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**International High School Graduate Adds International Baccalaureate Diploma Holder To His Resume**  
*Additional honors include Valedictorian and recipient of the Gates Scholarship*

For Johan Beltre, the Summer couldn't have had a better start. Having graduated only a couple of weeks ago, the International High School (IHS) valedictorian has reason to celebrate the fruits of his hard work again. To complement his high school diploma, Beltre has earned the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma as well. This great feat is added to his other recent achievement being a recipient of the Gates Scholarship, provided by The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

IHS is the only IB world school in Passaic County and one of only three schools in the state of NJ with both the IB Diploma and IB Career-Related Programs. The IB Diploma Program (DP) aims to develop students who have excellent breadth and depth of knowledge. It is a rigorous program which some students take part in, but few complete. His participation in the DP required a project in community service, which is part of the reason why he qualified for the scholarship. Volunteering projects that he was part of included making interactive crafts for young children at the Paterson Public Library and working in collaboration with IHS and Eastside HS art teachers to paint the five Little Libraries that were installed in community parks.

The Gates Scholarship (TGS) was awarded to Beltre on April 20, 2023, and he travelled to Orlando, FL in June to receive it. The award is a highly selective, last-dollar scholarship for outstanding, minority, high school seniors from low-income households that is awarded annually. Recipients will receive funding for the balance of what is not already covered by other financial aid and the expected family contribution. Award recipients must belong to a minority ethnicity, and are selected for their academic excellence, typically in the top 10% of their graduating class, leadership, as well as personal successes. Beltre has a GPA of 4.73, which is weighed more due to his enrollment in the IB program.

Beltre came from a small province in the Dominican Republic, called San Jose De Ocoa, only five years ago. When he arrived in the US, he immersed himself in the English Language and worked extremely hard with the help of his teachers to do well in school. In that short period, he challenged himself academically and took part in many extracurricular activities, such as the Robotics Team, Student Government Association, National Honor Society, International Club, and Upward Bound at Montclair University. He was also a part of the National Chinese Honor Society, and served as President of the Chinese Club; the Chinese program at IHS was recently named the "2023 Distinguished K-12 Chinese Program in the United States" by the Chinese Language Teachers Association, USA.

Of his experience at IHS, Beltre said, "Being part of the IB program at International High School allowed me to develop my writing, interview, and critical thinking skills and made me stand out from other applicants."

"I am so proud and happy for Johan," said IHS Principal Dr. Catherine Forfia-Dion. "Johan has worked extremely hard over the last four years at International and is a well-rounded student, who I am certain will make an incredible impact on the world!"

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“I want to congratulate Johan Beltre for his many successes,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Laurie Newell. “His work ethic and commitment to excellence are exemplary. My thanks go out to the faculty and administrators that guided him in his journey. To his parents, thank you for trusting Paterson Public Schools with his talent. I’m looking forward to the coming school year and all of the similar stories of academic, athletic, and personal success from the District’s many students.”

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