

THE KEYSTONE

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THE KEYSTONE MAGAZINE NO.6 2018 SUMMER ISSUE

Chronicles of the
Keystone Learning Journey

Growing With A New School

PUBLICATION OF KEYSTONE MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION

NO.

6



Class of 2018



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Sasha Onyango



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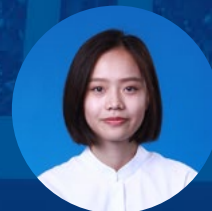
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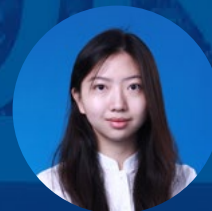
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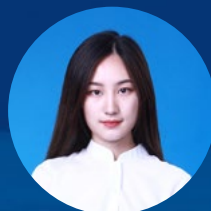
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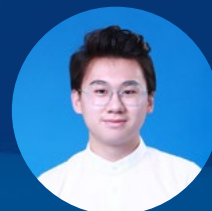
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Growing and Glowing

Keystone Academy is not just a new school. We boldly call ourselves ‘a new world school’. Slogans like this are sometimes empty vessels, making too much noise. They echo, but they do not have substance. But I think that ours is substantial: it is full, and meaningful. In a short time, just four years, we have made it so and shown that we are proudly national, yet robustly global; both local and of the world.

It is this combination that all of us who study and work here have labored to create since we opened. The Class of 2018, our first graduates, have seized on this ideal with the most extraordinary insight and enthusiasm. Read what they say in these pages, and what is written about them, and you will see this in abundance. These 47 young women and men have not only grown with our new world school, but they have also played a leading role in growing it. The relationship has been beautifully and beneficently mutual, and spectacularly successful. As is said of one student in the opening essay here, she is ‘stronger, more courageous, bold, and steadfast’ as a result of her Keystone experiences. I would say the same of every one of the 47.

So, what has it been like to grow with this new school, to help it grow, to build its culture, to make it into a new world school? You will find out in this magazine. When Keystone opened, our highest grade was Grade 9. There were just over 20 students in that grade group. We added slightly more than another 20 the following year, and a handful more when the class reached Grade 11. What I choose to note in this regard is that almost all of these graduating students have effectively been 4 or 3-year seniors. They have been the student leaders of the school for much longer than is usually the case, and in a way that, for obvious structural reasons, cannot be repeated. They have relished this challenge and have grown, and grown up, in truly wonderful ways.

I like to say that fine schools should be measured by what their graduates do, not only for the next four years of their lives but for the rest of their lives. You will sense that promise throughout this magazine, and not only in our recent graduates. But it is they who are the focus for now. I am confident that this first cohort, who have grown with our new school in such delightful and dedicated ways, will always be human beings of substance. They will not be empty vessels, echoing. They will continue to grow, and glow, taking this life and light to communities near and far.

Malcolm McKenzie

By Franne Van der Keilen

Growing with a New School

Chronicles of the Keystone Learning Journey

*Do not go where the path may lead.
Go, instead, where there is no path and leave a trail.*

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Branded “pioneers” since first setting foot on campus, the Class of 2018 has grown alongside and together with this young school. Here, and with great care, our graduates have carved uniquely personal paths for themselves toward blossoming and blooming in preparation for university and the wider world. Here, they have also assumed and shaped a myriad inaugural student roles nurturing within them a strong sense of pride, love and dedication. Here, as Keystone Academy’s first alumni, they have helped pave the way for the juniors trailing them.

At the cusp of their high school graduation, this magazine issue chronicles the learning journey of Keystone’s first senior cohort in the Academy’s history. From matriculation into a brand new boarding school at the time, to navigating the IB Diploma Programme’s many demands, this cover story sketches the principal milestones dotting the educational landscape of the Class of 2018. It also aims to foster appreciation for the character-building component so prevalent within our residential life, and the enriching value of experiential, service and co-curricular learning. Finally, it intends to highlight Keystone’s quest in matching each of our 47 graduates with the institute of higher education that is right for them.

The Class of 2018’s collective spirit and the distinctive characteristics of learning the Keystone way will further emerge through the profiles of our five graduates’ uniquely individual journeys in pursuit of their dreams, professional aspirations and personal happiness.



Expectations of a New School

“Please allow yourself to be led into this community with your minds and your hearts open to wondrous intellectual adventures, to fulfilling emotional growth, and to outcomes beyond your dreams. There is always so much more in each one of us than we think, and we must remain open-spirited in order to realize our dreams. What is important is that you have earned a place in our community through your motivation, hard work, and achievements, and through your clear demonstration that you want to make full use of the varied opportunities offered to you here.”

Such were Head of School Malcolm McKenzie’s opening words at Keystone’s first Matriculation ceremony in 2014 that marked the formal induction of the Class of 2018 into the secondary school as full members of our learning community. This month, after four years of crucial preparation in academics, extra-curricular fields and purposeful community building, we see our first cohort of 47 seniors graduate.

With the absence of established tradition at this new school came the responsibility for creating an institutional culture. “From the outset, our mission statement and five shared values have described the culture that we wished to establish. But a community culture is a living and changing thing, like a tree,” Mr. McKenzie emphasized in his 2014 Dedication Speech, “and with each passing year, we are able to describe more accurately some of the branches that have grown quite naturally from the sapling that we planted.”

Four years later, Keystone’s mission statement – with the Chinese Thread at its center and weaving this community together – has held our graduates to high expectations and gifted them with a shared purpose. “Over four years, the school has grown up together with us, the Class of 2018,” reflected Nancy Li ‘18. “Four years ago, Keystone was as

green as us. We now find that the school has also grown up. Us, seniors, and the school have been in a mutually reinforcing relationship. In a sense, we have participated in shaping the school.”

To keep this momentum vibrant, our seniors have regularly shared with their younger peers their learning and experiences in honest reflection discussions, IBDP Core presentations, visual arts exhibits, debates, tournaments, and performances. “Before I came to Keystone,” recounted Vincy Nie ‘18, “I thought that studying was the most important thing. But after some experience, I began to reflect and rethink the significance of learning. It is not only academic achievements that count, but also personal growth and enrichment, in all its forms.”

For Alice Zhang‘18, the reality of her imminent graduation from Keystone and making way for the younger generations sank in during the recent Keystone campus tour she organized for her younger brother. “I vividly remember being in awe with the buildings during my first campus visit and noticing my grandfather’s book “The Magic Tree House” on a library shelf here,” she reminisced. “My younger brother will now join Keystone next year. Graduation didn’t feel real until I introduced him to Dean of Residential Life Juli James, who suggested he would now replace me at Keystone. It dawned on me that graduation was imminent and my eyes filled with tears.”

Relishing seeing off Keystone’s first graduates, Head of High School Diana Martelly’s hope for our seniors is to pursue personal happiness and success, and assume responsibility to make the world a better place. “We often talk about how this first graduating class has had an opportunity to be leaders at our school for several years. I think this will translate into our graduates being highly engaged in the college communities they will join,” she offered. “At Keystone, we will never have a first graduating class again, so our



challenge will be to continue to graduate classes of strong and engaged leaders. I am confident we will do so because we have the faculty and structures in place. We are definitely up to the task.”

Learning the Keystone Way

Keystone seniors are eligible for both the IB Diploma and the Keystone Diploma. In the Keystone Diploma, we assess our students in academic and other achievements and in their proficiency in our three keystones. For example, as part of the assessment of the second keystone – building character and community throughout our residential setting – our seniors recently shared their interpretation of our shared values, their experience of them in their lives at Keystone, and the influence of these on their personal growth.

For Alice Zhang ‘18, these values – compassion, justice, respect, wisdom, and honesty – have grown to become the thread of daily life and relationships. “I keep these values in mind and reflect upon them daily. What I have learned, for example, is that compassion is not about assuming things or judging people. If I make the effort to understand someone, then I can communicate with

that person and relate with her. I have learned that compassion is linked with everything. The IB Programme, my CAS, and residential life experience here have really helped me understand the importance of compassion and communication.”

For the IB Diploma, our seniors must demonstrate fluency in critical thinking, research and communication through their work on the IB Diploma Programme’s core projects: Extended Essay (EE), Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS). Investigating the Chinese Thread through the rigors of these projects has provided some fascinating products from our Class of 2018. Across a range of subject areas, they have applied their chosen subject’s methodology and research skills to investigate contemporary, cultural, literary and historical topics within the Chinese context.

In her Extended Essay, Nancy Li ‘18 chose to examine traditional Chinese architectural elements and modernist influences in the design of the Suzhou Museum, which she had visited as part of our experiential learning program in Grade 10. Her research question speaks to Nancy’s appreciation of how Keystone students can choose to weave the Chinese Thread with the Diploma Programme

in exploring the cultural riches, beauty and depth of their native country.

For her TOK final essay, Marley An ’18 examined the claim that the quality of knowledge produced by an academic discipline is directly proportional to the duration of the historical development of that discipline. “It sounds difficult but if you look at it closely it is not as difficult as it sounds,” she offered. For her statement analysis, Marley used the disciplines of biology and astrology. She found that in biology, as time goes on, knowledge progresses. As more scientists study biology, later theories may disprove earlier ones and thus time and quality of knowledge are related. “Astrology, by contrast, is this magical thing where they tell you your future in the form of horoscopes, for example. My research shows there is no proof that it is correct and the quality of knowledge does not improve, thus providing a counterclaim of the TOK essay statement,” she concluded.

Reflecting on the skills strengthened by or acquired through the TOK course, which at Keystone uniquely encourages critical thinking about knowledge itself in a bilingual setting, TOK Coordinator Amina Burslem shared that, “The students improved their thinking skills in a number of important ways; primarily, they developed the ability to look at real life situations and asked relevant questions to critically evaluate knowledge claims and explore their veracity and the implications of those claims. They have grown confident in holding conversations with people from different backgrounds, cultures and belief systems on issues in English and Chinese, and can rationally analyze and justify their viewpoints. They have gained the strength of character to either justify or change their views in light of new learning.”

In their CAS project “Rearrangement of an Ancient Chinese Music Piece”, musicians Vincy Nie ’18 and Karen Ma ’18 transformed the ancient Chinese music Lofty Mountains Flowing River into a

modern fusion of this piece by merging western influences and eastern musical elements, structures and composing techniques. With Chinese traditional music gradually being replaced by more modern versions, the duo became interested in reviving this important piece of music. The result is a piece of musical magic with the composers demonstrating engagement with issues of global significance.

After 18 months of preparation for theory of knowledge projects, countless hours poring over extended essays and creative service projects throughout China, our seniors are true examples of what it means to be a Keystone student. Intellectually curious, service oriented, creative and analytical thinkers, the first cohort of graduates is ready to flourish and succeed in the next stages of their lives. “This coming together of the Chinese Thread in the acknowledgment of the systems within the IB Diploma Programme has been a really interesting journey for us. I hope that on their onward journey, our students continue to ask questions, seek knowledge, think critically, and always look for the truth,” concluded Ms. Burslem.

Forging Bonds in and with the World

When our graduates, in their Grade 10 year, ventured into rough terrain and camped near Mount Xiaowutai under challenging environmental circumstances, they forged bonds and brought home lessons and memories that will stay with them for life. “As we faced fierce forces of nature, we felt the maturing of our bonds with each other and a strengthening of our team spirit, something we take for granted in routine campus life,” recounted Evelyn Huang ‘18.

To Evelyn and her peers, these camping trips have been adventures of many firsts. “In Xiaowutai, we reached our finishing line with a deeper understanding of ourselves, and greater maturity in our



own perspectives and behaviors. Looking back at the camping trip, the group and team spirit are priceless memories to be cherished. They can withstand any hardship and only get stronger through our friendship and the embodiment of compassion, integrity and kindness in the heart of every Keystone student. Our commitment to friendship and team spirit will also be the guiding force when we interact with others, the international community, Mother Nature and the universe,” she continued.

Wesley Wu '18 added that, “I appreciated the experience and learning opportunity of that trip. The most important point to me was the change of mindset I experienced. Regardless of what was ahead of me, I had to overcome this obstacle. This unique experience was a major deal to me and I felt that the camping trip had brought all us closer together.”

“Learning to do” is crucial to the educational experience at Keystone and happens in China and around the world as part of Keystone’s Experiential Learning Program.

Beyond China, a number of our seniors traveled to Botswana last summer where they enjoyed opportunities for environmental and conservancy missions, cultural and intercultural learning, service work, and leadership training in a country and a landscape so vastly different from China and most parts of the world.

“It was extra special going with students who had

not been there before, and who had never experienced the amazing variety of human life, as well as the animals, birds, insects, trees, flowers, skies, and stars that we became a small part of for two weeks. For them it was a first time. For me, it was a different first time, seeing these wonders through the eyes of teenagers who were appropriately astonished. They gave me the gift of refreshment and reinvigoration,” recalled Mr. McKenzie.

Our seniors also planned and agreed on the various community service initiatives they wished to engage in as part of their service learning responsibilities, be it volunteering at charities and orphanages or in underserved communities. “I am a founding member of the Service Council and have served as its chairman,” explained Johnson Li '18. “I was responsible for leading the group to provide services throughout the area and it is a pleasure to see it has become a legacy at the school.”

Service learning has offered our seniors a chance to give back to the community and has instilled in them a sense of purpose, responsibility and personal commitment to life-long service. These transformative experiences seek to develop sound habits of the heart by making a difference in the lives of others in China and around the world. “Service Learning,” said Wesley Wu '18, “has helped me become less concerned about myself and more about the surrounding society. It has helped me become more well-rounded and more caring for others, and to be willing to pay it forward for others.”

In April 2015, while some of our 2018 graduates joined a Habitat for Humanity house build project in southern China, others journeyed to Kathmandu in Nepal to volunteer in local communities. “We visited a local school in Kathmandu. The classrooms were rough, humid, dim, and narrow. The desks and chairs were old and unstable. Some of us made friends with the local students, and taught them games and sports. Others painted the wall for the school,” recalled Nancy Li '18. “What most touched me was that at the end of the morning, when I needed to leave for lunch, each of them actively shook hands with me and said “friend”. My feeling at that moment was indescribable.”

Two weeks after returning to Beijing, a devastating earthquake damaged the areas where our students had worked and they asked to return to Nepal to assist with the earthquake relief efforts. In April 2016, they journeyed back to Nepal to help with the rehabilitation efforts in one of the earthquake-torn villages.

Over the course of their time at Keystone and as part of our residential life program, many of our seniors have also been dorm proctors, student leaders who care for their boarding peers, which has further facilitated the forging of bonds, building of character and honing of leadership skills: “When you go to university abroad, you’re far from home,” explained Jacky Liang '18. “If you stay at a boarding school, you have the experience of not being with your parents. They can’t help you, so you need to be the master of your fate. You need to control your time, finances, relationships,

and academics. Boarding school really prepares you to be a college student,” he offered. “Parents send their children to boarding school to build character and prepare for university life. If they over-focus on their child, they will not grow up,” added Ms. Ma, Jacky’s mother.

As for Nancy Li '18, she now feels stronger, more courageous, bold, and steadfast. “Being a boarding student has given me greater gains and enough time and space to think about life and self. I think this is very valuable, and solitude can make you face yourself calmly and think a lot. I have spent a lot of time thinking about things in the past four years,” she reflected. Wesley Wu '18 added: “I think that students have the opportunity to forge strong bonds at Keystone. Before the exams, everyone was in the library and helped each other to ask questions, from morning to evening. Community implies the sharing of resources”.

New Beginnings

“What our graduates do in college, and how they lead their lives after college, is more important than where they go to college. That said, we do want our students to go to colleges that are right for each individual’s interests, needs, and personality. Finding this fit requires patience, expertise, and in many cases, education about the vast number of inspiring institutions that are not big brand names,” noted Mr. McKenzie in a weekly address to the community.

Keystone's college counseling program's ultimate goal has been to provide individualistic and holistic approaches to guiding our seniors in the highly competitive college application process. For this, the counselors have maximized on school and after-hours boarding time to get to know the students better and in different ways.

"The opportunity to interact with students outside of the academic context allows for deeper connections and observing the students in a variety of situations requiring exposure of different talent sets and character traits," explained College Counseling Director Ms. Yan. As such, the counselors have attended theater productions and participated in dining hall discussions in addition to accompanying our seniors on college visits and introducing them to admissions representatives.

This wide array of support services allowed for developing strong bonds with our Class of 2018 and counseling them towards finding suitable fits with higher education institutions through research and reflection, and helping our students plan their careers and lives. "Since primary school, my goal has been to enroll into a prestigious liberal arts college in the U.S. and I have worked toward that target for many years. Last August, after I consolidated my college options, and was almost ready to apply, I had a sudden change of heart due to a series of events and conversations," explained Jacky Liang '18.

"I'm very grateful for the assistance and guidance that my college counselor gave me throughout the entire process. Since our first meeting, Ms. Yan has been an advocate for colleges that really suit me, and she has respected my decisions every step of the way. I think she and I together found the right balance, or like a middle ground, between me making all the decisions and being overly confident about myself, and her steering my college choices, and hence, the life of any young adult for

the next four years," reflected Jacky Liang '18.

Autumn 2017 marked the dawn of a new journey for Keystone and the Class of 2018 as nearly 20 of the 47 seniors sent off applications to colleges and universities through the early admissions cycle. The remaining members of the class opted to apply through the regular admissions cycle. By mid-December, the early admissions cycle applicants combined had received more than 25 offers from institutions in the U.S., Canada, Australia, the U.K. and Switzerland, providing a wealth of options to our seniors to help them achieve their dreams.

This list of acceptances expanded, including 12 offers of generous financial packages in spring 2018, when all of our students were rewarded for their academic and personal achievements and learned of further acceptances into institutions around the world. "They certainly have grown in every way during their time at Keystone and I've been impressed with the way the class as a whole grasped their role as leaders and pioneers from Grade 9 on. They will always be a special group in the school's history," offered College Counseling Consultant Martha Lyman.

Keystone's college counseling has helped our Class of 2018 to advocate for themselves, discover their passions and push their dreams. "If I want to know what I am supposed to be in the future, I have to try my dreams one by one," shared Andy Li '18. "Every single one, no matter how crazy, could provide me something new. Dreams are achieved not by thinking but through practice. Practice cannot guarantee that my dreams will come true, but it brings me a step closer. I will probably also realize some of those dreams are not things I enjoy, but I won't know until I try them. I still don't know what my future path will be, but for now I am only focused on the process. If I think big and also do big, I'm sure I will find my path one day. 🍷"





Dreams

By Langston Hughes

Hold fast to dreams
For if dreams die
Life is a broken-winged bird
That cannot fly.
Hold fast to dreams
For when dreams go
Life is a barren field
Frozen with snow.



With a zest for all things cultural, Evelyn will dedicate her time to the study of Anthropology at Wesleyan University, where she gained early acceptance.

Evelyn Huang

Budding Anthropologist

Cultural Infusion

Once a Grand Palace Museum intern, Evelyn exudes a zest for all things cultural, native and foreign. Marked by a sense of belonging based in the memories of a childhood spent exploring and learning about China, Evelyn’s cultural background has colored her identity in myriad ways. “In primary school, my father took me to explore China. A terrific storyteller, he especially liked reading to me about the Xia, Shang and Zhou dynasties, enriching my knowledge about Chinese history and understanding of our cultural traditions. My father would bring these stories to life by relying on his vivid imagination.”

Born, raised and educated in China, Evelyn’s parents have passed on to Evelyn their deep affinity for their Chinese roots, culture and heritage. Often, they would explore their hometown, visit museums and discuss the past, including the guqin’s 5000 year history and how this ancient seven-stringed zither is making a comeback. While her peers enrolled in piano and violin lessons, Evelyn cultivated a desire to study the guqin. As a result, her father engaged private guqin tutors for Evelyn, including a Central Music Conservatory

graduate student who taught her for three years.

“These three years were very crucial in helping me lay the foundation for my guqin playing. Mastering the guqin plucking is a complex endeavor and I am proud that I persevered. Occasionally, I play a song or just listen to the guqin to escape from reality and live the history of the song within its magnificent universe,”she offered.

Chinese Thread Embodiment

When Evelyn gained an interest to study abroad at the start of junior high school, she considered joining Keystone for its blended education model, weaving the Chinese, American and international learning traditions. “My perspectives started to change and my mother had also advised me to learn another way and not to worry only about home. I was prepared to get a taste of traditions different from my own as long as I would be able to continue to nurture my interest in Chinese culture. Without it, my life would be less,” she shared.

Drawn to the wealth of opportunities Keystone offers for cultural exploration, experiential

learning, literature, art, and language within the Chinese context motivated Evelyn's decision to enroll here. "Keystone offered a program in line with my educational interests and aspirations," she confirmed.

In her first year, Evelyn benefitted from her teachers' encouragement and her peers' support with easing into the Keystone way of life at her home away from home. "Integrating and adjusting to this new school, curriculum, faculty, student peers and way of learning took me some time," she shared, "I had to familiarize myself with voicing my ideas and opinions in front of the classroom, which took effort."

With a soaring requirement for presentations and increasing opportunities for public speaking, Evelyn grew more comfortable as the year progressed. "It was painful at times, but in retrospect, even those times of adjustment now feel very rewarding. Sometimes, you need that extra push to carry on and stretch beyond your limits. Without those experiences, I could not have reached further."

In due course, Evelyn also gained fluency in considering a blend of world perspectives and cultural angles and in regarding matters as objectively as possible. She learned how to write thesis statements in Chinese and English and studied literary works in both languages and from various eras. In addition, Evelyn assumed the role of dorm proctor, a leadership position in boarding life created to help plan and facilitate a pleasant and safe experience for all boarding students.

"If you take me now compared with three or four years ago, I simply cannot recognize myself. My lifestyle and my perspectives have changed and I am now able to experience culture through a different lens. It is not just about what these learning opportunities have taught me, but also how they have helped me open my eyes towards perceiving

and sharing culture. When I visit a museum abroad, for example, I now try to connect what I experience there with my own culture. It gives me the feeling that the world is complex and beautiful at the same time."

Anthropologist in Spe

Evelyn's binding interest has been the research of minority groups' crafts in southern China. As part of her Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) project, she spent her recent school breaks in the remote mountain villages of Guizhou to learn about and document the true essence of the traditional crafts of fabric dyeing and delicate embroidery by local ethnic groups. She also probed more deeply into how different ethnic groups value their skills and the history such a craftsmanship carries.

For this, she interviewed the craftswomen, volunteered in the training program for embroiders, and recorded the stories and scenes she witnessed during her journey. "The Miao, for example, are an ethnic group that embroiders and records on their clothes their story and history through time," explained Evelyn. "The threaded patterns of their embroidery convey their history and beliefs endowing hopes and wishes of life into the longitudes and latitudes of threads; women are empowered, materially and mentally, by these skills."

Over time, her learning morphed into awareness building around these dying crafts. Invigorated by her new experiences and findings, she produced a documentary, which together with her fellow student Alice, she presented in front of captive audiences at school and around Beijing. Last autumn, they also organized pop-up exhibits to share their learning and invite appreciation for this art in an effort to revive it and ensure its continuation.



Wesleyan University

Among the Keystone students who applied to colleges and universities through the early-decision admission cycle, Evelyn was the recipient of an early acceptance letter to Wesleyan University. "I chose to attend Wesleyan University because of the freedom and space it offers students to explore. I am very interested in cultural studies and film, and Wesleyan offers this combination. For me, this is the perfect choice for now as I define clear life goals for myself."

Wesleyan University is a private liberal arts college in Middletown, Connecticut, founded in 1831. Evelyn plans to dedicate her time there to the study of anthropology, a perfect fit, if you ask

her DP Chinese Literature Teacher, Hongwei Gao: "She is the person who likes to embrace all cultures, in addition to hers, exactly because of her understanding of and passion for her own culture and her strong identity. She is humble and open-minded towards all cultures and she gets the spirit of other cultures, while also reflecting on and being deep-rooted in her own culture."

Like Wesleyan, Ms. Gao believes Keystone has been a perfect fit for Evelyn: "The seed had already been planted before Evelyn joined our school and it grew and blossomed at Keystone. We are lucky to have her as a student and Evelyn is lucky to have found such a good match for her learning needs. We are a good fit for each other." ■



Humble, ambitious and considerate, Phoebe leads with compassion in pursuit of her academic and service learning interests. She will attend Middlebury College, where she gained early acceptance.

Phoebe Sun

Service Learning Epitome

The Power of Service Learning

When Grade 12 student Phoebe Sun and her parents were searching for innovative, new schools in Beijing three years ago, they commissioned the help of close friends and family who'd lived in Beijing and were familiar with the local area. Although Phoebe was not born in Beijing, she'd spent most of her young adult life near Beijing, in Shaanxi. Hesitant to send their daughter to an international school in Shanghai, the family was introduced to Keystone through a close friend who had also enrolled her son in the new school.

“We were very hesitant because Keystone was such a new school, and we really questioned whether it was worth it to take such a big risk. But after learning about the school and visiting, we really agreed that the Chinese Thread Curriculum, and combining the eastern and western styles of education, the experience of teachers, and the opportunities for service were very attractive to me and would expand my world view in preparation for college,” said Phoebe.

Since joining Keystone as a Grade 10 student,

Phoebe's passion for getting involved in the community has been evident from the very beginning. It is not uncommon for conversations with this service oriented leader to revolve around themes such as global inequality for women, community service activities for disadvantaged youth in Beijing, or even ways for students to get involved with service learning activities here at Keystone.

“There are so many opportunities at Keystone for students to get involved. For me, I felt I should take advantage of these opportunities, and step up to be a leader. When I was a student in public school in China, I did not have much time to invest in service or leadership positions and I really saw this as a chance to learn more about myself and invest in new and different activities. The student council and dorm council, for example, were the two best ways that I saw myself being involved here at Keystone,” remarked Phoebe. “I really feel I have made a difference in these positions at Keystone. I have grown a lot and have learned to cooperate with others, made my ideas come to life, and have learned so much from my peers on this leadership journey.”



Avenues of Opportunities at Keystone

An open minded and ambitious student, Phoebe’s leadership roles have always centered around leading by example. Phoebe has been a dorm proctor since her first year at Keystone, a self-selected student dorm council position. Phoebe has continuously dedicated her time to creating activities for peers and younger boarders, and fostering community amongst her classmates for their “home away from home”.

“The residential life component of the Keystone experience was another factor that convinced us to join this school,” stated Phoebe. “My mother knew that this would prepare me for the residential life aspect at college, so it has been great preparation for me in that way. However, I also knew that I wanted to join the residential life council at Keystone when I joined, because I can connect with my peers and teachers in a deeper, meaningful way.”

Now, as Head Dorm Proctor in her senior year, her

leadership skills have taken on a new role in which she trains dorm proctors in an effort to strengthen Keystone’s residential culture. From organizing Halloween parties in the residential halls to anonymously participating in Secret Santa traditions at the end of each winter semester with her Grade 12 peers, her commitment to serving her community has not gone unacknowledged.

Another activity that Phoebe is heavily involved with at Keystone is the Service Council. Service learning at Keystone plays a significant role in reinforcing Keystone’s shared values, and provides opportunities for students to get involved within and outside of the community.

Working closely alongside Phoebe in Keystone’s Service Council, Juli James, Dean of Residential Life and Global Service Initiatives, describes Phoebe as “a true student leader who has shown a willingness to be helpful in hundreds of activities from color runs to Christmas parties and puts in 120% effort in all of her leadership roles.”

Global Citizenship and Looking Towards the Future

Not only has Phoebe harnessed leadership roles at Keystone, but she has also expanded her leadership prowess beyond the borders of China. Experiential Learning Programs, a critical component in Keystone’s curriculum, have afforded Phoebe the opportunity to participate in a service learning trip to Botswana with Head of School Malcolm McKenzie and primary teacher Kat Kiddell, as well as a Math, Science and Humanities camp in Russia. By her own volition, Phoebe’s investment in experiential learning and service learning trips has led to deep personal growth and has aided with informing her decisions for life after Keystone.

A student unafraid to embrace challenges, Phoebe has not allowed her academic and extracurricular merits to intimidate her fellow Grade 12 peers. During the complex US college and university admissions process during autumn 2017, Phoebe’s academic accomplishments shined as she gained

early acceptance to a top ranked liberal arts school in the United States, Middlebury College. Despite learning of her early admissions in December, Phoebe chose to not disclose her results to fellow classmates for fear of adding external academic pressure onto them.

Humble, ambitious and considerate, Phoebe is a student leader who leads by compassion as she pursues her interests within academia and through various service learning activities. When asked about the opportunities for self-growth at Keystone, Phoebe’s response is simply: “When we are at home we have access to information and resources from all over the world because we have the internet now. If you ask any one of the other students who also participated in those trips, it broadened our horizons. By participating in those global trips, I did not limit myself as a global citizen in only a Chinese way. I learned about new, different ways of life that really inspired me to become a truly global citizen. I am a risk taker and I represent who I am to my local community and to the world through service.”





A student with an appetite for learning, Sasha's interest fields are wide-ranging. She anticipates further exploring her interests at Bard College.

Sasha Onyango

Citizen of the World

At Home in the World

Her mind now a memory bank filled with cultural currency from around the globe, Sasha has grown to define her unique self between the interstices of culture. Having lived and studied internationally since the age of eight, little by little she has become a part of this growing mosaic of people that feel at home in the wider world.

“My exposure to the world began the day my father sat us down in our living room and told my siblings and I that we were moving to Singapore. Leaving the one place I knew as home was challenging to grasp. Idealistic and unaware of what my future held, I was not only leaving behind family and friends, but also Kenya—my home, my identity,” recalled Sasha.

With its transient nature, Singapore “shuffled people in and out of” Sasha’s life, not often allowing her long-lasting connection with others. Whether they were escaping from war or seeking

a better education for their children, Sasha identified a commonality in all personal stories: “We were all foreigners to this country who had – in varying degrees – wrestled with the questions “Where is home now?” and “Where do I “fit in?”” she said.

Her sense of longing for home and a place to call hers made way for a newfound appreciation for the diversity surrounding her. “The rich cultures around me gave me a perceptive view of the melting pot I was living in,” she said. Gradually, life in the wider world started to feel more natural to Sasha as she expanded the walls of her heart to include new traditions, cultures, people, and languages, forging in her the respect and acceptance that our world needs more of.

“I shifted from viewing myself as ‘other’ to being part of the motion around me and realized that home did not have to be a point on a map but can be a fluid location independent of a plot of land. Ten years later, I realize that stasis is not what I long for,” Sasha revealed.

Preparing for the World

Two years ago, when her father sat her down again to announce the family’s plan to move to Beijing, “fear did not flood my veins,” she recounted. Sasha saw the move as an opportunity to expand her horizon. “I had learned much from Singapore, but my exploration did not end there. In China, more stories waited to be uncovered.”

A student with an appetite for learning, Sasha’s interests are wide ranging from science, math and humanities to theater arts, volleyball and service learning. Since joining Keystone as a junior in 2016, she has enjoyed the rich opportunities for growth offered through Keystone’s signature curriculum spanning international, Chinese and American traditions. “I think that this excitement and eagerness to participate in and work around units and with people both like-minded and of different views is something that carries well into the wider world,” she reflected.

Sasha credits her steep personal growth at Keystone to her active involvement in curriculum, extra-curricular and residential activities both inside and beyond the school gates. “Grades 11 and 12 have taught me a lot about myself and managing myself. These self-awareness and management skills are especially important when living alone in a foreign country or away from home,” she offered. “Being here also has cultivated a spirit of leadership in me.”

Particularly the opportunities for leadership and student participation in addressing global issues stand out to her as key preparations for life come graduation this May. “As an African that comes from a country that actually has endangered elephants and rhinos, it’s especially interesting to see Keystone’s efforts to tackle such an issue,” said Sasha, referring to Keystone’s yearly Global March for Rhinos and Elephants. “As China is the largest market for ivory and rhino horns, I think it’s

immensely important that Keystone is vocal on this issue. Getting to be a part of that, as a Kenyan, shows me that there are individuals, even small children who are rising up and taking action, which is more than can be said for most adults or people in power.”

Joining the Girl’s LEAD (Leadership, Empowerment and Diversity) Club as part of her IB DP CAS project and actively engaging with women’s issues have also helped her find her voice. Student activism was not encouraged in her previous school, but coming here and meeting people who are also passionate about creating meaningful dialogue surrounding gender parity, for example, has sparked her interest to speak up about certain issues close to her heart. “Since Girl’s LEAD is about equal rights and leadership, I have gotten to work alongside other wonderful women and girl leaders in planning for events celebrating International Women’s Day and the annual Women’s March,” she explained.

“An aspect of school life worth mentioning about Sasha is her commitment to clubs and service. As the sponsor for our Girls LEAD Club on campus, I have direct insight into Sasha’s leadership ability and commitment. She has been a co-leader of this group for two years, helping organize flash mobs, rallies, fundraisers, and salons. Most recently, she helped raise awareness around the international event, 16 Days of Activism, which focuses on ending gender-based violence around the world. Additionally, she has helped me organize our very own Woman’s March for the second year in a row, the only one registered here in China,” added English Teacher Angie Bergeson.

Sasha also highlights her unique theater experience as a hallmark opportunity for leadership development at Keystone, having held the combined roles of director, performer, creator, and designer in one play. “Co-directing *Waiting For Philip Glass* by Wendy Wasserstein was an immense



learning opportunity,” recalled Sasha, “because so much time went into it, and the entire process was a lesson in control. I remember reaching a point where I could not keep on projecting my desires onto the cast risking to lose the essence of the play. So, I had to take a step back and give the freedom required to create their characters and guide their interactions, I just couldn’t micromanage every aspect.”

“Sasha has created and starred in several school productions while successfully balancing her demanding IB coursework. I have no doubt that she will contribute to a high academic and social atmosphere as she continues on her educational and developmental journey,” shared Ms. Bergeson.

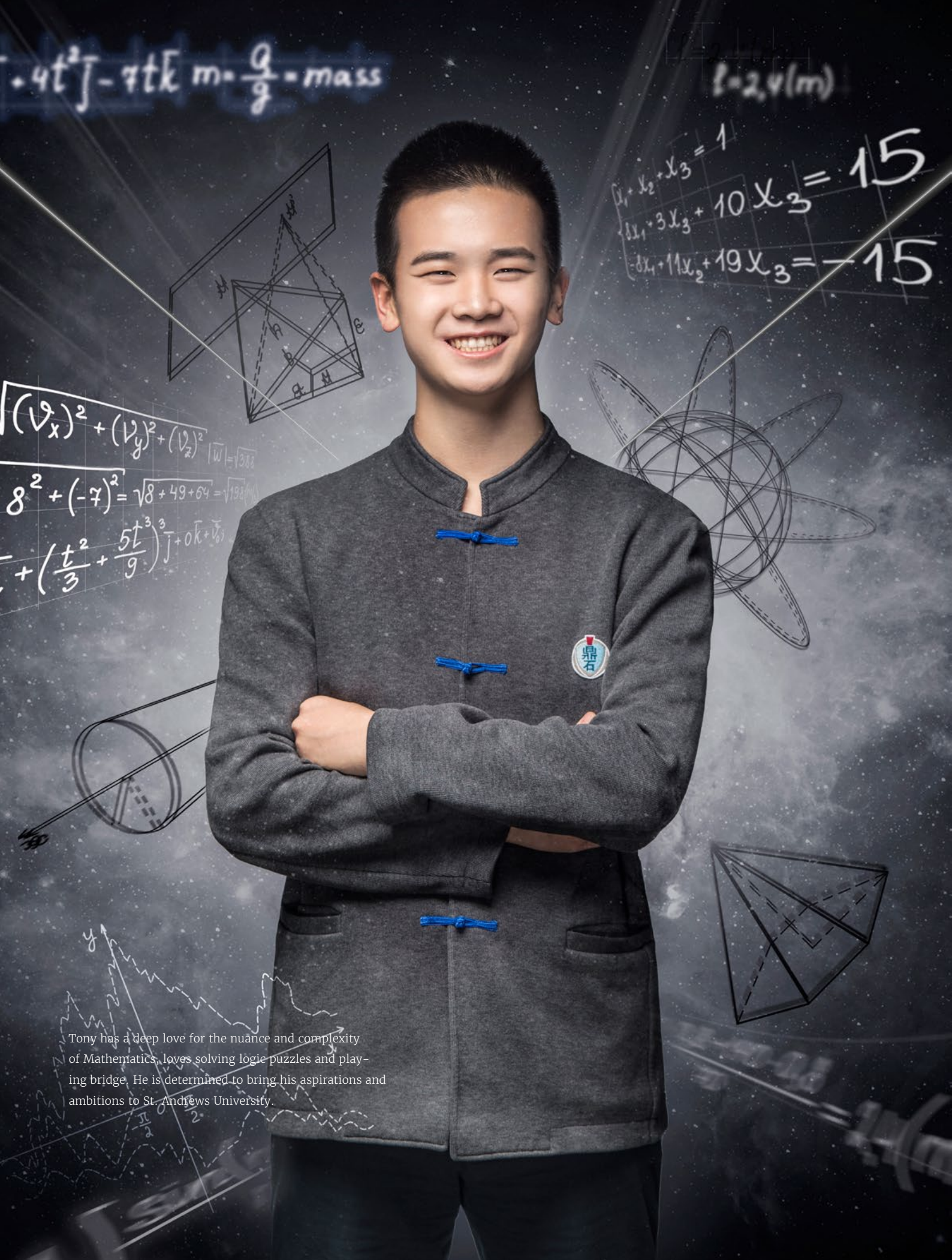
World Student

Keystone’s college counseling program has helped Sasha understand the type of college she would thrive in most. “I joined Keystone thinking I wanted to go to a large college with thousands of students. But after my time here, I realize I learn best in more individualized environments,” she offered. “My counselor has helped me realize that

my broad range of interests would fit nicely with a liberal arts curriculum and she has encouraged me to consider a wide range of universities.”

Sasha will attend Bard College. Founded in 1860 and located in Annandale, New York, Bard is an independent four-year college of the liberal arts and sciences. It is Sasha’s hope that Bard College will offer her a time to explore her interests. “I have placed my major as undeclared, not because I am indecisive, but because I know that I will change my opinion about my interest fields once I start university. I want to use my first year as a chance to explore,” she shared.

Reflecting on her career and personal aspirations, Sasha feels inspired by fellow Kenyans who leave their country to study and explore greater opportunities but also return to help their communities. “I see many problems with my country, but I also see the capacity for change. Kenyans are a resilient people and I think we can turn our adversities around into something that builds us up rather than defines us,” she explained. “Leaning on my experiences from living outside of Kenya, I want to uplift my community and ‘pay it forward’ so to speak.” ■



Tony has a deep love for the nuance and complexity of Mathematics, loves solving logic puzzles and playing bridge. He is determined to bring his aspirations and ambitions to St. Andrews University.

Tony Wang

Mathematics Enthusiast

Journey to Keystone

When Tony Wang and his parents first made the transition to Keystone several years ago, their enthusiasm for the newly established international school in Beijing was just the opportunity they were seeking in order to prepare Tony for an education that would expand his horizons. As an innovative and new world school, Tony and his parents were thoroughly impressed by Keystone's academic model and curriculum offerings. Differing from that of most local public schools in Beijing, Tony's parents considered that Keystone's residential life culture and International Baccalaureate program would enhance his learning journey and prepare Tony for life beyond high school.

"Initially, coming from several public schools in Beijing, I did not know much about international schools in China. There is a reputation that international schools are only for more privileged kids, so at first I really questioned if I would fit in this type of environment. But one thing that persuaded me to come to Keystone was the Chinese Thread. I have a strong interest in Chinese history and culture and I really wanted to explore those subjects

in more depth," shared Tony.

Over the course of the last three years, the richness of Keystone's signature Chinese Thread curriculum has provided him with a wealth of knowledge and opportunity in his native homeland, and has inspired him to delve into other interests that he has. Through Keystone's residential program, Tony has immersed himself in a living and learning community that has taught him how international minded his Keystone peers truly are and has expanded his own perceptions of Chinese history and art, joined KAP (Keystone Activities Program) events, and has participated in a variety of mathematics competitions such as the NEAMC (North East Asian Mathematics Competition) and the ISMTL (International School Math Teacher League).

One of Tony's passions is his deep love for the nuance and complexity of mathematics. "I have always been interested in math, and admittedly I was a bit worried about the math department at international schools. However, at Keystone the math department is very strong. And through the boarding life experience, I have even received the opportunity to recruit students for math

competitions and have made solid friendships through that initiative. Looking back, this has been one of the best decisions that I have made, by choosing to attend this school that I know will help prepare me for my future.”

Bridging Leadership Models at Keystone

One of Tony’s interests outside of pure mathematics and logic puzzles is playing bridge. Tony started a Bridge Club in order to introduce this to fellow students. Keystone’s IB Diploma Programme requires that secondary school students choose three subjects to take at the standard level and the higher level at the end of the academic year during official examinations. For Tony, the choice was clear. As a student taking the higher-level mathematics IB exam, he has been inspired by his courses to explore his academic interests and share his passion for bridge with his classmates.

Tony enjoys participating in a number of mathematics competitions, and prior to joining Keystone he participated in mathematics competitions across Beijing. “In grade 7, I began playing bridge and became a bit addicted to the game. I would play every day for half an hour. However, the game is not only about problem solving, but it is also about the fact that math is a team setting game. When I joined Keystone, I recruited members to join my club, the Bridge club, and now I have my teammates with me when we play in competitions,” stated Tony.

Marrying his interest in mathematics with Bridge, Tony has founded a community of likeminded math enthusiasts at Keystone, which has in turn enriched his living and learning experience at the school. He has become a student leader to his peers for this initiative, which stems from the joy

and interest he derives from one of his life’s greatest passions: mathematics.

The Journey to Scotland

In preparation for his next venture beyond Keystone, Tony worked closely with Keystone’s Directors of College Counseling, Amanda Yan and Percy Jiang, to research schools that would be the best fit for Tony and his academic and personal aspirations.

“When we were searching for international schools in Beijing, my parents and I were looking for a school that would prepare me for life outside of China, so that I can be exposed to other cultures and gain new experiences. Keystone is a world school, which made it a very attractive option for us,” Tony stated.

During autumn 2017, Tony alongside several Grade 12 Keystone students applied to competitive colleges and universities throughout the world through the very complex early admissions cycles. Tony was one such student, whose aspirations and ambition surpass the boundaries of even his imagination. Putting forth the concentration and dedication that he applies to his academic studies, Tony was elated when he received offers from prestigious colleges and universities in the United Kingdom such as King’s College London and the University of Bath.

Ultimately, this mathematics enthusiast and student leader will take his talents to the acclaimed St. Andrews University in Scotland. “Keystone prepares students well for higher education. The decision to attend a school like Keystone gives me great pride and I am ready to attend university now thanks to this environment, curriculum, and opportunity,” confirmed Tony.■



Ashley Fang

A Maven of All Trades

Harvesting Intellectual Curiosity at Keystone

As a member of Keystone’s first inaugural graduating class, Ashley Fang began her tenure at Keystone three years ago, entering with a fresh cohort of students matriculating into Keystone from local Chinese public schools. Ashley’s parents thoroughly researched schools in Beijing for their talented, yet timid daughter while she was in Grade 9 at Beijing Number 2 Middle School, and fell in love with Keystone’s innovative academic model and Chinese Thread Curriculum.

Ashley was granted acceptance with a full merit-based scholarship in 2015, and has maintained an excellent academic record since her arrival to the school. “This is the only school that I applied to and I have had a really great experience here at Keystone. I’ve changed a lot and discovered a lot about myself as well. I’ve definitely become more extroverted since arriving at Keystone and I’m proud of myself because I’ve done things I never thought I would do before!” exclaimed Ashley.

In her previous school, Ashley describes herself as “a typical good student.” Obedient, ambitious, and timid characterize her experience as a

student while at Beijing Number 2 Middle School. “I was always very active in my classes,” remarked Ashley. “At that time however, we did not have many avenues of extracurricular activities for students, especially in performing arts or leadership positions. At Keystone, I have found so many ways to be involved and have definitely taken advantage of that.”

As an intellectually curious student, Ashley’s interests surpass just academia. At Keystone, there are myriad opportunities for students to become involved in extracurricular activities beyond the classroom. Keystone’s signature Chinese Thread Curriculum ensures that many of the programs offered strengthen students’ knowledge of China, and enhances their appreciation for China’s 5,000-year-old history. Throughout her time at Keystone, Ashley has certainly taken advantage of Keystone’s Chinese Thread Curriculum, and has married its offerings beautifully with the rigors of undertaking the International Barcalaureate Diploma Program at the school as well.

“I’ve tried a lot of leadership positions since arriving at Keystone. For example, I’ve been a Dorm Proctor, I’ve taken on a role in the Service Council,

Eager to explore her academic interests in combination with a strong music program, Ashley found a suitable fit in Northwestern University, which promotes dual degree programs.



and I’ve even started some of my own projects on campus such as the China Thinks Big Competition and a Psychology Club. These leadership positions have really taught me so much about myself, my peers, and China!” remarked Ashley.

Musician, Scientist, Researcher, Athlete, and Much More!

Ashley truly embodies the phrase, “a maven of all trades”. Amanda Yan, Co-Director of College Counseling at Keystone, agrees: “A pianist, a guitarist, a vocalist, an actress, a Chinese traditional dancer, a pop street hip hop dancer, an environmentalist, a linguist, a public speaker, a researcher, a varsity volleyball player...I couldn’t think of any other 17-year old student who seamlessly fills each role with ease and confidence in my past 20 years of experience as an educator in IB-schools in the UK, Hong Kong, and China!” stated Amanda.

Ashley’s commitment to be involved in the Keystone community is as infectious as her smile when she describes her various interests

and accomplishments over the last three years. Academically, Ashley has maintained an excellent record in all of her International Baccalaureate classes at Keystone. Ashley received the opportunity to participate in the Yale Young Global Scholars Program, spending one week in Beijing and two weeks in New Haven, Connecticut with the Sustainability, Energy and Environment Program (SEEP), an experience that sharpened her research skills and expanded her knowledge of environmental and sustainability issues across the globe. She was also selected as a student researcher in a program called Pioneer Academics, an online research program for high school students to hone their research skills. Under the supervision of a professor from Vassar College in upstate New York, Dr. Malsbary, Ashley researched bilingual classroom interactions in schools similar to Keystone.

Undertaking such a demanding curriculum that requires a huge time commitment did not deter Ashley from pursuing many activities outside of the classroom. “One of the best things about Keystone is that I have had so many options to choose from. This has been such an eye-opening



experience since stepping foot into Keystone,” said Ashley.

One of Ashley’s biggest passions is her student band that she co-created, ‘Insomnia’. Throughout the past two years, ‘Insomnia’ has performed for numerous on campus events. Always service oriented and philanthropic, all of the proceeds from the band’s first album release were donated to a nonprofit school for children of migrant workers. A musician, scholar, philanthropist, and athlete, Ashley has invested her time in the Keystone community from her very first day as a boarding student, and her inquisitive nature is something she is keen to develop and explore even more after Keystone.

On Northwestern and Life After Keystone

The complex US college and university admissions process is mentally, emotionally, and sometimes physically taxing for high school students as they compete for top places with other students from all over the world. However, Ashley gracefully navigated the college admissions process in the

fall of 2017, and enthusiastically accepted a place at Northwestern University, a private research university located in Evanston, Illinois. The university has a total undergraduate enrollment of just under 8,400 students, and is located in a suburban area close to Chicago, Illinois.

“I was looking for a school with a strong liberal arts background that would let me continue to explore my academic interests, and also a school with a strong music program. Northwestern is very open and flexible to the idea of students double majoring across different schools or even doing a dual degree program,” said Ashley when prompted about her reason for choosing Northwestern.

As Ashley begins her journey beyond Keystone in the fall of 2018, her family, peers, and even members of the Keystone community are equally enthusiastic for Ashley’s next steps. “I am so excited to see how far Ashley’s educational and professional journey will take her in the future. I know it will be a journey full of a love of learning, service for others and a commitment to providing everything positive that education sets out to accomplish!” remarked Amanda Yan. ■

School News Round Up

01



Head of School Malcolm McKenzie Stays on Until 2021

Head of School Malcolm McKenzie extended his tenure at Keystone Academy until June 2021. After the end of the 2017-2018 academic year, he will continue as Head of School for at least 3 more years. In a letter to the community, McKenzie wrote “The dream of building a brand-new world school is being realized, and Keystone is growing up and developing as a school and a community. In my heart, China has become a second home.”

02



Keystone Hosts the University School Choice Fair

In August 2017, Keystone hosted the International ACAC Asia Regional Symposium. More than 40 university representatives from around the world participated in the conference, which introduced global post-secondary educational options to students and parents. Keystone’s Office of College Counseling opened the symposium to guests, emphasizing Keystone’s collaborative spirit of sharing with all members of the international educational network in China and families eager to provide post-secondary experiences to their children.

03



Vienna Boys Chorus Master Conducts Master Class at Keystone

In September 2017, the first Asian conductor of the Vienna Boys Choir, Zeng Zhibin, taught a master class for the Keystone community. He demonstrated the process of musical literacy and performance skills to students, the Keystone PTA (Parent Teacher Association), and the Keystone Choir. Zhibin’s world-class directorial style and approach to music gave guests the opportunity to experience a close understanding of the process-based learning method of the Vienna Boys’ Choir.

07



Antarctica - The Last Pure Wilderness on Earth

In November 2017, Grade 10 student Yu Zongqi and faculty members Gillian Williams and Andy Wang traveled to Antarctica for an exciting exploration of the southernmost part of the globe. While enjoying the beautiful scenery, they also observed and studied the ecological environment of the polar region at close range. Upon their return to Keystone, the travelers shared their experiences in an exhibit of beautifully curated photographs and a video montage with the entire community.

08



Keystone Students Launch TEDx

In November 2017, secondary school students organized and hosted Keystone’s first TEDx event under the guidance of English teacher Audrey Moh. TEDx is an international organization that brings savvy speakers, talented performers, and workshops that expose audiences to a variety of topics. Keystone invited guests such as entrepreneur Hong Fei, who utilizes Zen ideologies to explore the universe and find answers to complicated questions, and Kamani Suppiah, a science educator who gave a riveting talk on the endless possibilities when one unleashes their full potential.

09



Northwestern University President Addresses Keystone Students

In November 2017, Professor Morton Shapiro, President of Northwestern University in Chicago, Illinois met with Grade 11 and 12 students and shared tips and suggestions for the upcoming college and university application season. Professor Shapiro explained important factors for consideration when determining the most suitable school for students, suggested strategies for learning, and encouraged students to make good use of the resources available at Keystone.

04



The Benefits of Playing Chess

In September 2017, chess master Leontxo Garcia visited Keystone and introduced the history and educational merits of chess to the Keystone community. A strong advocate for the integration of chess as an educational tool in school curricula, Mr. Garcia shared examples of successful chess integration in education based on his personal experience with the game.

05



Keystone Dedicates New High School Library

In October 2017, Keystone celebrated the high school library opening with a dedication ceremony hosting many distinguished guests. UK interior and furniture designer Luke Hughes designed the Keystone library and led guests through the new space introducing its many cultural and artistic elements. “The new library imaginatively demonstrates the school’s Eastern, Western, and international traditions in interior design and furniture,” remarked Head of School Malcolm McKenzie in his opening speech. At the ceremony, British writer Simon Winchester also delivered a talk about the origin of Cambridge scientist Joseph Needham and his relationship with China.

06



Circle World Arts Bring the New Silk Road

In October 2017, Keystone hosted Circle World Arts musicians Sandeep Das, Tamer Pinarbasi, and Farzin Dehghan, who conducted dialogues on art and music with students of all grades. The three artists led students on an exploratory journey along the Silk Road and aided the students in understanding how art can create beautiful experiences, helps one reach new understandings, and brings about peaceful cross cultural exchanges in all communities. Concluding their presentations, they gave a wonderful public performance to the community.

10



Primary School Students Descend upon Malaysia for Round Square Conference

In November 2017, Grades 4 and 5 student delegations traveled to Malaysia to participate in a Round Square Conference for primary school students. With more than a dozen schools participating in the conference, all students participated in physical activities such as ladder climbing, high-altitude rope climbing, cave exploration, and jungle aerial rope activities. The conference provided students with excellent opportunities for growth and honing of their social and leadership skills.

11



Vienna Danube Philharmonic Orchestra Helps to Ring in the New Year

In January 2018, the Vienna Danube Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Chai Liang presented a wonderful New Year concert to the Keystone community in the Performing Arts Center. The musicians played a number of classical music compositions, ringing in the New Year with positive vibrations that were felt by all.

12



Keystone Students Win Service Learning Grant

In March 2018, Service Council students won a service learning grant at the annual ACAMIS (Association of China and Mongolia International Schools) in Macau, China. The service grant award will contribute to an ongoing library project, where students build a library for a non-profit organization in China. The executive director of ACAMIS stated that the proposal written by Keystone students was “the best proposal he’s seen in years!” Congratulations, students!



Unlocking the Power of Education

Diana Martelly, Head of High School, Mathematics Teacher
& Student Extraordinaire

Diana Martelly is a dreamer, a trailblazer and a lifelong learner. At the age of 50, as she hungered for more, she resumed her personal education. Admitted to both Harvard and Columbia Universities, she enrolled in the latter where she received a degree in educational leadership. To her students, she is an inclusive teacher and role model while her faculty appreciates Dr. Martelly’s balanced leadership style and accessibility. Relishing in the prospect of seeing off Keystone’s first graduating cohort, Dr. Martelly’s vision for our seniors is to pursue personal success and take up responsibility to make the world a better place. She steadfastly believes that we all have the potential to change the world... “You can, if you choose to” is one of her mantras.



Living the Dream

Her office walls clad in framed diplomas, Diana Martelly's Columbia University credentials feature front and center. She earned her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Math Education from Florida International University and also completed her Doctorate in Adult Education and Human Resources Management there. In 2015, she earned a Master's degree in Private School Leadership from Columbia University's Teachers College.

A 2012 USA college tour with her daughter inspired Dr. Martelly to chase her dream and return to school. Having pursued her previous degrees while also working, Dr. Martelly had always wanted to soak in full-time college life. "I had always worked while studying for my BS, MS and doctorate and never got to enjoy the vibrant learning atmosphere full-time students experience. And so I felt a desire to return to school," Dr. Martelly said, her eyes fixated on the framed Teachers College degree. "I was after getting a taste of full-time student life, complete with living on campus and busying myself exclusively with learning."

With thirty years of experience in education under her belt at schools across the globe and a secondary school principal at an international school in Nigeria at the time, she pursued her ambition and sent off university applications together with her daughter. "It's never too late to follow your dreams," she offered.

Soon after an acceptance letter for her daughter and a rejection for Dr. Martelly hit their mailbox, the tides changed with good news for both mother and daughter. Within the span of one week, her daughter received a letter of acceptance from MIT and Dr. Martelly got to open one from Harvard University. The acceptance letter from Columbia University soon followed, complete with a Klingenstein Center Leadership Grant, which helped tip the decision scale in favor of Columbia's

Teachers College. Her daughter eventually opted to enroll at Harvey Mudd College.

Her return to school helped lift the veil for Dr. Martelly into the university admissions process as she developed a sound appreciation for current college application requirements and the demands upon students in readying themselves for university and campus life. "I often share my personal experience with our high school students emphasizing that I've just gone through the application process myself and therefore can relate with the pressures, highlights and low points they might be experiencing and what is expected of them," she said.

Wonders of Education

As Head of High School at Keystone, Dr. Martelly also teaches mathematics. A teacher at heart, she enjoys the combination of directing the high school and being in the classroom. "From a young age, I was interested in helping others understand things. So I wanted to be a teacher for most of my life," she explained.

Over the span of her career, Dr. Martelly has worked in public, private and international schools and universities. During 11 of those years, she worked in IB World Schools as a math teacher, an IBDP examiner, and a Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) coordinator. This vast teaching experience has gifted her with the ability to keep a long-term perspective on education and observe the profound impact it can have on life. "People say that as you grow older, you increasingly become 'jaded by reality'. For me, the contrary is true," she offered, revealing an infectious smile. "I have grown more idealistic with age, because I have so often seen miracles in education."

Dr. Martelly has taught students from a wide variety of backgrounds, some very privileged and



others with far less means and opportunities. As she watched them grow up, she realized that the most important and ultimate goal in education does not vary: “As teachers,” she revealed, “we aspire to develop our students’ abilities and tap into their full potential because, ultimately, they will lead the next generation.”

“Meeting an excellent teacher can transform your life and put you on a path to become a miracle of education,” Dr. Martelly reminisced. She experienced this first-hand when, in grade 9, she suffered a rough patch in life that manifested itself in the inferior quality of her schoolwork and grades. Just as she was about to lose faith in her studies and herself, Mr. Moreno, her physics and mathematics teacher, stepped up and filled the void by supporting her academic needs and encouraging her towards blossoming into the best version of herself.

“Mr. Moreno offered to tutor me after school and worked with me on building a foundation upon which to build and grow knowledge,” she shared. “With him as my teacher, I regained my confidence in learning. I was engaged and worked really hard, which helped me not only strengthen my learning in physics and mathematics but also in other disciplines.” Mr. Moreno significantly influenced her decision to become a teacher, a personal story Dr. Martelly chronicled in her application essay to Columbia University. “Ever since, I give of my time freely. It is my way of paying it forward. He is a driving force in everything I do,” she stated.

As such, Keystone students are sure recipients of Dr. Martelly’s extra care and attention. For Vincent in Grade 12, mathematics can be boring at times. But, he says, Dr. Martelly tries her best to make it enjoyable, patiently helping students work through hurdles and always guiding them toward understanding of math problems. “Sometimes, when students are stuck, she will stop the class and play Venezuela’s classic birthday game “yo te dare”, singing while patting each other’s shoulders. Other times, Ms. Martelly will encourage us to stretch and perform yoga moves to try to relax. After that, the problem-solving ideas flow more easily.” Frankie in Grade 12 shared that even though, “Dr. Martelly has never taught me in any subject, I have learned a lot from her. This is perhaps what they call learning by example?”

Leading with Care and Purpose

To broaden her influence in the field of education, help faculty pursue their dreams and magnify the power of education, Dr. Martelly transitioned into school leadership upon accepting the role of secondary school principal at the American International School of Abuja in Nigeria. “It was a hard decision because I love teaching. But I am after the dream, not the position. I always do the very best that I can do, always push myself to the next level and never settle for what currently is. I always ask myself, is there anything else I can do to help the situation improve?” she offered.

In her view, educational leadership differs vastly



from the gratification of classroom instruction. "In the classroom, most of your hard work as a teacher reflects back in the form of student progress and growth, whereas leaders in education focus on problem solving, relationship building, collaboration, curriculum development, and faculty performance. These are longer term projects that take time to develop and implement before being able to reap the rewards of your hard work,” Dr. Martelly explained.

She motivates her faculty by supporting them and being the best model that she can be; by exposing her personal vulnerability and being open about not knowing the answers to everything; by leaning on the strengths of her team; and by creating structures and making decisions in support of their work. “I give of my time freely to my staff and value their work because what they are doing matters greatly. I also ensure that I recognize good will,” she said.

What has struck secondary school teacher Yuanqing Huang most about Dr. Martelly is “her great passion for education, her love for the students, and the dedicated guidance and unwavering support she is always ready to give to young teachers like me. She inspires all people around her with her infectious enthusiasm for life.” Secondary school teacher Meredith Phinney added that, “Diana truly cares about the students and appreciates the work and effort that you put in. She is the type of person who will meet you at 9:30pm if you feel there is something important to discuss.”



Relishing the prospect of celebrating Keystone’s first graduates, Dr. Martelly’s vision for our seniors is to pursue personal success and take up responsibility to make the world a better place. “I like to say that we are placing good knowledge in good hands. Keystone has a very rich mission statement, which aligns very well with my vision of our graduates.”

“We often talk about how this first graduating class has had an opportunity to be leaders at our school for several years. I think this will translate into our graduates being highly engaged in the college communities they will join,” she said. Last fall, the Keystone community hosted Northwestern University President Morton Shapiro, who spoke with our juniors and seniors of the regret that many Chinese students have about not taking more advantage of the many opportunities university life offers because they are so absorbed in their academic duties. “I think our first graduating cohort will not fall in this trap and will contribute strongly to the university communities they join,” offered Dr. Martelly.

“At Keystone, we will never have a first graduating class again, so our challenge will be to continue to graduate classes of strong and engaged leaders. I am confident we will do so because we have the structures in place, such as our CAS program, Keystone Activities Program, and the Global Issues Trips, complete with a great team of staff behind each of these programs. We are definitely up to the task,” she concluded.■



Du Jinghui: Inspired Teacher

*The best time was;
When you were on a podium,
while I was in my chair;
I felt like I was free;
I always remembered to collect the homework.
To remind you to try different outfits;
You are the idol of so many;
I am a straight-A student.
Now...You put your red pen to rest;
No more reciting the texts;
No more reading the prose;
Farewell to the Book of Songs, to the Tang poems.
As you turn off the class lights one final time;
You begin a whole new chapter.*

Ms. Du Jinghui's retirement moved one student to put pen to paper and write her this touching poem. Her seemingly quiet and calm dignity, however, belie this teacher's perseverance and strength of character that surface through her unique way of teaching. Ms. Du decided to continue to dedicate herself to education past retirement and joined Keystone as a middle school teacher after having taught for 26 years at schools across China.



Classroom In Nature

Methodical and gentle are the words that often come to mind when we think of Ms. Du. However, there is so much more that lies beneath the surface. “She encourages us to let our minds run free and embrace new experiences,” said Grade 7 student Zhang Xinyue. “When it was snowing last winter, she took us outside to watch the snow-fall and told us to write about it. Together with my friends, I started to feel that there is warmth even in the seemingly bleak loneliness of winter. It was from that moment that I started to think about and appreciate the little things in life.”

It has always been Du Jinghui’s mission to teach children through experiencing the real world. “Teaching Chinese is not just about teaching grammar rules or the nuts and bolts of the language. Instead, our language is part of who we are, connecting us with life and literature. To demonstrate this to the students, I rely on the great outdoors to teach and get the students to contemplate language. When they come face-to-face with the wonders of nature, students can understand fully what I have been teaching, making them more sensitive to and aware of the role that linguistic expression plays in our lives.”

Ms. Du believes that teaching Chinese should reach the very heights of nature itself, as another Du – the famous poet Du Fu – wrote: “Sensing the moment/Flowers shed tears; Hating the separation/ Birds are fearful at heart.” “Teaching Chinese,” said Ms. Du, “should provide space for feelings, so students learn more about themselves and how to express themselves to the world.”

Over the years, nature has figured prominently in Ms. Du’s teaching; whether it is springtime bike rides with students to the blossom-filled Yuyuantan Park or reading Zhang Ruoxu’s “A Moonlit Night on the Spring River” under the light of the full Mid-Autumn moon at the Summer

Palace, nature itself forms an unforgettable backdrop to her teaching and gives students a deeper meaning of the literature they study.

Keystone has provided the environment for Ms. Du’s “teach by doing” approach to thrive. On a recent school trip to Shaanxi, Ms. Du’s students visited the Qiao Family Courtyard and Mount Wutai. After their visit, Ms. Du asked, “Why is the grand and imposing Qiao Family Courtyard now nothing more than a collection of empty rooms but its temples are still flourishing?” Is it the spiritual or the material? God or Mammon? What is it that humans have craved for the most throughout history? It seems to us that the answer is already very clear.

Starting With The Child

These answers, seemingly at Ms. Du’s fingertips, are actually the result of experience that has accumulated over the years. “Every child is different, with their own thoughts and skills,” said Ms. Du. “As a teacher, you always need to consider the students and their specific needs. What they need from you is always the starting point for the teacher to reach out to the student, so that you can teach them. This is always one of the hardest things for a teacher to achieve.”

In her 26 years as a middle school teacher, Ms. Du has learnt inside out all the texts relating to literature courses. Whenever Ms. Du talks about this, she mixes the ancient, with all its references and classical allusions, with the modern, with its latest research and teaching developments.

Last year, in an attempt to bring together the curriculum’s required reading needs of the students, Ms. Du became the driving force in redesigning the Chinese curriculum for Grade 9. In this curriculum, Ms. Du has included the writer Lu Xun, the classic work *The Three Kingdoms*, and debates about



Confucianism and classical Chinese rhetoric. “It is clear that just short and fragmentary extracts are simply not enough for the students. Life should imbue the study process of the students. It is only when we allow the wider world into our teaching that we can open the students’ eyes to the beauty and wonder of the Chinese language and its culture.”

The module on the classic masterpiece, *The Three Kingdoms*, has been very successful. Over the course of two months, students read and studied this epic with their teacher. Starting with *The Death of Yang Xiu*, the students explored the character of Cao Cao by carefully reading all the chapters written about him. After analysing this complex historical figure and connecting the distant past with modern China, the students were inspired to read the entire story after class.

Even though it is a 600 year-old text, the students were able to draw parallels with the past and the present by considering the messages and meanings that fill this historical epic. Because of this, students have become fascinated with *The Three Kingdoms*. After all, if you were in Cao Cao’s position, whom would you choose to be by your side?

Students looked at these classics with fresh eyes, exploring the female characters as well as reassessing Cao Cao and Liu Bei, two characters that have already been studied in such extensive detail. Some of the students noticed similarities with the defeat of elitism in the American election; one student wrote about how Guan Yu evolved from a human being to a god of bravery and loyalty. In Ms. Du’s own words, “*The Three Kingdoms* continues to inspire a new generation of students...”

Students have also grown more confident in their ability to analyse and critique literature by themselves. One student told his mother at his parent-teacher conference: “Talk to my Chinese teacher, I am sure she has some good things to say about my ability to study independently!”

The Classroom as an Oasis

Realizing the depth of their abilities is incredibly important for a child’s growth. Early adolescence is a sensitive period for children, and acknowledgement from teachers and parents goes a long way in helping a child feel a sense of accomplishment.

However, we need to know the best ways to communicate with students in order to fully understand them which, in turn, means that we must find the best way of teaching. Fortunately, and with the help of new technologies, we now have a variety of ways to interact with students, such as face-to-face chats, homework feedback, Weibo and WeChat.

There are children who, when they have questions or problems, only get told off and told to study harder. “Young children,” said Ms. Du, “need dignity but often they only get criticism. But when they come to me, I listen to them and although I cannot act on anything, it gives them comfort to know that someone is listening.”

“When I set aside some time to help the students, I feel happy. To be honest, the classroom is my oasis,” noted Ms. Du. “When I was at high school, I read the book *My Heart I Give to Children* by Sukhomlynsky, a famous and very influential Russian educational expert. There were two scenes in that book that I still remember to this day.”

Below are the two simple and touching scenes

from *My Heart I Give to Children* by Vasily Sukhomlynsky that inspired Ms. Du to be the teacher that she is today:

Scene 1: In September, at the start of the new school year, it was the first time that these young children entered the classroom. They were so young that they were still used to walking around barefoot and just couldn’t get comfortable wearing their new shoes. But Sukhomlynsky just said to the students, “don’t worry, you can still take your shoes off here in the classroom.”

Scene 2: One evening, Sukhomlynsky took everybody outside to sit on the grass and gaze at the stars. He asked the children to make up some poems. One child started to narrate, “In Heaven, there is a silversmith who makes necklaces and every time he strikes his hammer, the sparks become the stars twinkling above....”

Showing respect to students, speaking at their level and letting them learn by doing have all been hallmarks of Du Jinghui’s teaching over the years. Those images of the little barefoot girl and the silversmith in the sky that inspired Ms. Du nearly thirty years ago still motivate her to this day. ■

Mosaic: A Year in Review

01

Awards and Medals for our Keystone Sports Teams!

Keystone students won top awards in a variety of sports competitions this year! Exhibiting athletic prowess in the water and on the fields, our teams competed with grace and discipline, exhibiting true sportsmanship and Keystone's core values.



02

Student Life Skills Surface through Theater

Students learned the essentials of teamwork in crafting a drama production, studied various facets of stage design, and tried their hand at improvisation techniques. Our Keystone theatrical performances opened up new learning opportunities for students across all schools.



03

Poetic Travelogue

On April 22, the Keystone community convened at the Beijing Beautiful Gardens Park in Shunyi for the 2nd edition of the Annual Poetry recital, Poetic Travelogue: A Convergence of Emotions, Thoughts, and Words. Student and faculty poets recited original and classic works of poetry. The event also featured student dance and vocal performances, a special appearance by the PTA Choir, and various pre-event entertainment activities for students.



04

Be the Force of Nature

Keystone hosted student delegations from Malaysia, Singapore, Australia, Indonesia, China, and South Korea for this year's Roundsquare Regional Conference on ecological preservation, energy issues, and sustainable development.



05

Memories That Last a Lifetime!

At the end of each learning period, students enjoy celebrations to commemorate their growth and gains. They are filled with smiles of achievement and satisfaction for a job well done!



06

Keystone Sees Off Class of 2018

Four years after the Class of 2018 entered Keystone filled with hope and curiosity, they prepare to embark on the next stage of learning with a sense of accomplishment. Congratulations!



07

2018 Keystone Annual Fair

May 26 was a fun filled day for the entire Keystone community! Water slides, climbing walls, foam canons, and bowling pins filled the field during our annual community fair. A variety of food and handcrafted goods were on sale, and numerous musical performances by students, faculty, and

guest band “Solid Gold” enchanted the crowds into the evening. Roundabout charity was also in attendance, providing designated drop-off points for gently used clothes, books, and toys.



08

I Love Artists Debuts at Keystone

This year, Keystone launched its I Love Artists Series, which began with a musical celebration of Polish composer Frederic Chopin and ended with Zhu Yibing’s Cello Orchestra celebrating the music by Mozart.



09

Education Salons Spark Community Dialogue

Keystone welcomed guests from various industries to meet with students face to face. Among them was writer and scholar Zhou Guoping, theatre director Meng Jinghui, Chinese language and culture expert Zhang Yiqing, dancer Wang Yibin, and artist and art educator Terri Moore.





Zhou Guoping: Every Child Is a Natural Born Philosopher

In his *Pensées*, French mathematician, philosopher and writer Blaise Pascal wrote: “Man is but a reed, the weakest thing in nature, but he is a thinking reed. There is no need for the whole universe to take up arms to crush him: a vapour, a drop of water is enough to kill him. But even if the universe were to crush him, man would still be nobler than his slayer.”

Pascal believed that man is both noble and feeble. Man is noble by his thought and is noble enough to know his feebleness and nobleness. The universe can crush him. But, man can think, which is something that no force can crush. In a sense, it is the greatness of the mind that has achieved the greatness of man.

Socrates suggested that all things must be questioned and verified, and that thinking has no boundaries. To philosopher and scholar Zhou Guoping, we should all subject ourselves to thinking in search of genuine knowledge and the truth. It is a mountain, he says, and the only way to get close to it is by walking towards it. What can truly teach us how to think is precisely thinking itself. It may not teach us how to live, he offers, but it will let us understand what one should live for.

“Where is the end of time?”
“What is on top of the clouds?”
“Can time stop?”
“Is there another me in the world?”

At last September’s education salon On Keeping a Philosophical Mind, Zhou Guoping delighted us with tales of his young daughter’s questions in dialogue with her father philosopher. As they grow up, children ask searching questions. They do so out of pure curiosity about the world. “The natural curiosity that children have for the great questions and puzzles of life leads them to start asking philosophical questions from an early age,” said Zhou Guoping. Such curiosity is a precursor to rational awakening. We adults must be alert to this, and listen carefully to these junior philosophers.

To Zhou Guoping, every child is a natural born philosopher. Childhood itself has its own intrinsic value. It is precisely the pure curiosity through a child’s eyes that inspires our motivation to seek knowledge, which in turn leads us to independent thinking. And that is exactly what philosophy aspires to cultivate.

Guiding engaging philosophical deliberations in front of an audience of diverse age groups and from all corners of the world can be a tall order. But Zhou Guoping masterfully navigated the discourse, introducing a range of philosophical views simply and with humor, often relying on vivid examples to illustrate basic ideas stemming from curiosity, doubt and uncertainty. From there, he spoke about the reason for the philosophical mind; ontology, epistemology, ethics and morality; about objective reality and subjective well being; and about the value of philosophy.

“Philosophy is more than a science or a field of study,” Zhou Guoping said, “It is a way of life in pursuit of wisdom. Anyone keeping a philosophical mind will always encounter new surprises and entertain new doubts,” he continued. What sets us apart from each other is our curiosity about the world and our independent thinking. “If you keep thinking about bigger questions, even if you don’t find the answers, you help develop a more magnanimous mind.” Zhou Guoping concluded the evening with a quote by Oscar Wilde: *We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars.* “I hope that you are all looking at the stars.”

Born in Shanghai, Zhou Guoping studied philosophy at Peking University and received his Master’s and Doctoral degrees from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He is currently a research fellow at the Institute of Philosophy of the Academy, specializing in Nietzsche and aesthetics.

Below follows a transcript of the September 8, 2017, Education Salon hosting Zhou Guoping.

EDUCATION SALON INTERVIEW

Guest – Zhou Guoping, Philosopher and Scholar
Host – Sabrina Liu, Director for Marketing and Communications, Keystone
Student hosts – Zheng Yuyu, Grade 11 student, Keystone
Wang Zikun, Grade 10 student, Keystone

Every Child Is a Natural Born Philosopher

Sabrina Liu: Hello, Mr. Zhou. As you just said in your lecture, in a sense, every child is a spontaneous philosopher. Wisdom begins with curiosity, and children boast the strongest curiosity. In front of a new world and life, they ask about everything. Many questions active in their brain are truly philosophical. Philosophy is originally an inquiry into the truths of the world and of life, and childhood and adolescence provide the best opportunities for such inquiry to happen. Then, how do you think parents should protect and even encourage their children’s philosophical interest?

Zhou Guoping: First of all, I advise against expecting of them to read philosophy textbooks or study philosophy deliberately or formally. The most important thing for parents to do is to listen carefully to their children and the questions they raise before discussing their questions with them on an equal footing. Many parents are impatient about these types of questions and often reject them with a simple statement: “Why do you bother to think about such questions? Leave them alone!”

An even worse way for parents to respond to their children’s questions is by giving them a vague answer. For example, when a child asks, “Why do people die? I don’t want to die.” A parent may answer immediately, “If no one dies, how can Earth accommodate so many people?” This is not a question of physics but one of the soul that cannot be answered in this way.

Sabrina Liu: So, parents need to give children room to raise questions. But, what should parents do if their children insist on receiving an answer?

Zhou Guoping: In my experience, children actually do not necessarily do it that way. You can tell them that their question is a very good one, but that you do not know how to answer it either. Hence, you invite your child to think together. Especially for philosophical questions, it’s better not to give a fixed answer. Rather, you can provide different choices and encourage your child to think. It may produce a better outcome.

Sabrina Liu: To let them know that there is no definitive answer.

Zhou Guoping: Parents who love to read will find that different philosophers have different views on the same question. Parents may therefore tell their children how different philosophers see the question differently and encourage their children

to think for themselves, thus acknowledging that they as parents do not know which is correct either.

Sabrina Liu: It seems that our parents have a lot of homework to do.

Why Should We Study Philosophy?

Zheng Yuyu: In the IB DP course at Keystone, students must learn TOK, which refers to epistemology as you mentioned earlier. Many students do not understand the use of this course. In your view, what are the benefits of studying epistemology at school?

Zhou Guoping: In fact, the theory of knowledge, or epistemology, plays a significant role in the Western philosophical tradition. The great turning point in Western philosophy began in modern times, when philosophers embarked on reflections. Before that, philosophers often judged the



nature of the world. Immanuel Kant once said that questions such as, “What is the essence of the world after all?” are those of belief that cannot be answered by reason.

The development of philosophy is a process of reflections on man’s rational ability, which is very important. You asked the question of what benefits can learning epistemology bring about. I think that learning philosophy is not mainly to learn knowledge but to equip you with an ability to think, ask and reflect. Such ability to reflect is beyond itself, and it is more important than knowledge.

If Philosophical Questions Have No Answers, Why Should We Explore Them?

Keystone student: If you become a great philosopher and think about philosophical problems all the time, will your days become very empty? How can we be happy? There can be many kinds of happiness. For example, you are happy because you have succeeded. You are also happy when you get a high mark on an exam. Or you are happy simply because you think you are. If happiness is so easy to obtain, why do people still need to work hard at it?

Zhou Guoping: Good. You actually asked two questions. Let me answer your first question first. To be a great philosopher and think about problems all day long can be extremely boring. For example, we all know that Kant is a great philosopher, but we feel that his life must have been very boring. If you were to ask Kant himself, he would say that he is very happy. He would not want to exchange his life, which you see as boring, for any other way of living. So, let us live the happy life of ordinary people, and leave the philosophers alone to live a boring life, which they, however, think is very happy.

The second question: happiness is very important, but why do we still have to work hard at it? If the

process of hard work is very painful, why do we still have to work hard?

There are two kinds of happiness: one is short-lived happiness, while the other is long-term happiness. This view comes from the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus. Epicurus thought that the most important thing in life is happiness. But, he also mentioned that some happiness has pain hidden in it. You pursue happiness but only get greater pain. Some pain will end up in long-term happiness. I think if you are working in the right direction, it may bring you long-term happiness. So, this becomes a mathematical problem: which happiness is bigger and longer? It depends on your choice. Do you think so?

Keystone student: As you mentioned earlier, there are many philosophical problems that cannot be answered. Is it because the problems themselves have no solution, or rather our thinking is inadequate, or existing technology is not well-developed enough to solve them?

Zhou Guoping: Both situations exist. If we have thought hard but still find no solution in the end, then we will say that this is a real philosophical problem. If we finally find the answer, then we will say it is not a philosophical problem but a scientific one.

Keystone student: I don’t quite understand what a philosopher does, because none of his problems can be answered, and even if he has an answer, it may not necessarily be correct?

Zhou Guoping: I don’t have an answer to this question either. Most philosophers in history did not have to worry about food or clothing. They did not need to work hard to make a living. Then, how should they spend their time? They began to think of philosophical questions, because these questions had no answers and they could continue to think about them.



Keystone student: If they can constantly think about questions, why bother publishing books?

Zhou Guoping: Do you want to say that philosophers wrote books as if they had found all the answers? Perhaps, all philosophers, or at least most philosophers, believed that they could answer the questions. If we compare the views of different philosophers on the same question, you will see that they seemed to be reasonable but still lacked something. It is difficult to judge which is right. In this sense, no matter how many philosophers believed that they had solved a question, in fact no problem had been solved if the views of all philosophers concerned are considered.

Philosophy and Religion: Which Can Solve the Ultimate Perplexities of Life?

Wang Zikun: Philosophy and religion are similar and closely connected. From the moment when



ancient people began to look up at the stars, religion and philosophy were born in the human desire for knowledge. What do you think of religion, and how do you look at the connection between religion and philosophy?

Zhou Guoping: We can horizontally compare philosophy, science and religion. They are the three main forms of human understanding of the world. Of course, art is also one of the forms. But, we will not talk about it today.

What philosophy and religion share is that they both need to solve fundamental issues. What is the nature of the world? What is the world after all? What is the meaning of life? The questions they ask are the same, but their solutions are completely different. Religion solves problems by virtue of faith. For example, to look for answers, Christianity relies on the revelation of God, Buddhism counts on precepts, samadhi and wisdom, while philosophy depends on rational thinking.

Science is completely different from philosophy and religion on the question of questioning. What science needs to solve are problems within the scope of experience. But, what philosophy has to solve is problems that transcend experience. But, as for the way of problem solving, philosophy and science are the same. Both need specific solutions.

To sum up, science uses rationality to solve problems of limited experience, and it is competent for this task. Religion solves the ultimate problems of metaphysics by faith and enlightenment, and it can also complete the task. Philosophy tries to solve these ultimate problems with reason. And in fact, it is hard to achieve the goal.

To me, the human soul is a madman, because it always asks those questions that make people uncomfortable. But, the mind is a bore. It follows the set order to solve problems according to logic. The current situation of philosophy is that the madman is asking questions, and the mind is answering them. We often hear people say that philosophy is in crisis. However, this crisis has taken root in the nature of philosophy.

British philosopher Bertrand Russell sees it as the true greatness of philosophy. What makes philosophy wonderful is that it sets tasks that cannot be solved by itself, thus putting the rationality of mankind and the spiritual pursuit of mysticism in a relationship of tension.

Keystone student: Why do many people who have faith believe in religion even if they know well that those religious stories are not true and science and technology have proven that such things do not exist?

Zhou Guoping: There is always a need for religion to exist, even if those notions about facts in the religious stories may be proven untrue by evolving science. However, religion provides its own answer and comfort to the ultimate meaning of human life.

Nietzsche once said that we need lies for the sake of survival. Religion and art are all lies, which we must have. Otherwise we could not live.

A Great Writer Should Be a Philosopher First

Keystone student: You just talked about the relationship between philosophy, religion and science. What is the connection between philosophy and literature? When we read literary works, we can find that those great writers will reflect on life and society. This is very similar to philosophy. So, what do you think is the connection between the two?

Zhou Guoping: The connection between philosophy and literature lies in content but not in form. As far as form is concerned, literature is an art of language. It has very high language requirements. As for connotations, the best literary works certainly have philosophical connotations. In Milan Kundera's words, a novel is a new discovery of possibilities of existence. In connotations, this is closely related to philosophy.

My favorite writers are all philosophers in a sense. These include Su Dongpo, Tao Yuanming, Li Bai and Cao Xueqin of China, and Goethe and Tolstoy of the West.

Sabrina Liu: *The Paris Review*, a well-known literary magazine, has interviewed many writers and poets. Different writers and poets have repeatedly mentioned that a great poet and a great writer should be a great philosopher first. In essence, there is an inseparable connection between poetry, literature and philosophy.

Zhou Guoping: These are different forms of human spiritual life and are unified by the spiritual life. Religion, literature, philosophy and art are all spiritual things. So, they are interconnected to some extent. ■





Raising Children Is About “Willingness”

*Be willing to spend time and energy accompanying kids,
and be willing to put them in the world to go through
wind and rain...*

Thousands of feet above land in an aircraft cabin, a young boy cried and began tossing and hurling snacks across the cabin. His parents stayed silent, and no other passenger came forward to stop him. The nearest flight attendant attempted to intervene, but the boy threw a pillow at her! Song Yuhan, who was sitting quietly in the back, picked up the closest garbage bag and squatted alongside the young boy. As he continued to fling objects through the cabin, Song Yuhan picked them up and placed them in the garbage bag. The boy would occasionally look towards Yuhan who kept on picking the objects, until he finally stopped. Throughout this experience, Yuhan’s parents remained put as they observed their child.

This is a classic example of the type of education that Yuhan receives at home. Her parents always keep their eyes on her, but they never interfere in her efforts to explore the world. Such education has given Yuhan an optimistic and a positive outlook on life, while instilling in her courage and the strength to solve real world problems. Yuhan’s father, a medical engineer, and Yuhan’s mother, a partner at a PR firm, both have busy careers, but they have never overlooked the importance of making progress and facing problems together as a family. They are a positive example for families at Keystone.

In this story, we learn more about Yuhan’s family, and listen to this Grade 6 student as her parents share their journey to Keystone...



Last summer, Yuhan transferred from a public school to Keystone. She has adapted well and left good impressions on her teachers. As her parents, what have you done to help her adapt?

Yuhan's Father: We began following Keystone as early as the year before last, and we participated in many school activities, such as the Russian ballet performance, education salon and weekend cultural exploration series, and the student-directed drama Legend of Monkey King. Yuhan enjoyed these activities, and it was a good opportunity for her to learn more about the school. So even before she began studying at Keystone, Yuhan was already quite familiar with the school, which helped her adapt to her new environment.

What do you value most regarding Yuhan's educational journey and personal growth? What made you decide to join the Keystone family?

Yuhan's Mother: We hope that she has an

international vision but also loves and appreciates Chinese culture. We want her to become a person of moral accomplishments – such a goal is consistent with the three keystones of Keystone's educational philosophy, and it also meets our expectations for our child. Apart from that, I have friends whose children are currently studying in Keystone's high school, and I have seen how they have changed and matured.

Yuhan's Father: Keystone focuses more on teaching by example than teaching by words, which is truly admirable. For example, every morning, the head of school greets the students and parents at the school gate. At first, when some children felt nervous and did not respond directly, the parents would remind their children to say hello to him, but the head of school disagreed with this approach and insisted on taking the initiative to greet the children. Gradually, the students all started to say hello to him on their own initiative, not because they were reminded to do so

but because they were inspired by the action of the head of school. The values of patience and determination in Keystone's education are truly heart-warming.

More than half a year has passed. How has Yuhan changed?

Yuhan's Mother: She has changed a lot. The school has inspired and motivated her to study more. There was a time when she would look for information every night and study until very late, but she was enjoying it. It was her father and I that urged her to go to bed. I would ask her: "Do you need our help?" She would respond to us very seriously: "Mom and dad, I'm working. Please give me a little more time!"

Yuhan has also learned to take on responsibilities. She now has the awareness to bear the consequences of her own behavior. When she traveled to Japan at the end of September last year for a piano competition, the trip happened to coincide with her history homework deadline but she could not log on the school's homework system from Japan. So she sent an email to her teacher, and asked if he could submit the homework for her. The teacher replied: "This is your responsibility. If you cannot hand in the homework on time, you will have to bear the consequences yourself." Yuhan kept on trying and finally succeeded in logging onto the system and submitting her homework before the deadline. The teacher replied to her within 1 minute after seeing the homework and said: "Congratulations. You are a great student!" We are very glad that the teacher educated our child in such a way that she should not try her luck in situations like this and should be held accountable for her actions. The school completes the education that is impossible even in a family with a close relationship.

Yuhan's dad: In the past, we have supported our child as she was growing up. Now, we grow up with her. Her positive attitude towards learning

also has an impact on us. Now, the time after dinner every night is a time for us to study as a family. Our daughter does her homework while my husband and I read our books. We also encourage Yuhan to truly understand that one should never stop learning. Mom and dad are also on the road of learning.

How about you, Yuhan? What have you gained?

Yuhan: A lot! I like the atmosphere in my classes. I like the extracurricular activities and love the art center, the library, and the school's Global Issues program: I will certainly apply for it. Even with little progress, my teachers always continue to encourage me to go for what I want. The teachers and the principal greet each and every one of us, and they always wear big smiles on their faces. This makes me happy every day.

Proper soil helps seedlings grow and flourish. In addition to the support of the school, I believe your family education has also provided ample support for Yuhan.

Yuhan's Mother: We value our child's personal culture and self-learning, and we hope that she grows up through real life experiences or even setbacks. Last summer, she went to England for an equestrian training camp. While she was on the trip, parents of the children in the same camp had a heated discussion in a WeChat group. They were worried if their children could sleep well since they had to share a room with 10 other children, if there were enough shower rooms, about the distance to the racetrack, and whether the work in the course was too difficult. I saw the discussion in the group, but did not talk to Yuhan right away. We didn't discuss her camp experience until she returned from England.

"I heard you had to share the dormitory with a lot of people, and they all had different schedules. Did it affect your sleep?" "Not at all. It was OK if you could adapt to everyone's sleeping pattern." "Did



you get the opportunity to shower since there were so many people waiting?” “Sometimes not. One time I didn’t get my turn to shower after going swimming. And I was so sleepy that I fell asleep with my bathing suit on. Ha ha!” “The race track was very far, and you must have been very tired going there every day?” “No, it was not that bad. I usually got to sleep in the car.” “What do you think you have you gained from this experience?” “A lot! I learned to jump obstacles, comb the horse’s braids, and shovel horse manure. Moreover, I learned to solve problems independently, and if unsuccessful, I would live with the status quo and enjoy the moment. I also made new friends from all over the world!”

The seemingly “bad” arrangements in the camp also came as a pleasant surprise in the form of unexpected gains for Yuhan. What she got from the camp was not just happiness, but also abundant strength. We believe parents should learn to

give their children a bit of freedom, and let them gain their own life experience. They should not make plans for their children. If they could do that, their children will surely be ready to face a brighter future.

Mom and dad let you face a lot of things yourself? Did you find it challenging?

Yuhan: Sometimes yes, but I like the feeling of trying, finding my own way forward and overcoming difficulties. Slowly, when I face difficulties, my first thought is not to look for mom and dad, but to fix the problem myself. Mom and dad often say to me: “Give it a try. I believe you can.”

I have been spending my vacations in different camps every year since the age of six. Choosing a camp is also my own decision. Mom and dad will only give me advice. I remember on my first trip, mom and dad asked me to pack up myself. They did nothing for me, and the result was I forgot to bring sunscreen. When I came home, my back was burning. After that painful experience, I learned to make a to-do list before packing to make sure I will not forget anything!

There is another factor that affects a child’s personal growth: family-school coordination. Better communication between families and schools can bring many benefits to children. Can you share with us your experience in this regard?

Yuhan’s Father: Establishing the right communication channel is the first step. When the new semester started, we spent quite some time learning about the school’s system and processes, such as how to ask for leave and how to read the assessment report so that if there were any problem in the future, we would know whom we should communicate with. As parents, we should give ourselves some buffer time to adapt, and learn all the tools of home-school communication, such as the specific functions and methods of various kinds of home-school communication software,

and cultivate the habit of communicating with teachers by email – especially with foreign teachers, which is particularly important. Yuhan’s teachers reply to emails very timely and seriously. The atmosphere of the parent community at Keystone is also very good. When we first joined the school, many parents were very kind to us and offered us a lot of help.

Yuhan’s Mother: When Yuhan’s teacher told us how Yuhan could improve herself, we paid very careful attention to that advice. Just a month into the school, Yuhan’s tutor and I discussed her academic efforts. She said Yuhan was an open-minded and innocent child, but sometimes she could be rather blunt, which might cause misunderstandings that she would not be aware of. After returning home, I reflected on the teacher’s words. My child is actually a mirror of myself, and the problem with Yuhan is also my problem. I am a straightforward person as well, and sometimes I have no idea that I unintentionally hurt others.

That night, I told my child: “Some of my weaknesses may have also affected you. For example, sometimes, I am not careful with my words, and I do not think about the feelings of others; other times, I make inappropriate jokes at the wrong time... I need you to help me improve. I hope you can supervise me.” She did not take my words too seriously at first, but in the following days, I paid particular attention to my way of speaking, and sometimes, I would deliberately use some wrong way of conversation with her in order to gauge her reaction, and make her feel and think how to respond in a way that is easier for others to accept. Our efforts have slowly made an impact on Yuhan. Not long after that, the teacher gave me feedback, and told me Yuhan had improved a lot.

We often see your family participating together in school activities. In fact, in the modern society, both husband and wife are very busy, so they often take turns participating in their child’s education and life. But you have chosen a

“no-division-of-labor” approach and always get the whole family involved. Why is that?

Yuhan’s Mother: There is no division of labor in our family. Whether Yuhan is in after-school classes or extracurricular activities, we try our best to take part so that we can all learn together and witness her growth.

Yuhan’s Father: For a child, the quality of companionship is very important. When our children make progress, no matter how little it may be, we are the ones that stand by their side to cheer them on. In addition, Keystone organizes every activity with heart, quality and depth. These are invaluable assets for both children and parents.

We thank Yuhan and her parents for agreeing to this family profile feature. Different families approach education differently, but one constant among our Keystone parents is the way they care for their children. Our families are both willing to spend time and energy in supporting their children, and to send them out into the world in order to experience the trials and tribulations of life. During these precious years of development and growth, let’s be mindful and inspired!■





Photography: Lu Nan

By Gary Bradshaw, Assistant Head of Primary School

The IPC Personal Goals: Making Us Who We Truly Are

There is an English saying that goes ‘manners maketh the man’ and I am not referring to the line from the movie ‘Kingsman: The Secret Service’ or the lyric in a Sting song, but rather the well-known expression coined originally in the late fifteenth century by William Horman, the Headmaster of Eton College and then Winchester College, Oxford. The expression refers to the etiquette, values and personal qualities that make us ‘human’. It is these qualities that define how we deal with life, the decisions we make and the causes we support. While academic ability and acumen are important, it is these qualities, these ‘manners’ in our interactions, in our conversations and in the things we do, that ‘maketh’ who and what we truly are.

This year sees our first cohort of graduates from Keystone Academy. We hope that during their school years they have been prepared, not only academically, but also with the knowledge, skills and understandings needed to deal with everything that comes their way. These years are crucial and carry the weight of future opportunity and prospect. However, it is also important to look at and reflect on the role played by the Primary Years. The primary school years are a time when personalities are formed, where moral and personal characteristics are put into place and where the kind of people we ultimately become is determined. While we know how important good grades are, we hope there is also a deeper understanding that it takes much more than good grades to get into the college or university of one’s choice, or to be successful in our career path, or to be a great partner, father or friend. It takes a range of qualities and personal characteristics.

Preparing Students for the World

Our world is changing and there is need for schools to develop well-rounded individuals with the knowledge, skills and understandings required to navigate what lies ahead. The IPC recognises just how important it is to instil the necessary qualities, merits and virtues early on. It appreciates the need to teach them implicitly and explicitly through a school’s curriculum and wider program and endeavours to ensure that schools are developing and assessing children’s understanding of what these qualities look like and mean.

When the IPC was first developed over 25 years ago, its founders asked a few important questions:

What kind of world will our children live and work in?
What kinds of children are likely to succeed in the world?
What kinds of learning will our children need and how should they learn it?

If we look at the second question: ‘What kinds of children are likely to succeed in the world?’, we see this question relates to the kinds of children we want to develop and the qualities we deem necessary. This is not only for individual success but also more deeply for human success and our ability as a human race to be prosperous, effective and positive within the context of life on our planet. This question is very wide ranging and explores international mindedness, skills and understandings and personal characteristics as well as focusing on deeper understandings of meta-cognition and self-awareness within our own lives and individual contexts.

The IPC Personal Goals

The IPC has been very deliberate in defining the kinds of ‘personal qualities’ deemed important for our children. These are exemplified within the

‘Personal Learning Goals’, one of three sets of goals outlined by the IPC. The others include ‘Subject Goals’ and ‘International Goals’.

These 8 personal goals within the IPC are:

- 1Enquiry
- 2Thoughtfulness
- 3Cooperation
- 4Respect
- 5Morality
- 6Resilience
- 7Communication
- 8Adaptability

Here at Keystone Academy we have sought to align each of these, not only with our 5 shared values of Ren, Yi, Li, Zhi, and Xin, but also with the IB Learner Profile and with the Round Square Ideals.

Enquiry (Inquiry) – Enquiry involves students constructing their own meaning, not necessarily getting right answers, but finding resolutions to questions and issues. There is an ongoing need to develop in children the skill and intuition to challenge what we see and hear around us; to ask strong questions and seek answers; and to filter what they find. In the Grade 2 unit ‘Inventions that Changed the World’ children explore the golden age of invention and decide the most important invention at the time. To do this, they need to ask questions about the impact of the invention, the significance of the invention today and determine what life would be like without it. They need strong research skills, as well as the ability to make sense of the information they find and skill to draw conclusions.

Thoughtfulness – This is the process by which we consider others, ourselves and the environment around us. It is the process of considered thought before action and may relate to not only the things we do, but also our responses and interactions with those around us. We can see strong links here



with Confucian values and with the values of Ren and Li. When children present their work or work together on a task, are they able to respect the views and efforts of others? Are they able to appreciate the role others play in the task? Are they able to make reasoned judgements?

Cooperation – We recognise cooperation to be one of the fundamental 21st Century Skills. Understanding the roles that different people play and being able to work alongside and together with others to achieve targets and goals is an essential skill. In the Grade 1 Unit ‘Our World’, children are asked to work in a group to create a collage of a tree. Children need to plan, communicate, and work together to achieve the best outcome. We

recognise the importance of cooperation and collaboration in today’s work. If we are to solve some of the deep issues and challenges that are before us this skill is essential.

Respect – Sadly, in the age of the self, of greed, of money and of social media, this seems to be a quality and characteristic that is diminishing. Can children make good decisions based upon their understanding of the needs of others? Are they able to act in accordance with other living things and the environment? In the Grade 5 Unit ‘Making the News’ students explore the role the ‘paparazzi’ play as they fill the pages of glossy magazines. Some key questions posed in this activity are: Do celebrities have the right to privacy? Are the

paparazzi just doing their job, or are they invading people’s privacy? What role do we play as consumers?

Morality – Morality doesn’t happen naturally, it is something we are taught from an early age. Through early childhood, as we also develop thoughtfulness, cooperation and respect, we are taught to distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad. We begin to form our own moral standpoints or code and learn how to act on it. There are strong links with ethics and values and we see the school’s 5 shared values come into play along with the ‘Moral Education’ as laid down by the Chinese National Education system. Looking at the role of paparazzi from the previous Grade 5 activity, we ask if it is right or wrong to take photographs of unsuspecting celebrities doing their grocery shopping? Do these photographers have a moral code? At what point does our moral code no longer take precedence?

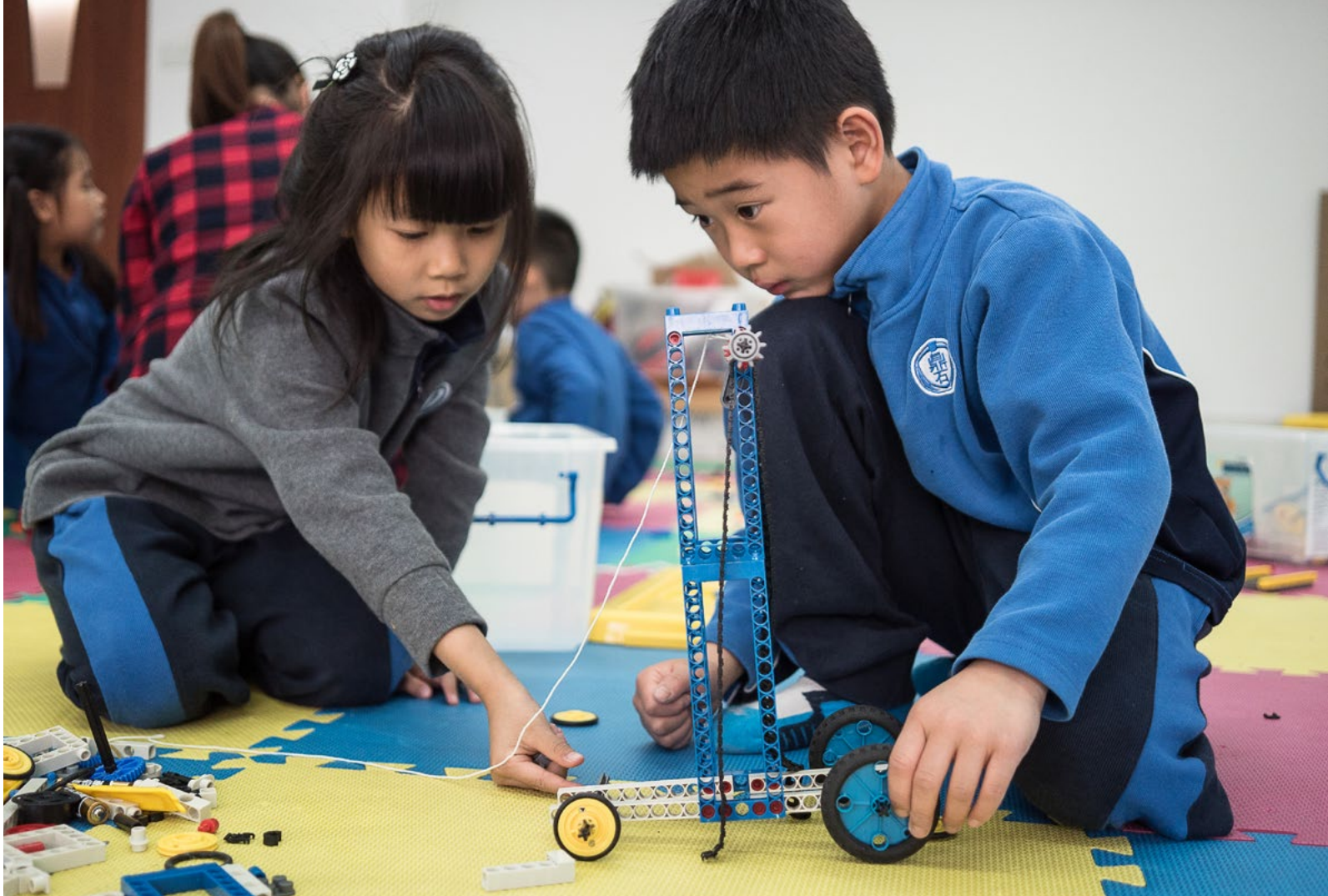
Resilience – How do we cope when things do not go our way? This year’s graduating class have sent out letters of application to universities around the world and the reality is they are not all going to be acceptances. As an individual, how do we cope with rejection and disappointment? Do we have the ability to get back up and try again or do we give up? The reality is not everyone is a winner. Our graduating students will certainly find that out when they move out into the world. Mother is not going to be there to pick up the pieces, there are winners and there are losers. Are our children really prepared for this?

Communication – Communication is another of the key 21st Century skills. It is in all our interactions; verbal, digital and visual. Within the global domain our children will be conversing and dealing with people from all cultures, backgrounds and languages: Are they equipped with the skills necessary? Children also need to understand that just because something is said doesn’t mean that it

was ‘heard’. In a world when everyone wants to be heard do we have the skills needed to listen?

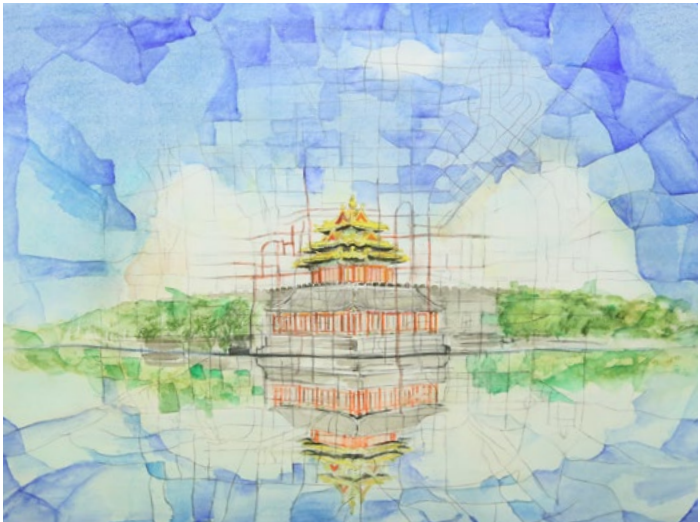
Adaptability – With strong links to resilience, to what degree are our children and young people at ease with themselves in a variety of situations? It is essential as they deal with challenges and changing circumstances, that they can keep calm and anticipate and respond positively. There have been a number of recent studies on the kinds of skills employers are looking for, and adaptability is high on the list. In the Grade 3 Unit, ‘Young Entrepreneurs’, students are asked to put together a marketing plan for a product they intend to sell. As they go through this process they are encouraged to make changes in line with challenges or issues they encounter. It was Charles Darwin that said, “It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.”

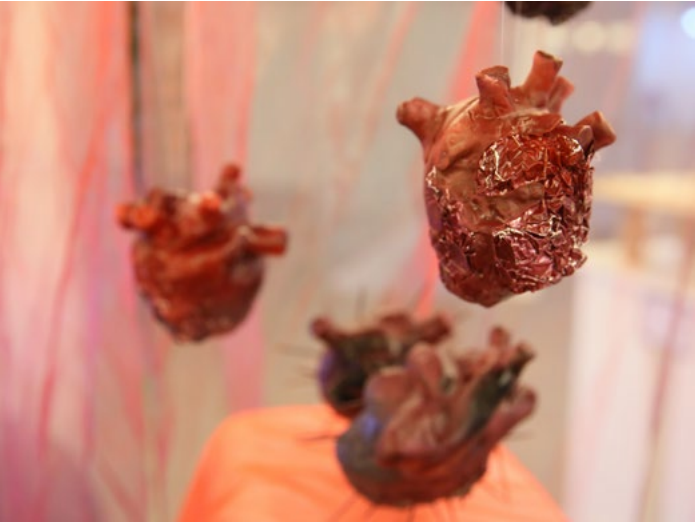
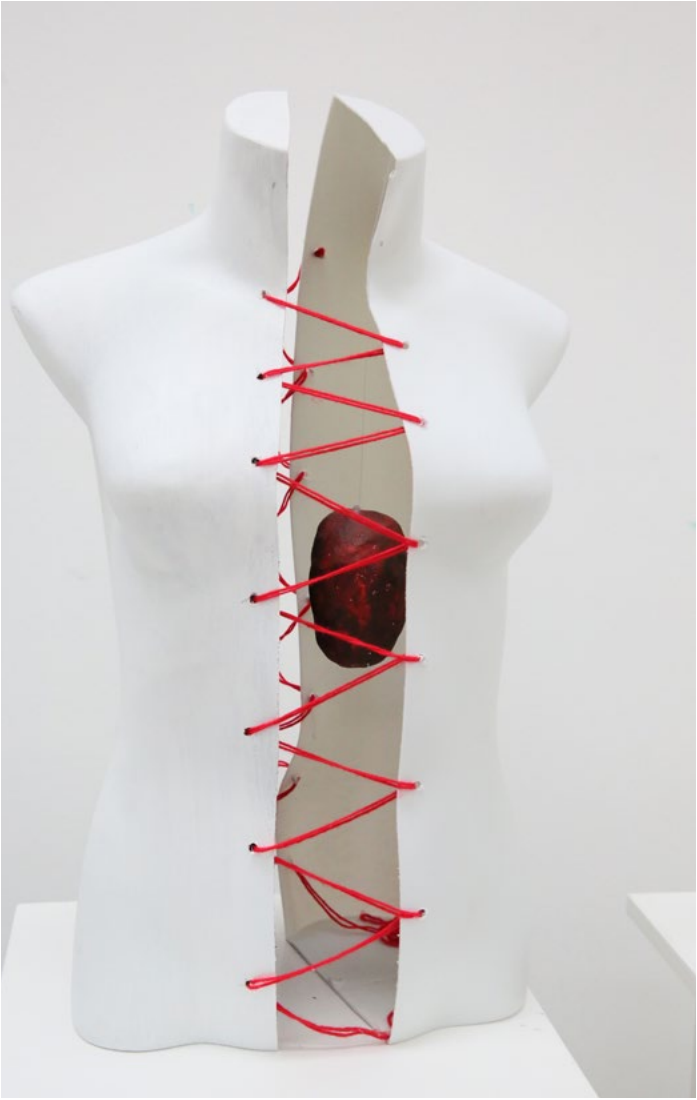
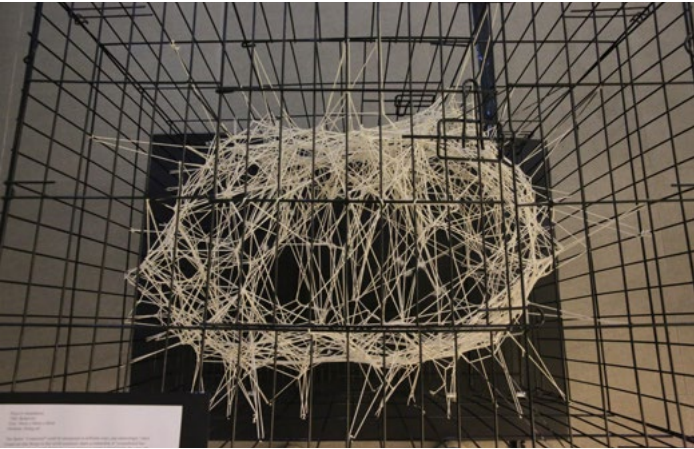
One of the keys strengths of the IPC is that it was developed with the future in mind. It asked the questions about the kinds of people that will be needed in the world of the future and the skills and qualities required to be successful. As our students graduate are they prepared and do they have the personal skills and qualities that will allow them to be successful. The IPC has been very considered in its choice of personal goals. They are embedded not only within the philosophy but also within the curriculum itself. It places these personal goals on equal par with subject and academic goals. It recognises that learning is holistic and that a well-rounded individual with multiple skill sets, abilities and characteristics is going to put them in a better position as they venture out into the world. If ‘manners maketh the man’, then it is perhaps the personal goals and individual characteristics that make our young men and women successful. ■



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