

THE IB UPDATE

*The Official Newsletter of Samuel Clemens
International Baccalaureate Program*



From Left to Right: Zoë McHodgkins IB Alumni (2020 cohort), Jalene Guadarrama with Bowling (2023 cohort), Dalton Lacy for CAS project (2023 cohort)

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WELCOME TO THE IB UPDATE!

by Lauren Rollins - IB Coordinator

Welcome to the January edition of the Samuel Clemens International Baccalaureate newsletter! Our goal is to keep all stakeholders (students, parents, SCUC community) apprised of the amazing opportunities that are going on within the IB program here at Samuel Clemens. We will publish this newsletter monthly and feature our current IB students as well as our IB alumni. If you have any questions about the program or suggestions for the newsletter, please email it to LRollins@scuc.txed.net
Thank you for your time!

Lauren Rollins
IB Coordinator





Photo caption (from left to right): Elysia Salazar, Logan Michael, and Layla Randolph (class of 2023) with their Holocaust remembrance butterflies in HOTA to examine the effects of the Holocaust on children.



WHAT'S GOING ON IN IB CLASSROOMS IN THE MONTH OF JANUARY?

IB Literature HL for Juniors - taught by Mrs. Rollins - Students have researched Nigeria, the setting of our current novel, *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. They have looked at and discussed the various authorial choices and how they impact the reader.

IB Literature HL for Seniors - taught by Mrs. Crawford - Students have been analyzing and discussing the poetry of Robert Browning.

IB History of the Americas HL for Juniors - taught by Mrs. Baker - Students have been introduced to Paper 1 which is the document-based question focusing on the Gilded Age. Students continue to push through content for Paper 3 and for the STAAR test.

IB History of the Americas HL for Seniors - taught by Mrs. Frink - Students have been studying Apartheid in South Africa and practicing Paper 1 skills. They met with Mrs. Frink to conference over their IA drafts.

IB Anthropology - taught by Mrs. Baker - Students are wrapping up *Fresh Fruit Broken Bodies* and will begin a project next week. Also, students will begin working on step 2 of our IA.

IB Theory of Knowledge (TOK) for Juniors - taught by Mr. Seiler - Students are working on learning ideas presented in the History & Knowledge part of the Areas of Knowledge (AoK).

IB Theory of Knowledge (TOK) for Seniors - taught by Mr. Seiler - Seniors are preparing the prescribed title essay, a 1600-word essay discussing one or more AoK.

IB Math Applications - taught by Mrs. Smith - Students are working on Topic 3 Geometry and Trigonometry. We did a geometry review and used our knowledge of lines to create Vornoi Diagrams. We are currently working on solving triangles using trig ratios and laws.

IB Biology HL for Juniors - taught by Mrs. Alvarado - Students have worked through different genetic inheritance scenarios including complex genetics. Then they had a study of evolution through mutation, genetic variation and inheritance and how change in organisms over millions of years is a way to explain the vast amount of diversity in the world.

IB Biology HL for Seniors - taught by Mrs. Alvarado - Students reviewed meiosis and inheritance and added to those more complex components of inheritance. They learned how sometimes the results of a cross may not be as expected from a Punnett Square prediction and how likely that is due to gene linkage.

IB Spanish - taught by Señor Hecox - Students looked at examples of each of the Fine Arts. Each student presented a famous Hispanic fine art example from a specific country, answering the questions "How do the arts help us understand the world?" and "What can we learn about a culture through its artistic expressions?"

IB Visual Art - taught by Mr. Lewis - students have learned the assessment criteria for the Process Portfolio and Public Exhibition. They explored art making mediums through sustained investigations which inform the processes they choose to explore for their fully resolved artworks which will be exhibited in April.



"I've lived in multiple countries outside of the U.S. before turning 20 in part because of the tools IB gave me. I cannot stress how important it is to actually follow the INTERNATIONAL part of the International Baccalaureate Program."

ZOE MCHODGKINS C/O 2020



Zoë McHodgkins (2020 cohort) in France and Poland

ALUMNI UPDATE

Ever since Zoë was in third grade, she wanted to move to Paris. For most students, this would be a passing fantasy, but for Zoë, she made it a reality. With this in mind, the International Baccalaureate Program seemed like the perfect fit. While going through the IB program, Zoë focused on French as her foreign language. For most students, it is challenging to write their 4,000 word extended essay in their native language; she went a step further and even challenged herself to write her essay completely in French!

Zoë, a Samuel Clemens IB graduate class of 2020, graduated amidst the thickest part of the pandemic. Despite the uncertainty of travel during Covid, Zoë didn't hesitate to pack up and head overseas for college. She is currently at American University in Paris and is working to receive a B.A. in Comparative Literature with a minor in Economics. When asked what made her pick this degree, she says, "I had always been scared to pursue anything related to literature because I thought I wouldn't be able to make money. After seeing the success in academia that my professor had, I knew that wasn't necessarily true." Upon finishing my B.A., she plans on immediately pursuing a doctorate in Comparative Literature before looking towards publication, translation, and/or teaching.

The IB program strives to give high school students the skills that build a solid foundation of learning

and a knowledge that allow them to flourish in college and life. Zoë shared, "IB granted me with a strong foundation in critical thinking and analysis. I was able to fast track straight to the way of thinking that I needed to have in college. It's a way of thinking that my peers in university often wouldn't have until their first year through college. To this day, I still use a lot of the methods I learned in IB to analyze texts and to draft my papers. But being in IB also helped teach me how to collaborate with a variety of people in an academic setting."

Zoë fluently speaks English and French and is proficient in German. This enables her to freely communicate to more people around the world. She encourages anyone to do IB to become bi-lingual. "Do it. If not for the college credit that you can earn, do it because two years of a foreign language is laughable. English can get you a lot of places but not everywhere, so learn another language. Try to continue pursuing foreign languages and opportunities to go abroad. The world is so much bigger than Schertz, Texas! If you get the opportunity to travel the world, do it! Just because you go (out there to see the world) doesn't mean you can't come back. But still go," she encourages.

"I've lived in multiple countries outside of the U.S. before turning 20 in part because of the tools IB gave me. I cannot stress how important it is to actually follow the INTERNATIONAL part of the International Baccalaureate Program," she says.

Marche à suivre, Zoë!

LEARNER OF THE MONTH

Trait: Open-Minded

The International Baccalaureate Program is known for having 10 Learner Profile Traits that make its program distinct from other higher education programs. IB Students are Inquirers, Knowers, Thinkers, Communicators, and Risk-Takers, who are Principled, Open-Minded, Caring, Balanced, and Reflective. For more information about the learner profiles, click [here](#).

January's trait is "Open-Minded". According to IB, students who are open-minded "appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. They seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and they are willing to grow from the experience."

Each month, the IB students and teachers vote on the student who consistently displays this trait - not just in January but year round. The student who has been award with the Open-Minded Learner Profile trait is Braelyn Ramirez (2023 cohort)!!!

Her peer said of her, "She is able to share her own cultural experiences while striving to learn about others and appreciate them too."

Another peer shared, "Braelyn is always open to listening and learning new things from others. She is always observing and applying her ideas in new ways in a creative and respectful manner. I have no doubt that I am able to express my ideas to her without being judged."

"She is always willing to listen to the views and opinions of others and is never quick to cast judgment. All the while, she stays true to her own values, and she will not be pressured into breaking them," a third peer stated.

February's learner profile trait of the month is "Communicator".



Braelyn Ramirez 2023 cohort



Jaylene Guadarrama (2023 cohort) in her bowling photo



EXTRA-CURRICULAR EXTRAS!

Samuel Clemens Bowling Team

It's never too late to try new things in high school! Jaylene Guadarrama found this out first hand when she joined the high school bowling team for Clemens her senior year. When asked why she joined, she said, "I took an interest in bowling when my friend suggested that I join the team. I instantly fell in love with the sport."

Although Jaylene has only been bowling since October of 2022, in her first tournament, she won first place out of 12 teams. When asked what she has learned from participating in bowling, she responds, "I have learned a lot! Sometimes it just takes time to learn. It's okay to lose. Sometimes you just have to learn from your mistakes and move on."

When asked what the most difficult thing about doing bowling was, she shared, "The most difficult thing about being in bowling is that we are not provided transportation as other sports have. We have to provide our own transportation to matches. It can be a struggle when we have early matches and our parents have to leave work early to come get us."

No matter the challenges, Jaylene knows it's worth it. "The best thing about bowling is that I have an amazing team. We pick each other up whenever we are feeling down on ourselves. The team helps build up your confidence."

When asked what advice she'd give to other students who are trying to balance academics and extra-curricular activities, she says, "During your free time, work on homework and other assignments. Try to get ahead and do NOT leave it off until the last minute." Way to try new things Jaylene; leave no pin standing.



Left: Dalton Lacy (2023) explaining his plan to his IB cohort for painting the cornhole sets.

Right: What the process looks like in the middle of painting a cornhole set.

C-A-S CORNER

Creativity-Activity-Service (CAS) is one of the essential elements that every student must complete as part of the IB Program. The goal is to show students the benefits of Creativity, Activity and Service in their life as well as for their community. Experiencing new things helps develop curiosity and help students become life long learners.

For Dalton Lacy's CAS project, he built 5 cornhole sets that he donated to the Clemens aquatic team. "The school aquatics program host several social events such as end of the year banquets or community cooking competitions. These cornhole sets would make outdoor entertainment easier."

When asked about what helped him the most during this project, Dalton said, "This was a very large project that quickly proved to be very labor intensive. It would have been nearly impossible for me alone to not only gather materials, but to construct and paint all ten boxes. It was only through the indispensable volunteer contributions of others that I was able complete this massive undertaking." For more information about CAS, please click [here](#).

EXTENDED ESSAY (EE) EXHIBIT

As part of the IB diploma requirements, students are required to write a 4,000 word Extended Essay over a topic which they are passionate about. Braelyn Ramirez ultimately landed on exploring why the United States' decision to use the atomic bomb at Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 was unjustified in relation to ending World War Two.

When asked about her what drew her to this study, she said, "I already had an interest in the social and political implications of nuclear weapons, but as I was doing research, I found an article discussing why the use of atomic weapons may have not been needed to end World War Two, and I immediately knew that this is something I wanted to research and discuss further."

One unique challenge she faced while researching for her EE was finding and citing sources. "In the US, we are told that the use of the atomic bombs was the only viable option for Japanese surrender. Because of this, finding sources that discuss why this decision was unjustified was difficult. Additionally, some of the primary sources such as a document written by scientists working on the project are still partially classified, including the names of the authors. I had to find ways to cite sources with limited information," she shared.

Other than honing her research and writing skills, Braelyn has learned another valuable lesson. "My experience with my EE has taught me the importance of questioning the status quo. My EE topic discusses a topic that has been argued between historians for many years but the popular opinion is that nuclear weapons were needed to end World War Two. Although many people may not agree with my EE, I believe it is important to talk about topics that often go unquestioned by the general public." For more information about EE, please click [here](#).



Braelyn Ramirez (2023 cohort)