

*Celebrating 5 Years of  
Life in All its Fullness!*  
2014 - 2018



# *Newsletter*

Issue: 2018 / July

## *The Sound of Music*



**Cover:**

A scene of Maria and the von Trapp children from the recent successful staging of HIS' production of 'The Sound of Music'.

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## *Message from the Principal*



I am so fortunate to have seen HIS enjoy another wonderful school year. There have been so many triumphs, big and small, to remind me of what a talented group of students we have as well as the special team of teachers, administrative and support staff who strive every day to help our students to achieve, as well as push themselves to go further as professionals. Big and small triumphs come in many forms; academic and sporting success, reaching the next level, or finding the courage to speak up in class. For a number of our learning & teaching assistants and teachers, success has arrived with the Cambridge Certificate (CICLT) course they have worked so hard at to achieve. It is so rewarding to see our staff growing, extending their professional skills and being so generously supported by their colleagues. At HIS, we have an initiative whereby staff can nominate a peer to receive a Letter of Commendation for putting in that extra effort, for helping a team member or providing inspiration. Reading what our colleagues say about each other is always gratifying and often moving, reinforcing my belief that the staff at HIS make a great team.

As a school, we are now approaching our sixth academic year and it feels like we have reached a kind of tipping point, becoming a dedicated training centre committed to staff development and embedding academic, sporting and creative standards into the culture of HIS. Our Mastery programme is constantly developing, becoming more critical for our holistic approach. Our students at World Scholar's Cup are enjoying amazing success, year upon year. We have had a group of students named as Cambridge Outstanding Achievers for the last two years. Many of our young athletes and sportspersons are excelling at their chosen activities. Our HIS sports teams are also enjoying increasing success in competitions. Our dramatic and musical productions are highlighting our young stars and proving the power of team work. This year's performance of 'The Sound of Music' was fabulous, joining a pantheon of really wonderful school productions.

As students conclude this academic year, we have had our graduation ceremony and the graduation ball and even more fun with the end-of-year House events, trips and activities we organise for this time of year and we have celebrated with our students in our annual awards ceremony.

Going forward, we shall continue to work towards becoming an essential element in the education culture of Malaysia and a thriving part of the community, local and global. Next term brings us a second visit from the MoE for an updated SKIPS accreditation and we are waiting on a decision to become a member of FOBISIA (The Federation of British International Schools in Asia). But we will, at the same time, continue to look within our classrooms and learning spaces to find what needs to be done better, to know our students more fully and to engage with the parental and wider community.



In the new academic year, new students and new academic staff will be joining us. We look forward to an exciting year ahead as the HIS community continues to grow. To the staff who are moving on to new challenges this year, to start new families back in their home country or to be nearer to their family in Europe or to continue their studies elsewhere, we say thank you and best of fortune for your future.

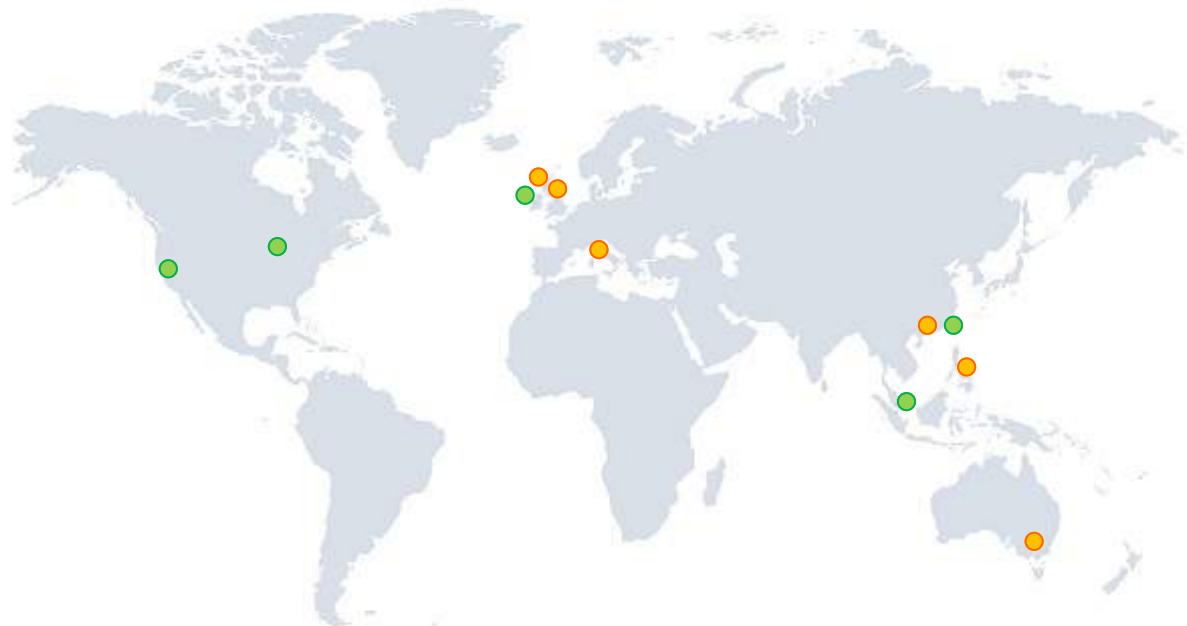
To conclude, I hope that everyone has a great summer break and a well-earned rest and I look forward to welcoming you back to another exciting phase in the life of HELP International School.



Vita Ad Plenitudinem  
Ms Davina McCarthy



## WHERE ARE OUR GRADUATES GOING NEXT?



### ● Offers Received by 2017/2018 Graduates

Russell Group universities (UK): London School of Economics, King's College London, University College London, University of Manchester, University of Edinburgh, University of Warwick, University of Bristol, University of Durham, University of Nottingham, University of Birmingham, University of Liverpool, Queen's University of Belfast.  
University of Monash (Australia), University of Hong Kong, Bocconi University (Italy), College of Our Lady of Fatima (Medical) (Philippines), University at Buffalo (US), Delhi Technological University (Computer Science and Engineering) (India).

### ● Former HIS Graduates

University of California, Los Angeles (USA), University of California, San Diego (USA), Purdue University (USA), Royal College of Surgeons (Ireland), University of Sterling (Scotland), University of Birmingham (UK), University of Nottingham (UK), University of Nottingham (Malaysia Campus), University of Southampton (UK), University of Southampton (Malaysia Campus), HELP University (Malaysia), Heriot-Watt University (Malaysia), Monash University (Malaysia Campus), Taylor's University (Malaysia), Fo Guang University (Taiwan).

# IPC STUDENT-LED CONFERENCE

June 27



Accredited  
School  
2018 - 2021

Every year, toward the end of the academic year, we invite parents to our student-led conference. This is a great opportunity for our primary students to share the entire year's learning with their parents.

In our latest student-led conference, children from as young as 6 years old, presented and articulated their learning to our parent audience with much confidence and pride. Mirroring the techniques teachers used in class to reflect learning, it is amazing to see how eagerly our students coached their parents for the quizzes or Q & A at the end of each presentation.

The parents' involvement have indeed made it more exciting for the students. Thanks to our wonderful parents who attended and experienced the joy of learning.





"Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow."

~ Anthony J. D'Angelo

# PRESCHOOL AWARDS DAY July 5

“The expert in anything was once a beginner.”  
~ Helen Hayes



**KS1  
AWARDS DAY  
July 5**

"The starting point of all achievement is desire."

~Napoleon Hill





KS2  
AWARDS DAY  
July 5



**YEARS 7-10  
AWARDS DAY  
July 6**



**HELPIan OF THE YEAR AWARD:** Joshua Verghese Bijoy



**PRINCIPAL'S AWARD:** Amanda Lim Yann Yi



*"Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education."*

*~ Martin Luther King Jr.*



Class  
of 2018

# A-LEVEL GRADUATION CEREMONY

June 22



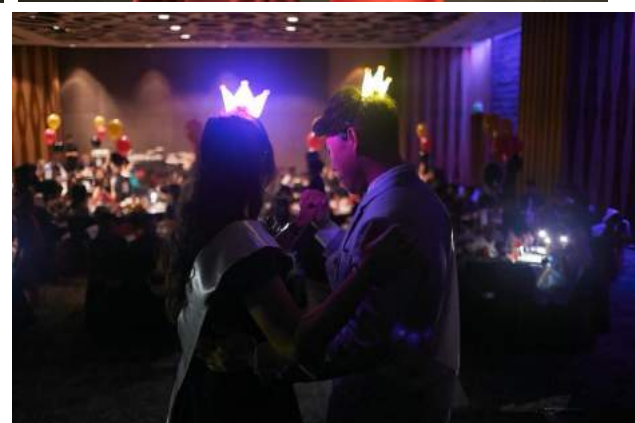
RAINTREE AWARD: Chook Hou Wei





# YEAR 11 & YEAR 13 GRADUATION BALL

June 23



# HELP INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AWARDED THE ECO-SCHOOLS SILVER AWARD



It is my pleasure to announce that we have achieved the WWF Eco-Schools 'SILVER AWARD' for environmental excellence in education. This is the second highest Eco-Schools international award, as we have bypassed the first (Bronze award) due to the success of our programme this year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who have helped and supported our initiative this year, especially Mr Simon, Ms Samante and Ms Uma who worked with the eco leaders, Carissa Tan Ying Xuan, Chantelle Lee Xin Yi, Louisa Foong Xiu Mun and Faith Lai Yue-Leng.

The Eco-Schools programme has grown from strength to strength this year, building on all the wonderful environmental programmes of earlier years at HIS. Special thanks to Ms Pat and Datin Seri Swee Lin, our parent volunteers, who have created the wonderful garden we enjoy in our preschool. Their continuous support of the Eco-Schools programme has been a huge factor in our success and we welcome and encourage more parents to join us.

In the coming academic year, Ms Samante will be coordinating the programme. She will continue to work with our eco president Carissa, Chantelle and the entire community, towards the coveted 'Green Flag' and ensure HIS continues to be a beacon for environmental excellence in the years to come.

Ms Celine Macarthur  
Deputy Principal (Primary)



Every time  
we waste,  
we lose a  
piece of  
ourselves.

# Congratulations





# ACTIVITY WEEK

## Preschool: MinNature Malaysia



## Year 1: Jungle Gym



## Year 2: KL Tower Mini Zoo



## Year 3: EnerZ Indoor Extreme Park



## Year 4: Sushi Making at Sushi King



## Year 5: Jumpstreet



## Year 6: Skytrex



## Year 7: Janda Baik



## Year 8: Malacca



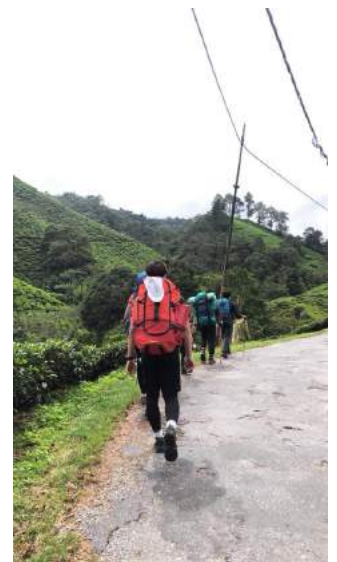
## Year 9: Port Dickson



## Year 10: Penang



## Duke of Edinburgh's International Award: Cameron Highlands







# END-OF-YEAR ASSEMBLY

July 13



## WSC TOP ACHIEVERS



## JASS - FULL BRONZE CERTIFICATE ACHIEVERS



## HIS WINS THE HIS-TENBY CUP!





# THANK YOU 2017/18 PREFECTS

July 12

ARTS PREFECTS



COMMUNITY PREFECTS



ACADEMIC PREFECTS



SPORTS PREFECTS



A huge thank you to our academic, art, sports and community prefects.

Each of you have carried out your duties diligently, and were role models to your peers.

Thank you to our teachers who have guided them.

*“What you do has far greater impact than what you say.”*

~ Steven Covey





# HIS PRODUCTION: 'THE SOUND OF MUSIC'

June 29 & 30







# THE 5TH ANNUAL H'OSCARS AWARDS

## 'THE SOUND OF MUSIC'

July 12

- ★ **Best Female Actor in a Leading Role:**  
**Amanda Lim Yann Yi** as Maria Rainer
- ★ **Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role:**  
**Puteri Nadia Iman Razalee** as Liesl
- ★ **Best Male Actor in a Leading Role:**  
**Muhammad Iqbal Raziq** as Max Detweiler
- ★ **Best Male Actor in a Supporting Role:**  
**Wong Keet Leong Edmund** as Herr Zeller
- ★ **Most Improved Performance:**  
**Shaun Shavin Deva** as Admiral von Schrieber
- ★ **Best Character Performance:**  
**Aliya Hafiz** as Sister Margareta
- ★ **Best Chorus Performance:**  
**Tio Li Yen** as Sister Berthe
- ★ **Best Musician's Performance:**  
**Leong Lee Ann**
- ★ **Best Musical Performance:**  
**Fong Shir-Ning**
- ★ **The Stanislavski Award for Method Acting:**  
**Shawn Phun Yong Xian** as Franz
- ★ **Outstanding Technical Support:**  
**Jadenn Kieran Sivakumar**
- ★ **Outstanding Contributions to Stage Management:**  
**Joy Renita Ramanan**
- ★ **Best Technical Teamwork:**  
**Chew Jun**
- ★ **'Backstage Boys' Award:**  
**Lim Kai Bin (Calvin)**
- ★ **Greatest Breakthrough as an Actor:**  
**Valentino Tew Yao Sean** as Captain Georg Von Trapp





# SECONDARY HOUSE MUSIC

July 4







# KS1 HOUSE MUSIC

July 3







# HOUSE COMBINED EVENTS

June 22



**KS2 RESULTS**

1. **Griffin**
2. **Dragon**
3. **Phoenix**
4. **Pegasus**





**SECONDARY RESULTS**

1. **Phoenix**
2. **Griffin**
3. **Pegasus**
4. **Dragon**



# YEAR 1 SWIMMING CARNIVAL

June 29





# YEAR 2 SWIMMING CARNIVAL

June 28



# STUDENT CORNER



**CAEDON LOO CENZY (Year 6)**  
**FALCON'S GYMANASTIC CHAMPIONSHIP**  
 6 September 2018, Thailand

2nd place all around (level 2)

- ★ Parallel bars Gold
- ★ Rings Silver
- ★ Pommel Horse Silver
- ★ Vault Bronze
- ★ High Bar Bronze



**ETHAN QI-RONG DUNN (Year 8)**  
**ABRSM HIGH SCORERS' CONCERT**  
 2 December 2017, Malaysia

Picked by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) to perform in the High Scorers' Concert after achieving high scores in his last ABRSM Piano Practical exam.



**MIKHAIL SHAH SOFIE ALAM SHAH (Year 9)**  
**MYPW RESURGENCE**  
 31 March 2018, Malaysia

Debuted and wrestled and won in a triple threat match against Kimi Boulder and Victor Ram in recent Professional Wrestling event under the ring name 'Mikamikaze'.



**KYRA QI-EN DUNN (Year 6)**  
**THE BANGKOK GYMANASTICS MOOSE GAMES**  
 31 March 2018, Thailand

WAG Level 3, Senior Category

- ★ Vault Gold
- ★ Balancing Beam Gold
- ★ Floor Exercise Gold
- ★ Uneven Bars Gold

**2018 FALCONS GYMANASTICS CHAMPIONSHIPS**  
 9 June 2018, Thailand

- ★ Category Cadet (Year 7) Bronze



**MARCUS LEE WEI ZHEN (Year 8)**  
**MSSD KLANG TAEKEONDO CHAMPIONSHIP 2018**  
 22 April 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Poomsae Individual Gold
- ★ Mix Pair Aged 13 to 15 Gold



**EMANUEL IAN BRANT (Year 10)**  
**2017/2018 MALAYSIA ICE HOCKEY FEDERATION (MIHF) NATIONAL JUNIOR LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP**  
 May 2018, Malaysia

Member of Rimau Ice Hockey Club who emerged as Champions for 2017/2018 National Junior League Championship and finalist of 2018 President Cup.



**CHLOE KOAY YU QING (Year 4)**

**JARED DU (Year 3)**

**GAN ZHE DEAN (Year 5)**

**CHEONG KAENG FYE (Year 5)**

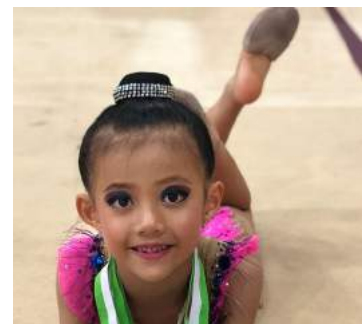
**PAEK JI-HOON (Year 5)**

**TAN YU SHEN (Year 5)**

**INTERNATIONAL SINGAPORE MATHS COMPETITION (ISMC)**

14 April 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Chloe Koay Bronze Medal for Primary 4
- ★ Jared Du Silver Medal for Primary 2
- ★ Gan Zhe Dean Bronze Medal for Primary 5
- ★ Cheong Kaeng Fye Gold Medal for Primary 4
- ★ Paek Ji-Hoon Bronze Medal for Primary 5
- ★ Tan Yu Shen Silver Medal for Primary 5



**CASSIDY TAN (Year 2)**

**NATIONAL CIRCUIT FOR RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS 2018**

1-4 July 2018, Malaysia

- ★ 6th place for Overall Champion
- ★ 1st place for Team Event
- ★ 2nd place for Rope
- ★ 5th place for Ball



**TEE NING MARN (CLAIRE) (Year 2)**

**ISMC (INTERNATIONAL SINGAPORE MATHS COMPETITION)**

14 April 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Bronze Medal for Primary 2

**HKIMO (HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD) HEAT ROUND**

12 May 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Gold medal for Under-7
- ★ She is eligible to represent Malaysia in the Final Round which will be held in Hong Kong on September 2, 2018



**TEE KAI MARN (KATE) (Year 6)**

**ISMC (INTERNATIONAL SINGAPORE MATHS COMPETITION)**

14 April 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Gold Medal for Primary 4

**HKIMO (HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIAD) HEAT ROUND**

12 May 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Bronze medal for Under-10
- ★ She is eligible to represent Malaysia in the Final Round which will be held in Hong Kong on September 2, 2018



**CHLOE NG (Year 4)**

**SKATE MALAYSIA 2018**

1 July 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Best overall performance by individual skater
- ★ 12 Gold Medals
- ★ 4 Silver Medals



### TEIOH NUAN NING (Year 7)

#### PISF POETRY SLAM 2018

24 June 2018, Malaysia

- ★ 2nd runner-up in Senior Category

#### KANGAROO MATHS COMPETITION 2018

16 June 2018, Malaysia

- ★ Bronze Medal - Category Cadet (Year 7)



### VALENTINO TEW (Year 10)

#### PISF POETRY SLAM 2018

24 June 2018, Malaysia

- ★ 1st runner-up in Senior Category



### ADAM SHIEW (Year 10)

#### PUMPFEST 2018

21-24 June 2018, Singapore

- ★ 2nd place in the U17 competition



### ALEXANDRIA CHEAH (Year 3)

#### NATIONAL CIRCUIT FOR RHYTHMIC GYMNASTICS 2018

1-4 July 2018, Malaysia

- ★ 2nd place for the Under-8 group exercise category



### INVINCIBLES 2017/18 U13 BOYS FOOTBALL TEAM

- ★ KLSL Champions
- ★ KLISS Champions
- ★ HIS-Tenby Cup Champions

Abdul Karim Judin, Abel Ang Yi Min, Chong Xiaodi, Christian Kor Jia Jie, Ethan Qi-Rong Dunn, Julian Kashwin Sivakumar, Lee Yee Heng, Louis George Norman-Jones, Raja Idris Othman Raja Rizal Azman, Russell Lam Shang Wae, Tristan Joshua Paul, Tyler Yee Kye-Zhe, Wong Hein Yew.

## CREATIVE WRITING ESSAY COMPETITION 2018

Well done to all who participated, and congratulations to the winners.

### ENGLISH

#### Year 7

- 1st: Teioh Nuan Ning (7 Rembrandt)
- 2nd: Alanie Choe Xin Ye (7 Rembrandt)
- 3rd: Ethan Tan Ee Teng (7 Rembrandt)

#### Year 8

- 1st: Ong Shi Yuan (8 Naipaul)
- 2nd: Ethan Lock (8 Naipaul)
- 3rd: Phua Ming Han (8 Naipaul)

#### Year 9

- 1st: Aliya Hafiz (9 Mangeshkar)
- 2nd: Hooi Cheen Teng (9 Beethoven)
- 3rd: Kavya Balaji (9 Mozart)

### BAHASA MALAYSIA

#### Year 7

- 1st: Germaine Soo Jen Ning (7 Picasso)
- 2nd: Teioh Nuan Ning (7 Rembrandt)
- 3rd: Abdul Karim Bin Judin (7 Michelangelo)

#### Year 8

- 1st: Grace Ong Yu Jie (8 Morrison)
- 2nd: Yeu Rui Cheng (8 Verne)
- 3rd: Chew Yu Xuan (8 Mo Yan)

#### Year 9

- 1st: Adam Najwan Mohamad Daud Chuah (9 Xing Hai)
- 2nd: Paige Wye Ching Chan (9 Mozart)
- 3rd: Sajidah Judin (9 Mozart)

#### Year 10

- 1st: Imran Anwar Shamsul Anwar (10 Kuok)
- 2nd: Elissa Yi Xian Foong (10 Kuok)
- 3rd: Charlotte Jia Yi Lee (10 Ka-Shing)

### MANDARIN

#### Year 7

- 1st: Huang Ching Yee (7 Da Vinci)
- 2nd: Yap Yin Syuen (7 Picasso)
- 3rd: Germaine Soo Jen Ning (7 Picasso)

#### Year 8

- 1st: Lim Yi-Qian (8 Austen)
- 2nd: Yap Ven Wei (8 Morrison)
- 3rd: Lee Zhuo En (Sydney) (8 Austen)

#### Year 9

- 1st: Lim Jia Jun (9 Mozart)
- 2nd: Tan Jiasuen Bernice (9 Mozart)
- 3rd: Kok Choong Han (9 Mangeshkar)

#### Year 10

- 1st: Li Zhuorui (10 Winfrey)
- 2nd: Lee Zhuo Qing (10 Kuok)
- 3rd: Tan Xiao Wei (10 Winfrey)

# WORLD SCHOLAR'S CUP



The World Scholar's Cup (WSC) has grown from year to year and in 2018, saw over 4,000 scholars competing in the 4 events - Collaborative Writing, Challenge, Bowl and Debate. These events saw scholars from 38 countries working tirelessly to ensure their team qualified for the Tournament of Champions at Yale, usually held in November. Unlike most competitions, WSC also ensures scholars have the opportunity to make friends through the social activities organised - Scavenger Hunt at Sunway Lagoon, Scholar's Ball or learning more about each other and their culture at the Cultural Fair. This year, HIS sent 20 teams, comprising 3 scholars per team (1 Skittles team (under-12), 14 junior teams and 5 senior teams) for the Regional Rounds held in Fairview International School, Kuala Lumpur in March this year. All 20 made it to the Global Rounds which was recently held in KL Convention Centre in Kuala Lumpur. They competed with over 4,000 scholars from 38 countries, to earn the right to emerge within the top 30%. Now, 15 of our teams have done exceedingly well, and have the opportunity to compete in the Tournament of Champions to be held at Yale University, USA in November 2018! The 45 students from HIS have worked hard, submitting essays on a weekly basis, working on debates every Wednesday and reading up on all 6 subjects - Science and Technology, Literature, Arts and Music, History, Social Studies and Special Area (Relationship). Congratulations to the 45 students for their achievements in the tournament. Thank you to the parents for their unwavering support. To the teachers who guided them all these months, and accompanied them there, our deepest appreciation for your dedication and commitment.



## Senior

Amanda Lim Yann Yi	10 Ma
Ashley Kow Wei Jan	10 Zhang Xin
Claire Sim J-Yi	9 Benedetti
Hannah Sufia Zuraimi	10 Winfrey
James Chen Jian Ming	9 Mozart
Julia Oh Pin Li	10 Buffett
Linus Theo Dengah	10 Zhang Xin
Lucas Lim Kit	9 Mozart
Maarven Pathmanabhan	9 Mozart
Loke Wen Huey (Natalie)	9 Mozart
Sarah Danisha Louis	10 Zhang Xin
Sean Woo Shan Ming	9 Mozart
Terence Ong Teck Yew	10 Kuok
Tio Li Yen	10 Ma
Vivianne Cheong Yi Lin	9 Xinghai

## Junior

Adelyne Wye Xin Chan	8 Naipaul
Aliya Hafiz	9 Mangeshkar
Ang Zheng Yao (Bryan)	9 Benedetti
Arjun Gunalan	8 Austen
Benjamin Tze Han Yeoh	7 Picasso
Carmen Foo Yen Leng	8 Naipaul
Cheah Ming Ying	8 Lee
Cheng Zhe Rong (Melody)	7 Renoir
Chew Han Xheng	9 Chopin
Chew Yu Xuan	8 Mo Yan
Dava Xi Gunananthan	7 Renoir
Divyesh Shurish	7 Guo Xi
Elena Foong Shu Xian	7 Renoir
Esther Ng Yi Ke	8 Lee
Ethan Qi-Rong Dunn	8 Mo Yan
Germaine Soo Jen Ning	7 Picasso
Hannah Choong Kah Huey	7 Da Vinci
Hooi Cheen Teng	9 Beethoven
Jasmine Affrina Ahmad Affandi	9 Benedetti
Jeanelle Leong Jing Yi	9 Mozart
Kareena Sivam	9 Chopin
Kavya Balaji	9 Mozart
Kieve Cheong Qi Jun	7 Rembrandt
Lam Wan Nee	9 Benedetti
Lee Jye Yi	9 Mangeshkar
Lennard Fredric Bataican Boholst	9 Mangeshkar
Lim Yi-Qian	8 Austen
Marie Asha Louis	7 Michelangelo
Melissa Lam Jia Ern	8 Mo Yan
Mustafa Amir	9 Xinghai
Natasha Sze Ann Yeoh	8 Lee
Nikhita Jeyakumar	9 Mangeshkar
Ong Joo Hann	8 Mo Yan
Ong Shi Yuan	8 Naipaul
Phua Ming-Han	8 Naipaul
Precious Hong Poh Yi	9 Beethoven
Puteri Sofea Iman Razalee	7 Picasso
Rea Janeen Selvaratnam	8 Morrison
Sherese Khoo Xue Yii	8 Austen
Tan Zhi Qing (Charlie)	8 Mo Yan
Teioh Nuan Ning	7 Rembrandt
Tio Eu Jien	8 Austen
Vara Qi Gunananthan	9 Chopin
Wan Khalesya Zahraa Wan Murdzaffa	8 Morrison
Wong Lun Heng	7 Guo Xi



## SEAYLP TRIP

(South East Asian Youth Leadership Programme, 2-28 April 2018)

Linus Theo Dengah (10 Zhang Xin)

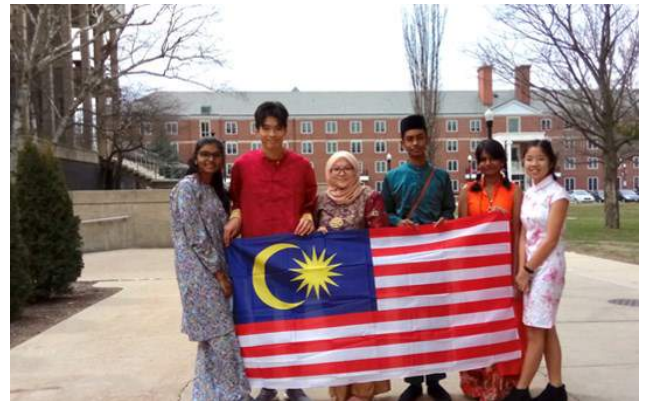
If anyone had told me a year ago that I would be chosen to go on an all-expense paid trip to the United States, I would have dismissed it as pure fiction. But I did and I still need to pinch to convince myself that I had actually gotten this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that turned out to be a surreal experience. The South East Asian Youth Leadership Programme is sponsored by the US Department of State, to whom I would like to express my gratitude. I would also like to extend my appreciation to my parents, teachers and friends without whom this trip would never have materialised.

We arrived in Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and made our way towards our host, Northern Illinois University in Dekalb, where we were housed in their Holmes Student Center for the majority of our trip. My roommate is from Laos. The first week was pretty relaxed, probably due to the fact they knew all of us would be experiencing jet lag and the effects of the brutal weather (coldest day was -16!). We enjoyed shows, dinners, and fun activities such as a shadowing visit to Sycamore High School to meet our peers and watching a Medieval Times tournament.

Our second week brought us to Chicago, a busy city with a breathtaking skyline. We started off our little excursion by visiting the Feed My Starving Children NGO to help pack food for the children. Later, we visited the Chicago Skydeck, where we got to see the entirety of the amazing city. We also had the opportunity to visit the Field Museum. However their main attraction, Sue (a giant T-rex) was sadly being relocated. For dinner, all of us were pleasantly surprised to be treated to Japanese dining by the staff of the Malaysia Embassy in Chicago.

The third week proved to be more exciting as we got to stay with an American host family - a young couple with three young kids aged one to six who lived on a small farm near the Sycamore town. My experience with them was definitely exotic, including a trip to visit their grandparents who were huge hobbyists. They had everything from homemade remote control planes to a giant room filled with model trains! My host family were the nicest people ever, and they pampered us for the week with bowling trips and homemade food.

During this week, we also attended many lectures and lessons such as structure of ASEAN, responsible citizenship, human capital, global justice, security, budgeting and water filtration. At the end of each day, we took turns to write reflections of what we have learned and observed. For Cultural Night, every country had to do a 5-minute presentation and ours was about a multiracial Malaysian wedding. We also proposed and presented a Civic Action Plan which all the SEAYLP delegates (5 students each from 10 ASEAN countries) will collaborate on returning to their home country. Our Malaysian team project is titled "Banners Down". We will collect and recycle used public banners to be sewn into bags and other useful items to raise funds for charity.



On our final week, we went to the Stronghold Camp & Retreat Center where we stayed overnight in wilderness cabins. We had outdoor hikes and challenging teambuilding activities. The final few days spent in Washington DC was a complete dream. On the first day, we were pleasantly surprised to run into French President, Emmanuel Macron at the Lincoln Memorial. We also visited the House of Representatives and met the officials from the Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs where we received our graduation certificates. However, I feel that the true highlight of the Washington DC trip was seeing the perfectly crafted fabric art by Do Ho Suh at the showcase of 'Almost Home' in the Smithsonian American Art Museum, that consisted of hand stitched details and huge structures that filled rooms.

The SEAYLP trip not only taught me about leadership, but I got to experience a slice of American history, culture and lifestyle. It was also a new feeling traveling so far without my family and having to organise myself, packing winter clothes and going through immigration as we transited in different cities. But the most important thing I have taken away from this programme is the friends and connections I have made with participants from each of the ten different ASEAN countries. I am deeply thankful to all the people who helped me gain this opportunity and those who have gone through the journey with me, and I plan to give back to the school community and the country as a whole.

