



ALSO INSIDE

A NOTEWORTHY CAREER

–Perry So

King George V School

BUILDING A FUTURE

–Taylor Williams

West Island School

Special Report

ESF Chairman's Award for Excellence

Where do ESF Students Go?

December 2012

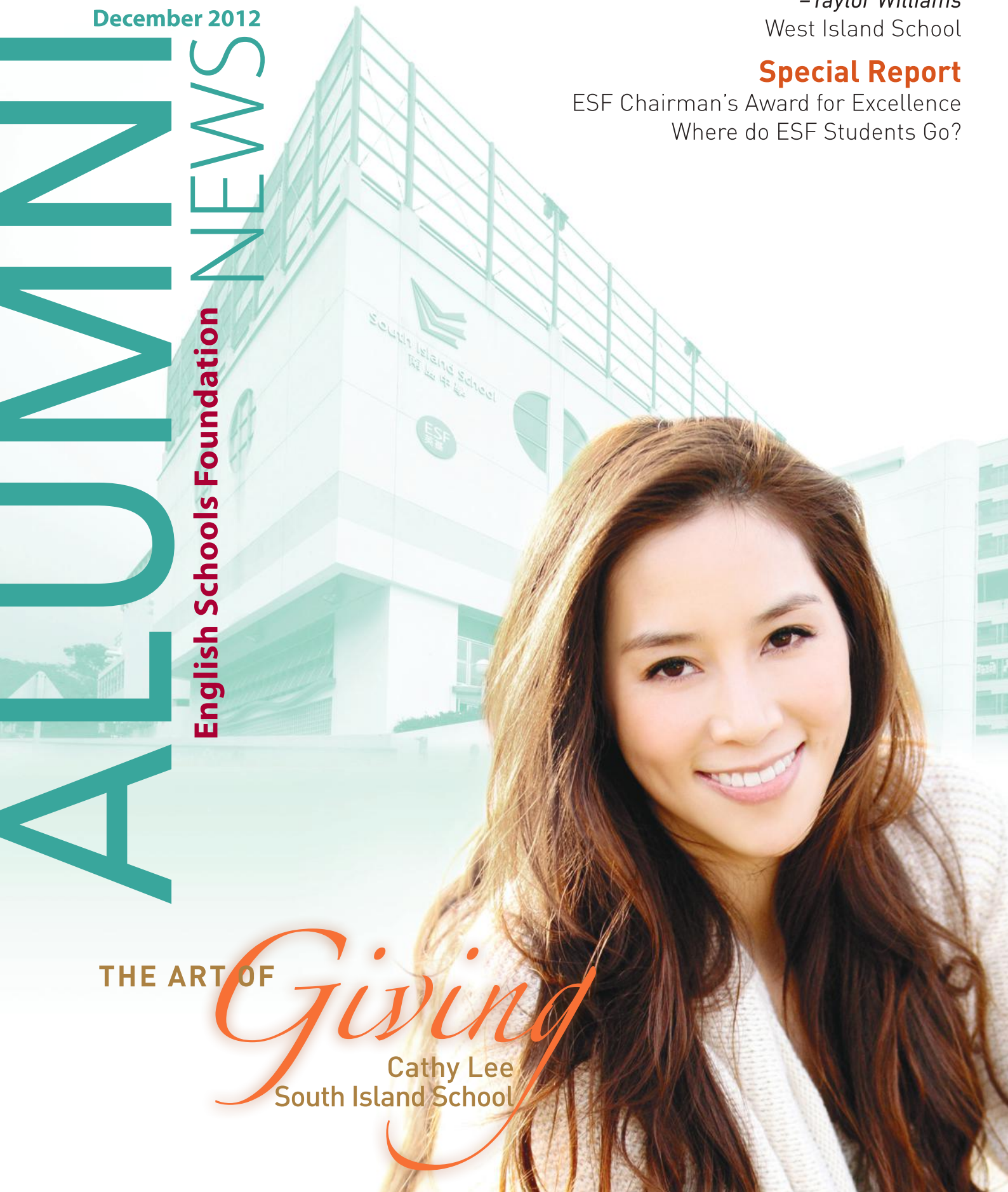
ALUMNI NEWS

English Schools Foundation

THE ART OF

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South Island School



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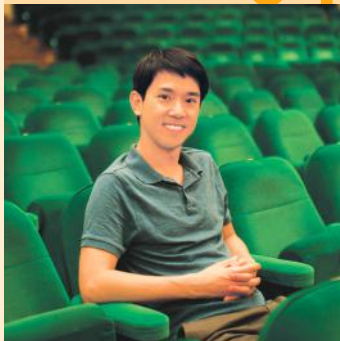
TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Art of Giving

Cathy Lee
South Island School



04



A Noteworthy Career

Perry So
King George V School

08

Building a Future

Taylor Williams
West Island School

14

Where do ESF Students Go?

16

ESF Chairman's Award for Excellence

Jennie Ng
Sha Tin College
Angela Wu
King George V School

18

What's Happening

21

Foreword

Welcome to the first issue of ESF Alumni News in this school year. We have made changes to give it a fresh look!



Since the magazine was published last December, we have received positive feedback from schools and the alumni. Without the support from individual schools, we would not have been able to re-connect with distinguished alumni and learn about their accomplishments. Thank you also to the alumni for their continued participation in the interview and alumni events.

In this issue, we are delighted to bring you interviews with alumni who demonstrate artistic talents in their professional fields. Cathy Lee and Perry So, two renowned celebrities and alumni of South Island School and King George V School respectively, are making their marks as a philanthropist and an orchestral conductor. Another recent graduate of West Island School, Taylor Williams, who is now studying at the Chinese University of Hong Kong to become an architect, credits his secondary school teachers for inspiring his passion in art and most importantly in life.

Not only our alumni are leading a robust life and making notable contributions to the vibrant society of Hong Kong, we are also proud that ESF students have achieved better examination results than their peers worldwide. Last year, we established the Chairman's Award for Excellence in recognition of our students' outstanding academic achievements. This time, we will cover stories of two award recipients who share with us how their all-round education in ESF prepared them for the challenges in university.

As parents and alumni, you may be interested in knowing the higher education destinations of our students. While North American destinations are very popular, this year 24% of our students have chosen to remain in Hong Kong for their tertiary studies. A comprehensive report on the academic performance of ESF students and their higher education destinations worldwide is included in this issue.

I hope you enjoy reading the magazine and wish all of you a Merry Christmas!

Heather Du Quesnay

Heather Du Quesnay
Chief Executive Officer
English Schools Foundation

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THE ART OF GIVING

FORMER SOUTH ISLAND SCHOOL STUDENT, CATHY LEE PROVIDES INSPIRATION TO MANY BUT HER OWN MOTIVATION TO SUCCEED COMES FROM SOMEONE VERY CLOSE TO HER HEART AND CLOSE TO HOME.

CATHY LEE

Cathy attended South Island School from 1995 – 2001. She obtained her undergraduate degree in Economics from University College London and completed her master's degree in Communications at The London School of Economics. Since 2007, Cathy has been a Goodwill Ambassador for the Chi Heng Foundation. In 2008, Cathy established the Glamour To Give Foundation with her husband Martin Lee.

Currently, Cathy is on the Fundraising Committee of The Hong Kong Red Cross Headquarters Redevelopment Project. She is also an Honorary Patron of Summerbridge Hong Kong, a Board member of the Hong Kong Arts Centre and the Chairperson of The FRIENDS of the Hong Kong Arts Centre.

“ I feel like a student again as I am learning new things every day: how to be a good mother and raise my kids so that they will become kind, responsible people. I believe children are born with wings, so why crawl through life when you can fly to find your dreams? ”

“ My father has always been my role model. He believes that life is a long journey and that we should never stop learning new things. Last year he completed a PhD - I am so proud of him! He also inspires me in my charitable activities because he is always ready to help others and contribute to the community.”

Her father's advice made a strong impression and if Cathy had her time again, there is little she would change; education wise. “I would definitely still have gone onto university in the U.K. Studying is not only about trying to achieve good grades. Personal development and critical thinking are equally important.”

Cathy had a successful career but had her life taken a different direction, the former model and actress thinks she would have enjoyed being a teacher. “This summer, I volunteered at Summerbridge as Honorary Patron of the programme. The students were all very eager to learn and it was amazing to see them improve in such a short period of time.”



Cathy played basketball with Summerbridge students



Cathy volunteered as a teacher at Summerbridge

About Summerbridge Hong Kong

Summerbridge Hong Kong was established in 1992, based on an American model which was founded in 1978 at San Francisco University High School. The American philanthropist, Mr. Charles Feeney, initiated and funded the programme during its early years. In Hong Kong, Summerbridge has served more than 3,000 young people, with the participation of 2,500 local students and 1,000 student-teachers. The non-profit organisation, which runs academic and personal development programmes for underprivileged young people, has maintained a close relationship with ESF since its inauguration.

Cathy has fond memories of South Island School (SIS) and feels her time there shaped her as a person. “SIS has a strong academic environment that helps students fulfill their potential and at the same time, teaches respect and responsibility. I could not have wished for a better school.”

While Drama and Media Studies were her favourite subjects, the broad syllabus enabled her to become an all-round achiever. The school's sports curriculum that included hockey, water polo, triathlon, netball, basketball, sailing, windsurfing, cricket, gymnastics and trampoline allowed Cathy to develop her athletic skills.

With hindsight, Cathy regrets not studying art at A-level. “I didn't realise I had a passion for art until I

was living in London and found myself spending hours visiting the museums and galleries. I think if I had studied the subject in more depth, my appreciation would be greater.”

Cathy chose Economics as her undergraduate degree at University College London and completed her master’s degree in Communications at The London School of Economics. She feels that her time at SIS helped prepare her for university.

“At SIS we were taught how to be organised and self-disciplined. I learned the importance of handing coursework in on time. This was good preparation for university as the professors didn’t chase you for your assignments. Those who handed papers in late risked failing.”

The tireless charity worker has some solid advice for ESF students wanting to follow in her footsteps.

“Consider what type of volunteer work might interest you based on your strengths and personal skills. Some students are interested in helping underprivileged children while others are drawn to the environmental field. You have to be passionate about the charity if you are going to commit and support it though.”



Cathy attended Hong Kong Red Cross “Blessing of Love” Charity Fundraising Campaign Kick-Off Ceremony as a member of the Fundraising Committee for the New HKRC Headquarters Redevelopment Project

If Cathy were a student today, she feels sure she would give her backing to the charities that she is currently committed to. “Since 2007, I’ve been a Goodwill Ambassador for the Chi Heng Foundation which helps AIDS-impacted orphans. Providing education for these children is very important as it’s the only way to lift them out of the poverty trap. Besides fundraising, my biggest goal is to gain as much support for them as possible in order to eliminate discrimination and to fight for equal opportunities.”

Her fondness for young people helps to explain why she is involved in a number of charities that support children in need. In 2008, Cathy and her husband Martin established the Glamour To Give Foundation. “We are particularly concerned about the development of underprivileged children as we both believe that all youngsters deserve our love and care.”

Cathy is on the Fundraising Committee of The Hong Kong Red Cross Headquarters Redevelopment Project which is currently aiming to raise HK\$400 million. In addition, she is a Board member of the Hong Kong Arts Centre and the Chairperson of The FRIENDS of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, which promotes non-commercial arts and helps to create an autonomous space for local artists.

“I am discovering how I can use my strengths to help those in need and create awareness for the charity organisations that I support,” she explains.

Despite her hectic schedule, the mother of three is determined that her children develop an interest in books – even if she isn’t able to find time to curl up with a novel herself these days. “I love reading and I cannot emphasise enough how important it is for broadening our knowledge. I spend at least half an hour each day reading to my kids because I want to promote a lifelong love of literature.”

Cathy believes parents in Hong Kong should allow their children plenty of opportunities to learn through discovery and play. “I feel young people’s lives here are too structured and that hinders their imagination and creativity. They learn so much about themselves through exploration, social interaction and the environment around them.

Children develop independence and confidence when adults trust them to do things by themselves. Kids are so much smarter than their parents think they are. My parents always trusted me and believed in me. This was very important for building my own confidence.”

Cathy does so much to improve the lives of young people across Hong Kong but how is she enjoying her role as a parent and what hopes does she have for her own children?

“I feel like a student again as I am learning new things every day: how to be a good mother and raise my kids so that they will become kind, responsible people. I believe children are born with wings, so why crawl through life when you can fly to find your dreams?”

“Graduating from school is just the beginning of a new chapter in life. You’ll encounter many new challenges ahead, so be positive and keep learning.”



Cathy with her husband Martin Lee and their son Triston

Cathy thinks that parents should allow their children to find where their strengths and interests lie and decide from there; rather than to choose the profession which offers the highest salary. She doesn’t believe income should be a guide to how successful you are. “It’s important to do something you’re passionate about. That way you’ll be motivated to excel in your work.”

“My four year old daughter told me that she wants to become a zookeeper. It’s an unusual choice but I think it’s wonderful because she is such a caring person and loves animals. Whatever my children’s ambitions are, I will support them. At the moment though, my daughter’s dream career changes every other week!”

Cathy was an outstanding student during her time at SIS and she has some advice for this year’s graduates. “I worked hard. I mean “really” hard. I wasn’t one of those students who grasped concepts immediately; I had to read things over and over again to understand them. I never gave up on anything because I knew that with perseverance, I’d get there in the end.”

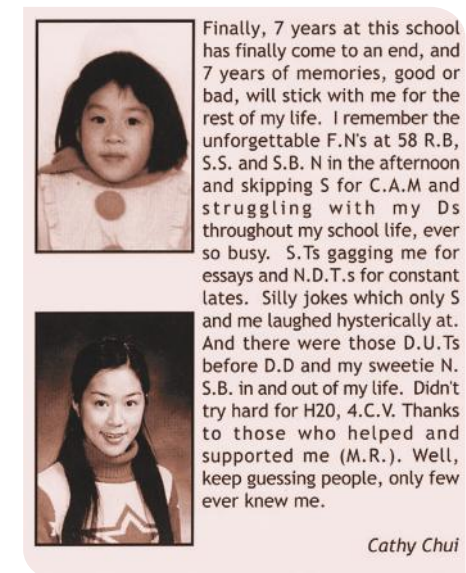
Cathy’s final message to Year 7 students is simple but invaluable. “Be curious and adventurous. Stay open-minded. Don’t be afraid of difficulties or of making mistakes, because you learn from them and they make you stronger once you overcome them.”



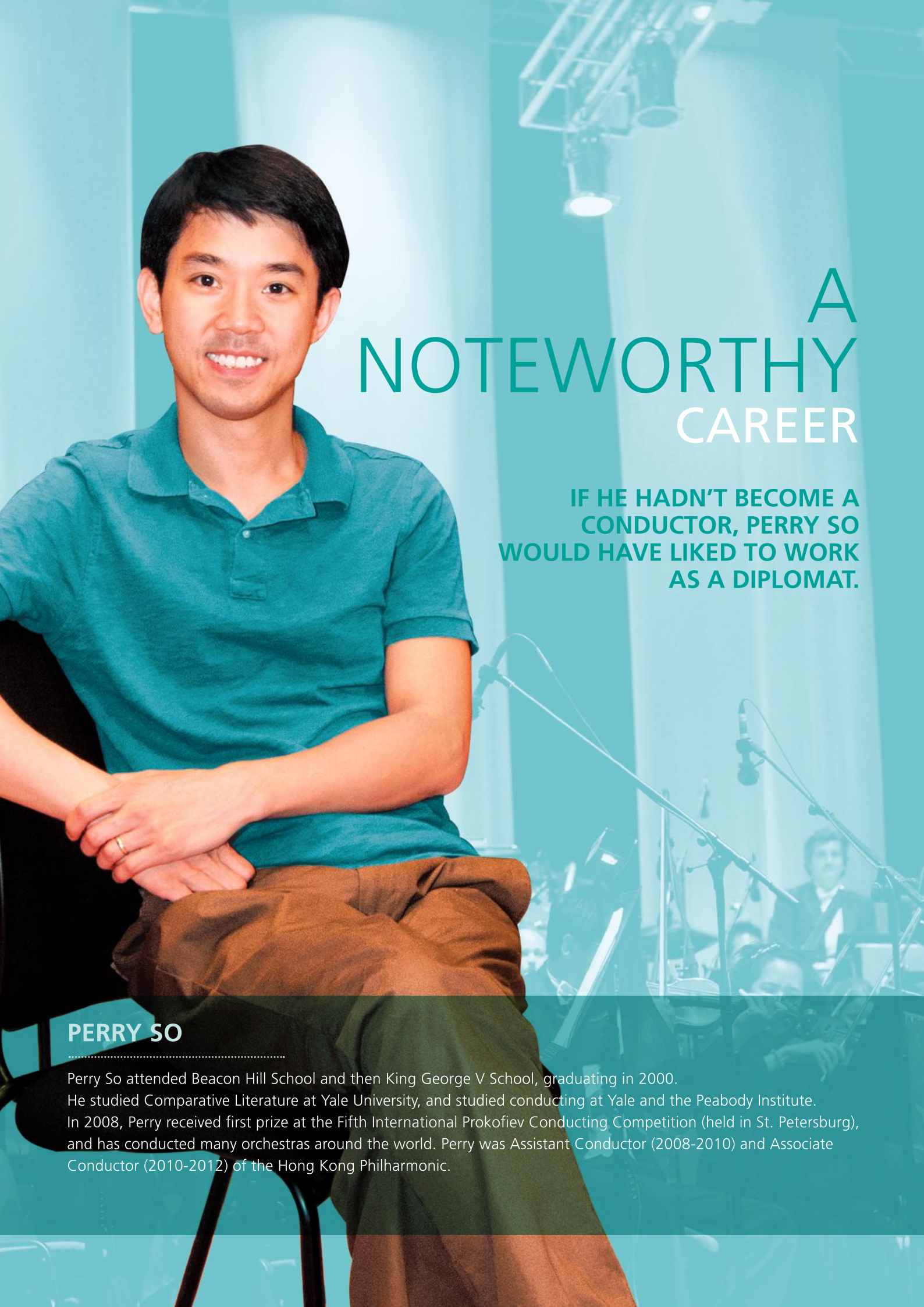
Young Cathy singing at the Christmas concert



Year 12 Year Book (2000)
Cathy standing at the second row, third left



Year 13 Year Book (Now and Then)



A NOTEWORTHY CAREER

**IF HE HADN'T BECOME A
CONDUCTOR, PERRY SO
WOULD HAVE LIKED TO WORK
AS A DIPLOMAT.**

PERRY SO

Perry So attended Beacon Hill School and then King George V School, graduating in 2000. He studied Comparative Literature at Yale University, and studied conducting at Yale and the Peabody Institute. In 2008, Perry received first prize at the Fifth International Prokofiev Conducting Competition (held in St. Petersburg), and has conducted many orchestras around the world. Perry was Assistant Conductor (2008-2010) and Associate Conductor (2010-2012) of the Hong Kong Philharmonic.

“My job is to set up the right conditions and to infect the players with the way I want them to play the music. In a way, my job description is really confucian: it’s about making sure that everything inside me is aligned in the right way.”

That’s not surprising: both professions of conductor and diplomat are about finding common ground and bringing people to talk together – and more important, to listen to each other.

It’s a calm, measured approach that has taken Perry from a youthful interest in music at King George V School (KGV) to a career conducting orchestras around the world. Perry is already a seasoned globe-trotter, having conducted orchestras in more than a dozen cities, including Los Angeles, London and Seoul. In 2008, he won first prize at the Fifth International Prokofiev Conducting Competition in St. Petersburg, after which he was scooped up by the Hong Kong Philharmonic to become an associate conductor.

It’s an impressive run for a 30-year-old, but it makes sense when you consider that a love of music runs in Perry’s family. “My dad courted my mother in the 1970s with his voice, and my mother was a primary-school and secondary-school music teacher in the local system, so we always had a lot of music at home and in church,” he says.

His parents were key in cultivating his talent. Perry is grateful his mother wasn’t a Tiger Mom: she didn’t force him to practise piano for six hours a day. Instead, she and Perry’s father treated him like the kid he was, and wisely advised: “You have a lot of other things to learn before you can be a fully fledged human being.”

That bit of wisdom can be seen in the way Perry approaches his role as a conductor. “I’m not interested in being dictatorial and authoritarian,” he says. “My job is to set up the right conditions and to infect the players with the way I want them to play the music. In a way, my job description is really confucian: it’s about making sure that everything inside me is aligned in the right way.”

Half of what he does as a conductor is not musical, says Perry. Instead, “it’s psychological, it’s leadership, creating an atmosphere, creating trust.” That’s something he learned not only from his parents, but from his teachers at KGV. “I wouldn’t have had the faintest idea how to do that if I hadn’t encountered teachers who had those gifts and were willing to share them,” he says.

Perry remembers his schooldays fondly. He says he feels that the education at KGV was tailor-made to his particular needs and interests, even in classes of 30 students. He became very close to some of his teachers, finding that his chats with them in the corridors were as insightful and meaningful as anything in the classroom. “I was lucky at Beacon Hill and KGV that I had elders who indulged my passions,” he says.

At KGV, Perry performed in and conducted orchestras, ensembles and the jazz band. His interest in conducting started early but not auspiciously: he describes his first experience of conducting, in primary school, as “an absolute disaster.” But he pressed on, and in Year 11 he conducted the KGV orchestra at the school’s music festival. “I was pleasantly shocked that I could get these people to do what I wanted them to do,” he recalls.

Perry graduated from KGV in 2000 and spent a year in Beijing before going to Yale University to study comparative literature. Choosing that subject enabled him to explore topics that he was interested in beyond music: philosophy, the visual arts, theatre, opera, history. While at Yale, he also participated in lots of musical activities, co-founding an orchestra, playing piano to accompany singers and studying conducting.

STAY IN TOUCH



We are keen to build links with the alumni of all ESF schools.
Please update your details and return it to us by fax to 3018 1279 or by email to alumni@esfcentre.edu.hk.

Title: (Mr/Ms/Mrs/Others) Surname:

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Address:

Email address:

Telephone:

Year of graduation:

ESF School(s) attended:

Alternatively, you are welcome to visit the following alumni websites and enroll as alumni of your school and network with your classmates.

Island School Alumni Association

<http://alumni.island.edu.hk>

King George V School Alumni Association

<http://alumni.kgv.edu.hk>

Sha Tin College Alumni Association

<http://alumni.shatincollege.edu.hk>

South Island School Alumni Association

<http://alumni.sis.edu.hk>

West Island School Alumni Association

<https://wis.site-ym.com>

Peak School

<http://www.ps.edu.hk/about-us/alumni>

Providing your personal information is strictly voluntary. All information collected will be passed to individual ESF school(s) solely for the purpose of alumni liaison.



Perry still keeps in touch with friends and teachers from his schooldays. In fact, a good friend from KGV was best man at his wedding.

Perry is particularly passionate about mentoring young musicians. He works regularly with the Australian Youth Orchestra, the Yale School of Music and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Perry occasionally leads the HKAPA's orchestra and he takes it as an opportunity to pass on some of the helpful tips that his own mentors shared with him. "It's great, because I see in the students a little bit of myself when I was younger," he says.

Perry has also co-founded a music festival in the Chinese province of Anhui, with the help of a group of friends who share an interest in cross-cultural communication and bridging the gap between China and the West. In one of the province's villages, they gave a group of children some percussion instruments to play. The results were delightful. "Something like that gets into their spines and colours their experience of the world – by doing exactly the same thing with 60 other people, yet feeling like individuals participating in this grand thing, they learn that anything is possible," says Perry.



Perry returned to his home school - KGV to share success stories earlier this year. He had a good session with the School Orchestra.



Perry works regularly with the Australia Youth Orchestra, the Yale School of Music and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Those kinds of experiences have convinced Perry that it's possible for every individual to make a positive contribution to society. "I've found that giving back is wonderful," he says. "I like to think that I do have lots to give back, and I'm grateful that people are very willing to take what I do."

That's especially true for ESF students and alumni, he says. "We have qualities that are absolutely crucial to every mature society – we're clear-thinking, intelligent, committed people, we think outside the box and we have a slightly different view of things than the mainstream. So we can be the factor in society that glues things together and gives a different perspective."

Don't miss the upcoming concerts of Hong Kong Philharmonic this festive season!

Great Eagle Festive Series: Harry's Christmas (23 & 24 December)

Celebrate Christmas with a sing-along of all your Christmas favourites with Harry Wong who is going to conjure some snow for Hong Kong, and we've heard Santa Claus is coming to town!

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Filled with joyful music and buoyed in a light-hearted ambience, this century-old musical tradition has been one of the most popular HK Phil programmes each year.

More details are available in this website <http://www.hkphil.org>

Ho!
ho ho...



Give your loved ones
a wonderful read.



For him



For her

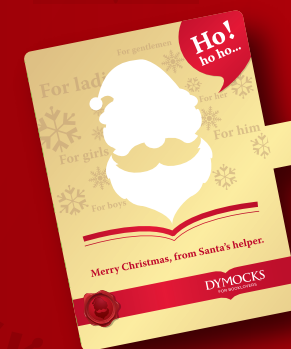


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BUILDING A FUTURE

**IF HIS BROAD SHOULDERS
AND LANKY GAIT AREN'T
INDICATION ENOUGH,
TAYLOR WILLIAMS'
BLEACHED HAIR SHOULD
BE A DEAD GIVEAWAY.**

TAYLOR WILLIAMS

Taylor came to Hong Kong with his family when he was 14 year-old. He graduated from West Island School in 2011 and is now working on his Bachelor of Social Sciences in Architectural Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

“People don't realise how hard it is just to design a square room. You have to justify everything, to make sure it works inside its context. It's a science as well as art and design.”

“I've been swimming for as long as I can remember,” says the West Island School graduate, who looks even younger than his 19 years. “I think the longest I've gone without swimming is a month.”

Taylor swims on the Chinese University of Hong Kong's school team, but he doesn't get quite as much time in the water as he would like, now that he is studying architecture. “People don't realise how hard it is just to design a square room,” he says. “You have to justify everything, to make sure it works inside its context. It's a science as well as art and design.”

Taylor grew up in Sydney, where his Beijing-born mother and Bostonian father worked in finance. When he was 14, his family moved to Hong Kong. He says it was a shock at first, but he soon got used to the change. “Now I have a hard time imagining life back in Australia,” he says. “I couldn't drive, so my life was wherever my parents took me. It was basically home, school and swimming. I do miss the beaches, though. Hong Kong beaches are kind of sad by comparison.”

West Island School helped with the transition. He has fond memories of playing “philosophy football” with Eugene Calvar, his philosophy teacher, who would write down theoretical assertions on the blackboard and duke it out with the students. “It teaches you how to think, and this skill is very beneficial in university and more significantly, in life,” he says. “As an architect you have to be willing to explore subjects outside the field.”

Taylor's English teacher, Luana Hasell, helped inspire his love of literature – and Taylor says she also gave him the confidence to write well. “I never thought I was good at writing, but she told me I was.” That's something that comes in handy at architecture school. “When you read books by architects, they're unreadable a lot of the time,” says Taylor.

Perhaps the greatest influence was Angela Swadling's art class. “I've loved art from a young age and always wanted to work in a related field,” says Taylor, and his art teacher recommended he take a summer architecture course. “Drawing is very, very important,” he says. “If you want to be an architect, carry a book around and draw what you see. You have to become sensitive to where you are and the space you're in.”



A rendering design by Taylor

That's an especially important skill for Taylor, who is specialising in studio design, the more creative side of architecture. He is currently designing a library for the Victorian-era Central Police Station complex, which is currently being turned into a contemporary art centre.

“I'm really interested in the design process,” he says, because it gives him a chance to incorporate all of his interests into his architectural work. One area he finds intriguing is phenomenology, the experience of building materials in architecture. He points to the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, who designed a rural chapel that looks a sombre stone memorial on the outside, but whose interior walls are lined by tree trunks that were covered in tar and burned away, leaving behind their charred, undulating imprint.

Taylor is careful not to let architecture school monopolise his life. “I refuse to work overnight in the studio,” he says. Instead, he relishes the independence that comes from living at university, and especially at Morningside College, his 300-student residence hall. The college hosts a communal dinner three times a week, and professors and fellows often join the students. There are often lectures by speakers from fields as diverse as Cantonese opera and economics.

He is also trying to revive a college literary journal that has fallen by the wayside. “I finished the first issue but now I'm waiting for funding from the university,” he says. “There's a lot of bureaucracy.”

But Taylor is patient. After all, he is studying to become an architect – a long, arduous process if there ever was one. After he finishes his undergraduate degree, he will work as an intern at a local firm. Then he must do a master's degree and pass a qualifying test before he can practise as an architect. He hopes to work in Hong Kong, but he won't rule out going overseas. “Hong Kong is a difficult place to work as an architect because it's so commercial,” he says.

In the meantime, swimming helps deal with the pressure. “It gives you a sport high,” he says. “I only feel normal when my heart is pumping.”

WHERE IN THE WORLD DO ESF STUDENTS GO?

ESF graduating classes move from strength to strength

By Chris Durbin, School Development Adviser for Secondary Schools and David Kirby, Student Attainment Manager

Whether you are alumni of Island School, King George V School, Renaissance College, Sha Tin College, South Island School or West Island School, you can be proud of the current achievements of the graduating class of 2012. Yes, the schools have rivalries; yes, there is healthy competition; and yes, the schools have some differences in ethos, but what is surprising is how similar all the schools are in their academic outcomes. All this enables the network of ESF schools and their teachers to be as strong as ever.

In the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma examinations the results illustrated the effective implementation of a change made nearly seven years ago. Four cohorts on from this implementation, the students' academic success is evident. Almost whichever indicator that you reference, the data

suggests high quality achievement by the students, supported by their teachers in all our schools. It is fair to say that ESF as an institution is successful in a global context. The fact that almost all those entered for the IB Diploma achieved it, is a tribute to the value ESF schools put on all students. (See Figure 1)

In addition to this, schools have established an Applied Learning Diploma, using the British Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) qualifications, for some students who prefer a more specialist pathway. BTEC qualifications are pre-university applied learning qualifications. The success of this pathway, grown from West Island School to the other schools has now given further opportunities to ESF students. The success of ESF students on this pathway is shown in Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 1

	ESF results (May 2012)	ESF results (May 2011)	ESF results (May 2010)	Worldwide results (May 2011)
Students awarded the full IB Diploma	761 (97.7%)	747 (98.2%)	683 (94.6%)	78.1%
Average points score of students achieving the IB Diploma	35.5 points	34.3 points	33.5 points	31.9 points
35 points or more	431 (55.3%)	365 (48.0%)	266 (36.8%)	22.6%
40 points or more	198 (25.4%)	119 (15.6%)	76 (10.5%)	5.8%
45 points (maximum)	12 (1.5%)	7 (0.9%)	2 (0.3%)	125 (0.2%)

Figure 2

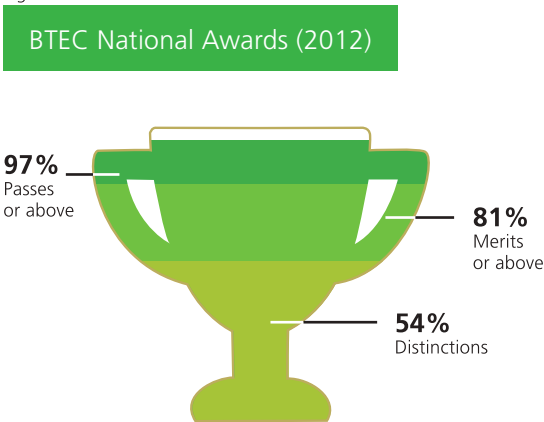
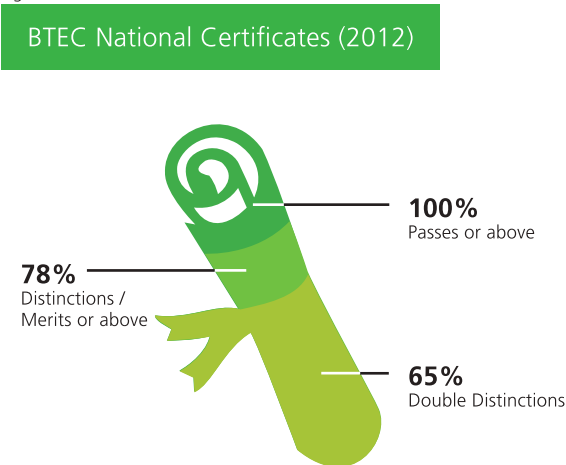


Figure 3



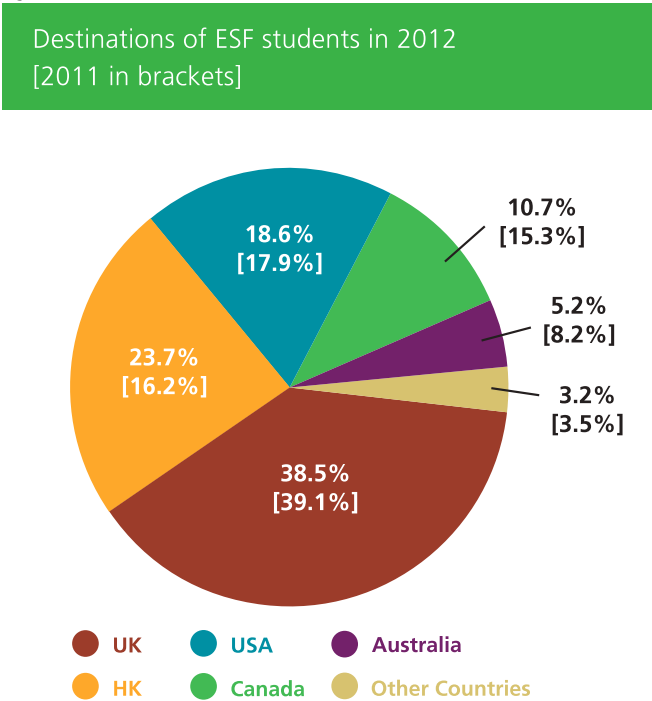
This success offers opportunities for nearly 900 graduating students. This figure will rise to nearly 1200 in the next few years as Renaissance College and Discovery College grow to capacity in the senior years. As Alumni, you will be interested in seeing whether students have followed the routes of past students or new opportunities are opening up. Our class of 2012 will attend higher education institutions in 17 countries in 2012-13. The largest number of graduating students head to the United Kingdom with students heading to 101 institutions in the UK; the most popular being UCL, Warwick, Exeter, LSE, Durham, Edinburgh and Kent. (See Figure 4)

In 2012, the second largest number of students has chosen to remain in Hong Kong for their studies. Opportunities in Asia, the improved quality of university education in Asia, the increasing international nature of local universities as well as affordability are cited as reasons for this growth. Ninety-two students went to the University of Hong Kong, 31 to Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and 29 to Chinese University of Hong Kong. This is an important part of the contribution an ESF education will make to Hong Kong in the future.

North American destinations are very popular too. Many students study in the USA, splitting themselves between the west and the east coast in almost equal measure. Many of those considered to be the top universities in the world are represented. This includes: Harvard, Berkeley, Chicago, Yale, UCLA, UPenn, Cornell, Northwestern, Carnegie Mellon, Duke and Georgia Institute of Technology.

Many students have Canadian citizenship and having strong ties between Toronto and Vancouver, many students return to study in the city of their extended family. The University of British Colombia supports scholarships for IB students and continues to attract ESF students, 35 this year. The University of Toronto is one of the biggest universities in North America and became the destination of 24 students.

Figure 4



ESF schools offer students an opportunity to study an array of subjects. There is hardly an area of study unrepresented. Our vocation in ESF schools is to find each and every student's aptitude and passion. As alumni of an ESF school, you will be delighted to see that ESF students go on to study the whole range of subjects. The table below shows the most popular courses for students in our class of 2012. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5

Course of study	% of ESF Students
Business / Business Management	14%
Psychology	6%
Art and Design	6%
Engineering	5%
Law	5%
Architecture	5%
General Sciences	4%

Like alumni reading this article, we hope and are quietly confident, most will go on to make a difference to people in the world.

If you have a story to tell about how ESF shaped the beginnings of your life and how you then went on to make a difference to people or the environment, then we would be interested to hear from you. Please send your story to alumni@esfcentre.edu.hk.

ESF CHAIRMAN'S AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The award was first introduced in 2011 to recognise ESF students' outstanding performance in school, including students who achieved excellent results in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma, the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the General Certificate of Secondary Examinations (GCSEs) and its equivalent, IGCSEs, the Applied Learning pathway and in Jockey Club Sarah Roe School.

In 2011 and 2012, there were 150 and 326 students who received the award respectively. Many of them attended the ceremonies and received the prestigious award from ESF Chairman Carlson Tong.



MEDITATE AND GRADUATE

JENNIE NG

Graduated from Sha Tin College in 2011 and scored 44 points in her International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. She was a recipient of the ESF Chairman's Award for Excellence 2011 and is now studying law at The University of Hong Kong.



(From left to right) ESF Chairman Carlson Tong, Jennie and Marc Morris, Principal of STC

Tactics used to revise for exams vary from student to student. Some work through the night and sleep after the exams, others choose exercise or music. For Jennie Ng, it was SGI (Soka Gakkai International) Nichiren Buddhism. In this interview, Jennie shared with us how she overcame personal challenges and found an inner sense of calm.

Jennie scored a resounding 44 out of 45 in her 2011 IB Diploma and has gone on to become a law student at the University of Hong Kong. She intends to become either a solicitor or barrister, but will make that decision further into her degree. But what she does know is that she wants to be in the legal profession and serve society.

"As a law student here, I know a difference can be made even in China, where issues concerning violations of human rights are extremely politically sensitive. There are many practical ways a student like myself can dedicate her career to work towards the ultimate ideals of advancing respect for the rule of law, justice and ultimately human security," says Jennie, the only child of social worker parents.

From her religion, Jennie has learned not to be envious of others and that it is unwise to have academic and career success as your only goals. She regularly visits family centres where she chats with elderly residents, orphans and mentally disabled people.

Jennie's IB extended essay was on the controversial Guangzhou – Shenzhen – Hong Kong Express Rail Link – to what extent is it beneficial to the economy of Hong Kong? "My conclusion was that it was definitely beneficial but there are obviously two sides and different stakeholders," Jennie went to interview some of the villagers of Tsoi Yuen, who had to move because of the link. "A few villagers slammed the door in my face saying they didn't want to talk to media," she said. "I tried to tell them I was just a student."

For Jennie, making the transition to Sha Tin College in Year 8 was not easy. Born in Toronto, she came to Hong Kong as a child and then went to a local kindergarten and later primary school for two years, before transferring to an international school. By the time she arrived at Sha Tin College, it seemed to her that her peers had already found their friends, she lacked social confidence, and "my academic performance was average".

To help her find her feet, her mother told her about SGI Buddhism. Thus, Jennie learned how to meditate to reach for an inner calm when she felt angry and frustrated. This proved vital in the run-up to her IB.

"I meditate 30 minutes to one hour a day. And before the English exam I did five hours, as I was particularly worried about that one. My friends thought that it was such a waste of time but I think otherwise because with a calm mind, it is far easier to focus and concentrate afterwards. Chanting is not magic. I don't expect problems to be automatically solved."

Jennie also found that time management was crucial. "You have to prioritise both in your studies and outside activities, and strike a balance."

For the Creativity part of her Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) Jennie learned the classical guitar and in less than two years obtained Second Place and a Merit Award in the Sixty-first Hong Kong Schools Music Festival's Solo Guitar Competition, as well as finishing Grade 5. She also does yoga and Chinese dance.



Jennie has her internship with legislator and barrister Hon. Alan Leong Kah-kit SC (middle)

Back at Sha Tin College, Jennie cites two teachers who had the greatest impact on her studies and outlook – Tony White, who was her geography teacher for six years, and English teacher Alex Daw.

"Mr White really inspired me. He was the teacher who made me fall in love with reading newspapers, which became really important for me in later years. He also taught me that geography is a combination of the human sciences and natural sciences, that everything is interconnected."

Before Miss Daw, Jennie found English quite dull. "But Miss Daw helped me understand a lot of literature, in particular The Crucible by Arthur Miller. There was a scene that is set in a law court, and the perversion of justice in the plot made me realise how much I want to play a role in ensuring a fair legal system in Hong Kong."

And while some of her peers' priorities will be how much money they can earn, Jennie's outlook is more about what she can do for others.

"My main purpose is to alleviate as much suffering as I can, she says. "It's really what I want to do."

BUILDING A BETTER WORLD

A multi-talented student works to improve the environment

ANGELA WU

Graduated from King George V School in 2011 with a perfect 45 result in her International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma and is now studying Land Economy at Cambridge University.



(From left to right) ESF Chairman Carlson Tong, Angela and Ed Wickins, Principal of KGV

Time and tide wait for no man - as the ancient saying goes. The fact that there are only 24 hours in a day vexes Angela Wu, but never stops her.

Ask her what she did in her "spare" time in the run-up to her IB in 2011, and there's a dizzying array of musical instruments, debating, rock climbing. She says she needs to work on her time-management, but then, how many people try to fit in as much as Angela?

Angela graduated from King George V School (KGV) in 2011 with a perfect 45 result in her International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma and is now studying Land Economy at Cambridge University, with a view to joining "some sort of think-tank".

She left her double bass, piano and drum kit behind for the flight, but took at least one of her saxophones.

"School was incredibly fun but always really busy," says Angela. "There are so many opportunities for us to do what we enjoy at all sorts of levels of responsibility. When there isn't an academic deadline to meet, there's lots going on extra-curricular."

Born in Florida, Angela went to school in New Zealand until the age of nine. "Life was much more relaxed and outdoorsy," she recalls. "I think my parents were concerned I would struggle with the basics if I grew up here with a helper."

For her IB, Angela chose Higher Biology, Chemistry and Geography and Standard English, Maths and Chinese.

"I think Service was my favourite," she says, referring to the service component of the Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) contribution to her IB. "I was lucky enough to visit Myanmar in my final year. It was such a rich experience. Sounds kind of cliché but I really learnt so much and thought so much about everything."

Two ESF teachers particularly inspired Angela. "Mr Marcus Turver taught English literature, but besides helping us understand the writer's craft, he really provoked us to explore each theme and message beyond the text. He loved leaving us deep in thought. We discussed existentialism, political oppression, gender roles ... Reading has become so much more fulfilling ever since."

In her geography class, Angela was motivated by teacher Miss Carole Beer always to go one step further. "For geography, assignments are graded against a clear mark scheme," recalls Angela. "But as we all worked towards that level seven benchmark, my teacher would bring in higher expectations. She always kept raising the bar. This way I found myself not just trying to meet criteria, but trying to produce to the best of my ability, and I am incredibly grateful she pushed us like that."

Angela found her calling in "Land Economy". "It's excitingly transdisciplinary," she says. "The course includes law, economics, environmental management, and finance. Hopefully it'll help me develop a well-rounded perspective. I don't see how current affairs and modern issues like biodiversity can be approached in any other way."

While Angela appreciates the importance of good results, she says it's also vital not to base your priorities purely on academic achievement. And it seems the sense of drive that saw her through her IB and multiple hobbies will continue.



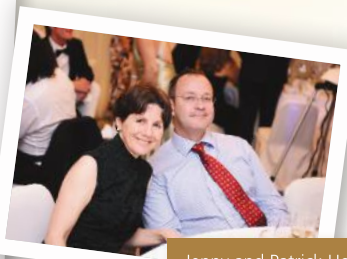
Angela with her friends at Jesus College

"I am dying to backpack around Europe, I've only been to Italy, but I would love to go to Croatia. I just feel so unexposed, like a little child. "

WIS *Gala Dinner*



Jane Foxcroft



Jenny and Patrick Hodson



Marianne Onsiong,
Roger Stanley



Shammin Azim;
Shafin Azim,
Nayaab Murshed



Michelle and Tony Hughes



Stanley Wong; Alistair Ho;
Richard Lant; Amy Lee;
Ian Bengay; Geoffrey Leung;
Owen Lau

On 23 June West Island School hosted a celebration of the school reaching a milestone year in its history: 20 years since its initial opening in Borrett Road in the old military hospital opposite the Island School site. As I was appointed Head of English all those years ago at WIS's inception I felt honoured to celebrate such a wonderful occasion.

The event took place at the incredible venue of the Verandah, Repulse Bay, with cocktails on the outside patio area as the sun set across the South China Sea and dinner for 120 people in the tented restaurant to follow.

"Alumni from many years ago came to celebrate the event, many from the event organiser's years at WIS," said Ms Amy Lee a former student and now teacher of WIS who orchestrated a really memorable evening. "Guests were treated to video footage of our 20 year history, a toast to the school, celebratory birthday cake and speeches to accompany the evening."

Some ex staff were present including Ms Rosie Marr, one of the first of our individual needs teachers; Ms Jenny Hodson, former teacher of English; Ms Virginia Powner, teacher of Languages, and Ms Ann Stevenson teacher of Geography when the school first opened. Mr Richard Dyer the second head of Maths and subsequent VP of the school, now Head of Secondary at the British School in Ho Chi Minh City, gave a speech about his own memories of WIS and its students.

Around 40 alumni students and alumni staff attended the event which finished at midnight. Guests received a memento of the evening with a specially designed WIS letter opener and went home with fond memories of the school.

A wonderful evening in a sumptuous setting!

Jane Foxcroft
Principal

SHA TIN COLLEGE

Alumni Visits



Ian Fong, a Sha Tin College graduate of 1999, who has chosen to be a small entrepreneur, shared his experience of turning personal interests into a career with Senior School students when he was guest of honour on the occasion of the Year 12 Celebration Evening held in September. Another alumnus, Siddick Khan, a graduate of 2008, was a guest of the Principal and

shared his life experience with current students.

The address was informative, lively with good sense of humour as well as intellectually stimulating. Please visit the alumni website <http://alumni.shatincollege.edu.hk> to read the full story.



The Alumni Association of Sha Tin College has launched its website

The alumni website will further strengthen liaison among alumni and between alumni and the College and will provide greater opportunities for alumni to be engaged in college activities as individuals and in groups. If you wish to get in touch with the college staff member responsible for alumni liaison, please contact Ms Maureen Tam at Maureen@shatincollege.edu.hk

KING GEORGE V SCHOOL

is excited to reveal its new rock climbing wall



The wall was funded by the PTSA and the KGV Development Fund after being identified by students and faculty as a highly desired addition to the Physical Education curriculum. The wall sits at the end of the field and is 8

metres in length and 3 metres in height. It was constructed mainly for lateral movement and will be used to improve student physical fitness in PE lessons and as a co-curricular activity for enthusiasts.

KGV Class of 2002 Reunion

The school is looking forward to welcoming back the class of 2002 for their 10 year reunion. On 20 December alumni will gather for a drinks and appetizers reception in the hall, and on December 21 they will visit us during the school day to meet with teachers and to observe what's going on at KGV 10 years later. Please contact Ms Meghan Spillane, Community Development Manager of KGV at meghan.spillane@kgv.edu.hk for more details.

SOUTH ISLAND SCHOOL

Film & Media Alumni Gathering



South Island School Film & Media Alumni Gathering was held on 16 August 2012 in Discovery Bay. Ranging from the graduating classes of 2006 through to 2011,

many of the alumni have gone onto study film and media related courses at universities around the world. The School is planning to feature alumni work as part of the end-of-year DVD to be included in the upcoming Yearbook. The group will meet once again next August and all former SIS film and media students are invited to participate. For further information, please contact saps@mail.sis.edu.hk.

New Learning Resources Centre (LRC)

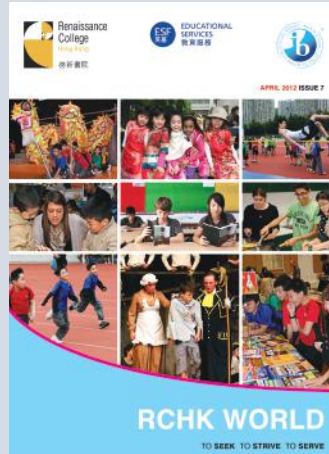
It was reopened on 24 September 2012 after major renovation during the summer. A Wall of Thanks is designed and installed outside the LRC to acknowledge generous donations from PTA, parents, and alumni. The whole school community is impressed by the design of LRC in terms of flexibility, adaptability for various teaching and learning needs, innovative furniture and the advanced technology. The School welcomes contributions from alumni, and donations of over \$5,000 will be acknowledged on the Wall of Thanks. Please contact Ms Faye Lin, Communications Officer, at flin@mail.sis.edu.hk for details.



RENAISSANCE COLLEGE

RCHK World

Renaissance College publishes *RCHK World* twice a year, in December and April. This full-colour magazine profiles RCHK's best and brightest students, and celebrates the achievements of its alumni and teachers. You can view the online version here <http://www.renaissance.edu.hk/rchk-current>. If you are an alum of RCHK and have a story to share, please contact Mr Jerome Yau, Communications Manager at jjau@rchk.edu.hk.



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Zurich provides a full range of personal lines insurance plans to protect you, your family and friends, on multiple aspects of your daily life, so that you can enjoy peace of mind throughout life. For successful enrolment from now till 28 February 2013, ESF alumni can enjoy the following discounts[#]:

10% off Zurich HomeCare Householder Insurance Plan

- Liability cover up to HKD10,000,000
- Sum insured for contents up to HKD1,250,000
- Contents cover will not deduct depreciation

10% off PAMultiple Insurance Plan

- Tailored coverage for children, adults and the elderly individually to meet with their specific needs
- Worldwide coverage for personal accident
- No claim discount up to 15%

Up to 20% off Home Helper Plus Insurance Plan

- Cover your employer's liability
- Coverage on medical and dental expenses
- Optional benefit on heart disease and cancer medical expenses

Up to 60% off Motorplus Insurance Plan

- No claim discount protection and front windscreen excess waiver
- 24-hour investigation commitment and claim recovery service
- Mobile app for express claim and cashless windscreen repairing service

For details, please call
ESF insurance hotline at **+852 2903 9384**

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INSURANCE

Remarks : [#]Applicable to policies successfully enrolled before 28 February 2013 and available to ESF alumni and his/her spouse, child (ren), parents and parent-in-law.

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