

Paw Prints

Winter Park High School International Baccalaureate Newspaper

November 2017

Interview with Mr. Blackmon

Written by Sarah Nix

What changes can we expect for the IB program in the coming years?

Not much at first. We are talking about one of the best IB programs in the state of Florida, in the country, in the world. Winter Park is renowned as being one of the best programs, so you're not going to see many changes. We are such a great IB school; I really want to get our students out there - to get more involved on a global level. There are different types of IB global student leadership conferences and different exchange programs. I'd like to start doing some bonding activities, like field trips or get-togethers, so the kids can see IB as a family, a cohort, a bigger thing. This way, they will see they are not in it alone.

What are the best qualities of an IB student?

The best qualities of an IB student: caring, knowledgeable, thinker, communicator, reflective, balanced, principled, and inquirer. All the learner profiles attributes—that's what makes the great IB students we have.

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"I love how Mr. Blackmon creates tools that relieve some of our stress. His EE website is a lifesaver!"

- Sophie Libow, 12



Mr. Blackmon., IB Coordinator

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Teacher Spotlight: Mr. Collins

By Valeria Romero

Why did you decide to teach history?

Well, it can't be math- I break out in hives and my hair falls out. I wasn't grey until people started pulling out math homework in my classroom. I am interested in how things work socially. All the stuff that is going on in the news today has all happened before. In AP European History, we talk about Galileo and how the church shot him down, even though he made sound observations. It's the same story with global warming today- the details are different, the people are different, the time in history is different, but it's the same story.

What would you say is your teaching philosophy?

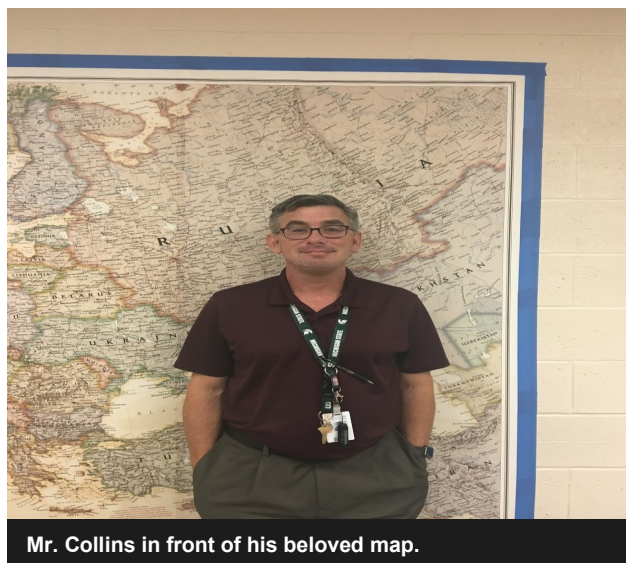
Confident students are good learners. If you can build confidence in a student they will be good learners. I didn't come up with that on my own. A long time ago I had an education job where I was helping out at an Elementary School- a kindergarten teacher told me that, and it always stayed with me. Kindergarten, middle school, or high school - if they're confident they are good learners. It's that simple.

If there's one thing your students will remember you by, what would it be?

That's changed over the years. Last year I told the kids I didn't have any sayings, maybe two or three. They wrote almost fifty on my board on the last day of school. I took a photo of the board and posted it on Facebook and people that I taught with in different states, and former parents of students told me they remembered I said that phrase ten years ago, or in South Carolina fifteen years ago. It was a little embarrassing, but that's what they'll remember me by, whatever weird saying I say that year.

What would you say is the biggest challenge as a teacher?

The biggest challenge is moving standards. This year one thing is important and the next year they're emphasizing something else. As a U.S History teacher in Florida, I am not happy that 30% of a kid's grade relies on one multiple choice test. If one isn't good at taking tests, then you have that much higher of a barrier to climb than someone who is naturally good at it.



Mr. Collins in front of his beloved map.

Tips for Applying to College

Written by Brianna Nicholas

- Spend a week for each college application
- In order for you to get these done and within a good amount of time, I suggest giving yourself a time-line. It can range from 4 days to over a week, but it's best to space out your applications and essays.
- Look up common essay topics in advance.
- It's easier for you to only write one or two essays. So it's best to look up common essay topics, because we do not have time to write 5 different essays.
- Make it personal
- Colleges love to know about you. They want to see what is unique about you, so give them reasons why they should accept you in their school. They are looking for confidence.

Interview with Mr. Blackmon Continued (from pg. 1)

Written by Sarah Nix

What are you looking forward to in being the IB coordinator?

Working with the students. We have amazing IB students. They are the best of the best of the best. They are the strongest competitors and the strongest workers. They are very passionate about what they do and it brings a level of energy to the teacher and me - as a coordinator - to be able to work with such special students.

What advice do you have for succeeding in the IB program?

It's a marathon. You're preparing for bigger things. You're preparing for college. You're providing yourself with the best opportunities to get into college. You're trying to open doors. Sometimes when it seems down and out, and the weight of the rigor is bearing down on you, remember that learning how to deal with adversity, solve problems, and jump over those big hurdles will make you stronger and stronger.

What advice do you have for seniors as they apply to colleges?

Do your research for the schools you are interested in. How do their academics fit your plan? [What are their] admission requirements, IB credit outlook, and AP credit outlook.

What is your advice for freshman as they start the IB program, and how they should prepare for the coming years?

You are not alone. You are now a member of one of the best college preparatory programmes in the state of Florida. Be thinking about time management, getting 7-8 hours of sleep, and organizing. Understand there will be a transition the first 4 to 8 weeks. Learning the new high school routine, what your teachers are looking for, learning the difference between studying for a math test versus studying for a AP Human Geometry versus an IB English class.

How did you first get involved in IB?

I became a teacher at Cocoa Beach Jr/Sr High School, and started teaching IB Math.

What do you hope to achieve with the IB community by the end of this year?

Build relationships with the students, teachers, parents and community.

IB Alumnus Interview: Emma Barbato – New College of Florida

By Isabelle Barbato

What is one specific way IB prepared you for college?

Writing, for sure. The IB teachers make sure you're ready to write college-level papers by the time you get to college. It's just incredible to see how many people in college struggle tremendously with writing. IB really prepares you, especially with the EE and all the IAs. I know they seem tedious now, but they pay off so much. You will be so happy once you get to college, and you're able to crank out a five-page essay in just a couple hours.

What was the activity you enjoyed outside of school, and how did you balance it with your schoolwork?

So, I played in a band called the Mason Jars. We would have rehearsal 3 times a week and play shows around twice a month. It helped that half the band was in IB, so there wasn't an issue with scheduling, but it did become a challenge to have regular rehearsals around midterms and finals. Prioritizing is key in IB. You need to be able to plan ahead and know when to take a break when you're too overwhelmed with schoolwork. Activities outside of school can definitely be balanced with your schoolwork as long as you manage your time wisely.

Which IB teacher impacted your life in the most profound way?

Definitely Professor Ivey. He taught standard and higher level psychology when I was at Winter Park, and he sparked my interest for psychology so much. He's the reason I'm now pursuing biopsychology for my career path. He was very accomplished and passionate about his work, and it showed in the way he taught.

If you could travel back in time to right before freshman year, would you make the choice to do IB again?

Yes. 100%! There were times in IB when I didn't think I would make it and questioned why I was even in the program, but I would totally do it again. It exposes you to so many interesting concepts and pieces of literature that I would have never read otherwise. It really opens up your perspective and lets you look at things through different lenses. The benefits of IB extend far beyond the diploma.

What's one piece of advice would you give to IB students now?

Stick with it, and enjoy it! I know it's hard, but you have an opportunity to learn about so many amazing things, so make the best of it and try to really submerge yourself in the interesting material you're learning. You've got this!



Emma Barbato enjoying some time off at her favorite coffee shop.

The B-E-R Months

By Brooke Nicholas

Now that the BER months have arrived, meaning September, October, November, and December, the school year is well into way, and the fall season has finally started. What's not to love about pumpkin pie, stuffing, and turkey? I asked some of our fellow IB classmates what their favorite thing about fall was and why.

"I like when the weather starts to get cooler and pumpkin bread."- **Kara Evans (12)**

"I like Halloween and anything pumpkin!"
- **Emily Evans (11)**

"I think of cool weather and a gentle breeze - the only time Florida actually has nice weather."
- **Brianna Nicholas (12)**

"Spooky decorations and leaves!"
- **Peter Stephenson (12)**

The Student Athlete Lifestyle

By Lucia Coutant

Many Winter Park High School students participate in school sports and IB. Most of these students also are part of a club, or even have a job outside of school. The student athlete lifestyle is extremely busy and does not allow for much downtime. Jessica Gangle, 11, says "I play water polo and swim, and I'm in IB. It's a lot of work, but it's so fun that it's worth it!"

After a long day at school, many students want to go home and take a nap, but our athletes choose to go to practice instead. Practice times can range from one to two and a half hours long! The time required to play a sport is demanding, and then adding at least three or four hours of homework on top can be stressful; however, being short on time often helps student athletes focus better and not be distracted as easily.

Crew, a very time demanding sport, is popular among IB students. A coxswain on the girl's crew team, Natalie Gibbons, 10, says, "Being on the crew team is a big time commitment, but it teaches you how to manage your time well and how to work efficiently". Rower Meghan McLean, 12, also claims that "Doing crew and IB has taught me how to make the most of my free time." Tennis player Emily Berger, 11, tries to follow the advice of Venus Williams: "Set realistic goals, keep re-evaluating, and be consistent".

The student athlete lifestyle is best summarized by the senior rower Fran Raggi, 12: "Being a student athlete teaches you how to handle your time with working out, school, homework and getting enough sleep. Being in IB and being a student athlete has made me a very well rounded person and has given me skills that I will use, even outside of high school."



Senior IB rowers Meghan McLean and Fran Raggi race at the Scholastic Rowing National Regatta.

Student Spotlight: Starlette Peng

By Sarah Houston

How does owning your own business, Starlette Tutoring LLC, help you in the IB program in regards to organization and management?

It helped me be more confident in my actions in regards to being in the IB program. I learned that it is okay to make mistakes and that it is impossible to get everything right. Like IB, business is difficult to predict, but hard work and slow progression is key.

You are also an active dancer, is there anything you might change in your scheduling to help you manage all of your extracurricular activities?

I like to attempt to do school work before dance because dance is a place where all stress can be released. It is hard because sometimes after school you just want to nap.

Do you ever get unmotivated to do work? If so, how do you get back on task?

I believe this happens to everybody in IB, even though we do not like to admit it. To get back on task, you just have to do it and not think about anything else. It is easier to do one task at a time rather than multitask on different projects.

Prior to high school, did you know much about the IB program, and if you did what about it was attractive to you?

Yes, my sister was in the IB program. The program was not attractive at first; however, I did it because I like to be challenged regarding academic aspects and time management skills.

What is the biggest take away you are looking to get from IB? Whether for your future job, in college, or life in general.

I think the biggest takeaway from IB is that I can do anything I put my mind to.

You often talk about anxiety and how you manage to deal with it. What advice would you give to anyone who feels their stress is consuming them and affecting their academic performance?

A lot of people presume that we are intelligent and “perfect” however they are far from right. Mental health is extremely important and should be stressed in school. It is hard especially when deadline, jobs, extracurricular, clubs, and sports get in the way. The best way to deal with stress and anxiety is to go outside or exercise.



Starlette Peng shares how she manages a business and IB.

Study Tips and Tricks

By Tyler Chong

Make flashcards!

When making flashcards, make sure not to include too much information, or else it will not be as effective.

Create mnemonic devices, acronyms, or short jingles.

Mnemonic devices and acronyms are helpful ways to help remember certain information by remembering the first letter or phrase of each item in a list. Jingles can also help with memorization by creating rhyming words, or words that go together nicely. For example, to remember what happened to Henry VIII's wives, think of the jingle "divorced, beheaded, died... divorced, beheaded, survived."

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Leaving Paper & Pencil in the Past

By: Katherine Terry

In the 2016-17 school year, OCPS rolled out a new program called LaunchED where every student, teacher, and administrator gets his or her own laptop to keep for the school year. The program began last year with 19 high schools in Orange County. At the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, another high school and 10 middle schools adopted the program. The LaunchED program provides either a Lenovo Yoga 11e or a HP 310 to complete school assignments.

The 1:1 program has drastically changed how teaching is executed in the classroom. In previous years, all assignments - from homework to county-regulated exams - were completed via paper and pencil. Last year, this was replaced with the laptops that every student now has abundant access to. Every class's Florida Standards Assessment is also taken on the student's device, which makes the test more convenient for the student and the need for a grader nonexistent.

OCPS's goal through this program was to "increase student engagement and achievement through personalized digital content and tools, such as online textbooks." The district does believe that this was accomplished due to the comments expressed by students and teachers alike. Some of the additional digital resources that OCPS provides to teachers and students include ProgressBook, LaunchPad, Canvas, and Lanschool. On these resources, teachers update students grades, monitor their laptops, and post assignments.

The LaunchED program has effectively wiped out the need for textbooks in most classrooms. When online textbooks are accessible at home with just a few clicks, few students would rather carry around heavy textbooks. However, this does not mean that physical textbooks are unavailable. At WPHS, as long as their desired textbook is available, students can check out physical textbooks for their classes.

Overall, most students and teachers view the LaunchED 1:1 program as a success and they enjoy their internet access.

How to Complete CAS Hours

By: Haryshwa Murrugupan

With juniors being introduced to CAS, and seniors completing their hours, everyone is constantly looking out for opportunities to fulfill these requirements. CAS hours are an effort by the IB Organization to foster well rounded student who will grow into creative thinkers, active individuals, and members of the community. To enhance the “global perspective,” the IB program wishes its candidates to experience more than just rigorous course work. Mr. Brielmaier’s recent CAS meeting may have seemed daunting, but the requirements are extremely manageable once you understand what activities match each category.

Creative hours can be obtained by any activity in which you are producing something using your innovative talents. Creative hours are abundant in the arts- acting in a theatre production, creating films and uploading them to YouTube, or even composing music. Outside the “main” fields of art, creative hours can be earned through clubs like DECA and Model United Nations. In these two clubs, you are not necessarily creating an object, but you are expressing your creative abilities through case studies and debates, which still qualify as products of your unique thoughts. Although the field for creative hours is very broad, just remember that Creative hours are activities that create a tangible product or exert creative thinking processes and skills.

As the name suggests, Active hours include any activity where you are physically engaged. These hours can also obtained both in and outside of school- club sports, working out at the gym, or even playing recreational sports with friends are considered active hours. Active hours don’t have to be earned from a sport, even attending habitat for humanity build days qualify! Just make sure to find an appropriate supervisor to verify these hours (one not related to you.)

Service hours are the most straightforward of the three categories. Any volunteering activity to help, aid, or contribute to the community, without payment, qualifies as a Service activity. Generally, any activity which is considered community service for National Honor Society, Beta Club, Bright Futures, or other organizations and scholarship programs will count as service hours. Volunteering at habitat for humanity, the second harvest food bank, hospitals, and other events where you’re providing free services to a person, organization, or community also qualify.



Image from: <http://www.ishilversum.nl/PublishingImages/CAS.jpg>

Study Tips and Tricks Continued (from pg. 7)

By Tyler Chong

Create study groups.

Working with other people can ensure that everyone is getting accurate information and provides for a way to understand a topic better by teaching it to someone else. When working in a group, make sure both or all parties are focused on the topic, or else it will be very inefficient.

Make reviews or study guides.

A good study guide includes most, if not all, information that was taught and what will be included on a test. If the teacher does not provide a study guide, just make one instead, using notes from class. A good way to make sure to learn all the information is to focus mainly on the information you do not know.

Let's Relax

By: Hope Oladipo

Do you ever feel like you've stretched yourself too thin?

Most of us are always on the go. We don't allow ourselves a designated time to sit and rest. Overworking yourself can cause you to experience chronic fatigue, bouts of forgetfulness, anxiety, depression, and increased risk to contracting illness. Yes superstar, you need to take a break ! Our bodies are like a battery, they need time to recharge. If you never give it a moment's rest, your body will begin to fail you, especially your brain.

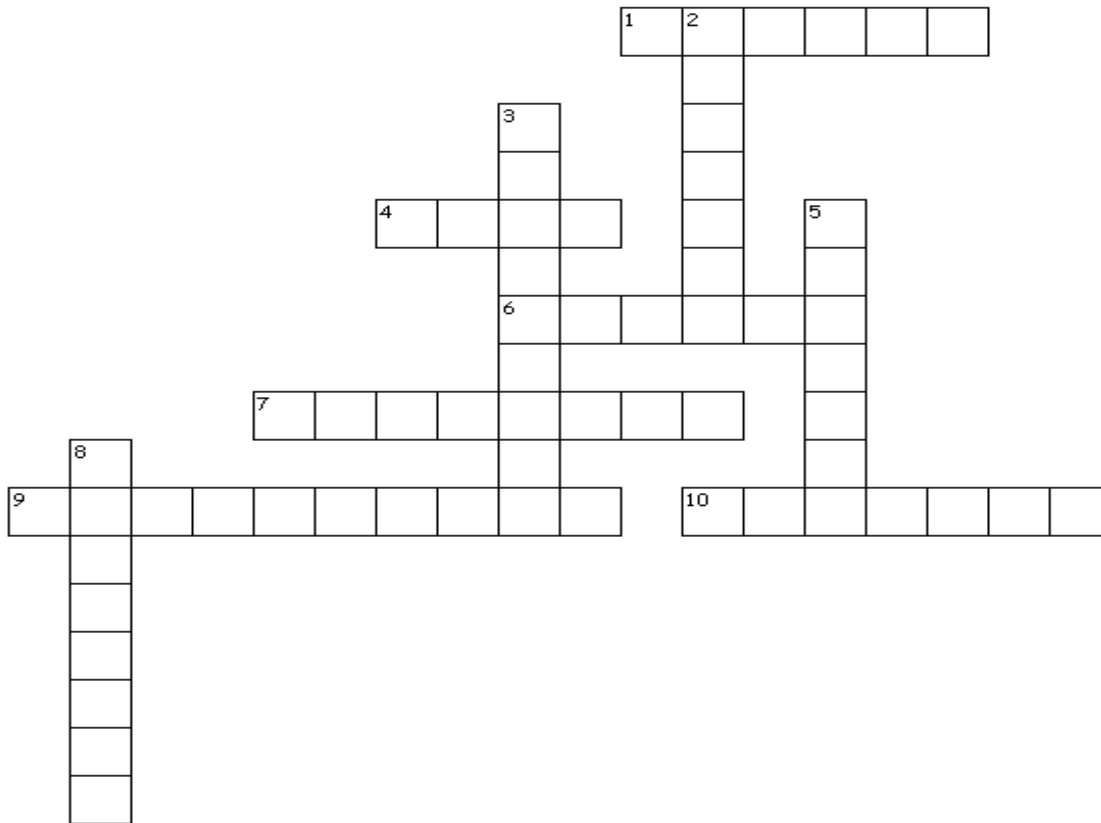
Sleeping allows our brain time to sort through data, find the useful bits, and rid itself of any unnecessary information. Even though most of us can't afford to take the day off, there are small things you can add into your daily routine to take a load off. Here are few things that you can try to relax:

- Read a book before bed. It helps the mind ease into sleep which means a more restful hours.
- Take a bath. The warm water will soothe your muscles, and your whole body will thank you.
- Listen to soothing music. Put on some calm background music, which will give you a nice soundtrack to work to.
- Stretch. Methodically think about your breathing and your movements to get your mind away from life's stressors, if only for a moment.
- Exercise. Get out that restless energy that has no outlet.

Take these tips to heart and a happier, calmer you will emerge. It's nice to take care of yourself every once in awhile.

Crossword Puzzle

By Kyle Smith



Across:

3. Article of winter clothing that Floridians rarely wear
5. Sport associated with Thanksgiving
6. An adjective to describe a ghost
7. The school dance in October. Also a big football game.
9. Something you carve

Down :

1. An important group of tests given halfway through the school year.
2. Farmers ____ their crops.
4. An October holiday
5. Season after summer
8. A word that no word rhymes with

Answers Across: 3. Sweater, 5. Football, 6. Spooky, 7. Homecoming, 9. Pumpkin.
Down: 1. Midterms, 2. Harvest, 4. Halloween, 5. Fall, 8. Orange

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