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focal point for learning

RC ALUMNI  
the college's ambassadors

RCHK WORLD

TO SEEK TO STRIVE TO SERVE



*Holly Brown*

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Innovation and creativity are keys to succeed in today's knowledge-based society. The Red Door Centre plays a crucial role in fostering innovative and creative ideas in the college community, as it helps our educators to make learning fun and interactive. In addition, it also gives our students the space to create and apply their ideas. As such, the opening of the new Red Door Centre truly represents a new chapter in technology and learning at RCHK where we have the infrastructure to meet the challenges of digital age education.

The Information Age not only brings us a knowledge-based society, but also transforms the way we communicate. Email, instant messaging and social media platforms have revolutionized the way we interact with each other. Amidst this revolution is the rise of digital publication, where it promises to bring richer and interactive content to readers.

In light of the new publishing paradigm, we are launching the e-book version of *RCHK World*. Initially available in Apple's iBook (IBA) format, the e-book version looks the same as the print version, but with the addition of multimedia content. At the same time, the circulation of the print version will be reduced, as part of our effort to reduce our carbon footprint.

In the meantime, we will continue to distribute free copies to primary students and copies are also available in the library. Secondary students can either view the PDF version on the college website or download the e-book version on Apple's App Store. This digital migration allows us to provide richer content without impacting the environment.

Thanks to everyone who contributed stories and photos. We wouldn't be able to celebrate the RCHK community in such a colourful way were it not for your support. As Christmas is just around the corner, we wish everyone a joyous holiday season!

Jerome Yau

Editor

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

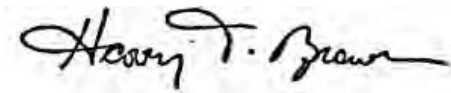
2013 is a milestone year for Renaissance College, as we received accreditation from the Council of International Schools and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges. These recognitions not only validate the integrity of our curriculum and philosophy, but also affirm our commitment to excellence in education.

The opening of the new Red Door Centre (RDC) in November is a fine example of our commitment to continuous improvement. As we are living in a constantly evolving digital world, the college realized that the existing ICT centre could no longer provide our students with the latest experiences that allow their creative minds to flourish. With ample learning space and the latest equipment, the new RDC is slated to become a focal point for learning in the college community for many years to come.

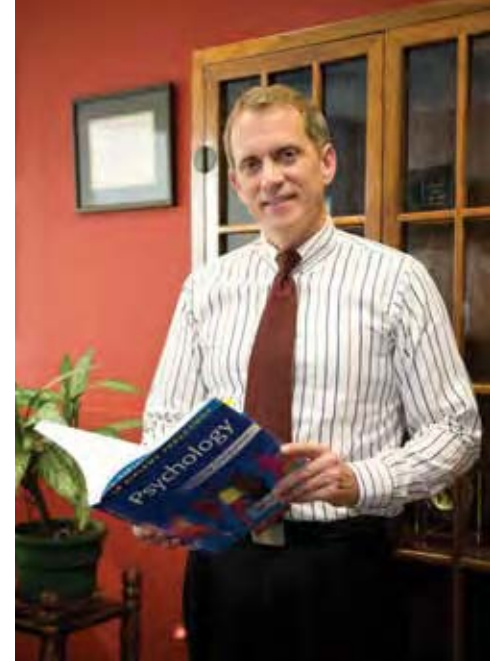
While our focus is always on our current students, it doesn't mean we haven't forgotten our alumni. We held our first local reunion in June, followed by the launch of a dedicated alumni website in September. As evidenced by the rich stories in this issue, our alumni are truly ambassadors of the college, as they continue to exemplify the motto of RCHK – to seek, to serve and to strive.

As a community-minded school, the spirit of humanitarianism is particular strong at RCHK. In addition to various student-led projects that raise funds for a wide variety of worthy causes, our parents immediately opened their hearts to the victims of Super Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines and donated money, food and supplies to the survivors. Their generosity has made a difference in the lives of people striving to recover.

The stories in this magazine epitomize the vibrant learning environment at RCHK. Please take a moment to go through the pages and celebrate with us the successes of our students and teachers!



Dr. Harry Brown  
Principal



# NEWSMAKERS

## Impressive achievements

Vivien Mok of 4KH is an avid golf player. In 2013, she won numerous awards in various golf competitions:

- Champion, 2013 U.S. Kids Gold World Championship (HK Qualifier)
- Champion, Bank of China (Hong Kong) 56th Festival of Sport – HK School Golf (Driving Range) Competition
- 2nd runner-up, Hong Kong Junior Close Championship 2013
- 2nd runner-up, Albert K. W. Lai Junior Championship 2013
- 2nd runner-up, The Clearwater Bay Executive Nine Junior Open 2013- Summer and Autumn Tournaments

In addition, Vivien won a championship, two first runner-ups and three second runner-ups in a total of 11 tournaments in the EFG Bank – HKGA Junior Golf Series 2013. Well done and congrats!



## Budding pianist

Congratulations to Crystal Wong of 1SP who won fifth place in the 3rd Hong Kong Golden Bauhinia Youth Piano Competition 2013.



## Taekwondo winners

Congratulations to Tristan Chan of 5BD who won first place in the Hong Kong Boy's Taekwondo Competition 2013 (Light Middle group).



## Figure skater shines on ice

Congratulations to Kahlen Cheung who won second place in the Asian Junior Figure Skating Challenge 2013-14 (Advanced Pre-Novice Girls).

Kahlen was also ranked sixth overall out of 15 participants from China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and other Asian countries. Well done!

## A proud mom

Angus Yip of 4KH and her mother were interviewed by the *Ming Pao* newspaper about Angus's journey in learning music in June 2013.

In the article, Mrs. Yip said that when Angus was three years old, he was trained to possess "perfect pitch" aural ability through music courses.

Angus is currently learning piano and electone. He obtained a distinction in the ABRSM Grade 2 Piano Examination and a pass in the Yamaha Grade 11 Electone Examination. He also won the championship in the Yamaha Children Music Electone Ensemble in June this year. In addition, Angus is a member of the RCHK choir.

We congratulate Angus on his many achievements and wish him continued success.



Scan or logon to  
<http://goo.gl/FML4kB>  
to read the article.



## First runner-up in national arts competition

Congratulations to Livia Korng of 6JF who won second prize in the 11th National Children Arts Cup competition (全國第十一屆少兒美術杯年度藝術展評).



## Sailor wins regatta

Congratulations to Year 7 student Faolan Whyte who won the Under 12 Division of the Hong Kong Sailing Federation International Open Regatta, beating participants from Taiwan, the Philippines, Thailand and Macau, as well as Hong Kong.



## Math whiz kid's incredible achievement

Year 9 student Ryan Leung competed in the UK Mathematical Trust (UKMT) competition back in 2012, which involved hundreds of thousands of students from around the world. After numerous qualification rounds, Ryan made it into the May 2013 Olympiad final. Incredibly he finished in the top fifty students worldwide. Well done Ryan for a truly exceptional performance!

# NEWSMAKERS

## A bronze achievement

Brian Wong of 6TW recently won a bronze medal in a Cub Scout competition. There were five activities, and Brian did one which tested his memory. He and another Cub Scout had to remember 50 photos displayed through a slide, then their leader gave them two pieces of paper where there were 100 boxes for them to check and choose the 50 slides that they saw earlier.

Initially, the pair thought they would win because they thought the answers they checked were all correct. Even though they only won bronze, they were still very happy.

Well done and congrats!

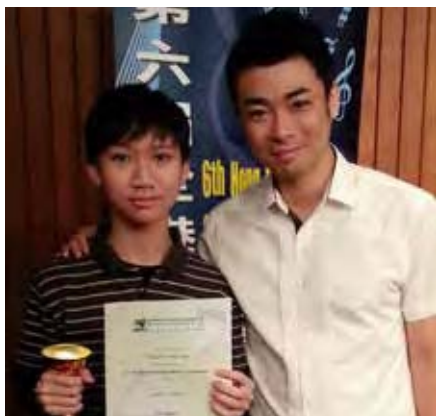


## Squash player performs well in tournament

Year 12 student Kenny Chu won third runner-up in the Boys Under 17 category in the Prince Hong Kong Junior Squash Championships 2013.

Kenny entered the top eight position after three rounds of the competition in the main draw. He then reached the semi-finals by winning the first match against a Hong Kong Sports Institute (HKSI) player. Among the four players competing in the semi-finals, Kenny was the only one who did not receive training at HKSI.

Well done and congrats!



## Aspiring singer

Congratulations to Year 10 student Jacob Leung who was awarded third place in Singing – Diploma Class in the 6th Hong Kong Students Open Music Competition.

Jacob was the youngest contestant, and the adjudicator commented that he gave an “excellent performance.”

At school, Jacob is singer in the Year 11 pop band, Bandage.



Julian Yuen



Jayden Yuen

## Skating twins

Congratulations to twin brothers, Julian Yuen (3LM, left) and Jayden Yuen (3JD, right) who won second place in the FS1 aged 7 event and third place in the FS1 aged 7-8 event respectively in the Skate Hong Kong 2013 Competition.

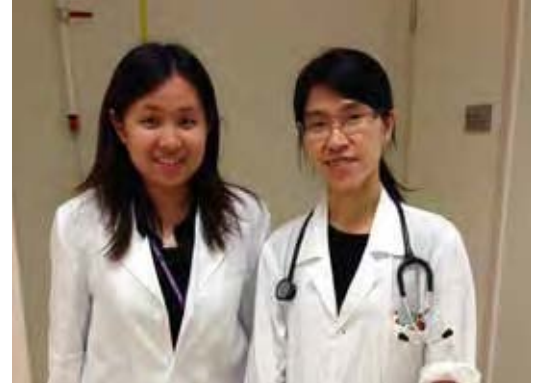


## LEARNING 360

### CUHK Summer Clinical Attachment Programme

By Ashley Wong, Year 13

The Chinese University of Hong Kong organized a Summer Clinical Attachment Programme for secondary students who are interested in studying medicine at CUHK. 140 students from 70 secondary schools in Hong Kong attended, with two students representing each school, all either going into Year 12 or 13. I was very privileged to be one of the two chosen to represent RCHK. The entire programme can be categorized into four areas: lectures, doctor shadowing, CUHK campus tour and the robotic symposium live surgery.



My first reaction to lectures was that it was going to be boring, but in reality it was the complete opposite. The professors that spoke to us were all very knowledgeable in the medical field and their lectures were inspirational and useful in helping us consider a future in this field. I definitely have better knowledge about a career as a doctor and am even more motivated than before to achieve this goal. The common theme throughout all the lectures by the professors were that in order to be a good doctor, we need to care for the patient from the bottom of our hearts and if our aim is to earn money, the medical profession is definitely not the one to choose, as it is a difficult and tiring profession. This theme was stressed in all the lectures throughout the week.

The highlight of the entire week was definitely the doctor shadowing session. Along with two other students, we shadowed a nephrologist (kidney specialist) where we were able to observe a minor surgery. Watching the blood spurt and the surgeon work was undeniably the top experience in my life. The robotic symposium live surgery was also very spectacular, as we witnessed a live broadcast of a robotic surgery where the surgeon controls a robot that operates on the patient.

Overall, this programme was one of the best experiences in my life so far!

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## LEARNING 360

### RCHK Unplugged

RCHK Unplugged is a series of after-school jam sessions for primary and secondary students who enjoy playing the violin or the piano. The first four sessions took place between January and May 2013. Students enjoyed collaborating in duets, sonatas and concerti. At the final event of the 2012-2013 academic year, 15 students played the Canon in D by Johann Pachelbel. Elaine Cheung, programme director of The Hong Kong Chamber Music Society, was present at each of the one-hour sessions to offer guidance to participating students.



One or more sessions of RCHK Unplugged may be organized in 2014. Watch out for announcements in *The Black Kite*.



### Scholarship Music Concert – a reflection

By Cecilia Chow, Year 13 Music Scholar

In early September 2013, a group of music scholars gathered together to perform at the 5th annual Scholarship Music Concert. It was a great evening filled with music of various styles, such as classical and Broadway music from the greatest composers of all like Poulenc, Chopin, Debussy, etc. Moreover, the PAC hall was filled with the sounds of different instruments such as saxophone, marimba, piano, cello and the guitar. It was not only a great performance opportunity, but also a great experience for music experience as we exchanged our musical knowledge which helped us further develop our musical maturity. We all played for a meaningful cause as the proceeds went to The Nesbitt Centre helping people with special needs. Moreover, we were very honoured to have invited Mr. Nesbitt and his family to our concert.

Having participated in the concert for the past three years, this was my last time participating in the Scholarship Music Concert. It has been a lovely time witnessing the growth of other fellow scholars and watching our music community

grows. As the last performer of the concert, I could not help but feel a little nervous. Nonetheless, I really enjoyed my last scholarship concert and I am sure that I will really miss participating in this significant annual event.

On behalf of all the music scholars, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Ms. Liu, Mr. Goldring, Mr. Otto, Ms. Shen, Fred and Vera for organizing this wonderful concert for the music scholars to share and to learn from each other.

## Australia's top diplomat in HK speaks to RC students

Paul Tighe, Australia's consul general in Hong Kong, spoke to a group of RCHK students on a range of regional and global issues on November 1.

The speech was followed by a Q & A session, where students asked many pointed questions, such as the War on Terror and Australia's relationship with China and Taiwan.

Without a doubt, the students appreciated the perspectives given by Tighe and they now have a better understanding of world affairs.



## Domino Effect workshop

By Melvin Kan, Year 11

The Domino Effect is a leadership workshop held on November 16-17, initiated by both RCHK and Li Po Chun United World College students. This workshop aims to develop student's understanding in what makes a great leader and train them with the necessary skills to be one. Leadership skills involve of a wide range of qualities, from communication to critical thinking, which these must be trained from when we are young.

Initially, the workshop was held annually beginning from 2008, however it came to a pause after 2010. This year, we made a comeback with students from RCHK and LPCUWC collaborating once again. The event went on for two days, each held in the respective schools led by different student leaders. From our school, 16 Year 11 students planned a diversity of activities, each training specific leadership qualities. In the end, not only did the younger participants walked away with new leadership skills from this workshop, but it has also been a valuable lesson for all of us, and a great opportunity to gain experience in taking the role of a leader. We are proud to say that these two days were truly remarkable, and had been filled with laughter and joy.



## LEARNING 360

### Year 6 Treasure Island camp

By Karina Pang and Rachel Wong, 6MH

On November 27, 125 Year 6 students departed to Pui O Beach, Lantau Island for the EOTC camp. We stayed there for three days and two nights. The trip to Lantau was quite long and it lasted for about one hour from Renaissance College, but luckily we could chat and play with our friends along the way. At Lantau, trained instructors helped and supported us with our activities and games. We were put into groups from 1-9 and were all taught how to set up our tents.

Surfing and hiking were just some of the activities we did, and it was loads of fun! We enjoyed it very much. We learned that throughout the games, we should all stick together because if one of us didn't cooperate, the whole team would not succeed. One of those games was the Pass the Sponge. It was hard, but it was also fun. Throughout this camp, we also made new friends and learned how to take care of nature. We saw lots of water buffaloes and their friend: Billy the cow!

Over these few days, we did lots of activities. Our breakfast, lunch and dinner were great too! There were spaghetti, BBQ, s'mores and many more. The last day's activities concluded with adventure challenges where we had to cooperate and communicate with our teammates. We had an awesome time at Treasure Island and we hope that we can go there again.



### Year 6 Zhaoqing camp

By Joe Fahy, Year 6 Teacher

A group of 32 Year 6 students took the opportunity to enhance their Putonghua by going on the three-day Year 6 camp to Zhaoqing, Guangdong, China with the outdoor adventure specialist Dragonfly.

Following a long bus ride to reach the destination the students were exposed to a range of activities, which gave them a greater insight into life in China. They visited a local school, where they were able to meet with other students and engage in conversation (some RCHK students even learned a few new games). They tried their hands at Chinese painting and even had a go at the local tradition of inkstone carving, having been inspired by seeing some of the works of the local artists. One of the highlights was the challenge of taking part in a great race competition around the scenic Seven Star Crags Park situated in Star Lake. The students stayed at the Nine Dragon Resort situated on a picturesque lake nestled by surrounding hills. The only access to the resort is by a slow boat, which gracefully meanders back and forth across the lake. On the second evening they showcased their variety of talents by completing some fabulous group drama challenges around a campfire. On the final morning they demonstrated their risk-taking skills by completing a cable hike, which over streams and waterfalls, through some stunning local woodland.



## **RCHK Laos Action Group** By Wyatt Mattison, 6HM

The members of the Laos Action Group went to meet children in different schools and work with the nonprofit organization Community Learning International (CLI). CLI works with the Laos children too improve their learning. It has created a series of learning facilities for the people of Laos.

During our time in Laos we brought supplies to schools and played games with kids our age. A few examples of the activities were monkey in the middle, tunnel ball and we played English-Laos hangman with the children. We also taught the children a series of songs/dances like Heads-Shoulders-Knees and Toes and the Hokey-Pokey. On our final full day we took an hour-and-a-half boat trip up the Mekong River to visit a village school. It was actually quite a challenge to get to the school, not only was it a long boat ride away, but we also had to climb a steep and muddy hill to reach the school. All of the students were waiting at the top of the hill in a grove of trees. On the other side of the trees was the path that led to the schoolhouse. It was a very new feeling being stared at from above by 200 children. Even though you couldn't see them all from the bottom of the hill you could still tell they were all very excited to see us. We learned a series of dances from the children and we also tried to learn the words that go along with the dances. The forms of learning that we saw included storytelling, dances, songs and some simple games.

This particular primary school was built to house students from four different villages. Compared to RCHK, the classrooms were very empty: wooden desks, bench seats, one cabinet and a chalkboard. Not many of the children had notebooks or pencils and they seemed very happy to get the supplies from us. The schools in Laos are only compulsory to Primary Year 6, so many of the children don't receive a complete education as we know it. It's hard for me to imagine what it would be like if this were my last year of school. I definitely would be a bit nervous because there's a lot I've yet to learn.



## **Reflecting Laos** By Christopher Mattison, Wyatt's Father

It was not so long ago in 1989 that Laos reopened its borders to international tourists, and it has been within just the last couple of years that various UNESCO World Heritage inscriptions and tourist-based initiatives have culminated in a sudden visitor spike to cities such as Vientiane and Luang Prabang. New airports, coupled with cheaper and more direct flights, put a crack in the door, and the forthcoming 421-km Chinese-Lao railway will remove those hinges altogether.

When the Laos trip was announced as an EOTC Year 6 option, it took all of about two seconds for us to know we'd be revisiting the Mekong. Our son Wyatt was initially less sure. He'd taken part in a number of Treasure Island surf camps, and was very comfortable with their staff and stretch of Pui O beach. But as we talked more with Wyatt about the specifics of the Laos trip—working at schools with kids, library boats, sticky rice, we all ended in agreement about Laos before he remembered to quickly practice the trombone before bed.

The picture we've chosen from our trip highlight the primary reason we decided not simply to visit Laos, but to move to Hong Kong three and a half years ago. We wanted to live something different than the suburban Princeton, New Jersey life we'd worked ourselves into. We wanted to be able to look back at the States from various perspectives rather than filtering the realities of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia through National Public Radio and *The New York Times*. We needed to get away from a particular pace of life and to remember the utter joy of standing in line with school friends or flipping through a new blank notebook.

And it is precisely this type of joy and discovery that transcends borders. Our kids are generally so constantly wired into various mobile devices that they forget to consider the actual act of inquiry, focusing instead on the digital modes of transfer. They're playing all of the time but they forget to play. One of the highlights of our trip was simply watching our group shed, if for only a few minutes, the games, iPads and phones to stand in line with other kids. To jump up and down repeating a few lines of a song in Laotian, and then tumbling to the ground to start all over again. And then to watch the smiles on our kids' faces as they passed out the school supplies raised by the entire Renaissance community. For those few minutes they knew they were part of something significant; flapping notebooks and a stream of "hellos" and "thank yous" between Cantonese, English and Laotian.

Twenty years from now when we look back at our time in Hong Kong, I can only hope this particular trip is something that will resonate with Wyatt, and that his next few years will be shaped, in part, by lessons he learned and friends he made over a few days in Laos in November.

# FEATURES

## New Red Door Centre officially opens

The RCHK family welcomed the addition of a new “member” November 20 with the official opening of the new Red Door Centre.

In essence, the Red Door Centre is an ICT hub that provides the much needed learning space for students, as well as to serve as an IT support centre. The centre has a 1,000 square metre space that features the latest learning technology equipment and a purpose-built room for digital video production.

The official opening ceremony, featured Chinese lion dance by students from Li Po Chun United World College, was attended by ESF CEO Belinda Greer, RCHK Principal Harry Brown, Hau-Cheung Ho, chairman of the Sha Tin District Council and other dignitaries.

Construction of the centre started in April and finished one month ahead of schedule. The cost of the project is \$22 million, and it was entirely funded through the Nomination Rights Scheme established by Renaissance College in 2012.



## Focal point of learning

RCHK World talks to Ania Zielinska, vice-principal (learning technologies) on the opening of the new Red Door Centre

### 1. The school’s ICT centre is known as the Red Door Centre. Does the name have any special meaning?

The concept of Red Door was developed before I joined Renaissance College in 2010. Originally, it comprised three creative professionals – digital artist, film maker and an all rounder creative technologist.

After I arrived I proposed that the entire ICT personnel be merged under the name of Red Door so as to develop unity and a sense of “one shop” for all ICT and learning technology needs.

Door is an abbreviation of “Digital Opportunities on Request.” Red was added as an auspicious colour and because Chinese red doors are so iconic and beautiful. The department always tries to make connections with Chinese culture – visible in our

logo, decor and now a beautifully handcrafted room divider that incorporates the logo.

### 2. Why do we need a new Red Door Centre?

Besides providing work space for 10 full time technicians and four teachers, the centre now has storage space for spare parts and stock items. We have a well designed two-height help desk counter to serve younger and older students. There is now a proper waiting area and an electronic queuing system to help us with demands during peak times such as recess.

We are especially delighted to have learning and professional learning areas as well as a dedicated recording studio and editing suite. In addition to all the great things we are already doing with the technology at Renaissance, we are excited to embark on a new initiative: developing robotics and makers movement for which we have a large open space area. With the help of our Coding Xtreme students we are in the final stages of specifying furniture and equipment and we are grateful to RAPT for helping us with the kickstart funds.

3. The new Red Door Centre has a dedicated digital video production room. What does this mean to students and the college community?

Film making is well-established in RCHK. Having a recording studio allows us to move to a more professional level of production because we can fully control sound and light. The camera, light and sound crew can manipulate these from outside the room making communication between them easier without interrupting the performance or interview. We can now also do a green screen recording with its endless possibilities in special effects movies.

4. When it comes to integrating technology in curriculum, how does RCHK measure up when compared to other similar schools?

Since its inception RCHK recognized the importance of integrating technology into teaching and learning and this was articulated in our bedrock principles. We are widely recognized as pioneers and innovators and the opening of the Red Door Centre will further cement our position in this regard. Possibly one of the measures of our success in integrating learning technology is continuing interest and visits from other schools in Hong Kong and the Asia-Pacific Region.

In line with other top international schools we now have

pedagogical leadership in integrating technology through learning technology coaches who are specially trained teachers and have expertise in instructional design. The coaches are part of the sustainable model we are trying to develop at Renaissance, whereby they are there to provide continuous, situated professional learning support and to create ideas - this is so important as the technology continues to change at an enormous speed and without such coaching, teachers find it very difficult to keep up and remain current.

5. What's your vision for Red Door and RCHK?

Our overall vision is to become a centre of excellence in the innovative and transformative use of learning technology for teaching and learning.

We have identified several initiatives for the next few years:

- Expand our film making programme to include animations, mixed media, special effects and creative short film making
- Utilize the power of social media to make learning and teaching visible, and to connect with other learning communities globally
- To develop robotics, makers movement and culture
- To help incorporate play and game based learning across all three programmes



# FEATURES

## Voices from the Red Door crew

1: What were your thoughts as you heard that the college was going to build a new ICT centre?

Andrew Song (AS): Cool.

Cameron van Breda (CVB): It's about time we have our own space to work in!

Thomas Pak (TP): The first thought that came into my mind was hooray! The second thought that came was I have to enhance my filming and editing skills to match the new centre.

2: What does the new RDC mean to the RCHK community?

AS: Since RCHK is known for its technological advancement in Hong Kong, I believe the new RDC will allow the school to develop on its specialties. It will also allow students to learn new technologies with better accessibility and quality teaching staff. More students will be able to experience the media area, and encourage them to step on their career for media production.

CVB: With the new RDC, it will probably benefit both staff and students of RCHK.

TP: I believe that with the new centre, it will allow more people in the school to embrace technology with even wider arms, as technology has been an integral part of the school.

3: What does the new RDC mean personally to you?

AS: As I will graduate from RCHK next year, I won't be benefitted from the new RDC much. However, I am certainly interested in mentoring the younger cohorts of the Red Door crew. I personally believe that the new RDC will allow me to have access to a better facility, so that I can mentor the younger crew members more efficiently.

CVB: I will be having the rest of my MYP and my DP courses in the Red Door Centre, the time that I will be able to spend there will probably be much less than in my recent years, but one thing for sure is that I will enjoy working in the new facility very much. Personally, I think this will create a very good base for Red Door's new members in the future (for both the ICT and the creative sides), and it'll make the experience all the better.

TP: As I get to use the facility for another year and a half, I think this is a good chance to search for new people interested in filming and teach them the ways to create good videos or films. Also, as there is space in the new RDC, I hope to find people who want to learn animation and teach them so that they can build their own little world in the space of a room. In short, the new centre is a new chapter for the ICT team and the Red Door team.







## Second Kids Ocean Day

By Angela Shek, Educational Assistant

This event was organized by Ocean Recovery Alliance in Hong Kong, with support from the Malibu Foundation in Los Angeles and Michael Klubbock who gave his award winning assemblies to over a thousand children in Hong Kong before the beach event. The aim is to change the way Hong Kong thinks about the ocean and the various pressures it faces. Through fun, innovative and interactive methods, this project strived to bring awareness to the community about the effects of plastic in the ocean, marine pollution, ecosystem degradation, and how every person can help to improve the ocean's health for the future.

They began with a drawing competition with the theme, "What Does the Ocean Have to Say?" and the winning pictures were used and transformed into one human art image on Repulse Bay Beach. 168 RCHK Year 6 students together with their teachers took part in this spectacular aerial art event and it involved over 1,000 primary students, teachers and volunteers in Hong Kong. Well done to Jerry Ip from class 6CB who was the winner runner up with his drawing of a shark, "Save Me" (cut-off fin).



Scan or logon to  
<http://youtu.be/sMicnAd9QqM>  
for the Kids Ocean Day Hong Kong 2013 video.

## 24 Hour Charity Sailing Race at HHYC

By Laura Grodewald, Sailing Coach

On October 26-27, 14 RCHK sailors participated in a charity sailing competition at Hebe Haven Yacht Club. For a period of 24 hours, students rotated turns sailing around a race course. Especially during the middle of the night, students faced challenges of darkness and no wind. RCHK sailors demonstrated teamwork, sportsmanship, and achievement. Together they raised \$7,750 for the charities supported by the event and sailed a total of 92 laps between the two boats.

Congratulations to: Kitty Wong, Sim Hoekstra, Kelsie Leveille, Nathan Lee, Martin Law, Christy Leung, Eshani Goonetilleke, James Johnston, Daniel Archer, Brian Cochran, Kevin Cochran, Faolan Whyte, Sorcha Whyte and Jasmine Hallworth.



# LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

## Talented musicians perform for a good cause

By Michi Lo, Year 11

Jackie Tsoi (Year 10), Misha Mah (Year 9), James Koo (Year 10), Kevin Tam (Year 10) and I were invited to play at the opening of The Nesbitt Centre's new coffee shop, The Nest, at St. John's Cathedral on November 1. The Nesbitt Centre provides an English speaking educational programme for adults with learning disabilities, in hopes of maximizing their life potential. Through this amazing opportunity we were able to learn how big an effect The Nesbitt Centre has on those individuals, and how accepted and welcomed they can feel due to the hard work of the organization.

We performed a large variety of pieces on the piano, violin and marimba, ranging from classical to pop, Western to Eastern, technical to melodic. Some pieces we performed were the first movement from Vivaldi's Concert no. 2 in G



minor (Better known as "Summer" from Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*), *Somewhere* by Leonard Bernstein, *Clair De Lune* by Debussy, and *Rain Dance* by Alice Gomez. All in all, this was a wonderful experience, and hopefully an experience we can have again in the future.



## Philippines typhoon relief efforts

By Zaza Rocoles, PYP Teacher

All eyes were on the Philippines in mid-November when one of the strongest typhoons ever recorded made landfall in the central part of the country. The magnitude of the destruction made international news and impelled people from all walks of life to help the affected areas. The Renaissance College community showed tremendous solidarity by quickly organizing several activities.



On November 15, students and teachers dressed up in the colours of the Philippine flag and on November 11, teachers made baked treats that were sold at a bake sale during break time. In response to appeals to the community, there has also been a steady flow of dry goods donations to be sent to relief centers in the Philippines. Students wrote wishes and letters of support for victims of the disaster on the Action Wall in the undercover areas and classrooms.



The school has raised \$50,000 that will be sent to the Philippines for relief and rebuilding efforts. Awesome work, RCHK! *Maraming salamat* from the Philippines.

## **BELEZA 3.0**

By Nikita Nandakumar, Year 13

RCHK's third annual charity fashion show, Beleza, was held in the PAC on October 25 amidst great anticipation and excitement. Organized by Nikita Nandakumar (head of models), Jhalak Shah (head of media and public relations), Rajul Daga (head of event management), Simran Dadlani (head of business) and Anoushka Grewal (head of designers), we tried to involve the entire RCHK community in order to make it an entertaining and college wide night. Though the process was an extremely strenuous and demanding one, it still remains to be our greatest achievement thus far.

Even with meticulous planning, we would have never expected to raise over \$30,000, all of which will be donated to the HER Fund. We chose the HER Fund as it provides support and a voice to marginalized women around Hong Kong. As a completely female run team, we took it upon ourselves to communicate with the charity and provide with all the support we could offer.

## **My visit to Bethune House**

By Kathleen Magramo, Year 12

Bethune House is a temporary shelter for women migrant workers who are in distress and are seeking justice in Hong Kong. To mark its 27th anniversary, RCHK Movement was invited to choreograph a dance routine and collaborate with the women from the shelter to produce a dance number.

As a Filipino, I am aware of the issues concerning domestic helpers. When I was given the opportunity to help at Bethune House, I was more than willing to offer my time and talents for them.

On my first day visiting Bethune House, I did not expect that the shelter was so small and minimalistic. I arrived earlier than planned to talk with the domestic helpers and know more about their situation here in Hong Kong. They all came to Hong Kong to earn money for their loved ones back home.

They had to leave their families behind and journeyed here alone to work. They had to endure all the stress from work, emotional challenges and new environment all by themselves. Hence, it really saddens me that they are being mistreated and looked down on here. Despite the heartbreaking stories they told me, we managed to have a fun-filled practice together. Although the dance I made was simple, the *jie jies* (helpers) really enjoyed

With the contribution of over 20 sponsors, parents, teachers, students and our wonderfully supportive support team, we were able to organize a night that everyone remembered. The beautiful models, talented designers, charitable sponsors and alumni MC's made the night more memorable. Special thanks go to the three teachers who added enthusiasm and thrill to the show: Ms. Phung, Ms. Waller and Mr. Otto. We would also like to thank our lovely and always motivating supervisor, Ms. Veronica Kang, with the help of whom we managed to stay focused and passionate till the end of the journey. To all those who were unable to attend, there is always next year!



dancing and laughing around. They were really focused in learning the dance and I was really happy when they appreciated the small joys I brought by sharing my talents with them. Throughout the practices, I also made friends with the *jie jies* there. They treated me like their little daughter as well. We may have encountered some difficulties during practices but it was well sorted out in the end. On the day of the performance, the *jie jies* made changes to the dance. I was completely fine with it as it actually made the dance a lot more fun and happy. I was also very overjoyed to meet people who also have a passion in giving back to the domestic helpers in our community. As I left the event, the *jie jies* were very grateful for my time and I was contented leaving them with big smiles.

I am truly grateful for the opportunity to participate in this service. This activity has opened my eyes to the harsh reality that domestic helpers face while working in Hong Kong. Although these *jie jies* face financial challenges, prejudice and distress in their time working in Hong Kong, they all have a positive outlook on life and never cease to strive through their circumstances. These *jie jies* are true superheroes in the eyes of their families and it saddens me to know that some locals look down on them. In fact, we should be honouring our *jie jies* with utmost respect, for they have sacrificed their time and presence from their own families to take care of us.

# THE ARTS

## SCAD visit

By Claire Brookes, Head of Visual Arts

Professor Derek Black of the Graphic Design programme at the Savannah College of Art and Design delivered a workshop to our Year 12 students on the October 25. He defined creativity as making new ideas by “joining the dots” and making connections between existing ones.

During the session he talked to the students about how to use a sketchbook and the role it plays in the development of ideas, which then led onto the students making a DIY pocket sized sketchbook. On the front of the small book they screen-printed an illustration made by a student currently at SCAD. Each student left the workshop having made one small book which they can carry around in their pocket. Black said that it should not be restrictive and daunting but full of scribbles, observations, sketches and be a valuable tool used within the creative process.



## Year 2 Collaboration Across the Arts

By Merry Hamilton, Primary Visual Arts Teacher

Year 2 students engaged in a unit of inquiry, which explored how patterns can be made and described through the arts (music, visual arts and movement).

The students made some great connections about the concepts of pattern and rhythm and understood that they are important in both visual arts and music.

The students' summative task was to show these connections and the UOI culminated in a collaborative performance incorporating, music, movement and drawing. The students gathered in the PAC and took turns at playing their musical compositions, moving to the music and drawing their response to the music.

Both their performances and self-reflections showed their understanding of these concepts and the connections they made across the arts. It was a pleasure to see the student's creativity, enthusiasm and learning. Well done Year 2!



## Block printing after school activity

By Rachel Wan

Block printing allows you to print and reprint an image onto paper and textiles. For several weeks, a group of Years 8 – 10 students designed and created lino/rubber prints of their own, tracing designs and patterns onto blocks before cutting them out with a range of carving tools. Using a roller and printing ink, a layer of colour was then applied to the blocks, with prints subsequently appearing after the application of paper. After a few prints were realized, more carving took place (this is called image reduction) and additional colours were applied to the existing imagery, producing more expansive artworks showing line, space, depth and texture. Creating a block print is easy, something you don't need to be an expert at to achieve. It is also incredibly exciting because, even with planning, the outcome of the print is rather unknown, as you cannot completely see what is happening as you print.



## Visual arts workshop with Ian Murphy

By Claire Brookes, Head of Visual Arts

The Year 12 art students received a treat on November 6, when British artist Ian Murphy ran his annual on-campus workshop.

The workshop, which ran from 3-7 pm, allowed us to experiment with new visual principles and artistic techniques. We were first introduced to the concept of “visual decision making” to help us train our artists’ eyes. Then, we had the chance to try for ourselves some of Murphy’s favourite techniques. These involved coloured ink, shredded newspaper, black pens, white pen and PVA glue, to name a few. (Needless to say, we made a bit of a mess.)

In addition, we were privileged enough to have him bring in some of his amazing pieces, both finished and in-progress, for us to ogle at. He answered questions about his art, inspiration and career, and even gave us one-to-one feedback on our own experimental pieces.

All in all, the experience was an eye opening one. It surprised us all how much we learned in a short period of time from first-hand experience and interaction with a professional artist. It was also very refreshing to have both classes of art students come together to share the experience.



## Visual arts field trip to Central

By Nathalie Fok, Year 13

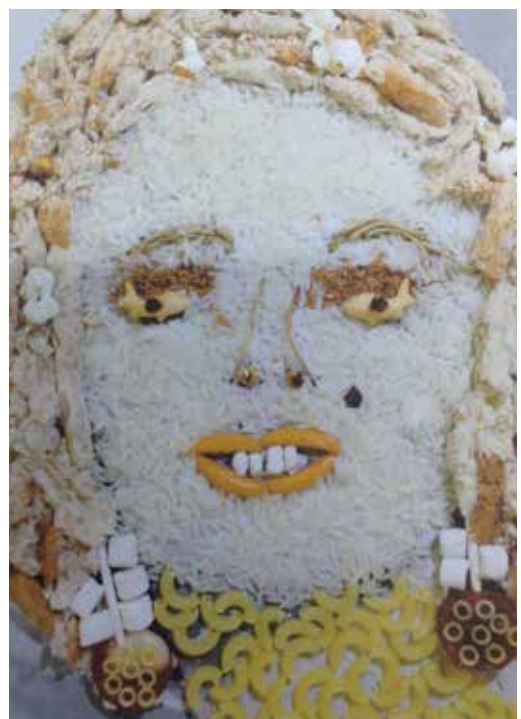
Hong Kong is a place that is rich in cultural arts, and on October 30, we visited Central, the ultra vivid part of Hong Kong. We focused on visiting three galleries that day: Ben Brown, Alan Jones and an Agnes b. gallery. They all contained very modern, contemporary art where different lines, styles, textures, colors and compositions were explored. As art students, we were meant to observe and record the different artists' artwork. I chose to take photographs of them from different distances and angle to enhance the specialty in some of them.

Other than the gallery visits, we saw a lot of interesting and artsy things along the way. We saw ripped posters, new posters, graffiti art, unique materials for interior design and they all represented a part of Hong Kong's culture. I enjoyed looking around the area more than visiting the galleries to an extent. This is because in galleries there were set and limited themes, whereas the outside environment really allows the cultural beauty and different inspirations to show through. Some of us took series of photos on reflections, pollution, people, etc. but I chose to take pictures of objects with mixed textures and colors. It was very interesting to find that different textures and colors together make a vibrant area like Central, and each bit of the area holds its own unique property, which makes Hong Kong so interesting and artistic.

At the end of the day, I have gotten a lot of ideas which I would like to use within my own artworks. I finally understand why artists often say that inspiration is all around us, I believe that I can incorporate all the elements I saw in my future artwork to make them more interesting and fascinating to look at just like Central, Hong Kong.

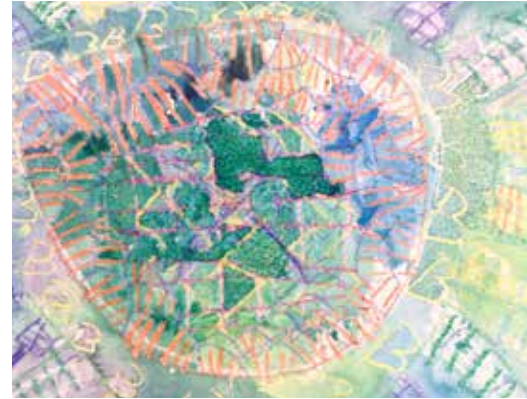
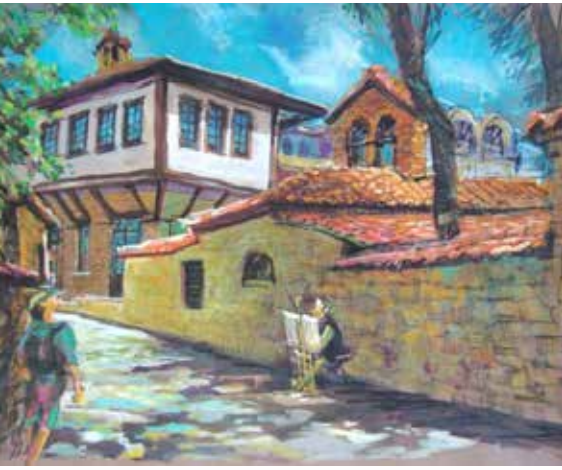


# PRIMARY GALLERY





SECONDARY GALLERY







## SPORTS

### **ACAMIS Green Division Volleyball Tournament 2013**

By Tim Ross, Athletics Director

From October 24-27 Renaissance College was, for the first time, the host for the 2013-14 ACAMIS Volleyball Tournament. RCHK welcomed over 100 athletes and coaches from China and Taiwan in what was a truly high-class display of volleyball talent. Not only was this a wonderful opportunity for our athletes, but equally it provided the opportunity for RCHK to showcase itself to the wider international school sports community across Asia.

Over two and half days, six schools battled it out, with both the boys and the girls divisions proving to be extremely even affairs. For our RCHK boy's team it was a case of so close but so far in the end. After having two match points in their final round robin match, the boys would go on to lose in three tight sets. This unfortunately meant that they missed the semi finals, settling for fifth place overall.

In the girls division, RCHK quickly asserted themselves as the team to beat, going through the round robin matches undefeated and without conceding a set. This form carried over into the semi finals with the girls overcoming a determined BISS - Pudong team in three sets. In the final, RCHK was matched up against Shanghai Community International School and for the first time were put under pressure by a determined, well drilled, Shanghai team. But true to their form, the black kites fought back, eventually running out winners in two tight sets. Congratulations to all the girls and their coach, Johnny Hogan, on what was a remarkable team performance.

For a tournament of this size to run successfully, it requires a team of dedicated people. I would firstly like to thank Joko Chan, our ACAMIS administrator, Sam Ng our graphics designer, Chartwells, the Red Door team, our student photographers, our first aid team, along with all the players and coaches.

### **China Cup champions**

By Philip Knight, Rugby Coach

The RCHK under 19 rugby team won the China Cup tournament hosted by HKIS in mid-October.

Held every two years the tournament is a chance for Hong Kong rugby players to test themselves against the might of the mainland. This year the International School of Beijing and Shanghai American School competed against Renaissance and HKIS under 19s. There were also other age group competitions for both boys and girls.

The Hong Kong-based schools dominated the under 19 section of the tournament. After losing to HKIS 7-0 on the Friday night we backed up and won both our games on the Saturday. Our games were tightly contested and eventually we beat ISB 21-0 and SAS 32-7. Ominously, HKIS seemed to beat both these teams with ease.

We played the final in sweltering heat at midday on the Sunday watched by a very vocal and very American crowd. Our earlier loss saw us as clear underdogs, but the boys dug deep and ignored their grazes and sore limbs and surprised HKIS with their tough tackling. Captain Max Woolf and an exhausted Dan Archer scored two spectacular tries and we managed to win 12-10.

The team would like to thank parent Ramon Archer for his support and wisdom. We would also like to acknowledge the reserves who did not get as much game time, but who helped us earn this victory. Without their constant support and enthusiasm there would be no team.



## Secondary Swimming Gala

By Tim Ross, Athletics Director

The annual Swimming Gala was held on October 4, and as always this was a day of great competition, celebration and colour. For the very first time the Year 12s and 13s created and participated in their very own event, the Tug Boat race. Judging by the smiles on their faces and cheering from the crowd, this is one event that is likely to be a popular draw card for many years to come.

It was pleasing to see so many students actively involved on the day, whether it was swimming, assisting with first aid or simply supporting their fellow competitors in the stands. The Monster Swim was again one of the highlights of the day with record participation from both students and staff

The race for house honours was a tightly fought contest all day, with Qing, Song and Tang houses competing desperately to wrestle back the trophy that Ming house convincingly won last year. However, in the end it was again Ming house that was victorious and continued their recent domination of the event. Congratulations not only to Ming house, but to all students involved on the day. A special thank you to all staff for their hard work in helping to make the day a great success.



## **RCHK swimmers victorious in inter-schools tournament**

By Kate Nankivell, PE Teacher

It's been a fast and furious ISSFHK swimming season with perhaps some of the most impressive individual and team results to date by the Black Kites team. For the first time ever, the Under 20 girls won the ISSFHK championship and the Under 12 boys were narrowly beaten for the title by only seven points. While it always helps to have some super fish within the team (and we certainly have some of these), a team is only successful if everyone plays their part. At the 2013 ISSFHK Championships, it was only by everyone playing their part and pushing for that extra place and therefore point, that we were able to be competitive on this stage. In the Under 12 and 14 age groups, there were some exceptional results that helped towards the above goal and achievement. These included; Harold Yick – 2nd in both U12 boys 50m freestyle and butterfly and 3rd in 200 freestyle.

- Clarisa Huang – 1st in U14 girls 50m butterfly, 2nd in 50m backstroke and 3rd in 100m freestyle.
- Allis Chan – 3rd in U12 girls 50m backstroke and Joshua Nanayakara, 3rd in U12 boys 50m breaststroke.
- Matthew Young – 2nd in U14 boys 50m and 100m breaststroke.
- In the U16 and U20 categories, the following students bagged themselves medals or put in some impressive performances
- Andrea Wan, Dawnie Lau, Annabel Suen and Stephanie Hawley – Gold in the U20 Girls 200m medley relay and 200 freestyle relay
- Andrea Wan – Gold in the U20 Girls 50m and 100m backstroke, Silver in the U20 Girls 200m freestyle and Annabel Suen, Silver in U20 Girls 200IM
- Stephanie Hawley & Dawnie Lau – Silver and Bronze respectively in the U20 Girls 50m freestyle
- Annabel Suen and Dawnie Lau – Bronze in U20 Girls 50m butterfly and the U20 Girls 50m breaststroke respectively as well as Annabel receiving bronze in the U20 Girls 100m freestyle
- Aran Au – Gold and silver in the U20 Boys 50m and 100m breaststroke
- James Johnston, Zachary Pau, Bjoern Behrens and Aran Au – Bronze in the U20 Boys 200m freestyle relay

Some other impressive results included Natalie Lam taking 22 seconds off her previously recorded 100m freestyle PB, Dewey Lee achieving a PB in the U16 Boys 50m freestyle, Marcus Yee setting a PB in the U16 boys 100m backstroke, Ching Long Wong taking 10 seconds off his PB for U16 boys 100m breaststroke and the U16 boys 200m freestyle relay team (Dewey lee, Ryon Cheong, Marcus Yee and Augustus Yeung) narrowly missing a medal despite gallant individual swims.

In addition to this, congratulations must go to Andrea Wan who represented RCHK and HK Schools in the 4th Asian School Swimming Championships in Macau between October 31 and November 7. Andrea won four gold medals at this meet in the 50m, 100m, 200m backstroke and the 200 medley relay. This was the most number of medals of any Hong Kong athlete at the championships!

I would like to extend thanks to my coaching colleagues, Mr. Molnar and Ms. Ha for their assistance throughout the season and to sports assistant, Winson Chau, for his contribution at the ISSFHK meets. Like the team itself, without camaraderie within our ranks, such success would not have been possible.

## **2011 HKSSF Swimming Championships**

By Kate Nankivell, PE Teacher

On October 16 and 21, some of the Black Kites Swimming Team members competed in the HKSSF Swimming Championships at Ma On Shan Swimming Pool.

Many of our students did exceptionally well including the following results:

- Clarisa Huang took gold and broke the HKSSF girls C grade record in the 50m butterfly as well as winning the C grade girls 100m backstroke
- Aran Au won the A grade 50m and broke the HKSSF record for this event as well as winning the 100m breaststroke
- Matthew Young achieved 1st place in the 50m and 3rd place in the C grade boys 100m breaststroke
- Our C grade girls relay team comprising Clarisa Huang, Nerris Lam, Allis Chan and Hilary Lo came 3rd in the 4 x 50m freestyle relay
- Zachary Pau achieved 6th place in the A grade 50m butterfly
- Ryon Lo came 7th in the C grade boys 50m butterfly
- Annabel Suen took gold in the 200m IM
- Overall, our Boys A grade team and Girls C grade team won the HKSSF Swimming Merit Award

This is a great achievement for the swimmers involved and bodes well for the ISSFHK Championships in on Nov. 6 and 8 in which we have a strong team entered. I would like to thank Ms. Kan Ha who accompanied the team and did the RCHK duty on both days.

## **Primary netball success**

By Tracy Wnek, Jo Kennard, Julie Davis, Netball Coaches

This year we had two teams playing in their first tournament for the year, at Kowloon Junior School on November 7. For many of our girls this was their first time ever playing in a netball competition.

Prior to this, they have been working very hard for the past few months at training to develop their ball skills and understandings about netball. Working together and listening to advice given the girls were rewarded with one team winning the plate section of the tournament and the other team displaying huge improvements with each game they played.

It was also great having so many parents there to support our teams and encourage them throughout their games

Congratulations girls, we are very proud of you all.



## ALUMNI AND COMMUNITY

### Looking beyond the Ivy League

By Aletha Rossiter, Further Education Counsellor

It's that time of year again – the Class of 2014 is busy making their final university choices. Every day students wait patiently in the FE office to discuss their lists with us. It's a stressful time, no doubt about it, and because they are taking the IB Diploma, there are many options available to them, and we want them to think carefully about their choices.

I recently read an article that said a study shows one in four Chinese students attending Ivy League universities in the USA drop out, as they were unable to adapt to the new cultural and educational environments. It still surprises me the number of students whose sole aim when applying to the USA is to get into an Ivy League school no matter what. This is usually done without

any research what life would be like in these schools. This does not seem to be the same for other overseas destinations where students recognize the merits of a wider range of higher education options and take the time to find out about courses, universities and the cities. Of course the higher education system in the USA also has this breadth and depth of choice from top liberal arts colleges through to very good state universities but the problem seems to be convincing the parents.

With nearly 70 per cent of RCHK students going to study overseas and a significant number applying to the USA, it is important that students look beyond the well-known higher education brand names that parents are all too familiar with and consider courses and universities that will provide them with an excellent education, a culturally rewarding experience and established networks for career opportunities.



### Following your passions

By Lisa Bergstrom, Class of 2011

In September 2013, two years after I graduated from RCHK, I opened my own dance studio. Many, many odd encounters and random experiences brought me here, but what always persisted was my drive to be better at what I love to do, and a reluctancy to say no. It might sound cliché, but if you honestly believe that you can do well, or even be the very best at something, you will. It also helps to not take failure so seriously.

I've always enjoyed music and sports. Once I started dancing, I realized it was a perfect combination for me. Dance allows for endless creativity and exploration, but also demands extreme physical control and self-discipline. While I was in New York training at Broadway Dance Center, I fully realized the extent of that statement. Dance requires you to be personal, vulnerable and put

your most intimate emotions on display, but if you can't be on time or follow directions, you simply will not get hired. That is why I believe professional dancers are some of the most versatile and disciplined people. Your art is your body.

One of the main things I took away from my experience in New York is that you are solely responsible for yourself. If you want to become better at something, only you can take the risks and push yourself to grow. I learned the most when I messed up the worst. The first time I did a solo performance, I blanked and forgot the whole routine. But from that I learned one of the most useful and healthy lessons; life is not that serious. Before, I thought this was the absolute worst and most embarrassing thing that could happen, but afterwards I realized that it really wasn't that bad. Most people remembered me as being brave for volunteering to do a solo, not for messing up. Don't be unreasonably hard on yourself, but also, don't let yourself be anything less than you can be. You define who you are, and where you stop growing.

Apart from dancing, teaching has also been something that I've enjoyed and found extremely rewarding for several years. By chance, I started working as a teacher assistant at Sonia Herron Academy of Jazz. Before that I had had very limited experience with children, but once I had observed and learned for a while, I became very comfortable. I wanted my students to do well, really well. So I put a lot of effort into being the best teacher that I could. In the summer of 2010, between Year 11 and Year 12, I did my first teacher training with Jazz Addict Australasia in Hong Kong. I started getting my own classes, and my students joined the annual examinations and performances. They did so well, overcame their five-year old nerves, and put on stunning performances. They made me feel very proud, and inspired to keep teaching. In 2012, I did my second teacher training, this time as a pilates instructor with Balanced Body in New York. I wanted to expand my knowledge of movement, training, and teaching adults.

Once I returned to Hong Kong from New York I started freelancing as a dancer and dance teacher. I worked part time at two different dance studios teaching baby ballet, jazz for young kids and adult jazz funk. I also worked as the assistant choreographer for the musical *Hairspray* with Face Production. Once in a while, I would do commercial gigs, photo shoots and performances for brands like Expedia, Monstar Beatz, Leeah Gwen Bridal, etc. After a few months, one of the studios I was teaching at approached me and asked if I wanted to take on a bigger

role. I was already managing the dance classes, and they were responsible for other music/art classes they offered. I soon realized the only options were either me taking over completely, or watching the studio close. I decided to follow my usual pursuit of not saying no, and took over.

Now I have my own company, Lisa B. Academy of Jazz Limited, and taken over the studio location in Nan Fung Centre, Tsuen Wan. In September, I started running all the classes under my company name, and remodeled the studio to my liking. I currently have around 30 students, from 2- 7 years, and plan to have 60 by the end of the year. I have also returned to RCHK, but this time as a choreographer for the musical *Rydell*, pilates workshop leader for the Year 13 Pastoral Day and dance teacher for the Year 11 PE projects.

Looking back, I didn't plan for things to turn out the way they did. All I knew was that I loved to dance, and didn't want to stop growing or challenging myself. I initially planned on staying in New York for only six months; I even had a slot to study geography and human development at the University of Sussex the following year. Opening my own studio had always been a vague and distant dream of mine, and people would tell me it's something I should do, but I didn't imagine it would be a reality so soon. I have decided to be the greatest dancer and dance teacher I can, so I will.

## **My new life in Providence, RI**

By David Deng, Class of 2013

Studying at Brown University is amazing. I have met people from around the world (Korea, UK, Somali, Greece, Ghana and countless more,) who have very diverse and drastically different cultural backgrounds. Interacting and studying with them enriches my education experience greatly. Also, Brown University is known for its academic freedom. There are no required classes and I have the liberty to take any courses in any department, even they are completely unrelated to my major. This way, I can explore subjects that I am truly interested in, rather than taking some mandatory courses that I do not enjoy.

However, the transition from high school to college can be overwhelming. The workload increased significantly (yes, college is harder than IB). The amount of students

in Brown University – 1,500 students in one year – is significantly higher than that of RCHK and you could seem to be lost in the crowd. Time management is also essential to balance my schoolwork, extracurriculars and social life or last-minute cramming ensues.

If you want a top-notch education and unsure about your major, I strongly urge you to explore Brown University as one of your choices.



## Life at the University of Toronto

By Donna Xiao, Class of 2013

I am currently studying in the University of Toronto Faculty of Social Science (St. George Campus).

After starting university three months ago, I feel like university life is very different compared to high school. During high school we always saw the same people and went to classes in small groups. Here we go to classes in big lecture halls, and in every class you get to meet new people and experience new things. One of my largest lectures has around 1,200 students! So it is very different compared to when I took IB at RCHK. During high school the teachers focused more on you (that's not always a good thing!), and provided more help for your academic work. Here in university, the professors/teaching assistants might not even know that you are one their students because they have so many students to look after. Therefore, if you need help or have questions about your work, you would have to go find your professor/teaching assistant. However, professors and teaching assistants are not always available everyday throughout the week; most of them only have a few hours of free time to help students. So, I find it really hard to match my time with the professor/teaching assistant's office hours and go ask for help. Some professors don't allow us to email them, in order not to spam their mailbox, so it makes it even harder for students to seek for help from them. In university I feel like you really need to depend on yourself and be more focused in class in order to decrease the amount of questions you might have later on about the course.

One of the best things about the University of Toronto is the food! U of T has a variety of places to eat and there are many different types of food. We can either eat in college canteens or buy from fast food trucks.



There are lots of fast food trucks located all around the campus, so it is easy to find and the price is cheap. I personally enjoy eating from the hot dog truck and the Chinese fast food truck. The canteen I visit most often contains foods from all over the world, like Chinese, Mexican, American, Japanese, Indian, etc. Apart from food, I think the facilities here are also impressive. There are many libraries around the campus. We have one major library, called Robarts Library, where you can find resources related to all subjects. It has 13 levels, and each level contains a wide range of resources for students to use. It is also a good place to study, with many study and computer rooms. Apart from this main library, we also have other smaller libraries. Each small library specifically provides resources for just one to two subjects. It is easier to find resources there just for your subject, and there are more resources there compared to what you can find in the general library.

Overall, I am really enjoying my life here in Canada, the school is really good and people here are very nice. However, I do miss Hong Kong a lot and hope I can go back and visit some time soon!

## New CEO visits RCHK

ESF's new chief executive officer, Belinda Greer, visited RCHK on September 25.

Greer visited primary and secondary classrooms and spoke to students about their education and learning. In addition, she met with teachers and support staff, and had a brief meeting with the College Leadership Team.

The inaugural visit was successful, as it helped Greer to understand more about the teaching and learning at RHCK. One of the observations Greer made about the college is the warm and friendly atmosphere of the campus. "It feels like a family here," said Greer.





## In pursuit of higher knowledge

By Sarah Jessi Primmer, Class of 2009



Recently, one of my professors – a historian of American labour history and race relations, grey-haired, soft-spoken – leaned back in his chair in his office at the University of British Columbia and asked me, “So, what do you want to do when you grow up?”

This might be a question more often asked of six-year olds, but it is a question that I hear a lot. What do I expect, really, when my answer to the questions “what do you do?” or “what is your job?” is “I am currently doing my masters in history. Chinese history.” (Really what I do is study shifting notions of gender and identity in the fiction of the High Qing period, but I don’t want to overwhelm my poor listener right away.)

My mother also asked me this question when I was in my final year of my undergraduate degree. It was January, and it was getting to the point where I really had to decide what I wanted to do once my final exams were over in May, my dissertation handed in, and I was no longer a student. After looking through pages and pages of job adverts, desperately looking for something that didn’t immediately make me want to curl up in a ball of despair at the thought of applying for, I reached the point where I realized that there was nothing there for me. I had done a Bachelor of Arts in history and Chinese, so I wasn’t qualified for anything science-y or math-related. I hadn’t slaved away as an intern for some corporation summer after summer, so I didn’t have enough experience to work for anybody in business (and besides, I don’t own a suit!). I didn’t want to work unpaid, so non-government organizations were out. There was nothing, it seemed, for me.

So my mother – wise woman that she is – asked me what I really wanted to do. Rather than list all the things I didn’t want to do, what did I really want to be doing with my life? My answer was simple: I just want to study. I would like to continue being a student. So off I went and applied for graduate school.

I applied to three schools in Canada – because I am Canadian, and it made sense in terms of funding – and got accepted to all three. I ended up at UBC simply because it was the best fit for me – I do Chinese history and they have lots of Chinese historians on faculty, they offered me money, they offered me a job teaching first year students and they offered to have my research supervised by the most amazing, generous, outright “cool” historian I have ever had the pleasure of working with. In terms of finding a graduate school, I really couldn’t have picked a better place. The environment is incredibly supportive. Standards are high, but my professors have all been generous with their time and feedback. We are encouraged to come to as many professional development workshops as is humanly possible, and there are many, many of these.

One of the things that most people don’t understand about graduate school is that we are all here because we want to learn. It sounds really silly, but I mean it – unlike being in high school and unlike doing an undergraduate degree, we all really want to learn. We all want to learn, we all want to read, we all want to contribute in class. There is no sense of “Oh, do I really have to read an extra book for tomorrow’s class? Really? Eugh.” Instead the sentiment is very much, “Awesome, can we meet up before class to discuss it and prepare questions?” We spend our breaks talking about readings, we spend our time in the library doing those readings. We prepare and wake up early for an optional non-credit Manchu class. We whine and complain and drink too much coffee, but we love it. Really.

The other thing that most people don’t understand about graduate school is that, for most of us, this is what we want to do in the long-term. When you study history at the graduate level (especially when you study history) there is an unspoken understanding that nothing we learn here will, really, be of any use in the real world. We are not doing our second or third degrees to boost our standing on the job market. We are doing our second or third degree because this is what we want to do. Like most jobs, it is underpaid. Just like other jobs you get really, really cozy with your co-workers because they are the only people you see, day after day after day. And just like every other job out there, it is highly competitive. Not everybody will make it. You have to be good at what you do in any field, and when your field is “studying,” you have to be really good.

But I think I’ve found what I want to do. For the next two years, I’ve got it sorted; I am doing my (almost) dream job. Well, for now at least – we’ll see what happens when I get my grades back for the first semester!

## **A whole new life at NYU**

By Jeffrey Ngo, Class of 2013

I still remember waiting in line at the Secondary Office with my flash drive and two hard copies of my extended essay. Even after that, I had to run home and start trimming down my History IA to fit ten years of Cuban history in 2,000 words, edit my umpteenth draft of my TOK essay, and continue the endless process of university applications. It was not easy.

A year has gone by so quickly, and I now study at New York University, currently the most expensive university to attend in America. Unsurprisingly, I am saving up all my nickels and dimes — and eating just cup noodles from Target — because school costs so much and living in New York is like experiencing a whole new level of capitalism. It takes time and effort to get to know ways around things and running into arguments with all sorts of people when we all want to defend our own interests. These are all valuable life experiences to have in the “real world.”

Nevertheless, the professors here are quite well known and insightful in their respective fields — some have their own Wikipedia pages and some publish best selling

books — which has helped me learn more and develop new values and perspectives. Thinking back to how we all thought nothing could be harder than the IB, I am sure most of us will find it a joke after all. University is not fun and games, because both the quality and quantity of work demanded are higher, along with the expectations of independence both academically and in everyday life. But at the end of the day, life is about overcoming challenges and becoming a better person than we were yesterday. So to all you current RCHK students, my advice to you is this - work hard, take chances and have no regrets!



## **Becoming more resilient and independent**

By Camilla Chung, Class of 2013

After two years of hard work to complete the IB Diploma Programme, I can confidently say that everything that I did has paid off. Being a psychology fresher at University College London, I am taught by professors who have huge passion for the subject. The weekly seminar with a tutor, as well as lab sessions, provide me the opportunities to learn the course materials in an exclusive manner. The exposure to new people and a different environment has helped me to become a more resilient and independent person. One of the highlights so far was the Welcome Fair. Clubs and societies that I could never think of were there, such as Chocolate Society and Dinosaur Appreciation Society!



## Greetings from Boston

Melody Liang, Class of 2013

Hello! Greetings from Boston! I'm currently studying at Boston University. Before I go on and on about how great my college life is, I just want to say, hang in there and enjoy your high school years. Before long, it will be a distant memory. College is so different from high school. I've learned how to be independent in these three short months. You are on your own, and it is so true when they say that college is what you make of it; you have to make an effort to meet people. Joining different clubs is the best way to be a part of a group and the best part is that you will meet people with all kinds of interests.

You are probably wondering how demanding the classes are. There is a lot of work, and classes are intense. However it's manageable since I have been drilled from six years of IB. I am sure you are trained to have good time management skills, especially after your PP and EE. The biggest difference from high school is that you have to take the initiative to seek help from professors. No one will make sure you completely understand the lectures and discussions. Again, that is why being independent is so important.

I have turned into a Red Sox fan since moving here (I used to be a Dodgers fan, sorry L.A.) The Sox's spirit here is insane! It is what everybody talks about. In the finals week, everyone wore a Sox hat while working out at the

BU gym. Seriously, who wears a hat to work out? It's that crazy. Boston is usually a quiet city at night but after they won the World Series, nobody slept, and half of the class did not show up the next day.

A big myth about college is the inevitable Freshman Fifteen. The dining hall can be your enemy. At first, my diet changed drastically, but I am on a quest with my friends to stay healthy. It is definitely a challenge because I do not have a kitchen here. However, we came up with a plan and bought a blender. We have been drinking smoothies and experimenting with different recipes.

I remembered how stressed out I was this time last year. For those who are applying to America, there isn't a specific formula you can follow. It is not clear what college admissions people are looking for, but a well-rounded student definitely stands out. So don't be one of the cookie cutter candidates. However, since being well-rounded is already in your blood (thanks to IB), focus on your SAT! I cannot stress how important that is, and it is something you can improve if you practice.

Anyway, I wish you all the best and I hope to see some of you in Boston!



## Celluloid Dreams

By ESF Alumni News

Dion Chou has spun his love for theatre at Renaissance College into a life in the film business.

Born in Taiwan, Dion Chou moved to Hong Kong with his parents and older sister when he was three months old. School was a struggle from the start. “My first language was Mandarin, so when I started school, I had to learn Cantonese,” he says. “My grades were really bad.” Eventually, his parents transferred him to an international school. “I thought, ‘I can finally make friends because I speak Cantonese now and you’re throwing me into an international school? I can’t even speak English!’”

But Dion proved to be an adaptable kid, even if he wasn’t always the star pupil in class. “I was pretty hyperactive,” he says. Those qualities have served him well in his chosen career: film. “I’m not the kind of person who can sit still. I don’t see myself doing well in something I don’t enjoy. When you’re holding a camera, it’s your eyes, anything you capture is an expression of how you see the world. And it’s something you don’t need to sit around an office all day to do.”

Dion ended up in the ESF system after his school, the Canadian Overseas International School, went bankrupt in 2001. The Hong Kong government set up a temporary school called Phoenix International School in response, which was managed by the ESF until a new school, Renaissance College, was built. RCHK opened in 2006. It proved to be a difficult experience for Dion. “Before, with the Ontario curriculum, it was easy to get straight A’s,” he says. “After I started IB at Renaissance, I still had the mentality of having fun — I didn’t realize how hard it was going to be.”

Although his marks weren’t always high, Dion remembers his teachers fondly. “They’re like friends who are always around to help,” he says. “You don’t feel like you have to please them.” At one point, Dion was doing so badly, his IB coordinator told him to drop off the school’s basketball team to improve his academic performance. “It was really embarrassing,” he says. “But my math teacher, Ms. Shobha [Sanker], invited me over to her place to study on the weekends. She even treated me to lunch.”

Though math wasn’t his strong suit, Dion excelled at performing arts. He grew up playing music — he can play the piano, drums, bass and in the school orchestra he played the tuba — and when RCHK launched its theatre

programme, he scored the lead roles in *Macbeth* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. “I liked the fact that I had a lot of responsibility in the play,” he says.

The natural step, then, was to continue his studies at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA), where he enrolled in the cinematography programme after graduating from RCHK. It wasn’t easy: “We started with 38 students and ended with 20,” says Dion. And it turned out to be a very different educational experience to what he had at RCHK. “Teachers at HKAPA are not always supportive — they’re more like your boss,” he says. But that wasn’t necessarily a bad thing. “It’s more like a working relationship. A lot of people can’t handle the stress, so they drop out, but I think what [the teachers] gave us was worth more than the school fee. It helped a lot to learn discipline.”

Dion seemed to thrive in the high-pressure environment. Some of his instructors recruited him and one of his friends, KGV alumnus Nathan Wong, to work on their own private projects, like filming cutaway scenes for music videos. “Regardless if there was pay or not, we did it because we loved it.” After graduating from the HKAPA last year, Dion and Nathan started their own production company, Thin Films, and they are working on videos for corporate clients and private events.

Before he gets on track with his career, though, Dion must return to Taiwan by the end of the year to complete one year of mandatory military service. (If he doesn’t, he will be banned from returning to his home country until he turns 38.) Dion is optimistic. “It will be a good experience for me to back and see where I come from,” he says. His dad, who served in the military when he was younger, gave him a piece of advice: “Just lay low. Don’t be the bottom, don’t be the top — just stay in between.”

That’s not advice Dion is likely to apply to his film work when he returns to Hong Kong. One of his first jobs was to work on the production of US television series *The Amazing Race* when it came to Hong Kong; he hopes to find more work on the growing number of big-budget Hollywood productions that are filming here. And in the future, maybe even make films inspired by Quentin Tarantino and Marvel comic book movies, which he says are his favourites: “I like it when they go way over the top.”

*Editor’s note: This story was originally published in the ESF Alumni News September 2013 issue. Reprint with permission from the English Schools Foundation.*



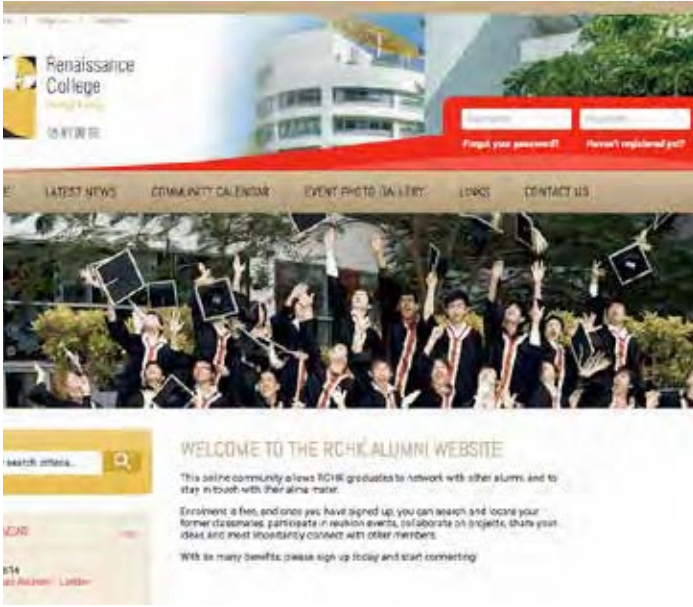
### RCHK Alumni website

The RCHK Alumni website is an online community that allows RCHK graduates to network with other alumni and to stay in touch with their alma mater.

Enrolment is free, and once you have signed up, you can search and locate your former classmates, participate in reunion events, collaborate on projects, share your ideas and most importantly connect with other members.



Scan or logon to [www.esf.edu.hk/alumni](http://www.esf.edu.hk/alumni) to view current and past issues.



### Uni life at Central Saint Martins

By Samson Leung, Class of 2013

Some people may think studying art related courses is pointless. But to the students at Central Saint Martins (CSM), it has probably been their dream to survive and graduate from there. Why survive, you may ask. Imagine all the elite art students coming from their hometowns and being placed in the same classroom! Getting the chance to study at my dream university is still unbelievable, but sometimes I feel anxious. Everyone is just as competitive and strong as each other. It has been a few months since I specialized in the fashion and textile pathway, and I've already seen blood, sweat and tears (literally!). However, despite the countless days of sleepless nights and getting harsh but realistic criticism from tutors, there are perks to being an art students here (such as no exams)!

I can't explain in words how much this place continues to amaze me. Living and studying here makes me realize how much more I want my dream to come true. Since moving here, I have already bonded with some new friends and travelled to different places to sightsee, visit museums or simply enjoy the feeling of getting lost in a new city.

Advice for studying at art college? Be confident and able to work independently, as you will need to motivate yourself quite a lot! Oh - and pack a suitcase full of art supplies! Trust me, you will need them.



Scan or logon to [alumni.rchk.edu.hk](http://alumni.rchk.edu.hk) to find out more!

### Dean's List

Congratulations to Leo Benjamin Chan, Class of 2010, who was awarded the Dean's List honours for the academic year 2012-13 for outstanding academic performance at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

In HKUST, undergraduate students will be placed on the Dean's List at the end of the term as an award for their accomplishment of a term grade average of 3.7, which represents the top 10 percentile of students in the university.



# BIG PICTURE

## Stay fit for life

The RCHK campus was turned into a carnival ground on November 30, as we welcomed guests to the annual College Fair. This year's theme was "Sports and Fitness," and guests were treated with great bargains, fun games, delicacies from around the world as well as performances by the students. RAPT aimed to raise \$1 million this year.





Term 2 starts  
6 January  
Winter Camp starts  
30 December  
ENROL ONLINE

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