

IB Spotlight: Aisha Tahir

Q: How do you keep up with your academics and social life?

A: I keep up with my academics while maintaining my social life by getting my major assignments done early and the usual homework later at night. Also it helps that most of my friends are either diploma candidates or take a lot of IB classes.

Q: What are your studying habits?

A: My studying habits are very varied. Usually after school, I come home late because of extra curricular activities so I go to bed early and wake up early. For example, I would go to bed at 10pm one night and if I have a major test or a huge assignment, I would wake up at 2am and study.

Q: What is your favorite IB subject?

A: My favorite IB subject so far has been either IB Theory of Knowledge or the content in IB Topics.

Q: What are your plans after high school?

A: My plan after high school is to attend Princeton University.

Q: How are you going to prepare for the IB exams?

A: To prepare for IB exams, I am reviewing all my notes from last year for the two year classes and for the one year classes, I am planning on studying closer to the exam.

Q: What is your extended essay topic?

A: My extended essay topic was: To what extent has the diagnosis of Cystic Fibrosis and Hemochromatosis changed with the advancement on technology?

Q: Is your only focus academics?

A: My only focus has never been academics. I believe that what we learn in class needs to be applied to every part of our lives. I think academics have taught how to be principle the most and for the past two years, I have made sure to value an A less then going to a protest or doing a nice thing for a loved one.

Q: What advice would you give future IB diploma candidates?

A: Advice that I would give future IB candidates is don't worry, you will make it. Learn how to work hard and give it your all but don't get obsessed with the A. Sometimes it's really okay to BS things and pick personal time over school.

Q: Who is your favorite IB teacher?

A: It's very hard to pick a favorite teacher considering I love almost all of my teachers but the one that I have had for four years and that has not only been my favorite teacher but the reason for my high school success is Ms. Ash.

Q: What advice would you give future IB diploma candidates?

A: Take some time for yourself sometimes. This is a stressful program and it's going to wear you down every once and awhile. In the end, the one assignment you're probably stressing on isn't as important as your mental well-being. On the other hand, don't procrastinate (it's usually not worth it and helps in avoiding stressful situations).

Q: What skills do you think the IB program has taught you that can help you later in life?

A: IB has taught be how to be an open minded thinker and how to form my own views on the world. It has taught be confident and has given me the most valuable gift of being opinionated.

Q: Who has helped you on your IB journey?

A: Through out my IB journey, my fellow IB candidate friends

and all of my other friends have helped me on the days that I slept past my alarm or just didn't have time to get an assignment done. Not only in school but also they have helped me during the painful late nights. I have it to the end because of their moral support and the wonderful IB teachers who mostly been nothing but understanding.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: In 10 years, I see myself being done with medical school and moving to a third world country to give assistance to people who are poor and lack basic necessities. If Iww'm lucky, I would love to be joining doctors without borders.

Sudoku Answers, Issue 7

8	2	4	5	9	7	6	1	3
5	1	9	3	6	8	4	7	2
3	7	6	2	1	4	5	9	8
4	8	7	9	5	1	3	2	6
1	6	3	4	7	2	8	5	9
2	9	5	8	3	6	1	4	7
7	4	2	6	8	5	9	3	1
6	3	1	7	4	9	2	8	5
9	5	8	1	2	3	7	6	4

Students qualify for regional science fair

After science fair was held on Jan 25., the top three projects in each category will continue on to regionals on March 17 at Robinson High School.

Students in Honors Biology, Chemistry, and Physics participate in the science fair and present their science skills to judges in hopes of advancing in the fair. Kids from all over the county participate in science fair, each presenting projects involved with their class course.

After each school wide science fair, several people will move

on to the regional science fair to present their projects.

“Regionals is a competition amongst the region which is Fairfax County. Some homeschooled kids, kids in private schools, and anyone who won a prize at their school fair can compete at regionals which is a huge group of students,” said Biology teacher Caroline Gergel.

Students prepare by researching, asking teachers about their topic and brainstorming questions they will have to answer to judges about their projects, called murder boards.

“My project is the effect of different liquids on the time it takes for Tylenol to dissolve. I plan on doing the same project. I am going to prepare a little more, do some more background research, research on questions, and that kind of stuff,” said junior Selam Negash, third place winner in Chemistry.

“My project is the effect of the shape of a boomerang on the range and direction flown. To prepare for science fair I make sure that my research is related to my project, what I’m doing, and what I measure. It needs to be relevant,” said junior Stephen Hy, second place winner in Physics.

Other things students do to prepare is test out their experiments and create their poster boards or scientific models.

“My project was the effect of distance of a fluorescent light from a plasma ball on the amount of light produced by the fluorescent light.” said junior Mikalah Parsons, third place winner in Physics. “To prepare for science fair I usually do a murder board and create the layout of my presentation.”

Students who qualified for regionals must attend and register their projects, find a spot, and have their projects judged.

This means the judges and officials will check for safety

hazards in each project. On Saturday, March 18, the judging will take place all day. Students work so hard on these projects they often feel nervous, scared or have no feelings at all.

“I feel pretty normal going into Regionals this year,” says junior Ian McClelland, second place winner in Chemistry.

“I’m not that confident [going into regionals], but you know. Whatever happens, happens. I’m okay with whatever happens,” Negash said.

“I feel pretty excited about going to regionals because this is my first time and I get to see other scientists in Fairfax County and how they do. I also feel like my project may not be the best, but I will still try my hardest and show what I got,” Hy said.

“My project is the effect of pH on seed germination. Winning was a real surprise for me. My teacher said I worked really hard, and she was happy I won. Now I’m going to regionals and it’s just a great experience.” says freshman Alexander Chounramany, first place winner in Biology.

The fair will be open to the public on Sunday, March 19 for everyone to see all the projects presented and the winners.

Sudoku Answers, Issue 6

1	3	5	9	7	8	2	6	4
9	6	4	2	5	1	7	3	8
2	7	8	3	4	6	5	1	9
8	9	6	1	3	7	4	2	5
5	2	7	6	9	4	1	8	3
3	4	1	8	2	5	9	7	6
6	5	9	7	8	2	3	4	1
4	1	2	5	6	3	8	9	7
7	8	3	4	1	9	6	5	2

My experience at the Women's March on Washington

When I woke up on January 21, I did not think I was going to do much, let alone attend the biggest inaugural protest in history.

As I sat in my living room, the morning news channels provided coverage of the many protesters filling the streets of the National Mall. I knew that this event was going to be historic, not only because there was half a million people flooding into the city, but because it was a national movement.

I immediately called my friend, senior Nora Hasrat, and we made plans to meet at the local Metro station.

The Women's March was aimed at gathering people in solidarity, aimed at the protection of women's civil and social rights. The march was also to promote equality amongst genders, people of different sexualities, religions, races, and so on.

While the rally of the event began at 10 a.m, I did not arrive in Washington, D.C. until 1 p.m. This was when the actual marching began. I arrived just in time to hear Alicia Keys's speech.

We hopped in the crowd of marchers and began to cheer alongside them. "This is what Democracy looks like," "Our body our rights," and "Who run the world? Girls" were some of the popular cheers we heard while making our way down into the city.

As we approached the Capitol building, the sheer number of people who attended the march became apparent. The streets were completely flooded with people covered in pink and bearing posters.

Along with all the empowering cheers about women and equality, there were also many cheers and posters going against the newly inducted president, Donald Trump. Among them were cheers such as: "We need a strong leader, not a creepy tweeter," and "No Trump, No KKK, No Fascist USA," and "Dump Trump."

A lot of posters included phrases like "Don't make America hate again," "Peace is Cheaper," or the more humorous ones that said "Not in my locker room," and "Keep your rosary off my ovaries."

Eventually, the congested streets caused the marching to halt. For a good 25 minutes, my friend and I were stagnant in the crowd of people. Frustrated by this, we made our way to the National Mall, where there was more open space. We took this time to take pictures and take in the event as a whole.

We took a seat and spoke to a group of women who had come from Oregon to participate. They told me although their city had its own March, they explained how they felt that they needed to be in D.C.. As we spoke to more and more people, we realized people had come from all across the country. From New York City to Los Angeles to Alabama, it was incredible to see how so many different people had come together for one common cause.

Everyone we spoke to we're really friendly as well, regardless of the poor weather or the amount of walking people did. Among all the pushing and shoving, everyone was happy to be there and it showed immensely.

Around 4 p.m, we realized that the crowd was not going anywhere. We saw this as a good time to start making our trek back to the nearest Metro station.

Getting into the Metro was absolute chaos. The police were only letting down a certain amount of people at a time for safety reasons, and when we finally got down to the trains, they were equally as full. As we struggled to find a proper place to stand, we spoke to other people and they shared their diverse experiences from the March.

After it was all over, I was extremely grateful to have attended the March and to have taken part in this historical event.

IB Spotlight: Kimberly Romero

Senior Kimberly Romero, balances her time between sports, running, music, animals and studying for her full IB schedule. She studies hard and hopes to graduate with an IB Diploma in June and go on to attend college in Buenos Aires.

Q: How do you keep up with your academics and social life?

A: I try to prioritize certain tasks and events based on what I should do rather than what I want to do. I try to do homework the day I receive it so that I'll have free time during the weekend, or even later that day, to hang out with friends.

Q: What are your studying habits?

A: I try to start on my homework as soon as I get home from school and leave the studying for last. That way I have time to dedicate my attention to my notes. I listen to either classical music or piano music while I study.

Q: What is your favorite IB subject?

A: My favorite IB subject is Anthropology. Learning about different cultures is something that has always fascinated me!

Q: What are your plans after high school?

A: After high school I plan on studying abroad in Argentina. I'll be going to college in Buenos Aires and exploring Patagonia while I'm there. I intend on majoring in Environmental Engineering and then in Veterinary Science.

Q: How are you going to prepare for the IB exams?

A: I am going to take out all of my old notes and study them little by little each day. I will most likely have Skype sessions with my friends and make studying fun.

Q: What is your extended essay topic?

A: I selected anthropology as my subject. My specific question was, "To what extent has the modern world impacted beliefs and values of the Mayan and Incan cultures that exist today?" To further my research, I traveled to Riviera Maya, Mexico and Cuzco, Peru.

Q: Is your only focus academics?

A: While I do love to learn, I don't only focus on academics. I love playing sports and running. Music and animals are also another passion of mine.

Q: Who is your favorite IB teacher?

A: Mr. Kelly! He always makes our TOK classes exciting. It was through the first year of his class that I overcame my shyness of speaking.

Q: What advice would you give future IB diploma candidates?

A: Definitely try to be organized. Managing your time well not only saves you from so much stress, but it also will help ease your IB journey! Also, remember to breathe and take a break every now and then. School is important, but so is your health.

Q: What skills do you think the IB program has taught you that can help you later in life?

A: The IB program has taught me how to manage my time and have confidence in myself. I have been able to overcome many obstacles and complete homework assignments that teachers said wouldn't be possible to complete the night before. It's not only a program that requires you to focus on your academics and strive for the best, but it is also a program that teaches you a lot about yourself as well.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: In 10 years I see myself traveling the world (hopefully with my dog!), volunteering, and possibly having my own business.

Q: Who has helped you on your IB journey?

A: My parents have helped me on my IB journey. There were always supporting me through my toughest days and reminding me that I can do anything I set my mind on.

Q: What is your most challenging class and why?

A: IB Biology HL is my hardest class. I enjoy the subject very much, but the content can be difficult to understand at times. However, Mrs. Mast makes the lessons a more enjoyable experience!

College – Your choice, not everyone else's

“Why George Mason University?” is a question I have become very accustomed to hearing and answering almost every time I tell a fellow student or even a teacher that GMU is my dream school. Growing up, much was expected from me – maintaining straight A's, pursuing the IB diploma, and getting accepted into and choosing UVA or NYU or even Yale. To many people's surprise, none of those things are in my agenda. Although I have maintained a GPA above a 4.0, I never once had all A's throughout high school so far. This year, I chose the advanced diploma because I understood myself, how much I could have handled, and the simple yet truthful fact that a piece of paper does not and will not necessarily define my future.

Countless looks of disappointment and shock are continuously shot my way when I proudly tell people GMU is where I want to pursue my desired career of psychology and eventually, psychiatry. For the past three years of high school, I have always felt obligated to not “settle” for someplace like GMU and it hurt every time I was judged for wanting to attend there. It has not been easy, but the more research I do about the school and the more I visit other schools, including “better” ones, the more I realize that GMU has my heart, not

only financially, but academically, emotionally, and mentally.

As one of the largest and most diverse universities in the state of Virginia with a student population of over 33,000, GMU is a place where students and faculty members can interact with a vast amount of cultures and people from all walks of life. It is not only a learning environment for academics, but also a place for growing and expanding one's mind. Diversity is one of the biggest factors that play into why I want to attend GMU as a minority student.

With the country's capital of Washington, D.C. only 15 minutes away from campus, opportunities for internships and even jobs are endless! As a psychology major, INOVA Hospital in Fairfax would be the perfect place for me to build connections in the medical field and gain work experience while attending GMU where psychology is one of the most popular and successful majors. Ultimately, it does not matter where you go to school, whether that is a community college, GMU, or even Harvard, if you do not have connections, solid work ethic, experience, and passion. It is not about where you go, but rather, why you choose to go there and what you make out of it for yourself.

I was fortunate enough to be in touch with the advising office coordinator of psychology at GMU, Dr. Michael Hurley, who offered me the amazing chance to sit in a psychology class. Even with more than 33,000 current students and a couple other thousands of applicants, the faculty members take time out of their busy schedules to aid anyone and everyone. That goes to show how much the school is willing to help students strive toward their futures.

The more people tell me I can do "more" and I should not be going someplace so close to home, the more determined I am to earn my way into GMU and to prove to them that a "real" college experience and independence are not determined by how far away you go, but what you choose for yourself, be it a few miles from your house or thousands across the country. I know

myself better than anyone else and my intuition continues to tell me that Mason is it.

College is your first big and independent choice to make, and if you make it based off of what everyone else seems to want for you, you could potentially lead yourself down the path of living for others the rest of your life. College is about you and only you; not your friends, your boy/girlfriend, your parents, or even your teachers. It is you who will be spending four years, if not more, of your life at that college, whichever one it may be. It is you who will be paying your tuition, you who will be making the best (or worst) of where you are and what you have, you who will be living.

When it comes down to it, this is why I want to attend GMU – it feels like home. Short and simple, but also incredibly true. It has felt like home for me since my very first visit the summer before my eighth grade year. Everything there feels like the absolute perfect fit, from the endless diversity of the students to the professors to even the food. Walking onto a college campus should feel like falling in love, like entering a room and only seeing the person you want to spend the upcoming years with. No doubts, no second thoughts. And that is exactly what GMU feels like to me – a place I can and hopefully will call home.

Good luck to all the seniors this year who are debating between schools and to my class of 2018 for next year with our own college applications and decisions! Remember that “college is a match to be made, not a prize to be won.”

Sudoku Answer Key, Issue 5

IB Spotlight: Vivian Tran

Senior Vivian Tran, balances her time between hanging with friends and studying for her full IB schedule. She studies hard and hopes to graduate with an IB Diploma in June and go onto attend college.

Q: How do you keep up with your academics and social life?

A: I try to keep a balance of both in my schedule. I usually set aside time right after school or take breaks during the evening to talk to my friends.

Q: What are your studying habits?

A: For me, making quizlets and rewriting notes a few days before a quiz or test work best.

Q: What is your favorite IB subject?

A: My favorite IB subject would have to be Physics.

Q: What are your plans after high school?

A: I'll (hopefully) be in my first year of college.

Q: How are you going to prepare for the IB exams?

A: I'll probably end up studying every chance I get. After all, it's what will determine whether or not I get the actual diploma.

Q: What is your extended essay topic?

A: My extended essay topic is within the field of visual arts, more specifically photography.

Q: Is your only focus academics?

A: No, of course not. My main goal is keeping myself happy so I try to spend a lot of my free time doing things I love such as playing video games.

Q: Who or what has helped you on your IB journey?

A: Mr. Kelly's TOK definitely had a lasting impact on me. After a semester, my outlook on the program and life in general has changed. I find myself thinking a lot deeper about certain issues that I would not have before.

Q: Who is your favorite IB teacher?

A: My favorite IB teacher would have to be Ms. Stevens.

Q: What advice would you give to future IB Diploma Candidates?

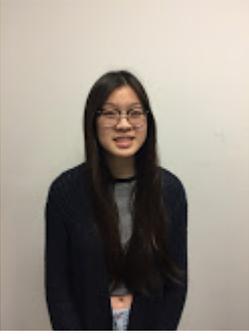
A: Do your work on time. It seems simple, but it can help in so many ways.

Q: What skills do you think the IB program has taught you that you can help you later in life?

A: Coming from a super shy person in the past, it is weird to say I am completely comfortable with public speaking thanks to the IB program.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: I see myself living with my best friend, a cat, and a dog. All while struggling to pay off lingering student debt.



Useful study skills leads to success

Studying is necessary and can make or break your grades. There are various approaches to it, make sure to study in the way that is best for you. Some people may find that flashcards help them the most.

“I like to use flashcards for Spanish and Chemistry because they help me memorize the material through repetition,” sophomore Hunter Schinstock said.

Some prefer a website called Quizlet for online flashcards and quizzes.

“I use Quizlet a lot because it helps me review and memorize Spanish vocabulary as well as English vocabulary,” sophomore Alex Bellem said.

If you really want to learn and remember the maximum amount of material, use both flashcards and Quizlet.

“I like to use flashcards and go on quizlet as well, because both ways are pretty easy to do and Quizlet is very accessible,” sophomore Kora Coker said.

Being organized can improve students' study habits greatly. A way to be organized is to keep a calendar of any upcoming events and big assignments. Therefore, time will not be an issue because you will know when you are busy.

Picking a specific time every day and every week to study will help establish a routine and make it a habit and a part of your daily life.

"Every time I study I like to repeatedly write down all of the material I learn because the more you write something, the more you remember it," junior Amy Han said.

Consistency helps prepare a person for a study session, therefore the studying will be more productive.

Procrastination is one of the worst things you can do to your grades and yourself.

Procrastination will turn into a habit that is hard to break. Setting a due date for yourself before the actual due date will help you complete your assignments on time.

"The best way for me to study is by quizzing myself several classes before a test or quiz so that I can remember the material," senior Kelsie Licatovich said.

Putting off assignments to watch Netflix or play Game Pigeon is never a good idea because later there will be a big stack of homework and studying that needs to be done in a short amount of time. Start with the most difficult subject first. The most effective and energized part of studying is the beginning when your brain is fresh and awake.

"I do not really study, I just cram before tests/quizzes. I don't have enough time to study," sophomore Chase Robson said.

Cramming and rushing is not helpful in gaining a successful future. Putting everything off until the night before a test

or quiz, will strain your brain causing you not being able to retain quality information.

Studying a whole unit right before a test or quiz leads to late nights which makes the brain tired for the next day. A tired brain does not function nearly as well as a well rested brain. Shoving a bunch of material into the brain does no good, the brain will most likely only remember about half of the information.

One of the most important things to remember while studying is to stay focused.

“I have my phone with me when I study and it sometimes distracts me,” senior Hunter Sloan said.

Phones can be very distracting so leave them in a room where you’re not studying. Avoid the temptation to check your phone every ding and notification.

“I use my phone to play music as I study, but I think that if I turned my notifications off I would probably get some more work done,” Sloan said.

If needed, you can seek help on how to study by talking to teachers, parents, and peers in order to discover what study method is most effective towards achieving the best grades possible.

Sudoku Answers, Issue 4

6	3	8	4	2	5	1	7	9
5	1	2	7	9	3	8	6	4
7	9	4	6	1	8	2	3	5
1	7	5	9	6	4	3	2	8
4	6	3	1	8	2	9	5	7
8	2	9	5	3	7	4	1	6
2	4	6	3	7	9	5	8	1
9	8	7	2	5	1	6	4	3
3	5	1	8	4	6	7	9	2

Answers to issue 4

IB Spotlight: Kitty Le

Q: How do you keep up with your academics and social life?

A: It's pretty difficult for me to maintain both my academic life and my social life. However, the majority of my friends are also IB candidates. This makes it a lot easier for us to spend time together because of our corresponding schedules.

Q: What are your studying habits?

A: If I have a test or a quiz, I always make sure to study the material thoroughly beforehand. I usually don't sleep until I complete all of my assignments and study sufficiently if needed.

Q: What is your favorite IB subject?

A: My favorite IB subject is Topics. It's really fun to learn about the different causes, practices, and effects of war.

Q: What are your plans after high school?

A: Like most people, I plan on attending college right after high school.

Q: How are you going to prepare for the IB exams?

A: I plan to study a lot when the time comes to prepare for IB exams. Over the summer, I organized all of my notes from junior year in order to have all of the material ready for when I actually need to start studying.

Q: What is your extended essay topic?

A: My extended essay is about the extent to which Koreans were oppressed under Japanese rule from 1910-1945.

Q: Is your only focus academics?

A: My primary focus in high school is academics, but I do try to make time to spend with my friends and family.

Q: Who or what has helped you on your IB journey?

A: Since most of my friends are also experiencing the same things I am, they have greatly helped me on my "IB journey."

Q: Who is your favorite IB teacher?

A: I can't really choose a favorite IB teacher because they're all great in their own ways.

Q: What advice would you give to future IB Diploma Candidates?

A: I would advise future IB diploma candidates to please not procrastinate, although it is a little easier said than done.

Q: What skills do you think the IB program has taught you that you can help you later in life?

A: The IB program has taught me that I can accomplish a lot of things in the span of one night.

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: In 10 years, I see myself finishing up graduate school, hopefully with a job.