

ST. JOHN'S
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

A COMMUNITY
of VALUES



St John's Student Body (Montjoie) 1964-65

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the past year, St. John's has worked to articulate its Christian values of companionship, respect and integrity. These values have long been a significant part of the St. John's ethos, but articulating and clarifying them for ourselves and our community has been energizing. These strong values, first brought to the school through the inspirational work of the Sisters of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, have continued to provide the guidance which makes St. John's unique. As a community of values, we cherish our historical tradition and believe in our vision, that St. John's students live our values to impact the world.

Dr. Tom Hawkins, Director



“In many ways, St. John’s was the model of a perfect world. Everyone accepted each other’s cultural and religious differences and worked to help new children to develop the same acceptance. I learnt so much about listening to what others had to say before I judged. There are so many outside of the classroom lessons that I learnt that have greatly influenced my personality and way of being.”

–Former student



ST. JOHN'S

GUIDING STATEMENTS

OUR VISION

St. John's students live our values to impact the world.

OUR MISSION

St. John's International School provides an English-language education based on Christian values, demands personal excellence and stimulates individual responsibility within a culturally diverse environment.

OUR VALUES

St. John's embraces its historical tradition and,
in particular, the Christian values of:

- COMPANIONSHIP—the gentleness to befriend and strength to accompany
 - RESPECT—of people, languages, cultures, beliefs and values
 - INTEGRITY—being true to ourselves, to each other, and to our world



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“There is a lot of attention for the individual. The teachers really know the students and what is best for their development. The teachers are very knowledgeable and really customize their approach for each student, there is not a “one size fits all” mentality. You can compare it to a nice men’s suit: you have mass production and you have tailored to your needs. St. John’s tailors to specific needs rather than mass production.”

–Former parent



ST. JOHN'S INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL:

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Essentially, every individual must question: what is the purpose of a “learning institution”? Whether you are a student, parent, teacher, administrator, alumnus, family member, friend, fan or even neighbor, you form a relationship with a school, and you have a feeling about that place that goes far beyond brick and mortar.

There is something about the ethos of St. John's that bridges from physical space into the immaterial. It is about community, people, and a spirit that transcends even specific people. This spirit can be largely contributed to the involvement of the sisters of the Faithful Companies of Jesus (FCJ), founders of the school who played a large part in the day-to-day activities of the school until 2000 and are still active on the Advisory and ASBL Boards today.

One chooses St. John's to undertake a journey; essentially, one has a goal in mind, or many goals, and one is confident that St. John's is the embodiment, in every sense, of what will make those goals realizable. To truly appreciate this phenomenon, it's necessary to look deeper into the life of the St. John's community, to realize the values that are omnipresent, forming the pulse of the community.

My name is Julien and I was a student at St John's International School. I am from Brazil and I have French and Swiss nationalities from my adoptive parents. I arrived in 2004 and graduated in 2007, obtaining my IB certificates and my High School Diploma. I was an EAL student at the beginning with a poor level of English. The new school was a bit confusing and some of the classes hard to follow; every day I faced new vocabulary in courses such as Mathematics, History, and Religion and so on. The small EAL group met a few times a week with their teacher to learn the language and to share our struggles. Then, after 6 months, my skills dramatically improved. I firmly believe that my integration in the St John's Community helped me to become more confident. I was part of the soccer team and there were academic requirements in order to stay in the team so it made me more responsible about my studies.

After my success at St John's, I did several projects. Indeed, I went to Nepal as a volunteer to teach English Language in a local school and afterwards I was accepted at Aberystwyth University in UK where I attend a Human Geography and Geopolitical Sciences Degree. I am succeeding with my studies and I hope to be accepted for a Master's Degree at the London School of Economics next year. Before arriving at St John's, I did not know that I would be able to achieve such academic goals and achievements; it was during my St John's years that I realised that I could do so. St John's gave me the ambition to succeed in life, organisational abilities, study skills and above all friendship – I keep in touch with all my friends who were students in my grade. Moreover, I still come back to the school in order to see my former teachers and the staff who played a very significant and relevant role in terms of my success.

I dedicate my academic success to all my former teachers who have helped me reaching my goals by giving me responsibilities among the St. John's Community and especially developing my academic skills through the years.

–Former student



St. John's masters this "blending"—it is a place of all-encompassing acceptance, and it strives to provide more than simple education, it strives to reinforce a student body of responsible, caring, charismatic people; people who are good to each other and good for the world beyond. Essentially, every student is a leader at St. John's; every student influences his own path in significant ways, and has a special set of abilities, values and interests. Students receive support and endorsement from day one—without even having to ask!





At an International School of this caliber, at a place that is the heart of the global arena, at a time in which, like none other before, technology and innovation are driving learning methodology forward at a rapid pace, isn't it exceptional to have a school that also offers something constant and personal?

The technology age is already long underway. Every strong school has advanced technology, and St. John's is certainly no exception. Yet, the school's values stretch beyond that—the grasp of the “heart of the matter” is what is truly admirable. As you walk the halls of the school, you will see Interactive White Boards, mobile workstations, laptops, and other advanced equipment. You can check course information online, post to a website, and share in google docs.

What you cannot see is pulsing in the air, however: the spirit of the school; the camaraderie and care evident in every detail, impacting everyone from parents to students to faculty... and beyond.

From the stories and shared personal experiences, it's clear that St. John's values are universal, yet they manifest in diverse ways throughout the community. “School” has evolved from a traditional place of sometimes-isolated study into a place that readily incorporates this sort of global knowledge-sharing and inquiry—St. John's embraces this idea, in everything from our Mission statement to our day-to-day activities. It is values-centered in every way.

St. John's International School was fundamentally built on Christian values, and it has maintained those values over the course of its 47-year existence. I personally appreciate the fact that St. John's is open to all religions. I see students from a variety of cultures, backgrounds, and faiths get along with each other every day, as they work side by side in the classrooms, on stage, in the choir, on the playgrounds, and on our sports teams. I see the values taught by our teachers go far beyond the classroom and prepare the students to have an open-mind about the diverse world we live in, clearly demonstrating that the values of St. John's are alive and well.

Dennis Davis, Athletic Director

What does values-centered truly mean, though? Essentially, as you have seen, it hinges on relationships. Relationships drive St. John's; it's what we are about-- we are active listeners, sharing, engaging and embracing the diverse wealth of knowledge present here.

Our model of teaching is also based on the value of relationships, with a student-centered approach. We see where students are at right now-- and can look to the future and where they will be growing. They are not one type of learner; they are not one type of thinker-- there is no mold-- in fact, thinking about thinking (meta cognition) is something that we also uplift, even having students lead conferences and exercises, using their voice to explain their own methods of processing ideas.



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ST. JOHNS
LIONS



In this time, it is not WHAT students know that is as critical as HOW they process, and the questions they pose, and the places they will go to seek answers to those questions. Ultimately, it's not even about technology-- it's not the tools that are important; it's what one does with them!

We do not seek to teach a set of ideas or principles; is much larger than that, and at the core rests a values-based philosophy that recognizes and celebrates the capability of each individual.

The St John's values that spring to mind are the thoughtfulness and kindness offered at the drop of the hat to those who suddenly find themselves in difficulties. I remember with gratitude the help that was offered spontaneously to my family when I was admitted to hospital as an emergency just before Christmas when families are normally busy themselves, preparing for the festivities or contemplating travelling "home". My husband and three young daughters were showered with food to sustain them, and gentle words to keep them comforted. Over the years since that stressful time I have witnessed countless similar acts from staff and students alike as they gathered around those in need, literally and metaphorically. Without question this is the family of St John's at its best, growing closer and stronger through adversity, eager to show that all are there without counting the cost to themselves.

Pauline Borthwick, High School support services

At St. John's, every member of the community is encouraged to disseminate information; to use knowledge in a variety of ways; to form connections and to be able to impact and uplift others.

These are our values in action... visible each and every day.

When you walk into the MS foyer you can't fail to notice a large modern metal sculpture depicting Jesus on the cross with St. John and three female figures standing around it. Sister Barbara Hughes, FCJ had commissioned my late husband Marcel to design "Something which will show those who see it that this school has Christian roots. The caring nature which is part of the ethos of St. John's should also be reflected."

Sister Barbara had asked me to notify her when it the sculpture had been erected in the foyer. She walked into the Foyer accompanied by, Rev. Claire Ullman, an Anglican priest who taught Religious Education in HS at the time. The two ladies stood in silence looking at the sculpture, which up to then had been only a design they had seen on paper. Nothing was said for a whole long minute and then Sister Barbara said, "Those three women at the foot of the cross depict perfectly the kind of companionship that I would like everyone at St. John's to experience."

Anja Coenen, English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher



"I don't recall any school that was as welcoming as St. John's, or as challenging. I'm in touch with more people from my elementary and middle-school days at St. John's than I am from my high school in the U.S."

—Former student

I came to teach at St. John's from a private school in Providence, Rhode Island (U.S.A.). I expected that the first year would be spent quietly acclimating to a new system and watching how it operates. Instead, St. John's gave me a warm welcome, inviting me immediately to take part in activities and truly become a part of the system. The school as a whole appreciates and embraces who I am, and I count my colleagues as esteemed friends. Here at St. John's, I have found a place where each person—student, faculty, staff—is recognized and encouraged to celebrate the spirit of exploration.

Middle School teacher Caitlin Krause

“St. John’s was much more inclusive in its culture; each student, regardless of what their parents did for work, was given the same care and attention.”

—Former student



“Values” is a nebulous word, and it can be construed in many ways. It’s refreshing and rewarding to find that what is truly valuable is alive at St. John’s: a common good that encompasses strong academics, a caring environment, and capable individuals celebrating each opportunity to grow, learn and thrive.

In this way, St. John’s is a true community; a caring atmosphere in which learning is celebrated—a constant, in this time of exponential change and growth.

Companionship

Integrity

Respect



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