

FOOTPRINTS

Summer 2025

Looking Towards Our Future 2025

Cover by Millie McNulty

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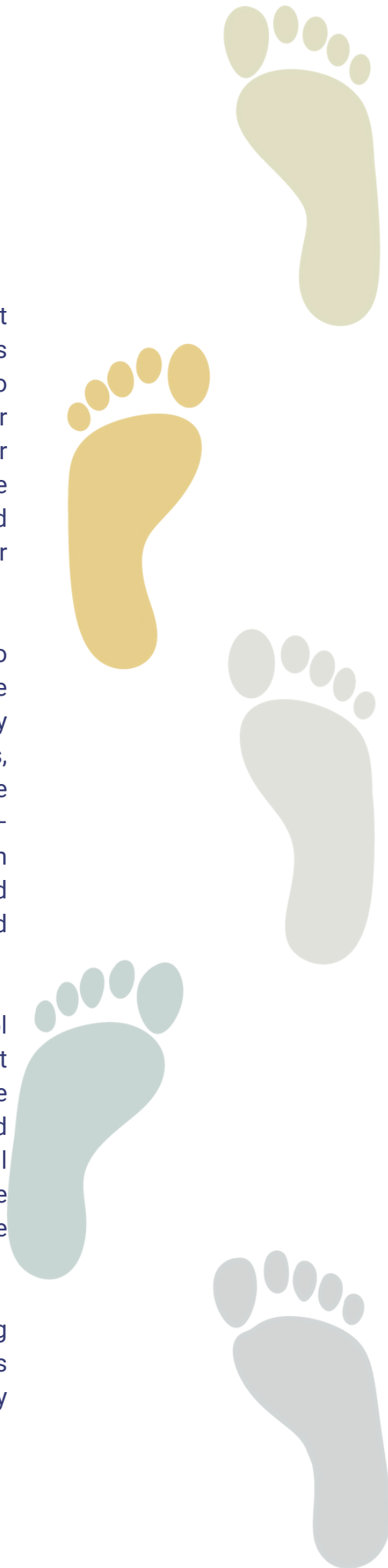
Footprints 2025: A Message from the CIS Senior Leadership Team

Each year, Footprints offers us a cherished opportunity to reflect on the heart of CIS - our community. At the center of this community are our alumni: the students, staff and parents who once walked our halls, laughed in our classrooms, and left their mark on the school in countless ways. Whether near or far, their connection to CIS endures. Their journeys remind us that the value of a CIS education extends well beyond graduation, and that the bonds formed here continue to shape lives long after school days have ended.

This enduring relationship is made stronger by those who nurture it, and we would like to take a moment to recognize someone truly special. For nearly four decades, Suzanne O'Reilly has been a living bridge between generations of CIS students, staff and parents. Her deep care and tireless dedication have helped maintain a vibrant, personal connection with our alumni—remembering names, milestones, and memories that tie them forever to our community. Her work has not only strengthened our alumni network but has helped preserve the spirit and continuity of CIS across the years.

In this issue, readers are invited to journey through the school year in photos, explore current events on campus, and revisit powerful moments from the past. You'll read about the remarkable contributions of students, parents, volunteers, and staff, all of whom shape the life of the school in meaningful ways. From celebrations and achievements to stories that make us pause and reflect, Footprints captures what it means to be part of the CIS family.

Thank you for taking time to explore this edition. By reading Footprints, you are helping us celebrate the people and moments that define CIS. We are grateful for your presence in our story and for being part of this lasting legacy.





Copenhagen
International
School

Celebrating Progress: Initiatives, Milestones & Community Achievements



DP 2 Business Management

On Oct 7th and 8th the DP 2 Business Management students entered the Entrepreneur Challenge - 2024 held on the school premises. This competition aimed to give students an opportunity to apply their theoretical knowledge to solving real-world problems. Students started their work in March 2024 when they brainstormed their ideas.

Finally, 32 students worked in groups of 1, 4, or 5 to come up with a business idea which was expected to be practically applicable. They were given some time during class and were advised to work outside the classroom at their own convenient time. The competition was judged by a panel of judges who were given a rubric for this competition.

The winning team and the two best and practical ideas were awarded a certificate which was signed by the judges and their teacher.



TopBlock - Start U by Celine Saeijs

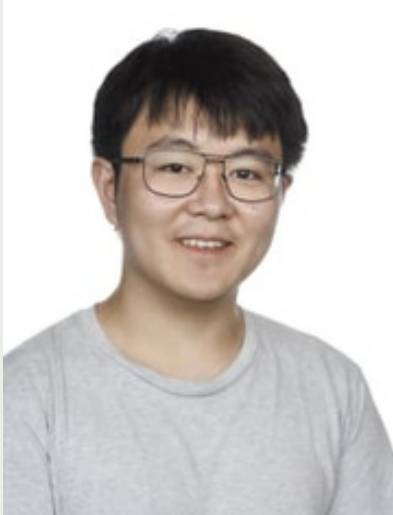
In November 2024, it was announced that my team and I won first place in a recent entrepreneurial competition with our startup, *TopBlock*! It was an incredible experience developing a concept aimed at promoting awareness and preventing drink spiking.

TopBlock offers two unique products:

- Reusable Scrunchie – a simple, stylish scrunchie with a built-in cup cover that you can always carry with you.
- Disposable Lids – portable and eco-friendly covers for bars or individuals, making it easy to keep drinks protected.

This experience was rewarding as it allowed me to address real-world challenges. Additionally, preparing the financial analysis further developed my knowledge, and I'm grateful for everything I learned.





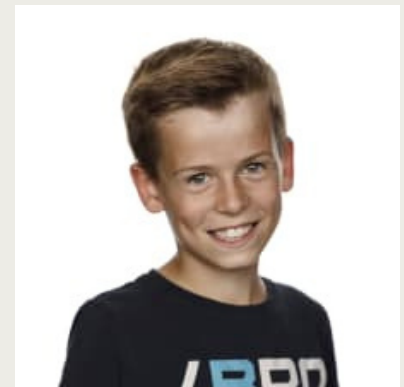
Ziyi X. in G. 11 is going to jet off to Australia to represent Denmark in the 2025 Maths Olympiad. This is a CIS first!



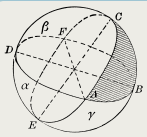
Faye B. in Gr. 10 weaved handbags made out of reused materials



Amen in G10 has won the Young Women in Leadership Award from Zonta Copenhagen! Her outstanding volunteer work earned her this prestigious honor.



The “Daniel D’Andrea” Sustainability Award 2025
 Oliver Kirchmaier & Elliot Boysen - Gr.5
 Habitat loss - Fishing and deforestation



Math at CIS

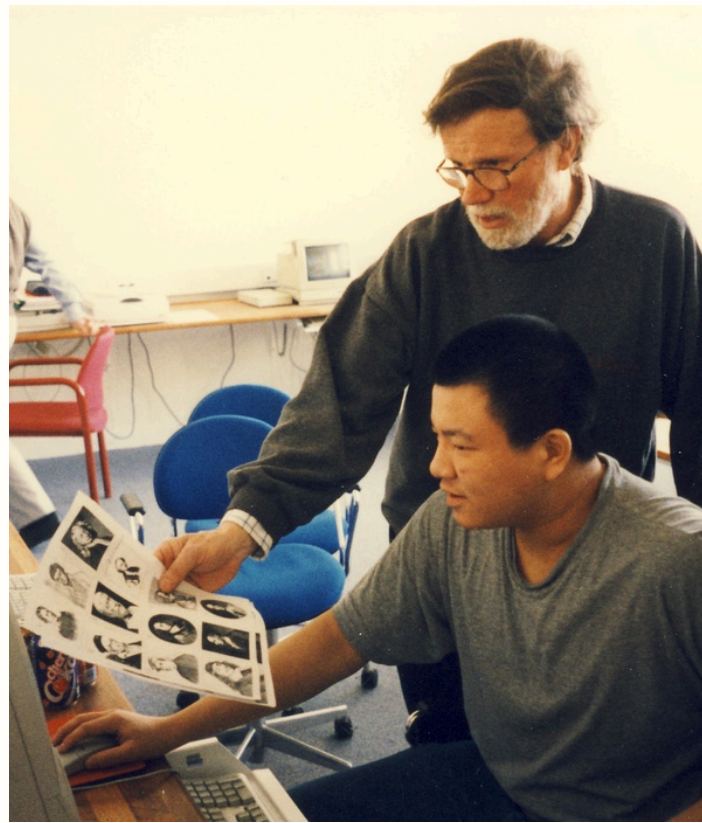
The Georg Mohr Competition

My name is Geoff Hern and I had the good luck to teach Maths at CIS between 1988 and 1999. From the rather cramped premises in Gammel Kongevej to the relative luxury in Hellerup, everyday was full of fun and banter coupled with a lot of Maths. The students must take most of the credit for that, given their warm response to my strange teaching methods: abbreviations on their homework such as YNS, WAM, NABE, the worshipping of Euler and the antics at the blackboard.

We also had the Maths Club and the International Schools Mathematics Competitions both Junior and Senior where students from our school competed with other schools in both individual and team events.

We hosted the Junior event in 1998 - quite an undertaking for a school our size - where the warm spirit of CIS shone through with staff, parents and, last but not least, students organising and running an event for over 200 competitors from Europe and the Middle East. We won the competition a couple of times.

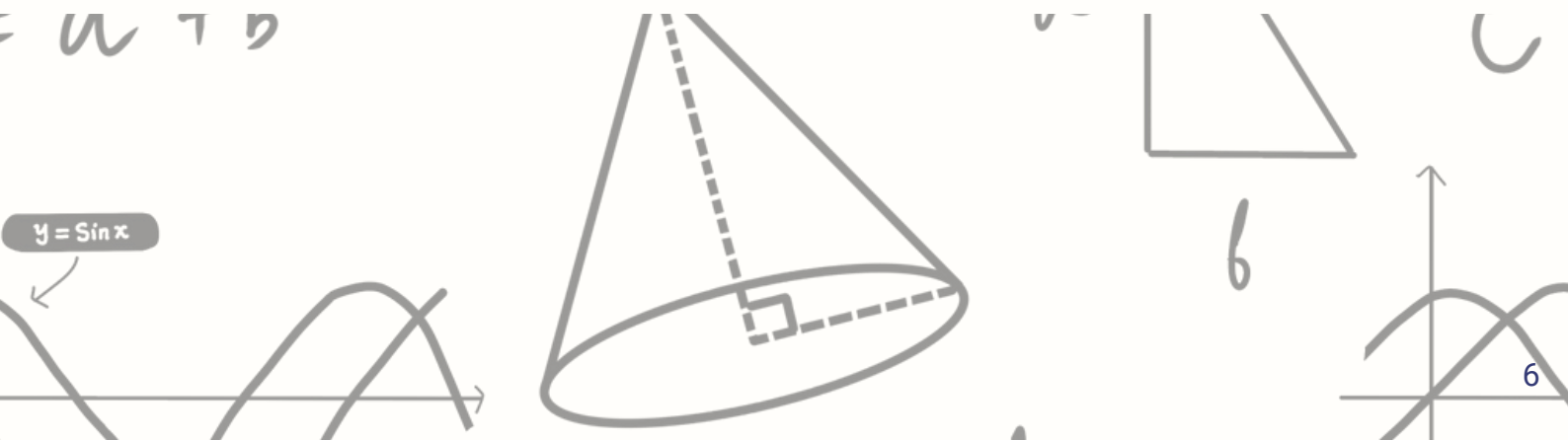
The 1993 Junior in Brussels and the senior team gave me a great retirement present by winning the Senior Competition in Vienna in 1999. The Maths evening was another yearly highlight where teams of parents, teachers, admin staff and students tackled questions of the type set in the Junior Competition.



Geoff Hern - Math teacher 1988-1999

UPDATE 2023

In 2023 the Georg Mohr CIS Math club was founded by Igor Michalec and Ziyi Xiao for the purpose of continuing to help students in CIS to prepare for the Georg Mohr competition, which is the Danish Mathematical Olympiad. It has been running since 2023. Ziyi continues to run the club at the school on a Tuesday afternoon.



Ziyi Xiao:

A Passion for Mathematics and a Legacy in the Making at CIS

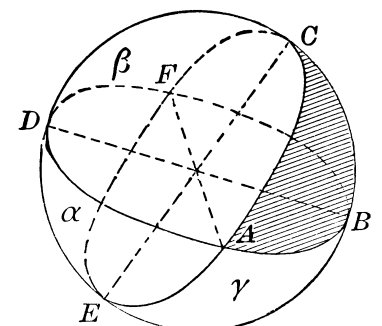
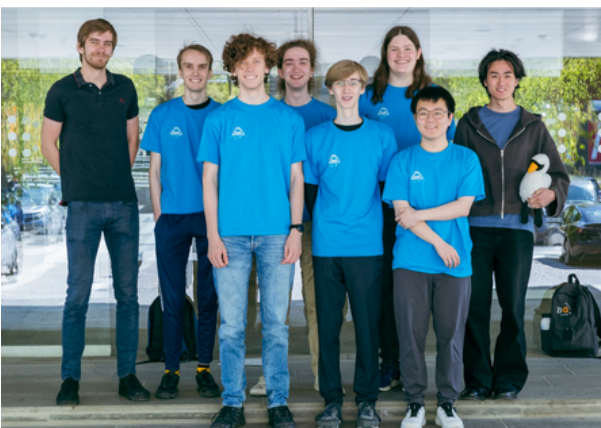
By Ziyi Xiao and David Jørgensen

Why do students educated in China often excel in Mathematics? According to Ziyi Xiao, a student at Copenhagen International School (CIS), it's a complex question. Cultural influences—like China's competitive and rigorous education system—play a part. Ziyi, who began his education in Suzhou, recalls how Mathematics was given strong emphasis in his primary school.

After moving to Denmark, Ziyi continued to self-study to keep up with peers in China. While initially demotivated without structured lessons, a turning point came when he discovered the Georg Mohr Mathematics Competition. Entering at age 14 in 2023, he was younger than most participants. With dedicated preparation, he won—becoming one of around 50 selected from 2,000 entrants.

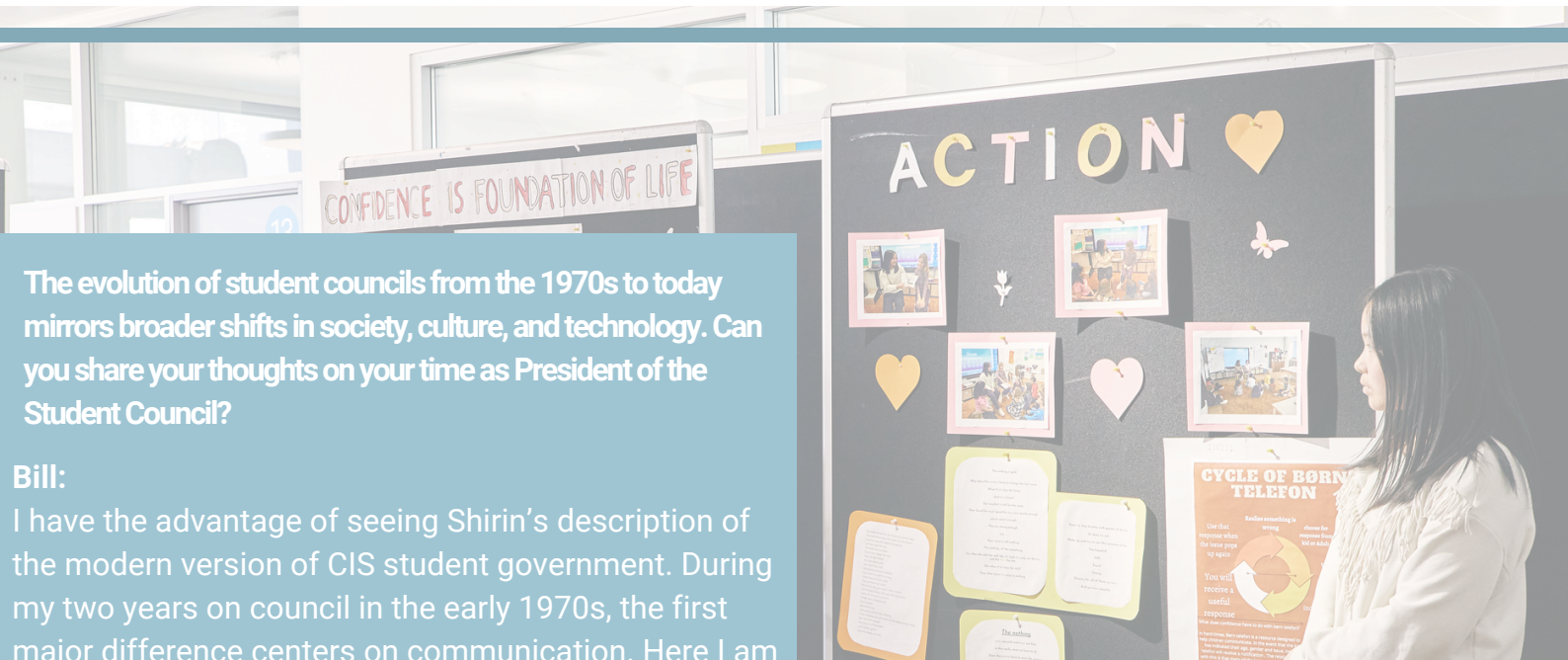
The competition opened new doors. Ziyi and his friend Igor Michalec (CIS Class of 2024) were the first CIS students in six years to win. They attended the Winners' Seminar in Sorø, where Igor qualified for the Baltic Way international competition. A year later, Ziyi not only won again but also represented Denmark at Baltic Way in Estonia, forming lasting friendships with fellow math enthusiasts.

At CIS, Ziyi is giving back. He co-founded the Georg Mohr Math Club with Igor to support students interested in competitive math. "We wanted others to feel the same joy we did—and help them through the tough parts," says Ziyi. Now in its second year, the club has seen students advance through both rounds of the competition. In 2025, Mike Zhang joined Ziyi as a national winner. Ziyi's dream of competing in the International Mathematical Olympiad (IMO) has now come true. He will represent Denmark at the 66th IMO in Australia—the first CIS student ever to do so. His story is one of talent, commitment, and community spirit—a legacy in the making.



The CIS Student Council from 1970 to 2025 and beyond

An interview with Student Council Presidents Bill Hawkins -1976 and Shirin Bjerrum-Bohr - 2025



The evolution of student councils from the 1970s to today mirrors broader shifts in society, culture, and technology. Can you share your thoughts on your time as President of the Student Council?

Bill:

I have the advantage of seeing Shirin's description of the modern version of CIS student government. During my two years on council in the early 1970s, the first major difference centers on communication. Here I am answering questions by email, from the far side of another continent. In my years, of course there was no email, internet, cell phones, or even fax technology.

Almost all of my communication was in person.

The second major difference has to do with focus. We were not involved in politics as a council, so no. CIS had recently moved into a new, temporary building as guests of the Danish Hoje Gladsaxe Gymnasium. There remained logistical and administrative issues to work out with our host school, such as use of athletic fields and equipment, sharing responsibility for hosting school parties, and the like.

Within the school, there were a broad mix of cultures and nationalities; fortunately, that presented few if any issues for us. It was a delightful mix. The car winders and stresses of the teenage years did present emotional and even some mental issues. The teaching staff - who doubled as administrators in those days - offered me as Vice President and as President to assist in what were invariably sensitive situations. Walking around campus, minus the traditional coffee cup in hand, was an effective way of keeping in touch with students and staff, explaining what was happening, fielding questions, and finding out if problems existed.

Jointly with staff, we hosted a Christmas (yes, we still called it Christmas back then) event. The one I remember was a talent show

Shirin:

Today the student council aims at extending into global issues such as diversity and inclusion. One of the ways I have worked towards this as a student council co-president was through initiatives such as hosting a 'Worldly Wednesday'. Here we did a whole secondary interactive presentation, where we presented lots of different nationalities and cultures, to showcase our diverse CIS community. Furthermore, we have plans to work with the CIS counsellors to create a 'kindness week', emphasizing mental health awareness and building community.

With new emerging technology and social media, the Student Council has also taken an active part in this, with our social media account, where we showcase fun, engaging student-oriented videos as a way to connect with the student body and create a stronger sense of community and connection. These new emerging plans of the student council strongly mirror the border shifts in society, culture, and technology, and show how we have adapted the student council to easily fit into the lifestyle of many of our students.

An interview with Student Council Presidents Bill Hawkins -1976 and Shirin Bjerrum-Bohr - 2025

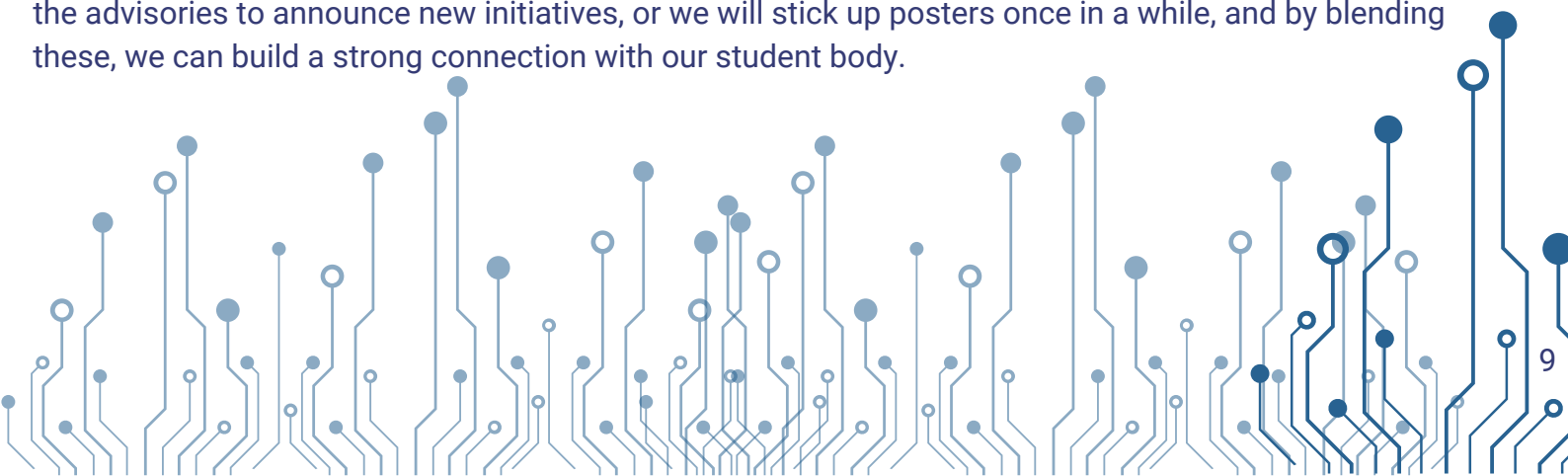
With advancements in technology, student councils now have more effective methods of connecting with the student body. How did you most successfully engage and communicate with students?

Bill:

As mentioned above, technology was still in the dark ages by today's standards. The downsides are fairly obvious: inefficiency, difficulty researching without the internet, and so on. On the other hand, the emphasis on face to face conversations allowed friendships to develop in a way that seems to be a dying art. We did have bulletin boards, which we were fairly good at ignoring, from time to time. I do not remember the information overload that we all experience today, as a result.

Shirin, do you think technology is more advantageous compared to traditional methods like bulletin boards or school announcements? Or does it have an overwhelming effect with the constant flow of information, notifications, and updates i.e information overload.

Shirin: Technology and advancement have both positives and negatives. Technology provides an easy way to communicate, and can be much more efficient than, for example, leaflets or posters, as it allows instant communication with the entire secondary student body. Along with that, technology has made it much easier to gather feedback through surveys or polls, allowing more students' voices to be heard. Social media and technology allow us to create dynamic content and let us spread information engagingly and smoothly. Despite this, technology today also presents challenges, with constant notifications easily being able to create information fatigue, where students might not turn towards important information as they would see it as 'just another email'. Along with that, technology can mean less face-to-face interaction, and with previous means of communication such as bulletin boards or posters, communication could feel more personal and grounded. As a part of the student council leadership, I recognize this, and that is why I try to incorporate a blend of both traditional and newer methods of communication. We do post on our social media, however, we often will also come around the advisories to announce new initiatives, or we will stick up posters once in a while, and by blending these, we can build a strong connection with our student body.



An interview with Student Council Presidents Bill Hawkins -1976 and Shirin Bjerrum-Bohr - 2025

Do you believe that Student Councils give students the chance to develop leadership skills, practice teamwork, and have a direct impact on their school environment and why?

Bill: Absolutely. The very fact other students look up to you or at you in a new way because of the role forces you to act like a neutral, more intermediary than administrator. But it all qualifies as leadership. I even used that dynamic to convince a teacher to select a particular student for a specific hour and activity, because the student would grow into the role, and the activity would provide him a boost he needed to grow and become more in love. It worked, and ultimately was one of my proudest accomplishments. There weren't many to whom to delegate, so we did our own leg work for the most part. We did work closely within council, with the main staff liaisons, as well as our counterparts in the host Gymnasium. Our impact was more on a personal level than on a grander scale. Our impact was more on a personal level than on a grander scale. The student body numbered only 65 or so, as I recall. There were 13 seniors in my graduating of 1972. (And yes, all graduated on time.)

Shirin: I think that student councils are the perfect place to develop leadership skills. When taking on a leadership role in the student council, you are tasked with delegation, managing tasks, overseeing projects, and through this, you develop a skill to take the lead and facilitate growth and development in your council. Not only that, teamwork is a large part of the student council, where discussing with others and working together allows you to practise hearing different opinions and ideas and fosters a strong sense of community and teamwork. The International Baccalaureate strongly encourages open-mindedness and risk-taking, which are attributes that I find taking part in the student council has taught me. This has a direct impact on the school environment as being a leader requires you to have these qualities, and by developing them in the council, you can demonstrate for the student body and build a welcoming and diverse school environment.



Bill you graduated in 1976, did you know what professional path you will embark upon and why?

Bill:

No, I did not. The seeds might have been sown with an interest in government, civics, history, sociology, later morphing into political science, public administration, and eventually the law. But I took a wide variety of undergraduate courses, veering into history, business, international relations and more, before finding a home as a junior in college in political science. Like so many, I had very little idea where I would end up. And my advice to high school students today is, that's alright. Try different things. Your interests will become clear.

An interview with Student Council Presidents Bill Hawkins -1976 and Shirin Bjerrum-Bohr - 2025

Shirin, you will graduate in 2026, do you know what professional path you will embark upon and why?

Shirin: I am currently thinking about studying medicine after I graduate, and specifically dermatology. I enjoy science, and I want to help others, and that is why this is a profession that I could consider embarking on. I am largely interested in skincare, which is also what I based my personal project in 10th grade on, and therefore, I find that dermatology could be an interesting field to study. However, I am also interested in the humanities and especially international relations. Along with the Student Council, I am also an active member of the CIS Model United Nations club, where I enjoy debate and discussions surrounding global topics. Through this club, I have realised my enjoyment for diplomacy, and therefore I would also be open to embarking on a more humanities-based professional path after I graduate.

Bill, do you think you had an impact on some issues during your time as Student Council President?

Bill:

Without a doubt. As I said earlier, we weren't leading political or social crusades in those days, we were helping fellow students navigate a new and uncertain world. For instance, for the American students among us, the Vietnam war was in full swing, and extremely unpopular in Denmark, on Danish TV and Swedish TV (which was also available). Foreign Service dependents are expected to remain strictly neutral, so the very idea of political involvement would have been a non-starter. At the same time, the war generated very strong backlash from other students, staff, and it seemed virtually every Dane I met in school and outside of school. That presented its own stresses for our students, some of whom were military dependents. We had a peer. Outselling the role to play, and I believed it helped.



Shirin, what impact does the Student Council hope to make during your time as President?

Shirin:

I mentioned in a lot of my previous answers this idea of building a community, but that is the core and aim of many student council activities and initiatives. Our Secondary School is a diverse community with different interests, goals, and ideas, and as a part of the Student Council leadership, I want to bring us all together through fun and captivating activities. I enjoyed the international day parade/presentation that the student council hosted during a secondary school assembly, and such initiatives are the way to strive towards building a community. I want people to look back at the 2025 student council term as one that brought the whole secondary together, if that's through our engaging social media presence, our proms, after-school events, or our assemblies and parades.

[Link to International Student Council page 1972](#)



Parent Engagement



Parent and Teacher Association



As we head toward the end of another school year, it's the perfect time to pause, look back — and maybe exhale just a little — after what has been a truly remarkable and joy-filled year for our PTA.

At the heart of every vibrant school community is something more than timetables, books, and test scores. It's people. It's a connection. It's those magic moments that remind us we belong to something bigger than ourselves — and this year, the PTA has been honoured to help create exactly that.

From day one, our aim has been simple: build community, celebrate diversity, and have some fun along the way. Mission accomplished — and then some.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL – 35 COUNTRIES, ONE INCREDIBLE DAY

Few events showcase the spirit of our school like the International Festival. With 35 countries represented, families shared traditional dishes, stories, music, crafts, and cultural pride. Flags flew high, and hearts even higher, as the entire community celebrated the richness of our shared global heritage. It wasn't just a festival — it was a living, breathing geography lesson (with better snacks).



CULTURE CORNER - 10 TRADITIONS, COUNTLESS CONNECTIONS

One of this year's newest and most meaningful initiatives was Culture Corner — a beautiful showcase of heritage brought to life through 10 inspiring displays curated by families from around the world.

From Lunar New Year to Diwali, St Patrick's Day and Dia de los Muertos, Culture Corner gives our community an ongoing chance to discover, explore, and appreciate traditions they may never have encountered before. These rotating exhibits sparked corridor conversations, classroom discussions, and a deeper sense of shared understanding across the school.



Parent and Teacher Association

BEHIND THE SCENES: A BUSY TEAM, A BIG HEART!



People often ask, “How do you do it all?” The truth is: we don’t.

The PTA is not only the PTA leadership team, it’s all of us, powered by a mosaic of volunteers — some who dive in for every event, and others who lend a hand when and where they can. Some make posters, some make spreadsheets, and others just make time. All are valued. We’re parents, caregivers, professionals, multitaskers, students and teachers — all united by a shared belief that community matters. That giving our children a strong sense of belonging is just as important as giving them a strong academic start. Celebrating who we are — and where we all come from — is how we extend the teaching of our schools’ core values: compassion, creativity, inclusion, growth, and integrity.

WHY IT MATTERS (BEYOND THE BALLOONS AND FAIRY LIGHTS)

Our school is unique — a true international melting pot of languages, cultures, and stories. That diversity is our strength. But with such rich variety also comes the need for intentional community-building. That’s where the PTA comes in.

We are the unofficial welcome committee, the event planners, the “where-do-I-find-the-lost-property?” whisperers, and the social glue that helps hold it all together.

This year, we’ve helped:

New families settle in (navigating everything from veracross to car parking fines)

Parents find support — whether through a coffee chat or a shared laugh at a late-night social event.

Students see their cultures celebrated — not just tolerated, but loved.



When children see adults from different backgrounds working together, volunteering, showing up — they learn what real community looks like. And more than that, they mirror what they see — kindness, generosity, collaboration, and pride in being part of something bigger than themselves.

These are the building blocks of educating champions of a just and sustainable world, the world we want them to grow into.

HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR – OVER 1,000 GUESTS!

It was creepy, it was kooky, it was altogether brilliant! With cobwebs in every corner, costume creativity off the charts, and up to 1,000 guests, our Halloween celebration transformed the school into a haunted house of joy. From pumpkin carving to haunted hallways, trick or treat street and Monster Mash. Parents, students, and staff came together to make it a night to remember.



Parent and Teacher Association

GRATITUDE, GROWTH, AND LOOKING AHEAD

To all of our volunteers — thank you! Truly.

Whether you gave five minutes or fifty hours, brought snacks or ideas, cleaned up the kitchen or waved your flag at International Fest — you made this year shine.

We hope you felt the joy, the connection, and the pride in every event we pulled off together.



NEXT YEAR?

We've already got ideas (and maybe a spreadsheet or two). But the real aspiration is to keep expanding our community. If you've ever thought, *Maybe I could help...*, the answer is *Yes, you can!* There's no secret handshake. Just show up. We promise to welcome you — and maybe offer you a coffee and cookie..

It Takes a Village...
And Ours Is Pretty
Amazing





SENIA Denmark:

Advocating for Inclusion and Supporting Neurodivergent Families

Founded in May 2023 by CIS parent Delia Browne, SENIA Denmark is the newest chapter of SENIA International, a global organization dedicated to promoting neurodiversity, disability awareness, and inclusive practices. As a long-time member of [SENIA International](#), Copenhagen International School (CIS) shares these values of inclusion and community.

While working with the Learning Support Parents PTA at CIS, Delia saw the need for a broader support network for families of children with additional needs in Denmark. Recognizing that many parents feel isolated, especially when new to the country, Delia sought to build a community where families could connect and access vital resources.

Today, SENIA Denmark offers a dynamic forum for parents, educators, and professionals to learn from one another and advocate for children with diverse needs.

Key initiatives include:

A Comprehensive Service Directory

Featuring over 250 providers—including medical professionals, leisure programs, and language-specific services—this directory helps families find tailored support.

Community Events

These events address key topics such as navigating services as an international family, home training benefits, and insights from individuals with lived experience.

In April 2025, CIS Director of Student Support Darryl Roberts joined SENIA Denmark's Board, reinforcing collaboration between CIS and the broader community.

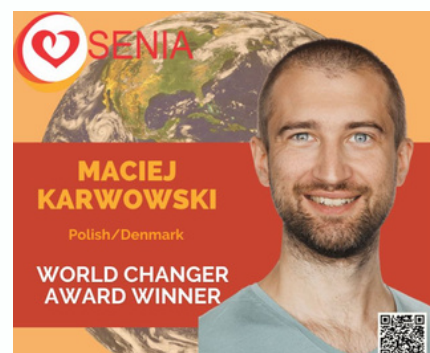
Contact SENIA Denmark:

✉ Email: seniadenmark@gmail.com 🌐 Website: www.seniainternational.org

Celebrating a True World Changer!

Maciej Karwowski has been named a recipient of the SENIA World Changer Award! As a Learning Support Teacher at Copenhagen International School, Maciej brings a wealth of international experience and a deep passion for inclusive education.

Beyond academics, Maciej's impact is truly life-changing. He nurtures confidence, fosters friendships, and provides unwavering support for his students' social, emotional, and academic growth. From guiding young learners to creating safe spaces where every child thrives, Maciej embodies what it means to be an exceptional educator and advocate for inclusion.

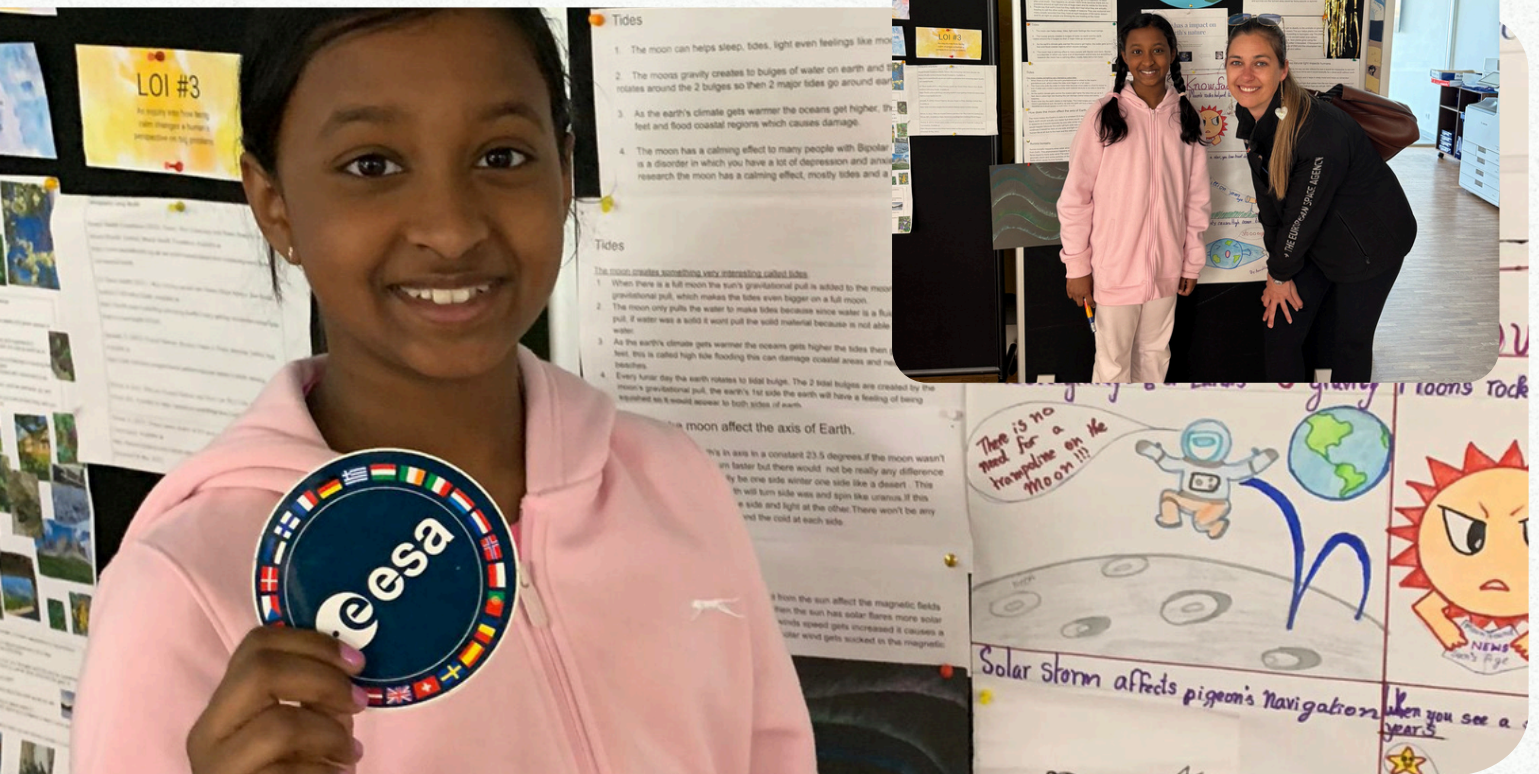




Spotlight on CIS Profiles: Students, Teachers, Volunteers

Anushka Muthukumar, Grade 5A

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." – Neil Armstrong



The PYP Exhibition was an exciting and fulfilling journey. As a space enthusiast since childhood, I chose to explore the topic: "How space can impact Earth." I was thrilled to dive into space science and began by framing lines of inquiry around space missions, microgravity, the International Space Station, space debris, and the Big Bang theory.

To deepen my understanding, I visited the Planetarium, interviewed astrophysicists, and explored Europe's oldest observatory at the Round Tower, where I saw Jupiter and some of its moons. My exhibition display featured Oreo moon phases, paper models of solar storms, and cardboard demonstrations of eclipses and gravity. I also explored a Danish connection by studying CIS alum and astronaut Andreas Mogensen.



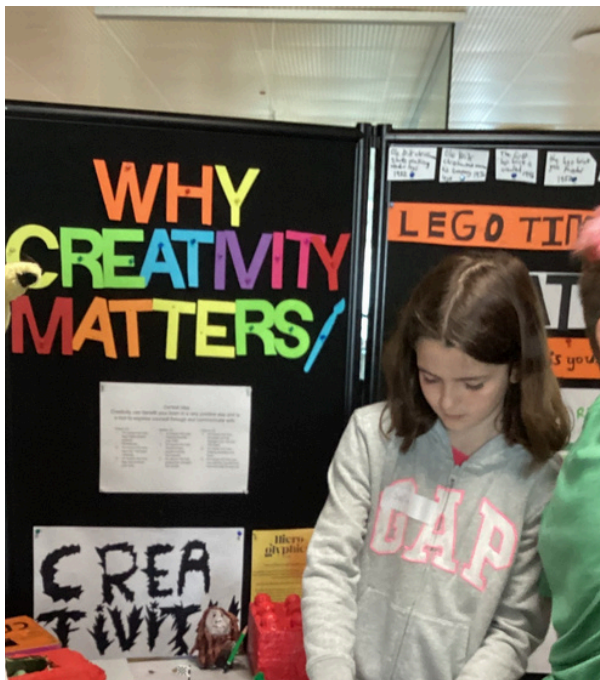
Adding creativity, I wrote a poem about space exploration and illustrated fun space facts to engage younger students. A highlight was meeting Ms. Sheila Christensen, space scientist and CEO of Sheilex, who appreciated my work.

Throughout this experience, I developed my research, creativity, and thinking skills. I'm grateful to my teachers and friends for their support. I believe space exploration is vital, as it helps us understand Earth better and may even help fight climate change.



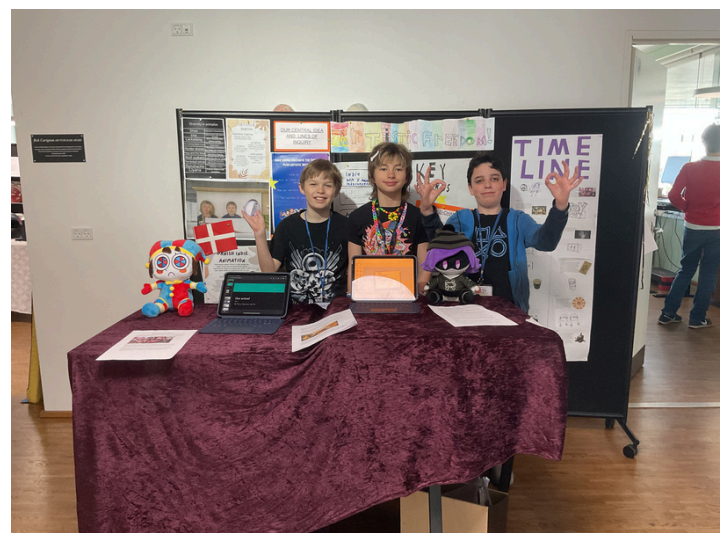
5B: Adam, Sofia, Isaak

We think it went well because people were very respectful listeners. We enjoyed it very much because it was fun to get to share our knowledge even though we were a bit nervous. A highlight was probably seeing people add to our community art tree and express their feelings.



5C: Terry, Harrison, Ori

It was fun but stressful at the same time, learning about 'indie animation'. One of the best bits was to teach people how to animate digitally. Some of the grown-ups were really impressed with what we showed them. We loved doing the research and creating our stand was really fun. We also liked how we got a lot of free choice with designing our display. There were plenty of visitors. We don't know if we were the most popular, but by the crowds that we got it certainly felt like it.





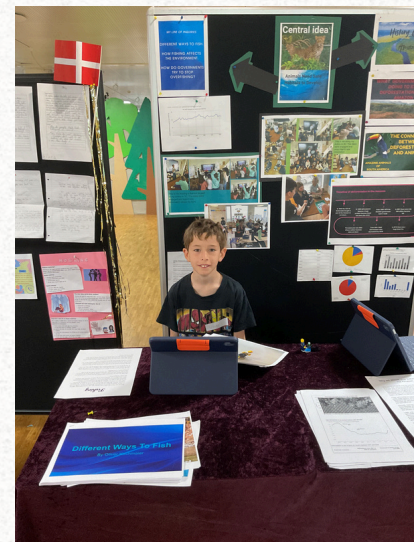
Lev Šooš

My exhibition was about economic inequality. While I was researching, I found out that information about this topic was hard to find. Many times, I felt like I just wanted to give up on my topic, but my parents helped me persevere, and I did extra research at home. I made slideshows, found photos, and built models to represent my topic. In the end, I felt relieved that it was not a failure. I was extremely happy that I stuck with my topic even though it was hard.

My main focus on economic inequality was income inequality in mining. I learned that most mines in Africa and South America are owned by foreign companies, which leaves the local people in poverty. The minerals they take out of the mines can be worth ten times more than what the local workers get paid. A good example of this is the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has more than 70% of the world's cobalt but is still one of the poorest countries in the world.



5D: Elliot and Oli



It went well because many people came and we were prepared. We enjoyed the research because we could learn about a topic we liked. Elliot felt comfortable presenting to different audiences and adjusted his vocabulary with younger students. Oli felt a bit nervous and didn't like standing so much and repeating his information too many times. One highlight for Oli though was using Canva to make posters and printing it. One highlight for Elliot was presenting his board game for younger kids. Thank you to everyone who helped with our stand (especially Janica) and visited our stand!

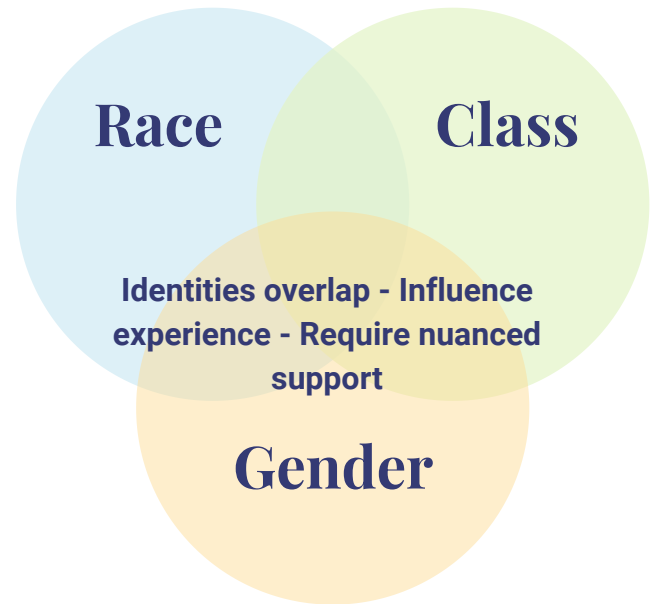
Building an Inclusive CIS: A Collective Journey Forward

By Nayoung Kim-Weaver, DEIJB Coordinator, Copenhagen International School

As the incoming Coordinator for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging (DEIJB) at CIS, I step into this role with deep gratitude for the foundation built by Olella Nyiendo. My vision is rooted in collaboration, connection, and care, seeing myself as a weaver who brings together voices, experiences, and actions to co-create a truly inclusive community.

Deepening Our Shared Understanding of Diversity

At CIS, we celebrate diversity—but to be truly inclusive, we must understand how identities like race, gender, class, and nationality intersect. This means moving beyond surface-level acknowledgment to a richer, more nuanced awareness of how lived experiences shape our community members. We'll gather ongoing feedback, engage in storywork, and analyze meaningful data to help us grow together.



Collaborating on Data-Informed Strategies

Data is a vital tool—not just numbers, but narratives. By incorporating insights from climate surveys and lived experiences, we will develop a community-centered strategic plan. This roadmap will guide our actions over the next several years and allow us to respond dynamically to the evolving needs of our community.



Centering Marginalized Voices

We are proud of the advocacy work already happening at CIS through groups like the Racial & Social Justice Union and the Gender-Sexuality Alliance. Moving forward, we will ensure that marginalized voices are not only heard but placed at the center of decision-making processes. By honoring the cultural wealth within our school, we foster deeper understanding and solidarity.



Strategic Planning Process



Promoting Anti-Racism and Curriculum Reform

Our commitment includes addressing systemic racism and Eurocentric narratives within our curriculum. We aim to develop anti-racist and decolonial learning frameworks that reflect our values and challenge dominant norms. This process invites students, educators, and families into critical reflection and co-learning.



Social Change Ecosystem Roles

Fostering Intersectional Affinity and Allyship Groups

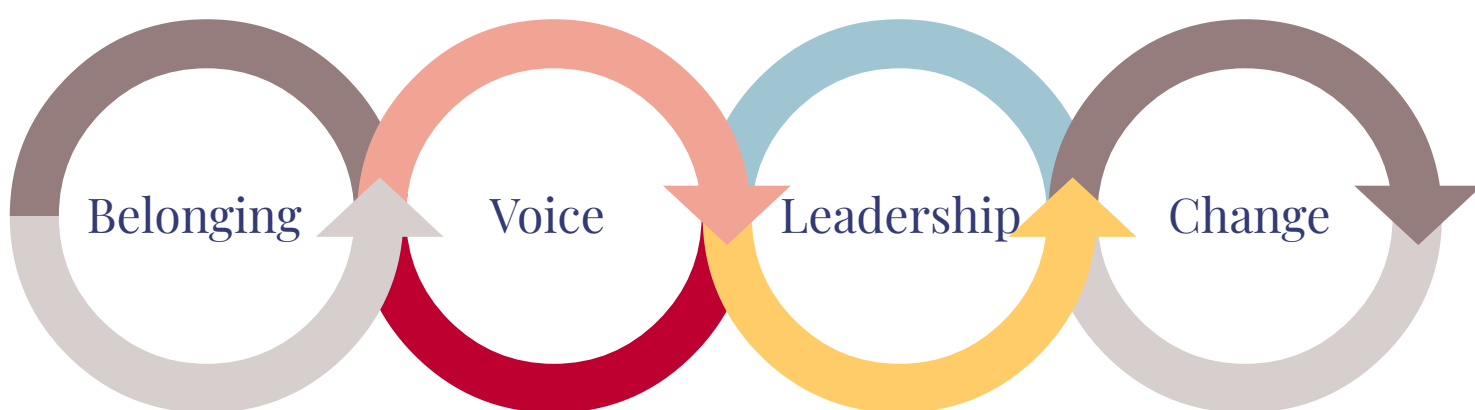
We are expanding affinity and allyship groups to support identity exploration, empathy-building, and collective action. These groups are essential in helping students feel seen, heard, and empowered. They also support the development of leadership rooted in equity and justice.

Prioritizing Well-Being and Belonging

Belonging is more than a goal—it's a lived experience. As digital interactions increase, so too must our efforts to foster genuine, in-person connections. We'll strengthen student support services and create more opportunities for intercultural events and shared dialogue, helping everyone feel welcomed and valued.

Creating Accountability and Sustainable Structures

We're developing a clear DEIJB policy, reporting protocols, and a dedicated Task Force to ensure accountability. Regular surveys and progress assessments will help us stay on course and celebrate wins along the way.



Empowerment Loop

As Angela Davis reminds us, “it is in collectivity that we find reservoirs of hope and optimism.”

This work is not just about programs—it's about people. I look forward to walking this path together, where every voice matters and every individual can thrive.

OPERATION WALLACEA MADAGASCAR 2024

By Lorraine Wykes



In June 2024, 14 Grade 10 and Grade 11 students had the amazing opportunity to go on a Biology Conservation Trip to Madagascar under the renowned organization Operation Wallacea.

This once-in-a-lifetime trip presented to us a completely different world: a culture many of us hadn't interacted with before, and endemic species we couldn't even begin to imagine the beauty of.

Despite the lengthy road trips across the country to the Forest Site in Mariarano and an enthusiastic, yet scary, propeller plane ride to the island of Nosy Bé for the Marine Site, we loved experiencing the Malagasy culture and getting to know the country.

In fact, I could even argue that one of my most memorable moments from the trip was our 2-hour hike from the Mariarano Camp to its satellite camp in Matsedroy, where we trudged through water that came up to mid-thigh and found ourselves forced to a halt by a passing Zibu! Therefore, even the trips between camps were something invaluable to our fantastic experience.

When it came to the scientific surveys, we had a multitude of them and everyone quickly found something they enjoyed the most. The bird surveys were the highlight of many. Although the bird-point count was undoubtedly the hardest, as it required us to wake up before sunrise and stand quietly in a forest that was brimming to life, the bird mist netting was an exhilarating experience. In this survey, we got to hold a bird gently in our hands and let it take flight from our extended palms.

The most entertaining survey in my opinion, was the butterfly survey, where we ran around sweeping our nets in the air and exclaiming gleefully when we caught a butterfly. It reminded me of a scene from Winnie the Pooh and we all unequivocally felt childish glee. I also particularly enjoyed the spider survey which, at night, brought to the air a perfect mixture of fear and excitement. Using tubes, sweeping nets, and sieves, we gathered scuttling spiders on a mat. Unfortunately, scientific research in the field of small creatures, like spiders and butterflies, requires them to kill the spiders in ethanol (a quick and relatively painless death), which was a sad reality we had to face.



Despite the deep darkness that settles in Mariarano on winter nights, it was relatively easy and fun to identify the animals on our night surveys; spiders' eyes glowed a Halloweenish green colour whereas lemurs' eyes glowed a bright orange.





However, for many, the highlight of the trip was yet to come. The Marine Site had a completely different ambience to that of the forest site. Whereas, in the forest we slept in tents, here we had cabins, and meals were much better (the water had also lost its metallic taste that came from filtering it which we greatly appreciated). It was here that non-divers like myself had the fantastic opportunity to learn how to dive. Starting in a freezing swimming pool, we quickly submerged ourselves into the depths of the Indian Ocean, where the experienced divers were carrying out surveys, ranging from Coral and Fish ID, to performing sampling techniques such as PVC quadrats and transect lines. We spent the whole week diving and we loved it! We would come back from the open waters to a warm beach, delicious food and comfortable dorms. There were even some stray cats we played around with!

On our last day with Operation Wallacea we took a motorboat and went to a small island called Nosy Tanikely; or as many of us referred to it as - Paradise Island. The water was translucent, and even from the surface the marine life was visible. Grabbing our snorkelling gear, we swam with turtles, rays and schools of multicoloured fish. We even saw an octopus hiding in a rock!

During this time, we also had the chance to celebrate three of our group's birthdays, with a delicious cake and many smiles!

Therefore, it was undeniable that our last day felt solemn with the knowledge that we were departing soon. We left Operation Wallacea and headed for our last night in a hostel on the beach, where we enjoyed bathing in the warm sun and buying drinks from the hotel bar. At dinner, we were lucky enough to have a final encounter with Malagasy culture as a band sang on a makeshift stage, and a funny-looking gecko clung to the wall behind them.

Overall, it was a fantastic experience where so much was learnt and a great deal experienced.





Generation Alpha





Connected, Yet Disconnected: How the World Has Changed in 40 Years

By Karleen Kaur, Grade 11

In the past 40 years, humanity has achieved great technological progress. From smartphone technology to space rover technology, the advancements have been profound. Communication has become instant, global, and constant, yet more people have reported feeling more isolated, anxious, and misunderstood. As smartphones and social media become substitutes for genuine relationships, we must ask ourselves: ***in connecting with everyone, have we lost the ability to truly connect with anyone?***

1985 marked the early days of mobile communication, introducing the first British mobile phones. Although most people still used landlines, the first truly portable cell phones had just appeared. Communication was still dependent on face-to-face conversations and physical presence. It was not until the late 1990s and early 2000s that the rise of SMS texting and internet-based communication occurred.

What we have gained in speed, we have lost in sincerity. By using our smartphones 24/7, we have become normalized to sensitive events unfolding around us. Another airstrike in Ukraine, a bombing in Palestine - no longer hard-hitting but something we merely scroll through. Tragedy has been reduced to headlines. Our constant exposure has normalized the horrific, dulling our empathy and making global crises into background noise.

However, many are aware of this issue. For example, here in Denmark, the government plans to ban mobile phones in schools and after-school clubs, following concerns about the negative impact of constant digital exposure on children's well-being.

At Copenhagen International School (CIS), a new rule has been implemented for secondary school students: "Phones must be off and away during the school day!" Our school has also begun encouraging students to build genuine connections, away from the screen. Initiatives such as "tech-free lunches" remind students that using our phones should be a conscious decision, something we do with intention, not out of habit.

As we move deeper into the digital age, we must not forget that the foundation of a community is based on genuine connections. The challenge now is not avoiding technology, but learning how to live with it wisely.

"Denmark to Ban Mobile Phones in Schools and After-school Clubs." The Guardian. Last modified February 25, 2025. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/feb/25/denmark-to-ban-mobile-phones-in-schools-and-after-school-clubs>.

"1985 in Science." Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia. Last modified October 11, 2024. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1985_in_science.

Four Big Steps in Four Big Decades: How Have We Changed Since 1985?



"Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

— Ferris Bueller, Ferris Bueller's Day Off (1986)

Forty years ago, the world felt slower, potentially smaller, but a shiver of change was universally felt. Fast forward to 2025, the pace of the world is dizzying. Technology continues to upgrade itself, societies come and fall, and we are all here to watch it as the Earth spins beneath our feet. In the blink of an eye, another forty years will pass, so let's take a moment, 'stop and look around once in a while' -- because if we don't, we might just miss it.

When we think about how fast the world has changed, we instantly mull over mobile phones and social media. Those things are right in front of us; literally, in the form of endless timelines that act as running tracks for our eyes day and night, cradled in our hands. Yet, technology has not only shifted the way we interact with information, but also the way we interact with others. This was seen from the way we form relationships to the way we play a part in activism. Notably, social media initiatives of diversity and inclusion have catapulted previously unheard voices, but not without a fight.



During the 2015 Oscars, the reigning lack of diversity was met with a spark of frustration through the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite, wherein viewers voiced frustrations on no nominations being placed in the acting categories. This sign of activism, born from both a truthful and snide remark, changed the landscape of the Academy, leading to diversity initiatives being introduced. 10 years later, the narrative has changed.

In 2023, Everything Everywhere All At Once took home ten Oscar wins, whilst simultaneously voicing the lives of first-generation Asian Americans with a smidgen of eye-opening fantasy. With outlets where the 'common person' gets placed on a level playing field, the world can have more equal discussions among each other and drive introspective and intersectional ideas forward. In that way, social media and the connection of people drive us closer together to a more united world.

("AI's carbon footprint - how does the popularity of artificial intelligence affect the climate?" 2024)

(Ritchie, Rosado, and Roser, n.d.)

("EU ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2035 explained | Topics" 2022)

Consequently, we must see the nuances in front of our technological advancements. Over the course of 40 years, the way we pollute has accelerated. Despite much of our carbon dioxide emissions still coming from non-renewable sources, technological advances have also set forth another chain reaction of carbon-producing processes. With the rise of AI in our daily lives, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere has skyrocketed. Over 502 tonnes of CO₂ have been released in the training of GPT-3, which is comparable to approximately a year's worth of emissions for 112 petrol-fuelled cars. Our knowledge of the effects of carbon dioxide has enlarged, and even the laws surrounding single-use plastics have changed, but our worldly emissions have partially stayed the same, averaging at 4.5 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person in both 1985 and 2025. In that regard, it is really up for debate on how we have changed over the past four decades; perhaps the biggest change in carbon dioxide emitters over the years has been a move to tech-based emissions. What is important to note is our increased consciousness of renewable practices, and we must extend this in the next four decades. Policies regarding carbon dioxide emissions should continue and extend beyond plastic straws. What's important to know is that we're already halfway there: policies are in place to better the climate, where in 10 more years all newly produced cars in the EU must not rely on petrol engines for power. We must strive forward to be even more environmentally and socially responsible, compared to our past forty years.

But, what are some things that have stayed the same over forty years? Despite revolutions in technology, politics, and communication, one fundamental truth has remained unchanged over the past four decades: human nature. At our core, we still feel the same emotions: love, fear, hope, jealousy, and pride are all emotions that have shaped who we are from 40 years ago, now, and always. The ways we express these emotions may have evolved, with emojis and texting replacing handwritten letters, and social media becoming a diary of public vulnerability through reposts and Instagram likes, but the feelings themselves persist. A breakup still hurts, a hug comforts, and the desire to be seen, heard, and understood remains just as strong. Whether it's a teenager writing in their journal in 1985 or one posting a video today, the underlying need to connect and process emotion unites generations across time. With emotions as our biological guiding light, this is a fact that will run forever, and is at the core of our interactions.

All in all, Ferris Bueller was right. Life does move pretty fast. When focusing on 2025, we must strive to be better, but also realise how far we have come in comparison to 1985. Perhaps we have not been on a smooth sailing route, but it's important to acknowledge the massive leaps we have gone through in terms of diversification, especially when remembering our international environment at CIS.

Written by Alima Kosbayeva, Grade 11.



Autumn Break

By Benjamin Ludwig



This autumn break I spent my time volunteering at an organic farm called Økobo. One of my friends and I took a train to Odense, a bus to Faaborg, and then a ferry to a small island where Økobo is located.

The farm itself was filled with natural beauty. The island it was located on - called Bjørnø - only has about twenty residents, so its exceptionally serene. The moon and stars are clearly visible at night and the ocean wildlife is striking and spectacular. My friend and I went crabbing and fishing in our free time, with varying degrees of success. The natural plant growth is beautiful too, and we got the privilege to learn about the wild mushrooms and reeds growing in that area.

The housing and hospitality was wonderful at the farm - significantly better than expected. My friend and I shared a small, two bedroom cottage connected to the other farmer's houses. The house, designed in a rustic style with a red door split halfway down the middle, was beautiful and very comfortable throughout our stay. While we had a kitchen we mostly used the large communal kitchen. We were given free range over the ingredients and the two most memorable meals I prepared and ate were a homemade pizza and a simple ground beef and potato dish with chili oil. The ingredients were so fresh it didn't really matter what you made, it was bound to be delicious.

The people there were also so kind. There were many farmers that oversaw us during our stay, and every one of them was welcoming and warm. My friend and I played with the dogs on the island a lot. They were very friendly and excited to have people willing to run and play with them. One night the farmers invited us to join them in the sauna. After heating up in the sauna we rushed into the cool water, and while washing the sand off our feet in a small tub we noticed bioluminescent algae permeating the water around us. It was a particularly relaxing experience and fostered a family bond between all people at the farm.

**Greener
Workspaces,
Happier
Teams!**





However (as expected for a farm) it wasn't all fun and games. We did hard work every day with tasks ranging from setting up fences to clearing weeds to taking care of the animals. One of the especially grueling tasks we did was placing seaweed on asparagus to prepare them for the winter. It was six hours of straight work and was very monotonous; carry seaweed, place seaweed, walk back, repeat. Our backs were very sore afterwards. Harvesting potatoes was also hard work. A lot of upper body strength was required to pull up the potatoes with the pitchforks. Some of my personal tasks (as I have worked on farms many times before) included taking care of the cows and chickens. I woke up early each morning to feed the cows and chickens, and then in the late afternoon collected eggs to stock the shop for locals. Compared to some of the other farms I've worked on, Økobo was quite laid back. We technically only worked from eight to three (though we often went over to help a little extra with the farm work) and had plenty of downtime.

We did a lot of fun things during our free time at Økobo. I finished two books, made clover tea, swam in the ocean, and talked to locals. What stands out most about our free time during this trip was the exploration. We walked by the ocean, skipped rocks, and even found a four leafed clover! The weather was perfect when we went - sunny most days with the chill of autumn still fresh in the air.

The main reason I chose to volunteer at Økobo was the connection to nature and a retreat from modern life. Something about working with your hands and seeing something come of that - a cow moo at you or a plant growing - really appeals to me and is very refreshing, especially in a day and age where most work we do is on a computer. I gained a lot from the experience: a refresh and retreat from fast-paced city life, a way to connect with a friend, and a way to build new connections with others. I also got to learn a lot about local Danish flora and fauna and got to work with animals.

If you have some free time coming up, I would strongly recommend volunteering at a farm. Many farms need extra help, especially heading into the spring months when farms will be sowing new crops and the number of people looking for farmwork is dwindling. Being a farmhand is very hard work and is not for the faint of heart, but is incredibly rewarding and gives you lots of life experience.

I hope you enjoy the few photos from my stay.



MODEL UNITED NATIONS

The Model United Nations (MUN) is an after-school club at CIS that is open to 9th to 12th-grade students. MUN, simply explained, is a simulation of the United Nations (UN), in which students represent a country and debate global topics. It mirrors the procedures of the United Nations, so students, posing as delegates, together draft a document that outlines solutions to pressing global issues, called a resolution. Delegates engage in active debates, speeches, negotiations, and voting to achieve the aims of peace whilst also representing the interests of their country. In this process, students practice policy-making and public speaking and consider the perspectives of member states.

The CIS Model United Nations (MUN) club meets every Thursday, led by teacher Anna Peachey. Sessions feature activities like MUN 101 lessons, fast-paced debates, research, and mock conferences. Topics range from global issues to imaginative scenarios, helping members practice public speaking and MUN procedures. Students of all skill levels participate, with experienced delegates mentoring newer ones through direct instruction and support. Marlene, a new member, says the club offers “a comfortable environment” for exploring ideas without fear of judgment. The club also fosters leadership, with senior students running simulations, such as recent debates on statehood and emergency crises.

Local conferences with nearby schools offer a realistic MUN experience while fostering regional collaboration. August, a new member, enjoys the beginner-friendly events at CIS and ISH, noting they allow full participation without the pressure of international conferences, making them ideal for building confidence and practicing debate skills.

In February 2025, 28 CIS students attended the BIGMUN international conference. Under the theme “Achieving peace: piece by piece,” they participated as delegates and chairs, earning six Best Delegate awards and Best Delegation for Russia. Notably, Niv co-chaired the General Assembly, calling the experience both nerve-wracking and rewarding.

Conferences

The MUN experience includes conferences outside of school and even Denmark. In the 2024-25 school year, the club has gone to well-respected international conferences, including:

- **BERMUN**, hosted by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung and John F. Kennedy School in Germany
- **ASMMUN**, hosted by the American School of Milan in Italy
- **BIGMUN**, hosted by Birkerød Gymnasium in Denmark.

The MUN club also hosted conferences at CIS, including a half-day conference in which the schools of Thomas Mann Schule and International School of Hellerup were invited to discuss.



Student interview:

What's your favourite part of Model UN?

Written by Surin Lee

Arguing

Jonah shared his favourite part of Model UN: arguing. Especially in BIGMUN, Jonah was the delegate of Russia. With few to no allies and a lot of opposition, there was heated but diplomatic debate on almost every issue. Jonah reports this to be thrilling.

In a similar way, Linus shared he enjoyed listening to and making arguments about nuclear factories as they deal with issues relevant and parallel to the world we live in now. Linus also shared his growth through representing a country and its policies: "Trying to represent a country pushes you out of your comfort zone because before going into research, you don't know much about the country." Then, based on his research, he had to react to amendments made at the conference through negotiations and objections, and that part, he found, was exciting.

Lea-Sophia shared that: "Joining forces with your allies when a country makes an outrageous statement is fun. Passing looks with your allies, passing notes, and devising a perfect speech or critical Point of Information is exhilarating."

Travelling

Numerous students report travelling to be their favourite part of Model UN. Whilst the main purpose is to engage in UN-style debates, visiting the Duomo during our conference in Milan, visiting thrift stores in Berlin, and a trip to McDonald's is certainly a treat.

Socialising

Many students report that socialising is one of the key benefits of being in Model UN, alongside academic growth. Model UN is an excellent way to meet friends from all over the world, with diverse backgrounds, and different school systems. Although separated by borders, students unite under the umbrella of MUN and get to share so many experiences. Putting teenagers in the same room for around five hours a day for consecutive days creates a perfect environment to foster connection. I have personally made so many new friends, who inspire me in all different ways, and continue to interact via social media.

Not only making new friends from different schools, Lea-Sophia shared that it is a chance to get closer to CIS students. Rehaan agreed, saying, "My friend group and our MUN group are quite different. However, going on trips to conferences with people allowed me to talk to a lot of new people in my grade that I wouldn't normally talk to. I made new friends thanks to it."

Most importantly, Model UN is not just a club, or a Community, Activity, Service (CAS) experience. Model UN is an impactful experience that gives students an opportunity to take risks and see where they can go with each attempt. I experience post-conference depression, due to the highs during conferences. Making a contribution, attempting public speaking, and indulging in lively debate heighten emotions, as well as connection with those in the room. For this reason, many students choose to pursue Model UN long-term after joining it. I personally transformed thanks to MUN. Crafting amendments has taught me to focus on solutions rather than complaints, and representing nations other than my own has deepened my understanding of the complexities of diplomacy. Standing at the podium to deliver speeches, I've learned to speak up for what I believe in, and chairing has shown me that true leadership often comes from active listening. For me, MUN is not an event that comes to a close as I exit the debate room, but a lasting experience of lessons learned, laughter shared, and friends made that I will carry on moving forward.

When I first joined the school in August 2023, Charity Club was the very first extracurricular I got involved in. At the time, I didn't know much about it; one of my friends from my TOK class simply invited me to come along. I decided to join her, and I'm so glad I did. Through this club, I've met incredible people and had the chance to contribute to meaningful causes through a wide variety of projects.

One of the areas I was most involved in over the past two years was advertising and marketing. I helped design numerous posters for different events, including those promoting our local soup kitchen and raising awareness for the library project we supported in Ghana.

I also had the opportunity to attend two meetings with the school's head of marketing. These meetings focused on finding more effective ways to promote the club. Additionally, I also sent out emails to students in Grades 9 through 12, recruiting volunteers for upcoming events.

TRIVIA NIGHT

From February 2024 to February 2025, two of my friends and I organised Charity Club's Trivia Night as part of our CAS project. Trivia Night is one of the club's biggest fundraisers. The funds raised go toward developing a model for teaching nutrition to middle-aged petty traders in an urban slum in Ghana. These women, many of whom had to leave school at an early age, benefit from learning about healthy food habits for themselves and their families. I created promotional materials, including posters and email announcements to parents and staff. In the days leading up to the event, I also sent reminder emails.



Together with the help of Amy and Ute, we wrote the trivia questions for each round. The event was held on February 21st, 2025. There were around 13 tables with six participants each.

Being part of Charity Club has been one of my favourite CAS experiences. It allowed me to develop my creative and organisational skills, and most importantly, contribute to causes that matter.



2024- 2025 CIS Student Life



CIS Boys JV Basketball team

It has been a busy and exciting year for our sports teams at CIS. We have hosted and travelled to tournaments locally and internationally for basketball, football, volleyball, swimming and track and field. We are incredibly proud of all our athletes who have represented our school at home and away.

Some results this year stand out as highlights. During the NORDIC middle school basketball tournament our CIS girls team took 1st place and our two boys teams came in 3rd and 4th place.

During our recent NECIS event, ten visiting schools came to CIS from across Northern Europe to take part in the basketball Junior Varsity tournament. It was a great event. Congratulations to ISS and ISA who took first place in the boys and girls divisions respectively. Hosting these tournaments well is a community wide achievement and we are grateful to our parent community who provide hospitality across all three days.

We sent two teams, U12 and U14, to the NEICS football tournament in Hamburg and Bonn this year. Both teams came away having won the Most Sporting Team Award. They did a great job of living the CIS values on and off the pitch.

Another collaboration of which CIS is a part is the Danish International School Network Athletic Conference. This year it has been chaired by Aga Debowska from our student life department. This is the first time in the history of DISNAC that it has been chaired by a woman. We were pleased to host the first professional development day for DISNAC sports coaches and we are excited to see how this will grow in the future.

Following is a summary of our other results this year and some photos from the events.



2024- 2025 CIS Student Life

Basketball:

- NORDIC - MS - CIS girls 1st CIS boys 3rd and 4th
- NECIS 2025 - U14 Girls Brussels 2nd
- NECIS 2025 - U14 Boys Brussels 2nd
- NECIS 2025 - JV Girls CIS 3rd

Football:

- NECIS 2024 (Hamburg) U12 Boys Most Sporting Team
- NECIS 2024 (Bonn) U14 Boys Most Sporting Team

Volleyball:

- NECIS 2024 (Bonn) U14 Girls 1st
- DISNAC 2024 U12 Girls 1st
- DISNAC 2024 U14 Girls 1st
- DISNAC 2024 U14 Girls 1st



Track & Fields/X.Country:

- NECIS 2024 (Amsterdam) U18 Girls - 1st
- NECIS 2024 (Amsterdam) U12 Boys - 1st



DISNAC Football hosted by
CIS

CIS Girls JV Basketball team



Brothers in Sports

The NECIS swimming competition was intense and unforgettable, with a huge pool, bright lights, and stands full of cheering students. Each race brought a rush of adrenaline, and though my brothers and I competed in different events, we were always on the sidelines for each other, cheering loud and proud. The races were tough, with close finishes and unexpected challenges, but we gave it our all. More than just medals, it was about pushing ourselves, representing our school, and making memories we'll never forget.

Christopher Chaplin, Grade 7



2024- 2025
CIS Student
Life



DISNAC Volleyball U12 Girls

NECIS U14 Volleyball Girls



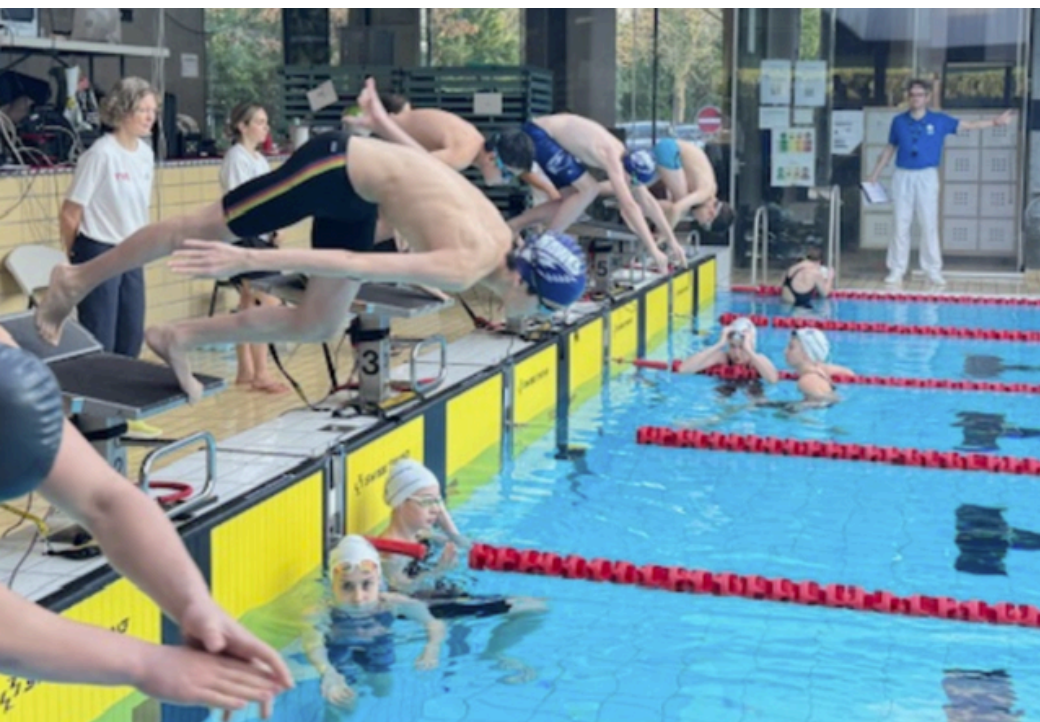


2024- 2025 CIS Student Life

Cross-Country team in Amsterdam



U14 Boys Football team

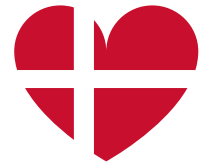


CIS Swimmers taking part in a Time-Trials event





A SLOVENIAN IN DENMARK



Timotej Šooš is a career diplomat passionate about public policy design and innovation through strategic foresight. He led Slovenia's first steps to deliver on Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. He is also a member of the Global Councils on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG17) and the OECD Advisory Group on Using Well-Being Metrics in Policy.



1. What were your thoughts when you heard you were transferring from Romania to Denmark?

We were very excited about moving to a city where both we and our kids can easily get around by bike, and where green is the dominant colour of most neighbourhoods. Being originally from Slovenia, a country where forests cover two-thirds of the land, we truly value easy access to nature. Denmark's emphasis on sustainability and outdoor living felt like a great fit for our lifestyle.

2. How did you prepare your children for the move to a country so different – or not – from Denmark? What do you miss more, what have you gained?

Relocating every few years is part of our life, and we're very aware that it's not only adults who experience the stress of moving, children feel it deeply too. We raise our kids to be resilient and open to change, and that includes having open conversations well in advance of each move. We begin by talking through the idea of leaving, acknowledging the emotions that come with saying goodbye to places, routines, and especially people we've grown close to. It's a process of both grieving and looking ahead with anticipation. In Romania, we loved the warmth and openness of the people, their hospitality, and of course, the delicious fresh food. We especially enjoyed exploring Transylvania and the Carpathian Mountains. In Denmark, we appreciate clean air and water, accessible public transport, and bike-friendly infrastructure. Our kids even go to school on their own, which is a big step toward independence. We also value the strong sense of social cohesion and trust in institutions.

3. Have you been able to create a network of friends via the Slovenian Embassy and CIS, or elsewhere?

Yes, we've managed to build a lovely circle of friends here. Most of them are from the expat community or have some international background. While it's not always easy to form close friendships with locals, we've found the international school and Embassy community to be very welcoming and supportive.



4. What role does the Slovenian Embassy play in Denmark?

The Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia in Copenhagen is accredited to all five Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. This regional approach requires strong relationship-building across multiple areas. As EU and NATO member states, we work closely with our Nordic counterparts on shared goals—from supporting Ukraine to promoting peace and security.

The Embassy also serves our Slovenian community in the region, supports Slovenian businesses, and fosters cultural, scientific, and economic cooperation. The Nordic countries are global leaders in sustainable development, digital innovation, and human rights—areas where Slovenia shares strong values and active collaboration.

We're proud to represent Slovenian interests while contributing to deeper ties.



5. World Bee Day is 20 May each year, commemorating the birthday of Anton Janša, a pioneer in modern beekeeping. The Embassy kindly held a presentation at CIS to raise awareness of the increasing threat to bees. How important is it to create awareness on this topic?

This topic is very close to Slovenia's heart. We are proud to be among the top-ranking countries in the world in terms of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and bees are central to that mission. Pollinators are vital for food security, biodiversity, and healthy ecosystems, yet they are increasingly at risk. By initiating World Bee Day and supporting global awareness campaigns, Slovenia seeks to highlight the importance of bees as part of a broader, systems-based approach to sustainable development and societal well-being. At the Embassy, we actively promote partnerships and educational initiatives across the region to support this goal.

6. Any words for new families transitioning to Denmark and the school?

We'd like to warmly welcome all new families. CIS is much more than a school—it's a vibrant community that offers an incredible support system for both students and parents. It's often the kick-start for friendships and social life, especially when arriving in a new country. Transitions can feel very different depending on where you're coming from, but rest assured: the weather isn't as dramatic as everyone says, the Christmas season is a 2-month-long and magical, and Danish summers are absolutely beautiful. Embrace the experience—it's a great place to grow, connect, and thrive.





Alumni



2025 CIS ALUMNI REUNION



Over 40 alumni from the graduating classes of 1995, 1997, and 2005 returned to CIS to celebrate their milestone anniversaries. Attendees travelled from a diverse range of countries, including Egypt, the USA, the UK, Denmark, Finland, Slovenia, the Netherlands, Dubai and Poland—highlighting the global reach and impact of the CIS community.



On Friday, 23rd May, a small group toured the school and engaged in an informal Q&A session with our IB1 students, who were enthusiastic to hear first-hand how the IB experience has evolved.

The highlight of the visit was a special appearance by Jim Keson (87), former High School Principal (1978–1999) and a long-standing figure in CIS history.



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On Saturday, 24th May, Courtney Moore (1995 Graduate) – who led the initiative and Suzanne O'Reilly (on behalf of CIS) hosted a sit-down dinner in the school's greenhouse. The event was extremely well-received, with many alumni expressing deep appreciation for their time at CIS. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with several guests commenting on the lasting influence the school has had on their personal and professional lives. A great night had by all :)

Coming Home ...

Niru Desai – 1995 CIS Graduate, parent of Sanaya Gr.6 and International Fair Volunteer

Career:

Global Exec | Senior Experiential Strategist | Design Thinker | Growth Curator | Climate Mentor |

Reflecting on a 30-year milestone since graduating from CIS, does it bring back a mix of emotions?

Wow! Has it really been 30 years already?! Yes, many mixed emotions. Being a parent here at CIS for the past seven years, I get to relive some of those emotions. Especially when I hear fellow parents talk about their 12th graders - or witness the energy around the school as another year of graduation approaches. The nerves around sitting the IB exams. The confusion around where to go next and filling out endless UCAS forms. The pinnacle treat of the truck ride after all the hard work! The excitement of starting a new adventure but at the same time the sadness of leaving behind friends and a very warm, inclusive, diverse and enriched community.

Upon graduation did you have a clear idea of what career you wanted to pursue?

I graduated in 1995, and at that time there was no way near the number of exciting opportunities and career paths that today's graduates have available. I knew that I wanted to study abroad after completing the IB programme and continue on a path of working and learning in a diverse community. Hence I chose the United Kingdom and an International Business degree as it gave me the flexibility to pursue various avenues in the future. I recall the disappointment of my Biology and Chemistry teacher - but they and the high school counsellor then were very supportive about my choices.



What is your profession today and did you face any obstacles or surprises that shaped your career in profound ways?

Today, I run my own Experiential Strategy company ID8 and offer global brand agencies in the US and UK advice focussed on curating, building and measuring both live and virtual experiences (shows and events) for major brands like Disney, NFL and Procter & Gamble. I have been in this industry for more than 20 years. It has indeed been a path of many twists and turns on the way!

When I first graduated, I was offered an amazing opportunity with one of the big five accountancy firms in London. My heart was keen to follow a marketing path but it was hard to say no to an offer that was financially more lucrative, and that too from a brand highly regarded as the best place to work. However, I soon realised that I was not passionate about accountancy. I was lucky to have Partners in the company who valued my potential and I was given a Marketing Planning role at the firm. First learning here: always pursue what you are passionate about. Do not give up, and seek ways to transfer your skills in new and unique ways.



From 2004 onwards, my career shifted to the fast paced and exciting world of Brand Experience Agencies. I worked my way up to lead the Strategy divisions for EMEA over nearly 15 years. It was great - every day was new, every client brought new learnings, and new experiences: Nobel Peace Prize Summit and Concerts, 2012 London Olympics, and even launching Zumba in Europe with 3,500 instructors!

But there comes a time where the fast-paced and jet-setting life loses its charm. That is when I became a mom. I loved working but I wanted to spend more time with my daughter Sanaya as well. So, as a family we made the decision when she was 5 years old to move to Copenhagen for a better lifestyle.

I set up my company here in Copenhagen but still worked with talented people from around the world. The remote set up buffered me from the pandemic that had a profound impact on the industry for a period of time.

I feel today I have found the right balance in my life and work to pursue what I am passionate about. I am remote yet with the technology we have today connected better to my colleagues around the world than I would be in a traditional office environment.

In 2018 you returned from London to Copenhagen and enrolled your daughter, Sanaya into Kindergarten. Was this decision based on your own educational experience at CIS?

Absolutely! When we decided to move back to Copenhagen from London, one of the conditions I had was to enroll Sanaya at CIS. I would speak to the fond memories and the explosion of diverse cultures that shaped who I am today. I wanted the same for her in the core foundation years of schooling.

I have lived, studied and worked in some of the most diverse cities in the US and UK, yet CIS was one place that brought the true meaning of an international student to life. When we first visited the school in 2018, I recall my husband and I referring to CIS as a mini United Nation!

For the past many years you have volunteered your weekends to teach Indian cultural dances to our Indian students. This allowed them a platform to explore and express themselves while promoting inclusiveness and an understanding environment at our International Fair each year. What does cultural dancing mean for you?

Any form of art is a beautiful way to connect people from different parts of the world. Dance and music are so powerful to motivate, excite and bring together and close gaps that unfortunately still exist in the wider world we live in today. Be that generational, gender biases, race-based or political.

I use the Indian cultural dance performance to connect Indian-origin students with their roots in a more fun and engaging way. For Indian parents, it gives them an opportunity to connect back to something they miss whilst living abroad. India is a massive country with lots of languages, religions and traditions. Through dance we proudly come across as one nation.

What I love most about the dance performance is the excitement and anticipation every year from all the non-Indian community at the school. I have always kept a very inclusive environment and we welcome anyone from any nation to join our team. Of course being a finale act and having everybody at the International Festival join the dance is the best. A memory I will always cherish.



Any words of wisdom for new families joining the school in August?

CIS is truly a very special place. You will not come across anything like it. It is not its building, or its excellent IB passing rate. It is the welcoming and warm community that has not changed since I started my journey here as a student in 1981. I mean Suzanne is still here! It truly says something when the school staff stay and enrich those memories we take with us once we leave the school.

Open up and get involved in this family. It is amazing how your life will change. Volunteer where you can or at least participate in all the amazing events that PTA and the school organize. You will always be part of CIS so make the most of it while you are here and whenever you come back for visits. You will make friends for life (great excuse to travel to new places when visiting them)!



A journey in progress ...

Koen van der Laan, CIS Class of 2011

I started CIS in the year 2011 and am a proud graduate of the class of 2021. While it feels like forever ago since I graduated, I remember the truck ride and all the festivities that came just after like yesterday – that and the big question of *what's next*. I didn't know the answer to that question back then, and if I'm honest, still don't.

What I did know is that experiences would build me. So, I set out to teach English in Pakistan through the help of one of my middle school teachers, Ms. Sameera Khan. I arrived with no real idea of what my role would be and how I would be teaching, but with a willingness to experience the new and see how it would shape me. The first month was hard. I struggled to understand my value. I struggled to 'fit in'. It was a completely different culture and people than what I had considered the norm and not the experience I had anticipated. Eventually, though, I began to find new rhythms and connect with my incredible host family. I soon understood that it wasn't only teaching I was offering. It was not as simple as grammar or how to write a PEAL paragraph. It was about imparting and gaining perspective. In truth, I learnt perhaps more from my students and the environment I was in, than they from me. What I thought would be an adventure turned into an eye opening experience that allowed me to progress into the person I am becoming today.

Ironically, I went from being keen on becoming a savvy entrepreneur in total control of his own time and economy – even taking up studying at CBS after my gap year – to wanting to be engaged with students because that bond that I had felt in that role in Pakistan was something I missed. I enjoyed seeing them develop and feeling like I was a part of the process.

After my gap year, starting CBS, moving into my own apartment with a friend and getting a job as a bartender at a pub (where I still work), I applied for and got a coaching position as the U10 & U8 football coach and as an assistant coach for swimming. My 'transition' to swim coaching with Sue Allingham felt natural and smooth since I'd known her as a coach since my own swimming days. Football, however, proved more of a challenge. As I was the head coach with only a little experience coaching grassroots football, I struggled to find a consistent rhythm in my coaching style and in training exercises. It also proved difficult to work with kids of such a young age. In hindsight, I would have been better suited as an assistant coach, which is the decision I made together with Jakob Høj after the first year. I am, however, grateful for the experience of managing a team and feel that it provided me with a good perspective of what is necessary for the progression of kids in football. I focused too heavily on improving the quality of my players, forgetting that they're kids and the priority should be enjoyment and a love for the game, something Guilanno (my current head coach mentor) has taught me so well.

Coaching has profoundly impacted the choices I am now making. It has made me realize that I want to pursue an education that is more practical and people-based in nature. I was not engaged or interested in my university studies, which, in turn, affected my day-to-day life and self-confidence, making me feel pretty lost and in need of something to keep me grounded. I began to consider a more practical degree, and applied to a smithing course at TEC. Although I'm glad to say that smithing has helped me both mentally and physically – and finally made me pretty okay at design! – it has also made me realise that I am more suited to and happy working in the social/humanitarian field. While I'm unsure of the 'next step', I feel confident that these experiences have provided me with an idea of the person I want to become. Coaching is a source of connection, enjoyment and steady direction that I feel grateful to be part of – and excited and proud to continue doing – at my own alma mater.

Elisabeth Stanners – CIS PYP and MYP Principal

My parents were educators. My mother headed the Mathematics Department at the girls' grammar school that I attended, and my father was a Headmaster, but I never intended to spend my whole career in schools.

Despite my parents' concerns, I applied to study Psychology at university. At the time it was a very trendy subject. They had me undergo a psychoeducational assessment to ensure it was the right choice for me. The assessment confirmed my decision, and I began my journey to becoming an educational psychologist, which would include teacher training and a master's degree in educational psychology.

My plan changed when, while at university, I married a Ph.D. student who was then offered a post-Doctorate at an EU research centre in Italy. I completed my teacher training and a qualification in teaching English as a Foreign Language, then joined him for what was supposed to be a two-year adventure. And it was a wonderful adventure that started an almost 40-year journey through four European countries. However, I couldn't pursue my chosen career outside the UK.

We lived in Italy for ten years and our three young children were the major focus of my life. Up to that point my major professional experience had been teaching in English in a 'Liceo Linguistico' and Philosophy at the local European School to cover maternity leaves. I remember my time teaching in Italy as being a steep learning curve: a time when I was challenged to do things I had never done before with very little mentoring or support. I learned from many mistakes!

In 1990 we moved to Brussels. We spent four years there and I had a part time job teaching Ethics and English as a Foreign Language to Primary School children in the English-speaking section of the European School at Uccle. The school was huge, with many different linguistic sections. I had my first experience of being part of a teaching team and responsible for the learning success of a cohort of pupils. The working language of the school was French. 'Conseils de Classes' were a real challenge for my school-learned French!

The move to Copenhagen coincided with my children being old enough for me to take up a full-time teaching position. I was appointed to teach English as a Second Language in the Middle School at CIS. The school had only been on Hellerupvej for a short while and the Primary School building had not yet been built. I remember the temporary 'portacabins' outside for the younger students. It was all a bit hand-to-mouth. Nothing was perfect, but the school had a real heart to it.



My background in cognitive psychology and education was sufficient for me to be asked to start a Learning Support Department. Times have changed, and today my background would stand me in very poor stead by comparison with the highly educated Learning Support specialists who now fill these roles. It seems difficult to imagine now, in an age in which learning differences are identified and students have the right to have their needs met, that in the 1990s international education really did not cater for special educational needs.

In the early years, I was excited to join discussions about curriculum. The International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) was growing, with the IB Diploma well-established and the Primary and Middle Years Programmes in development. We worked hard on these curricula and felt we had a voice in their development, both in our school and internationally. Those times were professionally creative.

I thrived on the professional sense of purpose at CIS and was supported to complete a certificate in International School Leadership and a master's degree in educational leadership. I also participated in Accreditation Visits to other schools, which helped develop ideas for change and improvement and in 2003 I was offered another career opportunity as Primary and Middle School Principal.

In 2010 I took up a position as Secondary School Principal at Vienna International School (VIS), a three-programme IB school like CIS. I had already had experience with the Primary and Middle School Programmes, but this role now allowed me to work with the IB Diploma Years as well.

I love working with teenagers! At VIS, I worked with professionals who took a holistic approach to student development. Academic success is important, but not at the cost of personal wellbeing or untapped strengths. We need academically educated individuals who are happy, fulfilled, and have strong values and resilience. The highlight of my time at VIS was working to put in place systems to support secondary school students achieve this.

I now volunteer as a School Governor, which has connected me with the UK education system. I work with a primary school in a socially disadvantaged area, a very different context to my background in international schools. Our aim is to support every pupil to do their best and become positive contributors to society.

Managing change was probably the most significant professional challenge that I faced over the many years in which I held leadership roles. Not everyone likes to change or is prepared to embrace it and certainly not everyone has agreed with the changes I was committed to. I have encountered significant resistance, but change is necessary to move forward. I have had the privilege to work with some truly wonderful educators who have had a positive impact on the lives of their students. Nothing could be more powerful or more important than that we work to ensure that the education our young people receive prepares them for the lives that are ahead of them

I will always be grateful to CIS for the professional opportunities it afforded me.



TEACHING IS A WORK OF HEART

Chloe Nash - 2020 CIS Graduate

My last day of Grade 12 happened over zoom, on the 17th of April 2020. That was it, one fun zoom call before I immediately joined another zoom to start working at a tech start-up after. Two years of hard work every day, late nights where we could be seen still studying even when Ms. Donnellan left the building!

The experience just ended and at the end almost got what most would assume to be a free pass. No exams. Yet, what it meant for some of us, including me, was that the “real world” caught up with us sooner than we thought it would. I remember constantly asking myself “is that it?”. The work that had been put into the two years, the late nights in the library, the hours I spent watching and calculating rugby conversion kicks for maths was suddenly just over and we had made it through the DP.

In March we were told you can go home now, yet my entire grade sat in the library. We had snacks and we enjoyed what we didn't realise was our last day of high school. The relief you feel, regardless of the circumstance, is overwhelming and that celebration, whatever it looks like, is worth every single second of everything else you fought for.



Covid Graduation June 2020



At 18 we all have dreams of where we want to be, what we want to do and who we want to be. Yet, the journey of how you plan on getting there changes and grows and twists and winds. So, I followed it instead. I worked my way through university saying yes to every opportunity I got. I went to college for two years in Køge, and made a hospitality course work for me walking out with a degree where I got to focus on digitalization and project management. Is that where I thought I'd be? Never. But I also didn't think I'd be about to finish a degree in Event Management having worked for tech startups, major sporting organizations in Ireland and still gotten to do what I love and enjoy along the way.

Here's the thing, you never know where you will go while you try to get to where you want to be and say yes to everything, even that mid-education gap year to try something new if you need to. I did.

There isn't always a correct path, no matter what anyone says there is just the right path for you. I may not have followed that dream I had at 16 or 18 but I have a new dream – work where you are happy doing what you do. Take the path that keeps you learning, and experiencing.

My time at CIS didn't always go with the flow, and one person who knows this more than most was Ms. Donnellan. One person who had chocolates on her desk and could ask you why on a continuous loop until you had justified and argued why you could or should try to do something new or different while barely noticing. Like picking an EE topic in a subject not taught at CIS nor with a dedicated teacher at CIS!

Ms. Donnellan was someone who changed the way I looked at education, and showcased for me that there are different paths to take and that focusing on who you are is just as important and what you're actually doing. She probably didn't know it but she taught us a lot more than just TOK and the odd history fact, she would always be there to push you as far as she knows you can go.

CIS says it educates champions of a just and sustainable world. The lessons and experiences I received during my time there helped make me someone who today still shows up for those who need it, but has also learned to fight for the path that best suits her.

CIS hands you opportunities but learning to say yes and give it everything is what all those amazing people you have around you show and teach you. CIS was always a place of support and a place where you could say yes to opportunities while making them your own. That is a lesson that I have taken with me to everything I do and have, the stories you will hear and the people you will meet will have a longer impression on you and the way you think than any academic lesson. Just don't tell all your teachers I said that!

My advice is to take a minute, there is always a way it just might not be what you thought it was. Have an escape, find your greenhouse or chamomile tea and remember there's time. There is always time - enjoy it.

Oh, and good luck! You've got this.



CIS Class of 2005 - 20 Years Anniversary



CIS Class of 2005 - 20 Years Anniversary





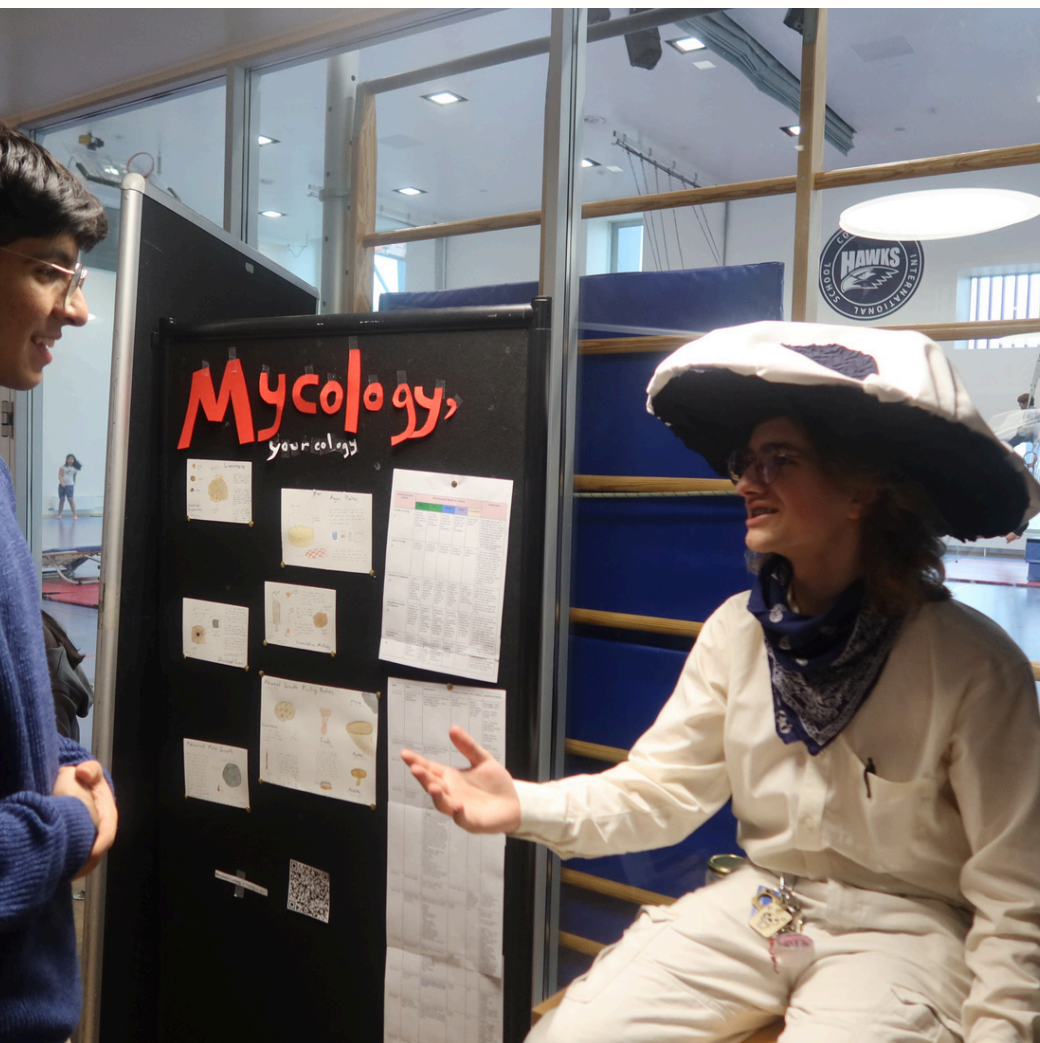
CIS Photo Gallery

Personal Project

Grade 10



“Great things come from hard work and perseverance.
No excuses.” *Kobe Bryant*



Parent & Teacher Association

Staff Breakfast



Parent & Teacher Association

Halloween



Parent & Teacher Association



Julenmarked



Parent & Teacher Association

Activities Fair



CIS Class of 2025

Waterfight!!!



CIS Class of 2025

Waterfight!!!



L I F E

If we notice little pleasures,
If we notice little pains,
If we quite forget our losses
And remember all our gains,
If we look at peoples virtues,
And their faults refuse to see
What a pleasant place,
This world would be!

by: Kathy
Stile

