Expanding the GHIS Network - A Postcard from London
By Nurit Gery

Our job is to tell the world about GHIS - you amazing students and our wonderful staff. Whether by Zoom or in person, over the last few years we virtually or physically visited people all over the world to connect them to our project. Now in the thousands, these people are committed to our vision and invested in the GHIS community.

In the last few weeks, I travelled many many miles to meet potential new supporters. It's not that glamorous but very important. Sleeping on couches, catching the red-eye flight to make a morning meeting on the other side of the world, presenting to new prospects and sharing stories over and over. Yet, when I see the face of someone who is excited about GHIS and the hope it brings, it makes it worthwhile.

One community that has become a second home to me is Santa Barbara. They have adopted GHIS as their special project. Many of our students have met our volunteer tutors who help with English, math, chemistry and university applications. It says a great deal about our community that these generous people in a small town on the other side of the world said ‘I want to be involved’.

As I write this, Clare and I are between meetings in London, making sure that GHIS is supported from all over. We are committed to continue working all hours, across time zones, to make sure that as many people as possible know about the amazing community that is GHIS.

Teacher Spotlight - Assaf Dagai
By Lam Ho (Vietnam)

Mr. Assaf Dagai is formerly a senior software developer at Amdocs, one of Israel’s leading software and services providers to communications & media companies around the world. In 2018, he decided to turn the page by leaving his promising hi-tech career behind and starting to pursue his passion as a mathematics and computer science teacher at GHIS.

Now, Assaf is a beloved teacher and colleague. He has a very unique and liberal perspective of education. For him: “the essence of education is to instill learning skills, strengthen the students’ self-confidence, and bolster their ability to communicate effectively”. Because of this, many students enjoy his classes. Arbel - a student in Assaf’s computer science and mathematics class, said that he really liked his classes because “Assaf always finds creative and interesting ways to make Math class funny”. Ilay, another DP2 student, agreed saying that “His teaching methods are exceptional as he allows the students to creatively learn different units. Overall, I would say that Mr. Assaf is the ideal for a good teacher”.

Besides teaching, Assaf is also mentoring a group of DP2 students and has helped many students overcome the challenges they face in both academics and in life by giving practical advice and support. Many students were inspired by his personal story and his passion for education. In addition, Assaf also organizes and manages the Football CAS so that the students will have the opportunity to train their physical strength and unwind after school. And if you visit the GHIS campus, you will notice a beautiful garden planted by Assaf.

In short, GHIS wouldn’t have been the GHIS of today without Assaf and many students will always be grateful for the knowledge and inspiration that Assaf has given them on their life journey.
Alumni Spotlight - Niva Cohen
By Liron Gandelman (Israel)

Niva Cohen is an alumna from the GHIS Class of 2021. She learned about GHIS in a very special way when she accompanied a delegation from her old school in Los Angeles to Givat Haviva and heard about the international school. It seemed to her like a good place to study, but she never dared to apply. Six months later she returned for a seminar as part of her music class. She had a friend who studied at our school at that time, who introduced her to other students in the community. Niva decided to apply to the school and began at the end of October 2019.

Niva lives in Tel Aviv. She felt that Tel Aviv was like a bubble; everyone was the same so life there was boring. "I wanted to get out of this bubble, have my high school experience in a special place where I feel welcomed, meet other people from different places with whom I have so much in common". These things soon became her favorite aspects of the school.

Like every other GHIS student, Niva shared a room with two other girls that held different opinions and came from different backgrounds. Before coming to GHIS, Niva’s friends came from the same city, had the same political opinions, and were never exposed to anything different. She realized that being aware of other opinions is how life is supposed to be - that it is normal to live and accept other opinions rather than pushing them away. At GHIS, she learned how to speak with people and have political arguments in a respectful way.

Niva is currently taking a GAP year, volunteering in a boarding school for children-at-risk who have been abandoned and abused.

CAS Spotlight - PodCAS
By Maria Bakhлина (Russia)

PodCAS was created by Jon Jusufi (Kosovo) to amplify the voice of GHIS students through the medium of podcasting. Jon started the Podcast CAS a year ago and now leads the CAS with Gal Shanir (Israel) from DP1. He says that, while last year’s aim was simply to create a place for students to speak their mind and discuss life in GHIS, this year the team is focusing on one of the school’s main values - leadership. Throughout the year, they will dive into important aspects of leadership, such as communication, time management, creativity, and effective use of resources. They will host guests who hold leadership positions (business owners, members of parliament, etc.).

There are three main goals to the CAS:
- To learn about podcasting and acquire skill required to produce a podcast, such as creating a podcast structure, using microphones, becoming familiar with audio-editing software, discovering new topics and related guests.
- To have a place for GHIS community members to talk about the nature of GHIS and their experience here.
- To learn about the meaning of leadership, how it applies to different aspects of life, and how we interact with it in GHIS.

PodCAS currently takes place on Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, which will be used to promote podcasts and to post clips. A Spotify account where all of the podcasts will be posted is to be created soon.

Boarding Team Spotlight - Niv Calaf
By Darik Mulugeta (Ethiopia)

Niv is from Jerusalem, and a GHIS gap year volunteer. He served 6 months after graduating high school in a National Service Organization placement which was forced to closed because of the pandemic. A Facebook advertisement led him straight to GHIS.

"Being part of the GHIS community has given me a new perspective. The diversity of the school and the process that the students and faculty go through has left me with a desire to get involved in similar communities in the future."

Despite how hard it was for him to open up and interact with the students in the beginning, in time he became one of the boarding team members with whom the students felt the most comfortable. At GHIS, Niv has contributed to the community in many different ways that are valued and remembered by the students and staff. He has created a feeling of togetherness by working closely and building personal connection with the students.

His positive influence on the community is highlighted in the school trips, boarding activities, and late-night conversations, "Golden Moments" as he described. His joyfulness and enthusiasm have always brought a positive atmosphere to campus.

At GHIS Niv learned countless lessons from which he can benefit for a lifetime. Alongside his communication and interpersonal skills, he has developed his skills of time management and critical thinking. "Most importantly" he said, "I have truly understood the essence of love, unity, and respect."

As he leaves this community to pursue his goals, we wish him all the best!
On Friday, October 29th, 36 members of the Givat Haviva community travelled to Tel Aviv to take part in the Climate March. The prior week students devised their plans for the event—designing t-shirts and creating posters to express the urgency of the climate crisis. The community also arranged for a volunteer from the movement inspired by Greta Thunberg to come to the school and present what exactly the students were protesting for.

The students arrived in Rabin Square, to be welcomed by music, educational booths, and young people from all over the country. The GHIS community showed up for the march with blue and green tie-dyed shirts. There was passion and drive bursting from the crowd. The chanting and drumming set the tone for an affirmative approach. The students were confronted with many different types of people. Success (Liberia) said “The 2021 Climate March was the first that I’ve attended. I come from a place of no knowledge about climate change and wanted to learn and understand it; I am motivated to raise awareness so others can learn about the situation.”

Ranging from anti-capitalist/socialist agendas to vegan activists, it truly was a formative experience. Speaking as a student present at the march, it was nothing short of incredible.

By Maital Perlin (United States)

In our school, we have after-school activities called CAS, which stands for Creativity, Activity, and Service. Each student takes part in at least one CAS from each of these categories. This way students are encouraged to try new things and get out of their comfort zone. Not just the students participate in these after school activities, other members of the GHIS community can as well. In fact, members of the boarding team, students, and faculty run them. If someone has an interest they want to share with others, they can start a CAS.

On October 10, there was a CAS fair. Everyone who runs a CAS presented at a small booth and students had the opportunity to ask questions and sign up. The fair gave the students the opportunity to try something new. Each student signed up for many CAS’s, just to try them out and see if they like it. The point of the fair wasn’t to make a final decision, but to explore and discover new interests.

Overall, the CAS fair was a great success! The entire school took part, tried new things, ate good snacks, and got a dance lesson from our Salsa CAS leader Ms. Hannah.

What matters most is that by the end of it nobody left saying they didn’t try anything new.

By Emuna Lapping (Israel/United States)
Another Student Leadership cycle has come to a close this October, and a new team was elected by our student body. Student Leadership is a unique opportunity to represent and impact our community. They work closely with the school’s administration and boarding team in order to carry out initiatives and listen to students’ wants and needs. This is an incredible opportunity for self-growth and learning.

After a week of campaigning, with posters, videos, gatherings, and bonfires, election night was here! There was so much excitement in the air as the student body gathered in our library. The candidates, as you can imagine, were very nervous, and sat in front of the audience. However, the atmosphere was encouraging and supportive.

After a short speech from the current Student Leadership who were facilitating the event, candidate speeches began. Each spoke for a minute and a half, in which time they had to make their mark. Then voting began as long lines of the whole student body stood before the voting booth. It was amazing to see the turnout of students, which reflects both the fact that students care about our community and also that the Student Leadership role is extremely impactful.

To relieve the tension of the election, the night continued with the Culture Carnival. Students from different countries set up booths and showcased their culture, history, heritage, music, and of course, food! Every few minutes, students from different countries would perform. We were treated dances from Ethiopia, Russia, Vietnam, Armenia, Latin America, Israel, Palestine, Liberia and more. In the midst of COVID lockdowns, we felt like we were travelling around the world.

To end the night, the old Student Leadership announced the winners of the elections: two representatives from each of our cohorts– 10th grade, 11th grade, and 12th grade.