

# THE DOMINICAN TORCH



Newsletter from the School Administration Dominican International School, Taipei

## Happy Mother's Day

**Words from Ms Ellen Chu, President of the VIP**

*"Happy Mother's Day to the epitome of resilience and unconditional love! Your strength and unwavering devotion inspire us every day.*

*Thank you for being the rock of our lives, Mom."*

Happy Mother's Day to all the wonderful mothers in our school community! Your love, dedication, and support are the guiding lights in your children's lives. Thank you for everything you do to nurture, inspire, and empower them. Today, and every day, we celebrate you! - The DIS Administration

## Two New DIS Grandchildren



Just in time for Mother's Day, we have the pleasure to announce the birth of two of our latest DIS grandchildren. They are John Isaac Moje, born on March 9th and Edwin Langley, born on April 9th. John Isaac belongs to Mr John Erick Moje and Ms Artolla, and Edwin is the son of Mr Seb Langley and his wife Libby. We are delighted to welcome our grandchildren to the DIS family. The DIS grandchildren are the babies who are born while their parent works at the school. Congrat-

Left: John Isaac Moje with Sr Socorro Teofilo during her recent visit to Taipei.

Right: Edwin Langley showing off that he was born in the Year of the Dragon



# Message from the Editor-in-Chief

## Mercia de Souza

After over a decade of being this publication's Editor-in Chief, collecting materials, taking care of the editing, and doing the lay-out of this newsletter, it is time to hand the baton to someone else. The Dominican Sisters offered me the position of Director of Academic and Student Affairs at our sister school, Dominican International School, Kaohsiung.

This publication first saw the light, with me as the Editor-in Chief, in August 2013 under the name "Spes Bona" which is the Latin for good hope. It was with great hope that we started the school year in which the first phase of the new school building was ready for use and some teachers moved to their brand new classrooms with great excitement. We were also preparing to get WASC accreditation for the first time.

Our School-wide Learning Outcomes (SLOs) did not have the acronym TORCH and were still under development.



The blessing of the new Admin building in August 2017

were said. The birth announcements of DIS "grandchildren" were moments of great joy that we reported. There were marriages as well. Several teachers achieved their PhDs.

One of the most difficult tasks for this editor was the memorial edition in August 2023 after our beloved Sr Zenaida had passed away. What made it even more poignant, was that in January 2023 there was the Jubilee Edition that celebrated Sr Zenaida's 50 years in the service of God.



The first mast-head for this newsletter

Four editions later, in August 2014 Sr Zenaida returned as the school's Principal, and spearheaded the refinement of the SLOs under the acronym TORCH. With that we changed the name of this publication. Mr Andrew Hall, an English teacher with an added graphic design background, designed the mast-heads that are still in use today for the three publications: the newsletter from the Administration, *The Dominican TORCH*, the Lower School newsletter, *The Junior TORCH*, and the Student Newsletter, *The Student TORCH*.

Over the years this newsletter contained news about many momentous events. Twice the school has been accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). The old building in which this newsletter was first produced, made way for the Administration Building with its gym, cafeteria and other facilities. New teachers were welcomed and good-byes



Sometimes we even have celebrities in the newsletter! 2022 Parents' Dinner

My wish is that the school will continue to go from strength to strength and that there will still be many editions of this newsletter to share the joys and sorrows of our school community.

It is my honour to take up the elevated position of trust at

our sister school during an accreditation year. WASC will visit them next April after the completion of their self-study.



by John Erick Moje

## Green Day Celebration: Dominicans' Renewal of their Commitment to Protect Mother Earth

The entire DIS learning community has shown solidarity with the rest of the world in celebrating Earth Day 2024 on 22nd April during the Monday Morning Assembly.

Dubbed “DIS Green Day”, Dominicans demonstrated their collective effort to promote awareness and strengthen commitment to caring for our common home—Earth—by wearing green on that particular day.

The Religious Studies Department collaborated with Earth-day.Org, Washington DC, USA; the STEM Department; Global Issues; Community Service Programme; and the TEDEd Club to actualise this year’s Earth Day theme, “Planet Vs. Plastics.” All Religious Studies classes from K1 to 12 successfully completed different meaningful eco-activities to raise awareness and strengthen their commitments to be good stewards of God’s creation.

Junior Lower School students made improvised bird feeders out of recyclables under the supervision of Ms Annie Lin. Ms Jessy Cardenas engaged her Religious Studies 1 and 2 students in arts. The Upper Lower School students prepared their own fairy gardens and decorated their plants with recyclable materials under the supervision of Mr John Erick Moje. Middle School Science classes, under the supervision of Ms Bing Racadio, made shampoo out of natural ingredients. Mr Jayno Jabonillo inspired his class to prepare educational posters and creative photos for the same cause. Selected STEM classes under the supervision of Dr Ram Gopal made an educational video clip, fostering great awareness about Earth Day and suggesting practical ways to take care of our environment at home and at school.

This meaningful activity reminded everyone of our collective responsibility to protect Earth’s natural resources for future generations. Tracing the history, the first Earth Day was held on 22 April 1970. That was 53 years ago and yet until now, clean water sanitation and climate action remain a concern as stated in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals or Global Goals according to the United Nations.

Pope Francis issued a significant document called “Laudato Si” or “Care for Our Common Home” in May 2015. It focuses on care for the natural environment and all people of goodwill, as well as broader questions of the relationship between God, humans, and the Earth. The same advocacy is enshrined in our D’TORCH values. We can express our helpfulness by being respectful and caring towards our environment.



## Lenten Recollection at Suao

**This year’s Lenten Recollection was held in Suao on February 23rd to 24th, 2024.**

This overnight recollection opened the hearts and minds of the participants to discover the Gift of Jesus’ love in the spirit of Valentine’s Day.

Organized by the Campus Ministry and Religious Studies Departments, meaningful activities enthralled all the participants, encouraging them to actively engage in various events. These included creative group prayer sessions at the beautiful and refreshing coast of Suao.

A Taize Song deeply resonated with the participants, emphasizing the value of silence and inner reflection.

A Cultural night provided an opportunity for the participants to showcase their talents, fostering creativity and collaboration.

Fr. Edu Pahn, a missionary priest, conducted a meaningful unpacking of the profound message of Jesus, which was concealed within the theme. The celebration of the Holy Mass created a welcoming atmosphere for participants to further contemplate the love of Jesus in the Eucharist.

To conclude the entire recollection, participants engaged in spectacular team-building and do-it-yourself activities, creating remarkable memories together!

## Easter Mass and Sacraments of Initiation 2024

**Congratulations to those who received the initial sacraments this year!**

For the Sacrament of Baptism:

Michelle “Adeline” Luo and Rebecca “Esther” Wu Schoeman

Reception into the Catholic Church:

Johannes Reiner Schoeman

For the Sacrament of Confirmation:

Gian Adrian Crisostomo, Ella Joy Manuel Ramos, Carl Dudek Janapatla, Michelle Luo, Rebecca “Esther” Wu Schoeman, Johannes Reiner Schoeman

For the Sacrament of the Eucharist:

Psalm Danielle Madeleine Lacangan, Vicky Wang, Theo Zachary Pak, Michelle Luo, Rebecca “Esther” Wu Schoeman, Johannes Reiner Schoeman

We are grateful that the Archbishop of Taipei, His Excellency, the Most Reverend Thomas Chung An-Zu, continues to honor this tradition of celebrating our Easter Mass. In his homily, he directed us to set our minds on heavenly things and desire nothing but the highest good. In order to achieve the latter, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, we must make a conscious effort to know what one ought to believe; to know what one ought to desire; and to know what one ought to do. If we practice this, we are sure to find the Truth with ease in the midst of disinformation. Let us always pray for each other and may our prayers, like sweet incense, rise as a pleasing offering to the Lord. Alleluia!

by Patrick Bugarin



His Excellency, the Most Reverend Thomas Chung An-Zu, Archbishop of Taipei (Photo: Dr Patrick Bugarin)



### Polish Lay Dominican Visits Martin de Porres Chapter-in-Formation at DIS

**A Polish Dominican, Bro. Jakub Kolodynski, OP, visited the St. Martin de Porres chapter-in-information at Dominican International School.**

Lay Dominicans in DIS were grateful to listen to his presentation about their formation and apostolate in Poland. It was a great opportunity to share best practices and to forge lasting connections. We expect more Lay Dominicans from other places to visit us in the future.



## DISMUN in The Hague by Andrew Hogenson

The **DIS Model United Nations Club** traveled to The Netherlands in January to attend the **THIMUN The Hague** conference at **World Forum The Hague**.

The team, consisting of four dedicated students, represented the delegation of the League of Arab States, engaging in diplomatic simulations, debates, and negotiations on a wide range of global issues.

The conference lasted for a total of 4 days, with over 3,200 participants from approximately 200 schools across different countries. Throughout the conference, the students actively engaged in networking and socializing, forging meaningful connections beyond the formal debate sessions. Whether it was during lobbying, breaks, or even bus rides and tours, members of the DISMUN club, especially Leo Yeh, the Assistant Head Delegate, embraced the chance to interact with peers from diverse backgrounds.

Aside from attending the conference, the DISMUN team also visited numerous places in The Netherlands. On the first few days of the trip, they visited downtown The Hague. Under the responsible leadership of Amy Lin, the members of the delegation explored iconic landmarks and immersed themselves in Dutch culture.

The tour began with a visit to the Mauritshuis, the art museum containing Vermeer's "Girl with a Pearl Earring" and other masterpieces from the Golden Age of Dutch painting.

One of the highlights of their trip was a stop at a traditional Dutch cheese shop. The delegation had the opportunity to sample and learn about various types of Dutch cheeses, renowned for their rich flavors and craftsmanship.

Under the exceptional leadership and responsibility of Amy Lin, the DISMUN team also traveled to the University of Delft

for a guided tour. Led by knowledgeable university staff and students, they explored the historic campus and admired the architectural beauty of its campus buildings.



Visit to the lecture hall at the Leiden University.

From left to right: Leo Yeh, Ms Irene Van Zand, Mr. Andrew Hogenson, Allyn Wang, Amy Lin, and Arthur Chen

World Forum, The Hague, The Netherlands.

The first day of the THIMUN conference.

From left to right: Allyn Wang, Leo Yeh, Arthur Chen, and Amy Lin



## Teacher Achievement



**Dr Agosh Librea completed her graduate studies and achieved a doctorate degree in Educational Leadership Management.** Congratulations Dr Agosh. Your dedication and hard work have undoubtedly paid off, and you're now equipped with the knowledge and expertise to make a significant impact in the field of education. Here's to your continued success and the bright future ahead!



Dr Agosh Librea

**Mr Takanobu Fukuda completed a three year graduate qualification that qualifies him to teach at any Higher Education institution (universities and colleges).** Mr Fukuda teaches Japanese in the Department of Applied Foreign Languages, Faculty of Management at Shih Chien University as well.

## Oxford University Athena Scholar

**Amy Lin in Grade 11 St. Anthony applied and was accepted to Oxford University's Athena Scholars Program with a generous scholarship.**

She will attend the program during the coming summer vacation.

As members of this esteemed program, young women at Oxford University are immersed in a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment that fosters growth and achievement. They engage in thought-provoking discussions, collaborate with renowned faculty members, and participate in groundbreaking research projects that push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation.

Beyond academics, the Athena Scholars Program emphasizes the importance of leadership, advocacy, and community engagement. Scholars are encouraged to take on leadership roles, advocate for causes they believe in, and actively contribute to positive change in their communities and beyond.

By nurturing the talents and aspirations of young women, the Athena Scholars Program at Oxford University empowers the next generation of leaders, innovators, and changemakers to realize their full potential and make a lasting impact on the world.





**Janice Doyle writes:**

## World Scholar's Cup Regional Round, 2024



Mr. Daniel Berdichevsky (WSC founder), Ms Janice, Prithika Chatterjee, Ruthvij Potharaju and Brandon Yu

**World Scholar's Cup is a world-wide competition that gives students the opportunity to explore and learn about various topics that they would not otherwise touch upon in their academic careers, from 6 different subject areas under an overall theme that changes every year.**

Students, in teams of 3, must use this acquired knowledge in 4 major events: collaborative essay writing, team debate, scholar's bowl, and scholar's challenge.

This year the annual World Scholar's Cup Regional Round was held in Hsinchu on March 10th and 11th, bringing together approximately 400 students from schools all over Taiwan. 36 Middle and 3 high school students from DIS attended this fun, exciting but challenging competition.

During the Collaborative Writing event, each team member had to choose 1 of the 6 given prompts to write about. Initially, the team members collaborated, giving ideas and suggestions to help each other.

The prompt had to be answered in a creative way to catch the judge's attention, and stand out from others' writing. Then, we had 40 minutes to write. After which, there was another 15 minutes of collaboration to review each oth-

er's work and give feedback. Great writers from our school Sophie Luna, Jamie Cheng, and Camille Ganhao were awarded 3rd place for Collaborative Writing in the Junior Division. Then there was the Scholar's Challenge, featuring 120 questions about Social Studies, Science, Literature & Media, History, Music & Art, and a "Special Area". It was a fun but challenging (as you can tell from the name!) multiple choice quiz that tested scholars' knowledge on areas related to the year's theme, Reimagining the Present. Some of the DIS students did really well in the Challenge. Brandon Yu, Prithika Chatterjee, and Ruthvij Potharaju came 2nd in the Junior Division of the Team Challenge!

After the Challenge it was time for the Team Debate. Each team debated against 3 opposing teams, depending on their debate tree, and whether they had won or lost the debate. Debate topics included "Should we change country flags once per generation?" and "Should planes fly half the speed they fly at now?" Sophie Luna who was ranked the 2nd best debater in the Junior Division, was chosen to debate in the Debate Showcase, where the best debaters get to show their skills. Brandon Yu who ranked 3rd, and his teammates, Prithika Chatterjee and Ruthvij Potharaju were awarded 1st place for Team Debate in the Junior Division.

Day 2 started off with the exciting Scholar's Day 2 started off with the exciting Scholar's Bowl, an event similar to the Scholar's Challenge, but

during this challenge, the questions were displayed on a large screen, and team members were allowed to work together. It was like a game show where teams tried to earn as many points as possible. Each question was worth a certain number of points, and the points increased as the competition progressed.

The final question was worth a whopping 1000 points: you should have seen the way the scholars went wild when the answer was revealed! Brandon Yu, Prithika Chatterjee, and Ruthvij Potharaju came 2nd in the Junior Division of the Scholar's Bowl!

That wasn't the end of the World Scholar's Cup, though. After the Scholar's Bowl, it was time for the famed Debate Showcase. The top eight debaters, of which Sophie Luna was one, were divided into 2 teams, and given a challenging topic to debate. We watched in awe as the eight debaters presented their

(continued on p.8)

## World Scholar's Cup

(continued from p. 7)

arguments and rebuttals to the audience and their opposing teams. The Debate Showcase not only inspired the rest of us to try and be one of them next time, but also gave indirect tips and advice on how to be a better debater! As the academic-related events came to an end, we settled back in our plush seats to watch the amazing Scholar's Show! Many creative, talented, and hilarious scholars wowed us with their performances.

### Many Achievements

FINALLY – the most important event of the competition – the Awards Ceremony. As the evening wore on, medals started clanking and the whole auditorium was engulfed in loud cheers and applause. We did a WOW job overall, bringing home 100 silver, and 113 gold medals and 6 trophies! Even though it was their first time, many of the sixth graders did an excellent job. To top it off, Brandon Yu placed 4th overall in the Junior Division, and Brandon Yu, Prithika Chatterjee and Ruthvij Potharaju brought home the 1st place trophy as the highest ranked team in the Junior Division! CONGRATULATIONS to all who participated. You have made DIS proud!

### THE DOMINICAN TORCH Editorial Team

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Gr. 6 Kailey Chiang, William Hsueh and Raymond Huang



The DIS World Scholar's Cup Team



# Sports News

by Gustl Pido, Athletic Director

## Track and Field Success

**In the recent competitions, the DIS Track and Field team once again showcased their prowess with the most medals in the past eight years, securing impressive rankings in both the girls' and boys' divisions.**

The girls' team claimed the 2nd place overall, while the boys' team secured a commendable 4th place. These achievements are a testament to the hard work, dedication, and teamwork fostered within the DIS community.

As we celebrate another successful season, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to Coach Erwin, Dr. Pido, and Captain Luna for their exceptional leadership and unwavering commitment to excellence. With their guidance, the DIS Track and Field team continues to soar to new heights, inspiring us all with their passion and determination.

Girls Overall Team Rankings: 2nd Place - Dominican International School

Boys Overall Team Rankings: 4th place Dominican International School



Boys 4x400 Meter Relay 3<sup>rd</sup> Place

From left to right: Chen, Evan; Thong, Michael; Chen, Oliver; Shahidi, Cameron

## Table Tennis



Coach: Mr. Edwin Portillo . This year, our table tennis team got 2 silver and 1 bronze medal. Coach Edwin coached our players 3 times a week for 2 months.

# Sports News

## We Are The Champions!

## New Record



**Girls 400 Meters Dash Champion**  
Ella Sarmiento



**Michelle Chang broke the record for the Girls 100 Meter Dash.** Jean Fang took the second place and Camelia Huang was placed 7th



**Girls 4x100 Meter Relay Champions**  
From left to right: Michelle Chang, Ella Sarmiento, Jean Fang, and Camelia Huang



**Girls Long Jump Champion**  
Adrienne Chen. In the 4th place (not in the photo) was Jamie Cheng





# Sports News

## A Family of Champions

**The legacy of excellence runs deep within the DIS Track and Field team, with sibling duo Camelia and Bryan Huang leading the charge as shining examples of unparalleled talent and determination.**

Camelia Huang, a stalwart in the girls' division, showcased her dominance yet again by defending her title in the Javelin Throw for an impressive four consecutive years. Not content with just one event, Camelia displayed her versatility by securing 6th place in the Girls 400 Meter Hurdles, demonstrating her prowess as a multi-faceted athlete. In the Girls Shot Put, Camelia once again claimed the top spot, solidifying her status as a force to be reckoned with on the field. Her remarkable achievements are a testament to her unwavering dedication and relentless pursuit of excellence.

Following in his sister's footsteps, Bryan Huang continued the family tradition of success in the boys' division, defending his title for the 3rd consecutive year. Bryan's exceptional skill and determination were evident as he secured 2nd place in both the Boys Shot Put and Boys Discus Throw events, highlighting his versatility and prowess across multiple disciplines. However, it was in the Boys Javelin Throw where Bryan truly made his mark, clinching the championship title and maintaining the team's impressive six-year winning streak in the event.

Their remarkable achievements not only reflect their individual talent but also the unwavering support and encouragement from their family. With a legacy of their older brother Brandon guiding them, Camelia and Bryan continue to inspire their teammates and peers alike, embodying the spirit of dedication, perseverance, and excellence that defines the DIS Track and Field team.

As Coach Pido expresses immense pride in the Huang siblings' accomplishments



Girls Javelin Throw Champion  
Camelia Huang



Boys Javelin Throw  
Champion- Bryan Huang  
2nd place- Evan Chen



# Sports News

by Gustl Pido, Athletic Director



## Swimming

**Conner Chen's** remarkable performance at the **TISSA Swimming Meet**, securing two gold medals, is a testament to the team's hard work and talent.

Coach Aisha Fairroots Bayan and team manager Ms. Vivian Lin lead the Middle School Swimming Team with dedication and precision. Under their guidance, the team continues to excel. With Coach Aisha's mentorship and Ms. Vivian's support, the Middle School Swimming Team is poised for even greater achievements in the pool.



In a thrilling display of skill and teamwork, the **Grade 6 and 7 Boys Basketball team**, under the expert guidance of **Coach Tim Sampson**, emerged victorious in the highly anticipated tournament held on **May 11, 2024, at TES**.

With determination in their hearts and a relentless spirit on the court, the team overcame formidable opponents to claim the championship title. Led by Coach Sampson's strategic prowess and unwavering support, the boys showcased their talent and resilience, earning well-deserved acclaim and bringing pride to DIS.

