

January 2017 Issue 7

# world student

## TO THE SOUTH POLE

HENRY EVANS WRITES ABOUT  
THE TRIP THAT STARTED IT ALL

## TALES OF RIO

STUDENTS GIVE US THEIR  
ACCOUNTS OF THE 2016 OLYMPICS

Plus: Study tips from author  
Lucy Parsons and experiences,  
articles and opinions from  
students worldwide.

  
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# Welcome!

Welcome to our first issue of 2017!

World Student Magazine boasts articles from across the globe, and this issue is no exception. With articles from Brazil, China, Germany, and even the South Pole as Henry Evans tells us about his expedition and how he has inspired students worldwide with his adventure.

As always several of you have written about your experiences studying in a different country. Eloho writes about how she adapted to Oxford, UK having come from the much busier city of Lagos in Nigeria. Helen spent a year studying abroad in Atlanta, USA, and Sami looks back at his education having moved from the UK to Malaysia.

There have also been some amazing programs that have been undertaken by some of our readers. Preeti writes about her experience of her schools' 'Each One, Teach One' program, which made her realise how important education is. The 'Saints' write about their entry into the Greenpower racing challenge, and Nilievna tells us of his experience competing in a Chinese national engineering competition, which wasn't without its obstacles.

I know that for a lot of you this term is the lead up to your exams in May. Lucy Parsons' article on page 24 gives advice on how to make the most of your study time whilst still maintaining that all important work-life balance. Liisa Toomus, on page 34, also imparts her wisdom on things she wishes she had known at school, from asking for help to wearing comfortable clothing.

Last summer, the world was glued to their television screens watching the Olympics Games in Rio. We have a whole section in this issue dedicated to your experiences of it. From watching the games, taking part behind the scenes, and even an article from Revan Senaratne who I'm sure we will see competing in the 2020 games in Tokyo!

This magazine exists on your creative talent, so keep on sending in your articles – who knows, you might end up in the next issue!

**Sophie Perry, editor**

# world student

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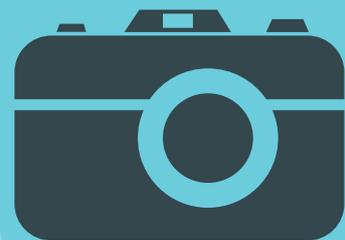
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# YOUNG SCIENTIST FILM AWARDS



#COBISYSFA



## HOW TO TAKE PART

1. Ask your teacher to register at [cobis.org.uk/scientist](http://cobis.org.uk/scientist)
2. Make a film (less than 150 seconds) aimed at students the same age as you
3. Get feedback from real scientists - if you want!
4. Upload to your school's YouTube channel and share the link with us
5. Check back on 7 May to see if you've won!

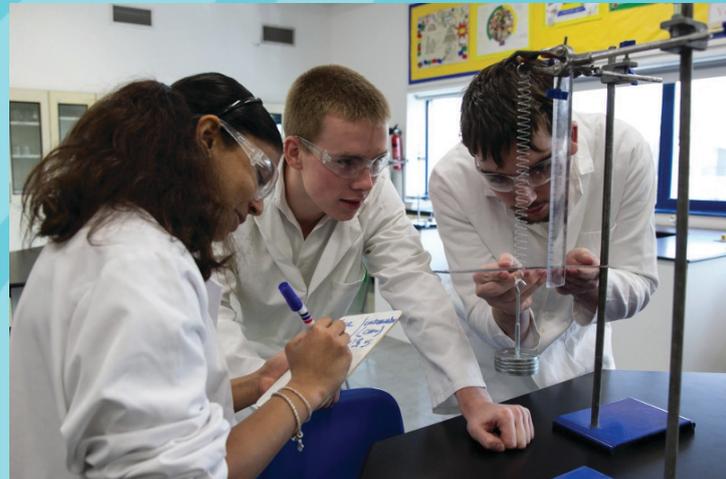
## BE INSPIRED!

**Space:** In 2017, both NASA and the ESA are launching missions to find exoplanets and India is hoping to send a manned flight to space

**Research and Development:** 2017 is the 20th anniversary of Dolly the Sheep being cloned and scientists hope to develop synthetic yeast in 2017, for biofuel and medicinal purposes

**Medicine:** 2017 is the 50th anniversary of the first human heart transplant

**If these ideas do not inspire you, show us your most inspiring experiment!**



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Please do NOT conduct a real-life transplant! In fact, make sure you do not harm any humans or animals or take part in any dangerous activities for your experiment.

# COBIS AND WORLD STUDENT MAGAZINE

The start of the year is the perfect time to reflect not only on our achievements throughout the previous 12 months but on the challenges and openings that a new year ahead may bring. The stories of our achievements can help others to learn and to flourish in their academic or professional careers. For some of our World Student writers, perhaps 2016 was the year when their creative work was first published. For readers, you may look back on this year as a time when you travelled to another country or passed an important exam. When the sun goes down on 2017 this time next year, what do you want to remember it for? Now is the time to plan, dream and prepare for what you want to achieve this year. All it takes is one small step, whether it's writing that first sentence that then blooms into a full-length article for this magazine or composing the first line of a poem that is eventually picked as a winner at the COBIS Student Poetry competition. The future is truly in your hands, and it all depends on that next small step.

In this issue, as always, there are many opportunities to learn about the experiences of others and to be inspired by stories from students around the world. Of course, not every story is positive but inspiration can be found in even the most desperate circumstances as we see in the contemplative article on the refugee crisis by regular contributor Liisa Toomus on page 11. The epic story of Henry Evans and his brave expedition to Antarctica shows us that we should never underestimate human endurance and this is a message that speaks to us all as we look to overcome future challenges. Students in COBIS schools in Germany and Nigeria will be very familiar with some of the sights and scenes described in our travel pieces this month while I'm sure you will relive the glory of the Rio Olympics through the experiences of students at St. Paul's School in Brazil who had the invaluable chance to volunteer at the games. We hope that their stories inspire you if you are hoping to travel to the UK in 2017 to participate in the COBIS Games where the spirit of the Olympics will come alive in both Stowe and Sheffield.

The COBIS Games is just one of several competitions and events that we will stage for students in 2017. Whether you are sporty, arty, creative or musical, your skills and abilities can shine with COBIS. For more information on how to get involved with our student competitions and events, check out [www.cobis.org.uk/students](http://www.cobis.org.uk/students).

As a new year dawns, on behalf of everyone at COBIS and World Student Magazine, I'd like to wish you and your family a happy, healthy and prosperous 2017. May it be good to all our readers and authors, and may you take that one small step towards success! ●

## Colin Bell, COBIS CEO

*For more information about COBIS, visit [www.cobis.org.uk](http://www.cobis.org.uk)*

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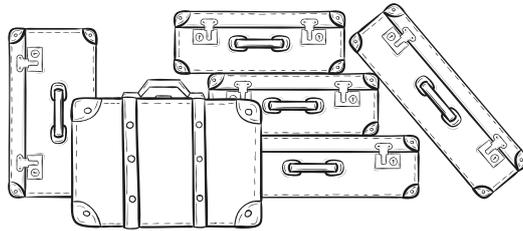




*Images of Kashmir 2016 by Liisa Toomus*

# NUMINOUS TRAVELS

THE REFUGEE CRISIS IS RIGHT HERE, RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR EYES.  
BY LIISA TOOMUS



It's a Monday morning in September. I've set my alarm clock earlier than usual, at 3:40 am to be precise. I stumble around in my dark house. I get dressed. I'd laid out my clothes the night before. For the occasion, I've chosen dark skinny jeans, a bright red top combined with a red and white college jacket, both of which I bargained for cheap at a second hand store the day before. I usually only dress in black. In the hallway, an old pair of white converse that I recently rediscovered are waiting to be worn.

My dad is kind enough to drive me to the airport during this early hour. I look out the window. The road is covered in frost. I rush through security with my hand luggage. That's also everything that I brought. I wave my dad goodbye from the big window screen.

Before I end up recounting this on a blue Lufthansa leather seat named '23D', I notice an interesting group of individuals sitting in front of me and waiting to board. I look at a hard-to-notice guy with short, but well kept, dirty blond hair in his early twenties. He is seated next to a couple of an unknown origin in perhaps their mid 50s. The woman and the man both have black bushy eye brows that make me reminisce of Frida Kahlo's iconic look. They talk quietly with each other every now and then in a language that I cannot distinguish. Seated next to them is a middle aged woman with blonde hair, dressed in somewhat official looking blue clothes, but nothing that would bring me to glance at her a second time. If these individuals

wouldn't have been seated this close to each other, in a row of four people with plenty of free seats in front of them, I'd never have guessed that they were traveling together.

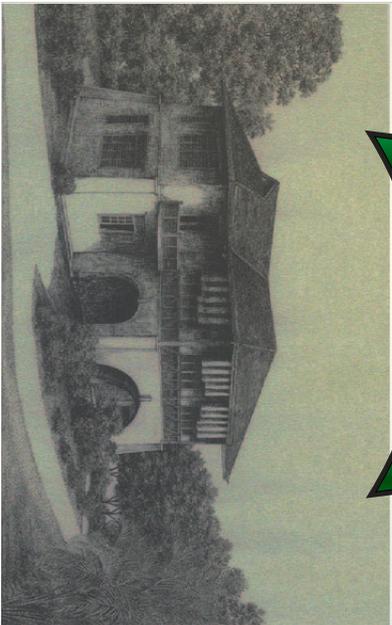
Around 5:25am, just a few minutes before the gate is meant to open, one of the people behind the desk walk up to the blonde lady dressed in blue. I cannot make out every word she says, but I hear her mention an early boarding. The blonde lady nods and pulls out a blue envelope from the inside of her jacket. I glance at it. Curiosity takes over me, and all I can see is government stamps on the outside of it and handwritten names. I catch a glimpse of a passport or two being inside of it. The group remains seated for a bit before dispersing into the plane ahead of everyone else. My mind wanders elsewhere, my headphones have broken and I try to hold the cord in the right position so that I'll still be able to hear music.

Not long after, plenty of tall men in suits wave their boarding passes around me, and I try to not lose my spot in the line. Once I'm about to walk into the plane, I recognize that the young man and the blonde woman are standing in front of the airport door. Leaning against the wall, talking, watching people pass by. Perhaps I misjudged the situation, I think to myself when looking at their blue costumes that blend in perfectly well to the airport environment. I walk into the aircraft. I walk down the aisle, looking for seat 23D, and that's when it hits me. Seated on the very last line of the aircraft, row 25, I notice two familiar pairs of bushy eyebrows. My heart breaks a bit.



# A

## JOURNEY THROUGH TIME



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For those unfamiliar with the last row at the aircraft, when it's not used by passengers in economy, it's strictly used by unaccompanied minors or other people in need of being looked after. Once when the plane has taken off, I sit down and think about the situation. My head aches from the transitory sleep deprivation. The instant coffee on the plane makes me feel ill. My mind wanders to every single article that I've ever read about Isis taking hold of Yazidi villages in Kurdistan, of the demolished streets of Syria in this very moment, or about the thousands of people drowned at sea. I wonder if the couple have any kids of their own somewhere in the world. I wonder where they're from. I wonder if they stayed for long enough in Sweden to pick up some of the language. I wonder where they're heading now.

I hope that I'm wrong about the situation.

With all my might, I hope that this article serves as a reminder that the ongoing refugee crisis is everywhere and that it's very real. It's taking place in local train stations around Europe; it's taking place on the borders of Schengen countries that people rather travel to for all inclusive charter trips; it's taking place in the European Parliament; it's taking place in the growth of fascist and racist voices that are amplified worldwide; it's taking place in the seas that we share with thousands of drowned people on the run; and it's taking place on row 25 on a plane heading to München at 6am. In reality, it's everywhere besides the big newspaper headlines marketing it. The refugee crisis is here and now. This was my one wake up call, louder than any of my own alarm clocks that I usually hit 'snooze' on. The refugee crisis is here and now.

With all my heart I hope that anyone else reading this out there won't ever have to enter the back row of the plane with only a handful of your belongings left. Of having nightmares about both your past and your future, and being escorted in and out of planes. To wonder if you could have filed out your application form in a different way that would have granted you a green stamp and 'approved' written somewhere on your papers.

All that I wanted to say is: the refugee crisis is right here right in front of our eyes. ●

Follow Liisa's travels, musings and photography on social media.

 @liisatoomusphotography

 @numinoustravels

 @liisatoomus

### What can you do?

#### 1. Open up your home to refugees.

Amr Arafa is a former Egyptian migrant who grew tired of just observing the impact of the crisis. Therefore, he came up with the bright idea to lend refugees and people in need his apartment. Since then, his idea has been launched into a website, airBnB style, that facilitates citizens to help refugees. [www.emergencybnb.com](http://www.emergencybnb.com)

#### 2. Help refugees assimilate.

Leaving your own country, language and culture behind is really difficult. However, what helps to facilitate this process is volunteers giving their time to help new citizens speak the local language, to get guidance into everyday life, and to get help to organize activities to do as a group. Google and see if there's any way you can get involved!

#### 3. Donate money.

Having worked at a charity organization in the past, I often studied graphs and statistics showing just how much of a majority individual donations made up the total income for nearly every organization. Part of my job was to recruit people downtown, and the clear majority of contributions from students would just be a small donation every month. However, unarguable is that many small rivers create an ocean.

#### 4. Creative your own initiative!

Help your school or university create projects to amend the crisis, build an app that'll solve problems, create a big fundraiser... The number of options is endless.

---

Numinous Travels is written by Liisa, who is Swedish-Estonian and grew up traveling frequently. During the last few years she has studied in Argentina, Bhutan, Costa Rica, England, Greece, India, Japan, New Zealand, Tanzania, Turkey and the USA. Her column is about a variety of topics she holds close to her heart: feminism, identity, growing up, cultural awareness and politics.



**Name:** Liisa Toomus

**Age:** 20

**Hobbies:** photography, running, writing, reading

**Studies:** International Relations & Global Issues at the University of Nottingham (England)

**Lives:** Warsaw, Poland during 2016/2017

[www.liisatoomus.com](http://www.liisatoomus.com)



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# A GUIDE TO... SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL

JULIA NEMR, LAURA MAKSOUD AND MARIA CAROLINA ALMEIDA

INTRODUCE US TO SOME HIDDEN GEMS WITHIN THE CONCRETE JUNGLE.



**S**ão Paulo overwhelms the senses with its sheer size. With over 15 million inhabitants, the attraction of the world's 12th largest city (by population), and the biggest in Latin America, lies in its people and its vibrant cultures. Besides its typical Brazilian joy, exquisite cuisine, artistic attractions and the colossal variety of shops which typically lure tourists onto its skyscraper-lined streets, São Paulo also stands out as an urbanised melting pot of different cultures. It is home to large Italian and Arab communities, and also houses the largest population of Japanese descendants (1.5 million people) in any other city outside of Japan. São Paulo holds the record for the

largest number of pizzerias in a city worldwide – even though pizza is not a typical Brazilian food, it is enjoyed by all. Social diversification in the city is both powerful and influential; it has a significant impact on residents and tourists. The city appeals to all ages although, in some ways, it is most captivating for the young as it is also famous for its round-the-clock bars and clubs which never sleep, perfect for party people. When considering a visit to the metropolis, many people consider the negative image spread by the press, thinking of the political catastrophes and endless traffic jams. In reality, it is absolutely much more than this. São Paulo is a well-known and much-loved spectacle.



## MAJOR EVENTS IN SÃO PAULO

### Carnival

Although the São Paulo Carnival isn't as well-known as the Rio de Janeiro celebration, it provides an exciting alternative, with cheaper tickets and fewer tourists. Paulistanos celebrate the most popular Brazilian holiday with the famous '*desfile das escolas de samba*' (Samba school parade). The festival takes place over a long weekend in February and marks the beginning of Lent.

### São Paulo Fashion week (April)

Catch a glimpse of the high-end in the beautiful Ibirapuera Park. Observe haute couture and exotic models hit the catwalks and learn more about this billion-dollar industry.

### International Book Biennial (September)

An enormous book fair in a space of 60,000m<sup>2</sup>. More than 480 exhibitors present their products alongside costume contests, author panels, meet and greets with YouTubers and your favourite writers. Tickets are very cheap; full tickets cost around R\$25 reais (just under US\$8) and students pay half the price. Tip:- if you want to dress up, make sure you go on the day which is specifically reserved for wearing costumes. But it's up to you; it's actually quite fun being the only one dressed as Daenerys from Game of Thrones! Prepare to get your picture taken with people.

### Brazilian Formula 1 Grand Prix (November)

For thrill lovers, head to Interlagos for the annual Grand Prix. Tickets are quite pricey and the race itself is filled with curves and spills so make sure you get your heart checked before the race.

### Festa Junina (June parties)

The winter celebrations take place in São Paulo throughout the month of June, celebrating the famous saints of the Catholic Church. It is also a month to honour the much-needed rain during the dry season. Festivities include dressing up as farmers and eating traditional Brazilian food such as canjica (sweet corn porridge) and paçoca (peanut brittle), bonfires and dancing the quadrilha (square dance).

## WANT TO SHARE YOUR TRAVEL TIPS?

*We're looking for students to write this travel guide feature for future issues.*

*Email us at [editor@world-student.com](mailto:editor@world-student.com) to find out more.*



TRAVEL TIPS?



## LOCAL CUISINE

Typical Brazilian food is unique as well as delicious. It includes a mixture of regional spices along with European and African influences. These are just a few of the great restaurants in São Paulo. The meals served will always vary from local delicacies to international treats.

### Fogo de Chão

Meat, meat and more meat. Luckily it's just about the best meat you'll find anywhere. With 27 years of experience, *Fogo de Chão* is a churrascaria in a class of its own. The rodizio system operates here: the freshly-grilled meats are brought to your seat and sliced onto your plate until you say 'basta' (that's enough!). A cold buffet is available on an all-you-can-eat basis, with a range of superb wines.

### Jun Sakatomoto

São Paulo is heaving with Japanese restaurants, but this one is a cut above the rest. The dining room is small, discreet and classy. Jun Sakamoto is a genuine master of sushi, with few rivals in the city. His creations are matchless, subtly fragranced with lemon, lemon grass, plum leaves and truffle oil.

**Brigadeira:** A small boutique that sells brigadeiros and nothing else. These chocolate sweets are common Brazilian delicacies usually served at parties. They're originally made out of condensed milk, cocoa powder, butter and chocolate sprinkles but stores like these have many flavours to choose from. All of them follow the pattern of bite size chocolate balls. Try flavours such as churros, leite ninho (powdered milk), and dark chocolate. Also make sure to try their waffles which are covered in melted brigadeiro.

São Paulo also has a vast range of snacks that you can find in supermarkets and botecos (bars). Here are a few local favorites. These don't exist anywhere else and no one knows why!

**Coxinhas:** fried, raindrop shaped pieces of paradise filled with chicken and a creamy cheese called catupiry.

**Pão de queijo:** translates to 'cheese balls', which is literally what it is: balls of bread with cheese baked onto it. Sometimes filled with requeijão (a Brazilian creamy cheese) or dulce de leche.

**Açaí:** Açaí is an Amazonian berry blended to make fruit bowls and smoothies. Usually topped with strawberries, granola, banana and honey.

**Pasteis:** Pasteis taste like a deep fried empanada. They can be filled with almost anything, but the most common ones are filled with either beef or cheese. But other fillings such as pizza or fish are also available.

**Bolinho de Chuva:** 'Rain cakes' are balls of dough, deep fried and sprinkled with sugar and cinnamon.

**Romeu e Julieta:** Guava jelly and white cheese placed over each other like a sandwich. Sounds like a crazy combination but it's delicious and unique.

# LANDMARKS AND ACTIVITIES

## Landmarks

### Ibirapuera Park

Picturing an ordinary Sunday at the park? Well, there's nothing ordinary about this one. You will be blown away by the diversity of Paulistanos. A lovely place to pedal, skate, roller skate and cycle, it also has two lakes, as well as all-year-round art exhibitions, museums, sculptures and even a planetarium.

### Estação da Luz

The Estação da Luz, or Light Station, is the postcard emblem of the city, with a clock tower structure that imitates Big Ben. The station was built in the late 19th century, and was the main office of the newly founded São Paulo railway. Despite the famous fire of 2015, it is still fully operational.

### Sala São Paulo

"A room that sings" – this is the musicians' paradise of the Sala São Paulo, a concert hall with spectacular architecture

that hosts presentations by a number of symphonic orchestras. It has an adjustable ceiling which is suspended up to 25 metres. The panels in the ceiling can be controlled individually, offering optimum acoustics.

## Activities

### Avenida Paulista

The Champs Elysée of São Paulo, this 2.8km avenue is where almost everything happens. As you walk down the road you will find cinemas, schools, cultural centers, stores, shopping centres, parks and all of it along with remaining late 19th century architecture. Avenida Paulista is a great place for all ages, as there's something for everyone. It is much better to get around by walking due to the traffic – it will also give you more opportunities to look at details and have a better experience. If you would like to take a memory home, take a picture crossing the avenue, but you must be quick!

### MASP (São Paulo Museum of Modern Art)

Located on the most famous avenue of the city, the Avenida Paulista, this museum has an eye-catching architecture and amazing masterpieces within.

### Mercado Municipal

Open until 6pm every day and 4pm on Sundays, this market is a great place to go when visiting downtown São Paulo. It is an old train station turned into an exotic farmers' market. You can wonder at the vintage lavishness of the architecture, wonder at the unusual array of fruits and enjoy many tasty bites. You can't miss the traditional mortadella sandwich at Bar do Mane and the Pastel de Bacalhau at the Hocca bar. This place is definitely made for tourists; most of the food is overpriced so feel free to negotiate. Also don't be afraid to try the fruit, and if you do, don't feel obliged to buy it.

### São Paulo football museum

Explore the 700m<sup>2</sup> space and learn all about the history of Brazilian football and the long and arduous, painful path which led to the team's current status as a force to be reckoned with. Examine the heroes, victories, training and the technique behind it all. ●

 @St. Paul's School  
 @SeniorStPaulsSP



## BEST KEPT SECRETS

### Beco do Batman

This exotic area around the alternative, bohemian neighbourhood of Vila Madalena is one of the city's most underrated locations. This alley contains a dense concentration of graffiti which lines the murals staircases and walls deep within.

### 4D Cinema

Not many countries have cinemas that bring you into the film in this way. The cinema at the JK Iguatemi shopping centre offers the experience of watching a film whilst involving other senses besides sight. Effects may include rain, wind, strobe lights, vibrations and seat movements.

### Escaping the city

You don't associate São Paulo with nature or outdoor activities, but you don't have to go far to see some real beauty. The beautiful São Paulo coast and peaceful island **Ilhabela** are within driving distance, as are the mountain villages of **Brotas**, famous for their cool climate and eco-adventure activities. However the real gem, **Ronco do Bugio**, is only 100km away and is probably one of São Paulo's best kept secrets. This small hotel is hidden deep within Brazil's beautiful Mata Atlântica forest and offers the perfect place to escape the crowd and relax.

# LOVING LAGOS, EMBRACING OXFORD

ELOHO WRITES ABOUT HOW HER HOME TOWN IN NIGERIA AND  
TIME IN THE UK HAS HELPED DEVELOP HER LOVE FOR WRITING

**E**very city has a pulse. Some laid-back, some vibrant and fast-paced, others find themselves merged in a mixture of both.

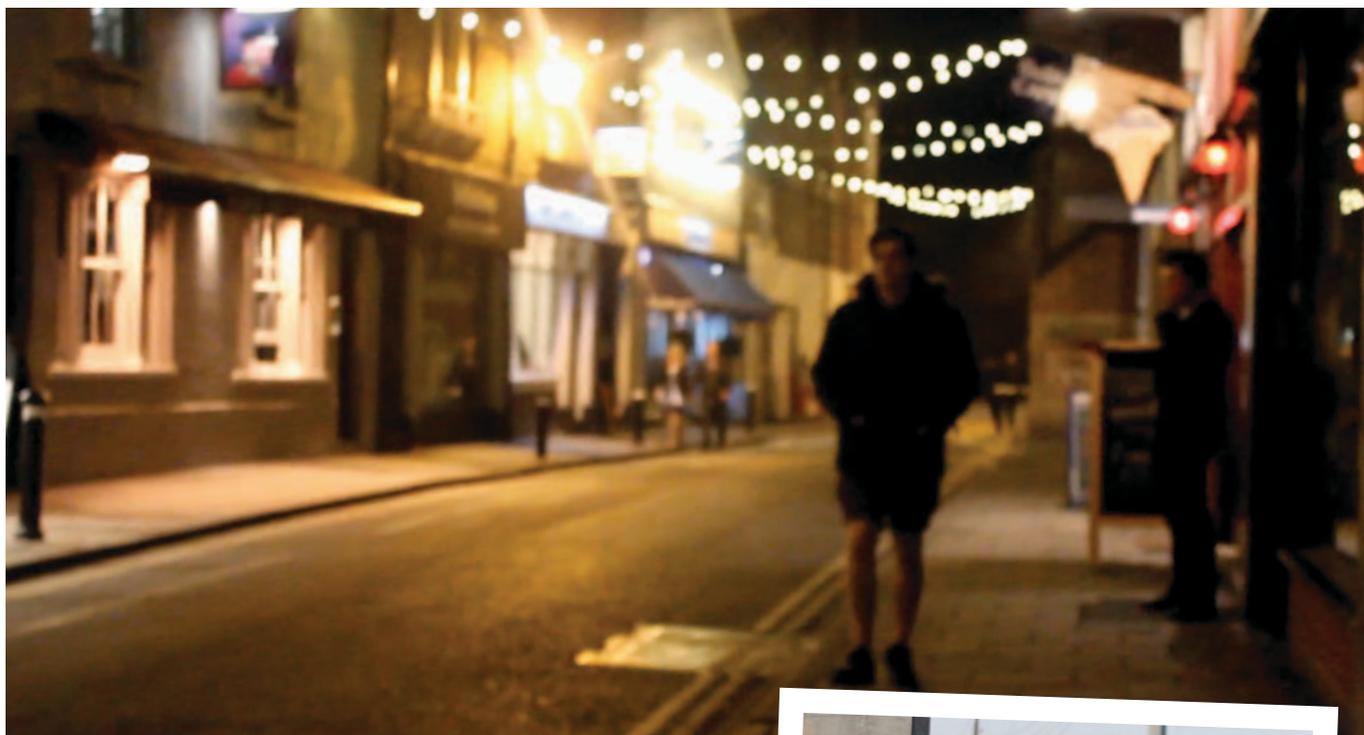
I live in the largest city in the entire continent of Africa. The city of Lagos located in Lagos State, Nigeria. This is a city that marches to the beat of its own drums. And you can bet that the beat is a quickened tempo that everyone around is used to. There's never a dull moment in Lagos, each day is an opportunity for a new adventure. Whether it is going to a comedy show or a concert hosted in Lagos every so often, or taking a trip to the beach or even wandering around the streets and taking in all the culture and personality the city has to offer. Lagos is definitely the place to go if you want to make lifelong memories.

One thing I personally love about Lagos is the street food. Nigeria, in general, has been blessed with an abundance of a variety of delicious foods that are unique to the country. But Lagos is one of the places where street food can be bought at literally every corner. By far, my favourite street food is Suya which is spicy skewered meat that is grilled over an open flame. One unique fact about this street food is that it is only sold in the evenings after sunset, it is also wrapped in newspaper, which gives it more authenticity and adds to the overall experience.

Many of my foreign friends have all had similar comments after visiting Lagos. They all said things like, "It's so exciting, there are so many people doing so many different things!" and "Everyone always seems to be in a hurry to go somewhere and do something. The hustle-bustle vibe is really contagious."

Since I grew up in and was accustomed to this way of life and Lagos's expeditious attitude, you can imagine my uncertainty when I was told I'd been accepted to EF Academy Oxford in the UK. Of course, I was extremely excited about the opportunity to study in a new environment, meet new people and learn about new cultures, but my worry was that the city of Oxford would be too relaxed for me. I worried that after getting accustomed to the sights and sounds of everything Oxford had to offer, I would ultimately get bored.





But that was far from the truth. After I settled into my new school, I took on the streets of Oxford to explore and see beyond the brochures and the touristic hot spots. I wanted to get a feel of what Oxford was really like, to discover the hidden gems that were not on tourist maps. And I was pleasantly surprised when I came across various places in the city that were right up my alley. There was a surprising moment when I realised that even though Oxford was not as fast-paced as I was used to, I was enjoying the feeling of calm. I remember that moment clearly. I was with one of my friends, we had this idea to explore Oxford at night. We had all intentions of getting lost, so we put our phones away, stopping the temptation to use Google maps. We wandered around the city and turned on any street we thought would be interesting. To our surprise and amazement, we came across this street that was lit up from beginning to end with twinkling lights hung beautifully over the buildings. Around us were cafes and outdoor restaurants and the sound of happy people filled the street. I was in awe of how pretty everything was, and in that moment, instead of being in a hurry, I just stopped and took everything in. Oxford has an environment for thinking and I found myself being more creative than I was in Lagos.

One thing about me is that I love writing. Whether it is a poem or a short story, I love the feeling of being transported into another atmosphere where it's just me and my words. In Lagos, I only ever wrote when I was in my room, in the quiet and comfort of my bed. However, I noticed that in Oxford, I started getting ideas when I was out in the park watching the sunset, or walking down the old city looking at historical buildings and appreciating the art in the architecture, or even sitting in



a cafe hidden to the rest of the world and watching the fairy lights that hung above the streets casting beautiful shadows and allowing my mind to wander. The serene and low-key surroundings helped me orchestrate the best pieces of work that I'd ever written.

That got me thinking. I didn't have to choose one side – the hustle-bustle of busy Lagos or the tranquil nature of Oxford. I could, in fact, appreciate both because both places had become a part of me. ●

***Eloho Etireri from Nigeria is an A-Level student at EF Academy Oxford.***

 [@EFacademy](#)

# AMIDST ADVENTURE, ANTICIPATION AND ASTONISHMENT

HELEN WRITES ABOUT THE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMME SHE  
WAS A PART OF AND WHY SHE WOULD RECOMMEND IT

It is amazing how even the most prepared individual can feel totally unprepared at the crucial moment. With all the paperwork completed, the visa approved, flights booked and accommodation organised, the clarity of the study abroad programme seems so much easier to comprehend. Yet, nothing can prepare you for the unknown, the uncertainty that lies ahead.

It was only when I arrived at Manchester Airport, looking for my flight to Atlanta, which was to be my new home for ten months, that I was hit with the sudden realisation that the whole programme was real. The 'good luck' messages meant so much, but I realised that I had one ultimate goal whilst embarking on such a programme, to be successful and brave, as a matter of pride and to prove my independence.

I had never been to America before. I had seen pictures of what to expect in films and from friends and family, but I could never fully form a full picture for myself until I was there in the moment. I was absolutely amazed by the huge skyscrapers, the friendly culture and the various opportunities that were presented to me, in order to make my time in Atlanta a happy one. This all began at the airport, where 'friendship families' were arranged to meet us and welcome us into the city and their way of life. From this one sign that directed us to the right family, saying 'Northumbria students', such friendship developed, and throughout my times of homesickness and confusion, they provided support through their local book club

and in their home. I am so very grateful for that and I sincerely hope this tradition continues for future students, as it was a real comfort.

There is a huge difference between studying in one's own country and moving to another. The principle rules are the same, such as, turning up to classes on time and being held responsible for achieving that work-life balance, but adjusting to the culture and the climate, tests one's ability to adapt to the surroundings. Such a transition would not have been possible without the aid of the local church group at Georgia State University, the BCM, who not only provided a haven of safety and security, but they also arranged a variety of trips for international students, to show us around the state of Georgia beyond the city of Atlanta. Some of my most treasured memories emerge from visiting Cataloochee on a ski trip, to going to Stone Mountain for a picnic. I strongly believe that one of the strongest advantages of any study abroad programme is the people. The people who you travel with, those who you meet on the programme and overall, their lasting impression that they have on you for the rest of your life, is vital to creating a sense of community, as without it, the experience can feel very isolated and more difficult than it perhaps needs to be.

I think that *carpe diem* is a highly appropriate motto to enforce when embarking on a study abroad programme, as the opportunity is very rare and gives individuals the opportunity to try, taste and experience all things new, everyday. Variety

alongside people is another incredibly significant factor whilst studying abroad, boredom and tedious action should never enter one's mind. As part of my job, working in the English Department for Georgia State University, I found it fascinating to meet all of the staff and learn about their roles in their university, as well as being intrigued by their view of England(!) Working on the 23rd floor and having a stunning view of skyscraper upon skyscraper was staggering, particularly being used to living in the countryside in tiny, historic England.

Friends were central to my experience in Atlanta, as without them, I would not have seen so much of the city and learnt about the southern cuisine, the love of macaroni cheese and iced tea! Equally, the friends that I made were keen to experience the old English traditions, such as afternoon tea, which was recreated in some very quaint tearooms in the heart of Atlanta.

One of the most surreal aspects of the programme was learning to treat the balance of study for the various classes that I chose to enrol on, alongside travelling to places like Memphis, Nashville, Savannah and Washington DC, particularly because of the vastness of the country. Every state of the country seemed to possess its own unique identity, which made it more fascinating to visit. One of the classes that was compulsory to study, was British and American Cultures, which examined America's history in relation to the literature that was written, which included a couple of field trips to various memorials and sites, to support this. Equally, the choice of classes extended

beyond my conventional degree subject of English Literature, to Public Speaking and World Literature, which expanded my view of the subject that I had originally chosen to study.

As I came into land at Manchester Airport, there is no feeling in the world that can match up to the relief, excitement and how proud I was that I had successfully completed the programme, but equally the disappointment that the final day of departure had arrived. From the very first email from the International Services at Georgia State University welcoming me to the programme, to my last day working on the 23rd floor at the Department of English, I am eternally grateful for the memories, experiences, friendships and challenges that each and every person who was a part of the study abroad year presented me with. For future students, who may be embarking on some form of a study abroad programme, whether it be for a year or just a semester, or maybe even to a school and not to a university, I thoroughly recommend it. For the adventure, anticipation and astonishment, the mix of thoughts and feelings are all worth it, for the unique experience you will most definitely enjoy. ●

***Helen Searle is a student studying English Literature at Northumbria University, UK.***

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# BERLIN, BERLIN, WIR FAHREN NACH BERLIN!

KHOA TELLS US WHAT TO SEE AND DO IN BERLIN

**Y**ou might know the sentence “*Berlin, Berlin, wir fahren nach Berlin!*” Every soccer fan in Germany dreams to see the final match of the DFB-Cup in Berlin.

With regards to the popularity of European cities, Berlin is in the same league than London, Paris, Madrid or Rome. Berlin is exciting, dynamic and inspiring. There is so much to do – every day and all year round. In my opinion, Berlin is the number 1 in Europe. And what’s best – you don’t have to spend a fortune to experience Berlin!

## Low budget city-trip

Since it is impossible to discover this vibrant city in just a few days, hopefully this article will help you make the most of your time in Berlin. An easy way to reach most of the famous sights in Berlin, is to take a ride on the number 100 bus (from 2,70 €). You can stop whenever you like for the most important attractions, or just stay on the bus and enjoy looking at them in passing. It takes around 60 minutes for the tour, depending on how long you stay at the sights. The 100 bus connects the former East-Berlin with West-Berlin and passes The Reichstag building.

This historic building was where the Bundestag (Parliament of Germany) convened prior to WWII. It was built in 1894 and survived two world wars, as well as the Reichstag fire set by Communists. The Brandenburg Gate is also nearby. This 18th-century monument is the best-known landmark of Germany. The so-called ‘Quadriga’ statue on top of it was stolen by Napoleon in 1814, but restored to Germany after his defeat. An amazing traffic spot is Alexanderplatz and the Fernsehturm. The latter is a television tower – the tallest structure in Germany and the second tallest structure in the European Union.

If you do not like buses, you can also discover Berlin by boat, just take a cruise on the River Spree. You can see the government district, Angela Merkel’s office, the Reichstag, Museum Island and the Nikolaiviertel (St Nicholas’ Quarter). It can become quite chilly on the decks though, so you might want to wrap up warm.

Apart from the historical sights, Berlin is open-minded for every idea and passion. If you like music, there is a karaoke show every Sunday in the Mauerpark. It can get loud, but it’s really fun...



Photography by Wolfgang Scholvien

### Culture and education

If you want to learn something about science, or about the history of Berlin. You will have a fascinating time in the Museum für Kommunikation. In times of massive mobile communication via devices like smartphones, it is very interesting to learn about a tool we use in our daily lives.

The Museum of Natural Science is a must for dinosaur fans. One of the best-conserved skeletons of the Tyrannosaurus Rex can be seen here. But be quick, it is moving on to another museum in 2018!

The German Spy Museum shows the history of international espionage and intelligence services. Since the museum is located in Berlin, there is a special emphasis dedicated to espionage in Berlin during the Cold War. Speaking of which...

Checkpoint Charly – the best-known checkpoint and the setting of the most famous espionage thrillers and espionage novels, such as *'James Bond 007 – Octopussy'* or *'The Spy Who Came in from the Cold'* (John le Carré). Allied forces used to register relatives of American, British and French soldiers before their journey to East Berlin.

The museum 'The Story of Berlin' explains the history of Berlin. On an area of 6,000 square meters, 800 years of Berlin history is presented in an interactive way. You can take a tour in an original nuclear shelter which today can still provide protection for 3,600 people.

### Food and drink

After a long day, you will likely be feeling very hungry. Just have a famous curry-wurst in Curry 36 at Bahnhof Zoo / Hardenbergplatz. You should try the organic curry-wurst. It's delicious!

Berlin is also known for its invention of the *'Döner Kebab'*. If you take the metro to Mehringdamm, you can enjoy a tasty Döner Kebab at Mustafa's.

If you prefer international food, every Thursday evening at 5pm there is the street food event in Markthalle Neun, which offers food from all over the world: Vietnamese, Spanish, Italian. You can find something similar every Saturday and Sunday from 12pm until 10pm at Kiez 99.

There are so many stylish bars, such as Bar 55 in Berlin-Pankow with tropical atmosphere or the Prince Charles Berlin – a former swimmingpool in Kreuzberg / Moritzplatz. A very popular bar is the Monkey Bar on the 10th floor of the 25hours Hotel Bikini Berlin next to the Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (Gedächtniskirche). Or just have a break and nice conversation



Photography by Wolfgang Scholvien

with international guests on the new roof-terrace of the Aletto Kudamm Hotel with a stunning view over Berlin.

### Where to stay in Berlin?

There are lots of nice hotels and hostels. My favorite is Aletto Kudamm, a hotel for guests of any age, a meeting-place for international travellers. The so called 'poshtel' offers comfort, a good price and, most importantly, a perfect location just next to the Bahnhof Zoo, where you can easily get to every part of Berlin. The design of the breakfast room resembles Berlin's metro architecture, including a handy metro map on each breakfast tray. The bus departs just some meters from Aletto. The location of Aletto cannot be beaten and the staff are just so friendly. ●

**Aletto Kudamm Hotel – [www.aletto.de](http://www.aletto.de)**

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**Khoa Tran is a student at the RWTH University in Aachen, Germany.**

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# 7 SIGNS YOU'RE STUDYING THE WRONG WAY (AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT)

LUCY WRITES ABOUT HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR STUDYING TIME



**H**ard work is vital if you want to get good marks in your exams. However, if you're not studying in the right way then it's possible that all your efforts are going to waste and no-one wants that to happen to you!

In this article I'm sharing seven signs that you're studying the wrong way and what you can do about it to improve your grades.

## 1. You spend hours procrastinating before you start work

To get the most out of your studies it's important that you do them when your brain is as fresh as possible. Instead of giving yourself an extended break of several hours after the school day has finished (otherwise known as procrastination), prioritise your studies.

Start your studies early, get them done and reward yourself with some rest and relaxation to wind down for bed. This way you'll do better in your studies and get a better night's sleep.

## 2. You're easily distracted

You study with your phone by your side. Every time you get a snap from your friend, a WhatsApp message or an app notification you stop studying, check your phone and get stuck in the social media web. Before you know it fifteen minutes have gone by and you've completely forgotten what you were studying.

This isn't just a waste of your time, it's a waste of brain power. Switching from one task to another is known as context switching. It takes a lot of effort for your brain to switch from one task to another. You will study more efficiently and more

effectively if you focus on one task at a time, not allowing yourself to become distracted.

Keep distractions at a minimum by leaving your phone on the other side of the room or outside the room so that you can focus while you're studying and have fun connecting with your friends when you've finished.

If you're easily distracted by websites you can block certain sites with apps in Google Chrome such as Stay Focused or block the internet completely for set periods of time with the Google Chrome app Strict Workflow.

### 3. Your study breaks last longer than your study sessions

Just as the most successful students set a timer for their study sessions (e.g. focusing for 30-45 mins at a time) they also use a timer to limit the lengths of their study breaks. Without doing this you can end up spending much longer on your breaks than you mean to and not getting as much studying done as you had hoped.

### 4. You're always over-whelmed by your to-do list

When you're in your last couple of years at school your study to-do list can get quite over-whelming. The homework tasks you're set can be a huge burden even without further reading and extra projects you might be doing. You can avoid getting behind and over-whelmed by allocating a set number of hours each week to your studies, as well as other things like further reading, and sticking to them. If you do this your workload will become much more manageable.

### 5. Nothing ever seems to stick

You sit at your desk for hour after hour reading your class notes but you don't feel like anything is actually sticking in your head. It's worrying you, stressing you out and making you anxious. But what can you do about it?

Test yourself, get other people to test you or do practice exam questions. If you can't remember anything when you test yourself, you need to come up with a different way to revise. Hint:- reading notes or textbooks without doing anything else with the information is probably the least effective way of revising that there is!

### 6. Your marks never improve

You seem to spend hour upon hour at your desk studying. However, you never seem to make much progress in your understanding and your marks never improve. You feel like you're putting all this effort in for no reward and there's no time for anything that you actually want to do.

To help yourself improve you need to learn how the marking

system works so that you understand what you have to do to earn marks. Try marking your own work so that you understand how to apply the mark scheme as well as getting verbal feedback from your teachers.

### 7. You haven't got time for anything else

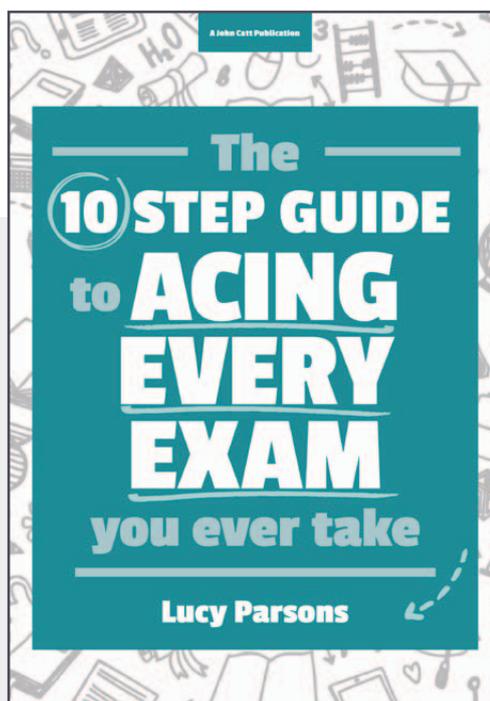
Studying is important. Getting good marks is vital for getting a good place at university and helping you along in life. However, if all you're doing is studying you're not doing yourself any favours.

Make time for exercise, down-time at the end of the day so that you sleep well and spending quality time with friends and family.

Using these hints and tips you will find that you're more focused in your studies. You will also find that your marks improve and you have more time for things beyond your school work. Doesn't that sound good?! ●

*Lucy Parsons is a straight A student, graduate of Cambridge University and qualified teacher. She is the author of The Ten Step Guide to Acing Every Exam You Ever Take (available February 2017) and publishes weekly study tips on her blog at [www.lifemoreextraordinary.com/blog](http://www.lifemoreextraordinary.com/blog).*

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# WHEN I REALISED THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION....

PREETI WRITES ABOUT HER SCHOOLS 'EACH ONE,  
TEACH ONE' PROGRAM

**W**hen I was a small child, I saw a few poor kids playing in a filthy puddle; I asked my mother, "Why weren't they sent to school by their parents? Why can't I enjoy myself like them?" My mother replied, "You are too young to understand the answer to this complicated question." At that time I ignored it. But as I grew up I was involved in this huge world a little more.

When I was jotting down my thoughts on paper, a terrorist attack took place in the Jammu and Kashmir state of India. It was not for the first time that this state suffered such an attack, but I realised how lucky I am, being able to educate myself in such a terror-free environment. One of the media channels telecasted their reports on the problems faced by the students of one of the local schools in the J & K state. The students said: "We were so involved in our exams that we didn't know what was happening outside our school premises." This very statement surprised me. That day I realised that you will understand

the value of education from those who are deprived from it. Every day when I surf the internet to enhance my knowledge, I feel like there is so much to gain and understand about this revolving earth.

I hope all my friends know about Malala Youfsafzai, a Nobel Prize laureate. Her compassion and strength made everyone her disciple throughout the world. She survived the bullet shots because it was for a noble cause of empowering the children of her locality to gain education. She provides a perfect example for every student in this world to study and enable children to taste the sweetness of education. She provided the required inspiration and motivation to everyone through her self-written book: 'I am Malala'. I got my inspiration from my father who was recently conferred with a very special award for his articles by the president of India. His achievement encouraged me to take up writing as a passion.



Recently my school initiated the 'Each One Teach One' programme in which every student has to empower a person to be able to read and write. When I had face-to-face interactions with my pupil, he told me that he always wanted to be literate, but at the age of 40, it seemed to be an impossible task. I assured him that we will try our best to make this impossible task, possible. Every day we studied together. Initially his family were not interested in helping him but his grit and determination turned the tables and made his family members realise the value of being literate. Finally when he was able to accomplish this task, before going he scribbled a few words on paper, "thank you, for changing my life". That day I realised that

Thank you for  
changing my life.

one can conquer this world with pen and paper and not with a sword. This very thought always persuades me every day to study even harder. I would have probably taken my education for granted, had I not seen this determination and craving in my pupil. Today I feel proud of being able to help someone become literate.

One can realise the importance of education by resembling your life to be like that of boiled vegetables having no taste and interest but as soon as we add the spice of education in it, it will become tasty and wonderful. If we are educated, we can smell and feel the fresh air and see the world as more beautiful. So friends, education is a very beautiful thing which makes this world a better place to live. ●

*Preeti Singh is a student at Ramjas School in India.*

 @Ramjas.PRD



# I ENVY PEOPLE.

LIISA WRITES ABOUT HOW

MODERN TECHNOLOGY GIVES

US AN UNREALISTIC IMPRESSION

OF OUR FRIENDS' LIVES

*Technology is a wondrous tool that opens up many possibilities, but is also vastly misleading. I tend to post tons of colorful pastel colored photos on my Instagram, but in reality my life looks little like it. It's easy to get stuck into scrolling through people's posts and photos and envy their life, and to forget that social media often just shows the tip of the iceberg of someone's life. I'm guilty of being slightly envious and comparing my life to others, I think most of us are. So I wrote this humorous piece, to remind you that this is all a polished façade.*

I envy people. I wish I could expand that sentence to somehow justify, to minimize, the green monster within me. But I can't.

As a person who was hand picked to a hard-to-get-in-to-boarding-school, with great grade scrutiny of all my marks over the years, personal essays written by me, teacher recommendations, and various skype interviews to even get considered, I spent the past few years living with marvelous

individuals and networking with equally brilliant adults. Some of my classmates had already given out their own books, started their own companies, or had a vast amount of followers on their social media accounts. Many of them also came to be my friends, and soon I realized that the filtered photos on Instagram, the well-liked profile pictures on Facebook, and clouded email inboxes often tell little about a person's real happiness or success.

Once, one of my friends who has hundreds of likes on all her Facebook photos and encouraging comments on each and everyone of them, once cried out how few close friends she has. Truth is, she'd moved around country to country with her family, and those still keeping in touch via likes only were acquaintances from summer camps and old classmates, in other words, people she barely knew. One of my other friends, who always had boasted a large scale of Instagram followers, had secretly had been buying them for ages. I too remember how

insincere my own presence on social media felt throughout my last year of high school where I'd sometimes go by days with little sleep and most time being focused on studying. In my boredom, one Sunday morning I once ran out and bought a flat white from nearby and arranged it neatly on my bed, put some nice filters on it, a good #sleepinginsunday tag, and preceded to cram grammar and historical dates for my exams. That short half an hour might have been my only break in my otherwise hectic weekend. I always felt vastly uncomfortable spending time with my local friends in Sweden, because they'd send dark comments and hints to how little I seemed to be studying at my boarding school and how much work they in comparison had to endure. It speaks volumes to say what they'd consider a late study night would have been what I at my worst considered a very early night.

Last spring, I met up with one of my friend's friends in New York City. She was this beautiful slim girl, with perfect porcelain skin and the kind of soft hair that I can only dream of, and of course, wearing the newest high street designer brands. She runs her own blog and has an Instagram with tens of thousands of followers, where she posts pictures of even more designer clothes, first class flight tickets, and her and her friends in the most lavish night clubs and restaurants around the country. The three of us had a brief coffee downtown in one of the trendiest coffee shops in Soho, normally with long queues that we magically had avoided. She told us how dull she found her new job. All I could think about was how impressed I was by this girl who was just a few years older than myself and her success. My friend brought up that perhaps it's not all as good as it seems. During the last few years, she'd accumulated debt with high rates, bigger than my 4-year student loan, on designer clothes and travelling alone. I still cringe just thinking about those debt numbers my friend mentioned. I still cringe of the thought of why my own Instagram cannot produce such high quality photos of chandeliers and champagne on a Wednesday afternoon.

A few nights ago, I watched a documentary about a New York based photographer. It starts off by showing Mark Reay, a 50+ photographer with the stylish kind of grey hair that would make one jokingly refer to him as a 'silver fox', combined with well polished clothes and brown shoes, mingling with a drink in his hand at New York City Fashion Week. Glamorous. Later in the documentary he'd open up his portfolio with portraits he'd taken of the most famous models on this planet, dating all the way back from modern day to the eighties. I envy the successful photographer career that Mark has carved out for himself; however, in fact, he spent most of his time in the city being homeless. With his three lockers at a local gym, he'd sneak into the rooftop of a building to where his friend had

lent him his spare key 'in case of an emergency'. For six years, his friend never knew that Mark was sleeping on a rug, under a plastic shelter, in a corner of his rooftop.

Every single feed that I have is brimmed with carefully staged photos showing people at their best in life. I envy people easily, because the only LinkedIn updates I see is of their new jobs and promotions, but not all the hard work and networking that I deep inside know they've dedicated to get there. It's easy to envy people when all you see is a tiny spectrum into their life, a small window displaying only the narrative that they wish you see. What my own envious green monster forgets to filter out or mention is the stress most people go through. At some point in our life, we all go through heartbreak, significant and unwanted weight gain or weight loss, some sort of financial crisis, poor and unglamorous entry level jobs, family issues, and severe friendship break ups. It seems like anything too personal or hard-to-discuss, or even unglamorous, slips out of the photo stream.

The people that I really envy are the uncensored individuals who openly discuss their issues and concerns. A reassuring read is that Johannes Haushofer, a famous Princeton professor, recently recognized this struggle of how perfected our lives seem. Although his career is what I'd deem as highly successful, he posted his own 'resume of failures', that will say, a resume of all the grants he did not get, all the job positions he was denied, and all the academic positions he did not get into. As a result, his own resume of failures became widely shared and sympathized with. To his great horror, it had in a heartbeat become more famous than his real resume with his hard-to-triumph-accomplishments, and today remains the very first pop-up when googling his name.

With a constant pressure to reach more and more likes on each new profile, on each new Instagram post, and new readers succeeding every blogpost, more and more weight lost by each week, a higher up position within work every year, I envy the people not stressed by this.

Ironically, my greatest envy is of the people who do not envy others. ●

**Follow Liisa's travels, musings and photography on social media.**

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# GREENPOWER

ST. PAUL'S PUPILS REPRESENT BRAZIL IN THE INTERNATIONAL

FINALS OF THE GREENPOWER RACING CHALLENGE

On 15th and 16th October, a team of Senior School pupils from St. Paul's School, Brazil, competed in the 2016 edition of the Greenpower international finals at Rockingham Speedway, UK.

This August, nine St. Paul's School pupils formed the 'Saints' to take on the Greenpower racing challenge. The challenge involves designing, building and racing an electric powered car, with the final goal of competing in the international finals. Started in the UK in 1999, the programme now involves more than 600 schools worldwide. After more than two months of gruelling work, our dream finally came true on 15th and 16th October, when we found ourselves among 39 other finalists competing for the title of 'Greenpower International Champions' in Corby, UK.

*"As a student who is keen on engineering, Greenpower enabled me to gather knowledge about engineering at high school level and to be more prepared for university. Also, with Greenpower, the opportunity to learn new skills which are not taught at school constantly arise and I think that those are priceless."*

*Ricardo Frankenthal, 18, Materials Manager*

Having only heard of the project in May, the 'Saints' had to condense what would usually take nine months of work into a little more than two. Although we faced many unexpected setbacks, our team pulled through after much hard work and



*"Greenpower has been one of the best experiences I've ever had. Dealing with real life problems, working with technical and engineering tasks are some of the reasons why I have gained so much maturity with this project. These skills will certainly be used throughout the following years with Greenpower and my professional life."*

*Felipe Rosset, 15, Mechanical Engineer*



*"Through Greenpower, I was able to showcase my knowledge and understanding in the specific area of engineering. Through this project I also personally experienced what it feels like to be an engineer and how one should deal with real life problems that unexpectedly occur."*

*Dhruva Rawat, 18, Mechanical Engineer*

successfully built our car in time for the Brazilian qualifiers at Interlagos, Brazil on 26th September. Obtaining the best results of the day, we qualified for the international finals on 15th and 16th October and preparations for the UK.

When we first arrived at Rockingham Speedway, we were impressed by the sheer magnitude of the race track and the professionalism of our competitors. We immediately took our dismantled car from its box and began to reassemble it, when we unfortunately discovered that our steering wheel had been cleanly chopped off from the body of the car. This was just one of the many challenges we faced while at the finals. However, with teamwork that had never been better, we took everything that came at us in our stride, and successfully got our car ready for the final race on Sunday 16th October. Although we performed with less success than expected due to issues with

our motor's gear ratio, achieving 34th place in the race, we are proud to say that we have exceeded our own expectations, especially as one of the newest and most inexperienced teams in the finals.

Aside from the competition itself, there are many other aspects of those two days that will remain with us. The cooperation between all the teams we met was simply amazing. When our chain guard broke and our chain fell off the gears for example, other teams were more than willing to lend us parts and tools to fix the issue. We were also glad to see that we were not the only foreign teams; aside from the home teams, there were teams from Poland, USA, Portugal and Ireland, all working towards the same goal, competing on the same grounds. As an international team ourselves, we hope that the international participation will keep on increasing in the years to come.

*"Greenpower was an amazing experience. I certainly learned and matured a lot with the programme. Even though it was very demanding and time consuming, I believe our hard work payed off."*

*Eduardo Ortenblad, 17, Director of Finance*

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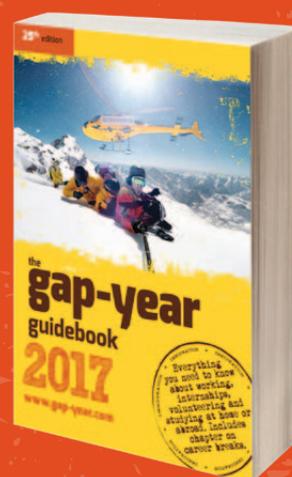
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This experience has been a valuable opportunity for growth and learning that will always be remembered by our team members. The arsenal of skills we have gathered from participating in this challenge – acquiring mechanical and electrical engineering knowledge, learning the best ways to crowdfund, having business meetings with large companies for sponsorship, working smoothly as a team – will serve us for the rest of our careers, regardless of the paths we choose. ●

This was the first year that Brazil has participated in the competition, and our school's entry was only made possible through the joint effort from our team captain, school teachers and Ecatú (an organization that promotes learning through STEM projects). It makes our team extremely proud that we had the opportunity to represent not only our school, but also Brazil and the whole of South America at the international finals at Rockingham Speedway in the UK. The 'Saints' look forward to facing this challenge again next year, armed with more experience, knowledge and drive. If you would like keep yourself updated, follow us on Instagram @saintsgreenpower. Visit our Indiegogo page at 'The Saints in the UK - Greenpower Challenge Pt. 2' to get involved.

*"Greenpower has surpassed all of my expectations, taught me life-long skills and brought me invaluable experience. This interdisciplinary programme which I have become so familiar with has closed the gap between theory and practice and transcended the common ways of learning. It is a significant chapter in my high school career and a most satisfying one. Yet all this wouldn't have been possible without the help and support our team received from both inside and outside of school. To all those who helped us, thank you. But most importantly, I'd like to thank the team members. I couldn't be more proud of all of you and to those who will still have this opportunity next year, I hope you continue both your learning and this legacy that is Greenpower."*

**Christopher Chiang, 17, Team Captain**

**Elisa Zhao Hang (Logistics Manager and Head of Business and Media Team for the 'Saints') is an Upper Sixth pupil at St Paul's School, Brazil.**

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# A LIST OF THINGS I WISH I KNEW IN HIGH SCHOOL

LIISA GIVES US ADVICE ON THINGS SHE WISHED

SHE'D KNOWN WHEN SHE WAS YOUNGER



**H**igh school is a tricky jungle to navigate through. As I don't have any older siblings, or younger ones to share my experience with, I had to learn everything the hard way. By now being in my second year of university, when looking back, there's a lot of things that I wish my younger self would have known; so I thought, where would be a better place to share all this with than the World Student Magazine audience?

## 1. There is a lot of growing space left

Some days you might feel certain that you know where you want to head after high school, and others you might feel like you have no idea, just paddling water, and everyone else has their lives planned out. Either way, you're still at an ideal age to try out the water. Take that extra job, volunteer somewhere where you are exposed to different people, join that after school club you're really passionate about, Google how to write poetry, or let your friend convince you to try out their soccer practice!

## 2. It's ok if you don't attend the most prestigious summer camp, the best internship or even job.

If you did though, congratulations! However, truth is, high school is still a very young age, and soon nobody will ask for specific extra activities that you pursued during the summer months of your high school years. Within Sweden (and internationally) there was a Twitter trend #myfirstseven (jobs) trending, and I scrolled down the responses of many big politicians and my favorite journalists. Trust me when I say that nobody had plotted down "Goldman Sachs CEO assistant" or "White House intern" on any of those steps. And that leads me on to...

## 3. There will mostly only be failures from now on.

One of the things that I looked forward to the most was the freedom that would follow after high school. In university, I'd have much more time to create my own flexible schedule, pursue projects that I haven't had much time for in the past, and meet many new people. Hurray! However, when I speak to some of my childhood friends my age, they seem devastated that high school is over, they've already gotten 'old', and the fact that they've missed 'all opportunities'. It's good to set the bar high, but I think it's important to realize that getting there won't, and should not, be easy. A lot of things won't be easy, or go your way. If you work around this, that's when you find your success the key is to not give up. Make sure to find the silver lining in everything you do.

#### 4. Be kind, because your high school and university (or any kind of) reputation will follow you around.

Most people like to think of university as a clean sheet where they can start over, and to some extent that is true. Still, be kind to everyone you meet in high school, and be honest about how you feel about things. I've met people in university who have acted somewhat shady, but I've always given them the benefit of the doubt, until I've heard from my friends that went to the same high school as them, that in fact they cannot really be called reliable. Be kind and honest, and always give people credit for their ideas and work!

#### 5. Having contacts is everything, but don't stress about it if you don't have any.

They say that having contacts is essential to get internships, jobs, and sometimes even get in to university. I never grew up with relatives who could help me out with their many contacts, seeing as both of my parents are immigrants and the rest of our family lives abroad. Instead, I realized that you have to create your own network, which is not too hard after all. One of my friends is only 24, and she's gained every single job through a friend of a friend, or a friend of an acquaintance that has spoken well of her; and these haven't been bad jobs either! My advice is to be passionate about what you do, be hard working, be kind to everyone, and tell them what you are looking for! If your goal is to get into politics, law, sports, or even just get a summer job, let people know. LinkedIn is a great app for staying in touch with people that you've studied, worked with or even casually meet on the train or at a party. Plus, it's really accessible. My point is, keep in touch with people who know what your aim is as maybe one day they will reference you for a great opportunity.

#### 6. Ask for help! Find a mentor!

It is good to have people who always believe in you. Plus, it's always fun to get advice and talk to new people to hear their stories – so contact people in your field and ask for advice. You'd be surprised how honored many would feel of being asked to be a mentor. Through an alumni program at my university I now have a very sweet lady from the BBC mentoring me and giving me advice and helping me set up goals through Skype every few weeks. Similarly, only last week did I meet up with a really talented wedding photographer for coffee, and who gave me plenty of advice based on her experiences of running her own business. Next week I'm off to meet up with a really talented street artist and after that for a quick visit at the Swedish embassy. Similarly, I constantly message my old English teacher what to do with my new writing pieces (or boy trouble!) or any other advice needed. They've given me a lot of invaluable advice (for free), and expanded my view of issues that I've had, and helped my personal growth tremendously.

#### 7. Wear those loose jeans

I helped my mom to clean out her wardrobe this summer, and found this pair of amazing, loose fit, high waist, white 80s jeans. I had instant regrets about all the skinny jeans, and all the a-size-too-small-can't-breathe skinny jeans that I forced myself into throughout high school. Take it easy, wear those loose jeans, and realize how young you are and how much time you have left for wearing uncomfortable trousers.

Follow Liisa's travels, musings and photography on social media.

 @liisatoomusphotography  @numinoustravels  @liisatoomus

# OVERCOMING PREJUDICE

NILIEVNA WRITES HIS EXPERIENCE OF BEING THE FIRST FOREIGN STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A CHINESE NATIONAL ENGINEERING COMPETITION

I was born in July 10th 1989 in the city of Pointe-noire in the Republic of Congo. My mother is a housewife and my father is a retired civil engineer who raised six children altogether (I have four brothers and one sister). My family has always been very supportive as I work to climb the ladder of success.

Ever since I was a child, I have always been very dedicated and hardworking when trying to achieve my goal. My motto is to always try my best to overcome any challenges in my way. To persevere regardless how hard the situation might be, in order to keep getting closer to reaching my dreams.

In 2013, I had an intensive internship at The Technology Consultancy Centre (KNUST), in Kumasi (Ghana) where I learned how to be more creative and innovative. Furthermore, I obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical engineering from Kwame Nkrumah University of technology (Ghana).

During my undergraduate studies, I got elected in unanimity in 2014 to be the executive of the university's French student association (AEF), and was also shortlisted among the organizer executives of the francophone week 2014 launched by the Alliance Française in Kumasi.

I am currently doing a master's degree at Yangtze University in the city of Jinzhou (Hubei Province) in China, where I also got elected to serve as president of the African student union.

Coming from a humble beginning in Pointe-Noire, I have always strived for success in my endeavours. After spending a year in China, I reached for the opportunity to be selected to participate to the '3rd Annual Petroleum Equipment Innovative Design Competition for China's Postgraduate'. It was not an easy task for a foreign African student like me to be selected, especially



among ninety-two Chinese postgraduate students. We were to work in groups to be able to participate in the competition, however I had to work alone on my project because, being a foreigner, no one believed I would be able to be shortlisted for the competition.

Students participating in the competition came from various universities from all over the country. They worked in teams of four benefiting from the assistance of one or two professors for creating innovative machine engineering. They were also financially sponsored by their university's dean. My innovation was to design an automated pipe handling equipment for oil rigs.



China is still a predominantly homogeneous society with a population of 1 billion of inhabitants. They have a social standard and ideology of living, inspired by the Caucasian standard. Foreigners in China represent less than 1% of the whole population living in the country, so black people remain a rarity. I was not spared from a discriminatory attitude from my peers.

Contrary to my fellow classmates, I worked alone day and night but I kept a positive state of mind during the whole process. Sometimes I tried to ask other classmates to give me a hand, however, none of them responded in a positive manner. None of the deans of my department financially sponsored my machine unlike my others Chinese classmates. As a result, I used my own resources to create the drafts of my machine at the astonishment of my supervisor.

I worked hard, often 12 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout my summer holidays, determined to be successful. Despite the obstacles I faced, my hard work and determination paid off. I ended up being listed among others students in my class and university to go to the national competition in Qingdao and represent the University of Yangtze. The competition was hosted by the 'China's University of Petroleum' and took place between the 21st and 22nd October 2016 at Qingdao City.

Going to the finals in Qingdao City, I was the only postgraduate, foreign student and first African man to ever attend the competition. I was surprised to see that despite over 50 Chinese universities registered, I was the only non-Chinese student participating. The first day was exhibition day where I had to introduce my design prototype operation to the public in Chinese however this competition section was not easy for me with limited Chinese. I tried to speak and explain as much as I could so that all the public would understand. This attempt

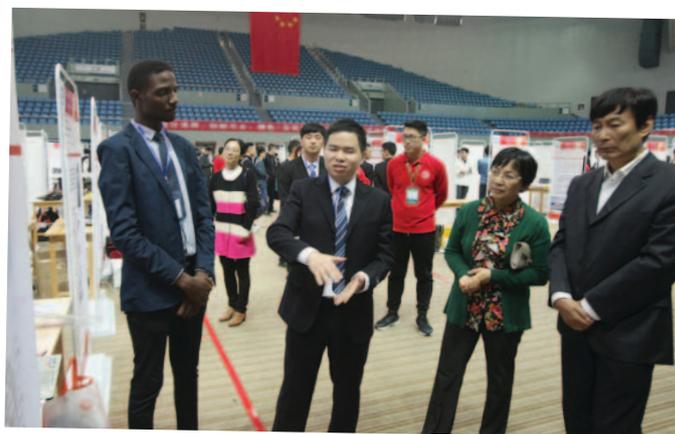
was quite successful and the president of the competition was surprised but very pleased to see an African student attending the competition for the first time in its history.

The second day of the competition, I had to do another five minute presentation and within twenty-four hours the results were published, I was really thrilled to be awarded the third position in the competition out of the 500 Chinese students participating.

Subsequently, the whole Engineering department of my university was applauded for bringing me along. Without realizing it, I contributed to make an historical step in the Chinese national education by paving the way for other foreign students wishing to integrate national competition in China. ●

***Nilievna Nkanza is an African student from the Republic of Congo doing a master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at Yangtze University in the city of Jingzhou in China.***

 [@yangtzeu.edu.cn](https://www.facebook.com/yangtzeu.edu.cn)



# STUDENT REFLECTION

SAMI LOOKS BACK OVER HIS EDUCATION AND WHAT MAKES

HIS SCHOOL SO SPECIAL

I still remember the day my dad came home from work and told me we were moving to Malaysia. I was eight, I thought Malaysia was in Africa and leaving my life in England was the last thing I wanted to do. I considered ringing social services but I couldn't remember the number. Looking back, the decision my parents made was quite possibly the greatest thing they have done for me. The first years, however, were undoubtedly difficult. Taken away from all that was familiar left me bereft, but at Alice Smith, I found a community that welcomed me, and in which I could grow.

The Alice Smith School is outstanding. Outstanding in its facilities, in its exam results and outstanding in its approach to learning. What makes Alice Smith special, cliché as it sounds, is the people.

From teachers quite literally going the extra mile and running with students at 3am during sponsored runs, to the general staff celebrating with the football team after a tournament win, it is the people within the Alice Smith School community that make it such an incredible environment. For me, running alongside our Vice Principal, Mr Connell, at a ridiculous time in the morning, underlined a unique connection between staff and students.

Chatting over subjects as crucial as who do Crystal Palace buy in the January transfer window to more trivial issues like what Brexit really means for the UK economy, the openness, approachability and genuine interest of teachers in the lives of students makes Alice Smith so much more than just a place to learn.

The role that students can take in school life was a recent huge highlight for me when I organised an event focusing on the current refugee crisis. The support I had from the school to raise awareness for a topic I felt strongly about, and the belief

they had in me to deliver this project is just another example of the position and trust in the students of this school.

Being a student in Alice Smith's international community has exposed me to countless opportunities and experiences that have undoubtedly shaped me as a person, challenging and changing my views on the world in the process.

Furthermore, the integral role of sport in school life has allowed me to develop both on and off the playing field, progressing as an athlete as well as a competitor.

Soon, I'll be graduating sixth form and moving on. It has suddenly dawned on me just what that means – no more school trips to locations most of the world only dream about, no more access to a truly incredible learning environment and of course, no more waking up at 6am in the morning!

However, I know for sure that this special community is one that I will never really leave. I know that the friendships I've made throughout my time here are ones that cannot be forgotten and that my experiences will last a lifetime.

What started as the desire of our school founder, Mrs Alice Fairfield-Smith to provide education for her children has become more than just a school. This is a community, an environment to nurture inquisitive minds, a place to question and grow, a setting to develop global mindsets and ambitions, and most importantly, this is a family. ●

*Sami Azam-Ali is a sixth form student at The Alice Smith School, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia*

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# SECOND IN COMMAND

ABDELRHMAN WRITES ABOUT HOW HE NARROWLY MISSED OUT ON BEING HEAD BOY, AND WHY THIS WAS FOR THE BEST

“Dear Abdul,” the letter read, “I have great pleasure in offering you the position of deputy head boy...” My eyes veered off the paper as I put the letter down and let out a sigh of resignation. I didn’t just fail; I was defeated by my best friend.

The A-levels I wanted to study were not offered at my high school in Egypt, so I decided to continue my education elsewhere. I travelled to England on a scholarship, and on the first day of school, the gossip about the prefects was all I heard. Every year, teachers select a few students to be on the prefect team. But not all prefects are equal; the head boy is at the top, and then there is everyone else. Period.

I wanted power. I wanted prestige. I wanted a shiny, green head boy badge. And my best friend, Vinícius, wanted the same. In a clash of egos, both of us were willing to move mountains to secure that sacred title. I was involved in everything within a five-mile radius of the school in an attempt to win over the teachers. I participated in the activities I liked and in the ones I didn’t.

The school was split into two groups, like Republicans and Democrats, those on my side and those on Vinícius’. There were others behind me. I had to win.

Later that year, the teachers cast their votes, and I got a blue badge instead of a green one. They chose Vinícius as head boy and me as deputy head boy and science prefect. This slap in the face opened my eyes to how misguided I had been.

I was so fixated on proving myself superior to others that I lost sight of the true purpose of having prefects. The competition turned my friend into a competitor, but it wasn’t about being better than everyone else; it was about being the best I can be.

As deputy head boy, I am in a position to both lead and follow, a position that gave me a new perspective on teamwork. The prefect team struggled until we put aside our desires to prevail over each other. Whether it was visiting Birmingham

Children’s Hospital to encourage donations, or meeting ambassadors to support education in Panama, our efforts would have been futile if it weren’t for every prefect on the team. Although an air of competition remains between Vinícius and me, this time around, it motivates us to bring out the best in each other.

Had I been chosen as head boy, I would not have learnt or achieved as many things as I have. Now I enjoy my role in the community and the activities that were once tools to build my reputation. In such a competitive world, people strive to be at the top: leaders are glorified, and followers are overlooked. Going through this experience, I came to realize that we can only achieve progress with unity and collaboration between all, leaders and followers alike. One year ago I would have given anything to become head boy, yet now I am glad I was chosen to be second in command. ●

**Abdelrhman Saleh is a former student of King’s College Saint Michael’s, UK.**

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# FROM UNIVERSITY TO THE SOUTH POLE AND BEYOND

HENRY EVANS WRITES ABOUT HIS EXPEDITION TO THE SOUTH POLE AND

HOW HE HAS USED HIS EXPERIENCE TO INSPIRE YOUNG MINDS WORLDWIDE

It was in Antarctica, while manoeuvring my skis through the 'sastrugi' snow drifts, that the idea for Magnificent Ocean surfaced. Amidst the blisters, hallucinations and fatigue, my mind kept returning to how I might communicate the importance of this awe-inspiring landscape and the relevance of science and exploration to the bright young minds of today.

This incredible opportunity came about after entering a national selection process to choose one candidate to join the International Scott Centenary Expedition (ISCE) to the South Pole. This 120 mile trek would honour the British explorer Captain Scott's own historic Terra Nova expedition and the scientific research his team conducted. The following months consisted of a series of highly challenging selection events, from the gruelling physical and psychological tests conducted by the Royal Navy to the cold weather training in the Norwegian wilderness.

On the 13th November 2011, while still studying my BSc Marine Biology degree, I received the news that I had been selected and

would be making the 10,000 mile journey to Antarctica and skiing the last two degrees to the South Pole accompanied by Geoff Somers, one of the world's most accomplished polar explorers.

After a year of fundraising, training and preparation, wedged between sledges, skis and scientists swaddled in layers of cold weather gear, I looked out of the window of the Russian Ilyushin Il-72 aircraft for my first glimpse of the breath-taking beauty of the pristine white Antarctica landscape. The trek itself was both brilliant and brutal, pulling a 70kg sledge 9,000 feet above sea level in temperatures of up to -30 degrees Celsius (-22°F). It didn't take long to experience the unforgiving nature of this alien environment. Crisp blue skies would turn into complete whiteouts within minutes, making it impossible to distinguish where the sky ended and land began.

Known as one of the most remote and inhospitable places on Earth, Antarctica is a precious continent for scientists. Virtually untouched by the influence of mankind and home to many unique species, its glaciers, mountain ranges and surrounding seas make a vital contribution to the progression of present day science and to our understanding of our planet's future. During my expedition I conducted my own scientific experiment with the support of The British Antarctic Survey, collating data to help further understand how our changing climate is affecting the polar ice.

On returning to the UK I set about building an education and outreach programme. Magnificent Ocean started locally, 2 miles down the road in fact, at my local primary school with a class of 30 lively 10 year olds. With a rucksack full of expedition equipment, photos and video footage, I tried painting a picture of what it is like to experience such an unfamiliar landscape and why this huge white mass of ice at the southernmost part





of the world is so important to the sustainability of our planet. The enthusiastic response encouraged me to organise more visits across the UK, including Eton College in London and Truro School for Girls in Cornwall.

Then Magnificent Ocean went international, visiting schools in China, Thailand, Vietnam and Nepal, and across the pond to the US and the United Nations School in New York, as well as international schools in Boston, Chicago and Los Angeles. Dressing up in expedition gear, handling the food packages and waddling around in the penguin costume that had been worn in the fundraising half-marathons and at the South Pole. 'Pingu', as he was more affectionately known, became quite the expedition mascot.

Over the next year I packed and unpacked suitcases, talking to tens of thousands of students, teachers and parents in classrooms and auditoriums for assemblies, science lessons and prize giving events. Whether it was working with 5 year olds in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, to 12 year old students in Nairobi, Kenya and 17 year old officers-in-training at Shanghai Maritime University in China, there was always a genuine desire to engage and learn. 'What can an individual do to reduce their carbon footprint?' 'How did you go to the toilet in Antarctica?' Today's bright young minds seem to have a burning desire to know the bathroom etiquette on the Antarctic continent.

As Magnificent Ocean grew so did its education program. We ventured beyond the Antarctic plateau to the rich ecosystem of the Borneo rainforest and the coral reefs of the southern seas, exploring the natural environment we live in and how human activity has a direct impact upon its survival. We look at the weird and the wonderful, the intriguing looking blobfish, for example, whose slimy appearance never fails to provoke a

squeal from the audience. We then discuss how deep-ocean fishing poses a significant threat to the future of many marine life species and the dramatic rate of deforestation in rainforests worldwide. As well as the wonders of our solar system, the sheer size of the universe and the incredible technological feats in space science and exploration.

In August 2015, I enrolled in a 2-year master's degree in Climate Change Science at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark, to learn more about the global implications of climate change and its impact in the modern age.

Over the past 3 years Magnificent Ocean has visited over 250 international schools across 5 continents, reaching out to people of all ages and different cultural backgrounds. It has been an incredible journey so far, yet it feels like it has just begun. More than ever there is a need for increased and more effective awareness on the subject of climate change as it becomes a greater political, social and economic issue, with world leaders discussing how to respond to ever increasing worldwide impacts.

Magnificent Ocean continues to share its passion for science and exploration and to communicate to all how their contributions really can make a difference to this world we all live in. ●

***Magnificent Ocean offers a variety of services ranging from school visits, attending conferences to providing a mentoring and tuition scheme. Their work covers subjects as diverse as the incredible marine life found in the depths of our oceans, to the threat of survival to future human generations. For more information, go to [www.magoce.com](http://www.magoce.com) or email [enquiry@magoce.com](mailto:enquiry@magoce.com).***

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# KING'S COLLEGE LONDON PRE-UNIVERSITY SUMMER SCHOOL

6 STUDENTS TALK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES OF SUMMER SCHOOL



Summer has now become the perfect opportunity for high school students to get a head start in thinking about which university they may want to attend, what degree they wish to pursue and the potential career opportunities available to them. Summer schools designed for students in their final two years of high school offer just that experience and King's College London is one of the first universities in the UK to offer a Pre-University Summer School. Students can gain an insight into a chosen subject area and learn more about what

it is like to study at this historic and prestigious university. This is what some of the Pre-University Summer School students from 2016 thought about their experience at King's College London. ●

 @KingsSummer

 @KingsSummer



**Ivana Skenderska:** Attending the Pre-University Summer School was an opportunity for me to get an early insight about the degree I would like to pursue at university as well as the industry I had considered for my future career path. I had the chance to interact with various people coming from truly international backgrounds. This collaboration let me build strong friendships for the future and to get to know students from all over the globe. It helped me also to understand how to work in diverse teams and how to overcome the individual or cultural differences between students. Now, thanks to the Pre-University course, I am sure which degree to choose at undergraduate level and what kind of career will suit me the best. I am looking forward to coming back to King's and putting in practice everything that I learned from this action-packed, as well as fun, Summer School experience.

**Kristyn Lee:** Coming to King's was nerve-racking. Was I going to make friends? Was the course content going to be too hard? However the two weeks studying Law at King's College London was not at all what I had pictured. I was able to make friends from all around the world – within my friend group we represented five different ethnicities. This was truly the most enjoyable and memorable part of my summer. Classes were also very insightful and engaging. Despite university level content, the professors were able to make it understandable. This translated into heated debates and a passion for the subject that was developed among the students in the class. It was an incredible way to spend my summer – too bad it's my last year or else I would have been back in summer 2017.



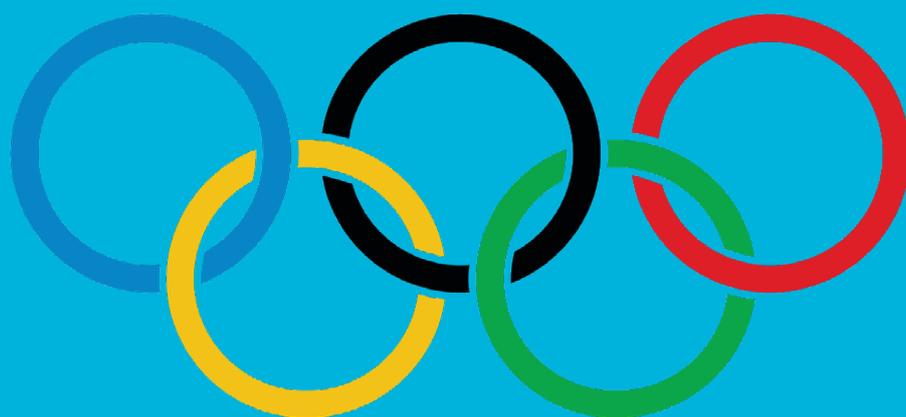
**Alexandra Blanter:** In all honesty, I started off my two weeks at King's a little shy, a little introverted, and very uncomfortable. Coming from a small school and never having studied psychology before, I wasn't really sure what to expect. As cheesy and cliché as it all sounds, those two weeks were probably some of the most memorable and impactful I've ever had. Without exaggeration, I loved every day. While I came in being unsure about my future prospects, I left positive that I wanted to pursue psychology. While at King's, I realised that there were possibilities and opportunities waiting for me outside those that I had come to know at home. Meeting my teachers, my ambassadors, people from all over the world allowed me to see a glimpse of what (if I worked hard) my future could become, and it was a future that I couldn't wait to be a part of.

**Helena Heimrath:** Overall I think that the Pre-University Summer Medicine course at King's College was a great, eye-opening experience. Not only have I made a lot of new friends from around the world, which helped me gain knowledge on other countries, but I also obtained a deeper understanding of what it really means to be a doctor.



**Lucie Škopková:** This year marked the second time that I have attended the King's College London Pre-University Summer School. After having such a wonderful experience the first time I could not resist coming back. This past summer I decided to study Politics. My expectations were exceeded throughout the programme and I left the Pre-University Summer School feeling confident about the course and with plenty of information that I could use when deciding about my future studies at university. King's opened its arms and welcomed me for the second time and allowed me to gain an unforgettable experience. Studying a university subject, receiving additional talks on ethics and university-related topics, meeting amazing people and being able to live in a vibrant city like London for two weeks, has made me a more confident, open-minded and enthusiastic person. It was a privilege to be able to spend these two weeks in such a special way.

**Nicolás Bertoni:** This summer I had the pleasure of spending two weeks at King's College London. A perfect combination of stimulating academics, engaging activities and a great geographical location truly made this one of the best experiences of my life. I enrolled in the Business Management course and found it to be both engaging and informative. The academic experience was enhanced by the interactive teaching methods and expertise of our tutor. Our classes and accommodation were all located in the heart of London and therefore gave a taste of what university life at an urban campus would be like. The fact that many different countries and cultures were represented at the Summer School further allowed me to broaden my cultural horizons and gain new understandings about people and communities that are different from mine. Overall, my experience at the 2016 King's Pre-University Summer School was a once in a lifetime experience.



# Rio Olympics 2016

# THE SAND GRAINS THAT FORM MAGNIFICENT MOUNTAINS

ISABELLA WRITES ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE OF VOLUNTEERING AT THE OLYMPICS IN RIO 2016



**M**y passion for the Olympics and what it stands for did not begin on my first day of work during the test event I attended back in February. It began with my mother's love and admiration for sport of every kind. She would take us to every competition possible, and encourage us to research the rules for all sorts of sports. Volunteering to work at the Olympics, with all the training and hard work involved, was an opportunity I grabbed with both hands.

At the Rio games, I was allocated to be an event service team member in the Maracana precinct. In other words, our main job was to inform and help all visitors with a focus on the spectators. Although, as you might expect, I can list many things that went wrong organisationally, I can also confirm that without a shadow of a doubt, I had the best experience of my life. I was lucky enough to be allocated to help with the athlete's parades in both the opening and closing ceremonies, where I had the chance to talk to them. In addition, I was fortunate enough to be able to watch a couple of minutes of the infamous football match where Brazil won its first gold medal, an unforgettable moment for the nation, and definitely for me.

Although meeting the athletes and experiencing the buzz of the games first hand was certainly special, the best experience for me, undeniably, was being part of the workforce community. When I refer to the workforce community, I'm referring to all volunteers in all kinds of function: doctors, operators, translators, event service staff and many other volunteer roles. Because that was what we were: a community. In a country of great contrast and division, the games offered a singular

opportunity for us all to come together and celebrate what can be achieved with great perseverance. During the transportation to our precincts, our individual differences and specific backgrounds didn't matter; we all shared many questions from directions to local attractions to curiosities about being a volunteer. We all worked long hours in the rain and sun. And like one volunteer said: 'each one of us are grains of sand, which together form the rocks and mountains that makes this event happen'. So it didn't matter that I was only a very small grain in the midst of an enormous event. The magic was that we were all small grains that made up a magnificent mountain.

The Olympics provided me with an opportunity to meet people from all walks of life. I was particularly inspired when I met a blind lady for the very first time. She had travelled a long way, by herself, and booked a front-row seat so she could place her hands on the rails and feel the vibrations from the event she was watching. Not being able to see didn't stop her from being inspired and inspiring me, and I know I will remember meeting her for a very long time to come. At the 2016 games, I had the pleasure of meeting people from all over Brazil and the world. And if I may be biased, I can state that yes, this was the best Olympics the world has ever seen. ●

*Isabella Castilla Russo Correa is a student at St. Paul's Upper Sixth, Brazil.*

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 @SeniorStPaulsSP

# THE OLYMPIC DREAM

REVAN WRITES ABOUT HIS DREAM TO COMPETE AT THE  
OLYMPICS IN TOKYO 2020

**S**wimming is my passion, my dream and my life. For as long as I can remember, I have aspired to represent my country at the Olympic Games.

My love for swimming started when I was a baby and I began training when I was six years old. Not long after this I first saw Michael Phelps in the Beijing 2008 Olympics. I was captivated by the eight gold medals he won to become the most decorated athlete in a single Olympic Games and he has been my inspiration ever since. He too started swimming at a similar age and has gone on to take part in five Olympic Games winning 23 Olympic titles and 28 Olympic medals. He did this through hard work, discipline and perseverance and he is definitely someone I look up to as a role model and someone I dream of emulating one day. I am highly ambitious, I train as hard as I can in order to be the best I can be.

My first swimming medal at the age of nine started my quest to excel in swimming and led me to represent my school and club. Traveling to different countries with my family did not dampen my love for swimming or representing my country some day. In fact, swimming helped me bridge the transition of moving to different countries by providing me the comfort and stability of always having my passion with me, as well as providing me with an avenue for making friends.

Moving to Hong Kong at the age of 10 gave me an opportunity to swim in a different environment and compete against swimmers from different parts of the world whilst representing my school and swimming club. Upon moving to Malaysia in 2015, I was given the opportunity to swim for the Garden International School Dragons. The school team race within

Malaysia and throughout South East Asia at international school competitions. After a year with the team, I was delighted to qualify for the Sri Lanka Age Group

Swimming Championship 2016 took place during the summer holidays. At the meet I managed to win four golds and one silver in the five events I took part in as well as being awarded overall age group champion trophy. As a result, I achieved my proudest moment to date, when I was invited to represent Sri Lanka at the South Asian Aquatic Championship (SAAC) in Colombo. The thrill of winning five silver and four bronze medals has motivated me to work harder to achieve my dream of representing my country at Tokyo 2020.

Swimming is not merely competitive sport for me. It is not just a hobby for me. It is a way of life for me. It helps me de-stress, it helps me relax and it helps me feel refreshed after a long day at school. As I swim in the pool, the rhythmic strokes are almost meditative. They help me balance my thoughts and encourage me at the same time. Getting up to train at five in the morning is not a chore. Instead, it teaches me discipline and self control. I am more determined than ever to work hard every day to make my dream a reality.

*“You can't put a limit on anything, the more you dream the farther you get” – Michael Phelps*

**Written by Revan Senaratne a Year 10 student at the Garden International School, Malaysia.**

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# 3 BUSINESS LESSONS FROM THE OLYMPICS

INA WRITES ABOUT THE LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE OLYMPICS

**T**his year's 2016 Rio Olympics, the first ever to be hosted in a South American city, has itself been host to a number of apocalyptic-esque catastrophes. Suffering great economic instability with its worst recession in 25 years, political turmoil from a corruption scandal and subsequent impeachment of their president, not to mention public health risks from a sudden outbreak of the Zika virus; Brazil has had a pretty tough break.

And as mesmerising as the athletes' performances were throughout the games, Rio's tumbling mishaps did show. Items stolen from Rio Olympic Village, food shortages at stadiums, faulty water and electricity, dead body parts washed up near the volleyball beach, the diving pool turning green – the list of complaints go on.

Whilst society has this remarkable tendency to criticise and scorn at failure, the blatant fact is that this mentality will lead us nowhere. The mark of any holistically successful individual is one's capacity to withhold blame or contempt, and to instead spend time reflecting, analysing, and learning objectively from situations like these.

So let's practise what we preach and ask ourselves: on a business level, what are the lessons that can be learnt from the failures of planning, and what can we ourselves emulate from those who have managed to thrive amidst the chaos?

## 1. Emphasise creativity over extravagance

One of the great hallmarks of the Rio Olympics was, as many would agree, the opening ceremony.

Directed by the internationally acclaimed Brazilian filmmaker of *City of God*, Fernando Meirelles, this year's opening ceremony was not only dazzling – it was also amazingly frugal. While the London 2012 and Beijing 2008 opening ceremonies cost USD42mil and USD100mil respectively, Rio managed to do it

with a mere USD4mil and still deliver a captivating work of art. So how did they pull through using such a slim budget? Without the funds to afford high tech spectacles such as drones or moving stages, Rio would, in the words of Leonardo Caetano, "*compensate with creativity, rhythm and emotion*". And so they did.

What we can learn from this is that wealth and grandeur are ultimately secondary to producing great work. Sure, luxury can buy us the means to package things nicely, to construct effortless thrills, to boost efficiency and fashion the appearance of success, but remember that quality can be achieved without this. What's paramount is originality, ingenuity and finesse. No amount of money can compensate for the absence of these things.

## 2. Lead with a social purpose

What I admire about the Rio Olympics is that despite its many struggles, it still tried hard to send a meaningful social message to the world: "*It is not enough to stop harming the planet, it is time to begin healing it. This will be our Olympic message: Earthlings, let's replant, let's save the planet.*" narrated Judi Dench during a spine shivering segment of the opening ceremony on the issue of climate change.

Now given the situation, not all of Rio's initial promises for a green Olympics have been kept. Though at the very least, Rio has certainly done more than just talk. Seven million gallons of the fuel used for transport were derived of green sources like biofuel and ethanol, energy used for lighting was reduced by 50% using LEDs, medals, display cases and ribbons were all made out of recycled materials and over 11,000 trees will be planted to represent each Olympian. They wanted the Olympics to mean more than entertainment, so they led their spectacle driven with a theme of social good. Based on international reviews, it really paid off.



As we are caught in the loop of life's daily grind, let us not forget to do our work with a sense of purpose. Conscience, compassion and leadership rooted in social good will inevitably attract success. Not only will people respond well to it, we ourselves are likely to enjoy a greater sense of fulfilment.

### **3. Success is impossible without perseverance, goal-setting and consistency**

Nevertheless, we still cannot overlook the array of shortfalls and broken promises of Rio this year. Brazil began its journey to the Olympics with wide-eyed hopes that this opportunity would be a catalyst for growth and a means to finally solve different sorts of problems for the country. But as seven years have passed, a bleak reality has instead overshadowed Rio's golden dreams.

Government housing initiatives have been abandoned, efforts to clear out pollution in the Rodrigo de Freitas Lagoon has led to little improvement, whatever transport and housing infrastructure that was constructed has overlooked the poor who need it most. It is still too early to say whether any positive change will come from this.

Brazil had an opportunity to pull through with all its brave ideals. But if we are to learn anything at all from this, it's that there is no easy way towards reaching our goals in life. For a brighter reality to manifest, it takes nothing but unwavering determination, meticulous planning and consistent action. It is easy to dream, but not always easy to do.

Whatever it is we hope to attain in life, let this be a reminder that words count for nothing unless we are obstinate enough to see them through as actions. ●

*Written by Ina Hanninger, Alumna of Garden International School and current student of University of Oxford.*

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*This article was initially written for Leaderonomics, a social enterprise with the purpose of transforming nations through leadership development.*

*Find out more at [www.leaderonomics.com](http://www.leaderonomics.com)*

# HOTELSCHOOL THE HAGUE STUDENTS AT THE OLYMPICS IN RIO!

ELKE AND MITCHELL WRITE ABOUT WORKING IN HOSPITALITY AT

THE OLYMPICS GAMES IN RIO



*During the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro Hotelschool The Hague was proud to be represented at the Holland Heineken House by several students and alumni. Two students, Elke Jacobse and Mitchell Arnst shared their experience with us.*

## **The selection process**

It was quite a tough selection, out of over 2700 applicants only 800 made it to the first round, from which 220 people were selected. The selection process had three steps: first the application where we had to send a letter detailing our motivation and a photo of ourselves. When we passed, we got invited to do an online personality/capability test and later on at the Heineken Experience in Amsterdam we had one-on-one interviews and photo sessions throughout the day. At the end of the day we received a letter with the invitation to Rio. We noticed that being a Hotelschool The Hague student really helped us through the selection, since we had an idea what Heineken is looking for: people that have a passion for hospitality and who are capable of working under pressure and show a professional attitude.

## **On our way to Rio de Janeiro**

Prior to the Olympic Games we received training to make sure that we represent Heineken to its fullest. That included a set attitude towards guests, the information we were allowed to share, where to go in Rio and which places to avoid. Having such a great training really made us feel safe. We arrived in Rio four days before the games started and to help build the bars and set-up the restaurants. Heineken was covering our flight to Rio de Janeiro, the hotel at Copacabana beach and our meals throughout the day. On top of which, we were provided 250 bikes to use for the way to the Heineken House and back to the hotel.

## **The Holland Heineken House**

Holland Heineken House (HHH) is known for being the best and most celebratory house of all. While other nations only provide catering and a gallery with the Olympic participants, the HHH also invites famous Dutch artists. The goal of the HHH is to create a home away from home for Dutch people. It was interesting to see the reaction of international guests

coming to HHH; I think they really did not expect to have such extravagant and great celebration ceremonies.

The HHH had a lot to offer, besides the basketball field and a swimming pool, several bars, the restaurant, a Panini bar and a BBQ were provided. It was very interesting to see how they created such an environment. The vibe at the house was incredible; especially the ceremonies which were very emotional and beautiful.

What they do at the Heineken House is unique compared to other houses. Nobody else does it like Heineken and it was such a privilege to be part of it.

### The experience of Rio de Janeiro and the Olympic Games

You almost can't describe how wonderful it was. The vibe was amazing; it was a mixture of athletes being extremely focused, excited and relieved. Our experiences from Hotelschool The Hague really helped in regards to etiquette; how to serve people in the right manner, how to manage VIPs, and how to work under pressure. Those who have never really worked in the hospitality industry perceived it to be much more challenging and tougher than we did.

Heineken really took care of us. We were offered sport sessions in the morning to keep us fit and prepare us for long working hours. Working at the HHH never felt like working, everyone was always in a good mood and we were one big team that always did things outside of working together and even went to handball and hockey games.

It was eye-opening to see the contrast between rich and poor. While staying at a hotel at Copacabana beach on the 13th floor we were overlooking the Favelas of Rio. During our time in Rio we did a tour through the Favelas with a guide who used to live there.

### A typical day at the Holland Heineken House

We would usually get up around noon and sometimes go to the beach before work. We would take the bike from the hotel to the HHH and would have lunch together, then change into our uniforms and start preparing the restaurant. Around 6 PM guests would start to arrive making the house busy until 12 AM. After that we would go for drinks with all colleagues or join the ceremony. The team spirit was great, we were all very motivated and worked hard to make the best out of our stay. Even though we had management teams around, we also managed ourselves. Both of us worked in the VIP restaurant, which only catered for people that got invited to the restaurant. It was great that we had learnt at Hotelschool The Hague how to cater VIPs and provide a high-standard service.

Most of my colleagues attended a hotel school and six of us are currently studying at Hotelschool The Hague. Working with all of them was easy, because you knew what they are capable of and it made the work process very smooth. Especially when the King and Queen of the Netherlands came to visit and dined at the VIP restaurant. We, the hotel school students, received a lot of positive feedback and were said to have exceeded their expectations. My studies at Hotelschool The Hague definitely gave me a solid knowledge of service standards and work efficiency. Looking back on the experience, I can say that it genuinely enriched me. It was great working in an international environment and applying all my learnings in practice, both the managerial skills as well as the soft skills came in handy. ●

*Elke Jacobse and Mitchell Arnst are students at Hotelschool The Hague, Netherlands.*

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# MY EXPERIENCE OF THE OLYMPICS

HELEN WRITES ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Last summer, I had the privilege to travel to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from New York City, to watch the 2016 summer Olympics.

My mother was asked to give a speech, in return for plane tickets and a hotel room, so obviously, she took the opportunity to take us all, and watch the Olympics in Rio!

The first Olympic records, were written in 776 bc, but it is highly suspected that games had begun many years before. Following on, there was only one event being held in the 776 bc olympics, but there were 28 events held this summer!

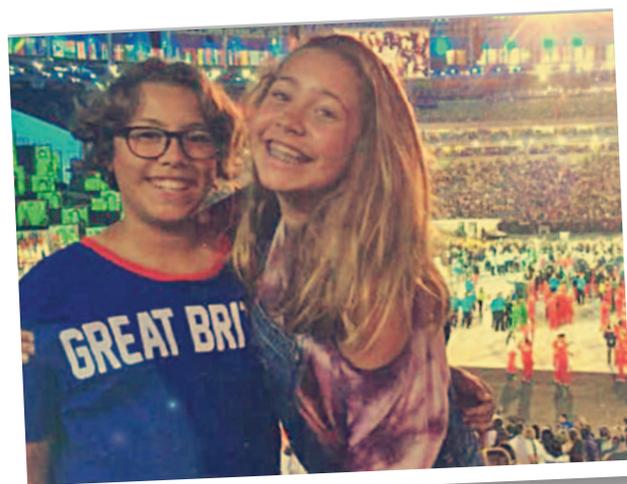
Four years ago, the Olympics were held in London, England, and even though I lived in the center of London at the time, I was not able to attend any of the events. However, this year, I was able to travel all the way to Rio and watch four events as well as go to the opening ceremony.

On the first day upon arriving we rested, knowing that the opening ceremony that we were to attend later on in the evening would go on until very late and would be a long commute home. Therefore, we explored the city and relaxed in our hotel.

We later decided that we would take the subway to the opening ceremony. Even though our expectations for the subway were low, we thought that it would be a good experience, and an interesting adventure. However, unlike what we had imagined, it was extremely fast, convenient and clean, and far better than the New York subway, surprising us all.

The opening ceremony was packed with dancers, musicians, speakers, performers and athletes, all running on and off, one after the other, putting on a show. However, they still managed to keep it organized and efficient and pretty incredible.

The beginning was extraordinary, from breathtaking fireworks to world renowned singers and musicians all creating magnificent performances. My personal favorite, was the four year old Brazilian street tap dancer. The tremendous talent and



effort that he had put into every click of his shoes, was not only astonishing, but also made you wonder how on earth a four year old was doing it all.

The first athletic event that we attended the next day, was women's gymnastics heats. Yes, we saw Simone Biles, and yes, she was spectacular.

My sister, who is an aspiring gymnast, was inspired by the vast range of ages and body types amongst the gymnasts. Ranging from 4'11 and wide-shouldered, to 5'9 and stick-thin. I do have to say that it was fascinating to see how two athletes with polar opposite body types, competed against each other, and used their bodies to their own advantage.

Although, as extraordinary as it was, watching so many of the athletes falling off a beam, or not quite completing a flip, was also upsetting, and made you want to run out into the arena and help them back up.

Our next event, swimming heats, was in the olympic park as well, so we quickly made our way to the Aquatic center. My family knows Katie Ledecky, the world's fastest women's swimmer, and her family fairly well, therefore watching her compete was far more intense and exciting. It was little surprising that she came in first place for all events, and beat the Olympic record!

Later on in the evening, we went on to watch men and women's swimming finals, which was even more exhilarating and breathtaking to experience, especially with her family sitting right next to us in the front row. Nevertheless, like she always does, Katie managed to not only smash the Olympic record, but also the world record, which she had set four years earlier, in the 2012 London Olympics.

Alongside the excitement of watching Katie, we were also able to watch Michael Phelps and Adam Peaty compete, two of the best male swimmers, who both won at least one gold.

The next few days, we were event free, so we took the time to explore Rio further.

We spent a day relaxing on Copacabana and Ipanema beach, which were both beautiful, and spent the other visiting the British and U.S. House.

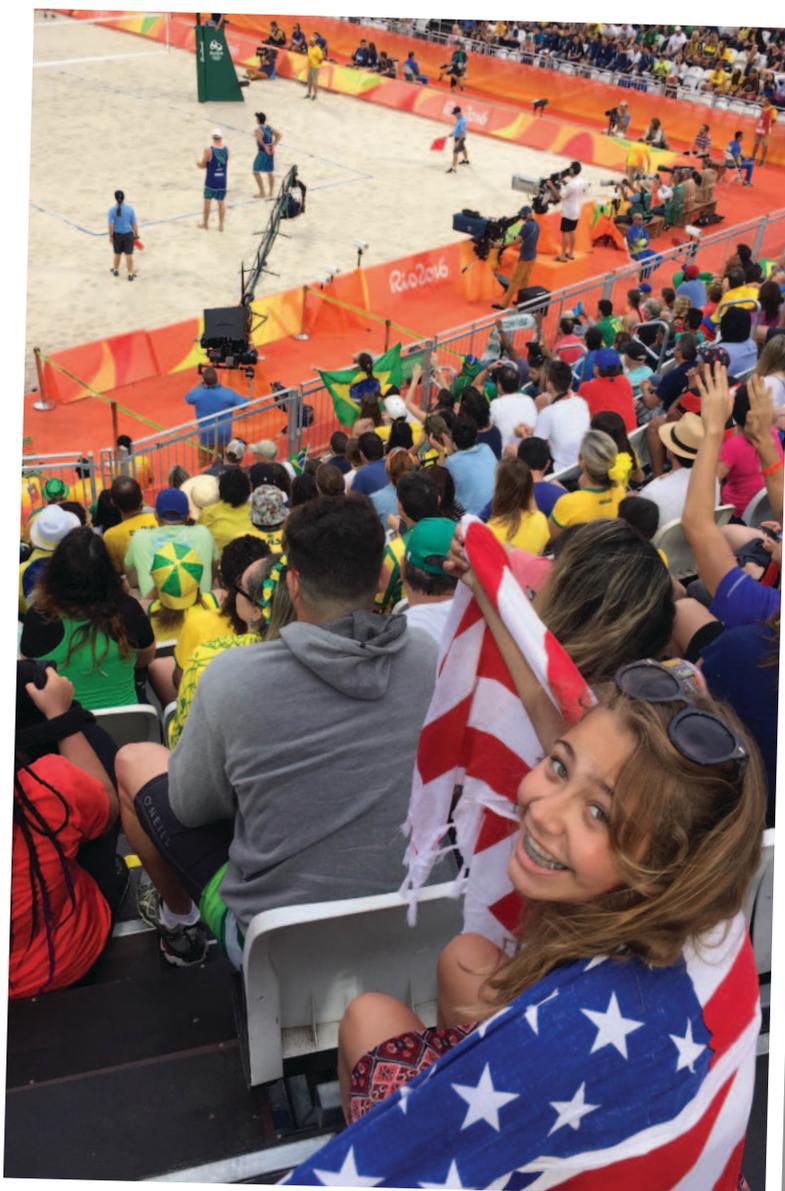
The majority of the major countries competing in events, have 'houses', where government officials, athletes, journalists etc., can visit, tour and relax, and my mother being a journalist, managed to get us into both houses.

The British house was at the foot of Mount Corcovado, this is the mountain that the Cristo Redentor (Christ the Redeemer) statue stands on. The house was held in a beautiful building which was truly a stunning piece of architecture, the polar opposite of the U.S. House, which was a large rectangular building, and slightly intimidating from the outside. However, the inside, was welcoming, and surprisingly had a specific 'twitter' room.

The next day was our last, although my mother and I wanted to see if there was any possibility of us being able to purchase any last minute tickets before we left, so we wandered up and down Copacabana, and to our luck, we found two men's volleyball tickets up for grabs. Obviously, we bought them, and then made our way inside. When we got in, we were able to see the last few minutes of Brazil vs. Austria.

The Brazilian fans were wildly excited by the tension of the game, but to both my mother and my shock, Brazil lost. To Austria!

After losing, all of the Brazilian fans left in misery, leaving several front row seats open to my mother and I, and playing next, was U.S.

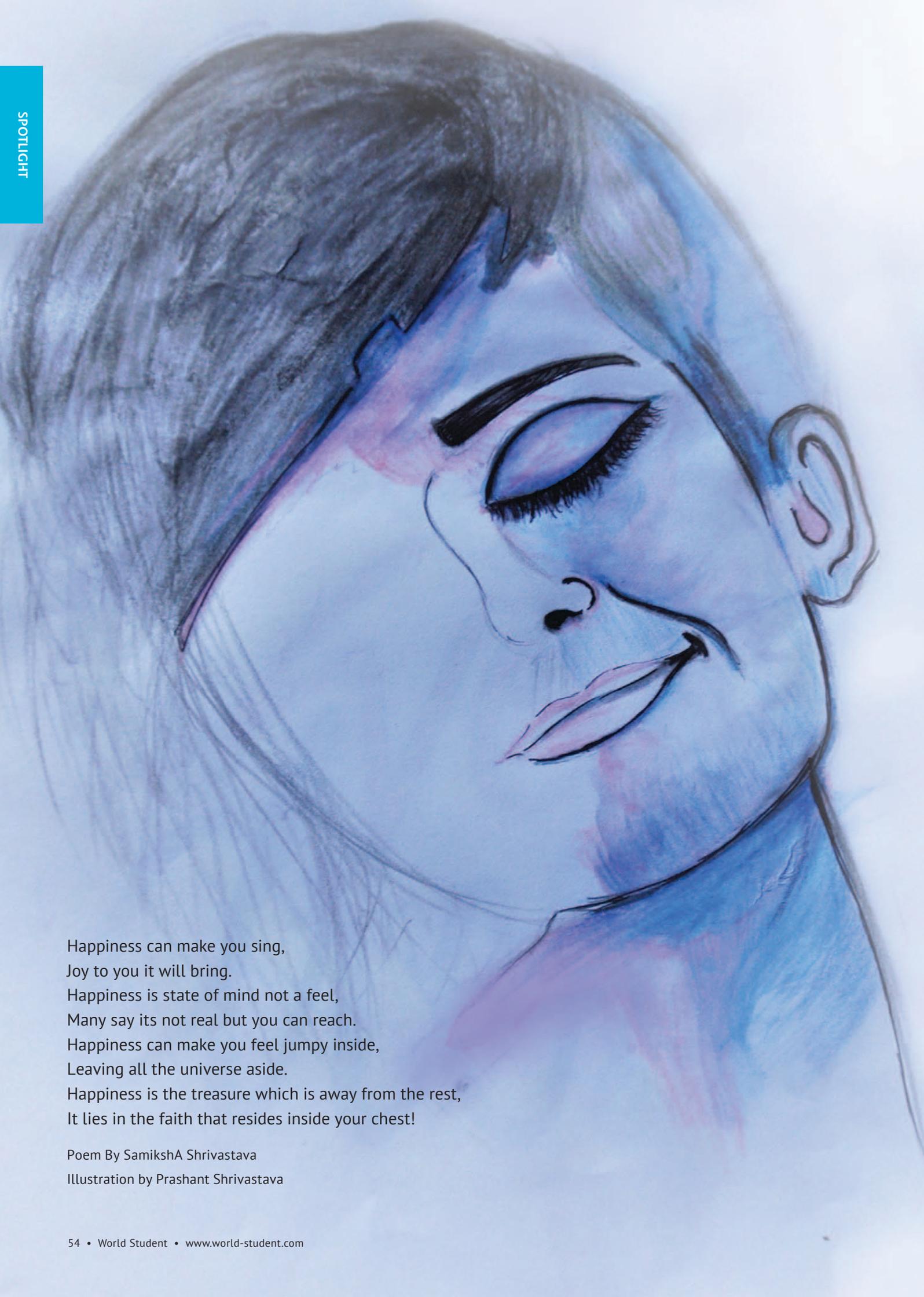


We did not manage to stay for the entire match, but from what we saw, it was pretty obvious that Austria (yet again!) was going to win.

That concluded our trip to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Overall, it was something spectacular that I know I will never forget. The incredible mix of stunning beaches and being able to watch so many of the events, was truly outstanding, and I would highly recommend visiting both. ●

***Helen Fajemirokun is 13 years old and studying at The British International School of New York, USA.***

 @BritishSchoolNY  
 @BritishSchoolNY



Happiness can make you sing,  
Joy to you it will bring.  
Happiness is state of mind not a feel,  
Many say its not real but you can reach.  
Happiness can make you feel jumpy inside,  
Leaving all the universe aside.  
Happiness is the treasure which is away from the rest,  
It lies in the faith that resides inside your chest!

Poem By SamikshA Shrivastava

Illustration by Prashant Shrivastava

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A wide-angle photograph of the London skyline at dusk. The Shard is the most prominent building on the left, its glass facade reflecting the sky. To its right is the London City Hall, a modern building with a distinctive dome. Further right is the Tower Bridge, illuminated with warm lights. The River Thames flows in the foreground, with several boats visible. The sky is a mix of orange, pink, and blue, indicating the time is either sunset or sunrise.

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