Newsletter
10.07.2023

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...this IS Us...
Message from the Director

In our final Middle and Upper school assembly of the academic year, we reflected that the current pace of technological development is unprecedented. To put things into perspective, humankind spent 19,960 centuries (not years!) improving stone axes before discovering metal. In the 20th century, it took 30 years for refrigerators to become widespread, and only 15 for mobile devices. This year, AI tools have taken about 6 months to reach most of our older students and my colleagues.

Faced with such rapid change, it’s easy to feel disoriented. Yet it’s essential to be positive. Disruptive technologies rarely destroy jobs and opportunities - instead they create them. It is up to us as a community to decide how we wish to face the future and the polymath Nassem Nicholas Taleb recently made a very astute suggestion that a positive, proactive mindset can determine our collective success:

*I still don’t know what leads to “success”. But I know what leads to insuccess: a temperament of complaint, the mentality of permanent victimhood, and the collective and individual propensity for lamentation.*

From time to time, such a reminder is not unwelcome. I would therefore like to thank all those students, colleagues and parents who have looked adversity and challenge in the face and made a conscious decision to work constructively and positively with each other in pursuit of progress and shared understandings. To achieve these understandings is not always easy, but commitment to working honestly and transparently through the right channels has succeeded time and time again, and our mutual reward is improved trust and higher quality relationships.

ISU’s programmes are carefully designed and implemented to prepare students to be nimble in a dynamic future. With a passing average this year of 33.3 points in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, compared to a global average of 30.24, our graduating cohort have again shown the value that they and their teachers have generated - and let’s not forget that a majority of ISU IB diplomas were bilingual. To the outgoing Grade 12, your teachers and your parents: congratulations! These achievements are the icing on the cake of a year that has seen access to the German International Schools Sports Tournament, musical and theatrical performances across the school and community togetherness in our first International Day, to name but a few of the highlights from beyond ISU’s classrooms.

It is that time of year when we bid farewell to departing colleagues: Suzie Jennings, Christopher Harvey, Maria Tran, Rodeane Henry-Grant, Alina Kraft, Lillian Frost, Martina Haller, Annie Grub and Tamia Huber. As a staff team, we were able to take some time on Friday afternoon in which to celebrate their contributions to ISU. They will all be deeply missed but we wish them all the best as they move on to new opportunities.

Looking forward, I’m thrilled for the academic year 2023-24. We have plenty of developments in store, including streamlined external assessment systems (see Mr. Gillott’s article in the last newsletter), leadership adjustments to foster greater decentralization of decision-making (i.e. division-level coordination teams), and exciting communication updates that were shared with a cross-section of parents in a sneak preview by Mr. Bailey last month.

I wish everybody in the ISU community a wonderful summer and look forward to students, colleagues and parents returning refreshed and in a positive frame of mind and geared for another successful year.

Luke Osborne
Director
The highly anticipated GISST (Global International School Sports Tournament) track and field event took place from June 16-17, showcasing a talented group of athletes. With coaches Ms. Garcia and Mr. Alex leading the way, ISU participants Julius, Sara, Pamela, Harry, Martin, Anthony, William, Annika, Satin, Maya, Arola and Neve.

Sara dominated the varsity girls’ shotput, securing first place with powerful throws. Julius soared through the air in the varsity boys’ long jump, earning a well-deserved second place. Martin displayed incredible endurance in the u14 boys 3000-meter race, finishing second. Harry’s lightning-fast speed propelled him to second place in the u14 boys 200-meter sprint.

These athletes’ exceptional skills and sportsmanship left a lasting impression on spectators. Coaches Ms. Garcia and Mr. Alex played a vital role in guiding and nurturing their talents. The event celebrated individual achievements while fostering camaraderie among participants.

The GISST track and field event inspired young athletes to pursue their dreams and strive for excellence. The dedication and achievements of Sara, Julius, Martin, and Harry serve as a reminder of the transformative power of sports.

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**Julius**

**Grade 9**
During the first two weeks of February I organized a CAS project called “Valentine’s Day Mailbox”. Students were welcomed to send each other letters. On Valentine’s Day, February 14th, the letters were distributed around the school to their receivers. This project was all about showing compassion to one another and making everyone feel appreciated. I wanted to show that Valentine’s Day is not only about love, but also about saying "Thank You". To make sure that everyone felt appreciated and included we asked every Middle and Upper school homeroom to write a random letter to one person in their grade.

This project was very special to me because I have noticed that not everyone takes for granted the people around them and I strongly believe that everyone deserves to feel appreciated, not only on Valentine’s Day, but every day. When I saw the numbers of letters that had to be distributed I instantly felt very happy. The project gave me so much energy and seeing the students receive their letters made me realize how connected and compassionate the ISU community is. I learned how little it takes to make someone smile and that a short, handwritten letter can mean more than a regular text message.

I am glad that I had the opportunity of bringing this project to life. It was very exciting to work on something creative and filled with compassion.

_Amanda_
Art Competition

On Wednesday July 5th, Dorothea in Grade 6 attended the state awards ceremony for the 70th Europäischer Wettbewerb (European Art competition) in Augsburg. Dorothea was recognized for the excellent artwork she submitted for the theme of a reimagined fairytale. Dorothea should be commended not only for her terrific skills and her beautiful painting but also for her independence and hard work.
International Day Pictures
International School Ulm / Neu-Ulm

International Day Pictures