



Personal Reflections

9/23/2019

Dear IMSA Family,

In my last Personal Reflection, I welcomed you to the 2019-2020 Academic Year and shared our two continuing priorities of **Global Strategies** and **Equity and Excellence**. I also identified the three indicators from our Impact and Outcomes 2020 plan requiring the entire IMSA community to work together to achieve our ambitious targets surrounding three indicators:

- Number of contributions from IMSA community -----members to any body of knowledge
- Number of alumni engaged
- Percent of engaged employees

Today, I wanted to share some good news from IMSA students, staff, alumni, and Academy-wide.

Students

The Class of 2019 graduated June 1. We are very proud to send 198 of these graduating seniors to 73 different institutions this fall. 100 will attend an Illinois college/university including University of Illinois, IIT, University of Chicago, Loyola and Northwestern. 96 are headed farther from home to Stanford, Yale, MIT, Case Western Reserve, Purdue University and the United States Naval Academy just to name a few. Two of our IMSA graduates plan to study abroad.

IMSA's Future Business Leaders of America Chapter had an impressive showing at their State Leadership Conference in April. Out of 40 competitors, six earned first place in their event and 25 were invited to represent Illinois at the National Leadership Conference in San Antonio, TX.

Three teams of IMSA entrepreneurship program students swept 1st, 2nd and 3rd place and won \$40,000 in prize money for their innovative business ideas at the Midwest 'The Next Launch' Competition in April.

Delicia Chen '21 advanced to the IHSA state finals after placing second in the 1600m run at the sectional meet in May.

2019 graduates Justin Izaguirre, Renzo Ledesma, Walter Marsh, Timothy Mou, Olivia Shi, Daniel Soto, Aidan Steineman, Mackenzie Valent and Kristin Wolford won more gold medals in the National Russian Essay Contest at the advanced level than any other students in the nation in May.

Diana Gonzalez '20, Esha Dani '20, and Samantha Lazcano '20 advanced to state with their film focused on women of color and highlighted poetry in the Chicago Regional History Fair competition in May.



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2019 graduate Daniel Chen became the IHSA Class 2A State Champion in the 1600m run at Eastern Illinois in May.

Michelle Wang '20 was the second-place winner at the BP Student Ideas Competition in May.

Six IMSA students from the Chinese language class competed in the 2019 Midwest Chinese Speech Contest in May and all won top awards. Gold Winners: Max Knutson '20 (Chinese II) and Derek Zhu '21 (Chinese I); Silver Winners: Abigail R. Light '20 (Chinese II), Charlotte Giff '19 (Chinese IV - competing one level up) and Grace Mitchell '20 (Chinese III); and Bronze Winner: Muiyiwa Arowolo '21 (Chinese I).

Students Nafay Abdul '20 and Sophia Pribus '20 presented a project titled, "Diagnostic AbO Targeted Probes for Alzheimer's Disease" at the Korea Science Academy Science Fair 2019 held in Busan, the Republic of Korea in June.

The incoming Class of 2022 IMSA Sophomores ventured out into the surrounding community and completed over 450 hours of community service as part of IMSA's service-learning program on August 21.

Faculty/Staff

Extraordinary Achievement Awards were presented to Marti Guarin and "Doc Nok" in June for their tireless efforts preserving IMSA's past in the IRC Archives area. (If you would like to donate to their work, please give [here](#).)

Dr. Adrienne Coleman, Director of Equity and Inclusion, was designated as a Certified Diversity Professional (CDP) by the Institute for Diversity Certification (IDC) in August. She also spoke at the State of the Black Tech Ecosystem (SBTE) conference in June.

IMSA science faculty, Dr. Sowmya Anjur received the first ever educational grant from SCARF (Sudden Cardiac Death Research Foundation) in August. She will be running experiments that mimic arrhythmias to help students learn how sudden cardiac death occurs and how to possibly prevent it.

Alumni

Matt Bornski '03, Sharon DeCaro '03, Anthony Stuckey '89 and Tamora Kimmett '91 served as panelists for the Computer Science Career Forum in May.

Aaron Victor '15, Samantha Medina '16, Isabella Ginnett '18, Maelee Chen '18, Jason Barazza '17, Paul Nebres '16, and Kady Frawley '17 served as panelists for the Class of 2019 Senior STEP program in May. The program is designed to reduce some uncertainties related to the



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"college life" through interactions and shared experiences from our alumni and Student Life counselors.

Sendhil Revuluri '90 was selected as the Chicago Board of Education Vice-President in June.

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot named Manuel Perez '07 to the post of Managing Deputy Director of Legislative Counsel and Governmental Affairs in June.

IMSA welcomed home Steve Chen '96 in June. He and his family spent time in the Steve and Jamie Chen Center for Innovation and Inquiry discussing the programming and opportunities this amazing space provides Illinois students.

Pooja K. Agarwal class of 2001 just released a new book, *Powerful Teaching*, about the science of teaching and learning in June.

Echoes of an epic Alumni Reunion keep bouncing around campus. Over 200 alumni and their families from the Classes of '89, '94, '99, '04, '09 and '14 joined us on campus July 20.

Elissa Larkin Conlon '99 received the first Kabiller Humanitarian Award in June. Elissa is a bilingual Speech and Language Pathologist at the Shirley Ryan Ability Lab, previously known as the Rehab Institute of Chicago (RIC).

IMSA featured three Alumni at its 2019 Convocation Ceremony in August, including a keynote by Claudia Flores '93 and musical performances by vocalist Alexandra Plattos Sulack '07 and violinist Jo Marie Sison '97.

Jessica Yagan '95 was recognized as one of the 2019 Most Inspiring Chicagoans by *StreetWise Magazine* in August.

Academy-wide

IMSA's first Innovation Showcase held in April featured student entrepreneurship projects and was anchored by a keynote from Elizabeth "Betsy" Ziegler, CEO of 1871.

The annual Hollister Lecture series in May featured keynote speaker James Robilotta, author, speaker and entrepreneur.

25 IMSA students were recognized by the United Nations Association – USA and InnerView Technologies in the 2018-19 National Community Service Awards for their volunteerism toward the 17 UN Global Goals in May.

State Representative Kelly Burke sponsored an IMSA event at Evergreen Park Library on June



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12 where IMSA staff shared information with residents about IMSA's immersive, experiential and rigorous academic and residential life programs featuring entrepreneurship, research and global learning opportunities. Plus, the Center for Teaching and Learning shared information about innovative and imaginative summer camps for K-12th grade as well as other flagship programs.

Summer at IMSA programs wrapped up a busy summer which included fun and inspiring camp themes along with a summer internship program. The program provides college and graduate school STEM education majors with training, mentorship and support, feedback, and classroom opportunities to teach IMSA-created, hands-on, minds-on STEM to students as part of the summer camp programs in July.

IMSA's partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) provides Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) professional development for 4th - 5th science teachers across the state of Illinois. Teachers will participate in a one-day immersive experience engaging in model science lessons, the significant shifts with NGSS, and a deeper understanding of three-dimensional teaching. This professional development will take place on various dates in September.

IMSA was ranked the #1 Best Public High School in Illinois and #2 Best Public High School in America by **niche.com** – this ranking was released in August.

The new auditorium was officially dedicated at Convocation on August 19 thanks to generous alumni and friends who contributed over \$400,000 to the "Save a Seat" Campaign. See a short celebration video [here](#).

In June the annual President's Award was bestowed to the SIR team of Cathleen Cunz, Dr. Don Dosch, Dr. Dave DeVol, and Dr. Eric Smith and also to Jean Bigger for outstanding service to IMSA.

I'm so proud of all of IMSA's continued achievements!

Respectfully,

José M. Torres, Ph.D.

President