

# TASIS TODAY

Fall 2023

A Magazine  
for Alumni and  
Friends of The  
American School  
In Switzerland



Bill the Ambassador



## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Alumni Family,

Several years ago, while touring the final exhibit of master-teacher **Mark Aeschliman**'s much-loved Architectural & Design class, I stopped at a lovely architectural model by **Alessandro Scavia '16**. After discussing it, he said of TASIS, "Your school is beautiful, too beautiful."

My questioning what he meant by this, he asserted that when students leave TASIS it will be hard for them to find such beauty elsewhere as is found in our campus and community. I appreciated Alessandro's comment, which has stuck with me these seven years. He identified the importance of the focus on Beauty at TASIS. It is part of our Motto: *Verum Bonum Pulchrum*—Truth, Goodness, Beauty.

In our directive Foundational TASIS document, called the Paideia, we insist that: "Beauty matters. Graceful settings; inspired architecture... In beauty we show our regard for one another and for ourselves. It is a form of courtesy. In beauty we also show our desire for the truth, the two being mystically bound together in our cultural inheritance."

My mother, Mrs. Fleming, always wanted her students to be surrounded by beauty. Hence the on-going spirit and ethos of TASIS, the welcoming community and the beauty of the campus.

We at TASIS often talk about the pillars of our community: the teachers, the programs, the setting, the buildings that make the experience so special. But, as my long-time friend and colleague **Bill Eichner** says, another true pillar of TASIS is the alumni. "We sometimes forget to mention that the real success has been the strength of the students we've had"—the connections, the friendships, what they are doing in the world, and how much they took away from TASIS. "Each student was part of the identity of the School...They had the experience, and got so much out of it, and left Montagnola with... friends, a certain direction, and certainly with a much better understanding of the world."

What makes Bill and the rest of us particularly proud is "when an alumnus sends his or her children to TASIS or the Summer Programs for their children to have a similar experience...It's the basic TASIS formula [and it] is getting better all the time." (37 alumni children attended our programs last summer and 25 in the 2022–23 and 2023–24 academic years.)

Bill repeatedly says that "the TASIS spirit isn't just our teachers, buildings, etc. – it's our students, the community they build with each other, and what they do when they're out in the world. Our TASIS students thrive on shared values and experiences. They all find their way, and end up doing amazing things. They are exposed to ideas and places and ways of thinking at a pivotal age. It's remarkable."

I am grateful to all of our alumni who have made the most of their TASIS experiences and taken these experiences out into the world, with all of its challenges. To make the world a better place was certainly the goal of my mission-driven mother, Mrs. Fleming, in creating TASIS.

I am grateful to our excellent, veteran Board of Directors for "Leading the Way" (see page 46) and to our outstanding Headmaster for doing such an excellent job in leading the School in response to and in accord with my mother's vision, which he has imbibed.

And finally, we are about to launch the next phase and completion of the Global Village after delays due to permits (a process largely controlled by unsympathetic local modernists) and redesigning the Master Plan and buildings after Covid. Construction will finally start in January 2024; preparation of access to the building site and temporary classrooms will take six months. Then 18 months will be needed to build the MacDermid Residence Hall and Music Center, ready for opening in January 2026, and then two more years to build the Elementary School Center for opening in June 2028. Underground parking and a large new dining room come next. So we have plenty of challenges, and as the person identified as the main Builder of TASIS (as featured in the last *TASIS Today*), I hope to fulfill the dream of completing the TASIS Global Village before passing on. Alessandro Scavia's complaint about beauty is a tribute, a compliment, and a stimulus: and it's his school—and yours—too.

**P.S. Please see the enclosed flyer  
"Looking Forward and Up"  
to reach the Collina Alta.**

  
Lynn Fleming Aeschliman  
Class of 1963  
Chairman of the Board







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# THE BIG QUESTION: WHICH UNIVERSE DO WE LIVE IN?

*by Christopher Nikoloff, Headmaster*



I tell my philosophy students that a school's motto provides a clue as to how that institution views the universe. Harvard's motto *Veritas* presumably means that Harvard believes in the existence of truth and values its pursuit. TASIS's motto *Verum, Bonum, Pulchrum* adds two more concepts to the great idea of truth—goodness and beauty. Many preschools tout the motto “Head, Hands, Heart,” not only for the alliteration the series of H's provides but also to make explicit the instruments of action in the pursuit of truth, goodness, and beauty.

As you may know by now, I am partial to TASIS's motto because it is so comprehensive. Just about everything can be categorized within the concepts of truth, goodness, and beauty, or their opposites. These three concepts not only cover the whole universe, but the three parts of the soul as Plato envisioned them. Even the most cynical

among us might admit that he or she would prefer to live in a universe where these ideals are pursued rather than not pursued. As I ask my students, would you be attracted to a school whose brochure touted the inspirational motto “Lies, Evil, and Ugliness”?

CS Lewis, in the first book of *Mere Christianity*, demonstrates that the concepts of right and wrong and the phenomenon of people quarreling over what is right and wrong, which we do all the time, are themselves a “clue to the meaning of the universe.” Since school mottos so often point towards what they believe is right and wrong, or at least what those schools think their students ought to pursue, these mottos are simultaneously pointing towards a view of the universe. A motto is a mini-metaphysical manifesto, in my opinion.

While school mottos may propose their view of the universe and humanity, challenges and even disruptions to these views can come from any corner. The technologies that humans create, with all of their enormous benefits, can also powerfully disrupt world views and cultural norms, the latest of which, artificial intelligence (AI), is no exception, which poses difficult questions about the nature of intelligence and what it means to be human in the first place.

Take the question of intelligence, for instance. The American philosopher and educator Mortimer Adler's book titled *Intellect: Mind over Matter* invokes both a question and an answer in its subtitle. Is the human mind only matter, a purely physical substance, or is there something more to it? Here's another way of asking the same question: Is the mind completely reducible to the human brain or is it more than just the physical brain?



Most languages distinguish between mind and brain. Why?

Our answer to this question matters (pun intended). If the human intellect were entirely material, entirely constituted in the activity of the brain, then humans would be a sort of “wet computer” which human ingenuity may eventually reproduce. In this case, humans may be able to create not only artificial intelligence but real human intelligence. However, if there is something more to human intelligence than just “stuff” or material, which is Adler’s belief, then it can never be reproduced but only imitated, however imperfectly. A big difference.

These questions easily spill into the nature of humanity and therefore, ultimately the universe. If we are simply material, nothing more than a haphazard chemical and electrical bath, then that is one kind of universe. If humans and the universe are something more, as most school mottos at least suggest, then that is another universe. Which universe do we live in?

I don’t have a lot of stomach for the reams of apocalyptic predictions about the potential catastrophic effects of AI that abound in popular entertainment and academic and sociological commentary. I take it as evident that AI could destroy humanity or control the world. We have shown that we are stupid enough to use any number of technologies to destroy ourselves over and over, as the latest blockbuster movie *Oppenheimer* explores. That is not the question that interests me the most.

I am more interested in the big question that is not asked enough in these predictions: What does it mean to be human in the first place? Are we material or something more? Is our difference from plants, animals, and machines a difference in kind or a simple difference in degree? Can human intelligence be replicated? To me, this is the more fundamental question, and how we think about this question may, if we are lucky, impact how we approach AI.

I don’t propose to answer this question, only provide my firm hope at the end of the piece. But the question itself needs to be clear, and AI, more than any other technology since genetic sequencing, has forced us to at least clarify this question. The Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Samuelson said, “Good questions outrank easy answers.”

The question is not new; it is as old as humanity itself. Great philosophers, poets, saints, leaders have asked it for centuries, and I imagine most of humanity at one time or another has wondered privately in their hearts, why am I here and what am I to do? Our answer matters not only to ourselves but to the universe we inhabit. It is nothing short of a worldview, the kind contained in school mottos. None of us should pretend the answers are easy, but nor should we gloss over the question, especially with the advent of AI.

Now as an educator and a headmaster of a school whose motto is *Verum, Bonum, Pulchrum*, I place a humble, hesitant, and hopeful poker chip on the chance that human nature is unique and has a special purpose, as you probably could have guessed. I have to believe that humanity is something more than a “mechanical dance of atoms” (Lewis) and that the values that school mottos point to are real. Not only are they real, they go so far as to indicate the kind of universe we live in, a universe where values matter. Otherwise all school mottos would be the same: “Survival of the fittest” or “Victory above all” or something like that.

Why do I have hope? Because as the poet Emily Dickinson says, “Hope is a thing with feathers.” Did that line surprise you? I hope so. I won’t go into the meaning of Dickinson’s poem on hope—that is a task for one of our great American literature teachers. But the startling and famous first line, in my opinion, could never be created by a machine. And of course for the sake of humanity I truly hope that I am not wrong in my wager on humanity, though I know I could be. I don’t think I am, however, if only because unlike AI or any of the wonderful technologies we create, I am able to hope in the first place.





*Alejandro Rodriguez-Giovo at Commencement, May 2023*

## Introduction to Alejandro Rodriguez-Giovo

We are blessed to have with us today a distinguished international educator from our Swiss sister-school westward across the Alps, the International School of Geneva, Alejandro Rodriguez-Giovo. He represents in his biography many of the realities that our faculty and students have experienced, and in his life commitments he has for decades served the intellectual and ethical ideals to which his school is dedicated, commitments in some respects identical to those of TASIS.

Mr. Rodriguez-Giovo was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and initially educated at the United Nations International School in New York, then in Geneva at the bilingual International School there, usually known as Ecolint, then in Buenos Aires, where he took a law degree, taught, and served as a journalist, and finally at the University of York in England. An alumnus of Ecolint, the oldest and largest international school in Europe, founded in 1924 alongside the League of Nations, he has served

the School since 1989 in numerous capacities. He has taught in English and French; he has taught English and Theory of Knowledge in the International Baccalaureate Program, and been Chair of both Departments; he has taught in the French and Swiss national curriculum programs. He was also for five years the President of the Ecolint Staff Association, representing 1300 employees in a school with 5000 students and three campuses. He has also been for a dozen years the School Archivist and is now orchestrating activities and publications connected with the celebration next year of the School's hundredth anniversary.

Mr. Rodriguez-Giovo is fluent in Spanish, French, and English, and has been a translator for UN agencies in Geneva. His devotion to the International School of Geneva has helped shape that flagship school of the International Baccalaureate and of international education in Europe in profound ways. He is also a good friend of **Lynn** and **Michael Aeschliman**.



# FROM GENEVA WITH LOVE

*Excerpted from the TASIS Commencement speech by Alejandro Rodriguez-Giovo*

Dear TASIS graduates:

Although I'm speaking today in a personal capacity, I would nevertheless like to begin by conveying to you the fraternal best wishes, solidarity, and congratulations from the International School of Geneva's graduating students.

Clearly you are not the only ones who deserve to be congratulated on this auspicious occasion: we must also bear in mind all those who have educated, guided, trained, supported and encouraged you in so many ways: most obviously, your teachers, in conjunction with the management and all the other staff of this great, beautiful and noble institution that is TASIS; including, of course, its guiding spirit and genius, Chairman of the Board **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman**, and its scholarly and charismatic Headmaster, **Christopher Nikoloff**. And let us spare a thought for what you owe to your families, and most especially your parents, who gave you the gift of life, no less....

## From Injustice to Rights

Human rights are incessantly referred to these days. We are all acutely aware of our individual rights, and today there seems to be no limit to how subtle, or counterintuitive, or obsessively self-centered, or even bizarre these rights can sometimes be.

....Allow me to make a sweeping, but nonetheless largely valid generalization: throughout most of the history of mankind, the vast majority of human beings—who, by and large, were poor, subjugated and exploited—were incessantly hectored about their duties by economically and militarily powerful minorities. In particular, they were hectored about their duties towards these dominant élites. Only the ruling classes had rights: most people had nothing but duties, such as paying arbitrary taxes or providing cannon fodder for the wars waged between the rival ruling classes.

The much-needed philosophical, political and social movement towards the notion that every human person has equal rights—regardless of sex, ethnicity, creed, nationality, disability or social class—can be traced back to thinkers such as John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and it bears concrete fruit with documents such as the British Bill of Rights, the U.S. Declaration of Independence, the French Revolution's *Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen*, and finally the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

All of these, of course, are deeply rooted in Christian values, which I have no time to explore here; I will simply refer you to the outstanding analysis of the subject by the distinguished historian Tom Holland, published in 2019 under the title of *Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World*.

So far so good: it was about time that every nation in the world should subscribe—in principle, though not always in practice, alas—to the notion that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.”

Sadly, this noble postulate often has little impact on the real lives of far too many people throughout the world, particularly in poorer countries, and in the marginalized sectors of society in richer ones. It is therefore paradoxical that in the socially and educationally privileged—and consequently influential—circles of some of the most prosperous Western nations, the invention and aggressive pursuance of ever more artificial, attention-seeking, self-indulgent, and narcissistic so-called “rights” dominates the political agenda—often with far-fetched and mind-boggling but very concrete results....

It would seem that, in rich, privileged countries especially, the insatiable greed for rights, however preposterous or perverse or plainly wicked some of them may be, has obliterated the notion of duty.

## Reciprocity: Rights and Duties

One of my aims in this speech, dear TASIS graduates, is to encourage you to balance your perception of your rights, of your desires and of your ambitions with an awareness of the concomitant duties that we all have. For every right that you and I can claim, we have a corresponding duty towards others. Rights and duties are two sides of the same coin: we cannot have one without the other.

I'm sure we all agree that migrants and refugees have the right to be welcomed and treated sympathetically, compassionately and humanely. But even migrants and refugees have duties.

Hospitality is one of the most sacred human responsibilities, acknowledged by all peoples and cultures. As far back as the 8th Century B.C., in *The Odyssey*, when Odysseus, following a shipwreck, is washed up on the shore of the land of the Phaeacians, no more to them than a naked, filthy and bedraggled stranger, he is received as an esteemed guest at the court of King Alcinous: he is bathed, dressed, lavishly fed at a succession of banquets and entertained with the singing of a bard and athletic games held in his honor. Only towards the end of this generous and elaborate welcome does King Alcinous politely ask Odysseus if he'd like to identify himself. This is a model of hospitality towards refugees that we should all bear in mind.

However, Odysseus understands that, as a guest, he too has duties: he is respectful, grateful, impeccably courteous, and fits in with all the expectations that the Phaeacians may have of him. It's not unreasonable to assume that migrants and refugees will do their best to fit in with the cultural and social mores of the countries that receive them, and respect local laws and traditions.

It was perhaps a mistake—a forgivable mistake, considering the millennia of discrimination, oppression and exploitation that it sought to redress with a single document—for the United Nations to draft a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It should, of course, have been called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and *Responsibilities*. This

specification would have spared us so much nonsense today....

## Animal rights?

Although animals have no duties towards us, and consequently can claim no rights, we human beings do have a duty towards them: a duty of care and compassion, in so far as these sentient creatures, often endowed with great intelligence and an acute susceptibility to physical and mental suffering, lie within our power (as virtually all of them do, owing to the astonishingly rapid mastery of the natural world by *homo sapiens*)....

## What Do We Deserve?

By now you may be wondering, “When will we hear the standard, imperative exhortation in a Commencement speech, urging us to *follow our dreams*, and *fulfill our ambitions*?”

By all means follow your dreams, if they are ethical, responsible and sound, and fulfill your ambitions—but never at the expense of others. It's easy to get intoxicated with self-advancement, so seductively captured by the lyrics of the song “New York, New York”, which Frank Sinatra made famous:

“I want to wake up in a city that never sleeps,  
And find I'm king of the hill,  
Top of the heap.”

“Top of the heap”? Really? A heap of other human beings, whom you're crushing beneath you? This facile sentiment cannot survive a modicum of moral scrutiny. The next thing you know, you'll be quoting Macbeth:

“For mine own good, / All causes shall give way.”

And we all know what happens to Macbeth: he becomes the mere shell of a human being, a moral vacuum; someone whose only response to the announcement of his cherished wife's suicide is: “She should have died hereafter”—in other words, she was going to die sooner or later; I don't have time for this now.

Macbeth then launches into the most chilling, and poetically powerful, expression of nihilism in the history of literature:



“Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,  
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,  
To the last syllable of recorded time;  
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!  
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player,  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.”

You don’t want to end up like Macbeth, do you? Rather bear in mind the words of Jesus: “Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.”....

## Being Decent Persons

Simply try to be a decent person, aware of the suffering, feelings, needs and perspectives of those around you: “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” You shouldn’t limit the scope of your love to only your neighbors, your family and your friends; but that’s where your love needs to start, if the notion of “love” is to have any solid reality in your life. To think that you can love equally the eight billion or so inhabitants of planet Earth, is to love no one at all. Enormous crimes have been committed in pursuit of the abstract “love of mankind.” Charity begins at home....

Altruistic love in human beings is no genetically-induced illusion, shaped by blind, purposeless evolution over hundreds of thousands of years. Don’t swallow the materialist, reductionist, relativist argument that altruism and the love of your fellow man or woman developed through random mutations which happened to benefit mankind biologically, owing to the advantages that fraternal cooperation offers our species, in contrast to savage, ruthless, each-man-for-himself competition. The biological world knows nothing of morality, which is an entirely human insight. Indeed, mankind doesn’t need to cooperate in a spirit of brotherly love to be successful as a species, in merely biological terms....

## Awesome Metaphysical Phenomena

No, my friends: human love, friendship, kindness, compassion, selflessness, forgiveness, morality itself—these are not incidental, biological by-products; they are

metaphysical phenomena of which we need to be in awe. They help us give meaning to the universe, to our own lives and to the lives of others.

...Let me return to the central exhortation of this speech: the wisdom of prioritizing **love** over your personal aims, ambitions and aspirations in life—not least love for those closest to you, and to whom you owe the most. I’m going to squeeze in one...final consideration, by means of one final quotation...by a great 20th-century poet, Philip Larkin.

...Larkin was not a particularly admirable person in his private life, but valuable artistic, philosophical, or even moral insights are often generated by individuals whose personal lives it is better not to scrutinize under a microscope. Actually, it’s better not to scrutinize anyone’s life under a microscope, except your own. The principle that you should first and foremost focus on knowing yourself was regarded as the basis of wisdom in Ancient Greece: don’t lie to yourself about yourself.

The line by Larkin that I have in mind concludes a poem in iambic tetrameter titled “An Arundel Tomb”. It’s a multi-layered and ambiguous poem, as great art often is (often, but not always).

The narrator of the poem observes a medieval tomb, which is characterized by the life-size, stone effigies of a knight and his wife, lying side by side. These tombs are not uncommon in English churches and cathedrals, but normally the hands of the carved stone figures are clasped in pious prayer.

However, this particular monument has a unique, touching detail: the knight is shown to have removed the armored gauntlet from one of his hands, which is reaching over to his wife to take hold of her hand. The poem’s narrator ponders the various possible implications that this gesture may have had at the time when it was so carefully carved. He cannot help being moved by the gesture, which he first notices with a “sharp tender shock” – but with 20th century cynicism he nevertheless tries to explain it away by means of a reductionist, utilitarian analysis.

And yet the narrator can’t avoid ending the poem with a line that I’ll ask you to take away with you today, even if it’s the only thing you remember about my rambling and interminable speech:

**“What will survive of us is love.”**

# IF I PUT IN THE WORK, ANYTHING WAS POSSIBLE.

*A remarkable speech by Valedictorian William Pacini '23*



*Valedictorian Will Pacini at Commencement*

First, I want to offer a very special thank you to my family, who have always been there for me. Without you, I would not be here today.

Secondly, thank you to all the administrators and teachers here at TASIS for helping my classmates and me get this far. Without you, we could have never taken the first derivative, scanned 20th-century poetry, or articulated why a dot painted on a canvas should or should not be called art.

Thirdly, thank you to my fellow graduates, who kept life interesting as we helped one another reach this milestone. Without each one of you, school and life would be simultaneously less fulfilling and more boring.

And finally, I would like to thank **Giacomo Bonardo**, who in a 10th-grade pickup basketball game called me “Franco,” which is not my name, leading to most of the Italian students and the entire basketball team calling me “Franco” for the next three years. (So, while



my birth name is actually William, I hope that whenever our paths cross in the future, you'll call me "Franco" for old time's sake.)

My fellow graduates: we made it! To be honest, when I first started at TASIS, I didn't know if I was going to graduate from high school.

Do you all remember when TASIS stripped the students of their spring break in 10th grade due to a little virus called Covid? I'll speak for all of us: it was rough. Students and teachers, dropping like flies. The only consolation we got from it was extra weeks of summer—which I must say, were amazing. We are the "Covid generation". Our early high school years were marked by masks and lockdowns. When I first arrived at TASIS, I didn't know what any of your real faces looked like. For the first year, I only knew you by the masks you wore. Once they came off, it was certainly interesting to see noses and smiles again and try to match up voices with faces during those first few weeks of school. But we survived, and we have been able to have a great senior year.

This past year we were able to witness Losver Galarg AS win the International Week World Cup and witness a master class on the dance floor by our very own **Xavier Rose**. Even though there were hard times, like when we found out **Arturo Lizardi Toledo** did not make it up the mountain during the senior ski trip, we supported one another, and now we are graduating.

While we had to endure some hard times together in high school, for me personally, my hardest academic times were actually way before I arrived at TASIS. I tend to be pretty private about my personal life, so many of you may not know that I was basically illiterate until the age of 10. If that sounds strange, you can ask my family, as it is nevertheless true.

Young, little, short William loved sports, Lego, and superhero movies. His dream was to be Iron Man—not Tony Stark, but the actual powered, invulnerable

exoskeleton: Iron Man. And little William hated school. He really hated it. And believe me, it hated him back. At age nine, my teacher's name was Mr. Little—ironic, because he was a very big man—and one day he asked me to stand up in front of the class and spell out vocab words we were meant to have memorized.

I remember standing up in front of all my peers and beginning to spell the word *recommend*. Instead of finishing the attempt, I would forget what word I was trying to spell and have to stop and ask for it to be repeated. Then I would start over at the beginning, but midway through, I would have to stop and ask for the word to be repeated. Over and over again. This process evidently frustrated Mr. Little; it certainly made my classmates snicker and giggle. After failing to finish spelling the word, he reprimanded me and told me to "stop joking around."

But I wasn't joking around. I had studied. But everything that was being told to me was slipping away. I waited until Mr. Little was finished and then asked to use the bathroom, sprinting all the way there, probably faster than Usain Bolt. Only once I was safe in a stall, I took a breath, and overwhelmed, I cried...all alone and feeling small and inadequate. After that, school and I clashed for years.

It wasn't until a few years later that my siblings and I were tested for learning disabilities and we learned that all four of us have dyslexia, and in the words of the child psychologist, I have "virtually no working memory." To put this in Disney-movie terms, during a test, I am the student equivalent of Dory from *Finding Nemo*. Instead of 42 Wallaby Way, I will forget the prompt by the time I finish reading the passage. So when I was up in front of Mr. Little's class asking for a word to be repeated again and again, it was because I had literally forgotten the word halfway through spelling it.

I felt liberated. This was the reason school was so hard for me. While I felt liberated, the doctor who assessed

me told my parents that most children with working memory issues like mine didn't go to college; in fact, few graduated from high school. My parents did not tell me that though. Instead, they told me my brain was different, but if I put in the work, anything was possible.

I decided that I wanted to put in the work. And what I learned was that most kids took 30 minutes to study and ace an assignment, and I took three or four hours of studying to get a B. But I kept working. And here I am. All those hours you were socializing with friends, going on dates, partying, maybe even a little clubbing, I was literally alone in my room studying, trying to understand what you guys already understood. You guys are remarkable. Some of you are fluent in seven different languages. I have spent my whole life trying to learn English. And if you can't tell, I'm still struggling!

These last few years I have learned how my brain works, and my greatest weakness—my memory—became my greatest strength. In time, my long-term memory more than compensated for my lack of short-term memory. Looking back, I am grateful that my parents didn't tell me the depressing tidbit about the chances I had for success, but instead told me if I put in the work, I could do anything. That my potential was limitless.

And I feel fortunate to be able to share a similar message with the TASIS graduating class of 2023: our potential is not finite. Our intellectual abilities are not capped. We don't have to be trapped by statistics telling us what we can or cannot do. Humans are amazing creatures, and we can do anything we put our minds to. Like me, I believe all of you have surprised yourselves while at TASIS. As we put in the work, confront our weaknesses, as well as recognize our strengths, we can continue to surprise ourselves and become whom we wish to become.

I look at you, my fellow TASIS graduates, and I am in awe at your talents and accomplishments. You have knowledge in fields ranging from history to art; you are athletes, dancers, musicians, actors and activists; most of you know multiple languages; and many of you continued in math past the point when you discovered that letters could be numbers—a particularly unkind discovery for me and my fellow dyslexics, might I add.

I am going to be honest, our lives are only going to get more stressful from here, but when you're at that tipping point, when you're crying in the bathroom because your teacher or your boss or your partner assigned you a task and you failed miserably at it ... shed some tears, compose yourself, then look for your hidden strength and get to work. Because, my fellow graduates, we can do anything.

And I am excited to see what you guys do with your lives, be it becoming a Nobel Prize winner—looking at you **Luigi Rebuffo**—or a member of the Forbes 30 under 30—**Nitya Dalmia** comes to mind. Among us there may even be a United States President...**Connor Crane**.

We don't know what the future has in store for us ... but if we put in the work, I know that our futures are limitless. Personally, I'm still shooting to be the real "Iron Man."

*William Pacini '23 is now a student at the University of California, Berkeley, where he is pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering and minoring in Aerospace Engineering and Electronic Intelligent Systems. He spent three years at TASIS, was the 2022-23 Male Athlete of the Year, and was inducted into the TASIS Cum Laude Society at the end of his junior year. William achieved a perfect 5 on every one of the 14 AP exams he took.*



# GRADUATION AWARDS 2023

## Excellence in Art

Giorgia Meregalli



## The Horst Dürschmidt Award for Excellence in Photography

Sunny Li



## Excellence in Architecture and Design

Mariia Andreichuk



## The Kay Hamblin Award for Excellence in Theater

Nitya Dalmia



## Excellence in English as an Additional Language

Elena Grasú



## Excellence in Modern Languages

David Ariza Solans



## The Cynthia Whisenant Award for Excellence in English Literature

Alex Gabriel



## Excellence in History

Michelangelo Vecchio



## The Shah Akbar Khan Award for Excellence in Mathematics

Bill Zhang



## Excellence in Science

Spencer LeGresley



## The Salutatorian Scholarship Award

Claudia Clarke Gosálvez



## The Valedictorian Scholarship Award

William Pacini



## The Headmaster's Award

Alex Gabriel and Nina Mondin



## The ECIS Award for International Understanding

David Ariza Solans



## The Jan Opsahl Service Award

Alejandro Orozco



## The Michael Ulku-Steiner Leadership Award

Michelangelo Vecchio



## The H. Miller Crist Award

Nitya Dalmia



*To learn more about this year's winners,  
visit [tasis.ch/blog](https://tasis.ch/blog).*

# KHAN-PAGE MASTER TEACHER AWARD 2023



*The Akbar Khan-Max Page Master Teacher Award was launched in 2009 to support and encourage the faculty as the heart of the TASIS experience. The award recognizes an outstanding teacher who represents a high standard of professional pedagogy, possesses advanced subject-area knowledge, has a capacity to convey the joy and importance of learning to students, and demonstrates a fundamental sympathy with the aims and goals of TASIS as expressed in the Paideia. Awarded annually, the Khan-Page Master Teacher Award is named after two outstanding teachers who taught for many years in both TASIS schools: the late **Akbar Khan** in mathematics and **Max P. Page** in English.*

*Congratulations to our newest Master Teacher, **Holly Weins**. She started working for the TASIS Summer Programs in 2004 before joining the academic year faculty in 2008. Holly teaches English as an Additional Language to our Middle School students and also serves as Middle School English and EAL coordinator.*

This teacher consistently employs the best practices of a master educator. Upon entering her classroom, one will notice her meticulously prepared Google slide displaying the day's agenda in an artistic manner, ensuring that each student is aware of the lesson plan and learning objectives. Her level of preparedness is exemplary, as she consistently provides engaging activities that are uniquely tailored to her students' individual needs. She finds innovative ways to teach grammar, make Shakespeare fun, and help her students become better readers through read-alouds, vocabulary instruction, and lively discussions. Additionally, she dedicates hours to providing constructive feedback on her students' essays.

Her tireless effort, care, and passion for teaching have greatly impressed everyone, making her a tremendous asset to the school. Her students have immense respect for her, thanks to her beautiful rapport, patience, and flexibility, which includes providing opportunities for improvement during office hours. Her ideas are always creative and engaging, and she strives continuously to improve her teaching strategies. Her colleagues affectionately refer to her as "the machine" due to her non-stop dedication to her students and her work ethic.

This teacher sets high expectations for her students while remaining kind and playful yet firm and structured. Her impact on TASIS is immeasurable.



# A LASTING LEGACY

*TASIS mourns the death of one of our most impassioned alumni, Donald D. MacDermid '61, who passed on October 11, 2022*



*Donald MacDermid '61 with Chairman of the Board Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63*

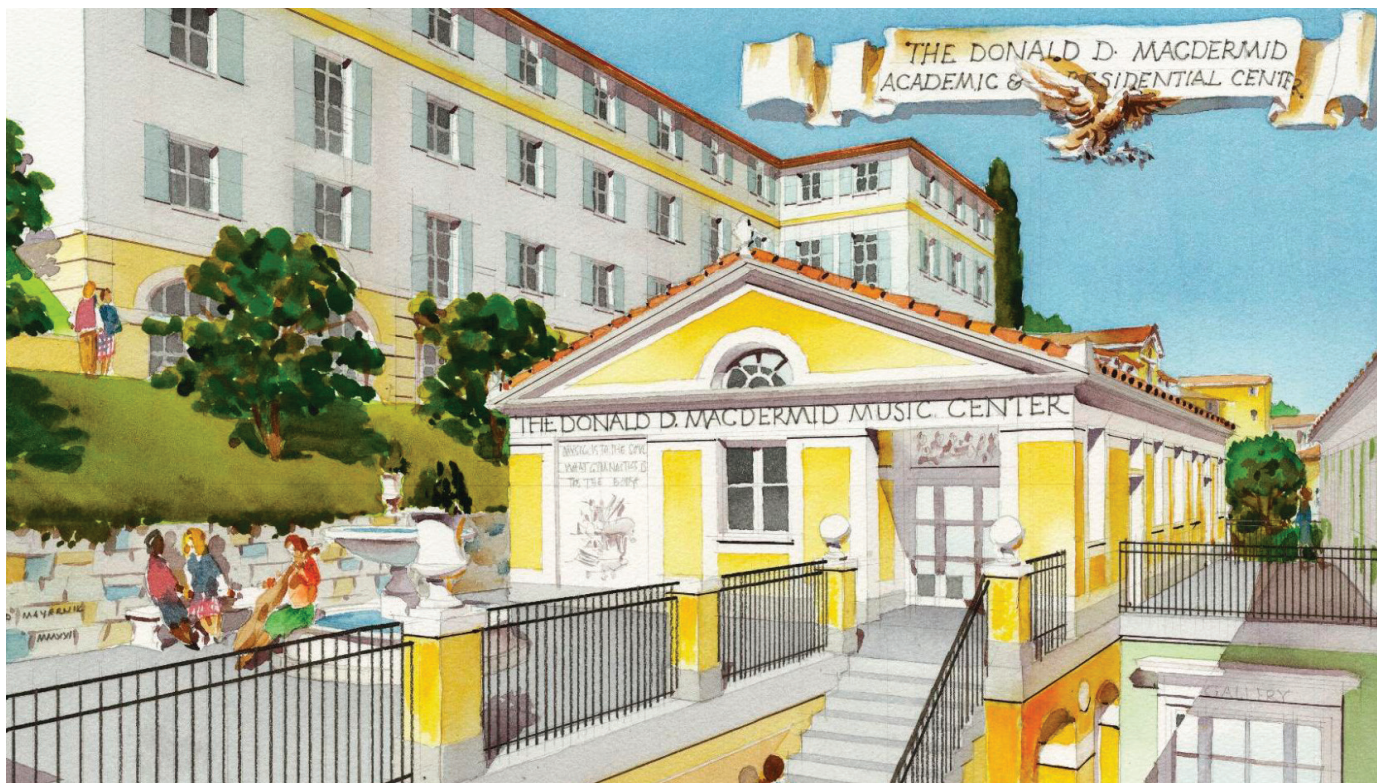
For **Donald MacDermid**, TASIS was transformational. A shy boy who loved art, history, and literature, Donald fell hard for the cultural riches of Europe and found a deep connection to Mrs. Fleming and her vision. He attended TASIS for three years, finding a sense of independence and love of travel that remained with him throughout his life.

After TASIS, Donald graduated from Middlebury College with a degree in art history before attending the Rhode Island School of Design where he received a BFA. He extended his learning with years of travel and found joy in discovering art through the context

of history. He visited all seven continents in an era where travel was not accessible or easy. Donald had particular affection for India, South Africa, and London, returning several times throughout his life. His Palladian home in Chester, Connecticut, was a shrine to a curated collection of art found on his extensive travels.

A regular at the New York City TASIS reunions, Donald loved connecting with his TASIS classmates and meeting others who found their experiences to be important. We will miss his thoughtful discussions and gentle humor at these events.





*The Donald MacDermid Music Center and MacDermid Residence Hall above.*

In 2019, he became one of the School's most generous donors. Donald's legacy gift will fund a major portion of the Donald MacDermid Music Center, the Donald MacDermid Residential Hall (both as seen above), and establish the Donald MacDermid Endowment Fund for the Fine and Performing Arts.

The thread of TASIS remained strong throughout Donald's life. "My love for TASIS hasn't changed. It opened me up, and I stayed open. It's always with me because of what it did to me. It changed my life," he said during an interview in 2019. "TASIS has been terribly important to me. It made me larger, in a sense. It made me who I am."

#### **Donald MacDermid's Private Art Collection, Chester Gallery, Chester, Connecticut**

Donald was an avid collector of artworks from Connecticut artists, and these will be shown on October 26, 2023 (Donald's birthday) at the [Chester Gallery](#) in Connecticut. Hosted by Donald's niece Kimberley Megrath and Chester Gallery's owner Nancy Pinney, proceeds from the sale of the collection will benefit TASIS.

#### **Be a Part of Donald's Legacy**

To further buttress Donald's generosity to TASIS, alumni, parents, and friends are invited to private appraisal days at Doyle Auction houses across the country to have their items reviewed for value in consideration of a sale to benefit TASIS. In the spirit of Donald's most generous legacy gift to TASIS, alumni, parents, and friends are invited to auction these items and donate the proceeds to TASIS. Doyle will also give 4% of their proceeds from all appraisal days to the MacDermid Endowment for the Fine and Performing Arts at TASIS.

#### **Doyle Appraisal Days**

**Thursday, September 28** in Beverly Hills  
**Wednesday, October 11** in Washington, DC  
**Thursday, October 12** in Boston  
**Thursday, November 16** in New York City  
**Tuesday, January 16** in Palm Beach

**Donald's family and TASIS send our deep gratitude in advance for your generosity.**



# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

TASIS opened the 2022–23 academic year with a record 750 students from 59 nations and with 38 different mother tongues. Over five hundred of these students were returners (an 87% retention rate), with 231 students new to TASIS. We were delighted that 25 of these students were alumni children—the highest number in the School’s history!

## Hut Hikes

A recent and popular tradition for our boarding students are the September hut hikes, where dorm parents take the students in their care on overnight trips to beautiful mountain destinations around Ticino. Students get to try a number of interesting new things, from e-mountain biking to cheese tasting. They are memorable ways to build community and celebrate the start of a new school year.



*Students from the Lanterna and Certenago dorms at the Campra Alpine Lodge in Olivone*

## Buchanan Poetry Residency

TASIS was honored to welcome celebrated poet and former faculty member **Kiki Petrosino** to campus on September 19–20 in the third installment of the **Linda**

**Buchanan Poet in Residence** program. The Creative Writing Program Director and a Professor of Poetry at the University of Virginia, Professor Petrosino is the author of four acclaimed poetry collections, a memoir, and a number of renowned literary prizes. Kiki visited a number of English classes and discussed her poetry with students, and gave tips to students who want to become better writers.



*Visiting poet Kiki Petrosino reading to students in Casa Fleming*

## TASIS Speaker Series

The TASIS Speaker Series continues to be an inspiring event for TASIS seniors. This year’s set of talks began in October with Energy Vault co-founder and CEO Robert Piconi, who discussed both entrepreneurship and the importance of achievable renewable energy solutions. He also is a TASIS parent, as all eight of his children have attended TASIS and four are graduates!



**Veronika Mühlhofer '97**, the Venue Press Operations Manager for the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, came to campus on January 16–17 and talked to students about her impressive career in international rugby and sports events management. The students were thrilled to learn of the myriad career options in sports and impressed that Veronika went from Valedictorian to the Olympics!

The series ended with highly decorated combat fighter pilot and bestselling author Lieutenant Colonel Dan Hampton. Weaving in stories from his own life as he traced his journey from an architecture student to a fighter pilot, sailor, commercial developer, private military contractor, best-selling author, and documentary actor, Lieutenant Colonel Hampton discussed the concept of crossroads—the points in your life where you are confronted with difficult decisions that could lead you in very different directions.

This series, funded by the M. Crist Fleming Endowment for International Understanding and Leadership, continues to be an inspiring touchstone for TASIS seniors, and we are grateful to the alumni who support this initiative.

### It's Showtime!

The Performing Arts continue to thrive at TASIS, giving students experiences that grow their confidence and stretch their skills. In November, the TASIS High School Theater Company performed Molière's *The Imaginary Invalid* to sold-out crowds. The student-led Sweet November Dance Company performed in late November and included students from all three divisions.

In March, High School students performed *Mary Poppins, Jr* to a full house each performance.

Finally, in May, TASIS students performed at Lugano's beautiful Palazzo dei Congressi for the first time since 2018. The performing arts showcase "Shine", the capstone of the 2023 TASIS Arts Festival, featured more than 150 singers, players, actors, and dancers from the TASIS community.



*Scenes from the chaotic and fabulous International Food Fair*

### International Week

The highlight of every February, International Week was kicked off by the Parade of Flags, featuring 70 countries! Each division got into the spirit of the week; Elementary School students showcased fifteen different nations to their peers, and Middle School students shared elements of their cultures with their classmates at a special assembly. High School students tried fabulous delicacies during the International Food Fair. And of course students shouted for their favorite teams during the infamous World Cup soccer tournament!

### London Meet and Mentor

An enthusiastic group of 12 TASIS alumni joined the TASIS College Counseling team and 26 11th-grade students—all of whom were in town to visit universities around London—for dinner in London on February 23. The alumni were recent graduates from the classes of 2018–2022, and they welcomed the chance to be seated among the current TASIS students and offer them advice about the college admissions process, university life, and living in the UK.

Before they left for the evening, the students commented on how helpful they thought it was to connect with these young alums. The alumni insight was a revelation, and the event also included ample time to socialize and get more specific information through individual conversations. While this was a “meet and mentor” event designed to pair young alumni with current students, it also served as a mini alumni reunion for the recent TASIS graduates, who relished the opportunity to reconnect.

## Robotics on a Roll

By virtue of a stellar performance at an official VEX Robotics Competition in Basel on February 23, the all-female TASIS High School Robotics team of **Olivia Su Canga '26**, **Maddy Costa Felix '26**, **Camille Giroto '24**, **Chuoqiao Huang '24**, **Yixin Lu '27**, and **Mariaurora Rosso '24** qualified for the 2023 VEX Robotics World Championship—the largest robotics competition in the world—in Dallas, Texas.

The latest triumph continued a steady ascent for Coach **Amy Bloodworth's** Robotics Program, which last year saw the Middle School team of Canga,

Costa Felix, Rosso, **Serafina Ballerini '26**, and **Diana Xiao '26** proudly represent Switzerland at the FIRST Championship World Festival in Houston, Texas. Known as TASIS Tigers 2, this year's team competed against the top high school coders and engineers from around the globe in Dallas from April 25–27. We're so proud of our young scientists!

## Summertime Rolls!

The 2023 TASIS Summer Programs opened with a record 423 students—273 boarders and 150 day students! TASIS began as a summer program, and Mrs. Fleming's values remain strong as student days are filled with learning, joy, and fun. Experiential learning is at the heart of the Summer Programs, and robust course offerings include languages, STEAM, Digital Photography & Filmmaking, Architecture & Design, Fine Art Portfolio, Next stop: Broadway!, and Lean Startup Masterclass for the High School Program; English as an Additional Language, French, Italian, Academic Writing, STEAM, Digital Photography, and Musical Theater for the Middle School Program; and English as an Additional Language, French, or Italian for Château des Enfants students.



*The TASIS robotics team and coach Amy Bloodworth*



*MSP students canyoning on the Ticino Adventure trip*



# BILL THE AMBASSADOR



*Bill at an alumni dinner in Lugano, fall 2022*

Milestones bring reflection, particularly when you've given your life to a place, a person, a school. This year, **Bill Eichner** faces multiple milestones. He turns 70, he celebrates his 45th wedding anniversary with **Melissa**, he reflects on 40 years with TASIS, and welcomed a new grandson, Wiley Jon, into the world. What better time to take stock and consider his impact on TASIS?

But for Bill, what matters is the future. How he'll leave TASIS, and what it will look like when his grandson graduates in 2041.

For the book *In Pursuit of Excellence* (2009), Bill wrote, "At TASIS, everyone is a foreigner. This allows our international students to take real ownership of a school in a way they might not if they went to school in the US

or UK." Bill, too, has taken ownership of TASIS through steadfast presence and insightful perspective which has grown mightier over four decades.

## The Early Years

Bill's own schooling experience was peripatetic. His father was an executive for Proctor & Gamble, which moved the family to various suburban towns near New York, Chicago, and Kansas City. Bill was 15 when his father died, and his mother moved him to Cincinnati, where his parents were raised and extended family lived. His older brother and sister were already in college. Bill had just started high school when his father died, and admits he was uninspired. He wasn't involved in school activities and doesn't remember any of his teachers other than two; a math teacher Bill found interesting, and an English teacher who encouraged him to write.

It was at Ohio University that Bill blossomed as a student. His first year he found a niche department called Comparative Arts, which included philosophy, art, the history of art, music, and photography. "Classes in the department were small, I had some professors several times, and I really got to know the teachers, and they got to know me," he recalls. "I had inspiring teachers who were giving me real guidance, and academic guidance as well. I wasn't the most polished kid, but they saw something." This is when Bill became focused on his academics.

His senior year he met Sidney Alexander, an American scholar who was based in Florence and had written extensively on Michelangelo and the Renaissance. Sidney encouraged Bill to spend the final semester of his senior year in Florence on a study abroad program. It was Bill's first glimpse of Europe. "I looked around and thought, why didn't I know about this? I was trying to figure out where I fit in, and this was where I fit in. I just loved everything about it. I went from a classroom to a living classroom."



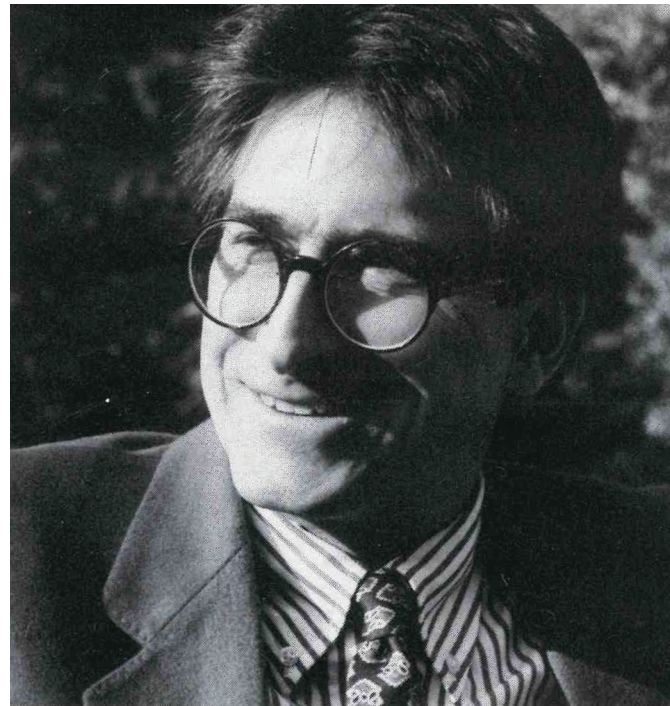
Bill didn't return to Ohio for graduation. Instead, he stayed in Florence for a bit, then traveled with Melissa, whom he had met in the study-abroad program, and trying to think of ways he could return to Florence. Melissa went back to finish college and Bill got a job at the Cincinnati Art Museum, which he enjoyed, but it wasn't the direction he wanted Art History to take him. But the guidance of his professors in Florence led Bill to meet the chairman of the Art History department at Syracuse University, which has run an M.A. fellowship in Italian Renaissance Art since 1964. So in 1978, he moved to Syracuse to begin his studies, and the program got him back to Florence. (**Mark Aeschliman** did the same program a year earlier, which is how Mark and Bill first met.)

"You're studying with the most inspiring people," Bill says of the program. "The director of the Uffizi Museum. The man who pioneered fresco restoration. I remember meeting at the Uffizi and the director saying, 'it's almost one o'clock, the light isn't good anymore, I only look at paintings in the morning light.' Going to the restoration lab and being asked to hold a Botticelli. It was a real opportunity." The program extended to teaching undergraduates at Syracuse, and Bill enjoyed introducing students to art, just as his professors had done for him.

### **Mrs. Fleming's Orbit**

Bill had fallen hard for Florence, and despite being accepted to the University of Pennsylvania, which had a Renaissance specialization, he wasn't sure that a Ph.D. would be right for him. "Florence was swarming with graduate students, and they were scrambling around looking for jobs to keep them in Florence," he said. He didn't have a thesis in mind and knew he enjoyed reading the great art historians, but wasn't sure that original research appealed.

At this point Bill was teaching at the American School in Florence, working for school founder Horace Gibson. "I enjoyed the engagement with the teenagers," he says. By then, Bill was a fairly strong Italian speaker, so he also became the liaison between the school and the Italian authorities.



*Bill in a 1980s yearbook photo. His quote that year was, "People in the 14th century listened to frescoes, whereas we only look at them."*

Horace knew Mrs. Fleming well; he was at the bar with her in Beirut in 1962 when the European Council of International Schools was founded. "He told me wonderful stories of her power of persuasion, entrepreneurial drive, and commanding personality," Bill recalls, "and Mrs. Fleming was known in Florence. We had all heard of Mrs. Fleming." Fleming College was in Florence at the time, near where Bill was living, and he was looking for a place to study so thought he'd ask if he could use the college's library. "And when I got there, I looked around and thought, wow, these people are in this beautiful villa and are having a great time."

The experience left an impact on Bill, and he finally met her through Mark. "Mrs. Fleming collected people," Bill says, laughing. "I was that person in Florence she could call for a favor. Picking her up at the train station or airport, driving her to Capitignano, that sort of thing." Mark would come to Florence often, and through him Bill met **Lynn** and **Michael Aeschliman** and got to know Mrs. Fleming.



*Bill with Headmaster Christopher Nikoloff and Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63*

Around this time, Bill began to think more seriously about what he might want to do in the future. He'd fallen in love with teaching, and thought seriously about where to go next. Mark was leaving TASIS to pursue his own Ph.D., which meant there was a vacancy teaching art history with the postgraduate program. "For me, TASIS was the only place to get serious about teaching," Bill remembers. "And the role happened to be tailor-made for my interests." Bill went to Lugano, met then-headmaster **Lyle Rigg**, and got the job.

### **From Teaching PGs to Cyprus to France**

"I thought TASIS was a paradise," Bill remembers. "It was everything I would have really benefited from as a teenager that I didn't have." Bill took on Mark's vacant two-year post and moved to Lugano, while Melissa remained at their apartment in Florence. She continued her work at the Syracuse University library and they met up during weekends, often traveling with the students. "They were two paradise years of teaching with the PG program. That kind of teaching, with incredible students, spending so much time traveling together...that's my first group of alumni, and I'm still in touch with many of them."

Two years later, Mark wanted his job back, so Bill had to get creative. He was thinking TASIS England might be the next step; Lyle had gone there, and Bill thought they could start a postgraduate program, or perhaps a beefed-up Art History program, or perhaps he could try college counseling. "I sat down with Mrs. Fleming and she said, 'You're going to go to TASIS Cyprus.'" I thought, that's an adventure I hadn't considered. So we went."

Cyprus in 1985 was fun. Bill and Melissa immediately bought a car and got to know every road on the island. Bill particularly enjoyed the archeological sites; "They didn't have an Art History class, so I started an archeology club," he remembers. The group got to know the ruins, the water, the rich history of the area. He was able to learn more about what made a boarding school work. Bill also knew it wouldn't be forever; "When I arrived, I thought I'd be there for two years."

The following spring, in 1986, two of Mrs. Fleming's most trusted advisors, **Paul Zazarro** and **Fernando Gonzalez**, came to Nicosia to see Bill and Melissa. Enrollment had been dropping and the school was dependent on a single market, the Middle East. Coincidentally, Mrs. Fleming had acquired a beautiful property (see where this is going?), this time in France, and intended to fill it with 80 students for a French year abroad, focusing on art, culture, and history. Unfortunately, the New York office could only recruit eight such students. So Mrs. Fleming pivoted, expanding the program to suit the traditional TASIS market. "My assignment was simple. I was to go to the Middle East and recruit 72 boarding students for TASIS France. I was to visit our feeder schools, current parents, and applicants, and deliver the unfortunate news that TASIS Cyprus was closing while presenting the exciting opportunity to be part of the founding class of TASIS France," Bill writes. "I was 32 years old, had no admissions experience, had never traveled to the Middle East, and had no idea where TASIS France was."

Bill and Melissa went to see the campus over spring vacation. En route to La Ferte Bernard, they stopped at a rest area to read a map, and Mrs. Fleming's white Volvo



had also pulled over at the rest stop; “Not to consult a map, but to break out her famous drinking kit,” Bill writes. “Fernando tapped on our window and offered us tall, ice-filled gin and tonics mixed by MCF. If I had to choose one moment that marked my transition from TESIS teacher to TESIS administrator, it was the offer of this particular drink.”

Bill went to the Middle East, armed with a stack of photos and a curriculum loosely based on the postgraduate curriculum with a photo of the fairy-tale Château Beauchamps on the cover. “Such was Mrs. Fleming’s reputation that there was considerable interest in her new program, and I managed to collect the 72 enrollments needed to fill the school and give it a fighting chance.”

Bill used his time at TESIS France to learn all he could. “Mrs. Fleming spent the majority of her time in France that year and was immersed in the sort of work she loved: the creation of a new school,” Bill wrote. Of course, she knew the names of every student. She would attend dinners and spend time with them, and Bill got to see firsthand how her energy transformed the place. Fernando and Paul also helped Bill gain a deeper understanding of school administration. Bill was involved in everything—including the decision to close the school.

A small, boutique program in France could not compete with England or Switzerland, and the US market for study-abroad programs was dwindling. “TESIS France is often remembered as one of MCF’s follies. I consider it a good idea at the wrong time, and while we did not succeed in building a lasting school, we did provide our full house of 80 students with a special and truly TESIS experience,” Bill wrote. “Always philosophical about her successes and failures, Mrs. Fleming could salvage the best of any situation with her forward-looking, positive attitude. The one and only TESIS France Class of ’87 went on to university.”

### More Change: Academic Dean

After closing France, Bill helped to ensure the 50 students left were placed in England and Switzerland. (Bill is also still in close contact with the Class of ’88, a



*Bill speaks to a group of students during an Art History trip in Venice*

group he taught and knew at three different schools—Cyprus, France, then Lugano.) Then Mrs. Fleming asked, “What about you?” **Peter Mott**, the TESIS Academic Dean at the time, was leaving TESIS Lugano to be the head of Zurich International School. “I knew that would be a dream job, just like I knew that coming here to teach the



PGs would be a dream job,” Bill says. The role allowed him to continue teaching, build the schedule, and have a say in the way the school was run.

Bill sees his first four years at TASIS as the end of his education. “I learned academics from graduate school and from my professors. I learned about schools by helping the headmaster in Florence, and through the experiences I had in Cyprus and in France,” he says. “That was probably the first time I thought, Oh, this is something I’m going to do for a really long time. I saw the opportunities and challenges, and I saw a role where I could grow personally, and there was a real future here.”

The future is where Bill is most comfortable, thinking of what to do next, how to improve. “That’s a strength of the school,” he says, “It was clear at the time that TASIS was at an academic turning point, and there was plenty to do. I was well suited to that job, and it carried me for a whole decade.” It was a time of transition, and some of the challenges Bill faced included adjusting the course offerings to suit the burgeoning EAL market and strengthening the academic program to appeal to stronger students. Bill also oversaw adding the International Baccalaureate program to TASIS. “The school had only around 300 students, so we could make decisions and implement things quickly,” Bill remembers. And perhaps more importantly, Bill deeply understood that Lugano was the place to settle and have a family, and when his son James came along, he knew he wanted to be in Lugano for the long term.

At that point, the marketing for all TASIS schools was done out of England, and student recruitment through both England and the TASIS US office. In Lugano, **Lotti Turner** received visitors, wrote letters, and answered phone calls about the School, and Bill and the current headmaster would read the admissions files. The success of Bill’s first trip to the Middle East to recruit for France became an annual thing, and the families were impressed that the Academic Dean was there. “Half of it was meeting current families, and I knew their kids. And the other would be inquiries from new families, who saw

the personalized approach. I didn’t come up with this; it was just what we did.” Around that time, the Asian market became important, Taiwan and Japan in particular, and Bill began going on those trips, too.

## From Academics to Admissions

By 1997, Bill knew that a more centralized admissions structure would be beneficial to TASIS. “It became a need,” Bill recalls, “and I knew I should do it.” At first, he kept his advisees and his classes—“I didn’t want to lose out on the fun!”—but it wasn’t fair to them as he spent so much time on the road. So he reluctantly gave up teaching because the demands of admissions were becoming greater.

Bill spent nearly twenty years as Director of Admissions, keeping his finger on the pulse of what was happening at the School to ensure it could deliver on the promises he made to families. In 2017 he took on the role of Director of Institutional Advancement, a mouthful to say which encapsulates the forward-thinking vision that Bill brings to the School. He believes in the strength of TASIS and how it gives students the space to thrive. “We have outstanding students,” he says, “and society puts a lot of pressures on teenagers now. There’s a lot more to teenagers than people think.” Bill acknowledges the distractions of social media and the internet, but keeps perspective. “There’s always been criticism of kids, for generations. I see totally the opposite. If anything, kids today are far more ready, far more sophisticated, far more cosmopolitan, far more worldly. They have so many advantages. And even if they’re stuck in their phone for a bit of time, it’s the rare kid who’s addicted to their social media. We’ve always turned out great students, and we still do.”

## The Alumni Pillar

TASIS often talks about the pillars of our community: the teachers, the setting, the buildings that make the experience so special. But Bill thinks the true pillar of TASIS is the alumni. “We sometimes forget to mention that the real success has been the strength of the students we’ve had,” Bill says. The connections, the



*Family portrait: Melissa Eichner, son James Eichner '07, and Bill at the Huntington Museum Reunion*

friendships, what they are doing in the world and how much they took away from TESIS. “Each student was part of the identity of the School.” Every academic year, the faculty sit back and think, wow, what an outstanding year, or what a great class that was. “We weren’t the ones who were outstanding. They had the experience, and got so much out of it, and left Montagnola with a lot of friends, a certain direction, and certainly with a much better understanding of the world.”

Current students see how important alumni are at TESIS. “We remember our alumni here, we cherish them,” he says. “The contributions the students make are lasting. The success of our students has an impact on the culture of the school. We often refer to students and their achievements, both at TESIS and beyond.” Alumni are often a part of the TESIS Speaker Series; “The students have an instant fascination with our alumni speakers. It shows them where they could be.”

Bill is proud of many of his accomplishments, but what makes him most proud is when an alumnus sends his or her children to TESIS or the Summer Programs.

“Every year, we have more and more alumni students. It’s gratifying, as the parents see their children having a similar experience. There are improvements everywhere—the facilities, the programs, Global Service, the Science Center—but at the heart it’s the basic TESIS formula that is getting better all the time.”

Connecting with alumni through reunions is also a highlight of his role, reminding him of the days when he accompanied Mrs. Fleming to reunions. “Going to reunions is wonderful,” he says. “It’s a tremendous community.” He loves seeing the regulars at the all-class reunions, but also finds joy in seeing someone who comes for the first time and is delighted by a crowd of people who also speak TESIS. But just as rewarding are the smaller reunions on campus, a few dozen people picking up where they left off twenty, thirty, forty years ago. “It speaks of their experience here, that they met the closest friends of their lives at this time.”

Bill is constantly amazed by the communities our alumni create; indeed, many reunions happen all over





*Bill laughing with Mrs. Fleming and former Board member Curtis McGraw Webster '75*

the world every year. “Our alumni have built these communities that exist beyond this campus and the hill. They get together often, all over the world, a network of people who really enjoy being together. ”

Reunions are also a time for students to share what they took from TASIS. “They all find their way, and end up doing amazing things. They are exposed to ideas and places and ways of thinking at a pivotal age. It’s remarkable.”

## On Institutional Advancement

Right now, Bill is in a good place; “It’s a fantastic time. And always a reminder that the best years lie ahead.” Much like how he views TASIS, Bill views his own life in how to move forward; “It’s all about the future. I guess when it’s not that, that’s probably when you retire.” People ask Bill that all the time: when will he retire? “What I do is so interesting, and so much fun, and so rewarding. That’s what milestones make me think about; it’s not looking back, it’s looking to the future in all those areas.”

Bill loves returning to Florence, enjoys paddleboarding on Lake Lugano, enjoys socializing with colleagues who have become friends. Deeply intertwined with his personal goals are his goals for his role at TASIS. “I often think, what is left that I can do? How can I make a difference?”

He links this with the Covid years. “Precarious times for a school, because we didn’t know what would be next. It caused a lot of challenges; how can we still ski? Travel? Build community? We found a way. And it was clear that what was really important were the basics. What is the identity of the School? Whatever we do to navigate this, we have to be true to the mission of the School, true to Mrs. Fleming’s vision; what would Mrs. Fleming do? It was gratifying to see that I could be helpful at that time.” His connection with the history of the school and with alumni, as well as his intuitive understanding of the spirit of TASIS, puts him in a unique position to influence the School. “I think about what the school can be for my grandson, what it can be for the children of our alumni.”

Bill is confident that the School emerged from Covid stronger. “Covid made us question every single thing,” he says. “And it was unifying, in terms of working with colleagues to solve a problem, you had a whole institution focused on this. It was a lot of work. But it was gratifying, and very personal to see how much creative problem-solving strengthened our community. And, if anything, we doubled down on our identity and



who we are. And I think we've emerged at our strongest point ever in terms of the faculty and the student experience."

When Bill became Academic Dean, he could see it was a meaty job with the potential to make lasting and important changes. He played the long game and produced results. The Admissions role centralized the process to Lugano, created an Admissions team, and brought more and more families to TASIS. Next for Bill is alumni engagement. "We've had some great successes, but there is still much to do. It's a new chapter."

For Mrs. Fleming, the most exciting learning was out of the classroom. "Students remember Mrs. Fleming's continual presence in the community, speaking to them at assemblies, having dinner with them. In our early years no one questioned, what's the mission of the school; it was what Mrs. Fleming said. She was out there saying it all the time."

Bill finds it interesting that new people come in and deeply consider Mrs. Fleming's mission. Headmaster **Christopher Nikoloff** is an example. "He never met Mrs. Fleming, but is probably the most articulate person about her vision that there is. Students learn about Mrs. Fleming through Chris and others talking about her, but also through seeing what we do at TASIS: beauty, service, building community through the arts and activities. Sometimes those of us who knew her well will fumble around for the right words or example, and not get it as succinctly or clearly as Chris does."

Bill feels the weight of Mrs. Fleming's legacy. "You have the responsibility not just to maintain it, but to improve it and enhance it. And that's what we've been doing in every aspect of the school, whether the program or the facilities. And that makes us more and more competitive all the time. We already have an outstanding campus, and we are well on our way to having the best in Switzerland, maybe even beyond."

Bill's mind is currently on the Global Village building campaign. "The campus is already outstanding, and it has always been one of the most beautiful places in the



*Bill in Lugano, a place that brings him deep joy*

world. That's something that students take away with them, whether they were here in the 70s or the 00s. It has a lasting impact." Bill firmly believes that the campus Master Plan will be realized within the next decade. He also looks forward to creative thinking with alumni involvement. "The Global Service Program is an example of a program where an alumnus has taken an interest and made us a leader in that area. And now we have an endowment in the Fine and Performing Arts, already a huge strength of the school, and now the future is always brighter. Any role I can play in all of that is gratifying. And that's what I see as my next challenge."

Bill has a bust of Mrs. Fleming in his office, sculpted by **Gianna Dispenza '08**, a constant reminder of the big-picture focus. "Mrs. Fleming had this ability to bring people along on the journey so well. Everyone from students to faculty understood her mission for their school and their community, and they were all a part of it. We are all a part of it. We've built TASIS together."



# INTERNATIONAL HUMAN BEINGS



*The 2023 Model UN delegation*

*...what we are trying to do, or attempt to do, is to create not international schools, but international human beings, men and women who are capable of moving easily in any society on earth, people who do not have to overcome the barriers of prejudice or even unfamiliarity in communicating with their fellow human beings, no matter what their backgrounds. – Mary Crist Fleming, 1983*

While every experience at TASIS helps to shape the ‘international human beings’ Mrs. Fleming hoped to create, Model United Nations (MUN) propels students to rise to this challenge in tangible and life-changing ways. MUN is the second-oldest student organization at TASIS, second

only to the yearbook, and former participants still speak highly of their experiences with the club.

MUN began in 1921 as a student-led League of Nations simulation at Oxford University. The following year, Harvard University’s Harvard Liberal Club created a similar event, the International Assembly. While the Oxford event only ran for a few years, the Harvard International Assembly remained robust. After World War II, Model League of Nations transitioned to Model United Nations, and the first recorded event was at Swarthmore College in spring 1947 and involved over 150 students from 41 universities.



This year's TASIS commencement speaker, Alejandro Rodriguez-Giovo, directed the large MUN program at the International School of Geneva (Ecolint) for many years.

The goal of MUN is to teach skills such as research, public speaking, debating, writing, critical thinking, teamwork, and leadership. It gives students an opportunity to develop a deep understanding of international politics and the issues facing countries around the world. Delegates from each institution are assigned a country to represent. They conduct research and formulate position papers and policy proposals that are used when debating with other delegates at an annual conference. Delegates vote on policies and the goal is to pass with a majority vote. Notable MUN alumni include Ban Ki-moon, former US Ambassador to Switzerland Suzan G. LeVine, Willem-Alexander, King of the Netherlands, and US politicians Paul Ryan and George Stephanopoulos. Over 160 MUN conferences are held around the world annually, attracting thousands of students.

Model UN is one of the oldest student organizations at TASIS. TASIS represented Ireland at their inaugural MUN conference at The Hague in 1979, and over the years TASIS students have also attended conferences in Paris, Munich, and Istanbul.

## Student Reflections

Over the years, TASIS students have considered their time with MUN with some three thousand other future leaders from around the world. **Tanya Paul '18** wrote of her trip to The Hague, "At first I felt out of my depth, but the days passed in a blur of resolutions, amendments, and crazy lunch breaks. Learning to speak in front of large audiences, improvise counter-arguments, and pay critical attention to resolutions are a few important lessons I'll take." **Diana Khassanova '19**, who represented South Sudan, said, "I now understand that being in Model UN isn't only a privilege, it is a responsibility that requires ambition, enthusiasm, and curiosity. Even though it is challenging, it is a rewarding experience that I will remember for the rest of my life."



*In 1994, TASIS represented the European Community at the Model UN conference*

**Sakura Tanaka '24** served as the Ambassador of the International Labor Organization at the 2023 conference. "The lobbying process was interesting, as it was a collaboration of ideas by a multitude of personalities. I encountered people who were obstinate and unwilling to collaborate, but I was able to find other delegations that had the same approach to creating a resolution as I did. After countless obstacles, group meetings, and discussions, we were able to create a resolution with different ideas through collaboration and communication." She also says, "From the first day of the conference, I truly learned that no matter the amount of preparation you do, MUN is an experience that has to be done through taking initiative and speaking up so that your ideas and everyone's ideas can be heard."

**Michelangelo Vecchio '23** attended four conferences during his time with MUN. "Upon graduation, they asked us to write our favorite TASIS memory to include in our yearbook and mine was MUN," he says. "I made connections that I value like gold, as all the delegates I met were not only smart and witty, but also revealed to be kind and caring—outside of debate, of course!" The club sparked his interest in world politics and connected him to an engaged group of people.

**Anna Alyakina '19** wrote an astute observation from her second MUN conference. "This conference is made for students to reenact the United Nations in order to learn



*Andrew Baker '24 voting on behalf of Eswatini*

from one another what international cooperation and negotiation are all about. Hearing someone's speech that is not completely politically correct and maybe even insulting is not always easy, but that is where an important lesson came in for me. Our issues are not caused by overpopulation, ignorance, or differences in cultures. It all went wrong when we learned to listen but not hear, and when we were taught sympathy instead of empathy. World leaders are doing their best to better our world, but they are not always able to hear each other and see the world from an opposing point of view."

## Faculty Reflections

**Jonathan Brand**, who served as a MUN advisor during his nine-year stint at TASIS (1996–2005), says, "Students were drawn to Model UN for a number of reasons. The preparation involved researching the countries they would represent and various current events. They were able to put into practice their learning at school, and the experience debating students from other schools was valuable." He was able to see the influence of MUN on the students, too. "Students grew immensely in their oral presentation and debating skills. They also became more confident engaging with others, and the skills they developed

translated well into their later careers in international business, banking, and law."

TASIS Webmaster **Brendan Shea** was a faculty advisor from 2015 until 2023. "MUN continues to be TASIS's premiere leadership training program. It gives students an opportunity similar to real life experience in diplomacy and conflict resolution." Brendan emphasizes the soft-power skills that are discovered during conferences, where networking and relationships are as critical to finding resolutions as facts and figures. "Students become better writers, debaters, and listeners. They learn from others and test their abilities with gifted peers from around the world. There's nothing quite like it."

**Michael Clardy** is the current faculty leader for MUN. He led a delegation at a school in Costa Rica, so was excited to further this work at TASIS. "This year was an amazing experience because of the student leaders and the dedication of the entire delegation," he says. "**Michelangelo Vecchio '23** and **Sylvia Cribari '23** were co-chairs and planned and implemented the preparation of our delegation for the entire ten weeks preceding the conference. Once our delegation was assigned a country to represent and our students were assigned to specific delegations—such as the Human Rights Commission and General Assembly—they began to research a set of specific questions that could be debated at the conference." These questions guided their pre-conference research, and the goal was for each student to write a resolution that was a call for specific actions to be taken by the UN in areas like health care and intervening in military conflicts. Before the conference, the students also debated these calls to action. "Michelangelo's and Sylvia's insightful and efficient planning did a wonderful job of helping all of our members arrive at the conference with a completed resolution that was thoroughly vetted," Michael says. "Consequently, this year's delegation had the highest number of resolutions and amendments passed of any TASIS delegation in history. This has given us a tremendous amount of momentum going forward."



## Alumni Reflections

**Dr. Janne Sirén '90** is a Finnish art historian who is Director of the Albright-Knox Gallery in Buffalo, New York, and his career has taken him around the world as a professor and gallery director. He calls his two years of MUN experience unforgettable. "In our meetings we learned about the way the UN organization works, about conflict management and international relations, and about how national and international identities are shaped and how they sometimes clash." Janne and his group represented South Africa at the conference. "I think all of us who were part of the Model UN team in the late 1980s, as the Soviet Union was crumbling and the Berlin Wall was about to fall, understood that without dialogue and the friendly exchange of ideas the horrors of war could be upon us," he remembers. "There was optimism in the air, but also the long shadow of two world wars, the Holocaust, and the Cold War."

**Mathias Mühlhofer '95** attended TASIS from 1989 until he graduated and now serves on the TASIS Board of Directors. "I remember a very important lesson from Model UN," he recalls. "Until that time, the world had always been hierarchical for me. At school, the teachers made the rules, I had to follow them. The headmaster made the rules for the teachers, Mrs. Fleming made the rules for the headmaster, and so on. Each would enforce the rules and make those below them on the hierarchy do what they wanted," he remembers. "But at the MUN conference I noticed that no country was the boss of another country and no one country made the rules and, in fact, no country could tell another country what to do. We had come there with all kinds of prepared resolutions: we wanted other delegations to agree to all sorts of things, such as clean oceans, to stop whaling, and to reduce pollution. But we were in no position to make them agree to our resolutions. We had to cooperate, find something they wanted and a way to give it to them. This taught me an important lesson about cooperation and win-win situations."

Janne agrees on the enduring legacy of MUN. "At TASIS, and especially through the MUN program, we all learned to



*The 2023 TASIS Model UN group*

be diplomats and were all ready to assume 'ambassadorial' positions. Just read my classmate and fellow TASIS Model UN student **Ariana Neuman '88's** book *When Time Stopped: A Memoir of My Father's War and What Remains* and you will understand what I mean. MUN certainly was a good springboard for the work I do today as a museum director. Thank you TASIS and [faculty advisor] **Steve Loesche** for challenging us to be our best selves."

The future of MUN at TASIS is bright. Students **Sakura Tanaka '24** and **Giada Giuliani '24** will lead the 2023–2024 delegation. "They have already been hard at work preparing for next year," Michael says. "They are working on getting our delegation to attend an additional conference in the fall. They have also begun recruiting new members and strategically planning our first set of meetings. This bodes well for our performance next year. We are all very excited!" May MUN continue to inspire student leaders for many decades to come.

*The 2023 delegation represented Eswatini and the International Labor Organization, giving one of their strongest performances ever. They passed two resolutions as main submitter, 15 as co-submitter, and 5 amendments. Four-year Model UN veteran, Michelangelo Vecchio '23, served as Ambassador of Eswatini, and Sakura Tanaka '24 the Ambassador of the International Labor Organization.*



# DANTE'S FOOTSTEPS



*The Honors World Literature class poses in front of Florence*

Last November, students in **Dr. Chris Love's** 10th-grade Honors World Literature class spent four days in Florence exploring the homeland of the illustrious Italian poet Dante Alighieri. After reading *Inferno*, the first part of the 14th-century epic poem *Divine Comedy*, **Haya Hamzah '25** took on the immense challenge of writing a recap of the trip in Dante's canticle style. She also included footnotes to provide a better understanding of the verse. Enjoy her incredible work!

## Day I - 2nd of November 2022:

At the emergence of November  
I came to myself in a lackluster station,  
3. for the straight way was clear.

Ah, how fond it is to tell  
the nature of that intrepid journey—  
6. The very thought of it renews my wonder!



To that antediluvian City of Lilies  
where the noon-light casts herself upon a  
transcendental path,

9. in the dark wood of juvenility.

And as a fawn would stagger to her feet,  
to venture the wild plains of Casentino,

12. balking at the greenness of those hills,

so my pen, clutched in trepidation,  
trembled before the eloquence

15. seated upon the lips of that man pictured in stone.

And so above the toiling waters of the Arno,  
urged by the fall of that heavenly light  
did we intone the prose of a King crowned in laurel,

19. beneath glimmering starlight.

### Footnotes: Day I

- 1-3. On the second of November, our literary journey to the city of Florence began. Huddled together in a crowded station, we made it through the bustle of bodies to our train cars. The anticipation was infectious and our excitement only grew greater the closer we came to our destination. At this point, we had reached the 28th Canto of Dante's *Inferno*, and were eager to become familiarized with a world we had only known so far through the pages of a book.
- 4-6. The excitement was palpable. Every individual knew that this trip would change our lives forever.
- 7. The word "antediluvian" refers to an entity which belongs to the time before the biblical flood. This marks Florence as an ancient city, and is a reference to the 1966 flooding of the

Arno. The white Florentine iris is a springtime staple in the Florentine region. As a result, it has only been natural for people to relate this flower to this city and give it this title.

- 8-9. The sun's movement embodies a moral significance in the world of Dante. At its peak, this "heavenly" entity alludes to illumination and closeness to the essence of God (as observed in *Paradiso*). Its utilization in this passage marks the beginning of a journey towards further enlightenment. Its personification could also be a reference to Beatrice and the guidance she offers Dante. Her presence upon a path in a "dark wood" ("selva oscura" *Inferno* ln. 2) is coupled with the reminder of our juvenility in adolescence. Overall, these lines refer to Florence's push towards greater literacy and enlightenment.
- 10-12. This simile is a nod to Dante's writing style in his integration of similes. The first section of the River Arno flows through the Casentino valley and into Subbiano, Italy, one of the four valleys that make up the Province of Arezzo.
- 15. This is a reference to Enrico Pazzi's statue of Dante outside the Basilica of Santa Croce.
- 16-19. On our first evening in Florence, we participated in a recital of Canto V of Dante's *Inferno* on a bridge that overlooked the Arno River. It was an otherworldly experience, and gave us students a much deeper appreciation for Dante and his work. Dante alludes to starlight as being the guiding hand of God and the heavens. This verse is the only one which contains four lines. This is because Dante utilized the terza rima (three rhyme) writing technique, always ending his Cantos with four lines.

*Haya's poem in  
full can be read here:*



# FROM A DREAM TO A DECADE:

*Ten years of the Global Service Program*



*The Zambia group poses with locals in front of a structure they helped to build*

Ten years ago **Jan Opsahl '68** had a vision. It began when speaking with his then-100-year-old mother who was keen that some of their family assets be used to benefit others. But for Jan, giving money to an existing organization was too intangible and setting up a family foundation did not appeal. Jan, who was serving on the TASIS Board of Directors at the time, was also considering how he could help TASIS. “What is the school known for?” he asked at the time. “When you ask people who have been here, they say the atmosphere, the ethos, the beauty, the travel. But those things are so difficult to convey.”

He and then-headmaster **Michael Ulku-Steiner** began discussing options: if Jan wanted to make a sizable donation, but not in the form of a building, what could it be? They discussed a number of options, but Jan was insistent that it be towards something that would make a real difference in the lives of students as well as set TASIS apart as a school.

They landed on the concept of service learning, which was a perfect match for a man who understood the impact of service. Jan spent seven years as chairman of a sports club in Hamar, Norway, which provided activities for



children. Through his work with the Rotary Club he began funding a project that provided eye clinics in remote parts of Nepal. And as the first international student at TASIS, Jan also understood how experiencing other cultures firsthand can affect teenagers.

The result was the Opsahl Global Service Program (GSP), a program unique to TASIS. The program's mission is to transform *lives by providing every High School student with a unique opportunity to connect across borders—whether geographic, economic, or social—through comprehensive experiences that build empathy and encourage personal responsibility. The Program awakens students to humanitarian needs, inspires them to build enduring, mutually beneficial relationships, and leads them toward a life of active citizenship and committed service.*

## The Work Begins

In spring 2013, Jan, Michael, the Board, and then Service Learning director **Zach Mulert** began considering how a unique service program might work. Thanks to Jan's generosity, TASIS could dream big and deeply consider the impact this sort of program could have. The ambition was to create a global program where all students have the opportunity to experience something life-changing, when at the same time helping others, and where students would take ownership of their experiences. "We must learn how to be good," Jan said. "We are one world, and TASIS is a cultural melting pot. Adding this sort of experience to the overall TASIS education was a game-changer."

Zach, now Head of Secondary at Lighthouse School in Mauritius, remembers this time vividly. "I wanted so badly for the vision to be actualized. It's one thing to dream, and another to carry it out and achieve all of the objectives." Of critical importance included cultivating partnerships directly with organizations, many of which are still in place today. TASIS doesn't use third-party organizers, as many schools do; the relationships are real and deep, continuing



Jan Opsahl '68

from year to year. Also important was considering the risk and safety precautions which were different for each destination, and the reality of organizing trips for an entire class of students. "This sort of journey early in life is important," Jan said. "Our students understand how good it feels to give someone hope."

Participation in the GSP, and at least one service trip, is a requirement for all 11th graders and new 12th graders. TASIS does not take this commitment lightly, and thanks to Jan's endowment, along with some support from the TASIS Foundation, these trips are free for all students. While the aims of the GSP are many, the ultimate goal is one of the tenets of TASIS. "Cultural understanding... takes away the perceived fear of our differences and prevents misunderstandings," Jan said, in an interview celebrating his philanthropy. "I learned English by being immersed in the TASIS environment, and I want students to learn about the world through cultural immersion. This immersion, with all of the discomfort and challenge and fear and awkwardness, will lead to an eye-opening, life-changing experience."





*Students in the Nepal service group building walls with locals*



*Building alongside locals in Thailand*

## The Impact on Students

**Danny Schiff** spent four years as director of the GSP before joining the 'Iolani School in Hawaii in 2022. "The GSP is truly revolutionary. To this day I still have TASIS alumni who reach out to me telling me how impactful their GSP experiences have been in their lives," Danny says. "Their trips have been a highlight of their TASIS

years and have informed their decisions about what to study in university, how to spend their gap years or school holidays, and personal priorities. The applications of the real life impact which GSP partnerships have upon the TASIS community and the partnerships around the world are always evident." Danny also notes that the GSP has garnered attention beyond TASIS; "Schools around the world look to the GSP as a model of how a program can be run with respect to global competency, grassroots involvement, and full school participation," he says.

**Carmen Alban '16** visited the WISER school in rural Kenya. "I fell in love with its students and their teachers," Carmen says. "When it came time to leave TASIS, I did not want to lose the relationship I had made with the WISER program and continued to be involved through my time in university. I led a club at my school that focused on fundraising for WISER and hosted a conference for other young women in our area who also felt a passion for the great work that WISER does every day. The GSP is one of the greatest things the school has to offer and I am forever grateful for my experience."

**Payton Clardy '22** spent her gap year after graduation traveling. She returned to Thailand and Nepal, where she'd been on service trips, with the idea that she might work for an NGO after university. Through discussions with NGO leaders she came to a stark conclusion. "The work being done is great, but the impact isn't global," she says. "It helped me realize that I want to work for a bigger organization with further reach and more power than the little ones, where I can use my connections to give smaller organizations more support." She also knows now that there are so many more options where she can help people—diplomacy, international development, even business—and is keeping her options open during university with the guiding goal of helping others.

## New Leadership for the Future

Last fall, **Patty Clardy** took up the reins as Director of the GSP. Patty brings a lifelong commitment to service

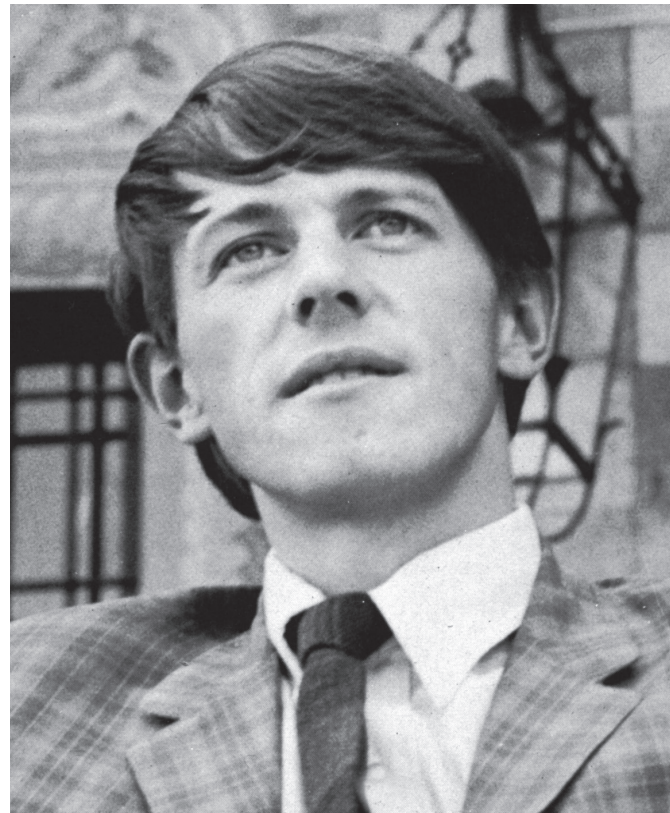


and was service learning chair at her former school in Bangkok. “It’s so hard to follow Zach and Danny in this role, but it really is a fusion of everything I’ve done,” she says. It was a challenging year to take the reins; only one trip was able to go since the pandemic began in March 2020, and Patty had to organize seven for spring 2023. Last year, trips were open to both 11th and 12th graders who didn’t get to travel due to Covid. A few recent alumni who couldn’t travel their junior year joined, too. “You can’t replace the actual experience,” Patty says. “You’re not just reading about it, or seeing it, but you’re really feeling it.”

And while the program’s first decade has resulted in a robust program, Patty has ideas about how to further enhance these experiences. “One of the goals of the program is to get students out of their comfort zones,” she says, noting that the trips might be vastly different to the standards of flights and hotels that students are used to. “These trips are not a vacation,” Patty says. “They address issues such as education, housing, water, gender, and poverty. The program offers the opportunity to witness and understand how global leadership can change lives through curiosity, creativity, and commitment.”

As trips are taken junior year, seniors could explore service more deeply, perhaps through reflection activities, sharing knowledge with others, or even starting their own NGOs. Patty would love to see seniors take a trip to Geneva to meet with NGO leaders and visit the UN, learning how organizations work in the real world. Patty also wants to put some of the emphasis back on the students. “On the Nepal trip, for example, the leaders chose to let the students take charge of the discussions. I want kids to really process what they’re experiencing and be able to share in a safe environment, so this sort of responsibility works very well,” Patty says. “I really believe that everything they’re experiencing right now is a seed. As they grow older, they’re going to have that planted inside of them, and it will make a difference.”

The School’s commitment to Jan’s vision extends to a special GSP Committee that meets regularly to review



*Jan Opsahl as a TASIS student in the late 1960s*

and support this signature program. Consisting of founding donor Jan, Patty, the headmaster, and select board members, the committee considers philosophical and pedagogical questions that could affect the program, advises on the impact and results, and reviews locations. Patty also plans to host a Service Banquet on October 19 to mark the anniversary of Jan’s remarkable donation, and the highlight will be hearing from Jan himself about how this idea has taken flight.

In the past ten years, the GSP has provided tangible and meaningful experiences to hundreds of TASIS students. Jan’s hope at the beginning was to provide an awakening to humanitarian needs leading to a life of active citizenship and service. It only takes one stone to cause a ripple effect which can change lives. “Whenever people talk about doing dramatic things in the world, it always comes with some sort of dramatic revelation,” Jan said in 2013. “What students do with this experience is up to them, but I feel it will stay with them for life.”

# THE INAUGURAL LYNCH FUND AWARD



*Alejandro with Michelle Arslanian, Alumni & Development*

Congratulations to **Alejandro Orozco '23**, the first recipient of the Lynch Global Service Program Extension Award. Established by **Ned Lynch PG '66**, the award is a \$1000 scholarship for a senior who wishes to continue working on an Opsahl Global Service Program project or go on a second trip abroad. Alejandro used the scholarship to attend his second service trip to Zambia.

## ALUMNI RETURN TO CAMPUS



Alumni parents return for Founder's Day: Lamar Kanafani '97, Osman Sönmez '01, Alicem Sönmez '96, Sonia Aydin Sönmez '01, Estela Dreux Mariani PG '96, Wilma Faisol Pinto Facchinetti '99 , Ana Cristina de Attayde '99



Summer Programs selfie! Alumni parents Mathias Muehlhofer '94, Bill Eichner, Nobuhito Kikukawa '95, George Saw-Shiun Hong '92 at the Summer Arts Festival

Thank you to members of the Class of 2023 for their class gift: a TESIS Tigers foosball table for The Lounge!





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# BREAKING TABOOS



“I am older than the amount of time that women have been mandated to be included in clinical research. That feeling of indignation is what led me to this work.” **Oriana Papin-Zoghbi '08** is keen to flip the narrative surrounding women’s health, and as founder and CEO of biotech company AOA Dx, she’s well on her way.

Oriana grew up in the Middle East. Her parents are from Lebanon and she’s from a family of doctors, and because Oriana also liked the sciences, she thought she’d be a doctor, too. While at TASIS, her IB Economics teacher **Robb Gushiken** spotted her talent in economics and suggested it as a major for her to consider. At the time, she laughed it off. But despite high IB scores and a focused goal, Oriana didn’t achieve great grades during her first year at Boston University. “The courses were not exciting. And then I

realized that while I liked the sciences, I liked the analytical thinking part more.” Oriana did some summer internships with medical device companies and found her niche in conveying technology, sales, and marketing. At her five-year reunion, she laughed when she saw Robb. “I told him he was right. I have a degree in economics.”

Oriana’s college internship with AmniSure extended to her first full-time job after graduation and it was a crash course in the issues surrounding women’s healthcare. She speaks English, Spanish, Arabic, and French, so was often sent around the world to discuss women’s healthcare technologies—and often the reception was frosty. “Once, in the Middle East, they said, no, we can’t test for HPV, because that’s a sexually transmitted disease. And I said, ‘you need to test for HPV, because that’s how you prevent cervical cancer’. Lots of women’s health is so taboo.”

As her career continued, so did her indignation. “Women’s healthcare is under-invested, under-focused, and it got to the point where I thought, if I, who care so deeply about this, don’t do something about it, then who will? I can’t complain about something and rely on the system to change it.” This came in Oriana’s dedication to working with companies focusing on women’s health initiatives and, eventually, founding AOA Dx.

The number of underfunded women’s health issues is staggering, and narrowing this field was the company’s first project and was challenging. “I’d mapped out these big issues in women’s health and included preeclampsia, endometriosis, and ovarian cancer. But I’m not an inventor, I can’t come up with a solution, so I started researching.” Oriana spent a year going to conferences and reading patent files and abstracts with these issues at the heart. Then she got a call from a friend about a man in Montreal. Dr. Uri Saragovi is a scientist in Translational Medicine at McGill University and at the Jewish General Hospital, Montreal. He had made promising strides in targeting



gangliosides, which are stable biomarkers used clinically for cancer diagnosis, prognosis, and therapy. Oriana had found her project: a blood test that could detect early-stage cancers, particularly ovarian cancer.

Ovarian is one of the deadliest cancers due to its late detection. While 94% of women with ovarian cancer start to experience symptoms in stage I, only 20% of cases are diagnosed at stage I or II, and early stage diagnosis is critical to the five-year survival rate (90%, compared with 28% for those diagnosed at stage III or IV). “Prior to diagnosis, 30% of women were prescribed antidepressants, and 15% were given a colonoscopy,” Oriana says. “Doctors don’t have the tools to find the right disease because, again, it’s only been thirty years since women have had to be included in clinical research, and less than ten years since research on mice had to include female mice.”

AOA Dx was founded with the goal of making a lasting impact for women’s health. Diseases that disproportionately affect women receive less than 7% of funding. “We want to do the difficult stuff—develop the hard technologies, solve these big problems, move the needle a bit,” she says. The company aims to create innovative, impactful, and cost-effective medical technologies and get them into the hands of patients and providers.

Funding a company in a space that is routinely ignored presented a welcome challenge for Oriana. The company had a first round of funding for family and friends, most of whom understood that this was, indeed, a big problem and Oriana was the one to solve it. In September 2022, AOA Dx announced they had closed a \$7M funding round, and their next round will be closed imminently. “There have been very few non-believers, and that’s been really comforting,” Oriana says. And while finding funding has been validating, just as important is hearing from women who have had ovarian cancer, who have said, *thank you, this is what we need*. “I could build the best company, have the best revenue, get a great ROI, but there’s nothing like that feeling that you’re serving people.”

Oriana’s dedication to the life sciences has earned her numerous awards. In 2022, she was included in the *Inc.* Top 100 Female Founders, alongside the Massachusetts Life Sciences Center MassNextGen Award, the Eddies People’s Choice Award, and the Wave Summit’s Emerging Women Founder in Bio Award. Oriana has already realized that part of leadership is surrounding herself with people who are smarter than her at certain things. Every Thursday her team meets to ensure Oriana has all the information she needs to make the right decisions for the business. “It blows my mind how successful we’ve become.” She’s hired an executive coach as well, “... because I’m a believer that what got me here won’t get me there. I’m always looking to grow and learn and be better.”

But Oriana admits that it can be lonely at the top. “Relationships with other female founders are critical,” she says. “And I have very close friends, some of whom are from TESIS!” Female founder networks are tight in the sciences, and Oriana appreciates the unfiltered advice that those who have navigated this space before her provide. “There’s a camaraderie,” Oriana says. “You’re trying to raise capital from men who don’t think women’s health markets are big enough, or who challenge your ability to run a company because you have a family.”

Oriana’s time at TESIS shaped her trajectory. As a boarder, she learned independence early, along with how to build friendships. “It’s an enormous advantage,” she says of the boarding experience. “By the time I got to college I had a higher competence level and ability to do things by myself. Having the international experience, being surrounded by people of so many different cultures really shaped the way that I thought about my career.”

Oriana has had a global career which has taken her to the US, Germany, Africa, and the Middle East. “I really worked to serve women, and communities all over the world because at TESIS I was surrounded by peers from all over the world. And I think that that really shaped who I am.”

# A WINNING FORMULA

*Masa Yo '04 is leading the Tigers to victory*



*An intense moment during a volleyball tournament with Coach Masa Yo '04*

*Fill all their waking hours with commitment to study, sports, the arts, and responsibility to others. Instruct–stretch them in all areas. They don't know the amazing potential they have!* – Mrs. Fleming's recipe for a school, as told to John Amis in 1990

Physical activity has been important to a TASIS education since the School's inception. Weekend walks through the Alps, afternoon swims in the lake, and, of course, Ski Week are woven into the fabric of the School. Many readers will fondly remember the Bubble, which was the home of basketball, volleyball, and many other sports for many years.

But athletics has become more and more integral to a TASIS education over the past two decades. Leading this

renaissance is **Masa Yo '04** who has been Athletic Director at TASIS since 2019. A young Masa came to TASIS as a student in 1999 and at that point, sports offerings were limited. "Usually there was one big tournament, the SGIS (Swiss Group of International Schools). That's really all we had in terms of competition," he remembers. But by the time Masa returned to TASIS as a teacher in 2009, after graduating from Tufts University and working for a year in his home city of Tokyo, things had changed for the better.

Masa taught Mathematics and PE for ten years before becoming Athletic Director, taking over from **Sonny Lim** who was at the helm from 2012–2019. "Sonny really changed the level and number of competitions," Masa said of his predecessor, "and now we are part of four different conferences in Italy and Switzerland and will participate



in at least a few tournaments each year.” This includes the European Sports Conference, which has become the highlight trip for teams.

TASIS Athletics and the Physical Education (PE) departments work closely together to promote healthy, active lifestyles to students. PE classes are mandatory through Grade 10 with age-appropriate activities and lessons focusing on movement, anatomy, nutrition, mental health, and related topics. Competitive play begins in middle school, when any child who wants to play can join the team so everyone gets to play. High school students have even more opportunities, including varsity and junior varsity teams which play other schools. These teams practice three times per week, which requires commitment from those interested in being part of a competitive team. “Obviously not all students are interested in the competitive sports we offer so they are encouraged to participate in one of our 20+ recreational sports offerings to keep fit without the pressure of playing for a team.”

The support these departments give one another is integral to the success of each student. Masa explains the difference plainly: “Physical Education is an academic subject, and students receive a grade. Athletics refers to voluntary teams that represent the School in competitions.” But the departments share equipment and facilities and even office space. It’s helpful that Masa and the PE Department Head, **Tom Lill**, have been good friends for over a decade and work well together. This is particularly helpful when dealing with the challenge of sourcing specific equipment or matching uniforms; they can share ideas about how to deal with logistical challenges while bolstering an American school sports program in Europe.

This focus on athletics can be challenging at a school like TASIS. For example, balancing athletics trips with other weekend travel opportunities. “But I think we have the right balance. Our seasons are about 10 weeks long, and we have three or four competitions, which leaves space for Academic Travel and all the other wonderful things that TASIS offers.”



*Basketball in the Palestra*

Masa and his team have created a number of initiatives to honor student-athletes. Special banquets and assemblies every sports season honor student-athletes who bring something special to their sports. And to help students feel empowered, Masa and Associate Athletic Director **Alex Zanecchia '02** created an Athletics Council to find ways to build excitement around athletics and encourage school spirit at matches and games. “Cheering on your peers at matches really builds community,” Masa says, and it also inspires younger students to strive to become better athletes.

But just as important are initiatives that allow all students to be involved, even those who might not be athletically gifted. “Covid really made people realize how important physical activity is to wellbeing,” Masa says, noting he sees this in students. “They are focused on academic work, but they also know they need a physical outlet.” School-wide events such as the annual World Cup during International Week, Beat the Bells, where runners leave campus at 6:15 AM, run

down to the lake, then back up the hill by the 7:00 church bells, and the Fleming Cup ski race are annual highlights for the community.

## Coaching at TASIS

Close to 100 coaching positions exist at TASIS, and around fifty TASIS faculty and staff are involved in coaching. “There are a lot of factors to consider,” Masa says of hiring coaches. Sometimes experience isn’t possible, but Masa tries to ensure all head coaches know the sport and have experience and assistant coaches can support the head coach and the team.

Masa’s goal is for all coaches to be certified by the Positive Coaching Alliance, a US-based organization that provides training to ensure positive youth sports development. It helps guide coaches through behavioral, emotional, and other issues as they strive to create a positive experience for all students.

And, of course, personal frustrations can often be brought into the sport. “Mistakes are tricky,” Masa says, citing both pressure from teammates and pressure from the self as challenging. He admits that the mental side of sports can be hard. “It’s the hardest part to coach,” he says. “Students sometimes want to blame others for what went wrong, or themselves for tripping up. But we have to help them learn to keep their heads straight the whole time, to self-motivate. The reflection piece is super important to my personal coaching philosophy,” Masa says. “Using mistakes to encourage us to learn and do better.”

## Tiger Nation

Masa is convinced that the skills learned on the field, court, or track are as important as anything else at TASIS. “Sports has to do with character,” Masa says, adding that some of the most important life skills are taught through sports. How far you can push yourself. How to find your own competitive edge. How to learn to rely on others. How to deal with others relying on you. How to win graciously. And, perhaps most critically, how to respond when things don’t go your way. “There’s no better way to see a student’s character

than during a loss. When a team deals with a loss together, that builds character. It’s so valuable to lose a close game, or get second or third in a tournament. It gives students something to work towards. And when they win, it makes the celebration so much sweeter.”

Masa admits he’s not trying to build the best athletes in the world. “I want to use sports as a way to teach life skills and values that students will use for their entire lives, such as collaboration, commitment. My vision for the TASIS athletic program, which I think is in line with the school as well, is using sports as a tool to better educate our students. It’s the best way to teach a competitive spirit, to learn about working as a team and sportsmanship. You can’t always get that in a classroom.”

# TASIS TEAMS

<b>Badminton</b>	
<b>Basketball:</b>	Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity, Middle School; Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity, Middle School
<b>Cross Country:</b>	Varsity, Middle School
<b>Golf</b>	
<b>Skiing:</b>	High School, Middle School
<b>Soccer:</b>	Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity, Middle School; Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity, Middle School
<b>Swimming</b>	
<b>Tennis</b>	
<b>Track and Field:</b>	High School, Middle School
<b>Volleyball:</b>	Girls Varsity, Junior Varsity; Boys Varsity, Junior Varsity

**TASIS Paideia, point 5:** TASIS recognizes the importance of teaching fitness and healthy habits of living. This recognition requires that the Schools take special care in offering nutritious meals, insisting upon timely sleeping arrangements, and encouraging students to participate in a wide range of outdoor and physical activities.



# TRAVEL, ENHANCED

*TASIS is now a licensed Duke of Edinburgh International Award center*

Travel continues to be an essential part of the TASIS experience. Last year, we shared the new Blue (Europe as a Classroom / cultural trips), Green (outdoor education), and White (snow sports) concept which has already begun to shape students in unprecedented ways. “The best thing about this new model is that students have choices,” says **Natalie Philpot**, Director of Academic Travel. “They are able to try many new things, which in turn makes students more excited about the trips.” And while the traditional Blue trips remain popular, Natalie notes that the outdoor trips are booming. “We are seeing remarkable growth in the students who go on our outdoor trips,” Natalie says. “Many young people nowadays can have difficulties with their attention spans, and they’re pressured always to succeed; they’re not allowed to fail—and we know that failure can be the way to success.”

To further enhance possibilities for students, TASIS has become a licensed Duke of Edinburgh International Award school, an accolade given to organizations outside the UK and Canada that value outdoor education. Founded in 1956 by the late Duke of Edinburgh, the award recognizes adolescents for completing a series of exercises or events in the areas of Physical Recreation, Skills, Service, and independently-planned Adventurous Journey. Bronze, Silver, and Gold Awards are possible and participants must show consistent activity over a number of weeks, depending on the level of award, and commitment to their cause.

Another perk of the program, which Natalie thinks is important, is that students have until they are 25 to complete their award. This takes the immediate pressure off and allows students to enjoy the process. And the extended commitment is an impressive



*Students prepare for their Duke of Edinburgh excursions*

enhancement for college applications and, eventually job applications.

Last spring, nine high school Silver Award participants carried out practice Adventurous Journeys. Both groups had to commit to pre-trip training sessions and planned the trips themselves. A group of five students headed down the Ligurian coast for a two-day cycling journey, and the four others went on a kayaking journey on Lake Lugano to Melano. Both groups went with chaperones who were as hands-off as possible, allowing the students to be self-sufficient. In fall 2023, the two groups will complete their Adventurous Journeys in Portugal and Greece. “The confidence that students develop in the process is really inspiring,” Natalie says.

# IN THE SHADOW OF WAR

*Marta Bilas '08 on life in Kyiv*



In 2014, **Marta Bilas '08** had just begun her Masters degree at Westminster Business School in London. On a course trip to Oxford she was at a group dinner at a hotel when she saw images of a war being broadcast on television screens. The backdrop looked familiar, so she moved in to get a closer look. “And I saw that the fighting was in Ukraine, in Kyiv, and I just broke down.” As the months of fighting continued, Marta wanted to help, so she spent her spring break and summer holiday volunteering as a translator for the Ukraine Crisis Media Center, which had been put together to help with the international narrative. Marta had studied PR at the University of Bournemouth and her skills were welcomed by the NGO. She was working with important government officials and parliamentarians, attending briefings and working with media around the world.

After the summer, Marta returned to London to finish her Masters and was planning to return to Weber Shandwick, a PR company where she had worked during her studies at Bournemouth. But she got a call from the NGO asking her to be in charge of English language outreach. “I felt like it was a way to help,” Marta says, “before I returned to London after everything was over. And nine years later, the NGO is still working, because there’s still work to do.”

Many of us not familiar with Ukrainian news might think the war started on February 24, 2022. But Ukrainians have been living in the shadow of war since 2014. “In 2014, 2015, there were no weddings, no parties, no music festivals. And then we become numb.” Slowly, the risks became just another part of



life; Marta herself got married in 2019. “If there aren’t rockets falling on you, you have to keep living.”

Marta continued her work with the NGO for nearly seven years before taking on her current role working on EU-related reforms for the customs service of the Ukrainian government, though she continues to help the NGO when they need extra support. This was particularly important when the war escalated in February 2022. “We took the news from the Ukrainian armed forces and the president and translated it, because the international media knew us and trusted us. We don’t generate the stories, we are the bridge, and have a pool of experts who are available to comment on what is happening.”

Marta’s story of the first days of the escalation likely echoes many others. “We were sort of expecting it on the 16th. We put fuel in our car, got an emergency pack together. I wasn’t sleeping. And with each day, I was hoping that the intelligence was wrong.” Marta and her husband drove to her parents’ home in Morshyn, in the Lviv region, where they hoped they would be safer. Many of her colleagues and friends were stuck in Kyiv, moving into the tube stations and other shelters. Marta had stable wifi and still had her media contacts so she helped the NGO during the first intense days and weeks. “If you stopped for a minute, your mind was like, ‘oh my God, what is going on?’ It was surreal. I thought I’d be back in my Kyiv flat in three or four days. I had a flight to London booked for February 24th. I didn’t come home for three months.”

The war is always in the back of Marta’s mind, particularly as her husband travels frequently for work (he helps to preserve the cultural history of Ukraine), and her parents live in the western countryside. But daily life for Marta continues, as it does across Ukraine, but with surreal adjustments. For example, the air raid sirens go off during the interview, and Marta checks a special app on her phone for specifics. The city has a strict curfew of midnight, and everyone is mindful of

loud music and other noises, particularly at night. Bars and restaurants are open, but subdued. “If you’ve been attacked in a dark alley, and you have to walk through a dark alley again, you’re always going to run.”

And what about daily life? “I’ve noticed that people have begun doing things they were postponing,” Marta says, “like proposing to partners or getting tattoos. There isn’t judgment if you binge-watch a television program or read trashy magazines. And for me, it’s not traumatic anymore. I’ve hurt so much that the pain is now numb.”

Marta uses the word “numb” a number of times, perhaps because the war has closed off a part of her that expected a different life for herself and a different trajectory for her country. Marta may spend time abroad again one day, but for now working in Kyiv, being a part of a government she still believes in, is the only way forward. “I remember those stories that our grandparents told us, of having a wedding or a big party during the Second World War, and I never understood that, because there was a full-on war happening! But you have to keep doing what you do.”

***If you are keen to help Ukraine, Marta has suggested a few small organizations she trusts.***

*Friends for Ukraine is run by a friend of Marta’s and buys equipment for soldiers in Slovyansk in the Donetsk region.*

<https://donate.givetap.co.uk/f/friends-for-ukraine>

*Happy Paw helps animals in the Kherson region that have been evacuated.*

<https://happypaw.ua/ua/node/28234>

*Marta and her husband are raising money to help protect the cultural heritage of Ukraine found close to the front line.* [paypal.me/MartaBilas](https://paypal.me/MartaBilas)

# LEADING THE WAY

*Strong leadership at the Board level ensures a bright future for TASIS*



*The TASIS Board of Directors: Mathias Mühlhofer '95, Marco Ornaghi, Lars Titland, Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63, Sara Rosso Cipolini, Alexandra Heumann Wicki '80, Lyle D. Rigg, Carla Arimont '94*

The spirit of TASIS has stretched across Europe and beyond since its inception in 1956 in the form of dozens of summer programs, a college, and schools founded with Mrs. Fleming's goal of experiential learning at the heart: "transmitting the heritage of Western civilization and world cultures—the creations, achievements, traditions, and ideals from the past that offer purpose in the present and hope for the future."

This indelible spirit began over a century ago in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, where Mrs. Fleming grew up with educator parents who sparked her passion for education. A Francophile who majored in French at Radcliffe College, Harvard University, she led student trips to Europe in the 1930s, where she saw firsthand how transformational travel was for young people. TASIS began when Mrs. Fleming wanted an American education for her three

children in the cultural setting of Europe, and thus began her lifelong commitment to international education. At the heart, each of her programs was committed to, as she said in a speech to students in 1979, "stretching the muscles of your mind...and the strings of your soul."

## **The TASIS Foundation**

Towards the end of her life, Mrs. Fleming and her family made the decision to bequeath the TASIS Schools to a non-profit Swiss foundation, the TASIS Foundation. It is a remarkable act to give away your life's work to a non-profit, but because of this noble donation, TASIS is able to continue with Mrs. Fleming's mission without individuals or entities profiting. The Foundation is charged with ensuring her virtuous and inspirational educational vision is kept alive for generations to come at TASIS Lugano, TASIS England, TASIS Dorado, and TASIS Portugal.



The Foundation is run by a Board that works pro bono and includes two former TASIS headmasters, educators, financial professionals, and alumni. Many of them knew Mrs. Fleming well (two are her children, Tom Fleming and **Lynn Fleming Aeschliman**), and are committed to ensuring the Schools adhere to Mrs. Fleming’s vision for her schools.

Early on, the Foundation Board made key decisions that concerned all TASIS Schools. First, the Schools are truly independent, and thus are not governed by state directives or political considerations. And second, the Board established that all TASIS Schools must be financially viable, thus eliminating the need for dependence on fundraising to support the operating budget. Finally, the board solidified the common culture of TASIS schools with the *Paideia*, a document written with Mrs. Fleming that sets out the overriding virtues, intentions, and ambitions that guide TASIS educators and communities.

“The beauty of this structure is that donations to the school can be focused on enhancements,” says **Bill Eichner**, forty-year TASIS veteran and Director of Institutional Advancement. “We’re not a school looking for an identity. We know who we are and what is possible as we stay true to the strength of our identity. This is very different to for-profit schools and educational groups.”

All funds donated to the non-profit TASIS Foundation are designated by the donor to one of two areas which support the TASIS mission and Mrs. Fleming’s vision. The Global Village Fund focuses on campus development and completing the ambitious, sustainable, inspiring Campus Master Plan, a tangible commitment to the future of TASIS. Currently, funds are focusing on Collina Alta, which includes the Donald MacDermid Hall and Music Center and an elementary school complex.

Donations can also be designated to the M. Crist Fleming Endowment for Cultural Understanding and Leadership, which enhances student experiences. This endowment was made possible thanks to a \$500,000 bequest by John E. Palmer ’64 and has been augmented over the years by alumni, parents, and friends to honor Mrs. Fleming. The Endowment supports initiatives such as

the TASIS Speaker Series, which brings speakers to campus who complement the intellectual and moral experience for our community. Recent alumni who have been featured include **Pontus Siren ’89**, **Nazli Çelik ’96**, and **Veronika Mühlhofer ’97**. The fund also supports the annual Khan-Page Master Teacher Award (see pg. 12) to celebrate outstanding teachers and finance professional development initiatives. Donations can be made in US Dollars or Swiss Francs.

### The TASIS Schools

Each TASIS school is governed by its own Board of Directors, which is responsible to the Foundation Board as well as the authorities in the country of operation. These boards focus on the day-to-day running of the Schools and are in frequent contact with the respective headmasters.

The boards are involved in how each school operates, advising on everything from budgets to curricula, graduation requirements to revising the Academic Travel program. The boards are constituted to include select alumni, educational experts, and individuals with expertise relevant to the needs of the Schools. These individuals are deeply dedicated to ensuring that the spirit of Mrs. Fleming remains critical to the student experience.

Mrs. Fleming was known to say, “times change, values don’t,” and through myriad challenges the TASIS schools have remained true to the beauty of the TASIS settings and campuses and the exceptional scholastic and social ethos of the schools she founded.



TASIS Foundation Board



TASIS Board of Directors



Paideia

## ALUMNI ARTISTS FEATURED AT WOPART LUGANO



*Martyn Dukes with Dominique Sganzi Nerfin, and Ed Lee '20 with Frank Long*

TASIS was honored to participate in WOPART the weekend of September 23–25, 2022. Curated by TASIS Visual Arts Chair **Martyn Dukes** and retired TASIS photography teacher **Frank Long**, the event was held at Lugano's Campo Marzio exhibition center. Exhibiting artists included **Yu Ying Chan '18**, **Payton Clardy '22**, **Valentina De Villalonga Martin '19**, **Faye Falangola '13**, **Maria Galtarossa '25**, **Giada Giuliani '24**, **Yulia Gusarova '12**, **Wai Ka Hazel Fu '24**, **Stanislava Kirsanova '19**, **Marina Krasovskaya '23**, **Ed Lee '20**, **Kiana Leite Garcia de Pinto '24**, **Giorgia Papes '22**, **Hajira Qureshi '20**, **Savannah Renauldi '13**, **Anna Savinova '20**, **Eleni Stabropoulos '22**, **Ole Strauss '20**, **Allegra Talamo '25**, **Najedah Tamer '22**, **Letizia Vanini '22**, **Zoe Wang '20**, **Cindy Xinyi Lin '20**, and **Kathy Yun Qing Hu '14**.

## THE TPA MAKES A DIFFERENCE



*TPA volunteers serving the food of their countries during International Week*

The TASIS Parent Association continues to make a lasting impact on our community. The Parent Support Committee meets regularly with administration and Elementary School room parents ensure communication lines are clear between teachers and parents. They host a monthly book club and Miracle Mornings lifestyle events, and have started a Parent Alumni Association especially for parents of TASIS alumni. In 2022 the TPA introduced a STEAM Booster Club to promote STEAM at TASIS in all divisions. And alongside all this, the TPA continued their annual events which have become important to students and faculty alike: the Fall Festival, Winter Garden, Holiday Market, Santa's Village, an Easter Egg hunt, and faculty/staff appreciation events, among many more! TASIS is grateful to the TPA volunteers for their tireless commitment to building community.



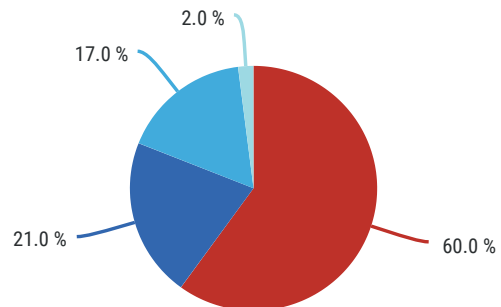
# TASIS FINANCIAL REPORT

TOTAL REVENUE 2022-23



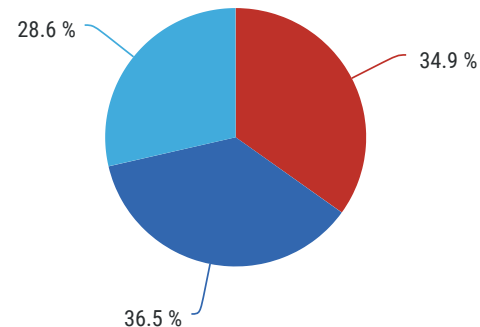
of the 2022-23 TASIS operating income comes from the Academic Year.  
9% of the operating income comes from the Summer Programs.  
The remaining 1% from donations for student programs, donations for the Master Plan,  
donations for teacher development, and others.

TASIS OPERATING COSTS



- Salaries, benefits, related taxes
- Student-related costs
- Campus costs: maintenance, utilities, and general admin.
- Depreciation, interest, other

TASIS STUDENTS 2022-23 AVERAGE NUMBER 748



- Boarding Students HS/MS
- Day Students HS/MS
- Elementary School Students

June 30, 2023



VILLA PRINCIPE LEOPOLDO  
LUGANO

## A true fairytale experience

Let yourself be surprised by the magical atmosphere on our terrace offering one of the most breathtaking views of Lake Lugano.  
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# HONOR ROLL OF DONORS 2022–2023

## DONATIONS RECEIVED FROM JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023

### IN GRATITUDE FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

We extend our sincere appreciation to the alumni, parents, faculty, staff, and friends of TASIS who have made a contribution to the School this year. Your generous support directly benefits our students and the entire TASIS community—thank you!

#### ANNUAL GIVING

##### \$100,000

Ayman and Cristina Tamer (Alumni Parents),

Collina Alta Global Village Fund

##### \$50,000

David Yang '84 and Federica Masotino, Collina Alta

Global Village Fund

Anonymous donation, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

##### \$40,000

Curtis McGraw Webster '75, in honor of the class of 1975

##### \$25,000

Tim Woolley, in honor of the Middle School

##### \$10,000–24,999

Fabio Canè and Patrizia Micucci (current parents)

Davide and Alice Dukcevic (alumni parents) in honor of

Emily McKee

Thomas Neslein '09

##### \$5,000–9,999

Richard H. PG'65 and Paulise Bell

Maude Glore PG '67

Harold Roy Holmyard '68

Anonymous, Gift-in-Kind: Digital Piano

##### \$2,500–4,999

David Beebe PG '66

Anna Brooke '60

Alexey and Elena Bulgakov (alumni parents)

Irina Rappoport (alumni parent)

Avni Yerli (alumni parent)

##### \$1,000–2,499

Antoine Bruneau '93

Judy Callaway Brand '63, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

in honor of Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63

David and Tamara Campbell (current parents)

William and Jackie Gage SH '62

John C. and Amy Gage '60

Mary Boyd Gould '75, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

He and Yuan Huang (alumni parents)

Jill Newman Iverson SH '57,

Collina Alta Global Village Fund in honor

of Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63

Guangjun and You Li (current parents),

Gift-in-Kind: Drones

Ned Lynch PG '66

Granvile and Ursula Molonha Alencar (current parents)

Nikolay Nemykin and Natalia Romanova (alumni parents)

Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Betsy Bacon Newell SH '62

Geoffrey Parker PG '67

Stefania Pellizzari (alumni parent),

Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Robert S. Perkin PG '66, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

John Procter '98, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Alexander and Vita Trykolich (alumni parents)

Emanuele and Sandra Verda (alumni parents)

Xiaorong Wang (alumni parent)

Deborah Webster '66

##### \$500–999

Walter Garbuio (alumni parent)

Kevin and Nell Harris (alumni parents)

Patricia Hedlund Oxman '63

Robert Horner PE '68

Lyle (former Headmaster and Board member) and

Sharon Rigg, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Vicky Thompson Tillotson SH '56, in honor of

Lynn Fleming Aeschliman '63

Konrad and Caroline Wilson (alumni parents)

Scott Whittle '71



Up to \$499

Anonymous

Winifred Gillett Alogna PG '65,  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Planen and Ivelina Atanasov (alumni parents)

Bret and Kathleen Budenbender (alumni parent)

Michael W. Chellman (faculty),  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

David and Melanie Damico (former staff & faculty)

Maxim and Svetlana Ermakov (alumni parents)

Leslie Heaton Evans '66,  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Stefan Gschiel (former staff)

Margrit Gillespie (summer faculty),  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Marilyn Frison Hand '69

Joyce Hansen (former faculty)

Hugh Smith Haynie Jr. '76

Lee Himelfarb PG '65, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Jennifer Mathiesen Ito '79,  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Frank and Mei-Ling Klein (former staff),  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Berkley (former staff and Board member)  
and Peggy Latimer

Andres and Bibiana Maldonado (alumni parents)

Thiago Marcal '08

Ulisses Melo (alumni parent)

Marcello Pitta (alumni parent)

Leslie Gordon Ross '63

Mary Seyfarth PG '66, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Ioanis and Leticia Stabropoulos Escabosa  
(alumni parents)

Victoria Leonhart Trefts '71

William Tyler '10

Jim and Jennifer Warren (alumni parents)

William and Delia Weddleton '75,  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Thomas H. Wyllie '71, Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Paula Menza Young PG '64,  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Charlotte and Armando Zaneccchia  
(faculty, alumni parents)

Vali Zarrabieh (summer parent),  
Collina Alta Global Village Fund

Randy Zisk (summer parent)

OPSAHL GLOBAL  
SERVICE PROGRAM  
Gift of \$90,000

With immense appreciation  
and gratitude to  
**Jan Opsahl '68** for  
his continuing support  
by way of regular  
donations from his  
**Service Learning Trust.**

DONATIONS TO THE  
M. CRIST FLEMING  
ENDOWMENT

\$500–2,999

Luiz Agosta and Cynthia Barros (alumni parents)

Roberto and Adriana Condulmari (alumni parents)

Tom Little '84

Diana Moyle '69

Colin Toole '03

Up to \$499

Abdulaziz Alomran (summer parent)

Anonymous

Leslie Downes FCF '74

Barbara Pritzlaff Pierce '74

Elizabeth Harris Pritchard '61

Leslie Tolbert '69

Robin Weaver PG '65

DONATIONS TO THE  
DONALD MACDERMID  
ENDOWMENT FOR  
THE FINE AND  
PERFORMING ARTS

\$500

Ned Lynch PG '66

Up to \$499

Dan Curland

Darrin and Linda Palm

Courtlandt Van Rooten

Donations are received in  
US Dollars or Swiss francs.  
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unrestricted.



# ALUMNI REUNIONS

## ALL-CLASS REUNION IN WASHINGTON, DC, NOVEMBER 18, 2022

TASIS was back at the elegant and historic Cosmos Club on Embassy Row after three long years—and what an evening it was! More than 100 alumni and former faculty and staff from every decade of TASIS and nearly every program were in attendance, with a group from the 1970s making a weekend of it! Director of Institutional Advancement **Bill Eichner** made a brief presentation to an attentive crowd, and a slideshow of images of alumni in attendance from their years at TASIS provided the backdrop for much of the evening.





## ALL-CLASS REUNION IN LOS ANGELES, MARCH 24, 2023

More than 90 TASIS alumni spanning six decades gathered at the Florentine Room of the Jonathan Club in Los Angeles on March 24 to enjoy one another's company and reminisce about their magical days in Lugano. Alumni dated back to the Class of 1962 and even included a few legacy families! Director of Institutional Advancement **Bill Eichner** made a brief presentation reflecting on nearly 70 years of the School while attendees sipped on MCF's signature cocktails.

The party continued the following day with an 80s group brunch in downtown LA and more group meet-ups the following week.





CLASS OF 1985:  
CHICAGO  
SEPTEMBER 9–11, 2022



Alumni from the mid-80s met to celebrate Mrs. Fleming and each other! Events included a Friday dinner at an Italian restaurant, and a Saturday tour of Chicago, including a visit to Millennium Park and an architectural boat tour. Saturday evening the group met at a French-Vietnamese restaurant where they toasted Mrs. Fleming in style.

CLASS OF 2010:  
10TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
LUGANO, SEPTEMBER 23, 2022



More than 40 alumni and guests returned to the TASIS campus for a wonderful evening on campus, which included a tour and special dinner at Casa Fleming.

CLASS OF 1990:  
30TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 18, 2022



After a two-year delay, the Class of 1990 finally had a chance to get together for a delightful evening in New York City which included dinner, drinks, and buckets of beers—and copy of the TASIS drinking privileges and rules (all followed to the letter on the night, of course), as well as a weekend travel request form!

CLASSES OF 1999 AND 2000:  
20TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
LUGANO, JUNE 9, 2023



After more than 20 years, we finally had a chance to host these alumni back on campus for their milestone reunion!



CLASS OF 1998:  
25TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
GOZO, MALTA, JUNE 9, 2023



Giorgia Bongarzone  
Di Lenardo  
hosted an intimate  
25-year reunion.

CLASS OF 1992 AND 1993:  
JOINT 30TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
LUGANO, JUNE 30, 2023



More than 50 alumni and friends enjoyed an unforgettable weekend in Lugano that included a wonderful night of food and fun on campus.

CLASS OF 2003:  
20TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
LUGANO, AUGUST 4, 2023



The festivities began with a campus tour and a visit to what was once Angelo's store before a special dinner in Casa Fleming.

CLASS OF 2018:  
5TH ANNIVERSARY REUNION  
LUGANO, AUGUST 5, 2023



Despite graduating only five years ago, the Class of '18 had a wonderful time reconnecting with each other while wandering around campus. The group also enjoyed aperitifs and a special dinner at Casa Fleming.

MEET & MENTOR  
ALUMNI DINNER  
LONDON, FEBRUARY 23, 2023



The College Counseling team and Alumni Office joined forces for a special event in London! A group of 12 recent graduates joined 26 11th graders for dinner, sharing their stories about the UK university admissions process and life as a student in the UK. The event was inspiring for everyone!

SPECIAL EVENT:  
PARENT-BOARD RECEPTION  
LUGANO, FEBRUARY 2, 2023



Members of the TASIS Board of Directors kicked off a productive bout of meetings in early February by meeting with parents at a well-attended reception at Villa Principe Leopoldo.



# ALUMNI *Class News*



To contact a class agent that does not have an email address listed, please email [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch). Note that submissions may be edited for space reasons.

We'd love to hear from you! Submit your news here:



[www.tasis.ch/classnotes](http://www.tasis.ch/classnotes)

## 60

**Class Agent: John Gage**  
gage.john1@gmail.com

## 61

**Class Agent: Rick Mayne**

## 62

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 63

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 64

**Class Agent: Joe Cook**  
jacook4646@yahoo.com

## 65

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 66

**Class Agent: Chuck Kitsman**

**Jennifer Holloway McHugh** writes, "We have just returned from a three-week trip to France. Forget Paris! We did a 1-week barge trip in the Dijon region, drank wonderful wine, ate beautiful food, and saw some great little towns. We went from there up to Normandy via Giverny. Being an ex-landscape architect, it filled my heart; it has been a lifelong dream to go there. And it did not disappoint. Next stop, Etretat, Honfleur, Deauville, all very touristy. Then a private tour of the historic D-Day beaches, battlements, cemeteries, towns and museums. It also happened to be on D-Day, and the French were out in force celebrating the invasion. What an emotional experience! Last stop was Brittany for Mont St. Michel and oysters. Now onto planning our next adventure! Have been hearing from **Mike Faris** while he is in Ukraine learning the reality of what is really going on there. Very moving experience with the people and what they are suffering. My brother, **Dean Holloway '71** has finally recovered from his heart transplant from 4 years ago. It was a very difficult recovery that took 2 years. He is doing very well now and has a 27-year-old heart. Now he wants to try hangliding! I would love to have another reunion like the one we had in New Orleans in 2016 but much smaller and more relaxed. Anyone interested?"

## 67

**Class Agent: Chuck Kitsman**

The Texas Tech School of Medicine in Amarillo, TX named **Chuck Kitsman** the recipient of the 2023 Louise Evans Bruce Award for outstanding volunteer service and for organizing and supporting awards for residents to recognize

their contributions to their quality of life. This program began 25 years ago when Chuck's father needed treatment after a fall and a resident and a medical student administered treatment with great care and compassion. At the time his father was experiencing the long slide into Alzheimer's Disease. **1 • Willard Morgan** shares, "I'm in post production on a 1920s gothic horror film which was shot lavishly in New York and Hoboken, New Jersey. I will be submitting it to festivals in a few months and the release is to be announced. *The Tannery* is the title of the film to look out for. Please contact me if anyone would like to learn more."

## 68

**Class Agent: Pamela Springer Bryant**  
tasis1968class@gmail.com

## 69

**Class Agent: Pamela Carrillo Jackson**

## 70

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

## 71

**Class Agent: Charles Hodgkins**  
chodgkins@gmail.com

**Stan Sehested** has a second book out in paperback and eBook, called *Hatch More Golden Ideas*. "I urge the class of 1971 to get it online or ask for it at your favorite bookstore! It's a game changer for entrepreneurial thinkers." • **Evelyn Gustafsson** visited with **Yvonne Procyk** in Vienna in mid-May. "It was lovely to see her! Am in contact with classmate **Cindy Engisch Lisner**, thanks to reuniting in

August 2016! • **Clifford Clavel '72** is well and living in Florida.

## 72

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

**Glynis Engisch Sutter** writes, "I have been in Arizona for 30 years. I have worked in the tourism business and am a flight attendant for American Airlines. I was in touch with **Ingrid Arnesen '71** and **Debbie Billingsley Lichtenberg '71** last summer, and am in touch with **Judy Charlton '71** and **Gary Charlton '71**. It is always great to see and speak to my TASIS classmates. When I'm not flying I am working on three books, one a thriller and the others fiction and non-fiction stories of the aviation industry. My sister **Cindy Engisch Lisner '71** and her husband live in southern Portugal. Please be in touch and say hello if you are in my neck of the woods! [sunnyinaz@protonmail.com](mailto:sunnyinaz@protonmail.com)" • **Claudia Bates** is happily retired with her husband of 45 years in Richmond, Virginia. "We travel extensively, I keep parrots, houseplants galore, paint around in my messy studio and generally lounge about. Our four sons are all launched and we have two wonderful grandsons and a beautiful granddaughter. How lucky am I!" • **Cynthia Garcia** shares with us, "I am happy to announce that this year I was awarded Brazil's Oscar in my field, Art History, by the Association of Art Critics of São Paulo. If you're interested in art, my interviews, in English, with Brazil's groundbreaking artists are published on an American website dedicated solely to Brazilian art: [www.newcitybrazil.com](http://www.newcitybrazil.com). I became a happy first-time grandmother of baby Theo, son of my daughter and professional art gallerist, America Cavaliere Pires."



# ALUMNI *Class News*



## 73

**Class Agent:** Wendy Barton Benson

## 74

**Class Agent:** Kathy Gamble Pilugin  
dulcinea\_q1@me.com

**Leslie Lishon Sosnowski's** daughter, **Sara Sosnowski '15** attended TASIS for her junior year of high school. Lishon and Sara were involved with a project in Haiti to encourage girls to be a part of the Special Olympics in Berlin. Their company BoulderShares procured the necessary gear and gifts in kind to ensure Haiti could participate—and the delegation won five medals, including a gold! • **Larissa Shmailo** has a new collection of poetry, *Dora/Lora*. It features a long poem about the Ukrainian *holodomor*, the mass starvation in the 1930s, and the role of Ukrainian kapos in the Nazi death camps seen through the lens of one family: Larissa's. It has been called harrowing and an important contribution to the Holocaust literature. *Dora / Lora* is available on Amazon. Larissa continues to offer Writing Resilience workshops for people affected by trauma, addiction, and/or mental illness and has launched a new workshop on formal poetry. 2

## 75

**Class Agent:** Linda Jaekel Avery  
linda.avery60@gmail.com

**Barbara Levi James** shares, "After 50 years of working in various industries—advertising, publishing, healthcare, and marketing—I finally retired! I enjoyed my various careers but a few health scares were reminders that, to quote the brilliant John Lennon, life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans. I wanted to travel, do volunteer work, and on my bucket list is going to a baseball game in every major league park and buying a team shirt,

something we are already starting to do. My husband Bob is also retired and keeps busy being a Hausfrau and gardener. I stay out of trouble by going to the gym daily where I get in shape and socialize and I'm putting my writing skills to work by being on staff at a local online newspaper (so much for retirement!). Life is good and I love keeping in touch with TASIS friends on Facebook."

## 76

**Class Agents:** PK Fields and Daisy Bilbao

**Hugh Smith Haynie** retired after 9 years as a prosecutor and 20 years as a judge. "Please email me. I'm not on social media. hughsmithhaynie@gmail.com"

## 77

**Class Agent:** Rick Mullen

## 78

**Class Agent:** Heidi Nickels Pace  
heidiv29@gmail.com

**Laney Sproat Pitt** tells us, "I'm mostly retired and loving it. We divide our time between Longboat Key, FL and Portsmouth, RI where we hang with the 5 kids and 6 grandkids. I am vegan and love to kayak, swim, and boat—anything where I am out on the water. I am active in the LGBTQ Equality movement and also animal rights and yoga. I have such great memories of my years at TASIS and am still best friends with **Sharon Sexton McNerney**. Hope I get to hear more news from all my old classmates!" • **Carolina Roman** recently visited grandchildren in NYC. "Last winter I volunteered for Achieve Tahoe, a unique adaptive skiing program in Palisades, Tahoe. I ran into **Karen Witt Wingate** who is one of the pioneers in this field. Karen

and I had not seen each other since graduation, but the TASIS connection made it easy to reconnect. There are interesting TASIS people everywhere."

• **Valerio Leone** will likely participate in the 2024 Monaco Historic F1 GP. "This is just 2 weeks before the modern Formula 1 GP. The other news is that in early September there will be a racing car show in Lugano. The cars will be on display in Piazza Riforma and I have been asked to participate. We will then drive the racing cars along the lakefront, from Parco Ciani toward Paradiso and back." 3

## 79

**Class Agent:** Tracy Shepardson  
tashepardson@gmail.com

## 80

**Class Agent:** Antonella Nosedà  
anosedà@swissonline.ch

## 81

**Nounou Taleghani**  
nounou@stanford.edu

**Nounou Taleghani** was recently promoted to Professor of Emergency Medicine, Stanford University. She was also recently promoted in the Stanford Medical School to Associate Dean, Academic Advising. "I enjoy splitting my time between clinical work in the ED, teaching residents and medical students and my administrative work in the medical school dean's office."

## 82

**Class Agent:** Tania Shetabi Nordstrom  
tasis82reunion@gmail.com

**James Tackett** married Christie Helton on August 12 and is settling down in Jacksonville, FL. 4 • **Tania Shetabi Nordstrom** returned from a wonderful two-week trip to the east coast. "While

there, I connected and spent time with **Cambron Henderson**. We have been able to see each other 2 times already this year, which is no small feat as she lives in NY and I live in LA. I have attached a photo. When she found out that I was heading to Philadelphia, she put me in touch with the wonderful **Jill Ruedy-Welch**. My husband and I met up with Jill and her family for a lovely dinner, talking for a solid 3 hours before we noticed the time! Although I missed the reunion this year, I was thrilled to have the opportunity to both meet **Michelle Arslanian Naroyan**. I'm excited we have someone with her background, passion, and sense of humor to lead the Alumni office. I hope to either attend the NY one with Cambron or hang tight until the next one in LA." 5 • **Cambron Henderson** flew out to attend the Los Angeles All-Class reunion. While there, she was able to connect with one of her favorite teachers, **Lanny Breuer** who was in the LA area on business. She arranged for a small group of Class of '82 alumni including **Mara Melera Flowers**, **Karin Knolle**, **Irene Smith**, **Sue Sindoni Wright**, and **Peter Gallagher PG'82** to meet up with **Lanny Breuer** before the reunion. We shared lots of laughter and tons of great memories. 6 • We caught up with **Roberto Castiglioni** last year after he received his MBE from the Queen. It seems that Buckingham Palace was impressed by him, as he was a guest at the first Garden Party to be hosted by the new King Charles on May 3! "It was magical," Roberto says of the event. "You are in the center of a lively city, but the atmosphere in the gardens is serene—and very laid back despite being formal. The King was affable and prone to engage with as many guests as possible. The cherry on the cake was the weather!" Thanks to Roberto for giving us the inside scoop! 7

# ALUMNI *Class News*



83

**Vacancy for class agent** – contact [alumni@tasis.ch](mailto:alumni@tasis.ch) to learn more about taking on this role.

84

**Class Agent: Jeff LaDriere**  
[jeff@ladrierebuilding.com](mailto:jeff@ladrierebuilding.com)

85

**Class Agent: Saba Dell'Oca**  
[sdo@fibitgroup.com](mailto:sdo@fibitgroup.com)  
In September 2022, 15 alumni from the Classes of '84 and '85 gathered for a reunion at an Italian restaurant in Chicago. The following day the group celebrated Mrs. Fleming's birthday in style, touring the city and taking a boat ride before cocktails and dinner. Former faculty member **Sara Larson** joined the fun. Thanks to **Dominic F. Mauriello** for organizing the event!

86

**Class Agents: Maggie Hammad Boyle**  
[maggie\\_boyle@yahoo.com](mailto:maggie_boyle@yahoo.com) and **Denise Mobley**

87

**Class Agent: Alex De Bruin**

88

**Class Agent: Laura West Presnol**  
**Lelina Pugliese Durette** shares, "I have published my first young adult novel, *The Girl Who Was Too Much And Not Enough*. It's a dystopian adventure/romance and can be found on Amazon. I continue to live in Houston, TX with my husband Michael, and would love to get together with other alumni any time. Hit me up if you're in the area! [lelinad@yahoo.com](mailto:lelinad@yahoo.com)" 8



89

**Class Agent: Lori Romero Ketter**

90

**Class Agents: Franca Marena Gullett and Ken Tobe**

[ken.tobe@nihonshokuhin.co.jp](mailto:ken.tobe@nihonshokuhin.co.jp)  
**Ken Tobe** organized a small but mighty 30th Anniversary reunion in New York in October 2022, including dinner and drinks and a night on the town! **Heidi Jacobsen Mundhenk** brought a yearbook and a few familiar artifacts: a weekend travel request form and the TASIS drinking privileges and rules! • **Charlotte Bushroe** shares, "Hello from St. Louis! Since my last update, I moved to San Miguel de Allende, Mexico in 2016 and then to Phoenix for 5 years. This was the last nail in the coffin of my teaching career—I taught in a women's prison for a year and a half—and I got out only months before Covid. I did a year-long paralegal program while working full time in a law firm as a Legal Assistant. I am just hitting my 3 year anniversary in law. I completed my paralegal program 2 years ago, passed the national paralegal board through NALA a year ago and am now a Certified Paralegal although I'm still working as a legal assistant. I have been in Estate Planning but I am currently trying to switch to another area of law. I moved to St. Louis two years ago. I have been a rabid genealogist for the past 25 years and I've been spending all my free time researching the 17th century for the past several years. I spend my Saturdays at the gorgeous local Carnegie Library. Now that I finally have a 40-hour-a-week-job, I am ready and inspired to write that novel. Stay tuned." • **Catherine Cooper Bedford** buys and sells real estate in Bend, Oregon. "Some people think that childlike wonder is something you grow



out of. Those people have never been to Bend. Bend is world-famous for both its outdoor pursuits and pristine beauty. You can catch an art exhibit, dine at an award-winning restaurant, spoil yourself at one of our many spas, or trek the legendary Bend Ale Trail, the largest beer trail in the West. Bend makes a great spot for family-friendly fun as well, from boating on one of the Cascade Lakes to watching raptors soar at the High Desert Museum. When you're here to visit, let's connect! I love to golf, ski, hike, camp, bike, paddleboard and then eat at any of the foodie restaurants in and out of town." [catherinebedford.realtor@gmail.com](mailto:catherinebedford.realtor@gmail.com) 9

91

**Class Agents: Kristina Malcolm**  
[kmalcolm44@gmail.com](mailto:kmalcolm44@gmail.com) and **Gina Jose Heydari**

In June, **Oliver Summers** published his book *The Duke of Pico*, which tells the story of the California medical marijuana industry. Starting from illegal dealing in the 1990s, the book includes thirty years of his struggles and hurdles as the industry grew, through to opening the earliest dispensaries in Los Angeles. Oliver is an outspoken advocate for safe access to cannabis and has been CEO of a publicly-traded cannabis company. He has helped create advocacy groups to protect the laws of California patients and is frequently cited as an expert in this field. The book is available on Amazon.

92

**Class Agent: Miki Schroder Nava**  
[miki@mikinava.com](mailto:miki@mikinava.com) **Sophie Desplaces** happily reports, "This year I had the privilege to reconnect with **Franca Marena Gullett '90** in April in Paris and **Lexie Smart Mouton** and her daughter in July and August. I hadn't seen either



of them for over 30 years. It was a lovely reunion. 10 • On June 30, the classes of **1992** and **1993** celebrated their joint 30th Anniversary Reunion in Lugano. A group of more than 50 attendees made it back home. The rain didn't dampen the enthusiasm of this group. They wanted to visit dorms, see the writing on the walls of their dorm rooms, and question changes to the dorm layout that they remembered so well.

93

**Class Agent: Paula Quijano**

94

**Class agent: Hege Shanor**  
[hege.shanor@gmail.com](mailto:hege.shanor@gmail.com)

95

**Class Agent: Nicole Pearson**

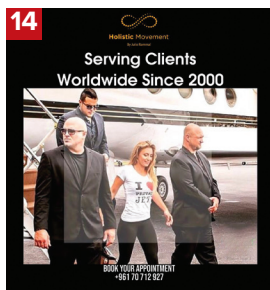
96

**Class Agents: Gina Van Hoof**  
[gvanhoof@gmail.com](mailto:gvanhoof@gmail.com) and **Francesca Nicotra**

**Silvia Bolliger** writes, "Warm greetings to all TASIS friends! I am a humanitarian worker assisting people affected by crises in different countries and continents. I also have a happy family and lively twins! I am currently based in Ethiopia. Let me know if you pass by Addis Ababa." 11 • **Robert Gebhardt** and **Yimin Lin '00** spent this summer in Florence, where their daughter Lilianna attended a summer school program along with her cousin Allison, daughter of **Alex Lin '94**. Allison's brother Damian was also around, attending a summer camp nearby. And **Ornella Gebhardt** (former teacher) joined everyone toward the end. Otherwise Robert, Yimin and Lilianna are still living in Taipei, Taiwan. 12



# ALUMNI *Class News*



## 97

**Class Agent: Kevin McMenamin**

**Michele Josue's** latest film *Nurses Unseen* premiered at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival on Saturday, May 6, which happened to be during the start of National Nurses Week. *Nurse Unseen* investigates the history of Filipino nurses, who have made a significant contribution to the US healthcare system for more than a century. Michele's film explores the colonial ties between the US and the Philippines and how this has led to a huge migration of nurses over the years. Michele also investigates the stark statistic that Filipino nurses, who make up 4% of the US nursing population, ended up disproportionately dying during Covid-19; 31% of the nurses who died were Filipino. But most importantly, it commemorates and celebrates the sacrifice that generations of healthcare workers have made over the years and how their stories are integral to American history.

## 98

**Class Agent: John Procter**  
tasisclass98@gmail.com

**Nina Sander** was really excited that her daughter Layla attended the TASIS summer program last summer! • **Giorgia di Lenardo** welcomed **Brisa Hanna-Barton** and husband John to Malta in June. "It was amazing to see Brisa again after 25 years! They stayed in one of our holiday apartments—Wind Rose Gozo Apartments—and had a great time touring the Island of Gozo. We visited many sites, such as Dwejra, Inland Sea, The Blue Hole, Wied il-Mielah Arch, The Salt Plants, Hondoq Bay, and Ramla Beach. We also visited the villages of Gharb, San Lawrence, Marsalforn, Xlendi, Victoria, and the Citadel. During their stay we also visited the main

Island of Malta, the Rotunda of Mosta (which has a replica of the aerial bomb that pierced the dome and fell into the church during Mass in 1942 but failed to explode), the capital Valletta—which included a tour of the underground city that was crucial for survival during The Second World War—and the fortified city of Mdina. Brisa and John then continued their holiday in Sicily before returning to the USA." **13**

## 99

**Class agents: Ana Cristina De Attayde, Wilma Faissol (Pinto) Facchinetti**

When we last spoke with **Christiana Wyly Musk** in *TASIS Today* 2021, we heard about her work on food sustainability. Now she's taking her knowledge to the airwaves with a new podcast series, *Unreasonable Impact: Food Solutions*, where she meets food innovators who are changing the way we approach food, eating, food waste, and sustainability.

## 00

**Class Agent: Tatiana Balmelli Lucchini**  
tatiana.lucchini@ehl.ch

**Julie Rammal** works internationally with VIP clients worldwide igniting their body, mind, healing with holistic body, mind, healing services. "In 2006 I created the world's first holistic DVD, *In Light of Change*, followed by launching 4 international TV programs which led to the launch of the world's 1st holistic methodology book: *Upgrade Yourself* and an empowerment clothing and jewelry line. I offer international and local holistic body, mind, healing services, consultations, retreats, workshops and more. [www.instagram.com/holisticmovement.co](http://www.instagram.com/holisticmovement.co) **14** • On June 9, more than 40 members of the classes of 1999 and 2000 celebrated coming home to TASIS alongside

**Lynn and Michael Aeschliman, Bill Eichner**, and former faculty member **Nilda Lucchini**. The event was likened to a family reunion! Casa Fleming was brought to life with yearbooks on display and a throwback photo slideshow rolling in the salon. Mrs. Fleming was surely looking down upon her alumni, glass raised, as the group moved from salon to garden sipping wine and prosecco before catching up over dinner by candlelight. **Alessandro Nelli**, now a restaurateur, came all the way from Sydney, Australia; **Tommasso Basili**, Italian sitcom and movie actor, made the trip from Rome; and TASIS couple and former classmates **Su Yi Chao** and **Chia Wei Yang** came with their children from Taipei. Many others made the trip from as far as Canada, the UK, the US, Mexico, and the Netherlands!

## 01

**Class Agent: Caroline Rothstein**  
caroline@carolinerothstein.com and **Oliver Rizzi Carlson** oliamgee@gmail.com

## 02

**Class Agent: Daniella Einik**  
**Huberta Bauer-Cortina** "I am still living in London with my husband, two sons and my pug Muffin." **15** • **Taylor Lorenz's** debut, *Extremely Online* (Simon & Schuster) was published in October. A technology columnist for The Washington Post, Taylor has been writing about the internet for more than a decade for The New York Times, The Atlantic, The Daily Beast, New York, Rolling Stone, and more. She is a familiar face on television news, too, often commenting on internet culture for CNN, MSNBC, NBC, and the BBC. The book dives into the social history of the internet, discussing how

it has reshaped the way we live by disrupting and transforming our world in remarkable ways.

## 03

**Class Agent: Remington Franklin**

**Vasily Vavilov** tells us, "I work in tourism now. I used to work with foreign guests, but now because of the war I only have Russian tourists traveling inside the country. Last year I built a glamping hotel on the river in the Ural Mountains. Also I do kayaking and organize kayak downriver tours. Hope one day we all will live in peace and TASIS alumni would be able to visit."

## 04

**Class Agent: Masa Yo**

yo.masa@gmail.com  
**Nicholas Martino** moved to London with his wife and two children in September 2022. "We live close to Hyde Park and are happy to be back in Europe!" **16** • **Beatriz Zamperlini** was married in June in Brazil. **17** • **Masa Yo** is organizing a 20th anniversary reunion for the class of 2004 on June 8, 2024 in Lugano. Please register on the TASIS website if you'd like to attend! [www.tasis.ch/alumni/reunions/2004reunion](http://www.tasis.ch/alumni/reunions/2004reunion)

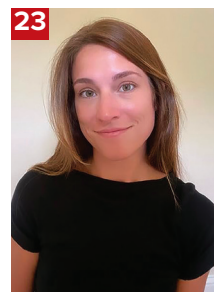
## 05

**Class Agents: Can Doganci**  
candoganci@gmail.com, **Eda Aksoy**  
**Ante Dodig** started teaching at a Masters program in Ancona, Italy.

## 06

**Class Agent: Hailey Parsons Minder**  
**Adam Kaczmarek** and his girlfriend Liha visited last summer. "I am beyond blessed to be a part of the TASIS family and am forever loyal. Falling into any

# ALUMNI *Class News*



group of people, knowing instantly what common grounds and copacetic topics to share with a person of any cultural background is only one of the many facets on the spectrum of development I feel only truly TASIS was able to beautifully encapsulate within me." **18 • Matteo Petrini** writes, "I recently joined Amgest SA, an independent FINMA-licensed Swiss Wealth Manager based in Lugano. At Amgest SA, founded in 2006, we offer fully-integrated holistic wealth management and multi-family office services. Our mission is to preserve wealth through time, safeguarding it for future generations, by never losing sight of our core values: transparency, diligence, and loyalty. Our multi-family office revolves around services like asset-allocation through discretionary and advisory mandates, or consolidation of bankable and non-bankable assets. We differentiate ourselves by creating added-value opportunities in private markets. We have a dedicated Private Equity team with a cumulative experience of over 40 years and in recent years we have invested over 200 million Swiss Francs in fifteen deals which generated an average exit of 4.2x. This was the result of leveraging our international network and deep expertise by thinking globally but acting locally, following one of my favorite quotes of all time: *Your network is your net worth* (Porter Gale)" **19**

## 07

**Class agent: Denise Chiang**  
Denise731@gmail.com

**Johannes Nelson** was recently married. The wedding had some TASIS connections! Obviously, the Nelson family was there, but **Meagan Vincent** and **Taylor Sayward** were too—and the

bride's sister worked at the Summer Programs! **20**

## 08

**Class Agents: Chingiz Aliyev, Oriana Papin-Zoghbi** orianazh@gmail.com and **Consuelo Marzi**

**Angelina Loverde** was selected for the Mansfield Fellowship which is a program to live and work in Japan for one year. Angelina hopes to connect with the TASIS Alumni community in Japan. The photo is of Angelina volunteering at the Sakura Matsuri Japanese Street Festival in the United States. **21 • Simon David** cofounded Galleria Ramo, a space in Como dedicated to the research of emerging artists. The gallery runs like a large Italian family working with eight local and international artists including alumni **Gianna Dispenza '08**, and **Berfin Ataman '09**, whose pieces were featured in *this is Not a Curated Exhibition III* earlier this year. **22 • Annie Badavas Wyatt** has just published her first children's book, *All Kinds of Castles*, available through Barnes & Noble. "This picture book for children shares the message that whether you are a horse, a turtle, or a child, your castle is wherever you call home." **23**

## 09

**Class Agents: Serge Bollag**  
contact@sergebollag.com and **Stefano Cremasco**

**Jennifer Manke** writes, "We are building a home in Texas and are in the process of moving from Hawai'i." **• Maurice Michel** shares, "The years 2022 and 2023 were incredible! I got married in September 2022, and we had a big wedding ceremony in my hometown of Wiesbaden in Germany. My friend **Mai Schilling** also came to celebrate with us. After the wedding, my wife and I spent a

wonderful honeymoon in Canada, Hawaii, and South Korea. We also traveled to several liver conferences abroad, including in Washington D.C. In my research, I focus on liver health and liver-related diseases. Metabolic risk factors such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, and alcohol have increased dramatically over the past two decades leading to a higher risk of liver cancer and premature mortality. My aim is therefore to identify biomarkers and potential therapeutic targets to prevent disease progression at an early and still reversible stage. Five years of residency in internal medicine are also coming to an end. I hope to visit campus with my wife next year to enjoy the beautiful atmosphere of TASIS again! Best wishes to all!" **24**

## 10

**Class Agents: Sylvie Coll** and **Anna Shabalova** annashabalova@yahoo.com  
Around 40 members attended their 10th Anniversary reunion on campus in September. Activities included a campus tour and delicious dinner in Casa Fleming.

## 11

**Class Agents: Mark Pate, Marco Rosso** and **Katya Brovkin**

**Caroline Isabelle Silva** wed Niklas Frassa on Jun 24, 2023 at the Tüssling Castle in Bavaria, Germany. TASIS alumni from all over the world attended including **Dariya Sachyk '10**, **Oyku Gur**, **Bruna Morandini**, **Caroline Assad**, **Ana Vitória Fernandes Suarez**, **Jessica Warner '10**, **Beatriz Chiuratto** and **Brenda Falcão '10**. The newlyweds currently live in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and visited Lugano in August 2022. They hope to one day send their children to TASIS! **• 25**

## 12

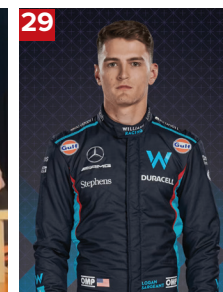
**Class Agents: Alexis De Bruin, Blair Darrell** bkdarrell@me.com, and **Mark Schrotter**

**Alana Goncalves** writes, "As a proud TASIS alumna, I am thrilled to share my news and some updates on my journey since I attended TASIS in 2010. After finishing high school at TASIS, I went back to Brazil determined to pursue an international legal career. Following graduation, I was admitted into law school and earned my law degree in 2018. After law school, I was admitted into two master's programs, one in criminal law at one of Brazil's top universities (UFPR) and one in the US at Harvard, at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. One of the proudest moments in my journey post-TASIS was seeing my name in print as a published author. I authored a book that delves into sex trafficking, a subject that I have been interested in since I was at TASIS. Recently, my career has taken an exciting international turn, as I aspired to since my first international experience at TASIS. I have been working with international organizations in international criminal tribunals for the past two and a half years and I believe I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't had the initiative to study abroad during my formative years. I am profoundly grateful to be a part of the TASIS alumni community. I have made amazing friends and connections, besides having a great experience on campus. Thank you for taking the time to read about my journey. I would be delighted to hear from others as they embark on theirs."

**• Cathrine Hansen** got married on July 1, 2023 in the countryside of Tuscany, Italy. "Adam and I met in London 5 years ago, but we have returned to the beautiful Switzerland and now live



# ALUMNI *Class News*



in Zurich where we have reconnected with a few TASIS friends.” 26

## 13

**Class Agents: Samantha Hercules and Sarah Wyler**

**Hilary Aeschliman** performed in the opera *Anna Bolena* by Gaetano Donizetti at Lugano Arte e Cultura in Lugano on September 4-10, 2023.

## 14

**Class Agent: Ryan Osgood and Giacomo Braglia**

giacomobraglia@tinico.com

**Giacomo Braglia** opened a new exhibition on June 25 called *Conversations With Blue Gold* in the Tuscan city of Grosseto, Italy. Jack's current exhibition *Conversations with Sustainability* continues inside the Mario Botta building on the top of Monte Generoso, where Jack will be discussing it on October 29 at 9:00 and 12:00.

## 15

**Class Agents: Nathaniel Brener and Tomson Carroll**

## 16

**Class Agents: Edo Italia and Pablo Tello** pablotellozulu@gmail.com

**Lucas Figi** graduated from the US Naval Academy in Annapolis 2 years ago. He was promoted to Second Lieutenant in the Marine Corps and leads a group that recovers downed aviators and others in hostile environments. His brother, **Jake '14** received his MD from UCL in London last year and heads to Boston this autumn to pursue a Master's Degree in public health at Harvard University. • **Isabella Coen** writes, "I graduated from TASIS in 2016, and it was an unforgettable experience for

me. Since graduating, I have lived in four different countries, and wherever I go, I often encounter alumni or reunite with some of my classmates. Besides the valuable networking opportunities and learning about various cultures from my peers and roommates, the memories of Academic Travel and my leadership role in WISER, where I visited Muhuru Bay to assist the local community through TASIS, are deeply ingrained in my mind. These experiences evoke a strong sense of nostalgia, and I wish to turn back time to revisit them. Following TASIS, I pursued further studies in Paris and Covid led me to move to Miami, where I later established my own marketing business catering to hospitality clients. I always intended to return to Europe and my journey led me to Madrid, where I am currently pursuing a master's degree at IE University. Coincidentally, one of my friends from TASIS happens to be in the same class! Regardless of the location, I often encounter mini-reunions with TASIS connections. The friends you meet in that place will truly be forever. For those of you currently at TASIS, I encourage you to fully embrace this extraordinary experience as time passes by swiftly. Eventually, you will look back and long for the chance to relive those moments. TASIS will forever hold a special place in my heart, and you are truly fortunate to be a part of it." 27 • **Michael Mazourik** pursued a bachelor's degree in International Finance and later earned a master's degree in artificial intelligence from USI Lugano and ETH Zurich in 2022. He began his professional journey at Ernst and Young as a consultant, where he gained invaluable experience working on large-scale AI projects. This led him to establish Ai Suisse SA, a cutting-edge consulting company dedicated to machine learning. This company gained a significant influx of clients

due to the popularity that ChatGPT has brought to the field. In response to advancements in technology, Michael and his colleagues launched an open-source initiative called 'Enabling Privacy in Large Language Model AIs.' Their mission is to safeguard personally identifiable user information from third parties and artificial intelligence systems. As a monumental step in their initiative, they have released one of the largest privacy datasets available. This significant contribution sets a course towards a safer future where peace of mind is intertwined with the rise of AI technology. A significant portion of Michael's success can be attributed to his education at TASIS. The rigorous academic environment at TASIS molded him into a skilled mathematician and prepared him to be a responsible global citizen. The lessons he learned at TASIS have been instrumental throughout his career, underscoring the importance of a solid educational foundation in shaping successful futures. 28

## 17

**Class Agents: Raid Husni-Bey and Aida Loggi dice**

aidamercedes99@gmail.com

## 18

**Class Agents: Nick Barbieri and Shiva Mirchandani**

shivamirchandani@gmail.com

## 19

**Class Agents: Filippo Cipolini** filippo.cipolini@icloud.com and **Aurelia Dochnal**

**Logan Sargeant** became F1's first American driver in almost eight years as he took to the grid for the 2023 season, giving the country a home favorite to cheer once more. Born in Florida,

Logan always had a love for racing and it stretched across the waters to places like England and Switzerland. While in Switzerland, he started competing in European kart racing and eventually debuted in Formula 4 in 2016, when he was only 15. 29 • **Filippo Cipolini** graduated on the 19th of May from Boston University with a degree in Business Administration, summa cum laude, and won the Outstanding Student award. "TASIS has a big part of merit, thank you!" • **Ashli Sartorelli** graduated in May 2023 with a double major in Photography and Psychology with departmental honors and university honors. "I recently started my master's degree in Counseling and Mental Health Profession. I'm working six jobs to pay for my entire degree!" • **Zhan Sarsenov '21** and **Filippo Cipolini** have been busy building an app to unite the Swiss boarding school's global alumni community, Alma Social. Alma's mission is to foster lifelong connections, create memorable experiences, and provide a platform for meaningful engagement among like-minded individuals from diverse backgrounds. See [almasocial.ch](https://almasocial.ch) or contact [zhansarsenov@almasocial.ch](mailto:zhansarsenov@almasocial.ch) or [filippocipolini@almasocial.ch](mailto:filippocipolini@almasocial.ch).

## 20

**Class Agents: Giulia De Cristofaro and Emilie Hansen** emiliewh@me.com

**Emilie Hansen** reports, "After 3 challenging years I graduated from Technical University of Denmark in Copenhagen with a degree in engineering and a focus on Future Energy. My studies were highly focused on renewable energy sources, sustainability, and carbon reduction methods and I wrote my final thesis on the sustainability of cement. I am taking this year off before I begin my master's in Sustainable Management. In my year off, I will be hiking up Mount

# ALUMNI *Class News*



Kilimanjaro in Tanzania and working at the engineering firm COWI. My mother inspired me to push my boundaries, and invited me on this special trip to Kilimanjaro—an experience which I am very excited to share with her! The image I attached was from when I finished my degree and had defended my bachelor's thesis." 30

21

**Class Agents:** Ella Abisi and Zhan Sarsenov sarsenov@nyu.edu

22

**Class Agents:** Olivia Garcia-Atance Arimont and Valentina Alencar Barros

23

**Idil Bektas and Michaelangelo Vecchio**

## Postgraduate Program

61

**Class Agent:** Mimi Trieschmann Nesbit

62, 63, and 64

**Vacancy for class agents** – contact alumni@tasis.ch to learn more about taking on this role.

65

**Class Agent:** Rick Bell rickbell@delawareinc.com

**Rick Bell** and his wife Paulise became Florida residents three years ago and live on Sanibel Island. "We enjoy it and the Florida lifestyle. Unfortunately, Hurricane Ian destroyed the entire first

floor with an 8-foot storm surge. What a mess! We welcomed a new grandchild and a new great grandchild in the past year—both were home births and went smoothly. Besides these two newborns we have 8 other grandchildren between the ages of 1 and 23 to keep us active. Our son **Michael '05** runs the company now and he's grown it enormously. He's also busy fixing up a condo in St. Thomas with his wife Christy and their 2 kids, Noah (4) and Emileigh (almost 2)."

66

**Class Agent:** Ned Lynch nedleigh@gmail.com

**Jack Graf** and his wife, Kay, visited **Ned Lynch** and friends in Ft. Lauderdale in December 2022. 31 • **Cindy Crabtree** spent last summer in Ely, MN with **Charlie James**. They also got together for a Valentine's Day luncheon with Charlie's wife Annie and their daughter. "Miss you guys! Planning on a return trip the summer of 2026! It will be the PG'66 60th reunion and the school's 70th anniversary!" 32 • **Mary Seyfarth** is excited to be working on a new bird! In January of this year her work *A Conversation* was displayed at the annual faculty/members show at The Art Center in Highland Park, IL. *Conversation* is about the white marble nugget from the Parthenon. 33

67

**Class Agents:** Geoff Parker gspkr@mac.com and Susan Lo Forti lofortisusan@gmail.com

68

**Class Agent:** Kathy Sanders-Phillips

*\*From 1972 onwards, High School Class Agents also serve the PGs.*

82

**Scott Thomas** tells us, "After 30 years of practicing emergency medicine I have transitioned to wound care and hyperbaric medicine at St. Joseph Hospital in Bangor, Maine. Life is good in Maine. Our 2 sons are working and finishing their last year at Liberty University. Keeping busy with outdoor activities that rural living offers. I trust that all of my classmates and TASIS contacts are well."

## Swiss Holiday

57

**Jill Newman Iversen** has recently published her novel *LIBRA, or Hanging in the Balance* (Legacy Book Press), featuring Frog Hollow Farm! "It's not only mentioned, but is a pivotal spot for the ending of the book. Everything has been updated, of course, and names and places have been changed—well, Lansdowne, Pennsylvania has been preserved, but the camp changed to a resort. Also all associated details, such as what happens to the brother there, lest anyone take alarm. I believe it's what's known as poetic license!"

## TASIS HELLENIC

82

**Kathie Gorman Sharp** is happy to share, "This year I've shifted jobs and moved into business development, working for QIMA, an international testing, inspection, and certification company. I'm happy to be in a role that

allows me to travel and hope to make it back to Europe soon. I'm also happy to report that I've joined my mother in a small cottage industry business of making purses that we sell at local trade shows. It's wonderful to have this quality time with my mom who has always been my biggest fan." 34

94

**Jean-François Belisle** is happy to report: "On July 17th, I started a new job as the Director and CEO of the National Gallery of Canada. Running this 300+ staff fine arts museum with a national and international reach is for me an amazing opportunity to affect change and help develop the Canadian visual arts sector. Between the Venice Biennale, Documenta, Istanbul, and the dozens of art fairs, I should be traveling a fair amount over the next few years. So let me know where you are and I'd love to reconnect on one of those occasions. jf.belisle@gmail.com" 35

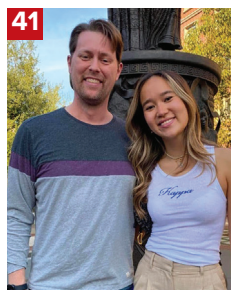
## TSP/TSLP

80

**Heimata Grand** sends greetings: "La orana (hello)! I am originally from French Polynesia (Tahiti), and spent the whole summer in Lugano in 1980. I was 14 years old. I still have unforgettable memories of these 2 months. How many friends I have made, and of all nationalities. I could tell you anecdotes about this period. It felt like it was yesterday. Today I live on an island called Raiatea, and I am a middle and high school history and geography teacher. I have 2 boys. I mainly practice sliding sports (surfing, kite, and foil)." 36



# ALUMNI *Class News*



## 04

TASIS sisters **Mariella TSLP '01** and **Attilia TSP '04 Avino** were recently featured in Forbes for their work on the gorgeous Palazzo Avino on the Amalfi Coast in Italy. Their father bought the 12th-century villa and opened it as a hotel in 1997, and the sisters grew up seeing their parents' passion for the building and gardens. The five-star property includes a spa, private beach club, and Michelin-starred restaurant. [www.palazzoavino.com](http://www.palazzoavino.com) 37

## Alumni Parents

**Thomas** and **Linda Cross** send their greetings along with their yearly family updates. "**Jessica '08** and her boyfriend were in Lugano recently and visited TASIS. It was her first visit back since we moved in 2010. She received a tour and a very warm welcome from the staff! She was very happy. She sent lots of pictures of Lugano and their trip to Florence and Milan. She is an immigration lawyer for a major law firm and works with major companies to obtain visas for their employees. She loves her work and they have been traveling quite a lot! Our family is doing fine. **Katie '15** was married in August 2022 and will graduate in May 2023 with a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy from Creighton University. They are planning to move back to Des Moines in December for her final practicum. **Patrick '10** is married and living in Denver. He is working for EY and his wife works for Deloitte. They are both consultants; he specializes in business transactions and she specializes in business strategy. They are both managing a good work/life balance with skiing and traveling, while

working lots of hours. **Melissa '14** has a serious boyfriend and lives in Norwalk, CT. She also works for Deloitte as an accounting systems consultant. She mostly works from home, but travels some to do onsite client work. She is enjoying exploring New England and Canada while she is living there. Linda is still running her dyslexia tutoring business and that keeps her busy. She does it from our home and does both in-person and on-line tutoring. She loves it and enjoys working with her students."

## Former Faculty

**Chris Carlsmith** (TASIS faculty 1989–92) published *Save Venice, Inc.: American Philanthropy and Art Conservation in Italy, 1966–2021* with University of Massachusetts Press. It tells the story of the American non-profit Save Venice Inc. which raises money and awareness on behalf of art and architecture conservation. A professor of history at University of Massachusetts Lowell since 2001, Chris previously published a book about the history of education in the Venetian Republic between 1500 and 1650. He lives in Arlington, MA with his family. 38

**Robert Winer** was in touch this year, "Thought you might be interested in this photo of former faculty **Bill Benish** and me which we took when I visited Bill, as I do every year, in Cleveland, OH. Bill taught math at TASIS from 1973–74 and I taught history and worked in the TASIS administration from 1973–77. Both of us have wonderful memories about our time at the school. I hope things are going well." 39

**Frank Klein, Mei-Ling Klein** (former staff), and **Robert Winer** enjoying a

delicious lunch at the Klein's home in Old Town Alexandria, VA. They see one another regularly throughout the year and always have a most wonderful time filled with humor and good cheer. 40

**Kay Hamblin** welcomed a new addition to her family. "I have a very new 14-week-old Cavachon puppy. She had a nanny on her flight from Chicago to SF airport where Colin and I picked her up. She is a designer mix of Cavalier King Charles Spaniel (mother) with a Bichon Frise (father). Dear Maggie passed on the Autumnal Equinox from bladder cancer. We hope this deliberate mix will bring good health with our new puppy!"

**Julie Rivellino Lyons** writes, "In 2022 we reported on Cape Cod doings for the Provincetown Independent and earned 4th place in our divisions at Bridgton's Four on the Fourth race during a Lyons Reunion in Maine. We volunteered at the Green River Festival and led white-water rafting trips on the Deerfield River. We enjoyed a week on the RI beach and ran 100 miles a month to celebrate my 51st year. We have enjoyed lots of sunshine and golf during two visits (before Hurricane Ian) to Cape Coral, FL. Spent Mother's Day six feet apart outdoors while recovering from Covid, spent time with friends in MD, and a sister in NC, played golf on several New England courses but especially Crumpin Fox. Enjoyed live music whenever we could, remained grateful for health, family, friends, school, rewarding jobs, and relative normalcy. Sending warm wishes to all of you!"

**Peter Locke** led a college tour with his current school (Madison Country Day School in Wisconsin) in February

that included a stop at the University of Southern California (USC). After some plans he had made with the admissions office fell through, **Zhamilya Mussaibeikova '22** was kind enough to step in and take his group all around campus. Zhamilya reports that she is doing great. She is majoring in Computer Science and Italian and loves her sorority and entrepreneurship club! 41

**Kiri Manookin** is an English Language Fellow in Armenia where she is training teachers and teaching English at Yerevan State University. Ms. Manookin is one of only 200 U.S. citizens selected for the 2022–2023 English Language Fellow Program, the first cohort sent out since the pandemic halted all in-country fellowships. While she was in the US during the pandemic, she taught academic writing courses at a local university, as well as an online business English writing course for Nepali-speaking employees at Peace Corps Nepal. She is currently in the process of renewing her contract for 2023–2024 in Armenia. The English Language Fellow Program is the premier opportunity for experienced teachers of English to speakers of other languages to enact meaningful and sustainable changes in the way that English is taught abroad and is sponsored by the US State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) with funding provided by the US government. Through projects developed by US Embassies in more than 80 countries, Fellows work directly with local teachers, students, and educational professionals to improve the quality of English language instruction offered at prestigious universities and other academic institutions. 42

# IN MEMORIAM



**Middy Randerson '66** passed away on February 29, 2020. "Middy had been struggling for several years with cryptogenic organizing pneumonia, a rare form of interstitial lung disease, and always faced her ever-diminishing health with grace, humor, and courage. She died quietly and peacefully with her devoted husband BC Robison at her side."

**Michael Helton PG '60** passed away in his home peacefully surrounded by family on October 30, 2022. "After schooling, Mike embarked on a career in aviation which he loved very much. He learned how to fly at Van Nuys airport in California August of 1965 and was eventually hired on as a commercial airline pilot in 1967. He was a very accomplished pilot and eventually retired from flying with US Air in 1995. Mike is survived by his wife, Karen, daughters; Tacy (Justin) Pugh; Lori (Adam) Halls; Jenni (Eric) Sohm; Heather (Sloan) Ellison; Amy (Brandon) Monsen; and 20 grandchildren and one great-grandchild." [43](#)

**Cathy Jo Cassidy '74** passed away on November 3 in Ventura, Calif. after a short illness. Daughter of Martin and Jo Cassidy, Cathy Jo was a world traveler and adventurous soul, loving wife and mother, a great cook and a wizard with a varnish brush. Cathy Jo is survived by her husband Don and son Cory (his wife Darwin and their



daughter Audrey), as well as her father Martin, brother Brandt and sister Caroline. [44](#)

**Catherine Kamar Mitchell TC '89** died on October 29, 2018 surrounded by her family. Cathy was a devoted wife to Johnny Mitchell, mother to Michelle Powell (Chris) and grandmother to Kyah and River Powell. Cathy attended TASIS and American International School of Cyprus in Nicosia, Cyprus. She is survived by her grandmother, Hannah Pearlman Scoggin, and her siblings Lenore Roberts (Donnie), Sam Kamar (Kathy) and Maria Kamar.

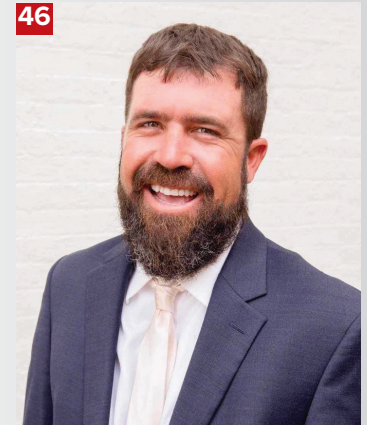
**Job E. Denni '70** was a devoted husband, father, successful farmer, and real estate broker. A lifelong resident of Lindsay, CA, he passed away peacefully on August 14, 2022 at the age of 71 with family by his side. [45](#)

**Todd Benton '74** died on 31 May, 2023 from complications due to Parkinsons. His siblings, **Craig Benton '69** and **Becca Benton Hanson '67** shared this news with us: "I know that he would like for his many far-flung friends and classmates to know. Todd attended TASIS from 1970 to 1971 but returned to the Frankfurt International School to finish up high school—his spirit was a little too rebellious and free-spirited for our parents to feel settled about letting him loose on the world.



However, he never lost the wonder that TASIS inspired in him. He went on to perform logistical miracles around the world to the constant wonder of his family. His away time was spent savoring sailing, diving, and skiing with his tight-knit family that included his two daughters whom he loved to the moon and back, and enjoying a good pint with a wee dram of Tullamore Dew on the side with friends whenever possible. His ashes will be laid to rest in the mountains outside of Sisters, Oregon, the long-time home of Craig and, later, our parents after they returned from 14 years in Germany."

**Elizabeth Jones Bonin '80** passed away this April, 2023, following a long and hard-fought battle with breast cancer. Her sister, **Melissa Guglielmi '78** shared the sad news: "After graduation from TASIS, Liz attended Louisiana State University, where she earned a degree in Fine Arts/Painting. While at LSU, Liz met her husband, Donald M. Bonin, whom she married in 1986. Liz and Donald have two daughters, and Liz spent her time being a mom, completing public and private art commissions, and running a flea market boutique where she sold repurposed furniture and amazing estate sale finds. She also enjoyed participating in a number of marathons and half-marathons, and loved vacationing in the Grand Tetons and on the beaches of the Gulf Coast."



**Michael Weiler '80** passed away August 23, 2022 from bone cancer. He leaves behind his loving wife and three incredible school-age children, Emma, Sophie, and Michael.

**Joe Dusing (TASIS staff)** passed away on August 28, 2023 of choriocarcinoma. A native of northern Kentucky, Joe moved to Lugano in 2021 with his wife Angela, who teaches MS music. Joe served as AV and Multimedia Coordinator and in his short time at TASIS he touched many lives, always putting others before himself. He loved life in Lugano and found great joy in the TASIS community. Joe is survived by Angela, their labrador Francis, his father, Paul Dusing, Sr., mother, Elizabeth Dusing, and sisters, Amy and Katie Dusing. We raise a glass of bourbon in his honor. [46](#)



# UPCOMING REUNIONS



*Alumni, mark your calendars!*

**All-Class Reunion** in New York, Friday, November 17, 6:30–9:30pm, The Yale Club

Other upcoming events: Regional all-class reunion in Tokyo on November 10; Grand 70s Reunion in Austin, TX, April 11-14. Lugano reunions: Class of 2004, June 8; Class of 1994, June 21; Class of 1984, July 19; All 50s & 60s, September 6! Visit [tasis.ch/alumni/reunions](https://tasis.ch/alumni/reunions) for more information.



Reunions

## Summer 2024

Introduce your children or grandchildren to the TASIS experience! The TASIS Summer Programs offer challenging, inspiring, and engaging courses and activities that guarantee the best summer of their lives!

In 2023, we welcomed 37 alumni children to TASIS! Get in touch if you'd like to share TASIS with a child in your life.



Summer Programs

### HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM (ages 14-17, day and boarding)



**Language-based courses:** *English as an Additional Language (EAL), French*

**Project-based courses:** *Academic Writing, Architecture & Design, Digital Photography, Fashion and Textile Design, Introduction to Investment, Filmmaking, Fine Art Portfolio, La Cucina Italiana, Lean Startup Masterclass, Next Stop: Broadway!, and STEAM*

**Travel program:** Cultural day trips to *Milan, Zurich, or Lucerne* and adventure day trips to *Val Verzasca, canyoning, or rafting*. Weekend overnight trips to *Nice, Rome, Monaco, Venice, Zermatt, Interlaken, and Andermatt*.

**Afternoon activities:** Sports, the arts, and outdoor adventures including *AC Milan football* and new for 2024, *The World of Formula 1*.

### MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM (ages 11-13, day and boarding)



**Language-based courses:** *English as an Additional Language (EAL), French, Italian*

**Project-based courses:** *Creative Writing, Digital Photography, Musical Theater, and STEAM*

**Travel program:** Day trips to *Engelberg, the Borromeo islands, and Milan*. Overnight options include the *Italian Riviera, Verona, and Andermatt*.

### CHÂTEAU DES ENFANTS (ages 7-10, day and boarding)



**Language courses:** *English, French, Italian + STEAM every day*

**Activities:** Local excursions, nature walks on *San Salvatore*, and *pedal boating on Lake Lugano*. Weekend trips take boarders to nearby *lidos, museums, and gardens*. Children also spend two nights camping in the *pre-Alps*!

### MINNOWS (ages 4-6, day students only)



**Language courses:** *English, French, Italian + STEAM every day*

**Activities** *Music, art, and science, and off-campus trips to local attractions such as an Alpine dairy farm, the local zoo, a children's museum, and Swissminiatur.*

**Welcome to the best summer of their lives!**



Mary Crist Fleming driving students through Europe in 1937.

*"My dreams, the landscape of my mind, have always been filled with beautiful buildings situated in beautiful settings spread around the world and always inhabited by hundreds of beautiful young creatures." - Mrs. Fleming*

*With fondest good wishes to  
all the TASIS alumni!*

*You are a very special breed  
and I have high expectations  
for you to create a better world!*

*Mary Crist Fleming*

**We're driving further towards Mrs. Fleming's dream of creating the most beautiful campus in the world—and we need your support! If TASIS shaped who you are today, help us look forward and up to Collina Alta!**



**Ways to Give**