



INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

Fraternitas 2017

What's inside:

Meet the Deputy Head	07
IH students who give back	20
60th Anniversary Celebrations 2017	14

December, 2017

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Contact us: *Fraternitas* is published three times a year (one in print and two online) for the International House community. We would love to hear from any of our valued alumni - whether it is news, a feature article for the next edition or to update your contact details. Please email the editors at ih-alumni@unimelb.edu.au.

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Connor Forsyth and Sarah Quek



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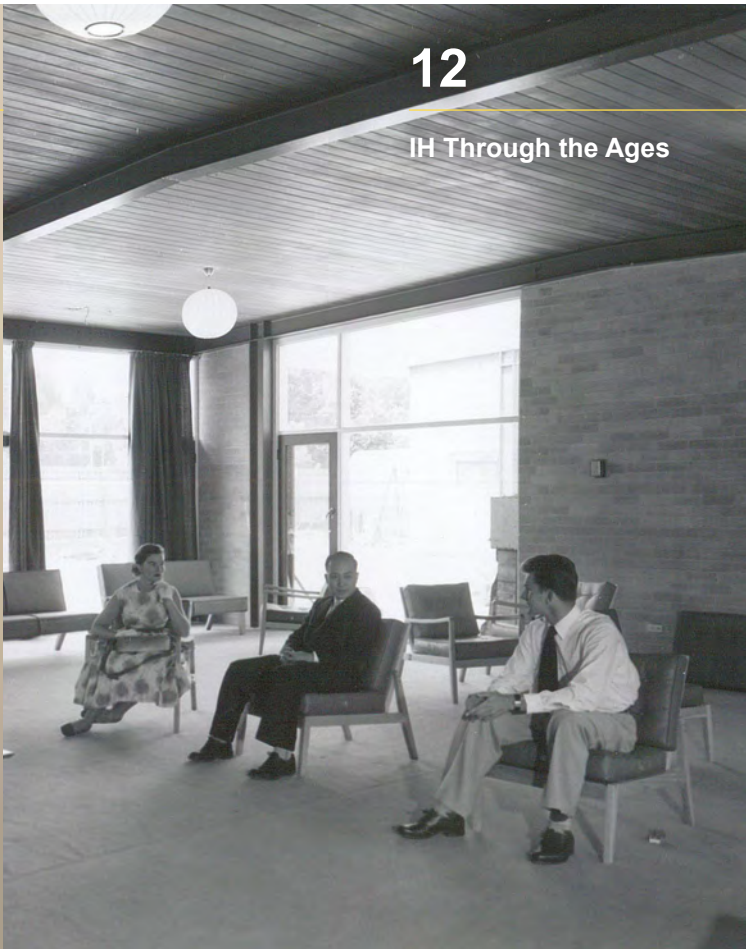
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In this issue:



06

Graduate Life



12

IH Through the Ages



17

From the IH Undergraduate
Student Club President:
Connor Forsyth

Features:



04

From the Head of College
Dr Deborah Seifert AM



8

Open Day 2017



22

Striving for excellence
– an update on Jeff Tho



20

IH students who give back

Contents:

From the Head of College	4
Graduate Life	6
Meet the Deputy Head of College	7
Open Day 2017	8
Where did Satadal start?	9
60 years of IH	10
IH Through the Ages	12
60th Anniversary Celebrations 2017	14
From the IH Graduate Student Club President: Dave Sachasiri	16
From the IH Undergraduate Student Club President: Connor Forsyth	17
The google story: Dave Sachasiri	18
The Stereotype that is IH	19
IH students who give back	20
Striving for excellence	22
International House Donors 2017	23
Reunions	24
Staff and Student Executive	26

From the Head of College

Dr Deborah Seifert AM



Each year since 1959, the International House students have printed an annual student magazine Satadal using their own words, ideas, and highlighting their issues. Satadal annually reflects the thinking of the International House students and what is important as their legacy. I like to think of it as a printed time capsule.

You will notice in this edition of Fraternitas we have an article on the history and creation of Satadal from the perspective of one of the first co-editors, Bill Holder. Bill is one of our foundation members, still attends IH events and contributes to our alumni committee. Let's hope all the departing students from 2017 are equally involved in the International House community in 60 years from now!

The journey that is each students' experience at International House is unique and yet all have similar threads. I hope that all alumni will look on your journey with fond memories, and rekindle that youthful perspective.

Below is my Head of College report from 2017 Satadal. May the new alumni take inspiration from our past International House leaders and contribute positively to make the world a more understanding and compassionate place to live.

"If we're lucky, the places and people that can give our lives an aura of magic

potential enter our experience at the right moment to sustain our dreams. One generation can give another that sustenance, not so much by what they say but by how they live, and how they include one within the life pattern they've created. Invariably, the magic is based on place – not theory but lived experience, part of ourselves. Often the magic is in a special house and its inhabitants'. These words are based on Jill Ker Conway's writing. Jill grew up on an isolated property in outback Australia and went on to be President of Smith College in Massachusetts, USA. She found a real home there and speaks about this experience in such a wonderful way.

I hope her words have rung true for all students at IH this year. I hope that being at IH now has been the right moment in your lives to sustain your dreams and that the lived experience based on place here at IH becomes a special part of all of you.

Each of you has come with your own story, your own academic background, your own cultural understanding and your own hopes for the future.

Our hope for you is to build knowledge to make a real difference in the future. Wherever be your home country, you will be the innovators, thinkers, researchers and creators in your professions of the future.

By being at International House and studying at university, each one of you has invested in your own future and in doing so you are investing in your own country's future. So many IHers before you have done this – excelled at University, made the most of the contacts here at IH, and then gone on to be professionals, leaders and innovators either here or abroad in their home countries.

IH celebrated our 60th anniversary this year. IH has a great history and a great future and you have all added to the IH story this year. We hope that you will have done the very best that you can in your university studies. Thank you for taking part in College life, being with others, looking out for each other, learning about each other, doing things together, making friends and meeting people from countries you have never been to but might visit one day.

To all IH students, whether you are heading off to further study or a professional career or returning to IH next year, thank you for being part of IH Fraternitas in 2017!

Deborah F. Seifert

Dr Deborah Seifert AM
Head of College

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"The journey that is each students' experience at International House is unique and yet all have similar threads."



Ms Vi Peterson, Mr Philip Kent . University Librarian University of Melbourne, and Dr Deborah Seifert AM at the Photography and Memorabilia Exhibition

Graduate Life



Achieving a graduate study degree has become almost a requirement for the job vacancies of today's world; however, I decided to do my masters for more than just a competitive career edge. Since I finished my undergraduate studies in Mass Communications at the American University in Cairo, I have been working in the field of media management and marketing communications. My first client was Lipton tea when I was an intern at TBWA agency where I discovered my true passion towards the world of branding and marketing. Later, I worked mainly in advertising and branding agencies for almost five years in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and UAE where I managed reputable former clients including Mercedes Benz, Ikea, Mobil1, and MSD.

Although I succeeded in contributing to the managed brands' attitudes throughout my career as stated by my employers and clients, I did not get the chance to learn the latest marketing & branding techniques and theories in order to put them into professional practice. Also, I felt that there

was something missing. I needed a new experience and challenge to find my true self. Therefore, I made my final decision to pursue my master's degree. However, moving to Australia for this purpose was not an easy decision to make.

Looking back a year ago when I arrived to Melbourne, I was so anxious with many doubts regarding this decision of going back to the academic field after having work experience. Also, when I moved I was worried about my social life since I had no friends or family here; however, I was ready to get out of my comfort zone and open up myself to the new experience. Staying at International House highly contributed to this experience in a very positive way. Since the day I arrived I felt how welcoming and helpful every staff member was to help me settle down. Later, as I have arrived in the second semester, I had the chance to meet a few of the residents who moved to IH earlier when I attended my first casual event arranged by the GSA committee. I was able to talk about all my doubts and concerns regarding my studies and they shared their own experiences and stories when they started their programs as well to advise me and give me some tips. This was the moment when I realised that I have made the right decision to live in a college where networking and sharing experiences are very beneficial to any graduate student.

Moreover, IH physical and human resources were developed to provide all the support any student would need to achieve their academic goals. With different study areas designed for individual or group studies,

I always find a place out of my room to keep focused and fight procrastination. Also, I find the IH library to be a great resource with a full support to supply any requested academic textbook that can be ordered and provided in a couple of days. Adding to the facilities and the well-designed premises, IH has a wonderful social life.

For me, IH is not just a residential college with nice buildings and high achieving students; it is a community where residents belong and apply its values. Like any other community, IH values are embedded in the way students and staff members communicate and interact seamlessly through all the social events and activities. Respect and diversity are the values I admire the most about IHers which are always reflected in their communications and I am proud to be part of this community. Living with people from different cultural and academic backgrounds has inspired me and added a lot to my knowledge during the last year. Living with people with different mindsets and perspectives about life has added a lot to my knowledge and each time I have a deep conversation with one of the residents I learn something new. Finally, staying in IH with other students, with time we became friends where we share stories and make memories. I call IH home because home is where you feel supported and respected.

Mohanad Al-Horub

Master of Marketing and Communication, the University of Melbourne

Personal Background:

I was born in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. I have a very multicultural background. As my father is half Palestinian and half Jordanian and my mother is half Turkish and half Egyptian, I have dual citizenship from Jordan and Egypt. Since I was born I have not lived in one country for more than five years around the Middle East due to my father's active job in the 1990's as a life insurance consultant.



"Progress is seen in so many ways – collectively and for individuals. Whether this is as part of a team or group of IH'ers providing leadership."

Meet the Deputy Head of College

I consider myself fortunate to have joined IH at such a significant juncture in the House's history; as well as wistfully looking back, and learning from our past, we have been able to do a great deal of looking forward and it is wonderful to see the reflection of our history encounter the ambition for the future for our community. To meet the alumni who have made such a contribution to society should allow you to realise that you, too, can forge such a destiny.

Progress is seen in so many ways – collectively and for individuals. Whether this is as part of a team or group of IH'ers providing leadership and guidance (IHSC, O-week leaders, Queer and Queer Allies, RA's), it may be the advancement in our tutorial programme that allows someone to reach a grade they may not otherwise achieve or the individual successes of those of you transitioning to new roles and responsibilities, within or outside the House. All of this comes alive at IH, it is our lived experience and I have had the pleasure of working collaboratively as is the IH way, with a team who should be proud of the legacy they leave from their tenure as leaders. Likewise working with the tutors, who have such an influence on our lives, has been a gratifying experience and I continue to marvel at their professionalism and dedication.

I have been invigorated by the daily experience of being amongst such a dynamic cohort, with the emphasis on embracing diversity and, as I have been often noted to repeat, there is a sense

that we create an incredible cross-cultural community by osmosis, by which I mean this happens naturally – in your study time, at meals, in sporting endeavors or simply the genuine support that each and every one of you has and gives amongst your peers. Respect, Integrity and Kindness are writ large in our daily lives and I hope this can be transitioned into your new exciting futures.

Long before my IH journey began, I attended the Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth from 1989 – 1991 before going on graduate from City University (Great Britain) with a Master MA in Arts and Cultural Management in the mid 90s. After a few years of very enjoyable teaching in Arts & Cultural Management, I undertook a PhD from London South Bank University that afforded me a significant amount of time in India for field research. After becoming an Academic at the University of Melbourne

in the School of Creative Arts, I moved into professional administration and was involved in establishing the Australia India Institute, forging a stronger relationship; between the two countries and developing my own public diplomacy and international relations skills. I have also undertaken additional postgraduate training in Educational Leadership, Risk and Governance in Asia (here at UniMELB) as well as in International Relations and National Security Studies at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

In addition to my role as Deputy Head of College that I have held here at International House, I also sit on the boards of the Cultural Development Network (Arts & Cultural Development Planning, Strategy and Policy), James Morrison Academy (Governance, Strategy and Development) and ix (a specialist Research and Mentoring Institute).





Open Day 2017



Open Day 2017 saw an overwhelming number of students apply to work on the day to promote IH to potential, future IHer's. After going through the applications, some marvelous IHer's were chosen to take on the roles of tour guides, decorators and bus guides, alongside International House Marketing and Communications assistants Sarah, Tessa, Naomi, Tim, Vidushi and Shrishti.

The 20th of August rolled around, and the first lot of IH students began their shift bright and early at 8am. Manuel and his team had already been working on making sure everything was neat, tidy and ready to go! The IHer's were having a great time filling the blue and yellow balloons with helium and lining them along the fences, making the outside of IH a reflection of the bright, friendly community inside. The balloons looked fantastic, and finally, it was time for the guests to start coming through.

The first visitors came at 10am, and our panda and panda assistant were out the front to greet them with a smile and direct them inside to our registration assistants. Once we had names and the visitors had a special IH chocolate, the excited tour guides were ready to take them on tours. Assisted by the marketing team, they took their first tours, showing the visitors around and then they took their next lot of tours independently. Each tour guide's enthusiasm was clear, with the smiles on their faces saying it all. As they were leading the prospective students around the college, their passion for IH shone through as they would tell stories and be so excited to tell the visitors of different events and activities that are carried out here at IH.

There was a constant flow of people touring IH all day, often congregating at IH's very own free coffee station at the Bobeff Café in the George Hicks Building. A big congratulations to our IH baristas who worked on the day making fabulous coffees and keeping up with the large number of orders throughout the day.

Visitors kept coming through the doors right up until the end of Open Day, with over 100 groups being taken on tours over the course of the day. A huge thank you goes to all of the IHer's who helped out on the day, guests left glowing remarks about the excellent tours and the passionate and extremely enthusiastic students who lead them around on the day. Thank you also to Tamra and the student marketing team for their help and efforts throughout the day.



Well done to everyone involved on such a successful 2017 Open Day and thank you for your contribution to the college.

Sarah Seery

IH Open Day Coordinator 2017

Where did Satadal start?

Satadal at International House began in 1959 under the presidency of Richard Seddon, co-founded by William Holder and co-edited by Andrew Deakin, as a magazine that was more than just a way to inform the students of the best room to have a beer party. Mr William Holder, International House Student Club President in 1960 and co-founder of Satadal, fondly recalled the time of the magazine's creation. With the support of the Head of College Mr Samuel Dimmick, limited resources and a contract with the local printing press, Satadal came to life.

The original Satadal encompassed four main elements. The first was to allow students to distinguish themselves. Students wrote topical essays, some of which covered aspects of nuclear warfare and racial segregation in Malaysia. The submitted essays allowed individuals to showcase their knowledge and understanding of the world, and allowed students to seek justification for doing certain things within the college community. The second element was education of other people's cultures. During a time when the White Australia Policy was still prominent, International House situated itself within a conservative



area of Melbourne, where the community was often reactionary, and Satadal was a way for international students to educate their Australian counterparts about their backgrounds. Thirdly, Satadal loved to include works by famous people, and works were published by the likes of William MacMahon Ball, a notable Australian diplomat and academic. The final aim of Satadal was to propagate the name of International House around the university. Mr Holder recalled the setting up of a small table outside of Union House, where he and other fellow IHer's sold upwards of 200 copies of Satadal at The University of Melbourne.

The selling of Satadal was mainly to cover the costs of producing the work, but also to raise awareness of the diverse community that was, and is, International House.

I would like to thank Mr William Holder for taking the time to come to International House and speak about the time during which Satadal was created and about the wonderful years he experienced at the college.

Lana Kisseleva

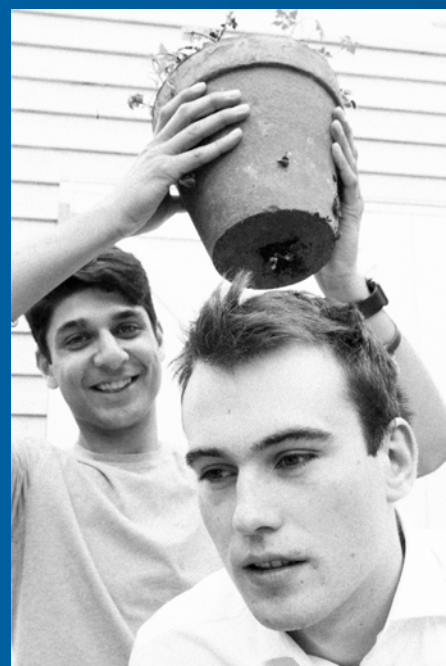
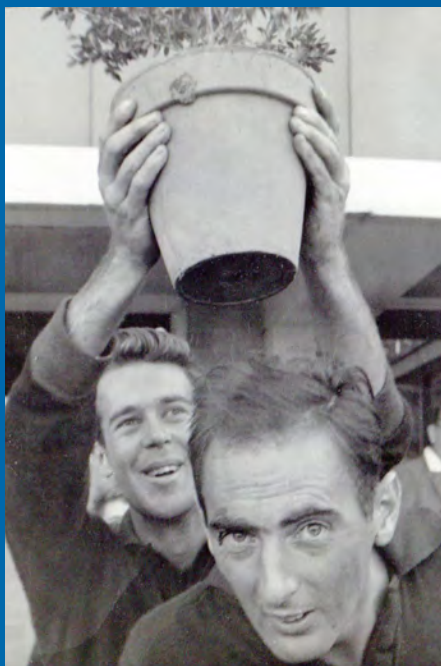


60 years of IH

The re-creations

The Satadal team dug through the archives to find pictures from our glorious 60-year history. Our aim with these photo re-creations was to see the beautiful journey our college has gone through over the years, and using these photographs was one of the expressive ways to showcase this journey. The photos we chose to re-create explore some of the most important aspects of an IHer's life, i.e. community and friendship.

Bakhtawar Gill



IH Through the Ages





60th Anniversary Celebrations 2017



The Dimmick Dining Hall, decked out in yellow and blue floral arrangements with our ever-present plethora of flags hanging around the walls, made for the perfect location to celebrate this wonderful college. Seeing the room that hosts us for three meals a day, filled with people from all walks of life who adore and appreciate IH as much as we current students do, was very special indeed.

Alumni, current students and staff members alike gathered in the Dimmick Dining Hall on this exciting Saturday

evening to say a happy birthday to International House; a place that has evolved and changed in its appearance and inhabitants, but has instilled the same sense of community and belonging in so many who have graced its grounds over the last six decades. The night began with a chance for guests to greet old friends, reminisce and examine an array of photos of IH over the years, before taking their seats and starting on a delicious dinner.

Throughout the night we heard from several speakers, from current Head of College Dr Deborah Seifert AM, who spoke on the history and enduring philosophy of IH, to Chair of Council Mrs Vi Peterson, to Khun Mechai, who through video spoke of his astonishing life and all of his accomplishments. Next, Dave Sachasiri, the Graduate Student Club President gave an amusing view of what it's like arriving in a new country, and the quirks and misunderstandings that come along with such a change.

Finally, we heard from Connor and Randall Forsyth, who brought to the table two generations' views of life at IH. The two gave an entertaining Q&A demonstrating both how IH has changed, and also

what has endured throughout the years. What followed was a father-son duet on a guitar that has resided at IH twice; decades apart, which made for a beautiful conclusion to what was an absolutely fantastic night.

International House is a special place. To quote Dr Seifert's opening remarks, it's a place "that nurtures understanding, dialogue and friendship", and sometimes it's easy to forget that it has been doing that for a very long time, and for many more people than just those we see on a daily basis. This dinner gave an exciting opportunity to meet some of those people, and to get an insight into the magnitude of the effect that this wonderful home has had on the world. With so many IHers going about their lives across the planet, undoubtedly who they are today is at least in part due to their time here.

It was an absolute pleasure to get to spend the night with so many fellow IHers in an event dedicated to appreciating the place that we're all so fortunate to have in common. Happy 60th birthday, International House.





From the IH Graduate Student Club President: Dave Sachasiri

The Success Story at IH

Regarding his new position at IH, Dave believes that the new role helped him in developing managerial skills including time management and balancing between the responsibilities of the role, his studies, and being well rounded to have his own time as well. He describes the main role as being able to “manage the graduate committee, the expectations of the graduates, and the activities where they get to interact and engage in IH”. Dave explains that the best managerial skill to deliver the desired value is the ability to communicate with and learn from people with different professional and cultural backgrounds.

“They have different perspectives and understanding of life and how to get things done from how I do things; therefore, they always add to me”. Moreover, working with the graduate committee Dave gets to know more about their field of studies,

for example “some have a very strong financial focus, or event management, so this allows me to learn more from them because they bring what they learn in class and apply it here in this environment as well”. Dave adds: “such a position requires the holder to be aware of the different cultural perspectives and always be open for constructive discussions”.

When asked about his definition of true success, Dave said: “there is no one big solution for true success. For me, success is all the small achievements that happen every day which add up to the meaning of success. If I am mentoring someone and he comes back to me with the ‘Aha moment’ that is success. It is the addition of all the small things that go well, all the small things that are successful. Being successful is the ability of achieving all the small tasks I set every day”.

International House has contributed a lot to Dave’s definition of success. For him, being the graduate president is a

success in itself. Also from an academic view of success, all the facilities and the resources at IH contribute to his academic and professional achievement such as the library, study places, and academic seminars. Dave provides an example that last year he ordered a new book and IH managed to provide it within three days when it was not even available in the university library and because of this book he managed to write a very good report.

Dave continues on his perception of success within IH by saying: “another criteria of success is being able to talk to and bounce your ideas off someone experienced to refine them and get the right advice. The IH management team really supports us because we can talk to them and they would advise and guide us of what is the best way to do things”.

MohAnad Al-Horub

From the IH Undergraduate Student Club President: Connor Forsyth



When I first stepped into IH on a warm summer’s day in 2015, I had no clue of the journey that I was in for. Three years later, I could not imagine the kind of person I would be without it. Understating it, the experience has been simply lifechanging, and I am incredibly grateful to have been given the opportunity to serve as a community member, as well as the Student Club President for 2017.

IH has taught me so much; it is one of the most relevant, genuine missions I have ever had the pleasure to be involved with. No other academic institution places such a strong emphasis on cross cultural exploration and understanding as we do here at IH. Living and learning within a residential community is something that

I would recommend to all people. Going further, the IH experience carries genuine substance and integrity that has the ability to imbed lifelong values and invaluable understanding which could not be conveyed in any other environment.

IH is not your conventional residential college. It takes a curious soul to really understand the benefits and opportunities our community provides. IH accommodates and nurtures all walks of life within our space. It is a place of diversity in all forms; demographic, psychological and organisation. It is the most noble idea, executed in such a brilliant way.

It is a journey of understanding, an understanding which can only be fostered through the exchange of experience. Australia’s longest standing Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies touched on this brilliantly at the opening of International House in 1958; its this idea of having people living together, learning together and disputing together will guarantee an increase in cultural awareness and understanding. IH has made me enlighten about the world, different cultures, but also myself and the influences that have played a role in my life.

I will even credit Deputy Head - Dr Nicholas Hill; in which we had an enlightening discussion on what defines IH.

We came back to this idea about unconscious learning, and the phrase; ‘cross-cultural learning by osmosis.’ The conducive environment allows for ideas, beliefs, perspectives and values to be radiated and imbedded into IHers’ understanding without them even being consciously aware of what is being passed over. It is the fastest, most productive and effective way to develop as human beings.

IH is a pioneer within an incredible multicultural movement that is increasingly relevant in our ever-developing world. The Staff Leadership Team along side the Student Leaders are well in touch with what this means and what the big picture purpose of IH is. However, these entities are purely there to guide, serve the community and facilitate positive change through student input. Ninety-five percent of what makes IH the place it is today is credit to the inhabitants whom provide the insights and intimacies that foster and create the amazing density culture. And it truly is a beautiful sight to witness and be a part of.

I will forever cherish the wisdom acquired from living in a place such as this. IH is a utopia. It has certainly enlightened me in limitless ways, and I will be forever grateful for the experience it has provided me.





The google story: Dave Sachasiri

In On a winter gloomy day in July 2016, the IH Graduate Student Association President Dave was running around Princess Park when he received a call that brightened his day. The call was from Google congratulating him for being selected in the summer 2016 internship program. Dave applied for the internship in May last year. Two weeks later he got a call from the HR asking him which roles he would be interested in.

Since he was really interested in a role that combines business and technology (convergence IT), a week later he was informed that there was a position in the 'Cloud Team' as a Sales Engineer. In total he had four interviews and each lasted roughly for 45 minutes. A week after the last interview he was informed that he was selected along with only other four applicants in the Could Team in all of Australia and New Zealand. He found the experience at Google to be extraordinary

and successful. Dave says "what I really enjoyed doing was using the technology in the cloud to help the team with the technical issues they had while absorbing and enjoying all the knowledge that the company offered. Also, I was delighted by the culture and the people whom I enjoyed having deep and engaging conversations with especially the knowledge sharing sessions". He described people there to be very smart, nice, and willing to help. "They never make you feel intimidated, they want you to succeed".

Post completion of his internship, Dave received a Christmas card from his manager saying that the base at which he had been doing things was unprecedented at Google and that he fit really well within Google culture and until today the things he developed at the 'Cloud Team' are still being used. From his experience, Dave strongly encourages other students to apply for the internship regardless of the professional field because although Google is an engineering tech company,

it is a large one and there are a lot of functions within including financial, HR, business, and marketing teams who are looking for interns. He adds: "People sometimes are afraid of rejection. Ask yourself what is the worst thing that could happen if you apply and you do not get it. You still learn something about the process and how to apply because the simple act of applying teaches you a lot and there is no saying that you will not get it. People have this misconception that they have to be the top students in their fields to be able to get in to Google. Academics is still one criteria, but it is not the only one. It is you as a person that matters a lot. Therefore, they need to understand that it's a whole package and it is not just one criteria".

MohAnad Al-Horub

The Stereotype that is IH



When I was asked to write an article about IH I'll be honest, I was at a complete loss for words. However, it wasn't because I didn't know what to write. Rather, it was because everything I wrote sounded cliché about living in a residential college. It read like something from a college brochure full of stereotypical phrases and buzzwords, which individuals were attuned to glossing over, such as; 'immense learning opportunities', 'cross cultural interaction', 'unforgettable experiences', 'welcoming and close-knit community' and 'forging life-long friends'.

I can't tell you how many drafts I've written and rewritten in order for the article to sound, for a lack of a better word, 'real'. After nearly a week of struggling to come up with something I was satisfied with, it FINALLY hit me - I couldn't come up with anything better because IH, in the best possible sense, IS a stereotype. IH is the physical manifestation of a college brochure because it embodies all the best aspects about living at college. You DO seamlessly integrate into a friendly tight-knit community, you DO form life-long friendships with people from around the world, you DO undertake a journey of personal growth and you DO have immense learning opportunities stemming from an array of leadership positions and events/activities to get involved in.

Now, I could continue by giving you a run-down of the facilities, describe what an undergraduate/graduate room looks like etc, however you can book yourself in for a tour/visit the IH website to get that information (hand on heart - from someone who choose IH by solely looking at the website, what you see is what you get). I would rather touch on something that I think really enhances people's college experience. Something that often cannot

be fully captured in words, the epitome of stereotypes - 'unforgettable memories'. Having had more than my fair share, I can attest to the fact that they're the kind you see in every movie - consisting of late nights, close friends, a few questionable decisions and lots of laughs. This is what sets IH apart - the calibre of people you meet and the memories you form together are a testament to our culture and our community. But like I said before, because it borders on the intangible, you have to experience it to truly resonate with what I'm saying.

I am and always will be immensely proud to be an IH-er. It has afforded me so many opportunities and experiences. I will forever be grateful that I took a chance on a college that seemed too good to be true because unlike most stereotypes, it lived up to its reputation.

Vidushi Sinha



IH students who give back

An introduction to community development projects and the Nepalese culture that led to a process of self-development For Jasreena Kaur, winner of the Global Citizen Award.

I undertook this trip to Nepal mainly with the intention of gaining a better understanding of the challenges surrounding community development work but also to attain an experience of volunteering abroad. I was fortunate that this trip was offered as a breadth subject at The University of Melbourne and is called "Community Volunteering for Change". I would strongly recommend this subject to all University of Melbourne students as it provides a good taster of what you would most likely experience in working in the field.

After spending a month in Nepal, I realised that we only tend to appreciate the true value of modern technology after being exposed to the living conditions in underdeveloped regions. Facilities such as gas, electric stoves in household kitchens, heating and cooling systems, 24-hour power supply and clean water supply are some of the facilities that numerous villages in Nepal do not have access to. Therefore, they utilise traditional methods such as cooking on the ground with coal or wood that were quite unfamiliar to me having been born and raised in the city. My journey in Nepal started off in Kathmandu, the capital city. It took me a day or two to acclimatize to the pollution in the city and before I knew it, I found myself in a peaceful homestay known as Barauli Community Homestay that is located in the Southern part of Nepal. The community in this region practices the Tharu culture. This homestay was not like any other as guests would be living in their own cottages rather than with the local families. The homestay was developed with the aim of promoting women empowerment by providing them with job opportunities or an income that allows them to be more financially independent. It was inspiring to learn that there is a significant amount of effort placed towards empowering women, especially in the villages where most women would rely solely on their husband as a source of income and financial stability.

My working group in Barauli consisted of five other students and myself from different academic and cultural backgrounds. This variety in our acquired knowledge and upbringings made it extremely challenging for group discussions and decision-making as there would always be opposing perspectives or beliefs. However, it was also beneficial as we were exposed to the challenges when working amongst an interdisciplinary team. As a team, we conducted several community development projects which were based around the themes of women empowerment, waste management and sexual health. These themes were chosen based on the current issues at the homestay, one of which being the lack of confidence amongst the local women owners of the Barauli homestay. Although the Barauli women are receiving the profits earned by the homestay, they lacked the skills required to hold administrative and management positions at the homestay. Therefore, we conducted English lessons for the ladies hoping that it would provide them with some language skills to have a simple conversation with the homestay guests. We made these lessons more interactive by learning some Nepalese from them as well. We also interviewed the ladies and wrote up their

biographies which were placed in the guest cottages as a way of encouraging the guests to get to know the locals.

Another significant issue we observed at the homestay was the burning of rubbish very close to the guest accommodation. This is not only detrimental towards the health of the locals and tourists but it also greatly degrades the air and soil quality. This would then affect the crop plantations, especially those in the immediate vicinity to the region in which plastics are burned. Therefore, we decided to guide them on waste management. A compost was started up for disposal of the biodegradable products while the non-biodegradable waste would be set aside for collection by the municipality. We take it for granted that our household waste is collected weekly or fortnightly, whilst here in Barauli there is no fixed collection dates and it can be as rare as once every 2 months if not once a month. As a result, they resort to burning their waste as it would be the most space efficient method. Therefore, we hope that they would sustain the practices of waste segregation and composting as it would prevent any health effects and promote sustainable practices amongst other locals and tourists.



My group mates and myself in the Tharu traditional costume.



My group mates and myself alongside the local women owners of the homestay, the management and administrative staff of the Barauli Community Homestay.



The women owners of the Barauli Community Homestay during their interview.



Harvesting potatoes with a local woman at the Tharu Community Homestay.

There was certainly fun amidst all the work. We were lucky that our trip was in January, as it was said to be a good month to tie the knot! The weddings in Nepal generally involve a lot of dancing, music and hence we would fall asleep with the sound of background music playing from the weddings. We had the opportunity to attend a wedding as well and I got to wear a saree for this occasion. The local ladies were kind enough to lend me one and tie it up for me in the traditional Tharu style. Although we lived in our own cottages at the homestay, the generous amount of time we had there allowed us to truly get to know the locals and they even felt like family towards the end of our stay. I had the opportunity to harvest potatoes as well which showed me the value of the food we get on our plates. I tend to forget the significant amount of effort involved in the 'farm to plate' process and I'm so grateful for this opportunity as it increased my awareness on food production. Throughout this trip, I also gained some knowledge on the Buddhist and Hindu cultural practices to which I hadn't known before even though

I was raised amongst a culturally diverse community in Malaysia. I am now much more inquisitive towards cultural practices and specifically gender discriminating practices that may exist within my family and moving beyond that, within wider society.

In essence, I'm so grateful for this trip as it has undoubtedly changed me for the better. I would like to take this opportunity to thank International House for granting me with The Global Citizenship Award. This greatly supported my travel and accommodation expenses whilst I was there and took the burden off my parents' shoulders. My time spent at International House has allowed myself to become a more confident and competent student that then led me to be chosen to be a part of this trip to Nepal. Again, I'm incredibly honored for both my time spent at International House and for this Award in providing me with this life changing experience that I shall never forget.



Rudil tying a saree for me in the traditional Tharu style.

The Global Citizen Award, donated by Professor Emeritus Frank and Mrs Valerie Larkins, is to provide 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, preferably for the benefit of the citizens of an under-developed region. For more information please contact tkeating@unimelb.edu.au

Striving for excellence

– an update on Jeff Tho



The last time Jeffrey Toh appeared in Fraternitas, he was still a student at International House with big dreams in badminton and dentistry. Now, seven years on, we caught up with Jeff and found out how life has changed for him since graduating from university.

Upon answering the phone, Jeff was very friendly and enthusiastically asked how Rosie in the office was going and we spoke about the buildings to find out that not too much had physically changed here at IH since he left. After exchanging a few memories and some stories of our experiences at IH, we got to talking about his most recent achievements.

After leaving IH in 2011, Jeff continued his success in badminton with achievements including being the



Australian Representative at the Thomas Cup Men’s Team Championship in 2012, being crowned the 2014 Oceania Championships Men’s Singles Champion and attending the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow in 2014. In 2016, Jeff and his doubles partner were the runners up in the Australian National Championship, and in 2017 Jeff attained the Number 1 ranking of National Men’s Doubles.

Throughout pursuing his passion of badminton, Jeff was always working hard at university to pursue his career in dentistry. Whilst studying dentistry at The University of Melbourne, Jeff made it onto the Dean’s Honour’s List, demonstrating his versatility in being a stellar player on the badminton court and a successful student in the classroom.

Jeff’s success has continued to this day. After working for a few years in a private dental practice in Ballarat as a dental surgeon, he bought it over in July this year. Now not only is he still working as a dentist, but as the owner of the practice, he has taken on the administrative role that comes with owning his own practice causing him to be, as he described, ‘very busy’.

Whilst Jeff has had much success with his career in dentistry, he has kept up with his badminton. But after a hip problem in September 2015, he now plays at more of a social level. As if Jeff isn’t busy

enough with his dental career and social badminton, he also recently co-founded a new, specially designed, range of badminton apparel, ‘Elevate A’.

When I asked Jeff how he manages fit in everything he does and what advice he would give to people who were trying to pursue their own goals, he said that the key to success is hard work. As an individual, Jeff likes to strive for excellence in everything that he does, and always wants to do more and more, to push himself and see what he can achieve. In order to do that, Jeff says that it is important to prioritise what you think is important and make sure you stick to it. He says that it can often feel difficult and long, but it is important that you are consistent in your quality and that you are working hard. Jeff believes that every day, we have a choice. A choice to wake up and work hard. He acknowledges that sometimes you wake up and are tired, and you feel unmotivated; the easy choice would be to let yourself be tired and not do anything. That is where Jeff says that choice is important; you need to make the harder choice, that no matter how you are feeling, that you choose to work hard and push yourself, because that is when you will succeed.

Sarah Seery



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See all the photographs from International House reunions and events by visiting our Facebook page
www.facebook.com/internationalhousemelbourne

50 plus

25th May



1977 IH Reunion

18 May



1987 IH Reunion

31 August



1997 IH Reunion

7 May



2007 IH Reunion

19 September





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50 plus 1957-1968 Reunion: 24 May

1988 Reunion: 30 August

1998 Reunion: 6 September

2008 Reunion: 13 September

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