



SEPT. 2025

ISKL SELAMANYA





THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF KUALA LUMPUR

GIVE TO INSPIRE

Giving is not just about making a donation. It is about making a difference.

– Kathy Calvin, Philanthropist

Many of the lasting memories made by our students are not possible without the generous donations of our community.



We welcome donations to support our Give to Inspire Campaign.

Some donations can impact student life today and some donations will impact generations to come, what remains essential is that your giving will have a positive impact. Join us in this journey, every gift helps.

Scan the QR code or log on to <https://www.iskl.edu.my/community/philanthropy>



SELAMANYA

WHAT'S INSIDE

56

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Finding Her Voice in Every Language

59

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

From ISKL to Oxford

69

LOOKING AHEAD

Staying Connected: Shaping the Next 60 Years



On the cover
ISKL Alumni Panther

05

Letter from the Editor

06

LOOKING BACK

Building Bonds Across Generations

34

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Rekindling Connections

39

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

I Suka KL & ISKL Alumni Panthers

45

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Real Talk: Alumni Share the Journey Beyond ISKL

66

LOOKING AHEAD

Catching up with the Class of 2025

73

In Memorium



ISKL Selamanya

Alumni Year in Review

Chief Editor Kendra Nicole Jones

Head Writer Farena Cooper

Designer Ross Idris

Contributing Writers Christian Sorand
Eileen Unwin
Karen Palko
Sarah Madzney

Contributing Danial Marzuki ('17)
Photographer

*Once a Panther,
Always a Panther*



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

As we turn the final pages of ISKL's 60th Anniversary celebrations, this edition of *Selamanya* invites us to pause and reflect not just on where we've been but also on the spirit of connection that continues to carry us forward.

Within these pages, you'll find stories that honor our shared legacy: from the beloved traditions that have shaped generations of Panthers, to the quiet power of mentorship, and the ways our global alumni network continues to inspire and uplift. This magazine celebrates community in many forms: lifelong friendships, meaningful reconnections, and the profound impact of giving back. It's been a privilege to be a part of many of these stories and witness just how deeply ISKL lives on in the hearts of our alumni.

This edition is especially meaningful to me, as it also marks a personal milestone: my final issue as Editor. After four incredible years serving as ISKL's Alumni Engagement and Development Lead, I'm preparing to enter a new chapter and officially join you as a fellow Panther alumni.

Looking back, I feel nothing but gratitude. I'll always remember launching the Alumni Amazing Race during the pandemic, a playful yet powerful way to stay connected when we needed it most. From there, the journey continued with annual alumni gatherings in KL, the growth of the Get Real Series, and the privilege of welcoming returning alumni to our (new-to-them) campus.

Hearing your memories, witnessing the bonds that began here and still flourish, and seeing the impact ISKL has had on your lives has been both humbling and inspiring.

Some of my most cherished moments have come from connecting alumni with students during the Senior Assembly panel discussions and supporting parents as their children graduate, helping them find their place in this new chapter as alumni and empty nesters. And, of course, being part of planning and delivering our 60th Anniversary celebrations has been a true highlight; an unforgettable tribute to the past and a hopeful step toward the future.

More than anything, what has stayed with me are the relationships; the friendships that span decades, the stories that echo through time, and the quiet sense of belonging that comes with knowing that ISKL will always be part of your story.

Thank you for sharing your journeys with me, allowing me to share in yours, and continuing to be part of this incredible community. I look forward to staying connected as an alumni, a friend, and a forever Panther.

Once a panther, always a panther.

Kendra Jones
Alumni Engagement and Development Lead

BUILDING BONDS ACROSS GENERATIONS

By Karen Palko, Current Faculty



Karen in 2002 with one of many 'Palko Pups'

For more than four decades, Karen Palko has shaped the lives of generations of ISKL students. As the school's longest-serving faculty member, she has witnessed—and helped build—the very heart of our Panther community. In this 60th Anniversary reflection, Karen shares how connection, continuity, and compassion have defined her ISKL journey.

I am honored and privileged to be part of ISKL's long and evolving legacy. From my first year in 1983 to now, I've felt immense pride in being connected to the thousands of ISKL students who have gone on to make their mark in the world. Hearing of their successes always brings back a flood of memories. I especially love when alumni return with spouses and children—because I vividly recall their middle school days! My memory seems to surprise (and occasionally worry) them, as I can recall both their shining and awkward moments on stage or in the gym. But truly, every day at ISKL brings a new story worth remembering.

“Every day at ISKL brings a new story worth remembering.”

I've been lucky. My teaching load has allowed me to witness students thrive in so many settings—on stage, in the gym, across athletic fields, and out in the wilds of Malaysia, our wonderful host country. Whether it's a dance sequence, an IASAS event, or a musical performance, these moments stay etched in my mind. Some of my favorite memories are from Malaysia Week, watching exhausted middle schoolers on Survivor Island faceplant in the sand and sleep there all night, completely unbothered. I love it when they look up at the stars and out to the sea and feel lucky to be here in Malaysia.

Teaching the children of former students has been a surreal, full-circle experience. I'll never forget the year multiple alumni-turned-parents attended my open house, and all of their children ended up in my classes. In those moments, the passage of time becomes so tangible, yet heartwarming.



Karen with her students

What makes ISKL special are the traditions we've carried forward together—students, faculty, and staff. These shared experiences shape our community, from IASAS to the year-end Clap Out, from International Fest to Faculty/Staff Thanksgiving. But if I had to choose one that touches my heart the most, it would be the Terry Fox Run, now the Run Against Cancer. Participating in events like these together is deeply powerful. Perhaps the most heartfelt example of ISKL's Panther spirit was when the entire school united to support Quincy, the young daughter of two faculty members, during her cancer diagnosis. Meeting her years later as a healthy teenager was a moment of deep pride and gratitude—a true "ISKL full circle."

"Meeting Quincy years later as a healthy teen was a moment of deep pride and gratitude."

While ISKL has changed physically over the years, its heart remains the same. I still wake up excited to come to school. Every campus has radiated positivity and always felt like home. The students may change, but their spirit hasn't—they're still eager, involved, and open-hearted. I may be three times the age of the Class of 2025, but I feel just as connected to them as I did to my very first students in the 1980s.

"I found myself at ISKL. I hope you did too."

ISKL has been the foundation of my entire teaching career. I've always believed in "leading from behind"—creating space for students to lead, grow, and shine in their own light. As I begin to prepare to hand over the reins, I find comfort in knowing that my time here has been meaningful and appreciated. Bilqis Hijjas ('97) once said of me, "She has short legs, but nobody can keep up with her." These days, the opposite feels true—I still have short legs, but now there are many who have caught up and are blazing trails of their own. And I couldn't be prouder to cheer them on.



Karen entering the 60th Anniversary dinner, Jom Lepak



A BRIEF HISTORY: 60 YEARS OF LEARNING, GROWING, AND LEADING

From a crumbling palace on Maxwell Road to a purpose-built campus, ISKL's journey over six decades is a story of transformation, resilience, and community.

By Kendra Jones

ISKL's story begins not with buildings, but with a vision. It was created by parents and educators who believed that a globally mobile community needed more than just classrooms. They needed connection, care, and a curriculum that would prepare children for any path the world might offer.

In 1965, American families and U.S. Embassy staff established ISKL in a former royal residence on Maxwell Road, fondly remembered as the Istana. That first year, 48 students and a handful of passionate educators brought a crumbling palace to life with ingenuity and heart. Leaky roofs were patched with buckets, bathtubs became art sinks, and an old kitchen wing was transformed into a science lab. It was chaotic, intimate, and unforgettable.

ISKL's early years were shaped by pioneers like Bob Fendley, a former Peace Corps teacher who became the school's first principal. With modest resources and a tenacious spirit, he laid the foundation for a school culture rooted in excellence, creativity, and community. Classes were small, textbooks came from Vietnam, and the library bore stamps from Dalat School. Just two years later, ISKL held its first graduation on the lawn under the trees.



By 1975, the school had outgrown the Istana. Under the leadership of Head of School Bob Gaw, ISKL moved to a purpose-built campus in Ampang Jaya. The new site featured air-conditioned classrooms, an auditorium, and expanding programs that included the arts, athletics, AP courses, and student leadership. Traditions like the Harimau yearbook, International Fest, and Malaysia Week took root, connecting students to their host country and each other.

The 1980s and 1990s were a time of innovation and inclusion. ISKL became one of the first international schools in the region to support students with learning differences and to offer both Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs. Enrollment grew, extracurriculars flourished, and ISKL earned a reputation for developing globally minded graduates ready to lead with integrity and empathy.

In the early 2000s, ISKL expanded again, opening a second campus in Melawati to house the Elementary School. Each division was able to thrive, and "The Melawati Way," an ethos of compassion, respect, and responsibility, became a defining part of the school's identity. Students across the divisions engaged in service learning, performing arts, forensics, and regional athletics, including IASAS, which ISKL helped found.



In 2018, the school reunited on a unified, state-of-the-art campus in Ampang Hilir. Designed for sustainability and innovation, the new campus reflected everything ISKL has become: future-ready, inclusive, and deeply connected to its community.

The years that followed brought new challenges and milestones. During the Covid-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022, the ISKL community demonstrated extraordinary resilience, ensuring continuous learning despite global disruption. The school's outdoor athletic field received official certification from FIFA and World Rugby, which underscores ISKL's commitment to providing world-class facilities. And in 2025, the boys' basketball team captured IASAS gold for the first time in 31 years, a long-awaited and well-earned victory.



Today, ISKL serves more than 1,800 students from over 70 countries in a learning environment where curiosity is nurtured, differences are celebrated, and every student is empowered to shape a better world. Over the past 60 years, the ISKL community has grown into a global network of changemakers, dreamers, and leaders. From the early days at the Istana to today's vibrant, future-ready campus, our story has always been about people. Looking ahead, our alumni, spread across every continent, remain at the heart of our Vision to shape a better world, one Panther at a time.



Did You Know?

A GLIMPSE INTO ISKL'S EARLY YEARS



ISKL opened in 1965 with just 48 students and a campus in a former royal residence.



The Malaysian tiger was initially featured on the school crest.



The first school graduation took place on the palace lawn in 1967.



Early sports teams played on borrowed fields near the Royal Selangor Club, nicknamed *the Dog*.



The first school yearbook was published in 1968 and called *Sekbangsa*.



Tuition in 1965 was RM1,500 a year, with a registration fee of RM5.



ISKL's first alumni reunion was held in 2002 at the residence of the former Head of School, William Powell.



In the early years, school plays were performed in classrooms, at the school entrance, or anywhere else space was available.



The Red Hat's Grade 5 leadership initiative celebrated its 20th Anniversary in 2023.



Taman Negara has been a location for Malaysia Week, formerly known as intersession, since its very first iteration, and is still included amongst trip destinations today.

Celebrating



Anniversary

1965 (September)

ISKL's first home is the Istana (Palace) on Jalan Maxwell with a grand total of 48 students and nine teachers.



1966-1967

ISKL Faculty and students.



1968-1969

The first yearbook is called "Sekbangsa" (One Nation) but is renamed the following year to "Harimau" (Tiger).



1960s



1966-1967

Students vote to adopt the name "Panthers" for sports teams.



1967 (July)

ISKL's first graduation ceremony takes place on the lawn of the Istana.



NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY		International School of Kuala Lumpur	
ISKL CHAPTER		November 2, 1969	
CHARACTER	CANDIDATES	INDUCTION CEREMONIES	
SCHOLARSHIP	Seniors: Mureen Biggs, Carole Cassano, Emma Ryan, Ane Shaw	Music Director: Mabel Ho, Elaine Chee	
LEADERSHIP	Juniors: Drake Chen, Gavin Grubbs, Joe Macdonald, Famer Fan, Jay Kenny, Christopher MacCall, Nicole Stinger, Kevin Stone, Michael Sun	LUNCHEON	
SERVICE	Sophomores: Carole Hester, Mary Hill, Elizabeth Ting	Musician: Diana Chen	
		Emcee: Bill	
		President of Candidates: Mr. Ann Koon, Speaker	
		Acceptance of Candidates: Mr. Albert A. Quail	
		Presentation of Charter: _____	
		SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	
		Music: _____	
		Arrangements: _____	
		Flowers: _____	

1969

The National Honor Society inducts its first 16 members.

From our first day to today, every chapter has been a story of curiosity, community, and growth. Our six decades of inspiring learning, fostering friendships, and building community have been filled with extraordinary moments – and the best adventure is yet to come.

1970-1971

Student government sponsors UN Week to celebrate diversity at ISKL. This event evolves into ISKL's annual International Festival.



1978

The PTA is formed in 1971 and donates money towards the purchase of ISKL's first computer in 1978.



1979

ISKL publishes its first community newsletter, the "Friday Flash"



1970s



1976
Ampang campus opens.



1978
ISKL establishes the first Southeast Asia Forensics Tournament.



1979
The first Malaysia Week takes place and was originally called Intersession.

Our Leaders
ISKL Heads of School across the decades.



Robert Fendley
1965 - 1968



Albert Chudler
1968 - 1970



Robert B. Gaw
1970 - 1978



Gail Schoppert
1978 - 1983



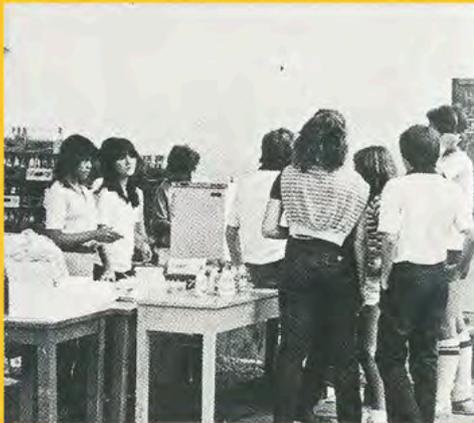
Joseph Kennedy
1983 - 1986



Ronald Dowty
1986 - 1987

1980

ISKL initiates one of the first school-wide special needs programs in Southeast Asia.



1988

ISKL hosts its first Model United Nations (MUN) conference debating issues such as nuclear-free zones, the AIDS crisis and the Iran-Iraq War.



1982

The first IASAS competition takes place.



1980s



1986

In 1986, Derek Haight graduates as ISKL's first lifetime student having enrolled in 1973.



1989

ISKL becomes the first school in Malaysia authorized to run the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP).

1982

Panther Athletic Club (PAC) is created to enable students to play a role in earning money to support IASAS activities. The PAC Shack tradition starts with students selling food and drinks.



Dexter Lewis
1987 - 1989



Dick Krajczar
1989 - 1996



Barry Farnham
1996 - 1999



William Powell
2000 - 2006



Paul Chmelik
2006 - 2013



Dr. Norma Hudson
2013 - 2019



Rami Madani
2019 - present

1992

Melawati campus opens. First day of school at Melawati.



1994-1995

First Mission Statement and Core Values are developed.

MISSION STATEMENT

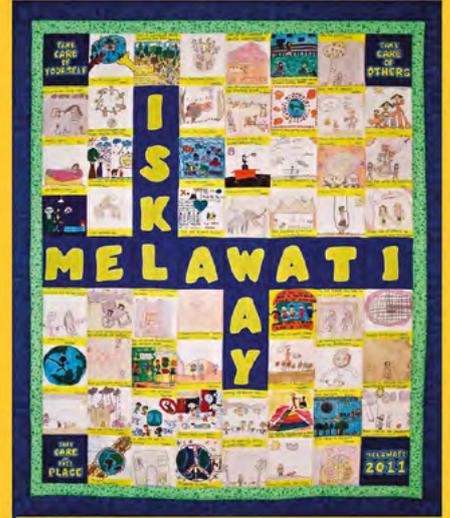
The International School of Kuala Lumpur, a private, parent-governed, United States-accredited school, offers its students a superior education to prepare them to be responsible world citizens who think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively, and learn enthusiastically throughout life.

We believe that...

- all people have intrinsic worth.
- diversity is a strength when people are committed to shared goals.
- individual and cultural diversity enriches life.
- individuals are both responsible and accountable for their choices.
- learning is a natural, life-long process.
- all people have the capacity to learn.
- open, honest and respectful communication is essential to mutual understanding.
- society benefits when people seek to excel.

1997

The "Melawati Way" is introduced in Elementary School.



1990s



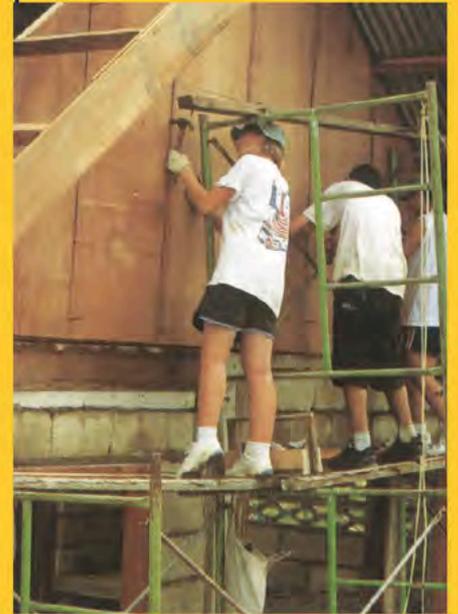
1992

Elementary School publishes its first yearbook, "Kancil" (Mouse Deer). Middle School publishes its first yearbook, "Monyet" (Monkey) in 1997.



1997

The haze is so bad 400 students and 40 teachers leave Malaysia and study online, making ISKL a pioneer in distance learning.



1998

The first Habitat for Humanity build takes place and is part of a pilot service learning initiative for High School students.



1966-1967
The ISKL crest is designed by members of the Student Council. The tiger and crescent moon represent Malaysia. The scroll and book stand for learning and the globe represents diversity.



1982
The ISKL crest is revamped. The crescent moon disappears and the standing tiger begins to resemble a leaping panther.

2002
The first alumni reception is held and ISKL's Alumni Association is launched.



2002
First IB Diploma Scholarships are awarded to Malaysian students.



2009
The first Global Action Program (GAP) takes place.



2000s



2003
The "Red Hat" community service/ leadership initiative is introduced in Grade 5.



MISSION
THE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF KUALA LUMPUR PROVIDES AN EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATION THAT CHALLENGES EACH STUDENT TO DEVELOP THE ATTITUDES, SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING TO BECOME A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, SPIRITED, SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE GLOBAL CITIZEN.

SCHOOL-WIDE LEARNING RESULTS (SLRs)

THINK CREATIVELY
CREATIVE THINKERS ARE RISK TAKERS WHO PROVIDE NEW IDEAS AND ENJOY THE CHALLENGE OF EXPLORING A WIDE VARIETY OF POSSIBILITIES THROUGH DIVERGENT APPROACHES.

REASON CRITICALLY
THOSE WHO REASON CRITICALLY CONTINUOUSLY PROCESS AND APPLY INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES IN A CONSCIOUS FASHION IN ORDER TO DEVELOP, VERIFY, REFLECT ON, AND EVALUATE VIEWPOINTS AND CONCLUSIONS.

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY
EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS ACTIVELY LISTEN, REFLECT AND RESPECT OTHERS' IDEAS. THEY KNOW THEIR AUDIENCE, HAVE CLARITY OF PURPOSE AND ARE FLEXIBLE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE IN THEIR CHOICE OF MEDIA TO ENHANCE UNDERSTANDING.

COLLABORATE CONSTRUCTIVELY
CONSTRUCTIVE COLLABORATORS USE COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND APPROPRIATE TOOLS AND NORMS; THEY MAINTAIN POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS, CONTRIBUTE AND BUILD UPON OTHERS' IDEAS AND WORK TOWARD ACHIEVING COMMON GOALS.

LEARN ENTHUSIASTICALLY
ENTHUSIASTIC LEARNERS ARE SELF-MOTIVATED, INTELLECTUALLY CURIOUS, ENGAGED, AND PERSISTENT INDIVIDUALS WHO OBTAIN CHALLENGES.

LIVE ETHICALLY
SOCIAL AND ETHICALLY RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS ACTIVELY CARE FOR AND RESPECT THEMSELVES, OTHERS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

THE VISION FOR OUR STUDENTS
TO WALK IN A HARMONIOUS ENVIRONMENT WHERE CARE FOLLOWS CLOSELY BEHIND; LEARNING IS STIMULATED, CURIOSITY IS SPARKED, VISION IS CULTIVATED, AND ACTION IS INSPIRED.

CORE BELIEFS
WE BELIEVE THAT:

- ALL PEOPLE HAVE INTRINSIC WORTH
- INDIVIDUALS ARE BOTH RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE FOR THEIR CHOICES
- OPEN, HONEST AND RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING
- DIVERSITY IS A STRENGTH WHEN PEOPLE ARE COMMITTED TO SHARED GOALS
- INDIVIDUAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY ENRICHES LIFE
- LEARNING IS A LIFE-LONG JOURNEY THAT IS TRANSFORMATIONAL
- ALL PEOPLE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO LEARN

2008
A new Mission Statement, School-wide Learning Results (SLRs), and Core Beliefs are launched.



2001
In 2001 the school crest is incorporated into a logo and in 2007 the mortarboard replaces the caliper.



2019-2020
The first ISKL Alumni crest is launched in 2019, featuring the ISKL panther and founding year, 1965.

2012
ISKL becomes the first recipient of the Eco-Schools Green Flag in Malaysia.



2017
Life Centered Education (LCE) is launched serving students with a diagnosed intellectual or development disability.



2018
Ampang Hilir Campus opens. After 27 years apart, all three divisions are once again united.



2010s



2015
ISKL celebrates its 50th anniversary.



2019
ISKL Varsity Rugby and Varsity Touch team wins Gold at Season 2 IASAS Championships.





Who could have foreseen the start of this decade would find us grappling with a pandemic that has changed the way we all live, including how we teach and learn. ISKL, like schools around the region and the world, was closed for much of the year as we adhered to the Malaysian government's Covid-19 Movement Control Order (MCO).



2022
Panther Runs started



2021
Learning continues during the MCO



2025
New field receives
FIFA/World Rugby certification



2025
ISKL Varsity Boys
Basketball team wins
Gold at Season 2 IASAS
Championship

2020s



October, 2023
ISKL launches the
Pathways Scholarship
to nurture Malaysian
changemakers

April, 2025
60th Anniversary's
six panthers



January 2022
The Kanopi opens



April 2025
ISKL celebrates it's
60th Anniversary.

HONORING OUR DEPARTING FACULTY 2024-2025

By Farena Cooper

With the 2024-2025 school year now concluded, we extend our heartfelt thanks to our departing faculty members for their dedication and lasting contributions to ISKL. Their commitment to student growth and learning has helped shape the vibrant, inclusive community we are so proud of.

As they begin new chapters, we are honored to welcome them to the ISKL Alumni family. Their legacy continues in the lives they've touched and the values they've helped instill.

Here, we reconnect with some of the inspiring educators featured in our Panthers of ISKL campaign. While this is only a small selection of those leaving, each story reflects the impact and care they brought to our school.

Explore more stories from our community in Panthers of ISKL!



"I can honestly say this school allowed all five of us (in our family) to be everything we wanted to be during these 15 years, including career moves, opportunities to coach and direct, and simply having fun and enjoying our lives."

~ Tina Casey

"The school expects a lot from everyone, students, parents, teachers, and administrators, but if you are willing to put your heart and soul into this place, the school, the community, and most of all, the students will make it the most rewarding place imaginable."

~ Peter Casey



"I will most definitely miss the wonderful students at ISKL. I love that our students come from many different countries and cultures. I learn so much daily, giving me new perspectives on the world and the subjects I teach."

~ Laurie Larsen



"In Elementary School, we adopted the phrase Bersatu, which means 'Better Together' in Bahasa Melayu. It's true in our ISKL community, but also no matter where we are in the world."

~ Kim McNaughton



"What I'll miss most about ISKL are the students and my wonderful colleagues on the LCE team. Having the opportunity to work with students over multiple years allows me to build strong connections with them and witness their growth. As for my colleagues, I feel fortunate to work alongside such knowledgeable, caring, and dedicated professionals."

~ Franny Bakker

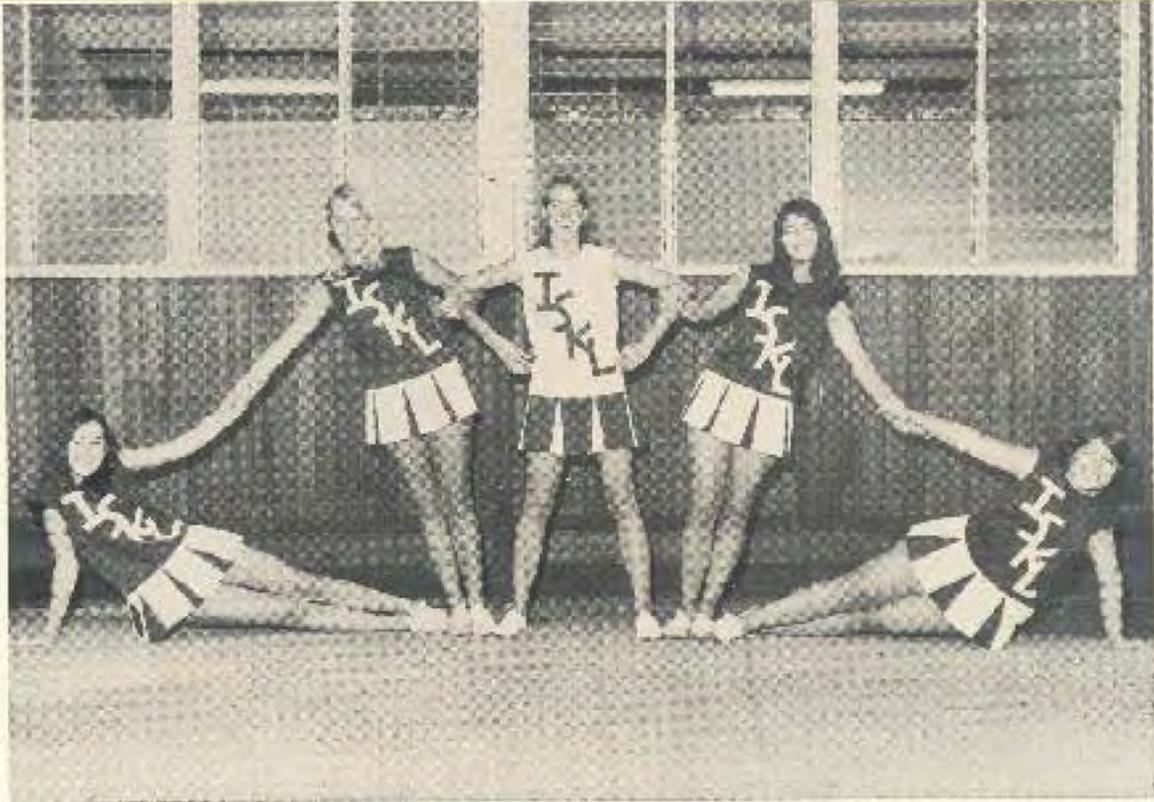
Alumni SCRAPBOOK

GET READY TO
BROWSE BACK
IN TIME!

In this special 60th Alumni scrapbook feature, we've opened up the ISKL vaults to bring you a curated journey through the pages of our iconic Harimau yearbooks, a heartfelt tribute to the Panther spirit across generations.

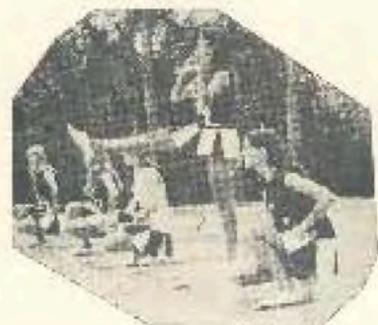


Want to see your class yearbook?
Update your alumni profile at
iskl.edu.my/alumni or scan the QR
code to access the complete
digital archive!



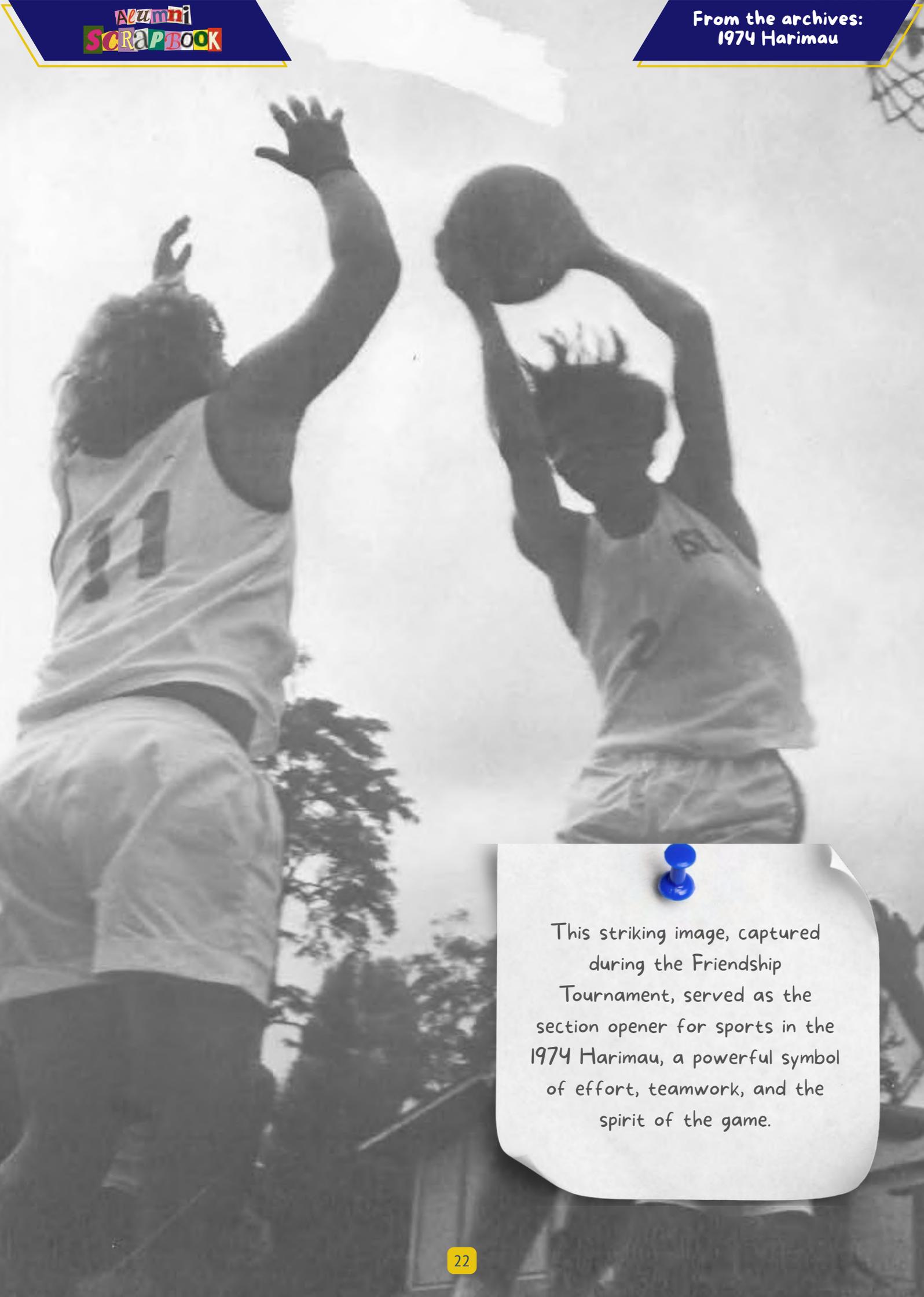
From Left to right: Leslie Smith, Debbi Ratti (co-captain) Ann Shane (captain),
Maureen Boggs and Gerrie Greathouse Not Pictured; Carol Walker, Carole
Cavaness (alternate) and Ruth Bell (alternate).

A glimpse into ISKL's early days,
where Panther Spirit was born.
As the school took its first
steps, so did our students —
building identity and unity, just like
these pioneering cheerleaders!



In 1971, the yearbook theme "Open Doors To..." captured ISKL's commitment to creating a world of opportunities for every student. This moment, frozen in black and white, marks the start of lifelong friendships.



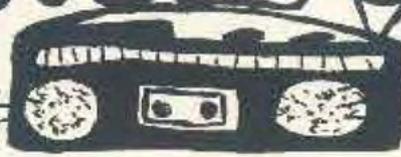


This striking image, captured during the Friendship Tournament, served as the section opener for sports in the 1974 Harimau, a powerful symbol of effort, teamwork, and the spirit of the game.



POMMETTES.

Another One
Bites the Dust



Get Up
Stand Up
Strut your funky stuff!!

The ISKL Pommettes made their debut as the school's first drill team, dancing their way into the hearts of spectators at pep rallies and beyond!



CAPTAIN: Theresa Watts
(Junior)

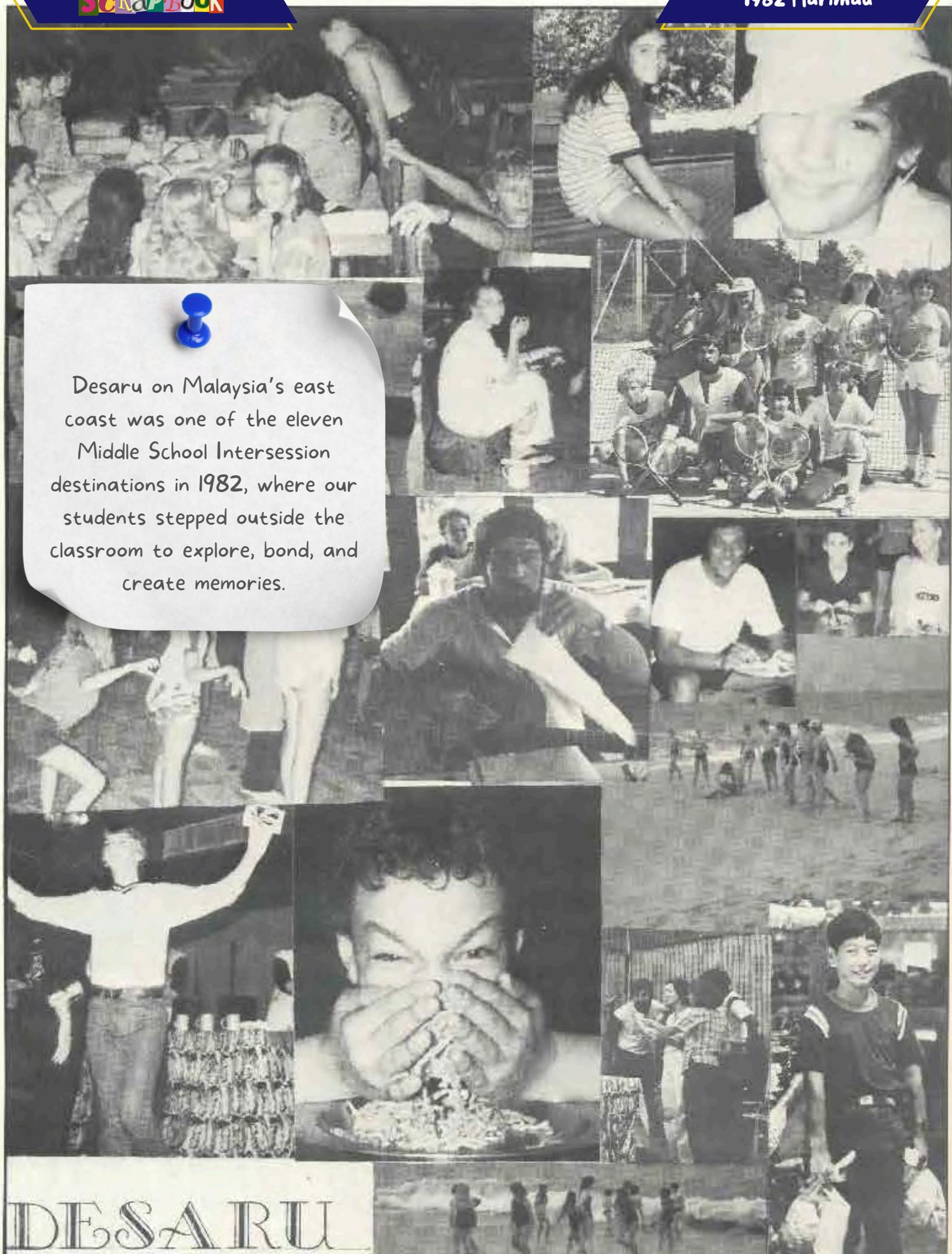


CO-CAPTAIN: Kellie Carter
(Senior)

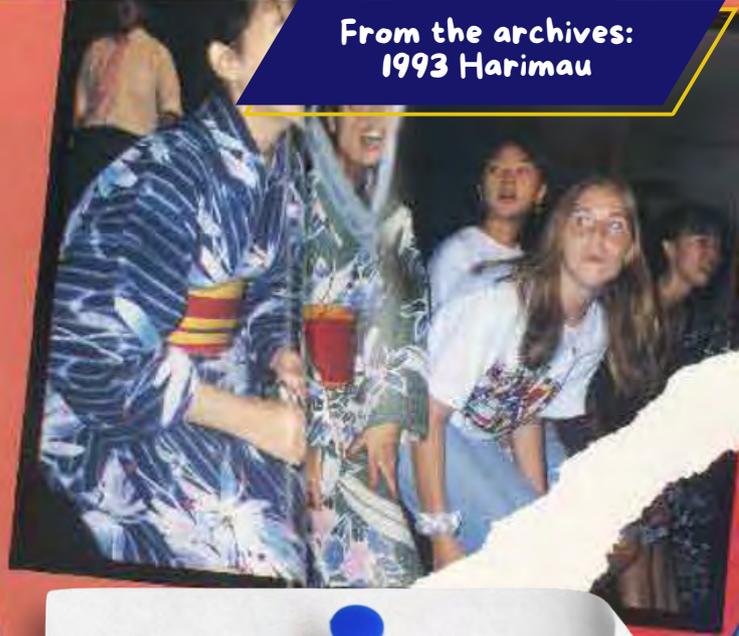
CAUSE YOU
AIN'T SEEN
NOTHIN'
YET



Desaru on Malaysia's east coast was one of the eleven Middle School Intersession destinations in 1982, where our students stepped outside the classroom to explore, bond, and create memories.



DESARU



#Throwback to 1993! The theme was centered around time, and this colorful page on the various after school activities offered reflects how ISKL has always inspired students to seize all opportunities, and savor every second!



Spread design by SoYoung Yoo & Sun Kim
Compiled by Zach Nice



photo by Fred Miller

Women's Varsity Tennis

We hit every ball that flies our way

by Zach Nice

Though the tennis team does not often take center stage in the minds of ISKL sports fans, neither the men nor the women have been interested in being just a try-out well as have the



photo by Fred Miller

Aya Kajima's eyes are keenly focused on a doomed ball, which will be leaving her side of the court very quickly.

Our 1998 queens of the tennis court proved that excellence comes with grit, hustle, and plenty of heart. The team proudly clinched third place at IASAS that year!



photo by Tara Hach

Rika Tsuchiya and Shiho Takagi collapse on the floor after a tough match. Who says Tennis isn't hard work.

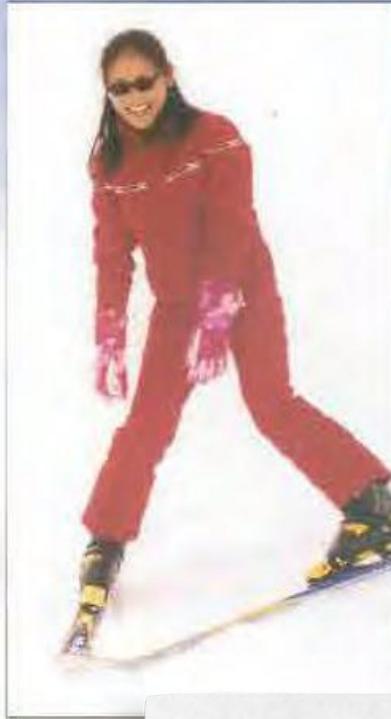
This year's team is the strongest ISKL has had in a while, and with this young team in IASAS next year, ISKL will be prepared to heat Singapore and win the gold.

Queens of the Court

Before Switzerland at ISKL.



In Switzerland.



Left: Yuka Tanaka does a textbook snowplow and flashes us her brilliant



"Well... It was humbely classie."
~Josh Bartosh

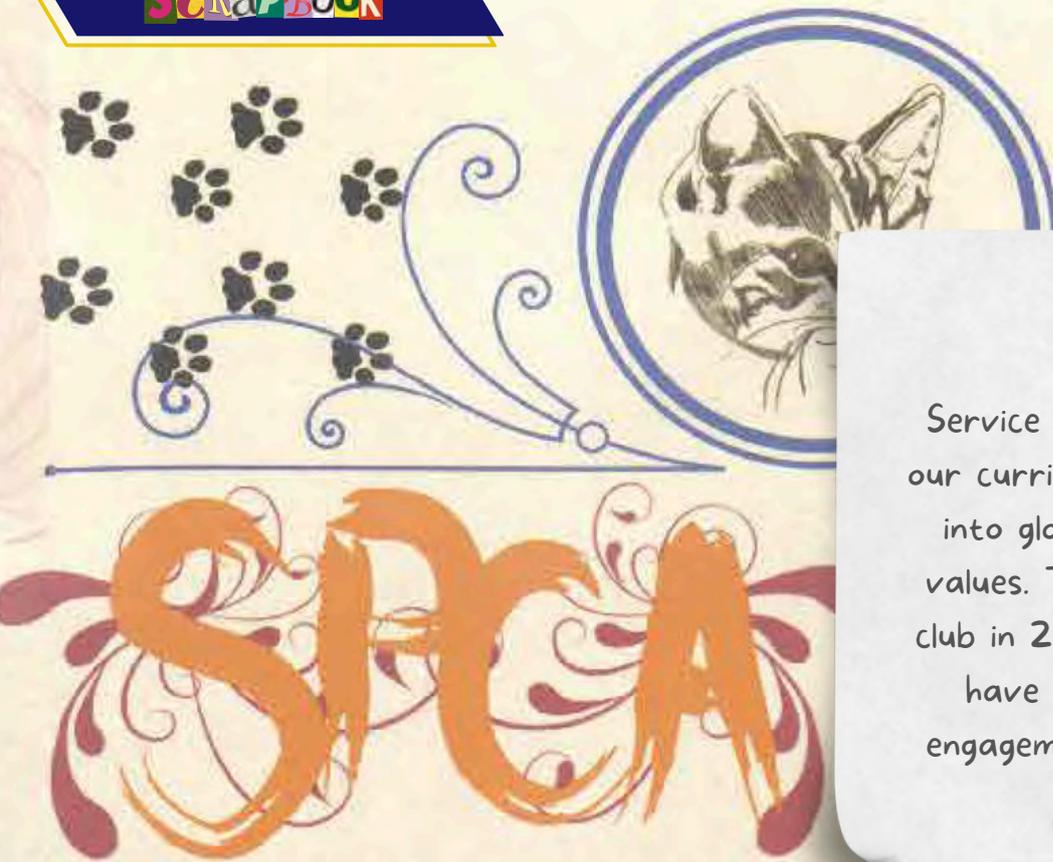


Left: Dan Straffon and Chin Kuo experience some difficulty on the bunny slope.



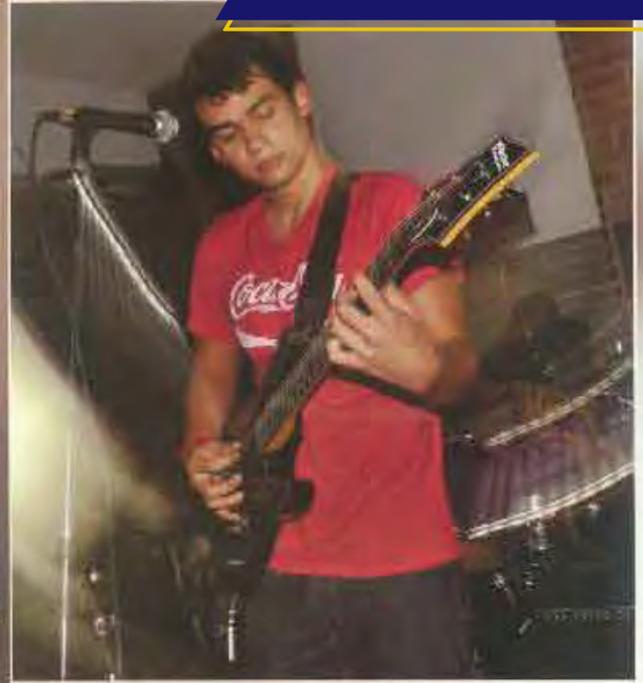
Left: Trekkers Jon Morrison, Joel Naderman, Carl Gross, Hiroki Ogawa, and Christopher Money take a much needed drink from their nifty devices.

Under the bold theme 'Extreme Spectrum', the 2001 yearbook captured ISKL students venturing to the edges of experience, literally. From the snowy slopes of Switzerland to the rugged trails of Nepal, these unforgettable trips challenged comfort zones and sparked moments of growth and connection.



Service Learning is at the heart of our curriculum, shaping ISKL students into global learners with enduring values. This snapshot of the SPCA club in 2009 highlights how students have long embraced community engagement through hands-on work with local shelters.



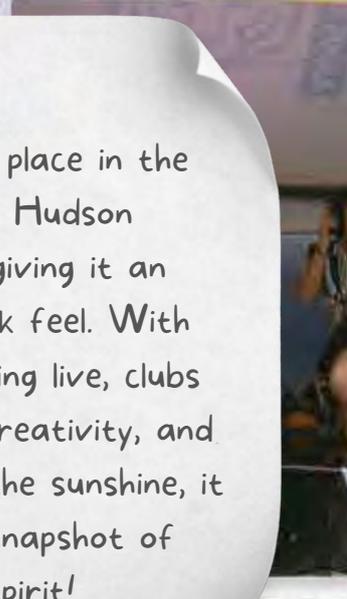
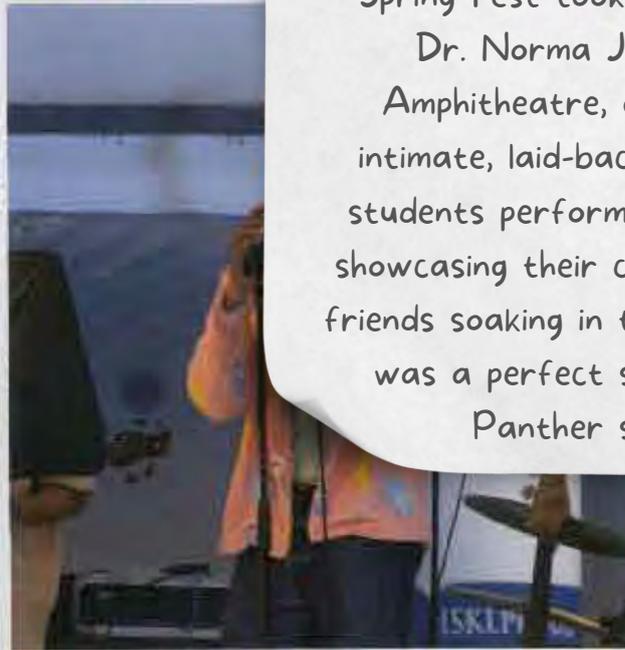


The year was 2013. YOLO was the vibe, the Harlem Shake was everywhere, and ISKL students brought that same energy to the stage. Battle of the Bands lit up the campus with eight bands and a crowd that rocked to every beat.

SPRING FEST



Spring Fest took place in the Dr. Norma J. Hudson Amphitheatre, giving it an intimate, laid-back feel. With students performing live, clubs showcasing their creativity, and friends soaking in the sunshine, it was a perfect snapshot of Panther spirit!



Left to Right: Tasha Mohd Tawad, Coby Baker, Oskar Andersen, Luca Thomas Bogacz, Eihan Mangelsdorf, Lizza Kaiman, India Cooper, Sara Rebecca Chan, Wen Li You, Vasil Azulin, Zafaria, Amando Soe, Hin Mangelsdorf, Ming Xio (Annie) C Lisa Jesudas, Allegra Tang, Yasmin Collin Ohrien

「Lights Action!」 Social Distancing



Much Ado About Everything

Oliver Macdonald-Butler, '22

Herman Wallmark, '22



Performing Shakespeare is no small feat, but doing it while socially distanced? That's pure Panther resilience! ISKL's cast of *Much Ado About Everything* brought creativity, courage, and a love for the stage to life despite pandemic restrictions.

Whilst social distancing? [Name] was able to stay one [Name] ('23) identified how [Name] in spite of going [Name] amount of hard [Name] safe distance from [Name] wis ('23) stated [Name] ('22) added that to "make friends [Name] beautiful." With [Name] d that "it got kind of [Name] is ticking, although [Name] a big part of our [Name] would pile up. Despite [Name], the cast was cager



Evi Boot, '22



Kellie Wool, '23

Modern Cast



Gabriela Woodward, '22



Robert Butler, '24



Sigrid Gartmann, '24



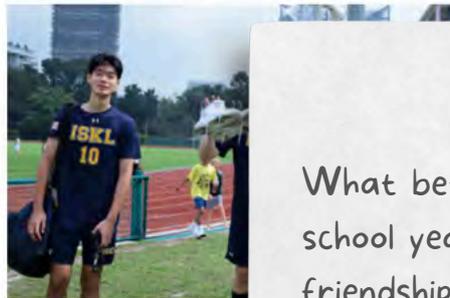
Bulka Chaudhary, '24



Rania Woodward, '24

PTA BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

Aug 19, 2023

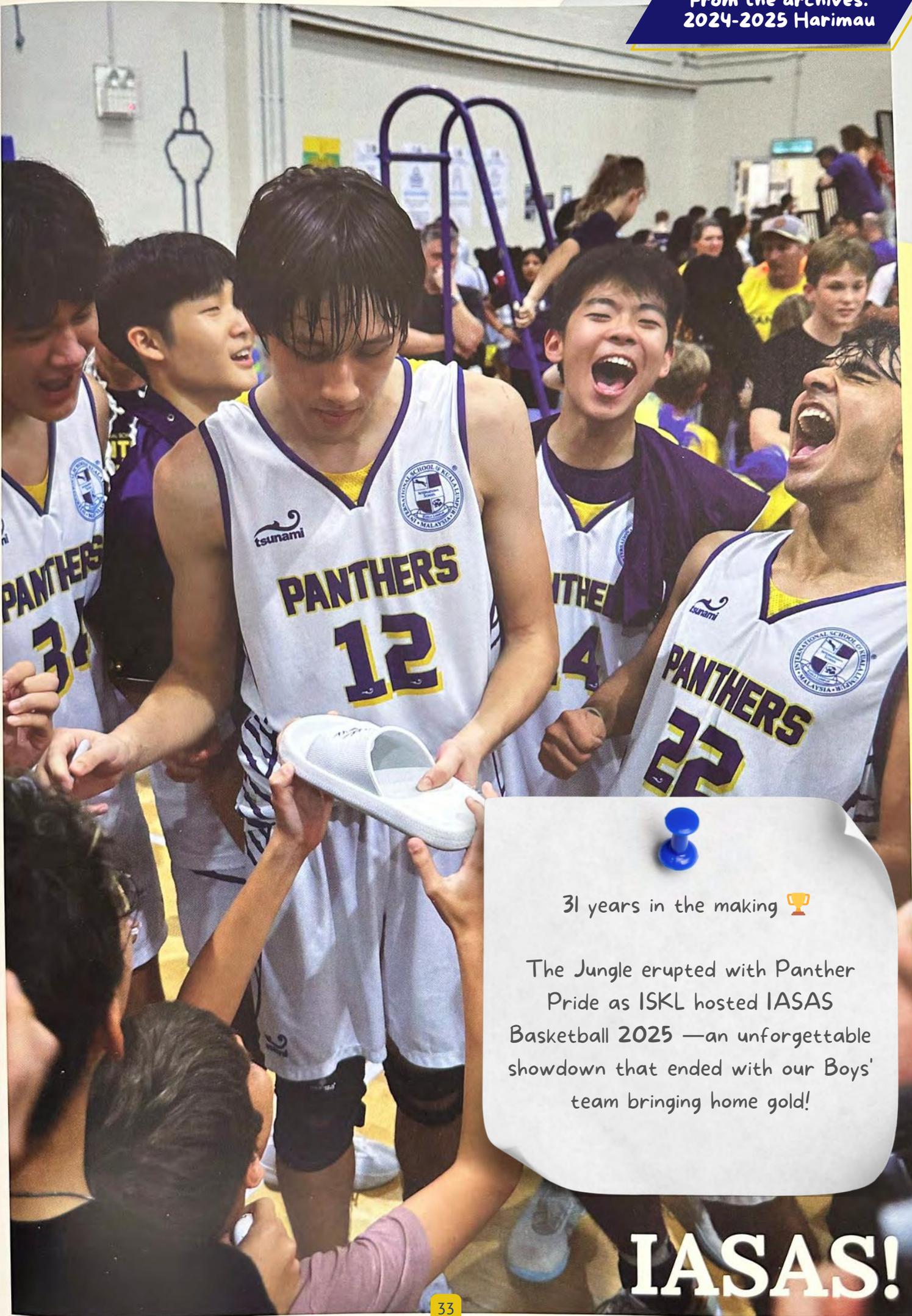


What better way to kick off a new school year than with food, fun, and friendship? The 2023 PTA Back to School Bash event brought the ISKL community together to celebrate fresh beginnings and make new memories under the sun.



Kuhi, Grace, Aiden and Maitlyn enjoying the outdoors and each other's company this early in the morning.





31 years in the making 🏆

The Jungle erupted with Panther Pride as ISKL hosted IASAS Basketball 2025 —an unforgettable showdown that ended with our Boys' team bringing home gold!

IASAS!



Members of the class of 1978 at Jom Lepak

REKINDLING CONNECTIONS: ISKL ALUMNI FROM THE '70S TO EARLY '80S RETURN TO CELEBRATE 60 YEARS

By Farena Cooper

Friendships started in classrooms and cafeterias, at school dances and on sports fields. But for ISKL alumni from the 1970s through the early 1980s, the friendships they formed didn't end at graduation. They evolved through decades, across continents, and along life's winding paths—into something lasting, meaningful, and surprisingly rare.

For many, the return to Kuala Lumpur for ISKL's 60th Anniversary was more than a reunion. It was a powerful reminder of what still binds them. Not just memories, but connection. Not just nostalgia, but community. And in a world that often moves too quickly, their story stands as proof that some bonds only grow stronger with time.



Re-living the 80's on the ISKL history wall

LIFELONG CONNECTIONS FORGED AT THE ISTANA

For Raymond Tait ('78), the 60th Anniversary celebration brought with it a wave of memories and a few laughs. "The photo of me on the big screen at Jom Lepak from the Harimau '78 Yearbook of Class Superlatives was funny," he said. "That image has been laughed over and mentioned at our gatherings over the years."

His ISKL story begins at the school's original campus on Jalan Maxwell, affectionately known as the Istana. This repurposed royal residence housed classrooms, friendships, and the defining moments of his youth. It was here that bonds were formed not just through academics, but through the shared experience of growing up in Malaysia, and later, the equally complex process of adjusting to life after leaving it.

"What made these friendships so enduring was the common thread of our shared experience," Raymond reflected. "Not just school, but life in Malaysia, and then re-entering our home countries for university. Comparing notes and sharing those feelings was a rite of passage only truly understood by those living a parallel story."

For Carl Bishop ('78), ISKL provided more than an education. It was a support system. "My friends helped me adjust to life in Malaysia when I first arrived," he recalled. "We shared everything from strange cafeteria snacks to discovering local traditions."



Senior Superlatives from the 1978 Harimau featuring Raymond Tait ('78)



The Class of 1978 at their graduation

One such memory has stuck with him for decades. "I remember trying cendol for the first time. I thought the green worm-like jelly in the dessert was bizarre. But my classmates insisted, and we ended up loving it. That moment sums up what ISKL was like—unfamiliar, exciting, and shared."

***"We weren't just students, we were becoming who we were going to be. And we were doing it together."
— Raymond Tait ('78)***

The shared experience wasn't just cultural, it was deeply emotional. Many alumni describe those years as a coming-of-age period lived in fast forward. "We weren't just students, we were becoming who we were going to be," Raymond said. "And we were doing it together."

Years later, that same sense of support reemerged as they began to reconnect. "When we reconnected as adults, we were able to talk about adjusting back to life in our home countries," Carl said. "As third-culture kids, we didn't always realize at the time how much that transition would affect us. Reconnecting allowed us to process it together. It was incredibly therapeutic."

***"That moment sums up what ISKL was like—unfamiliar, exciting, and shared."
— Carl Bishop ('78)***

GLOBAL FRIENDSHIPS AND LIFELONG IMPACT

In the decades since graduation, many alumni from the 1970s and early 1980s have remained closely connected. These were not fleeting high school friendships—they became lasting relationships that helped shape worldviews, influenced travel paths, and provided a sense of continuity through adulthood. From annual catch-ups in Australia to spontaneous Mini-Reunions across the globe, these bonds offer something far deeper than nostalgia.

Raymond and his classmates have maintained their connection for more than 40 years. They've organized beach reunions in Florida, kept in touch through a dedicated Facebook group, and even held regular Zoom calls during the pandemic. "We weren't going to lose each other," Raymond said. "Technology just gave us a new way to stay close."

"Several of my close ISKL friends live in Australia, and we've continued to catch up annually at the very least," he added. "Just being able to check in and reminisce has been a powerful form of validation and mirroring, contributing greatly to my life experience over the years."

For Andrew Macneil ('78), ISKL friendships have become a truly global network. "The 50th anniversary was the first time I reconnected with ISKL friends," he said. "Since then, I've visited classmates in the USA, Norway, the Netherlands, Japan, and Australia. Our strong friendships and shared love of the school haven't diminished."

***"Technology just gave us a new way to stay close."
— Raymond Tait ('78)***

Wolfgang Rietz ('80), who joined ISKL in 1977, echoed that sentiment. One of his earliest friendships at ISKL ultimately mirrored his international path. "After graduating, the first person I met at ISKL ended up studying in the U.S., working in Europe, and then in Asia, very similar to my path," he said. "We were able to catch up regularly, and notably joined both the 50th and 60th Anniversary celebrations together."

REUNITING AT THE 60TH

The 60th Anniversary was more than just a reunion. For many, it represented a celebration of enduring connections and the shared legacy of the ISKL community. Alumni from across the globe, including Raymond, Andrew, and Carl, gathered in Kuala Lumpur for three meaningful days of reconnection and reflection.



Together, they retraced their ISKL roots—beginning with a Happy Hour at The Campus, the former Ampang home of ISKL, followed by a Meet and Greet at the current Ampang Hilir campus. The celebrations culminated in Jom Lepak, a vibrant evening event held at the JW Marriott that brought together alumni, faculty, and staff across generations. For Carl, the reunion was both personal and profound. "Even with alumni I hadn't met before, we instantly connected through shared stories and experiences," he said. "That connection is rare."

Wolfgang found special meaning in the final night's celebration. "It was a joy to reconnect with classmates, teachers from the past, and current staff we've come to know through involvement in the school," he said. "It brought everything full circle."

Returning to the state-of-the-art Ampang Hilir campus, Raymond Tait ('78) was struck by how much had changed—and how much pride it instilled.



Raymond and friends at some of the Class of 1978 ISKL mini-reunions

"The multi-story core facility was impressive," he noted, "but three areas were deeply meaningful to me—the Robert B. Gaw Theatre, where I performed in musicals and plays; the gym, now known as The Jungle; and the incredible expanse of pools, courts, track, and soccer field. It was awesome. It filled me with pride to see how far we've come, especially remembering our days at the original Istana campus."

Wolfgang echoed that pride as he reflected on his own experience touring the campus. "Meeting current teachers and students, then flipping through yearbooks at lunch, that was the moment I felt the ISKL 'family feeling' most strongly."

While many alumni returned to reconnect in person, the most meaningful parts of the weekend weren't on the itinerary—they were in the spontaneous conversations that happened along the way. "I saw many of my old friends and met many new ones," said Carl.

Raymond agreed. "You're not just reminiscing. You're rejoining a network of people who knew you when you were becoming who you are. It's grounding."

***"Touring the campus with current students, flipping through old yearbooks, seeing familiar faces—it was surreal. But it also felt natural. That's the ISKL effect."
— Wolfgang Rietz ('80)***



ISKL past and present: Valentina L. ('26) and Wolfgang Rietz ('80) on a campus tour during 60th Anniversary celebrations

For Wolfgang, the visit brought everything full circle. "Touring the campus with current students, flipping through old yearbooks, seeing familiar faces—it was surreal. But it also felt natural. That's the ISKL effect." In a fast-moving, digital world, the friendships formed at ISKL offer something rare and grounding. "They're the people who remember where you came from," said Raymond. "They knew you before careers, families, and passports. They see you fully."

***"When you're a third-culture kid, home is a hard concept. But your friends from ISKL? They're home."
— Carl Bishop ('78)***

These reunions go far beyond social catch-ups. They provide perspective, emotional grounding, and lasting joy. For Raymond and his classmates, staying connected isn't a nostalgic habit—it's a lifeline. "Keep in touch with your school friends," he advised. "Their advice and support will make you a better person and global citizen."

Wolfgang added, "Reconnecting reminds us we're not alone in how we experienced the world. We've built a global community—and that's something to celebrate." His advice to today's students is simple but powerful: "Keep up with communications from the ISKL Alumni Team. The community is strong, and it's worth staying part of."

***"Since the 50th Anniversary, I've visited classmates in the USA, Norway, the Netherlands, Japan, and Australia. Our strong friendships and shared love of the school haven't diminished."
— Andrew Macneil ('78)***

That same spirit of connection is thriving among the younger generation of Panthers. In London, ISKL alumni from the Classes of 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 began organizing traditional Chinese New Year reunion dinners while studying at university. What started as a way to stay in touch while living abroad evolved into a community of support and eventually led to a full reunion in celebration of ISKL's 60th Anniversary. That gathering included alumni from as recent as the Class of 2022.

For them, it wasn't about recreating a moment in time. It was about carrying forward a legacy of belonging. Whether in Kuala Lumpur or across the world, the feeling of being part of the ISKL family transcends geography, generations, and graduation years. These friendships also offer something deeply personal for those who've grown up between cultures. "When you're a third-culture kid, home is a hard concept," said Carl. "But your friends from ISKL? They're home."

A LEGACY THAT LIVES ON

For alumni of the late '70s through early '80s, returning to ISKL was more than a reunion. It was a reaffirmation of identity and a rekindling of ties that time and distance could never weaken. These weren't just former classmates—they were co-authors of a formative chapter, bonded by a shared sense of belonging that continues to shape their lives across continents and decades.

As they walked the halls of the new campus, laughed over old yearbook photos, and embraced familiar faces at Jom Lepak, one thing became clear: the spirit of ISKL lives not just in buildings or events, but in the people who carry its legacy forward. In every story shared and every connection renewed, the ISKL community proved what many already knew—once a Panther, always a Panther. As ISKL looks ahead to the next 60 years, the invitation remains open to all alumni: Reconnect. Reach out. Share your stories. Whether through an email, a coffee catch-up, or your next trip back to campus, the Panther family is always here, ready to welcome you home.



Younger generations of Panthers keep friendships alive by organizing a reunion in London in honor of ISKL's 60th Anniversary



Alumni reunite at ISKL's 60th Anniversary celebrations



I SUKA KL: A LOVE LETTER TO ISKL, KUALA LUMPUR, AND 60 YEARS OF PANTHER PRIDE

By Kendra Jones

A heartfelt tribute to the people, place, and spirit that have defined ISKL for six decades and a celebration of the enduring bond between our school and the city we call home.

In April 2025, ISKL marked a historic milestone: 60 years of fostering learning, connection, and community. What began in 1965 with 48 students and nine teachers in a repurposed royal residence has evolved into a world-class international school with more than 1,800 students representing over 70 nationalities. This anniversary was not only a time to look back on ISKL’s extraordinary journey but also a heartfelt tribute to Kuala Lumpur and the people who have called this school home.

A CELEBRATION OF LEGACY AND BELONGING

From the very beginning, ISKL was built on a foundation of inclusivity, innovation, and international-mindedness. These values continue to shape the school’s learning philosophy today, as students are encouraged to discover their passions, cultivate global awareness, and contribute meaningfully to the world around them. What an experience it is for ISKL students to do this in a place defined by its vibrant energy, rich cultural heritage, and incredible diversity. Just as KL thrives on its multiculturalism and openness, so too does ISKL, fostering a global learning environment rooted in mutual respect and intercultural exchange.

“What began 60 years ago as a small school with a bold vision has grown into a global community grounded in learning, connection, and a strong sense of belonging.”
— Rami Madani, Head of School



Rami Madani, Head of School welcomes Panthers to Jom Lepak

At the heart of the 60th Anniversary was a month-long celebration that brought together the entire ISKL community, students, parents, alumni, employees, and friends to honor six decades of growth, diversity, and excellence. The festivities started with a special edition of one of ISKL's longest-standing traditions: Ifest. Organized by the Parent Teacher Association since the 1970s, iFest celebrates cultural diversity and community. Ifest featured student performances, international cuisine, and a colorful marketplace this year. Its overlap with the IASAS Track & Field and Golf tournaments made it even more memorable, combining school spirit, competition, and culture into one vibrant weekend.

Hand-crafted quilts stitched by parents and alumni added a commemorative touch. These visually rich pieces capture memories from across the decades, echoing memories and milestones. They were donated to the Ifest auction, allowing community members to bid on the quilts for a chance to take one home. Each quilt is more than fabric; it holds stories, friendships, and a sense of community stitched into every square.

A GLOBAL COMMUNITY COMES HOME

The celebration continued with events designed to rekindle alumni connections. On April 17, nearly 100 alumni returned to familiar ground, the beloved former Middle and High School campus. The Campus, which has been wonderfully redeveloped by the new owners into a bustling community hub filled with cafés, shops, and vibrant gathering spaces, offered a new perspective. As they mingled in the central square, memories stirred beneath the new facade.

Laughter echoed through the breezeways, stories flowed as freely as the drinks, and long-forgotten corners of campus sparked spontaneous recollections.

“Even though the campus has evolved from our day, the feeling of belonging is still the same - warm, welcoming, and inspiring.”
– Raymond Tait ('78)

The space had changed, but the spirit had not. In that moment, surrounded by old friends and familiar warmth, it felt like no time had passed. ISKL spirit pulsed through the crowd, turning the evening into more than just a reunion; it was a joyful return.



Current and former employees pose for a selfie at the Alumni Happy Hour



Sandy Tait ('88), Derek Haught ('84) and Karen Palko (middle) current faculty, pose for a photo at the Alumni Happy hour

The next day, alumni returned to the current Ampang Hilir campus for the Alumni Meet and Greet. Guided by current students, returning Panthers explored the campus, flipped through old yearbooks, and caught up over refreshments. It was a nostalgic return filled with fond memories and joyful reconnections.



Alumni group photo after the tour of the Ampang Hilir campus

Internationally, the celebration extended to ISKL's global alumni. In London, UK-based alumni gathered at The Wellington for a night of connection, co-hosted by Nicole Phung ('19) and Kabeer Chauhan ('19). This satellite event demonstrated ISKL's enduring reach and the strong bonds that alumni maintain regardless of location.



Learning all about the new campus

Background photo: Alumni filled the center square of The Campus at the Alumni Happy Hour

JAM AT ISKL: A SHOWCASE OF MUSIC AND COMMUNITY

On April 18, the MSHS Cafeteria transformed into a lively open-air stage as Jam at ISKL brought together the entire community's rhythms, colors, and voices. In the spirit of a family fun fair, the event welcomed even the youngest Panthers to enjoy an afternoon of music, movement, food, and joy. Activity stations dotted the area, laughter echoed from one corner to the next, and the scent of festival fare filled the air.

Conor Newudorf ('11) performs with faculty band Chums and Roses at Jam at ISKL



Vasily Malashich ('21) and Ariz Alirahman ('21) perform at Jam at ISKL



Months earlier, the selection of performers had already begun, led by High School Band Teacher Dan Miles and a 60th Anniversary planning committee member, who channeled their inner Voice judges to curate a truly eclectic lineup. From delicate string performances to rollicking bluegrass, and from soulful jazz to pop and rock anthems, the show truly highlighted ISKL's diversity, musically and culturally. A standout was the One Voice Community Choir, composed of ISKL employees and parents, whose harmonies embodied the heart of community spirit.

Student emcees introduced each act, infusing the event with youthfulness, humor, and infectious energy. The performers, representing all divisions of the school, Elementary, Middle, and High School students, parents, employees, and alumni made the stage a communal space of expression and unity. Students, parents, and employees sang and danced while waving glow sticks in time with the music. "We had a music festival right in the middle of campus," said a Middle School student with a grin.

With the iconic KL skyline in the background, the event pulsed with creative energy and cultural fusion. It was a tribute to the rhythm of Kuala Lumpur that resonates through ISKL's artistic heartbeat. More than just a concert, it was a living, breathing embodiment of the joy of coming together. It was another verse in the love song ISKL has written with and for its community.



**JOM LEPAK:
A NIGHT TO REMEMBER**

Following Jam at ISKL later that evening, more than 530 alumni and employees gathered at the JW Marriott in Bukit Bintang for Jom Lepak, a special anniversary dinner and reunion celebration. Over 200 alumni from the Classes of 1973 to 2023 joined in, turning the evening into a vivid commemoration of ISKL's enduring legacy across generations. Alumni faculty from the early Istana days danced alongside some of our most recent graduates, a testament to six decades of camaraderie and connection.

Guests were treated to an unforgettable night filled with joy and pride. Free-flowing drinks and a lavish buffet dinner featured both Western and Asian favorites. At the same time, thoughtful touches paid homage to our Malaysian roots, from tuak welcome drinks and live cendol service, to a nostalgic Balik Kampung-style "living room" photo set that stayed busy with guests playfully rearranging props to create the perfect scene for their keepsake ISKL-family portraits.

The evening buzzed with activity and celebration. Lucky draw prizes, standard and 360-degree photo booths, and live music performances by alumni bands, including Kyoto Protocol and Chums and Roses, brought everyone to their feet. The joyful energy, laughter, and heartfelt reconnections turned the ballroom into a space pulsing with shared stories and full hearts.

"It's a beautiful tribute to all of us who've carried the Panther spirit with us... that sense of belonging and connection stays with you, wherever life leads."
- Sheila McGuiness Wall ('73)

A highlight of the evening was the unveiling of the final Panther statue, symbolizing ISKL's Alumni, by Sheila McGuiness Wall ('73) and David Watson ('75). Titled "Roots of ISKL" and created by the artist Jacktus, the statue was a striking tribute to the lasting legacy of the alumni community. "Unveiling the alumni Panther statue was deeply moving," said David Watson ('75). "It wasn't just about the artwork; it was about seeing our collective legacy honored in a lasting way, surrounded by friends old and new."



Unveiling the alumni panther

Jom Lepak was more than an anniversary dinner; it was a vibrant tapestry of music, memories, and togetherness, a true expression of what it means to be part of the ISKL family.

The Alumni Panther greeting guests at Jom Lepak



Class photos at Jom Lepak: Class of the 1990's

DID YOU KNOW?

60TH HIGHLIGHTS



530 guests attended Jom Lepak, including 200+ alumni from graduating classes spanning 50 years.



Six Panther statues were unveiled, each representing a core ISKL group.



100+ tie-dyed T-shirts were created by current students for alumni.



Alumni returned from more than 10 countries to celebrate in person.



Current faculty and alumni joined the class photo of ISKL's most recent graduates on behalf of their children who couldn't make it back for Jom Lepak



Raymond Tait ('78) addresses the audience at Jom Lepak on behalf of the Alumni

SYMBOLS OF SPIRIT: ART, MERCHANDISE, AND CONNECTION

ISKL's 60th Anniversary merchandise and commemorative projects were more than just souvenirs; they were meaningful expressions of school spirit, cultural pride, and connection across generations.

A standout visual tribute was unveiling six life-sized Panther statues across campus, each representing a core group within the community: Elementary, Middle, and High School students, parents, employees, and alumni. These were not just statues—they were collaborative works of art created by Malaysian artists in partnership with students, alumni, parents and employees. Each Panther was infused with cultural references, symbolism, and shared stories, making the series a powerful illustration of Malaysia's artistic legacy and ISKL's inclusive spirit.

“Each statue tells a story of curiosity, camaraderie, transformation, support, unity, and legacy.”
- From the Panther Statue Series

The “Ties That Bind” project carried this ethos through wearable art. Unsold alumni merchandise was repurposed into tie-dye T-shirts using traditional Batik techniques, creating one-of-a-kind pieces that embodied sustainability, student-alumni collaboration, and cultural heritage. Designed and dyed by students of all ages, each shirt carried a personal message from the student artist to its recipient, forging lasting emotional connections. More than 60 shirts were sold, raising funds for ISKL's Pathways Scholarship.



ISKL's collaboration with local lifestyle brand APOM (A Piece of Malaysia) added another layer of community expression. The Apom x ISKL collection featured witty, Malaysia-inspired slogans like “Goreng Strong Since 1965” and “I Suka KL”—a clever homage to both the school's initials and its deep-rooted love for Kuala Lumpur. These limited-edition items, ranging from T-shirts to tote bags, blended playful design with school spirit. I Suka KL and other Apom x ISKL merchandise remain available in the Panther Hut, continuing to connect past and present Panthers through collective identity and place.



Together, these projects formed a vibrant patchwork of memory, meaning, and Malaysian flair—proof that the ISKL story is best told in words and symbols, stitches, brushstrokes, and bold prints worn proudly by all.



GIVING BACK AND MOVING FORWARD

Alumni played vital roles throughout the 60th Anniversary celebrations, and their contributions were both heartfelt and inspiring. Their generosity helped make this milestone unforgettable, from the creative to the logistical. An alumni faculty member, Susan Rahim, led the Quilt Project with vision and care. Haffendi Anuar ('04) brought artistry to life through the Elementary Panther statue. Lydia Lubon ('97) crafted a signature batch of her beloved OOHAA Tuak, offering a flavorful nod to local tradition. Musicians Gael Oliveres ('02), Shakeil Bashir Ahmad ('04), Conor Neudorf ('12), Vasily Malashich ('21), and Ariz Alirahman ('21) set the stage alight with electrifying performances.

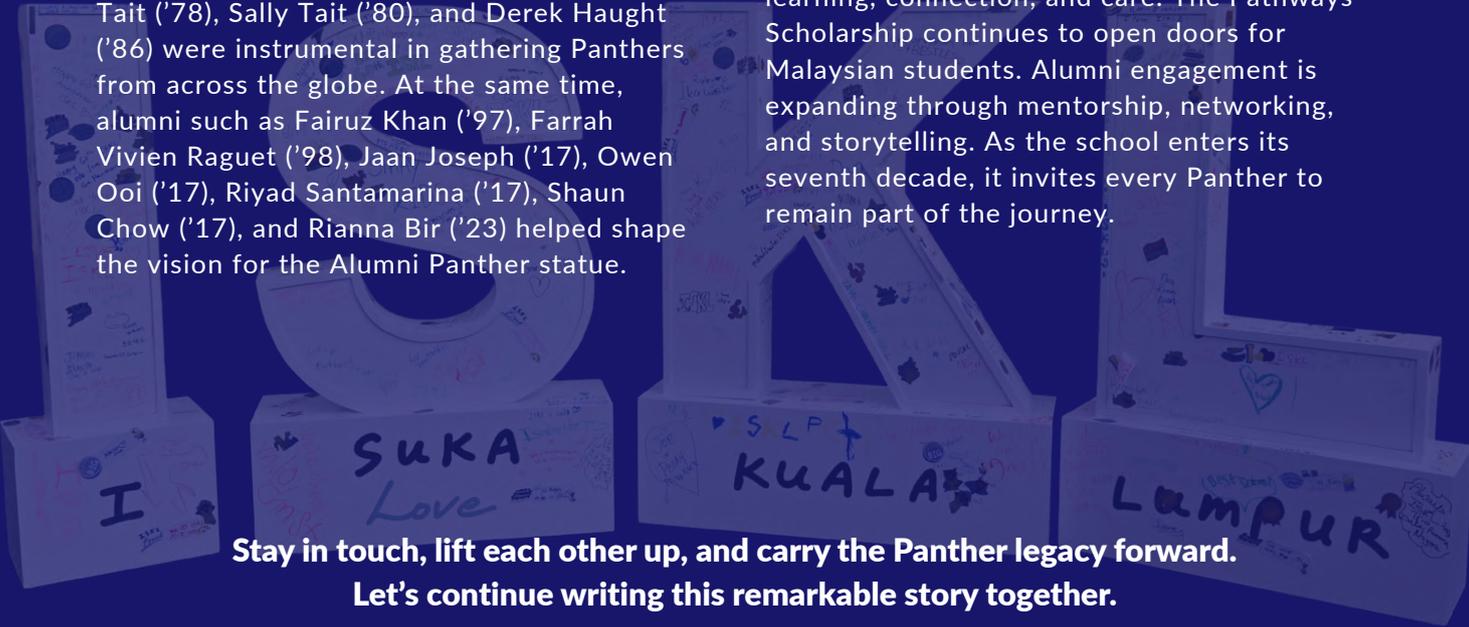
Behind the scenes, alumni like Nicholas Tang ('17), who serves as the Advancement and Events Intern, and Danial Marzuki ('17), who oversaw all photography and video coverage, ensured that each moment was beautifully captured and seamlessly executed. Raymond Tait ('78), Sally Tait ('80), and Derek Haught ('86) were instrumental in gathering Panthers from across the globe. At the same time, alumni such as Fairuz Khan ('97), Farrah Vivien Raguet ('98), Jaan Joseph ('17), Owen Ooi ('17), Riyad Santamarina ('17), Shaun Chow ('17), and Rianna Bir ('23) helped shape the vision for the Alumni Panther statue.

We also extend our gratitude to those who participated in the 0-100 video series—Raymond Tait ('78), Noren Sahari (Alumni Faculty), Al Daniel (Alumni Staff), Morgan Krajczar ('93), and Hannah Bahrin ('23), reminding us of the enduring thread that runs through every ISKL story.

Thank you to every alumni who participated, supported, or simply showed up with a full heart. Your pride, presence, and Panther spirit helped solidify ISKL's legacy and breathe life into our shared history.

"Once a Panther, Always a Panther" is more than a motto. It's a lived reality seen in the laughter of old friends, warm embraces, and the pride stitched and sculpted into every piece of art. This entire celebration was, in many ways, a collective love letter, penned in memories, painted in murals, and sung in chorus by generations of Panthers.

Looking ahead, ISKL remains focused on nurturing future changemakers through learning, connection, and care. The Pathways Scholarship continues to open doors for Malaysian students. Alumni engagement is expanding through mentorship, networking, and storytelling. As the school enters its seventh decade, it invites every Panther to remain part of the journey.



**Stay in touch, lift each other up, and carry the Panther legacy forward.
Let's continue writing this remarkable story together.**



Watch the Highlights
Relive the magic of the 60th Anniversary celebration in our highlight video.

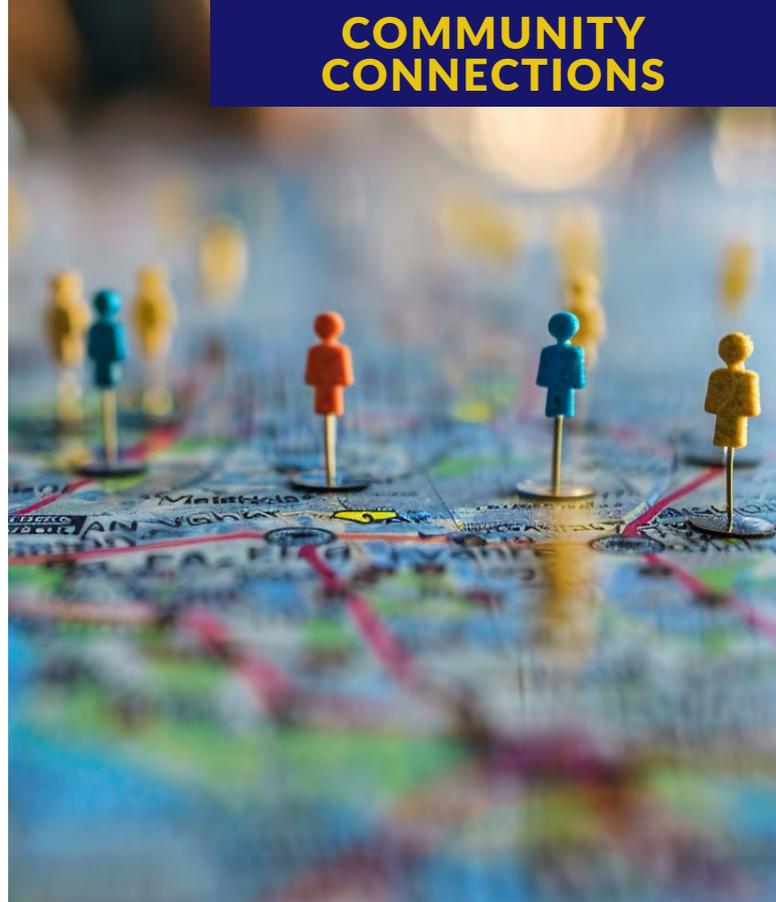


Join the Legacy
Update your alumni profile, share your story, and stay connected. Because once a Panther, always a Panther.

REAL TALK: ALUMNI SHARE THE JOURNEY BEYOND ISKL

From unexpected career paths to real-world lessons in resilience, ISKL alumni reflect on how their education shaped the lives they lead today.

By Kendra Jones



ISKL has always been more than a school; it is a community where students from across the globe come together to build academic knowledge and the resilience, curiosity, and adaptability that define success in an ever-changing world.

The Get Real! Alumni Speaker Series, a cornerstone initiative of ISKL's commitment to lifelong learning, invites graduates to return to their alma mater and share the lessons they have learned beyond the classroom. Through candid conversations with high school students, alumni from diverse industries and backgrounds offer insights into university life, professional challenges, and adulthood's unexpected twists and turns.

The recent sessions of the Get Real! series revealed a powerful tapestry of experiences and advice, bound by a few universal themes: the enduring value of an ISKL education, the non-linear nature of career paths, the importance of connections, and the critical role of perseverance and passion.

THE ENDURING VALUE OF AN ISKL EDUCATION

Many speakers credited ISKL with shaping their ability to succeed, both academically and personally, after graduation.

Aqil Khairi ('15), currently a PhD candidate in Aeronautical and Astronautical Engineering at the University of Washington, U.S reflected on his time at ISKL with gratitude. "The IB programme was intense," he shared, "but it prepared me for the challenges of university coursework. What seemed overwhelming then became the foundation that allowed me to manage my time, balance competing demands, and tackle complex material." Deanna Williams ('15), now a lighting technician in live event production, echoed this sentiment from a different angle. "IB Physics taught me technical skills that I use almost every day on the job," she said. "Even more importantly, the ISKL environment taught me how to be resilient, lead, and work creatively within a team."



Across different career paths, alumni consistently emphasized that ISKL's focus on academic rigor, leadership, and a global perspective left a lasting impact.

CAREER PATHS ARE RARELY STRAIGHT LINES

The alumni speakers roundly dismissed the traditional notion of a straightforward career trajectory. Instead, they painted a picture of professional journeys marked by experimentation, unexpected detours, and personal growth.

"I did not get into the program I originally applied for," admitted YuXuan Seah ('22), a Computer Engineering student at the University of Toronto, Canada. "At first, it felt like a failure. But looking back, it was one of the best things that could have happened. I found new interests and discovered strengths I did not know I had."

Deanna Williams's career path defied traditional expectations. After enrolling in university, she dropped out to pursue work; first as a server, then as a photography assistant, before finding her passion in stage lighting. "It was not a straight road," she said. "But every step taught me something valuable."

Marley Emerich ('15), now a Development Executive at Fantastic Films, underscored the same point from her vantage in the film industry. "There is no one right path," she said. "The people who succeed are often the ones who are willing to adapt, keep learning, and build strong professional relationships."

***"There is no one right path. The people who succeed are the ones willing to adapt and keep learning."
- Marley Emerich ('15)***

E-Therng Lee ('22), currently studying Mathematical Finance and Pure Mathematics at the University of Waterloo, U.S, also spoke about unexpected academic shifts. Initially drawn to financial math, he discovered a stronger passion for Pure Math and Combinatorics through elective courses. "Going to those course classes has honestly been one of the best things about my degree," he said. However, he warned that pushing too hard in advanced classes too early can negatively affect grades.

***"Every step taught me something valuable. Your reputation travels faster than you think."
- Deanna Williams ('15)***

CONNECTIONS OPEN DOORS

A consistent thread throughout the Get Real! series was the vital role of relationships—with peers, mentors, professors, and colleagues—in shaping professional opportunities. Aqil Khairi ('15) pointed to his experience with student-led engineering groups at the University of Washington, where hands-on projects and team competitions led directly to job offers at major companies like SpaceX and Boeing. "Networking is not just about attending events," Aqil said. "It's about collaborating, building something meaningful together, and showing people what you can do."



Marley Emerich ('15) with colleagues at the afterparty after their show's premiere at the Venice Film Festival



Students look on as E-Therng Lee ('22) gives his top tips for adjusting to life in Canada

“Networking is not just about attending events. It’s about building something meaningful together.”
- Aqil Khairi ('15)

Deanna Williams emphasized that personal recommendations are often more valuable than resumes in industries like live event production. "You have to work hard and be someone people want to work with," she advised. "Your reputation travels faster than you think."

Similarly, Marley Emerich recommended starting in a literary agency for those aspiring to enter the film industry, highlighting the importance of developing a strong professional network early on. "Everyone you meet could be a future collaborator," she said. "Or your next boss."

PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE: THE TRUE DIFFERENTIATORS

Beyond academic credentials and technical skills, alumni consistently identified two key ingredients for long-term success: passion and perseverance.

"Graduate school, especially a PhD program, is not just about being smart," Aqil noted. "It is about being deeply interested in your subject. It’s about being willing to work through the inevitable setbacks because you care about the questions you are trying to answer."

In the entertainment industry, perseverance takes a different form. Deanna Williams spoke candidly about live event work's physically demanding and often unpredictable nature. "There were days I questioned everything," she admitted. "But the love for what I do kept me moving forward."

Marley Emerich emphasized the need for resilience in facing rejection and uncertainty. "In development, you read dozens of scripts before you find one that might be worth pursuing," she said. "You have to keep believing in your ability to recognize something special, even when things don't work out."

UNIVERSITY AS A TIME FOR EXPLORATION AND GROWTH

While much of the discussion focused on career preparation, alumni also stressed that university should be a time of personal exploration and growth.

Kevin Gaw ('78), who now works in alumni relations at Lawrence University, U.S, urged students to use the wide range of support services available at most universities.

"Career centers, academic advisors, wellness programs—they are all there for a reason," he said. "Learning to ask for help is not just smart; it is essential."

Kevin also noted that students should not feel pressured to have all the answers when they arrive at university. "It is 100% okay to not know your major right away," he reassured. "University is where you figure out who you are and what you want."

“Learning to ask for help is not just smart; it’s essential.”
- Kevin Gaw ('78)

YuXuan Seah emphasized the importance of social connection. "At a big university like Toronto, you have to take the initiative to find your community," he said. "Clubs and activities are where you build friendships and support systems."



Aqil Khairi ('15) - Happy faces at the end of a grueling 100-mile bicycle ride to support cancer research, part of the 2022 Fred Hutch Cancer Center Obliteride event in Seattle

E-Therng Lee ('22) provided insight into the day-to-day realities of student life in Canada, including the challenge of managing time, cooking, budgeting, and doing laundry—all while navigating a demanding academic load. "Adulting 101 is real," he said

He also described the shock of moving from Kuala Lumpur to a smaller town in Ontario, complete with snow and slushy sidewalks. He noted that making friends during his first year was essential for everything from emotional support to future housing arrangements.

FINAL REFLECTIONS: A COMMUNITY THAT ENDURES

One of the most striking aspects of the Get Real! series was the sense of continuity and connection that alumni still feel toward ISKL.

Seung Jin Lee ('99), now a professor of Mechanical Engineering at the University of Washington Tacoma, U.S, spoke warmly of the foundation ISKL provided. "It was at ISKL that I learned to love learning," he said. "That spirit stayed with me through my years at Boeing, graduate school, and now in my career as an educator."

As the alumni shared their journeys, they reflected a core truth: the values cultivated at ISKL—curiosity, resilience, empathy, and leadership—endure long after graduation. Their stories offer reassurance and inspiration for current students and fellow alumni alike. Success is not a fixed destination but an evolving journey. It is built on relationships, fueled by passion, shaped by perseverance, and grounded in a willingness to embrace both uncertainty and opportunity.

And most importantly, it is a journey that, no matter where it leads, remains rooted in the shared experience of being part of the ISKL community.

TOP 5 ALUMNI TIPS FOR SUCCESS



BUILD MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

"Networking is not just about showing up. It's about collaborating, creating, and earning trust."
- Aqil Khairi ('15)



EMBRACE NON-LINEAR JOURNEYS

"Success isn't a straight line — every detour teaches you something valuable."
- Deanna Williams ('15)



ASK FOR HELP EARLY AND OFTEN

"University services exist for a reason. Learn to ask questions and advocate for yourself."
- Kevin Gaw ('78)



FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS (EVEN THE UNCONVENTIONAL ONES)

"Whether it's aerospace engineering or film production, passion and perseverance open doors."
- Marley Emerich ('15)



PACE YOURSELF FOR THE LONG GAME

"University — and life — is a marathon, not a sprint. Find your rhythm and stick to it."
- YuXuan Seah ('22)

ISKL's Alumni and Development Office prepared this article as part of our ongoing commitment to celebrating and sharing the journeys of our global alumni community. Through the Get Real! Alumni Speaker Series, we connect past and present Panthers to inspire, support, and empower the next generation of changemakers.



Once a Panther, Always a Panther. Scan the QR code to catch up on past episodes.



Scan the QR code and be our next GetREAL! Speaker



ALUMNI
 **PANTHERS**
OF ISKL



**BE OUR NEXT
 PANTHER OF ISKL!**
 TELL US YOUR STORY OR
 NOMINATE SOMEONE!





Canada 

2 ambassadors



United States of America 

19 ambassadors

INTERNATIONAL MINDEDNESS: MEET OUR ISKL ALUMNI AMBASSADORS



The ISKL Alumni Ambassador Program is a global initiative connecting current students and recent graduates with experienced ISKL alumni. These dedicated volunteers offer invaluable advice on university life, career paths, and cultural transitions, helping to ease the journey from ISKL to the world. From Boston to Bangkok, our Alumni Ambassadors represent a wide range of industries, universities, and life experiences, and they're here to support the next generation of Panthers.

**Want to give back and stay connected?
Update your alumni profile and
volunteer to be an Alumni Ambassador!**

Are you interested in becoming an Alumni Ambassador or looking to connect with an ambassador near you, email us at alumni@iskl.edu.my and we'll help make to make it happen.



★ Universities:



★ Top Majors:



★ Top Industries::



Quick Stats:





INSPIRING POSSIBILITY: HOW COMMUNITY GIVING FUELS STUDENT GROWTH

By Kendra Jones

What happens when imagination meets opportunity? This year’s Inspire Campaign projects have sparked creativity, confidence, and connection across campus, from murals and musicals to leadership summits and game-changing tech. Fueled by community donations, including gifts from alumni, these initiatives show how one act of giving can echo through hundreds of student stories.

What do a sustainable future, a winning game, a student-led summit, and a wall-sized batik mural all have in common? At ISKL, they are all made possible through the Inspire Campaign.

Designed to fund faculty—and student-led initiatives that exceed the school’s operating budget, the Inspire Campaign is a testament to what happens when a community believes in big dreams. In the 2024–2025 school year alone, RM156,714 in Inspire grants supported projects spanning all grade levels and disciplines, from the arts and athletics to service, leadership, and language learning.

These programs do more than enrich the student experience. They embody ISKL’s Mission to know yourself, care for all, and create a better world. And, for many alumni, they may look a little familiar: student summits that echo past Model United Nations events or musical performances that bring back memories of their own IASAS Cultural Convention experiences. The venues may have changed, but the spirit remains the same.



Visiting Conductors with our students



One of the summit's keynote speakers, Aaron Moniz



High School students taking part in the summit



ISKL alumni and pediatrician Dr. Hana Aziz ('98) returns to campus to share her insights

LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: SUMMIT SPOTLIGHT

In 2024-2025, the Youth Service & Sustainability Summit welcomed over 150 students, educators, and NGO partners for two days of collaboration and changemaking. Workshops and student-led action pitches addressed the question, "How can we plan for a sustainable future?"

The event, organized by ISKL's High School Service Council, featured keynote speaker Aaron Moniz, Co-Founder and Director of Inspire Citizens and alumni guest Dr. Hana Aziz ('98), who shared how her experience at ISKL shaped her global health career.

"It's powerful to be back where it all started. ISKL taught me to lead with empathy, and that still drives me today."
— Dr. Hana Aziz ('98)

THE ARTS: A SPACE TO IMAGINE

Creativity also took center stage through a range of Inspire-funded initiatives. The MS Arts Festival returned for its second year, expanding into a community-wide celebration of Malaysian culture. Students engaged in workshops with local chalk artists, gamelan musicians, and choreographers, learning to express themselves through diverse art forms.

In the High School, music students collaborated with composers Kevin Day and Tim Mahr to premiere an original composition, "Capricho," as part of ISKL's 60th Anniversary. Choir students will also benefit from a new choral education residency in the first semester of the 2055-2026 school year, designed to enhance vocal technique and ensemble skills.

Meanwhile, a batik workshop brought Grade 2 and 4 students into a collaborative art-making process, producing a large-scale mural that celebrates Malaysian tradition and student expression. Looking ahead, a new mural project with street artist Fritilldea and a theatre collaboration with South African artist, Calvin Ratladi will continue this artistic momentum.

"When students connect with local artists, they develop pride in place, culture, and community."
— Rebeca Osthoff,
ES Art Faculty

TRAINING TRANSFORMED: ATHLETICS REIMAGINED THROUGH INSPIRE

Inspire grants have made a significant impact on ISKL athletics, turning training into transformation through expert coaching and cutting-edge technology.

One standout addition was the Dr. Dish Basketball Shooting Machine. This advanced system allows athletes to dramatically increase their shot volume while receiving instant, data-driven feedback. The result? Improved shooting consistency, better technique, and greater player confidence.

“Investing in the Dr. Dish shooting machine is an important step in supporting the long-term success of our basketball programs. This technology enables students to significantly increase the number of shots they take while improving consistency, shot arc, and overall technique. More importantly, it encourages self-reflection on shooting mechanics, helping students become more efficient and effective players.”

***— Sim Huang,
Varsity Basketball Coach***



ISKL student-athletes explore data-driven training with an automated basketball rebounding machine, showcasing technology integration into sports



An ISKL HS student hones her swing during a fastpitch softball session with guest coach Jim Browning

The Pixellot Camera System, introduced in the previous school year, further supported this success. Designed for live streaming and sports analysis, the system now plays a vital role in coaching and student development. Coaches use game footage to strategize and deliver targeted feedback, while student-athletes review performance clips to identify areas for growth and improvement.

These innovations have elevated ISKL's athletic programs, fostering continuous learning and deeper engagement on and off the court. The payoff was historic: the varsity boys' basketball team brought ISKL's first IASAS Gold home in 31 years.

Meanwhile, in the FastPitch program, an Inspire grant funded a week-long coaching clinic led by guest trainers from Florida, U.S. Over 30 student-athletes participated in intensive sessions focused on pitching and batting fundamentals, while ISKL coaches gained valuable professional development. The season culminated in a well-earned Bronze medal at IASAS, a testament to the team's growth and resilience.

“It's not just about winning. It's about giving students the tools to grow as athletes and teammates.”
— Steve Katz, HS Fastpitch Softball Coach

LANGUAGE, DEBATE, AND STUDENT VOICE

For the first time, ISKL formed a Chinese-language Debate Team, supported by the Inspire Campaign. The team advanced to the Top 8 in a regional tournament, an impressive debut. Students honed public speaking and critical thinking and strengthened their leadership, collaboration, and pride in language and culture.



ISKL's High School Chinese Debate Team proudly stands alongside peers from across the region after making it to the Top 8 in their first tournament appearance

“Despite the challenges, it was rewarding to see our vision come to life.”
— Valerie Y. ('26),
HS Chinese Debate
Team Co-Founder

WHY IT MATTERS

At its core, Inspire is about saying “yes” to possibility. It empowers teachers to pilot bold ideas and gives students real-world experiences. When successful, these programs often become part of ISKL’s permanent offerings, just like the MS Arts Festival, which has been fully adopted into the operational budget.

These stories represent more than individual success. They are proof of the power of community and what happens when Panthers support Panthers. From a coach’s vision to a student’s voice, from a mural in a hallway to a concert in the Robert B. Gaw Theatre, The Inspire Campaign is how the ISKL Mission continues to evolve.

A CALL TO OUR ALUMNI COMMUNITY

Alumni understand what it means to grow, dream, and be part of something greater than themselves. The Inspire Campaign offers you a way to stay involved, support innovation, and directly impact the student experience.

Whether through a one-time donation, a recurring gift, or sharing expertise and time, alumni contributions help keep ISKL dynamic, student-centered, and inspired for generations to come.

Help shape what’s next. Donate to the Inspire Campaign today.



DONATE TODAY

Find out how to support the next Inspire Campaign project!

WHY ALUMNI SUPPORT MATTERS



The Inspire Campaign is not just about students. It is a way for alumni to stay connected and contribute to ISKL’s future in meaningful ways. Here’s how alumni support makes a lasting difference:

PAYING IT FORWARD, PURPOSEFULLY



Alumni giving ensures that current and future students have the same opportunities that shaped previous generations. Each gift helps open doors to experiences that build confidence, character, and community.

A LIVING LEGACY



Inspire Campaign-funded projects, from music commissions to leadership summits, often become permanent fixtures at ISKL. Alumni donations help bring these ideas to life, creating a legacy that lasts.

STAYING CONNECTED THROUGH ACTION



Supporting the Inspire Campaign is more than a financial contribution. It is a meaningful way for alumni to remain involved in the school’s story and Mission.

REINFORCING SHARED VALUES



The Inspire Campaign reflects ISKL’s commitment to empathy, innovation, and global citizenship. Alumni who give are supporting the same values they learned as students.

CREATING GLOBAL IMPACT



Inspire projects prepare students to be future leaders. Alumni who invest in these opportunities invest in a better, more connected world.

ADVANCING A SHARED MISSION



ISKL is more than a school. It is a shared vision. The Inspire Campaign allows alumni to support that vision and actively advance it.

FINDING HER VOICE IN EVERY LANGUAGE

By Farena Cooper

Francesca Cricelli ('00) arrived at ISKL in Grade 7, newly relocated from Brazil by way of Italy, with limited English and little understanding of international schools. What began as a challenging adjustment became a transformational experience—one that shaped her future as a writer, translator, and scholar. In this interview, Francesca reflects on the teachers who inspired her, the power of multilingualism, and how ISKL helped her discover a lifelong passion for language and literature.

After living in Reykjavik, Iceland, since 2009, Francesca has recently begun a new postdoctoral research position and relocated with her family to Brazil to continue her academic work.



Francesca beams with joy as she works on-site during a Habitat for Humanity trip, building not just homes, but lifelong memories

Brazilian-Italian writer and cultural researcher Francesca Cricelli ('00)

CAN YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT YOURSELF?

I was born in Brazil and hold Italian citizenship. I lived in both countries before moving to Kuala Lumpur in early 1995. I arrived mid-school year in Grade 7, with limited English and no idea what to expect from an international school.

My parents moved to Barcelona in 2000, the same year I graduated from High School with the IB diploma—incidentally, it was also the Year of the Dragon. Living in Malaysia and attending ISKL were among the most formative experiences of my life; what I learned during those years shaped every decision thereafter.



DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST DAYS AT ISKL- WHAT WERE THEY LIKE?

Before my first day, I took an English placement test for English as a Second Language (ESL). A few of us sat at a table, pencils and erasers in hand. Despite studying some English in Brazil and Italy, it wasn't enough to navigate an entire curriculum.

Initially, I attended only English, Math, and P.E. I didn't even understand how lockers worked—turn right, then left, then right again. It felt like an alien world. In Italy, we carried every book home daily. I showed up with a bright, heavy Invicta backpack while others wore minimalist, monochrome Eastpaks.

“They performed a kind of miracle - within a semester, I was fluent in English.”

Switching classrooms was new to me, too; in Italy, teachers moved, not students. It was overwhelming, and also exhilarating. I've always had a sense of adventure. I'd adapted before, moving from Brazil to Italy, and I was ready to do it again. I owe a debt of gratitude to three teachers: my ESL teachers, Mrs. Rosevear and Mr. Thompson, and my math teacher, Mrs. Cannon. Her husband would later teach me IB History. Within a semester, I was fluent in English. They performed a kind of miracle.

WERE THERE ANY TEACHERS OR MENTORS AT ISKL WHO WERE PARTICULARLY INFLUENTIAL IN YOUR CHOSEN CAREER PATH?

Every teacher shaped me, but some changed my life. They ignited my love for literature, poetry, translation, and the arts. They taught beyond the syllabus, tying our teenage emotions to the texts we read.

“Ms. Colman taught me how to read deeply - something no university professor has ever matched.”

Ms. Colman, my Advanced English teacher in Grades 11 and 12, and Mr. O'Reily in Grade 10, who brought Shakespeare and cinema alive, were central to this journey. Mrs. Tan supported our IB exam prep, and Mr. Trygstad guided my work on the yearbook and *The Hornbill* magazine. We even had a digital poetry magazine—avant-garde for the '90s!

Mr. Rosevear, my IB mentor and theater director, also played a key role. Later, I realized that my eventual pivot to language and literary studies stemmed from these experiences, even though I initially studied Political Science and Journalism.

My final Advanced English project was a translation and video presentation of Leopardi's poetry. Ms. Colman taught me how to read deeply - something no university professor has ever matched. It was in her class that I discovered Whitman, Yeats, Eliot, Conrad, Camus, Toni Morrison, Zora Neale Hurston, and García Márquez. That foundation continues to shape how I see the world.



Francesca receives her High School diploma at ISKL's Class of 2000 graduation ceremony, a proud moment marking the start of new adventures

WHICH EXTRACURRICULARS OR AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN AND ENJOY AT ISKL?

I was involved in a wide range of activities: Middle School Choir, High School Theater (Thespian), Earth Club with Mr. Hopkins, class Vice President, and some swimming. I joined "Who Cares," went on two Habitat for Humanity trips to the Philippines, and did community service at a children's hospital - an experience that became deeply meaningful. Mr. Crouch, our biology teacher, was our mentor. I also participated in Operation Starship with Ms. Purbrick and competed in IASAS Drama.

DESCRIBE YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENTS AT ISKL?

There isn't just one moment that stands out. Learning English, joining Advanced English, acting in plays, and traveling for ISTA and IASAS shaped me.

"ISKL taught us to think independently and study autonomously."

Friendships were central. I still keep in close touch with Diya Ghosh and Paula Villanueva and fondly remember Jenni Wisung, Isabel James, Jenny Lunstead, and Ian Griffiths. ISKL was where I came of age. I appreciate that we studied Southeast Asian History - a visionary part of the curriculum. I hope there's now a class on Decolonial Studies. ISKL taught us to think independently and study autonomously.

LIFE AFTER ISKL DO YOU FEEL LIKE ISKL PREPARED YOU WELL FOR LIFE AFTER SCHOOL?

Absolutely. Learning was rigorous yet organic and fun. I breezed through university, graduating on time. My father still jokes that ISKL gave me my organizational skills. If that's true, I'm grateful - it never felt like excessive discipline, just purposeful structure.

TELL US WHAT YOU DID AFTER YOU GRADUATED FROM ISKL?

After graduating, I tried Business Administration in Barcelona but quickly realized it wasn't for me. I moved to Florence for a BA in Political Sciences and Journalism. During my master's in São Paulo, I interned with the UN in New Delhi. I also taught Italian language and worked as an interpreter.

CURRENT LIFE CAN YOU SHARE MORE ABOUT YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

I began informally translating my aunt's psychoanalytic texts. Later, I taught at the Italian Cultural Center in São Paulo and facilitated for the International Honors Program.



In 2011, I curated a literary exhibition at Casa das Rosas, a museum housing Haroldo de Campos' archive. There, I discovered unpublished letters by Giuseppe Ungaretti, which led to my PhD in Translation Studies. While studying, I taught literary translation, published bilingual poetry, and translated novels. My poetry has appeared in journals from Turkey to Iceland. I earned my PhD in 2019, and Mondadori published Ungaretti's letters.

"Learning was rigorous yet organic and fun."

FROM ISKL TO OXFORD: A JOURNEY OF CULTURAL AWARENESS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

By Farena Cooper and Eileen Unwin

What does it look like when a student's school experience ignites a lifelong passion and shapes a global perspective? For Floris Gast ('20), the answer began at ISKL. From arriving in Kuala Lumpur with limited English to walking the halls of Oxford University as a postgraduate student, Floris's journey reflects the transformative impact of an inclusive, globally minded education.



Floris Gast ('20) today



Floris Gast catching up with an ISKL alumni friend, Giulio Errico ('20)

When Floris Gast ('20) arrived at ISKL at age 11, he faced more than just a new school. Having returned to Malaysia after early childhood in Kuala Lumpur, the Dutch student navigated unfamiliar territory: new languages, cultures, and challenges. Today, he studies African Studies at the University of Oxford, a path shaped in no small part by his ISKL experience.

Floris credits ISKL's emphasis on global awareness and cultural understanding as the foundation of his international relations and interests in politics and the economy. "ISKL broadened my perspective in ways that have been indispensable for my studies and career," he shares.

EARLY CHALLENGES AND MEANINGFUL MENTORSHIP

Floris' first ISKL class covered the Chinese Cultural Revolution, a difficult topic, especially with limited English. But with support from teacher Ann Whiting, he learned to persevere. That early resilience paved the way for growth both in and out of the classroom.

Through guidance from educators such as Shawn Staley, William Regan, and Shane Graham, Floris began to thrive. Lessons learned on the volleyball court, particularly during the 2019-2020 IASAS season, where the team earned a silver medal, instilled in him the values of teamwork, discipline, and dedication.

“The relationships I formed at ISKL continue to shape my life, personally and professionally.”

INSPIRATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Academically, Floris thrived. He points to faculty Richard Martin, Michael Bollom, Matthew Popovich, and Thomas Musk as shaping his academic passion. Martin introduced him to the Congo Crisis, sparking a lasting interest in African political history. Meanwhile, Socratic dialogues in Musk’s Theory of Knowledge (ToK) class pushed him to engage deeply and critically, a skill that still guides his thinking today.

A WELL-ROUNDED EXPERIENCE

Outside the classroom, Floris embraced opportunities to lead and create. His involvement in photography and yearbook, under a former faculty member, Paul Ubi’s guidance, helped him hone design, storytelling, and collaboration skills. He later served as Senior Editor of the High School yearbook, a role that strengthened his communication and project management abilities.

Whether playing ping-pong with friends on the Senior Deck or coordinating student publications, Floris found joy in the connections he built. “The relationships I formed at ISKL continue to shape my life, personally and professionally,” he says.



Floris and fellow delegates attended a diplomatic dialogue on African development hosted at Imperial College Business School in London

FROM KUALA LUMPUR TO THE WORLD STAGE

Following graduation, Floris pursued a Liberal Arts and Sciences degree at Erasmus University College in the Netherlands, taking on leadership roles across various committees and student bodies. He interned at Telecommunications service provider HumanityLink, taught at Stichting Landmerk, and engaged with policy through the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He contributed to conversations on youth integration in foreign policy and even presented at the Rabat Process, a diplomatic dialogue between the Economic Community of West African States and the European Union.

AT OXFORD: A RETURN TO A SPARK FIRST LIT AT ISKL

Now at St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, U.K, Floris continues to explore the political economy of Africa. His focus on extractive industries, governance, and the dual role of conflict and resource wealth builds directly on his ISKL foundation.

“As a Publicity Coordinator for St Antony’s International Review, a peer-reviewed journal of international affairs published by Oxford University, I bridge academic research with policy discourse,” Floris shares. His postgraduate work includes field research and collaborations with civil society organizations across the African continent.



Floris on campus at the University of Oxford during a matriculation ceremony. He is currently pursuing a Master of Science in African Studies at St Antony’s College

“ISKL broadened my perspective in ways that have been indispensable for my studies and career.”

Looking ahead, Floris remains committed to refining his perspective and driving meaningful change. And it all began, he reflects, with teachers, teammates, and experiences at ISKL that pushed him to grow, care, and think critically.

THE SPIRIT OF ISKL

By Christian Sorand, Alumni Faculty



Christian Sorand today

At ISKL, our Vision to “know yourself, care for all, and create a better world” comes to life through the stories of our community. This testimonial is a powerful reflection of that journey—one where personal growth, compassion, and global impact are more than ideals; they are lived experiences.

Becoming an international school teacher was both a calling and a chance, one that shaped my entire career.

It began when I was just 21, still an undergraduate, and selected for a teacher exchange between France and the United States. I spent a year in Pennsylvania, teaching French in local schools and visiting regional colleges as a state itinerant teacher. After completing my graduate studies in France (with a stint at Trinity College Dublin), I was drafted. But instead of military service, I joined an overseas teaching program, a decision that launched a decades-long global journey.

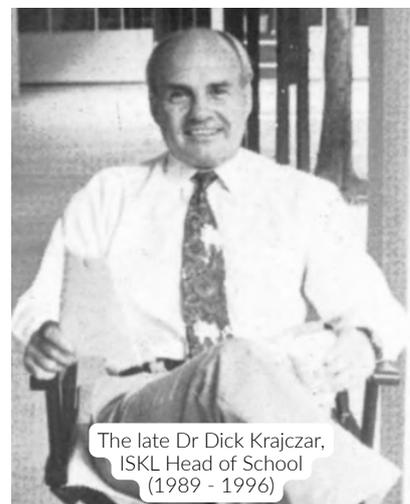
From Casablanca to Kalimantan, my path took me across North and West Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia. Along the way, I taught in schools under the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, conducted anthropological research, and encountered an ever-evolving tapestry of cultures and educational systems. But it was in Borneo that I was first introduced to American international schools, and ultimately, to ISKL.

A fellow head of school in Balikpapan pointed me toward Kuala Lumpur and connected me with ISKL’s Head of School at the time, Dick Krajczar. I visited KL during a holiday, and a position in the Foreign Language Department opened soon after. With approval from the French Ministry, I made the move, marking the beginning of one of the most formative chapters of my life.

My first year at ISKL wasn’t easy. I had to adapt to new teaching methodologies and embrace the International Baccalaureate curriculum. But Dick, along with many supportive colleagues, made the transition smoother.

What struck me most was the sense of community, not just among faculty and staff, but also with students and parents. ISKL had a spirit unlike anything I had experienced before.

That spirit came alive every morning as I arrived early on campus, often crossing paths with Dick sitting in his director’s chair in the courtyard, greeting staff and students alike. Those early years in Ampang forged deep friendships. ISKL didn’t just offer me a workplace, it gave me a lifelong network of friends and mentors: Jean-Guy, David Cannon, Tom and Marilyn Hopkins, Marc Fogel, Jaci Stucker, Toni Dyktor Mullen, Lesli Muri, and many more.



The late Dr. Dick Krajczar,
ISKL Head of School
(1989 - 1996)

Note: This testimonial has been lightly edited for clarity and to align with editorial guidelines, while preserving the author’s original message and voice.

“ISKL had a spirit unlike anything I had experienced before—a deep sense of community that extended far beyond the classroom.”

These connections followed me across continents; from ISKL to Tunis, from Paris to Bangkok. I visited former colleagues in Vienna and Martha’s Vineyard, kept in touch with others across Asia, and reunited with friends in unexpected corners of the globe.

The ISKL bond endures. When Toni Mullen and Karen Palko visited Paris, I provided them with an online walking tour to ensure they didn’t miss the city’s hidden gems. I still meet up with Tom and Marylin in Bangkok, and even reconnect with former students, some of whom have become accomplished creatives in London, Mumbai, and KL.

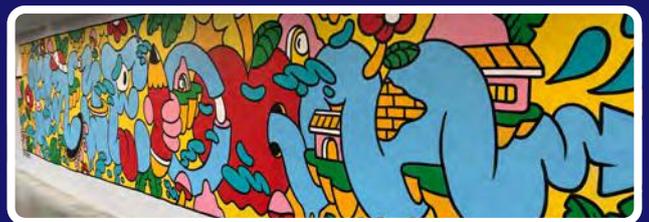
“The ISKL bond endures—across continents, across decades, and across generations.”

I officially retired in 2010, closing out my teaching career at the American Cooperative School of Tunis. But retirement offered a new beginning: I returned to my passion for anthropology, publishing research on Berber civilizations and Thai spirituality. Even as my academic focus deepens, ISKL remains a part of my story. I’ve visited the new campus twice and hope to return.

This message is dedicated to my dear friend and colleague, Marc Fogel. His journey is a testament to what it means to carry the Panther spirit—resilient, compassionate, and connected.

Christian Sorand

Monastir, Tunisia, March 2025



There are many ways to leave your legacy at ISKL and help lay the foundations for years to come.

Find out more by scanning the QR code below



INSPIRE
PEOPLE | PLACES | PROGRAMS





The Salim family proudly wearing the ISKL varsity jacket

THE SALIM LEGACY: THREE GENERATIONS OF ISKL

By Sarah Madzney

At ISKL, community is more than a value; it's a shared experience. For the Salim family, that experience spans over 50 years and three generations. Their story reflects what so many ISKL families feel: a deep connection to a school that becomes a home.

It all began with Emily Salim, a beloved educator who joined ISKL in 1971 and made it her second home. Her son, Omar Salim ('92), grew up within that same community, and the family's story continued with Norman Salim ('17) and Alicia Salim ('24), who carried the legacy forward with pride, purpose, and a deep sense of belonging.

IT ALL STARTED IN THE ISTANA

Emily Salim's ISKL journey began in 1971 at the school's original downtown Kuala Lumpur campus, located in a residence known as the Istana. She vividly recalls the school's early days. "The teachers' faculty room was in the bathroom," she laughs. "You could get your paper supplies from the bathtub and sit down with your coffee to chat with friends."

In 1992, Emily's son Omar graduated from ISKL, carving his own path through the same community his mother had helped build. His years were marked by a strong sense of camaraderie and school pride, particularly on the soccer field. His standout moment was helping win the boys' soccer championship after a 14-year drought. "It was like we won the World Cup," he smiles, reminiscing the moment of victory.

THE THIRD GENERATION: LIVING THE LEGACY

Today, the Salim legacy continues through Omar's children. Norman and Alicia have each made their mark at ISKL, carrying forward their family's tradition while forging their own unique paths.

Norman shares a particularly meaningful connection with his father through an art teacher they both had during their own time at ISKL, the late John Stupka. "I remember both my dad and I took the same class," Norman says. "It was a block of my day where I could do my work and talk to someone older, someone wiser."

***"It feels like home."
– Emily Salim***

Alicia echoed Norman's sentiment and reflected on the enduring sense of familiarity that defines her ISKL experience. "I always know people," she says. Whether it be teachers, students, or my brother's friends, I just always know someone."

As she prepares for university, she reflects on how unique and comforting this environment has been, an experience not easily replicated elsewhere.

WHERE SPORTS BUILD BONDS

Athletics have long been a defining part of the Salim family's ISKL journey, especially through IASAS, the Interscholastic Association of Southeast Asian Schools, where High School students compete at a varsity level.

"When you're in High School, IASAS seems like the world," Omar says, recalling his days as a student-athlete in the early '90s. Norman remembers the energy of watching the IASAS Rugby finals. "Everyone was out on the field," he says. "The sound, the energy, the community, it was one of those moments to remember."

Alicia's IASAS story began in Elementary, cheering Norman on and dreaming of doing the same. That dream came true. "My dad went to IASAS, my brother went to IASAS, I also went to IASAS," she says.

"And I think that shapes me as a person, because I wanted to have the same experience they did."

Today, the legacy lives not just in memories but also in mementos. Omar's varsity letterman jacket from the 90s, now a staple in Alicia's closet, is a subtle nod to the family's deep ties to ISKL athletics and the traditions that continue to shape each generation.

***"Even though students don't have that same generational background, they still have the same sense of community."
– Norman Salim ('17)***



Emily Salim (second from left) with fellow ISKL alumni, including the late John Stupka (second from right)

COMMUNITY THAT EVOLVES WITHOUT LOSING ITS HEART

“One of the first things I learned was The Melawati Way, which is: Take care of yourself, take care of others, and take care of this place,” Alicia recalls. What begins in Elementary School becomes a compass for students as they grow. Over time, that simple message becomes second nature, showing up in how students lead, collaborate, and support one another.

While ISKL has grown over the years, its facilities expanded, and its programs diversified, the essence of ISKL, the feeling of belonging, remains constant. “Even though a lot of students don’t have that same generational background, they still have the same sense of community,” Norman reflects.

“I think the thing that has always stayed the same here is this feeling of home, community, and joy in spending time with each other and making these friendships,” Emily shares.

“I think that has always been ISKL. It feels like home”.

A LEGACY CARRIED FORWARD

The Salim family’s story is not just about legacy. It is about passion, community, and the enduring spirit of ISKL. While much has changed since the school’s humble beginnings, one thing remains constant: the deep sense of connection that ties generations of Panthers together through a shared sense of belonging and pride.

More than anything, we see how a school becomes a home when it is filled with people who care for each other, grow together, and pass on those values to the next generation.

EXPERIENCE THE SALIM FAMILY’S REMARKABLE JOURNEY AT ISKL.

Watch the full video on ISKL’s YouTube channel and discover what makes ISKL a home across generations.



Scan the QR code to watch the full video



Learn more about our alumni stories and what makes ISKL a community for life!



Norman and Alicia back when they were in Elementary and High School



Alicia Salim (second from right) representing ISKL on the soccer field during IASAS



CLASS OF 2025

From Senior Sunrise to final goodbyes, the Class of 2025 shared laughter, friendship, and unforgettable moments that shaped their ISKL journey

CATCHING UP WITH THE CLASS OF 2025

By Sarah Madzney

In their final days at ISKL, the Class of 2025 reflected on the memories, milestones, and meaningful lessons that defined their senior year. From IASAS victories to advice for fellow Panthers, their stories are a celebration of growth, gratitude, and Panther pride.

As their final year at ISKL came to a close, members of the Class of 2025 reflected on defining moments, hard-won victories, and heartfelt lessons that capture what it truly means to be a Panther.

This article is part of our senior spotlight series, "Catching Up with the Class of 2025," where we sat down with our graduating seniors to talk about the memories they've made during their time at ISKL, the lessons they've learned, and the advice they have for their fellow Panthers.

MOMENTS THAT MATTERED

When asked about favorite memories, the seniors lit up, recalling big wins and quiet moments. For many, IASAS was a defining thread. Alina enthusiastically shared about the silver medal earned with the girls' track team. Quinn and Gavin shared the thrill of clinching gold for IASAS Basketball after 31 years, while Zoey reflected on a volleyball tournament that started with no expectations and ended in an unforgettable silver. She added, "I'm so proud of that experience and our entire team. That's a memory that's going to stick with me for a long time!"

Others found joy in moments shared with friends. Shelby recalled the memories of her 17th birthday dinner, where her house was filled with laughter and conversation late into the night. For Gruia, it wasn't about one standout event, but the feeling of connection throughout the year. "I don't have one particular memory," Gruia shared, "but just being with friends is fun."

**"Be open to change."
- Kanwal N. ('25)**

LESSONS LEARNED AND PASSED ON

In between the laughter were hard-earned lessons, many of which now serve as words of advice for rising seniors.

Time and how quickly it passes were recurring themes. Alina reflected on how easy it is to underestimate it: "You always think you have more time than you do, but you don't." This year's class speaker, Hyren, echoed that sentiment with a broader reflection: learning to value and cherish time with loved ones. "I think just enjoying the moment," he said, was one of the most important takeaways from his senior year.

Others leaned into the emotional and personal growth of senior year. "Be open to change," Kanwal said, acknowledging the turbulence that often comes with transition. Jason encouraged future seniors to "have fun" and "be yourself," while Zoey advised, "Take it day by day... try to live a balanced and healthy life."



KEEP UP WITH THE CLASS OF 2025

There's more to discover! Head over to ISKL's official YouTube channel to continue Catching Up with the Class of 2025. From personal triumphs to advice straight from the heart, our video interviews dive deeper into the stories, laughter, and reflections that define this remarkable group of graduates.

**"Take it day by day... try to live a balanced and healthy life."
— Zoey Y. ('25)**

Dev reminded us that sometimes the key is simply persistence: "Just keep working hard, and everything will fall in place. You might get caught up in a single moment and think, 'Oh my God, this is going to change my life.' But if you keep your head up, stay positive, things will work out."

**"Just keep working hard, and everything will fall in place."
— Dev C. ('25)**



Gruia summed it up best: "You're in control of your last year. Prioritize what you want, not what others expect."

**"You're in control of your last year."
— Gruia N. ('25)**

A LASTING LEGACY

The Class of 2025 leaves behind more than memories; they leave behind lessons, laughter, and a legacy of meaningful friendships. Their stories remind us that while time flies, the bonds and lessons of ISKL endure, shaping futures near and far.

**Welcome to the Alumni family, Class of 2025.
Once a Panther, Always a Panther!**





Congratulations
CLASS OF 2025





Faculty past and present



Alumni across the decades



1980's Alumni

STAYING CONNECTED: SHAPING THE NEXT 60 YEARS

By Kendra Jones

“Once a Panther, Always a Panther” is more than a motto. It’s a living legacy.

At ISKL, it has never been just about the classrooms or the campus; it’s about the people. For sixty years, students, teachers, and families worldwide have come together to create something extraordinary: a global community grounded in care, curiosity, and connection. From school-wide traditions to spontaneous hallway conversations, what stays with you isn’t just what you learned, but who you became and who was with you on that journey. That spirit of togetherness defines the ISKL experience and will shape our next sixty years.



Meeting old friends and new at the Happy Hour event at The Campus

THE POWER OF COMMUNITY, THEN AND NOW

When students step onto campus, they become part of something greater, a community that spans generations, continents, and careers. ISKL is where lifelong friendships are formed, values like curiosity, empathy, and leadership are nurtured, and memories take root. Whether you studied in the Istana, Ampang, Melawati, or Ampang Hilir, you carry a shared experience, a sense of belonging that doesn't fade with time.

***“The ISKL bond continues online, and it remains strong as ever!”
– Christian Sorand,
Former Faculty.***

Throughout our 60th Anniversary celebrations, we saw that bond in action. Alumni returned from across the globe. They shared stories, raised glasses, and danced under the stars. They gave their time, talents, and hearts, mentoring students, performing on stage, and even helping design Panther statues that now symbolize our shared history.



THIS IS YOUR CALL TO ACTION

We will write the next chapter of ISKL's story together. As a global community, nearly 25,000 strong, we have the opportunity and responsibility to carry the Panther spirit forward.

Let's keep this network thriving, support the students who follow in our footsteps, celebrate the legacy we've built, and continue to shape a future filled with purpose, passion, and Panther pride. Stay in touch, lift each other up, and carry the legacy forward. Because the next 60 years start with you.

LOOKING AHEAD: YOU ARE THE LEGACY

As we shape the next 60 years of ISKL, our alumni are more essential than ever. The school's future is being built by students, teachers, and every Panther who stays connected and gives back.

There are so many ways to get involved:

- **Be a Mentor:** Join the Alumni Ambassador Program and guide fellow panthers navigating university choices and life beyond ISKL. Your experience can light the path for the next generation.
- **Share Your Story:** Participate in the **GetREAL!** Speaker Series or contribute to Selamanya. With all its twists and triumphs, your journey can inspire and empower others.
- **Support the Inspire Campaign:** Whether RM60 or RM6,000, every gift helps provide learning opportunities, fund innovation, and ensure ISKL remains accessible to deserving students. You can even help fund a Pathways Scholarship that transforms lives.
- **Reconnect:** Update your alumni profile, attend a reunion, or organize a meetup in your city. Being part of this network means showing up, not just in memories but in momentum.

“Your pride, presence, and Panther spirit has helped strengthen ISKL's legacy and breathe life into our shared history.”



Scan the QR code to
visit the Alumni site





Alumni enjoying their time on the Ampang Hilir campus

*Once a Panther,
Always a Panther*

Get Connected!

Join the Alumni Network

There are many ways to stay up-to-date with all things

#ISKLAlumni



Scan the QR code to visit the Alumni site

✓ <https://iskl.edu.my/alumni> 

✓ IG: @ISKLOfficialAlumni 

✓ FB: @ISKLOfficialAlumni 

✓ Search LinkedIn: ISKL Alumni 

✓ X: @isklalumni 

✓ YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/ISKLOfficialChannel> 



ANGELIQUE KAFLOUD ('21)

Angelique's vibrant spirit, creativity, and passion for science and the arts left an indelible mark on the ISKL community. A member of the Class of 2021, she pursued her dream of studying medicine in Doha, Qatar. Angelique continued to inspire through her writing, art, and compassion, embodying a deep desire to make a difference in the world. Her legacy lives on in the hearts of those she touched.



PATRICK QIUXIANMING ('25)

Patrick, a beloved member of the Class of 2025, is remembered for his kindness, gentle presence, and the quiet strength he brought to his peers. His passing was deeply felt across the ISKL community, and during this year's graduation ceremony, Patrick's name was honored as part of the graduating class. Though he is no longer with us, Patrick's memory remains part of the Class of 2025's enduring bond and story.

In this milestone year, as we reflect on six decades of connection, growth, and belonging, we also pause to honor members of our community who are no longer with us. Whether alumni, faculty, or current students, they remain forever part of the ISKL story. Their memory lives on in the lives they touched and the legacy they leave behind. *By Kendra Jones*



HIDAYAT ALEXANDRE TOUELLE ('16)

Hidayat joined ISKL in Grade 1 and was with us until Grade 10. Remembered for his creativity, warmth, and genuine kindness, he left a lasting impression on classmates and teachers alike. His legacy is celebrated by those who had the privilege of knowing him.

A memorial service was held in Montreal and livestreamed for the global community. Messages of remembrance can be shared at mykeeper.com/AlexandreTouelle.



John Thomas (Employee from 1992 to 2016)

For 24 years, John Thomas was a cornerstone of ISKL's High School Science Department. His passion for teaching, tireless commitment, and leadership in service initiatives like Habitat for Humanity touched countless lives. Beyond the classroom, he fostered community through the Staff Association, football matches, hiking outings, and annual events. John's memory lives on in the voices of those he mentored, laughed with, and stood beside. He embodied humility, generosity, and dedication, and will forever be part of the ISKL legacy.

If you would like to share a memory or tribute for a classmate, teacher, or friend, please email alumni@iskl.edu.my. **Once a Panther, Always a Panther.**



This is a publication of
The Society of
The International School of Kuala Lumpur
(PPM-001-10-15041965)

Editorial Team

Kendra Nicole Jones
Farena Cooper
Sarah Madzney
Danial Marzuki ('17)
Ross Idris

Contact

The Society of
The International School of Kuala Lumpur
No. 2, Lorong Kelab Polo Di Raja, Ampang Hilir
55000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

KDN Permit No.

PP19633/01/2021 (035251)

Printed by

Akitiara Industri Sdn. Bhd.
KDN: PQ1780/2-52-(21)
Address: No 1 & 3, Jalan TPP 1/3, Batu 12
Taman Industri 47100 Puchong, Selangor.
Email: akitiara@po.jaring.my | Phone: +603 8061 9988
Fax: +603 8061 9933 | LMC No. 050283