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FEEDBACK
Fraternitas is published three times a year (one in print and two online) for the International House community. We would love to hear from our valued alumni. Please email us at ih-alumni@unimelb.edu.au

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How IH has changed my life
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Mixed identity
The increase in the commercial student accommodation market around the University and inner-city areas has delivered many challenges in 2019. The Executive has been reviewing the features and services provided to students and getting to the core of what is vital in making IH so special and unique.

What will the student of 2025 or of 2030 want and need? How can we maximize the use of our spaces, our programs and our resources to meet the needs for students into the future? IH must constantly look forward to the student of tomorrow, as well as maintaining relevant traditions that hold the IH community together. A recent report looking at living issues facing university students found that the greatest single issue of concern is loneliness.

Although the modern student is digitally connected through electronic communication, some find face-to-face communication difficult and finding friends in the modern world a hard skill to develop.

IH is in a strong position with the newly elected Undergraduate and Graduate Presidents and student club committees. I look forward to working with these committed IH student leaders over the next 12 months. The graduate committee has a full team elected, the first time since the graduate student club was formed in 2015. This to me demonstrates the involvement, commitment and pride of the graduate community which has formed over the five years of the George Hicks Building. The future of IH within both the undergraduate and graduate cohort is strong.

Finally, I wish to thank donors and underline the importance of scholarships. It is becoming increasingly important that IH can offer scholarships and bursaries to students in financial need. Students are looking more and more at budgets and cost saving and at a distance sometimes find it difficult to understand the very real benefits of the college environment and the support, connections and services we offer.

Scholarship donations help IH to provide scholarships for those who otherwise might register in cheaper accommodation without the rich pastiche of support as provided at IH for academic and social development. All donations go into our International House Scholarship Trust Fund which helps fund a range of scholarships.

Operational funds are not used for scholarships therefore it is only donations and the interest generated from our trust funds which allow us to allocate financial support to those in need. In 2019 we distributed $350,000 in scholarships and we hope in 2020 with your support to be able to create more opportunities for students in need.

Dr Deborah F Seifert AM
Head of College
Congratulations to our 2019 Scholarship Recipients

SCHOLARSHIPS AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE IN 2020

FOR NEW STUDENTS
- Dawn Wade Scholarship
- Clifford Family Scholarship
- Commerce at International House Scholarship
- Robert M Fels Rotary Club of Melbourne
- Richard Cullen and SK Chan Scholarship
- Mavis Jackson Academic Potential Entrance Scholarship
- Weickhardt Academic Potential Entrance Scholarship
- 1964 Alumni Scholarship
- Frank and Valerie Larkins Scholarship
- Donovan Johnson Scholarship
- SEAVIC Lodge No.8 Freemasons International House Bursary

FOR RETURNING STUDENTS
- Weickhardt Academic Excellent Scholarship
- Sundarason Scholarship
- Andrew Lee Scholarship
- Peter Cole Scholarship
- Mavis Jackson Scholarship
- Donovan Johnson Scholarship
- 1964 Alumni Scholarship
- Rotary Club of Malvern
- Vi Peterson Scholarship
- Charlie-Jong Scholarship
- Global Citizenship Award
- TASC Award

If you would like to contribute to the scholarship funding at International House, please contact Ms Tamra Keating, Director of Marketing & Advancement: tkeating@unimelb.edu.au or +61 3 9345 7558
Thank you to our Generous Donors

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Rotary Club of Melbourne
V N Sanders Charity Trust
Zagora Foundation

1964 Alumni – Rob Oke, David Kidman and Gregor Howie with the 1964 Alumni Scholarship recipient – Meaghan Ferguson
Fraternitas NOV 2019

From the Deputy Head of College

What a pleasure it is to be part of this International House Community. I was aware whilst working at the main university campus of International House’s history, philosophy and strong student bonds. However, from semester two to be living and working in this community has only strengthened my understanding of the essence of IH. The wish of the students at IH to appreciate, welcome and respect the principles, cultures and differences of others is a living thread throughout the daily life at the House.

IH clearly lives its vision and mission of excellence through the collegial educational experience, preparing students for the valuable roles you will all fulfil in your local and global communities. I already see the determination of IHers to achieve academic success, personal growth and cross-cultural understanding as a basis for your life ahead.

I have met many past and current IHers, interviewed prospective students, dined at several High Table dinners and participated in student events. One particular strength of IH that I have observed and experienced is the sense of welcome offered to all those joining the IH community. The harmonious and helpful spirit of the House is palpable, and clearly enables lasting friendships to be made. I have been so impressed by the sense of individuality, the sense of knowing one’s self and of being strong to one’s ideals.

Finally, I would like to thank the IH community, staff, students and friends for making 2019 an interesting and rewarding time for me at IH.

Mr Daniel Persaud
Deputy Head of College

Tutor Review

Living at IH for the past 4 years has been an amazing experience. Beginning as a post-graduate student in the George Hicks Building, life was very different to what it is now as the Dimmick tutor (Pastoral Care tutor) living amongst the undergraduate students. During my time working with the students, I have gained an immense amount of skill in negotiating, communication and at times bordering on coercion.

As a tutor with academic and pastoral care responsibilities, I often have many students approaching me after hours for advice regarding personal study or other more sensitive issues. I have come to realise that pastoral care is hugely contingent on availability of support, which is what we have strived to improve and provide here in IH. Tutors are available after business hours, which can be useful for students who have full days in lectures and tutorials at the University.

I can speak from personal experience that the culture developed by the students of IH is unique and special. The amount of care and compassion students have for one another amazed me as it truly embodied the meaning of ‘Fraternitas.’

The ethos established by the Orientation leaders from day 1 preserves this spirit from older generations of students to new IHers. I have been truly impressed by the activities organised by the IHSC where inclusivity and compassion have been key themes.

The most enjoyable part of IH has definitely been the multiple dinner conversations I have been a part of. Topics ranging from politics to current internet trends (i.e. memes) have been the highlight of my many semesters here at IH. The sense of maturity displayed by the students who eventually leave IH belies their age, as they’re exposed to many global views within this enclosed community. As a tutor, juggling full time study and part time work will never be easy but the students here make it so much more enjoyable.

Ms Fiona Yew (New Zealand)
Dimmick Tutor
Doctor of Medicine student
Orientation Week

Being a new student at International House is an amazing experience filled with excitement for the semester to come. It is a similar experience to starting any new school, university or even an after-school activity program with the exception of being surrounded by like-minded peers in a place of residence where you are submerged into diverse culture and enthusiasm.

The first day jitters similar to starting anything new is expected and normal, yet in a way the new school feeling is different as you know the people you meet and memories that you make during the orientation week (O-Week) are there to last whether it be a semester, a year or 3 years. The first introduction into IH is held in the beautiful dining hall and everyone is welcomed into a strong sense of community. Each student represents a country or region and their flag is displayed on the walls in the dining hall as a sign of respect and belonging. O-Week is just some of the college ‘lingo’ that many students will use including words such as ‘IH-er’.

All new students will pick up the rhythm of the college lifestyle very quickly. In my perspective, ‘O-Week’ was an amazing way to meet new people and learn my way around the college, become familiar with my way around Melbourne using the trams and to discuss my subjects with the tutors and older students in order to become confident with my choices. The activities during O-Week are organised by the O-Week leaders (a select group of older students) which allows new students to become familiar with current students and to provide a ‘sister’ or ‘brother’ for students to go to about any problems or for a chat. The activities are designed to allow students to have free time but also have a structured week so that mealtimes, bonding games and parties are encouraged in a safe and friendly environment. The week is designed to encourage everyone to participate, make friends and meet new people from different counties in order to learn about different cultures.

O-Week activities included an adventure race around Melbourne, a big game of ‘capture the flag’, lunch at Dockland, a beach day and much more. It was a very fun way to meet people and settle down into the flow of college one week before Uni began. Once O-Week was complete and classes had begun I found that I had quickly learnt the IH way and settled into my new home, stress and worry free knowing I had made friends for life that would be able to support me throughout the year.

There is a saying amongst IH that you will never need to book accommodation whilst travelling as you will meet and become friends with so many people from all around the world, therefore meaning accommodation will always be free! As a current first year student I am especially glad that I chose International House as my home as I do not think there is another college that I would feel so content and happy with.

Paris Eckert (Australia), Bachelor of Design student
Selamat Datang (means ‘welcome’ in Indonesian), the IH orientation handbook, was first produced in 1961. The Warden (Head of College) Sam Dimmick welcomed the initiative, but used his introduction to urge students to find a balance between study and socialising:

You should be an active participant in the extra-curricular activities of students, such as sport, clubs and societies, House functions, general meetings, processions, drama, dances and social life generally. Having said this, one must add that extracurricular activities must not be allowed to interfere with your studies.

The first handbook provided directions on how residents could get to their rooms, the offices, carpark and warden’s room. Interestingly, the handbook also included the origins and purpose of International House - its goals and ideas beyond being a simple accommodation for university students. It was built to encourage “understanding amongst international students while pursuing their studies.” Further, it was also a way to promote openness and collaboration between domestic and international students in activities such as sherry parties and tennis tournaments, displaying the House’s aims of producing “graduates” who are culturally sensitive and with little tolerance for ignorance.

Although it was written in 1961, parts of the handbook are still relevant today. It mentioned Melbourne Zoo, as well as Brunswick’s Barkly Square as a “premier shopping centre.” Unfortunately, a popular food store called “The Dugout,” located in the next block towards East (close to Princes Park) no longer exists.

Meals within the college were divided into informal and formal, similar to what current IHers know as high table dinners. The difference lies at how students were required to wear formal, business attire and had to sign the absence book if they were not to attend these meals. The handbook also includes practical tips for new residents such as how to order extra bottles of milk and how to operate the “somewhat ancient” washing machines.

There were also residents called to duty by the House who were referred to as “Duty Officers,” otherwise known as Residential Tutors today. They were responsible for setting the tables for dinner and locking the gates at 11pm, taking turns (or shifts) at least once a month.

In 1961 the House also had specific tutors on every floor for each building, and they were ones who had power to fine students for misbehaving (for example, using sticky tape on walls).

The Student Club was the centre of life for the college, despite being in its early stages. Peter Sellers, then-President, wrote in welcoming the club’s new members and stating their initiatives, such as starting cricket and hockey teams. He also encouraged residents to write for Satadal and participate in cultural functions of the House. Sellers also wrote about their fundraising initiatives: wine tasting, festivals and dances that are evident in the college’s social culture today.

Although some rules and practices from 1961 have disappeared, many are still relevant today, and the handbook proves as another guide to International House’s strong historical roots.

Kiara Mijares (Philippines),
Master of Applied Psychology student
How IH has changed my life

After three years of living in a supportive, adventurous, and loving community, I will be saying goodbye at the end of this year. A lot of people ask me how I feel about leaving the college at the end of the year and often I do not know how to answer. My feelings are very hard to put into words, how can I describe the love I feel for a place that has been my lovely home for three years. It is not that I do not want to move out, but I am feeling the same way you do when you finish a good book - part of me wants to relive the highlights, but I know that if I reread the whole book it would not be the same as the first time, nonetheless, I am so glad I had the opportunity to read that book.

Three years ago, I came to IH: at the time I was a nervous eighteen year old, who was just moving out of home for the first time, and I was excited to be moving to IH after thoroughly stalking the college’s Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube accounts. Since that time, I’ve gotten the opportunity to do so many things that I could have never imagined myself doing. From singing at Music Soirees, organising Café Internationale, helping run the student shop, to being on the O-week leader team. I know that we often talk about all these brilliant activities we run as a college in our social media. But for me, those activities which I took part in serve as little markers in memory of the lessons I learnt, and most importantly all the growing up I did along the way. I will always treasure IH because it was the place where I could safely discover who I was beyond my home and my family. My years at IH will always mark when I was working what I wanted my values were going to be. And of course, my values are still developing but IH has left a very distinguishable mark on them.

IH showed me how to support friends, it taught me that I needed to expand my horizons and value those around me more. I will never forget those IHers who stood beside me in the most difficult periods of my life and were unconditional in their love and acceptance. IH taught me the value of service and of contributing to a community. Without the tireless teamwork of IHers at our events, some of the most highly anticipated events of the year would never occur. There is definite sense of pride which you feel will when you contribute to an IH event like O-week, a National Night, or a Holi and Songkran.

To be honest, I feel enormously thankful – there are so many people that I should thank. It may be a cliché, but our community is nothing without its people. I’m thankful for my scholarship donors because without them I would never have had the opportunity to live in this diverse and adventurous community. I am thankful for the IH staff; for their friendly smiles and conversations, and their support in difficult times. And most of all, I am thankful for all the IHers their friendship, their jokes, and their energy.

When I think about it more, I believe I know how to answer the question, “What are you going to miss about IH?” I am going to miss all those little daily interactions with IHers; the smile and nod you give someone when they walk past, the silly jokes you share over lunch, the groups chats with ridiculous amounts of people, and the endless coffee chats at Bobeff café. I’m going to miss IH, but it will always hold a special place in my heart and whenever I revisit, I will always have my fond memories – just like I am turning over the pages of one my favourite books.

Naomi Smith (Australia)
Bachelor of Arts student
IHSC president 2018 – 2019
Sundarason Scholarship recipient
Amid the fast and busy pace of our lives, it is easy to overlook inequities prevalent in our neighbourhoods and cities, let alone other countries. And yet, through chance encounters with people of diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, our perspectives and concerns fortuitously broaden to not only remind us of our privileges but also to motivate us to do more with our lives.

Such was the case for Peter Card, who lived at International House between 1967 to 1970 whilst pursuing his Bachelor of Engineering degree at the University of Melbourne. Coming from a low-income family, Peter spent his first year living in a caravan on a friend’s backyard before moving into IH’s Clunies Ross Wing, and spent his summers working on dairy and pig farms.

Peter reflects on his time at IH gratefully; it was his first introduction to an international community (having grown up in a homogenous, insular Melbourne suburb) and his friendships with international students sparked his curiosity and passion for travel. Peter particularly met many students from Southeast Asia who were of modest backgrounds themselves—at the time, the Australian Government was heavily sponsoring students from South and Southeast Asia via Colombo Plan scholarships—and with a fellow IHer, Indonesia became the site of his first journey abroad.

In 1972, while working as an operations supervisor on the steel furnaces of Whyalla, Peter met Margie, a primary school teacher from Adelaide, and the two got married the following year. The pair shared their affinity for travel and frequently backpacked around Asia, later together with their three young children. By always travelling with minimal luggage, using only local transport, and finding modest accommodation upon arrival, Peter and Margie are able to consistently realise their ultimate goal for traveling, which is to immerse themselves in local cultures and lifestyles. To this day—Peter in his early 70s and Margie in her late 60s—the pair are avid explorers, frequently backpacking around Asia, later together with their three young children. By always travelling with minimal luggage, using only local transport, and finding modest accommodation upon arrival, Peter and Margie are able to consistently realise their ultimate goal for traveling, which is to immerse themselves in local cultures and lifestyles. To this day—Peter in his early 70s and Margie in her late 60s—the pair are avid explorers, recently traversing Iran, Armenia, Georgia, Guatemala, Tunisia and East Timor.

Their wanderings have led to substantive and enduring philanthropic endeavours. In the ‘80s and ‘90s, whilst supporting their own three children through schooling, Peter and Margie funded the education of several village children who came from low-income and single-parent families in Indonesia’s remote Banda Neira islands, up until university. Then, through travels to Myanmar (also known as Burma) in 2005, Peter and Margie met Ohn Myint, a retired school teacher who is now 79 years old. Ohn Myint soon became their close friend as well as their intermediary for funding and constructing schools across remote villages of the mountainous Shan Plateau. Since 2007, they have jointly built approximately two schools every year, amounting to 17 schools today. The schools provide kindergarten and primary school education for 100 to 300 children, with one including a middle school.

The cost of building a school, including electrical equipment (solar panels, batteries, inverter), communication equipment (satellite dish, TV, DVD player), desks, chairs and school uniforms, roughly totals $35,000. In three locations, Peter and Margie have also provided additional funds for the construction of teacher cottages to improve the quality of life (and so retention) of teachers, and the pair continue to revisit the sites every other year.

Without these schools, children would be walking up to five kilometres just to arrive at a poorly constructed bamboo and tin shed with no books, writing materials or lighting. The sites for the schools are chosen carefully by Ohn Myint and officials from Myanmar’s Ministry of Education so that areas that have previously been neglected due to their remoteness can be rejuvenated.

The farmers of the Shan hills, both men and women, work in the fields all day, every day, planting and harvesting rice, ginger, sesame, turmeric and vegetables, for the meagre annual income of $2000 to $5000. Peter postulates how decades of oppressive military rule and exploitation of farming families have unintentionally preserved village life such that children want to be farmers just like their parents and not move into towns.
Though their material possessions are scarce, their family and community bonds are rich and strong, rendering any judgement that village life is less valuable or inferior to modern living as flawed.

To fund each school, Peter and Margie take from their savings, which have largely been accrued by Peter’s earnings from his project evaluation work in the mining industry. Remarkably, they do not view their outreach work as unidirectional charity but simply as sharing between people. They share with others what they regard as an overabundance of financial resources, and do not expect anything in return except for locals to share their unique cultures and ways of life.

As Peter says, ‘People in Australia get too much of the world’s resources than we give back. It’s about trying to right the balance…We live a good life, and we’ve got more than we need and deserve.’

Today, Peter and Margie are actively sharing their experiences and knowledge here in Australia in regions with social enterprises (self-sustaining NGOs). They are also currently collaborating with professionals from ATEC Biodigesters International and Engineers Without Borders Australia to expand the penetration of biodigesters on small farms in Southeast Asia.

For several decades now, Peter’s employment has been in project and business evaluation. To give back to the mining industry, he has created a freely accessible website where you can ‘teach yourself’ his trade. There is also a parallel set of modules he created for people in social enterprises.

These materials can be found at

www.economicevaluation.com.au

Yeung Shin (Korea),
Master of Teaching student
IH is a home to over 300 students from all over the world. Not only do we have the privilege of living in this tight-knit international community, the college also offers an array of academic and professional supports to residents throughout the academic year.

Students have 24-hour access to dedicated study spaces in every corner of the college. A well-stocked collection of books, academic resources and shared computers are also available at the IH Angus Mitchell Library, exclusively available to IH residents.

As the Graduate Academic Officer, I had the opportunity to support our community’s academic program by facilitating learning and studying through organised events. In the 1980s, Francesco Cirillo developed the Pomodoro technique as a way to increase productivity through interval studying. Weekly study sessions at IH called “Shut Up & Write” adopt this technique to encourage all residents to turn solitary studying into a supportive and social study group! In these dedicated study sessions, we take advantage of our breaks in between the working periods by trying all the different snacks funded by the House.

Graduate students also have the opportunity to share their academic research and area of study with the community through academic seminars. Every year, four academic seminars are held in the George Hicks Building. Academic seminars really highlight the incredible amount of knowledge of the multi-talented cohort here at IH. From cancer research findings to probability calculations, the stimulating conversations and discussions from the engagement of our students never ceases to amaze me. Speakers are able to practice their confidence in public speaking, whilst residents who attend these seminars always leave learning more from their fellow neighbour then from what they actually do in university!

In collaboration with IH’s Academic Coordinator and Undergraduate Academic Officer, the annual Pathway Dinner is hosted to provide senior undergraduate students with the opportunity to meet and network with external industry and academic professionals in their areas of interest. This year, our keynote speaker from Bain and Co was invited to empower and inspire our students to continue striving for excellence. All our undergraduate residents also have access to mentorship by graduate IH residents from all disciplines. Mentoring is a great way to facilitate early networking opportunities and building strong relationships within the community. Throughout the year, professional assistance and events such as CV writing, Basics of LinkedIn, and interview practices are also offered to upscale our IH residents’ skills in preparation for their future careers.

While college life can be full of twist and turns, IH’s comprehensive academic program truly has all the resources and amazing staff support to ensure each and every student is getting the support they need for academic and professional success!

Portia Tsoi (Canada)
Doctor of Physiotherapy student
Graduate Academic Officer 2019
A Valedict's Story

In my three years living at IH, I have collected more memories than I could fit into any amount of suitcases. I didn’t just upgrade my room from Clunies to Founders, but also gained a whole new family. When I first came to IH as a 17 year-old, I could never have imagined that the people I would later come to deem important in my life would also include members of faculty. In my opinion, my experience at IH has taught me four valuable life lessons.

First, the importance of team work. At its root, IH is nothing if not one massive team. It takes team work to show up to high table dinners on time in our academic gowns. It takes team work to collectively finish all the drinks served at the formal dinners. It takes team work to win and lose at sports (but at least we participate). It takes team work to organise and run O-week. It takes team work to compete in and win the Step Up Dance Competition (Fresher Dance). It takes team work to set up and clean up after every party, no matter how ‘sick’ anybody is. It takes team work to collectively sit around Bobeff café and spend a whole afternoon ‘pretending to study’. It takes team work to live in an apartment, to host dinners or movie nights and to keep it clean.

Second, it taught me the importance of family. No matter if someone is in their first, second or third year, every single resident at IH is part of our extended family. This quality comes to life the most during our outings. It doesn’t take very long to learn the IH way- that no matter where and when, you always have everyone else’s backs and they will always have yours.

Third, I have come to learn that it’s the little things in life that make all the difference. Being given a coffee by a friend when you really need one can brighten someone’s day. Painting someone’s nails in the library can kickstart a beautiful friendship. Getting that extra slice of bacon at breakfast makes it all worth it. Living here I have learnt to value even the tiniest things – such as my room key. Being locked out of my room in the cold winter after a shower at 2 am really stuck with me and I never forget my key again. Gold coins are another little thing that are of great significance. College has made me value a 1$ or 2$ coin in such a strong way that I don’t think I could ever spend them on anything that isn’t a laundry machine.

Lastly, IH has taught me to open my mind and heart up to new experience. Meeting new people every year and being able to call them my best friends and now flatmates would never have been possible if IH had a senior-junior divide. If I hadn’t been open, I would never have realised of my love for AFL, and my inability to excel at it…

I am leaving University and IH with a heart full of gratitude. It was a privilege to be able to live here, meet wonderful people and go on the most exciting adventures. IH is majorly responsible for the person that I have grown to become and has prepared me well for what lies ahead.

Sukhmani Vacher (India), Bachelor of Arts student
My Nepali Adventure

In 2018 I was fortunate enough to be the recipient of the International House Global Citizenship Award, which enables an IH resident to travel overseas and help a community of their choosing.

With these scholarship funds, in August 2019, I spent four weeks in Kathmandu (Nepal) helping to rebuild schools that had been destroyed in the 2015 Earthquake. While this earthquake was catastrophic on many levels, schools were among the hardest hit, with almost 9000 schools and 30,000 classrooms ruined and over one million school children displaced. In order to minimise disruption to the children, the government chose to move schools into abandoned residential accommodations. This arrangement added an urgency to the rebuilding process, prompting volunteers from all around the world to travel to Nepal and offer their services.

My reconstruction efforts were for Project Secondary English School. Given the mammoth task of rebuilding, the task was organised into phases that were assigned to groups of volunteers. The volunteer team before me had built one classroom and my volunteer team had been tasked with building the remaining two classrooms and laying the foundation for the hall - these spaces would be used by the school for their art program. The unique part about my project was that the residential building the school inhabited was right next to the construction site - it was great to be able to interact with the staff and children who would benefit from the project!

My volunteer team consisted of eight people, while we differed in genders, nationalities and ages, we were all united in our effort to try and make a difference in this community. On our first day, the local oversight team consisting of the site supervisor and the civil engineer taught us all the different aspects of the building project, such as; digging trenches, mixing mortar, laying concrete and bricks, setting up and dismantling scaffolding and building internal support structure.

Given the labour-intensive nature of the work and the basic tools and supplies we had, we definitely relied on each other when faced with challenges such as trenches being repeatedly flooded with rain or having limited supplies. Over the course of a month we put our new skills to use and worked to complete the task at hand - the day we finally finished the construction was a proud day for everyone involved!

I was lucky enough to stay with a local host family during my time in Kathmandu where I was able to experience first-hand the Nepalese way of life. Additionally, I was able to make the most of my days off by traveling to Pokhara, Chitwan and Dhulikel; exploring historic places such as Pashupatinath, Boudhanath and Swayambhunath and I even participated in traditional cooking, dance and woodcarving classes.

In every sense, this experience was a back-breaking one but it was worth its weight in gold! Thank you IH for this incredible opportunity, I have made memories to last me a lifetime!

Vidushi Sinha (Singapore), Bachelor of Arts graduate, 2016-2018 IH alumna

The International House Global Citizenship Award is worth $5000 and provides the opportunity for residents at International House enrolled as an undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Melbourne to spend a period of at least one month contributing to a humanitarian aid project, for the benefit of the citizens of an underdeveloped region.
My Nepali adventure

Open Day highlights
2019 in Colour
Mixed Identity

Melbourne is one of the most multicultural cities in the world. It is very evident throughout the city. The blend of different cultures is what makes Melbourne one of the best places to live (Melbourne was voted the world’s most liveable city for 7 years in a row) but for those who are mixed, it creates a very confusing problem.

Take me for example.

I am half Australian (a quarter Irish and a quarter German) and half Chinese. Although I am an Australian citizen, I have never lived in Australia, having lived in Asia all my life.

I was born and raised in Singapore for 14 months before moving to Hong Kong, where I lived for the next 6 years. I then moved to Malaysia, where I have lived for the past 12 years.

Being mixed can make you question your identity. It makes me wonder which side am I more of? Am I more Australian? Am I more Asian? It’s very easy to feel like you are neither here nor there; you are not “100%”, not pure in that regard. I grew up in Hong Kong and Malaysia, but then my Mandarin isn’t fluent (nor am I well versed in the Hokkien dialect despite living in Penang). But now in Australia, I am not seen as “Australian enough”. I don’t know many Australian slangs (I didn’t know what arvo meant until a week ago, and I didn’t know McDonalds was “Maccas” until last year), nor am I familiar with AFL, cricket or rugby. It can be really challenging, feeling like a foreigner in the two countries you live in.

In one of the most multicultural cities in the world, I find identity important. That idea of identity is constantly put to the test, whether in Melbourne or back in Asia. Where do people like me really belong to? Being mixed means I’ve struggled with my identity, and it’s hard to forget I am not just a citizen of Australia, that I’m not just mixed but also a citizen of the world. We all are.

I have dreamed of studying at the University of Melbourne ever since I was a kid, and to finally be here is a massive honour, to be able to follow my Dad’s footsteps and become a Melbourne Uni graduate. He was the one who told me IH was the place for me, I didn’t know how right he would be until I went through my first semester at IH. I’ve managed to make a lot of good friends here, people I know will be in my life for years to come. I’m always grateful for them and their friendship. This is what IH is about, it is one massive family. You are never alone at IH, even if you think you are. It is a tight-knit welcoming community that has something for everyone. There are so many opportunities to get involved in college life, whether it’s through sports, student committees, or a variety of college events. Life at IH takes some time to get used to, but it’s so worth it. Staying at IH has helped me settle into life in Melbourne very well, considering I have never lived in Australia before, despite being an Australian citizen. There are so much here to remind me of home (mainly the food) and having mixed friends like myself put me at ease.
Although some people may not enjoy the idea of multiculturalism, I believe it’s important for multiculturalism to be celebrated. I am proud to be living in such a culturally diverse environment, where people from all over the world can feel at home despite being miles away from home. It’s important to embrace and celebrate different cultures. You could learn new languages and try new food from different countries. Travelling is also a great way to truly immerse yourself in a culture, to help you become more of a global citizen and to learn to accept your multicultural identity.

I love Melbourne and being here allows me to celebrate my cultures. For me, culture is important and I try to do what I can to honour my culture.

One’s culture is a reflection of one’s own identity, so that’s why it is so important to me to never lose sight of where I am from, or who I am, even if I am more than 6000km away from home. Being at IH allows me to celebrate my identity, to explore it and to continue growing. There’s a reason why this place is called International House - all cultures are celebrated, you feel at home even if you are far away from home. IH helps you realise your identity and your culture is celebrated and supported, no matter who you are, and where you come from. We are all IH citizens and we are all citizens of the world.

James Velten (Australia), Bachelor of Arts student
2019 Reunion

Thank you to all alumni and guests who have attended International House Reunions in 2019
2020 REUNIONS

The following Reunions are scheduled for 2020:

• 1980 IH Reunion: 14 May 2020
• 1957 – 1970 IH Reunion: 21 May 2020
• 1990 IH Reunion: 27 August 2020
• 2000 IH Reunion: 3 September 2020
• 2010 IH Reunion: 10 September 2020

IH Reunions are a great opportunity to be reacquainted with old friends and to reconnect with IH at our updated campus. All IH reunions include a campus tour, pre-dinner drinks and a three-course meal. Reunion invitations will be emailed to respective alumni throughout the year. Reservation is essential.

Please let us know if your contact details have changed so we can keep you updated with IH news and events.

You can fill in a quick online form ihouse.unimelb.edu.au/alumni/update or email us at ih-alumni@unimelb.edu.au
The Importance of Culture

Last year, I graduated from the safe haven of university and accepted a graduate sales role at the tech company Cisco. With this being my first “real” job, I had nothing to compare this new experience to but was nevertheless sceptical of my colleagues’ insistence I was very fortunate to have started my career at a company like Cisco. Over time I have come to realise just how accurate they were and now appreciate how important culture is in personal growth and development.

In the graduate program, we started off with four months of almost full-time training that was delivered over video-conference with our fellow grads in Asia. Three weeks into the program we had the opportunity to join colleagues from all over the world at our annual global sales conference in the USA to learn about our upcoming plans. Two weeks after that, we were then sent to Singapore to participate in a more hands-on presentation skills workshop.

In my time at this company I have also enjoyed the flexibility to work anytime and anywhere, meaning even as a graduate I am encouraged to work my schedule around personal wellbeing and family interests, and we have paid time to volunteer. Cisco was even recently ranked number one in Fortune’s Greatest Places to work list! This supportive and collaborative culture has brought out the best in me and been an incredible learning experience.

Reflecting on other periods of my life where I’ve learned the impact culture has on learning development, two experiences stand out.

Firstly – my time in IH. This is where I gained my first exposure to the wonderful variety of cultures in the world. I had grown up in a somewhat one-dimensional background in suburban Brisbane and apart from my own Chinese heritage didn’t understand too much about values and different ways of living. I came to IH in 2015 very much with the same scenario as my post-grad naivete – I didn’t know what an “expat” was and suddenly I was surrounded by them. I was able to meet people from all over Asia, Europe and the U.S. and IH celebrated these cultures with countless events throughout the year. It was a significant change from my secluded Brisbane upbringing but amazingly educational and made me much more open minded.

This was particularly the case when I spent time on the Student Club and other committees helping to plan and run events. Learning how to work in a team with different styles of collaboration proved challenging to say the least.

Secondly – in my final year of university I went on an exchange program to the University of California, Berkeley. This was another environment where I was able to surround myself with people from all over the world and cultures I had not previously experienced. Being absorbed into the American college town life and new style of curriculum took some adjusting – and just as I learnt from my friends, I was able to teach them the Australian way of life.

All these experiences have proven to me how culture and being surrounded by different cultures can help bring out the best in people – it certainly has for me!

Emily Shaw (Australia), Bachelor of Science graduate, 2015 – 2016 IH alumna
Open Day Highlights
# International House Community 2019 - 2020

## IH COUNCIL MEMBERS

**Chair**  
Ms Vi Peterson  
**Student representatives**  
Mr Wallace Jin  
Mr Sami Zahir  
**General members**  
Mr Peter Godfrey  
Ms Katerina Kapobassis  
Professor Paul Kofman  
Ms Cherie Ong  
Dr Deborah Seifert AM  
Mr Richard Tan  

### IH STAFF

**Head of College**  
Dr Deborah Seifert AM  
**Deputy Head of College**  
Mr Daniel Persaud  
**Director of Finance and Business Development**  
Mr David O’Hanrahan  
**Director of Marketing and Advancement**  
Ms Tamra Keating  
**Student Office Manager**  
Ms Rosemary Hampson  
**Finance and IT Manager**  
Mr William Chao  
**Facilities and Assets Coordinator**  
Mr Nathan Caplan  
**Marketing and Recruitment Officer**  
Ms Thu Nguyen  
**IT Officer**  
Mr Shaun Huynh  
**Librarian and Archivist**  
Dr Caitlin Stone  
**Executive Assistant**  
Ms Catherine Fairlie  
**Finance Assistant**  
Ms Patricia Hughes  
**Student Office Assistants**  
Ms Jessica Bennet  
Ms Mary McCormack  
Ms Maybel Forrest  
**Gardening**  
Mr Michael Dale  

### Building and Maintenance
- Mr Gary Verona  
- Mr Steve Verona  

### Catering (Cater Care)
- Ms Colette Guerillot  
- Mr Marcus Moar  

### Cleaning (Spree)
- Mr Manuel Fredes  

### IH RESIDENTIAL TUTORS

- **Dimmick Tutor**  
  Ms Fiona Yew  
- **Academic Tutor**  
  Mr Dave Sachasiri  
- **Tutors**  
  Mr Ronny Andrade  
  Mr Aidan Carter  
  Ms Angela Chen  
  Ms Eugenie Chung  
  Mr Harry Driscoll  
  Ms Caitlin Kendal  
  Mr Bresson Li  
  Mr Aaron Lim  
  Mr Brandon Syiem  
  Dr Alex Wong  

### UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CLUB

- **President**  
  Mr Sami Zehir  
- **Vice President**  
  Mr Duncan Ledger  
- **Secretary**  
  Mr Bryce Owen  
- **Treasurer**  
  Mr Yukash Sivaraj  
- **Activities Officer**  
  Mr Matthew Winefield  
- **Activities Treasurer**  
  Ms Sophie Ng  
- **Female Sports Representative**  
  Ms Emily Seery  
- **Male Sports Representative**  
  Mr Campbell McKenzie  
- **Fresher Representative**  
  Mr Shaun Chow  

### General Member for Shop
- Ms Olivia Tan  

### Globe Editor
- Ms Aanya Gunawansa  

### International Liaison Officer
- Ms Sophia Lin  

### Outreach and Environment Representative
- Ms Abbey Milligan  

### ICAC Representative
- Mr Jack Hall  

### General Member
- Mr Carson Young  

### Arts and Music Representative
- Mr Ikshvak Sobti  

### Queer Community Representative
- Ms Stella Finlay  

### Women’s Representative
- Ms Rose Forrest  

### GRADUATE STUDENT CLUB

- **President**  
  Mr Wallace Jin  
- **Vice-President**  
  Ms Hiba Naeem  
- **Secretary**  
  Ms Divya Mishra  
- **Treasurer**  
  Mr Gowrie Kandasamy  
- **Activities Officer**  
  Ms Claudia Takahashi  
- **Culture Officer**  
  Ms Thirangie Jayatilake  
- **Welfare Officer**  
  Ms Steffany Alvarez Maldonado  
- **Community Officer**  
  Ms Sydney Shacklock  
- **Sports Officer**  
  Mr Poorya Shaghaghi
Countries and Regions

The following countries and regions are represented in the International House community in 2019:

- Australia
- Bangladesh
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Czechoslovakia
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Ecuador
- France
- Germany
- Guatemala
- Hong Kong SAR
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Ireland
- Japan
- Kenya
- Libya
- Lithuania
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Mongolia
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Pakistan
- Peru
- Philippines
- Portugal
- Singapore
- South Africa
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- St Kitts & Nevis
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Turkey
- United Kingdom
- United Arab Emirates
- United States of America
- Vietnam
- Zimbabwe

Philanthropy

Philanthropy played a vital role in establishing International House in the early days, and to this day is transforming the lives of many Australian and international students with much needed financial and in-kind support. There are many ways you can make an impact, including:

**CONTRIBUTING TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUNDING AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE**

A scholarship at International House will ease the financial burden of living away from home. You can empower students from a rural, indigenous, international or disadvantaged background and provide the freedom they need to learn and develop into global leaders of the future.

**CONTRIBUTING TO CAPITAL WORK AT INTERNATIONAL HOUSE**

International House needs to adapt to the changing demands of students in order to remain an innovator and leader in international learning and living. You can help International House provide a pleasant living environment for our talented global residents as well as keeping them warm, safe and happy.

**CONTRIBUTING YOUR TIME AND EXPERTISE**

There are many ways that non-financial support can benefit International House and its students. You can mentor a student, become a guest speaker or offer job opportunities for students at International House.

For more information, please visit ihouse.unimelb.edu.au/give or contact Ms Tamra Keating, Director of Marketing and Advancement at tkeating@unimelb.edu.au and +61 3 9345 7558.