

The Learning Community International



Graduation

Class of 2021

**Saturday
June 5, 2021**



The Learning Community International



Our Mission

Empowering individuals to reach their highest potential through a customized and collaborative process of reflection, self-evaluation and self-correction to achieve their educational goals.



Administration



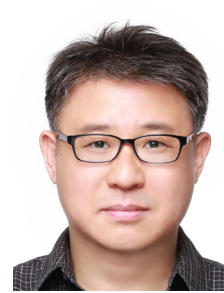
Manfred Smith
Principal Director



Nancy De Luca Stempel
Executive Director



Romana Hughes
Director Academic Affairs



John Ghim
**Associate Director
East Asia**



Jeanne Smith
Associate Director

TLCI is an accredited private school offering an educational alternative since 1984
Columbia, MD 21045
www.tlcischool.org

Graduation Celebration

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Manfred Smith
Principal Director

Romana Hughes
Director Academic Affairs

Graduate Reflections

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Kelly Elizabeth Doherty
Wonjae Jang
Jiwon Jeong
Yejin Kim
John Kim
Kiwoong Lee
Jason Aditya Lee
Wendy Liman, for Andrew Santoso Liman
Owen Tjahjono Sianto
Oliver Adivarman Wihardja

International

Vita Priastuty
Coordinator of Bina Abyakta
Montage Video
John Ghim
Associate Director East Asia

Closing

Nancy De Luca Stempel
Executive Director

Opening Remarks



Manfred Smith
Principal Director

Welcome parents, colleagues, and friends celebrating our 2021 graduates....
I'm Manfred Smith founder and Principal Director of The Learning Community International School...

Since 1984, our mission has been empowering students to realize their highest potential using the whole world as their classroom.

Consistent with our mission of educational freedom and opportunity, and after a challenging year that kept so many of us close to home, I believe the setting of my opening remarks is most appropriate.....

Congratulations to all our graduates for the completion of your education through the high school years. This is an accomplishment that brings you to a new place in life; it is a time of passage when you begin to truly step out into the world as your own person. It is an exciting, wonderful, and sometimes scary transition.

As you continue your journey through life you will face unexpected challenges and uncertainty; you will encounter obstacles and difficulties.... But you know that already because you have worked hard to overcome personal challenges and difficulties over the years.

During your time in TLCI you have been encouraged, guided, and supported in designing your own unique education and shaping your own future. Doing so, you have learned to become increasingly empowered.

An empowered individual is one who:

- Has learned to become increasingly self-aware.
- Has learned to reflect, self-evaluate, and course correct;
- Has learned to make the wise choices needed to keep moving successfully forward to achieve his or her goals.

Whatever challenges you will face as you move on with your life you are well prepared to deal with adversity. And more importantly, you will recognize new opportunities and to seize them if you so choose. In a moment, Romana Hughes, TLCI Director of Academic Affairs, will offer more detail about our unique approach to education and how we strive to ensure that every graduate succeeds when then leave TLCI.....

Congratulations graduates of the class of 2021..... I encourage you to live up to your highest vision of yourself no matter what circumstances you might encounter. You are the architect of your life, so choose wisely because doing so is critical for achieving a life well lived and the happiness that comes with making wise and rational choices.....

The Learning Community International is not just another school: it is a way of learning; a way of life.... a true educational alternative.

I wish each and everyone one of you great success and happiness as you continue your life's journey.



Romana Hughes
Director Academic Affairs

Congratulations, TLCI Graduating class of 2021.

I am Romana Jaksa Hughes, the Director of Academic Affairs, and an advisor for The Learning Community International School, TLCI.

You are a TLCI graduate, which means your high school experience has been shaped by your learning preference, interests, and learning needs.

Your school journey has been designed specifically for you. We (the student, family, and TLCI staff) are a team that supports one another, by using active listening skills to communicate, building trust, and capturing opportunities to pivot the learning path to meet changing needs and interests.

TLCI worked with you and developed a learning plan that captured opportunities for you to know and recognize what learning is by connecting course outcomes to learning activities, your interests, and self-reflection.

You graduate knowing that school is more than a grade-point average and a test score. You will walk away from TLCI empowered with life-long learning skills embedded.

When we look back at your TLCI path, we can see various hills, dips, curves, and forks. Your path is purposeful and unique; only you have walked it. The foundation of love and support you received from your family, friends, and the TLCI community is also exceptional and unique.

You are the main focus and reason for every success, decision, question, and lesson learned at TLCI. You are our purpose.

You graduate today empowered, knowing the future path may also have hills, dips, curves, and forks.

Still, you are prepared for the walk your path, knowing it may not always be easy, but you have the success skills to get through it not looking back but using critical thinking for future decision and looking forward.

I wish all of you success and happiness. I end our conversation by reading a special quote by Eleanor Roosevelt I find fitting for this moment.

“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”



John Ghim

**Associate Director,
East Asia**

Congratulations to the class of 2021. Year 2021 has been a memorable year for all of us.

Most colleges started the test optional policy because of COVID-19 pandemic, so many students and parents got confused. But we worked it out and I'm so proud of you and your great accomplishments.

Our graduates were admitted to top tier schools such as Dickinson College, UC Irvine, UC Davis, Purdue, etc. A number of graduates received scholarships ranging from \$48,000 to \$60,000.

I really appreciate all your hard work and the support given by your parents to yourselves and to TLCI. I also want to thank the faculty and staff of TLCI and our educational providers for their hard work and support to all our students.

Congratulations on your graduation.

God Bless you.



**Vita Priastuty
Coordinator**

Yayasan Bina Abyakta

Hi, I'm Vita the coordinator in Yayasan Bina Abyakta. I'm here today to represent all the teachers from our school. I want to start by saying how proud we are of our graduates Jason, Oliver, Owen, and of course Andrew.

We have been looking forward for this moment to celebrate the immeasurable achievements and fond memories that we have shared during their times in Bina Abyakta. It has been our privilege and honor to watch them grow throughout the years and develop into outstanding individuals of the world.

Even though we are their teachers, each of them has taught us so many valuable lessons.

Owen taught us that we should always strive to do our best.

Jason, taught us to be caring and to show empathy towards other people.

Oliver, showed us that the sky is not the limit, that you can take your dreams even bigger and higher.

Last but definitely not the least, our beloved Andrew has gifted us with the lesson that little things can bring you happiness and we should always be grateful. I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to Andrew who is no longer with us and is resting in peace. Andrew, we miss you but we find comfort knowing you are in God's arms and you will forever be in our hearts.

The best part of my day is looking at the smiles on your faces. You make coming to work something to look forward to.

Even during the pandemic, you have shown us great strides and perseverance. I hope you continue to inspire others, and I know that each and every one of you will succeed in anything you put your minds to.

Congratulations to all families and graduates of class of 2021! And thank you TLCI for making all of this happen!

On a final note, I am honored to present a video montage of our 2021 graduates!

Here's to Jason, Owen, Oliver, and Andrew.

Congratulations, Class of 2021!



Chun Hei Chen



Kelly Elizabeth Doherty



Wonjae Jang



Jiwon Jeong



Yeojin Kim



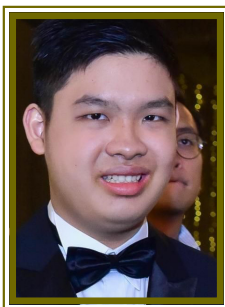
John Kim



Kiwoong Lee



Jason Aditya Lee



Andrew Santoso Liman



Owen Tjahjono Sianto



Oliver Adivarman Wihardja

Graduate Memory Pages



Chun Hei Chen

This year has been a year of tremendous growth for me. I have wrestled with mind-boggling ideas in subject such as economics, psychology, history and months of discussing and articulating such thoughts on paper. Through it all, I've learned to be more persistent, more tenacious and have improved my ability to read, write and speak on a wide array of subjects. As some-one who couldn't intimately connect with materials taught in my old high school, The Learning Community International has provided a way of learning that is appropriate for me: on my own pace, in my own style, and with instructors that I can connect to on various levels.

I haven't had the opportunity to socialize with fellow classmates or participate in extra-curricular activities as students normally do in a traditional high school setting. However, this experience has allowed me to dive deeper into my studies, especially during this unprecedented time of the Covid pandemic. If anything, the lock down and quarantine period has made me treasure my experiences with TLCI even more. It gave me a sense of purpose, of belonging, and a goal.

I have no doubt that TLCI has made me a more appealing and competitive candidate for college. I plan to enroll in an undergraduate program in the United States to further expand upon my interests in economics or psychology—maybe even both. TLCI has shown me that opportunities are readily available when I choose to look for them. I am excited for what's coming next and I have TLCI and my advisor, John Ghim, to thank for that!





Kelly Elizabeth Doherty

Hello friends and family, my name is Kelly Doherty, and I am so proud to be graduating from high school today. My family and I have been with TLCI for my entire school career, and it has been quite an experience. I would like to share a little bit about my journey with TLCI and homeschool.

I am so thankful for the flexible schedule that TLCI offers because it has allowed me to have time for extracurricular activities such as my participation in the co-ed scout program at my church, Pathfinders, which has been an amazing experience and has taught me so many valuable skills.

In general, I am not a fan of school as some of the subjects I can find challenging. But something that school helped me to realize is that I enjoy writing. During my sophomore year, I had to write a script for English, which I loved doing, and to hold the printed script in my hand was so rewarding. This sparked my interest in writing and made me realize that I wanted to become a screenwriter. So, while I can find school challenging, it has helped reveal this important trait about myself. After graduation, I plan to attend Howard Community College and major in English in hopes of becoming an animation screenwriter.

I would like to take a moment to thank those who have been with me through my whole journey. I would like to thank my dad, my sister, my two brothers and all of my family and friends who have supported and helped me so much, and I would like to give a huge thank you to my mom, who has homeschooled me and my siblings from kindergarten through high school. I would also like to thank TLCI and Ms. Maria who has been our advisor for as long as I can remember.

Thank you all





Wonjae Jang

My name is Wonjae Jang. I prefer to be called Brian and I am very pleased to graduate from TLCI.

My high school life before TLCI was not as smooth as I hoped. There were a lot of tests and pressure to get grades. I wanted to get a better education, so I transferred to an international boarding school. It was my first dorm life and gave me more time to spend with friends. As the school years went by, I enjoyed playing volleyball and basketball which helped to relieve my stress, because classes were hard. Keeping a high GPA is important when applying for the university.

The 11th grade was a harsh moment because of COVID-19. In my 11th grade second semester COVID-19 happened so I had to change to an online class which was very satisfying. Because of the endless pandemic, I thought staying in my international school was a waste of time and money. I decided to transfer to The Learning Community International as a senior. TLCI it gave me the opportunity to have classes with teachers face-to-face and more selection for subjects.

After I graduate from TLCI, my next challenge is the university. I will work hard to be successful and achieve my goal in university. Finally, I want to thank to mom and dad for all their support, my teachers, friends and TLCI.





Jiwon Jeong

I love to make things. When ideas pop into my head, I visualize them in my mind; I manipulate, swivel, flip, and turn the concepts – imagining them from every angle. After I “see” what I want to construct, I assemble my materials and begin manufacture.

My sister and I would use tape, rubber bands, and cardboard boxes (in endless supply, courtesy of Amazon.com, and our mom’s proclivity for online shopping) and run up to my room in highly charged expectation. Using a shallow rectangular cardboard box, we drilled a hole in the bottom and attached a rubber band across the hole to propel a marble. With smaller pieces of cardboard and tape, we created small obstacles against which marbles could ricochet and reach their targets. This was our first pinball machine game in our mini arcade. Eventually, we added a skeet ball and a slingshot target game to our collection.

We were excited to have our very own little fun house, but more than that, we were captivated to see our ideas manifest into actual physical objects. I’ve had great success such as my mini-arcade and some complete busts. But I always enjoy the process.

When I moved to China and was put into an international school, I didn’t get much chance to explore my passion for crystallizing my ideas and constructing them. I became too occupied with learning English and Chinese. I was fortunate to meet many wonderful teachers along the way, especially teachers in STEM subjects. They not only helped me gain the necessary knowledge but also infected me with their enthusiasm for math and science. But I still didn’t have the time to learn what I wanted to learn.

When I transferred to TLCI, I was granted the flexibility that allowed me to pursue what I am most interested in. I was able to build stuff again. I would schedule my classes Monday through Thursday and spend Fridays and the weekends buying necessary materials. It also gave me the time to participate in the Odyssey of The Mind competition, through which our team won the Minister Award and became the Korea National Select.

I am happy to rediscover my love for designing and constructing things, and see my imagination turned into creations. I am a curious person; I always have been. I like to take things apart, figure out how they work, put them back together, use the knowledge gained to build new things. I know my enthusiasm began with the small cardboard arcade and when I become a software engineer one day, I have my teachers and TLCI to thank.



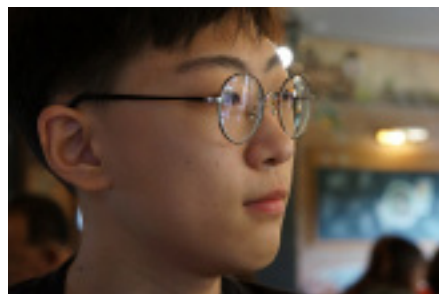
With my father



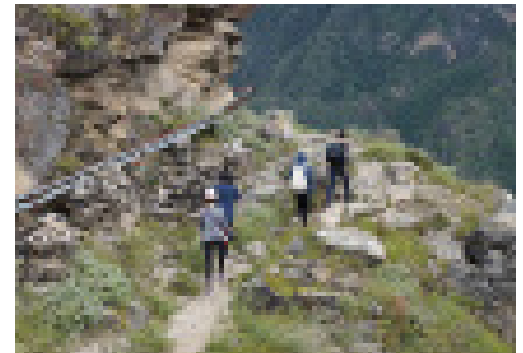
Trip to Thailand



Family trip to Kumming



I dream....



Tracking Chamagodo



Yeojin Kim

Hello everyone, I'm Yeojin Kim. I have lived in Korea all my life. One day when I was in my senior year of high school, my brother pursued his dream of becoming a pilot and went to America. That gave me the desire to go to America and study at an American university. However, it was virtually impossible to transfer to another international school or foreign language high school as a senior.

My parents discovered TLCI which paved the way for me to study in America. Because I had decided to study abroad so late in high school, I had to study many subjects required by U.S. colleges such as certain science, mathematics, and history courses that were not part of the Korean curriculum and also take many tests.

Thanks to all my teachers, friends, and TLCI's program, I was able to acquire the knowledge needed and passed my exams with good scores. My teachers taught me well and gave me a lot of advice and my friends praised me and gave me emotional support.

Everyone in the world goes through a period of a slump in their lives. That slump came to me in my senior year. I've wondered if it was the right choice to give up my Korean school and go to the U.S. At first, I couldn't concentrate on my studies because I felt like I was going the wrong way every day. However, I was able to overcome my feelings thanks to many teachers and friends who gave me advice—kindly and harshly—but always encouraged me.

Thanks to my parents who found TLCI and all my teachers, I got accepted to my dream university, University of California, Irvine where I plan to major in biology. I will go to America, into a new world, and expand my dream. I know there will be obstacles, but I believe that my experience of the past year will help me to achieve my goals.



**Gwaneumsa
Temple**



**The Korea Herald
student journalist**



**Sangumburi
Crater**

**Seopjikoji
Beach**



**Interned at
Skin n Skin**



John Kim

It was a very hard decision for me to make when I thought of transferring to TLCI last October. I had to leave friends behind and walk into the unknown by myself. At that time, I had one thing in my mind which was to learn and improve myself to be prepared for the future. I choose TLCI because their philosophy of student success matched with my willingness to be motivated learning in a new environment.

I still remember the first class at TLCI. I felt like I was in school for the first time. Nothing was familiar, and in this time of the pandemic, limited contact with friends challenged me to adapt to the new surroundings. I especially want to thank Mr. Kim who helped me sincerely from the day one. He really inspired me and motivated me throughout the schoolyear.

I truly enjoyed learning science subjects in TLCI with teachers and friends. My interest in science and curiosity towards the world fascinated me to explore more about nature and I eventually decided to study environmental science in college. During my time in TLCI, I enjoyed biology class with Ms. Woo, who allowed me to discover wonderful facts of living cells and creatures.

When I attend college, I will carry great memories and experiences from TLCI with me and strive to reinforce my self-motivation and respect for others. I am very excited to start a new voyage into this new world. I can't wait to meet new friends, but I won't forget my friends in TLCI and hope to continue networking with them. Finally, I thank my parents who supported me through the final year of high school and all teachers and faculty members in TLCI who helped to broaden my perspective and gain insight to achieve my next step.



Take a picture with Ms. Woo and Mr. Kim



Doing Math problems with my teacher.



Kiwoong Lee

My name is Kiwoong Lee in Korean and people in the US call me James. I really love to meet and talk with new people.

Since I started the TLCI program in 10th grade, I've met lots of good people. Moreover, I have gained practical knowledge through conversation with many people during the program.

During my education with the TLCI, I participated in many programs which allows me to meet up with new people and talk about different topics. One of the programs I really enjoyed was the United Nation's Training Program. To register the program, I had to be a member of NGO called "Hope to the Future".

As a member of Hope To the Future association, I left for New York to arrive at UN headquarters, excited to meet the ambassadors and people who are working for the UN. After a tour around the headquarters, I went into an education room where I had a chance to hear lectures from various speakers related to the United Nation. This opportunity was an important event in my life. I used to have grand but general ideas about the UN and some social issues but having been exposed to various departments in the UN by visiting the headquarter itself, I came to understand the complexities the UN deals with and became more interested in thinking about the social issues in a bureaucratic framework.

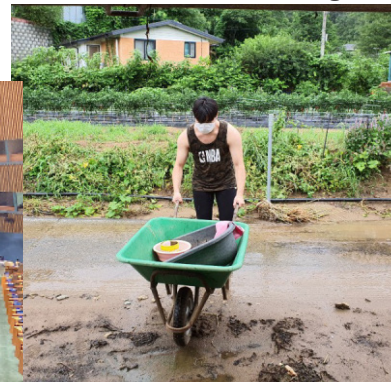
Through my time with the TLCI I enjoyed my studies and researched about what I want to do with my life. Because of my flexible curriculum I was able to use the extra time for my artworks and hobbies such as going to art displays, eating foods I like, and so on. Being able to use my time efficiently led me to develop myself as a student and had led me to want to be an artistic businessman.

I am very appreciative of my parents and all teachers who guided me to discover my goals and the journey I must take to achieve them. I am very grateful to the TLCI and Mr. Ghim for guiding me to become a better student.



United Nations, NYC

Volunteering in Chun-an, ROK

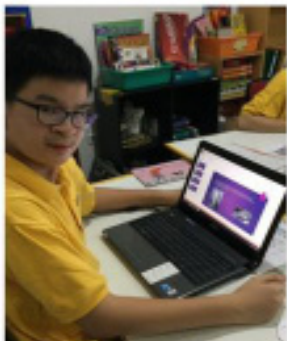
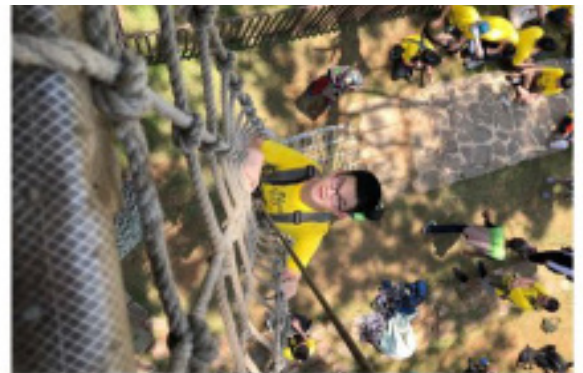


Training Seminar



Jason Aditya Lee

Hello, my name is Jason Aditya Lee, but you can call me Jason or J. Lee. Some might say I am a friendly and easygoing person. I have a special love for music. I think it's because I come from a musical family. My dad has a beautiful voice and my mom and brother play the piano. I, myself, play the drums and piano. I've been playing with the guitar also lately. Hopefully, I'll be able to play a couple of songs, if not many, on the guitar soon too. One of these days, I wish I could perform with my music teacher around the world. I also love cars so much and hope that one day I will have my very own car dealership.



Chinese New Year's day

On Chinese New Year's day, my family and I went to papa's house. Papa received grandma in Chinese. My brother and I got apples from papa and kung hoi. I ate 5 Chinese cookies for brunch.

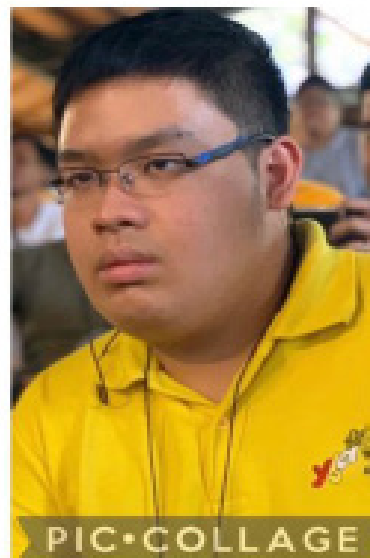
Did you do anything for Chinese New Year's Ma, Nancy?

Andrew, you're smart!



Andrew Santoso Liman

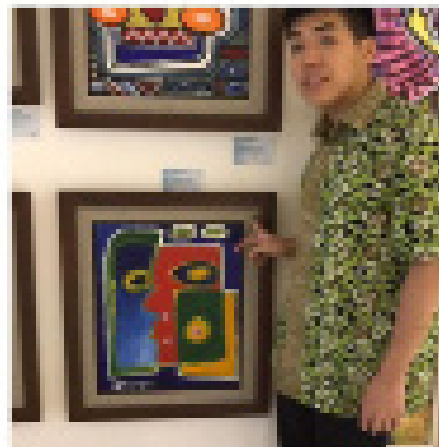
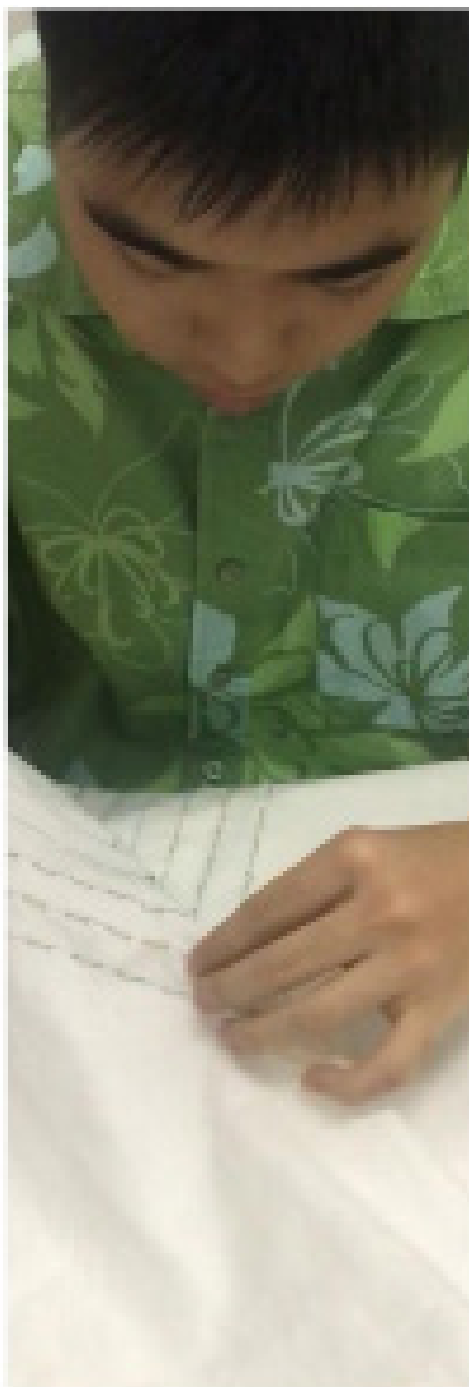
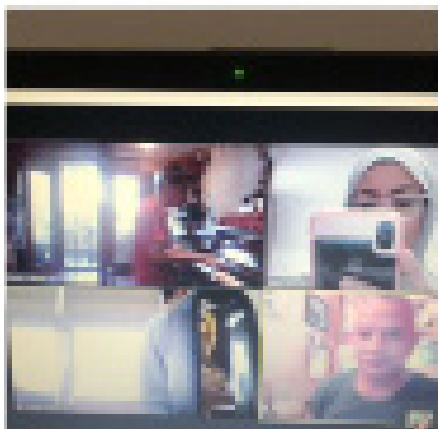
Andrew Santoso Liman, the youngest in the Liman family, was a tall, sweet, soft spoken, and kind hearted young man. He was good in various sports such as basketball, futsal, swimming, and most recently he took up badminton. He loved spending time with his family, be it family dinners or trying out different restaurants. As long as he was with his loved ones, it was all good. At school, dining out with his friends and teachers was an activity he looked forward to every week. Andrew also enjoyed art class. During painting, he was very confident when stroking the brush and often chose vibrant colors in his work. Andrew had a unique sense of humor. He was the type of person that, suddenly out of nowhere, would wear a sheet mask during online class, or put on sunglasses just to look cool. Andrew, you left us too soon, but you will forever remain in our hearts.





Owen Tjahjono Sianto

Hi, my name is Owen Sianto and I am from Indonesia. I'm completely blessed to have a loving family. My parents and my siblings are very sup-portive in everything I do. I have an older brother named Kevin, and a younger sister named Odilia. I also love to spend time at my grandpar-ents' house because I can hang out with all my cousins and have fun. I can say I am a diligent student, a bit ambitious, and I do well in most things I do. At my school, I play the drums and I am pretty good at it. I love performing with my school band and I can proudly say I don't get nervous. As a matter of fact, I have won numerous awards in various band competitions both in a national and international scale. I'm also good in sports. I play basketball, futsal, and I also swim. I have a very competitive side, but I think these days I've managed to become a good sportsman.





Oliver Adivarman Wihardja

My name is Oliver but most people call me Ollie for short. My mom named me after the English chef Jamie Oliver, but actually I prefer to eat than cook. My first love is singing. I sing when I am happy, and I learn new songs from everywhere, even from advertisements. I also learned to play the piano since I was young, and I would like to learn to play the guitar someday. People say I am tall. I guess that's because I swim a lot. Swimming calms and relaxes me, and my favorite holiday is when we go to Bali and spend all day at the beach swimming and surfing. Painting is my other hobby, and I have participated in several art exhibitions. I cannot imagine a world without painting now, and one day I hope to be a famous artist.



Closing Remarks



Nancy De Luca Stempel
Executive Director

Every year, since 1984, TLCI graduates a class of unique individuals. ‘Unique’ is often cited as a word that should never be modified, but this TLCI graduating class of 2021 is *especially unique*.

You and your families have dealt with a global situation that’s had a personal impact in your lives. And despite the upheaval and the shifts in your academic and personal lives, you’ve all made it. Your strength of character, your resilience, and grit have facilitated your remarkable growth.

Please, during this pivotal time in your lives pause to remember and celebrate the determination that has led you to this point. In going forward continue to seize the opportunities available to you. Always ask questions, be critical in your thinking, and always bring your true authentic self to every conversation.

2002 TLCI graduate Corey Weidenhammer in his alumni speech to the graduating class of 2013 shared three thoughts.

Continue learning. Corey said.... Your foundation is complete. You have each done an incredible job of getting yourself to this stage. Now take your understanding of how to learn and your desire to learn; along with all of the knowledge you’ve acquired, and use it to charge into the unknown without fear, confident that you have the skills necessary to respond to whatever challenges life will throw at you.

Reflect on your knowledge and experience as you continue the journey to understand yourself in the context of the world around you.

“Learning without thought is labor lost.”

Use those reflections to guide your actions in order to live a life of integrity.

Finally - seek to give and share Our fates are interwoven with those around the world more than ever. As citizens of the world, we owe it to ourselves and those who supported us to pay their generosity forward.

To the *especially unique* Class of 2021: Congratulations today and best wishes for all your tomorrows.

Acknowledgements

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