



# AIS News

Spring 2025 Q3 Edition

## Solar Power Up & Running!

Sophie Melissa Suazo Zaldivar



The American International School has taken an important step to help the environment by installing solar panels.

The installation of the panels began in the last weeks of January, and by early March the panels were already in place. Electrical work continued over the following weeks.

The project was fully funded by the school, with no help from the government or other institutions. According to Ms. Katty Alvarado, Executive Director of AIS, this initiative was planned over nearly three years, and the investment is expected to be recovered through lower electric bills in a similar amount of time.

As of Monday March 24, the school is running on solar power.

The solar panels were placed on the roof of the gymnasium, making use of the space and sunlight. One of the most modern models was chosen to ensure the best efficiency. The unit requires very little maintenance, just periodic cleaning for proper functioning. The same company that did the installation offers maintenance services if necessary.

As part of its ecological commitment and as a flag bearer of the Blue Flag (Bandera Azul), AIS aims to reduce its impact on nature and promote the use of renewable energy. In addition, the school wants to share its experience with other institutions and is planning to record a video with drones to show the process and encourage more institutions to use clean energy.

# 9th Grade Baby Project

Daniel Andres Cassiosis Gabourel

This year, the ninth graders faced an exciting and challenging responsibility: the baby project. This was designed to simulate real-life taking care of babies. Students must look after a robot baby with sensors that tracks every movement and interaction. These sensors inside send real-time reports to the science department. This allows teachers to assess how well students care for their 'babies.' Dr. Mallozi, the ninth-grade science teacher says that the objective of this project was "to get a realistic simulation of what it's like to have a newborn, ... and consider all the support from your partner and your family."

Students are graded based on their performance and how well they handle the responsibility of taking care of the baby. This means they have to make sure the baby gets everything it needs, like food, attention, and comfort. If the baby cries, the student must figure out what's wrong and calm it down. If they fail to do these tasks properly, they will receive a low grade. However, if they are able to meet all the baby's needs and take good care of it, they will earn an excellent grade.

The project teaches students the importance of responsibility, patience, and problem-solving as they experience what it's like to care for a baby, even though it's just a robot. According to Dr. Mallozzi, "it's an opportunity for us to consider when is the right time to start a family and with who is the right person to take care of a baby." This project is a fun, challenging but serious task that gives students a taste of what real-life parenting might involve.

Jun Park, a ninth-grader who took the baby project, says that the baby project was a very fun and challenging experience

because this is how a real-life baby actually behaves. Babies cry every once in a while, so every time you have to attend it and always have take care of it at all times.



## Giving Back

Heidi Evelia Revaz Chacon

Ever want a pal for life? Ms. Veronica Alvarez, the marketing and communications officer here at AIS, has found a friend in her therapy dog, Sally. Sally is 5 years old and is a Border Collie. Together they help kids in hospitals that often deal with depression and anxiety.

Ms. Vero and her dog Sally, have done a lot of valuable therapy sessions. They have worked as a therapy team for about 3 months. Together they visit hospitals in Cartago and Alajuela. Ms. Vero and Sally are in a group called "Grupo de Intervenciones Asistivas", (Assistive Interventions Group).

Ms. Vero is always keeping herself busy with Sally; she is constantly active. When



Sally came into Ms. Veronica's life, she knew that Sally had the energy and heart to lift kids spirits. Ms. Vero has also always loved to volunteer, and she has a passion for helping kids with her dog.

Ms. Vero has said "Community service is a great opportunity to connect with people and try new things and also help the community".

Ms. Vero has gotten to know many people and she has been able to connect with other dogs in her group. For Sally to be trained as a therapy dog she had to complete certain evaluations and demonstrate particular character traits. The idea is for Sally to come and help the children forget about their troubles for a little while.

# Carnegie Mellon University Recognizes AIS Students in Coding Competition

Carlos Jose Zumbado Jimenez



This year all three AIS students whose work was submitted in the Carnegie Mellon University coding competition received recognition. The students who won were Sara Cerrato with second place, Lauren Oldenburg with third place, and Santiago Ramirez with an honorable mention. The coding competition was hosted by CMU CS Academy which is Carnegie Mellon University's curriculum for high school students. This is the second time AIS has received recognition in this competition. The event happened during the first week of December as part of Computer Science Education Week.

AIS participation in this competition is facilitated by Ms. Eve Kolitsky, Information and Technology teacher at AIS.

Carnegie Mellon is a prestigious university in the United States recognized as being

one of the top universities for Computer Science.

CMU CS Academy was founded by David Kosbie and Mark Stehlik, both teaching Professors at Carnegie Mellon, and co-founders of the program. Their motivation for creating the program was to provide high school students with greater exposure to programming concepts which ultimately better prepares them for the university environment.

The Fall Design Challenge rewards creativity, artistic merit, and proper code. At present, approximately 1,600 schools around the world use CMU CS Academy. As an institution, we should be very proud that all three participating AIS students were recognized in this year's competition.

## Student Teachers at AIS

Walter de Paula Welsh Romero

Normally, we're the students, but for one week in January, teachers were students!

On the week of January 27-31, a team of 17 student teachers visited from the University of St. Thomas. These student teachers came on a trip to understand what teaching really feels like, as they are starting their educational courses at the university. The university of St. Thomas and AIS have partnered on this project.

The student teachers received a very warm welcome from the staff and students here at AIS upon their arrival and they were able to enjoy a genuine teaching experience.

Help from the AIS staff, and even the students, was abundant for the student teachers. The student teachers were each assigned one teacher, and they spent the week observing lessons, add-



ing their input in the teaching, and even fully directing their own class on their last day.

Mr. Julio Bustos, History teacher, personally stated that his experience with his student teacher was amazing. He said, "He was great, and he was ready to grow". These student teachers were divided amongst the high school and elementary classes, and they were placed into subjects including those of history, geography, science, and math.

The student teachers expressed their love for the school. Mr. Ben, the student teacher placed in science, even stated that the school was "so similar, yet so different from what I'm used to". The student teachers all found the campus to be open and welcoming, and they liked how students were able to express themselves while still remaining on top of their work. "I love it" was a commonly expressed sentiment.

# CRIMUN Trip to Switzerland

Katherine Brooke Johnston

MUN ventures throughout the world all the way to Switzerland. The CRIMUN delegation consisted of 11 students, traveling to Switzerland for the FerMUN conference to debate while representing Costa Rica.

Pierce Johnston, Dana Salazar, and Pricilla Kastelz from the American International School of Costa Rica went to Switzerland as part



of the CRIMUN delegation representing Costa Rica in the FerMUN conference. They were chaperoned by teacher Julio Bustos from AIS. They left for the trip January 6th and came back January 15th 2025 as the conference was 3 days from the 7th through the 10th of January.

Switzerland was a fun and challenging adventure for the CRIMUN delegation. Lycée International de Ferney-Voltaire was the school that hosted this conference, although the venue was held at the International Labor Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Julio Bustos was the one who organized this event as he is one of the founders of CRIMUN. The CRIMUN delegation was invited this year to take part this year. Last year when the CRIMUN delegation had also attended they had requested to go instead of being invited. Julio Bustos mentioned that "This conference was a role model for anyone in MUN".

Throughout the trip they explored many of the sites in Paris and Switzerland, such as the Louvre, the Eiffel Tower, and Mont Blanc. While in Switzerland they stayed with host families, and were able to get a real sense of the culture. After the conference in Geneva and Paris they stayed at a hostel. Pierce Johnston says, "Getting to meet new people and reunite with old friends was the most enjoyable part of the trip".

# 55th Anniversary Logo for AIS

Santiago Moreira Granados

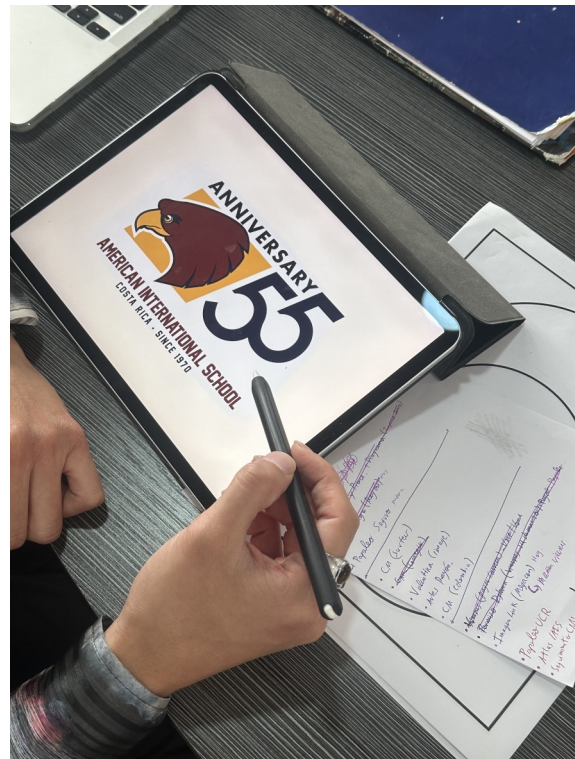
Having a logo represents the face and the personality of your brand. It represents what people will remember about a brand.

This year marks American International School of Costa Rica's 55th anniversary. To recognize this event, Mr. Adam Esquivel from the art department gave the logo a facelift!

The new logo is designed to add a touch of modernity while creating something that will last for years.

Ms. Veronica Alvarez, the marketing and communications officer here at AIS was asked what impact a logo has in the school's social media. She said that a logo's purpose is "It reflects the school's identity."

The new logo is composed of the school's mascot which is a falcon with the school's name and the date of foundation. To commemorate the 55 anniversary of ais the school updated the logo with a stamp. This logo is used for social media posts and everything related to the AIS community including events and sporting tournaments.



# Family Day

Anthony Carnevale



Family day at AIS, a perfect day to spend time with the people you love! This year Family Day took place on February 22. Students, parents, and other family members enjoyed a variety of activities. The entire event lasted from 8am to 2pm.

The day began with the annual road race and breakfast prepared by the AIS PTO(Parent Teacher Association). Many of our elementary students had a lot of fun playing organized games, inflatables and a mechanical bull. They then enjoyed some free play with water games.

Parents had a good time sitting down and buying food from the food trucks. There were also many stands where people sold crafts, shoes, clothes and candies

There were organized sporting events like Volleyball and Basketball games, and we had the Students vs parents soccer match . “ The best part was the soccer match” said Gerson Bagnarello, physical education teacher. Many people enjoyed the soccer match like our teacher Gerson.

At the end of the day, our school did a good job putting together different kinds of activities. Students and parents had a fun time at our school.



# Valentines Day Celebrations

Veronica Hernandez Viera

AIS celebrated Valentine's Day. February the 14th was full of fun activities for everyone.

At our school, this special day is celebrated not just for romantic relationships but also for friendships, making it a delightful experience for everyone involved.

This year's Valentine's Day at school was marked by outdoor activities, organized by seniors with Mr. Adam Esquivel, the art teacher, and Miss Mileydi Montero, Spanish teacher and senior advisor. The celebration extended beyond romantic gestures to embrace friendships, family ties, and community spirit. Nicole, a Valentine's enthusiast, remarked, "Both for relationships it's a great opportunity to express your feelings and love, and as for friendships it's a different kind of affection that still deserves to be celebrated."

The day fostered connections and creativity, leaving lasting memories as stu-



dents look forward to next year's festivities.

The celebration featured a variety of engaging activities through school community. Students participated in playful mock wedding ceremonies, where classmates officiated and couples received humorous fake certificates, adding a lighthearted touch to the event. Seniors also took part in serenatas, singing songs for their friends and romantic interests, creating a festive atmosphere throughout the school. In addition, students exchanged valograms—chocolate-filled bags—as a gesture of kindness and appreciation, further enhancing the spirit of the celebration.

Valentine's Day serves as a reminder of why we celebrate love in all its forms. It encourages us to make others feel valued and appreciated. As students decorated classrooms with hearts and cheerful symbols, they embraced the essence of love, creating an inviting atmosphere that made everyone feel special.

# Pi Day Activities

Andres Edgardo Molina Rivera

March 14 isn't just an ordinary day, it's a celebration of the first three digits of an infinite number with countless practical uses. Pi is celebrated on March 14th, because the date 3/14 are the first three digits of Pi. It's a day where children gather and practice fun activities related to Pi. The day is important as it highlights the importance of the Pi in applications such as geometry, physics, and even engineering. The day often involves math related problems to show the importance of mathematics in everyday life. Another way to celebrate the day is to eat pie during the day since the word "pie" and "pi" sound the same.

The event was held at the American International School of Costa Rica from 8:00 AM to 9:10AM on March 14. The objective of this activity is to help students understand that Pi is not just a number, but a concept used in many real life situations. Working outside the classroom provides students with a unique learning experience and the chance to practice soft skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem solving.

The event was organized and hosted by Professors Jorge Bravo and Vanessa Garcia of the AIS math department. Middle and High

School students participated in a math related scavenger hunt. The winning student group received a pizza "pie" as their reward.



# Composting at AIS

Editor



AIS has launched an exciting new composting program aimed at reducing food waste and promoting sustainability. Four staff members (America Chaves, Spanish Teacher, Jorge Bravo, Math Teacher, Adriana Alpizar, Accountant, and Maria Gonzalez, Administrative Assistant), have taken charge of the day-to-day operations, ensuring that food scraps from the cafeteria are collected and properly composted. Martin Cambroner, head of maintenance, and the entire maintenance team have provided essential support.

The composter, a large model, has been placed on a specially constructed platform in the green area behind the library. The compost produced will be used in the school's gardens and shared with the larger AIS community.

There is always an element of trial and error when using a new composter. Ms. Adriana explained that the team is keeping a close record of the balance of material added and the time required for the scraps to break down. The plan is to involve students in the program during the next school year.

Special waste receptacles have been placed in the cafeteria, kitchen, and teacher's lounge. At the initiative of our first grade teacher, Ms. Laura Viquez, the first graders have their very own compost bin and are learning to collect scraps from their snacks.

"It's important for our students to learn that small changes can make

a big difference," says Ms. America. At AIS, we believe in making a difference, and we're doing it one banana peel at a time!



# Honor Roll—Q2

## Editor

It is with great pleasure and pride that we honor the academic accomplishments of the following students:

### Elementary

#### Honor Roll A

4th grade Santiago Alvarado Alvarez

#### Honor Roll B

4th grade Leah Cristine Lysaght Bolaños

5th grade Noa Isabella Cassiois Gaborel

5th grade Luciana López Zuñiga

### High School

#### Honor Roll A

8th grade Fabiana de los Angles Hernández Ramirez

8th grade Katherine Brooke Johnston

8th grade Walter de Paule Welsh Romero

12th Alana Kuo Chaves

#### Honor Roll B

7th Mathias Christopher Borchgrevink Leiva

7th Daniela Cespedes Zamora

7th Jorge Luis Cordoba Trejos

7th Santiago Pérez Chanto

8th Delder Livier Lie Rodríguez

8th Lauren Amanda Oldenburg Vanegas

8th Santiago Ramírez Fernández

8th Alberto Ruiz Cruz

9th Victor Joel Pascal Genibre

9th Verónica Hernández Viera

9th Celeste Huang Wang

9th Andrés Edgardo Molina Rivera

9th Heidi Evalia Revaz Chacón

9th Ava Maripaz Thomas

10th Camilla Gabrielle Castro Aleman

10th Sebastian Quesada Brenes

10th Lucía Rodríguez Arce

10th Sebastián Vargas Cordero

10th Allain Daniela Zamora Loría

11th Melissa Benavides Guerrero

11th Miranda Huertas Reyes

12th Isabella Trejos Viquez





# AIS Enrollment Rises

Jun Young Park Lee

The American International School of Costa Rica has been receiving a lot of interest from new students looking to transfer. Five students from The European School are considering joining AIS either next quarter or next year. They first learned about the school through the internet and were impressed by its strong academic programs and welcoming student life.

One of the main reasons they want to switch schools is that they prefer the education at AIS over their current school. They also do not want to follow the IB program, which is required at The European School. Instead, they believe AIS offers a better learning experience that fits their needs of education. As Miss Elizabeth said "The new students prefer smaller schools, also that AIS does AP instead of IB ... .A lot of people are also relocating from the US to Costa Rica so they want to join AIS."

The admission process at AIS begins with completing the application form and submitting it to the school in an envelope. Next, applicants must pay a \$50 admission fee and schedule a visit

to the school. The Admission Committee then reviews each application, and finally, the school emails the family with the admission decision. The admission policy is the same for both primary and secondary students, and all applicants take the MAP test to assess their skills and determine the appropriate class placement.



# International Luncheon 2025

Victor Joel Pascal Genibre



Here at AIS, we are an international school and take pride in that. The international luncheon was held on the 5th of March and was took place around all of the school . Families could walk around, look at the presentations and also sit down to enjoy the food. The school hosts these luncheons to celebrate the different cultures and nationalities at AIS and to bring everyone together.

The international luncheon is a celebration of diversity at the school. This year was the first time that the school made the decision to include students from all High School grade levels. Students were placed in groups by their English teachers who organized the activity, and assigned a country to investigate. In previous years the 6th

grade class alone was in charge of planning the event as a fund raising activity.

Ms. Dylana Vicenti, Cocurricular Coordinator, said "The decision was collectively made by the school to support the clubs or groups that needed it the most at any given time".

On the day of the luncheon, families came to see the presentations that students made and got to learn about different countries and their cultures. Students also brought food from that country so that families could enjoy the different types of food from around the world. Ms. Dylana, she said "we are happy with the results and all the presentations made by the students".



# Elementary Camp

Celeste Huang Wang



This year, the elementary principal organized the camp, along with a team of experienced teachers and camp specialists. The camp was planned for students through first and sixth grade, so kids ages 6-12 got to take part in all the fun. The activities were led by trained camp counselors who are experts in planning field trips and hands-on activities. Teachers were also involved to help guide and support the students throughout the camp.

Elementary camp is a fun and exciting place where kids can learn new things, make friends, and have adventures. It helps them grow, build confidence, and develop important skills through activities like arts and crafts, sports, nature walks, and team games. The camp also includes STEM challenges, outdoor games, and a field trip, allowing students to explore the traditions and places of our country. Running from Friday to

Saturday, it offered students a mix of learning and adventure.



This year's theme was picked because it's something kids enjoy and helps them learn in a fun way. "This theme was chosen to align with students' interests, real-world applications, and current educational trends that promote hands-on, experiential learning," explained Ms. Rocio.

The camp lets students practice problem-solving, creativity, and teamwork while having a great time. Safety is super important, so there will be trained staff, emergency plans, first aid, and secure drop-off and pick-up.

The activities are made for everyone, so all kids can join in and have fun. Students spent the night at the school following a field trip on Friday.

# Global Sustainability Summit in Qatar

Editor



The last week in February, Two AIS students, Pierce Johnston and Alana Quo, attended the Global Sustainability Project as finalists where they were invited to present their project on the world stage.

The Global Sustainability Summit in Qatar is a

biannual international event focused on addressing global, environmental, and social challenges. The summit, which brought together young leaders from around the world, provided a platform for students to showcase innovative projects supporting UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

then chose the measures to follow through on in the short term. Our students were even able to contribute by carrying out some of the work.

After implementation, the number of accidents decreased.



According to Ms. Maria Gabriella Murillo, Science Teacher and team advisor, developing a project takes about a year. In the initial phases of the process, students compete against other groups for the chance to present in Qatar.

Pierce and Alana's project was dedicated to solving a local problem. There is a section of road coming up from Belen with an abnormally high rate of accidents. Working with the Municipality of Belen, it was determined that these accidents were due to excess velocity.

Our students completed an extensive investigation and were able to create a list of actions to be taken to reduce car velocity on that stretch of road. Their proposals were presented to the municipality which



# AASCA Volleyball

Ava Maripaz Thomas



This year the AIS women's volleyball team headed to EL Salvador on March 12-16 competed in several rounds on each day at the AASCA tournament.

AASCA tournaments are for schools all across central America. Volleyball teams from Costa Rica that competed are PAN American school and Marian Baker, also AASCA schools, as well as other schools from throughout the region. The AIS team played roughly two games a day. The tournament was hosted at the CISS, a school in El Salvador. The AIS team has seen positive results from the tournament, getting 11th out of 16th place, which considering this is the first time AIS has ever attended an AASCA for volleyball, the team did well. The AIS volleyball team won 2 out of 5 games and played hard the whole time. Ms Dylana states that "Next year, AIS hopes to get top 8".

AASCA was originally formed to support academic, artistic, athletic, and cultural interaction between students. With AIS going to this event, the Volleyball team proudly represented our school and the country throughout the tournament. Students were also given time to explore their surroundings in the five day trip and take advantage of their free time.

