me for the skills I'd taught him. Before starting the programme he was using a food bank regularly, but he now has a good job and is in a position to buy his own house. I wasn't expecting to have that type of impact when I first came into teaching. **Z**

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