

The Learning Community International



Graduation

Class of 2022

**Saturday
June 4, 2022**



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

International

John Ghim
Associate Director East Asia

Graduate Reflections

Bry Evans
Chris Ghim
Jinyoung Kim
Dongwoo Lee
Seok Nam
Sangjun Park
Luke Parker
Nyah Smith

Closing

Nancy De Luca Stempel
Executive Director

Opening Remarks



Manfred Smith
Principal Director

Graduates, parents, family members ,TLCI advisors and professionals... I'm Manfred Smith, TLCI Principal Director: Welcome to the 2022 graduation celebration honoring our accomplished young men and women.

Since our founding in 1984, The Learning Community International's mission has been to provide a customized learning experience designed to empower students to reach their highest potential through a collaboratively designed learning plan closely supervised and guided by our experienced advisors anywhere in the world.

We offer every student the opportunity to become full partners in their educational journey by encouraging and guiding them to discover hidden talents, interests, and for many, rekindling their motivation to learn and the excitement that accompanies success in achieving their goals.

This process of learner empowerment—to become more confident and make wise choices for one's success—is central to TLCI's mission and our advisors guide students in three key actions to increase learner empowerment:

- Self-reflection—to think deeply and systematically about one's learning, goals and achievements
- Self-evaluation—to assess one's progress, successes and failures
- Self-correction—to identify negative outcomes and create a plan of action to correct or eliminate problems.

When we add these three factors together, we empower individuals to become increasingly self-aware and confident to make choices that best address their goals and achieve their own success and happiness. It is a process of ongoing and never ending improvement.

Like every TLCI graduate over the past 40 years, our 2022 graduates represent diverse interests and goals. Some of you will attend top-tier universities, others will start their own business and some of you will enter the job market.

Whatever the path you have chosen, I encourage you to make the hard choices in your journey through life that will result in the success and happiness you will deserve—because in the end, you will not regret having made your own choices, nor will you regret the great things you have done, but you will regret the choices and opportunities you let slip by.

Congratulations graduates, and best wishes for always making the hard choices to achieve a life worth living. Thank you.



Romana Hughes
Director Academic Affairs

Congratulations, TLCI, Graduating class of 2022.

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

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

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.

I want to recognize two TLCI seniors who have been awarded TLCI scholarships.

Nyah Smith will receive the Skip Downing On Course scholarship and Luke Parker will receive the Barbara Nichols Klein Scholarship.

I wish all of you success and happiness. I end our conversation by reading a special quote by Michelle Obama “Don’t be afraid. Be focused. Be determined. Be hopeful. Be empowered.” Congratulations!



John Ghim
Associate Director,
East Asia

Congratulations to the class of 2022. You are closing the last page of a certain chapter in your history. Now, TLCI School is an indelible record of your history. Of course, your names has been engraved in the history of TLCI School.

Year 2021 was a memorable year for all of us. Most colleges had 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 NYU, Tufts, Pepperdine, UC Davis, S.V.A., S.C.A.D., etc. A number of graduates received scholarships ranging from \$36,000 to \$210,000 for four years. I really appreciate all your hard works and sincere supports from your parents to all the members of TLCI. I also want to thank the faculty and staff of TLCI and our educational program providers for their hard works and supports to all our students.

Congratulations on your graduation. God Bless you.

Congratulations, Class of 2022!



Bry Evans



Chris Ghim



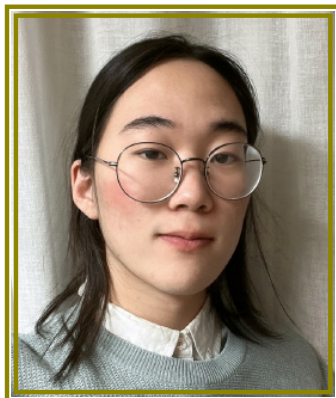
Jinyoung Kim



Dongwoo Lee



Seok Nam



Sangjun Park



Luke Parker



Nyah Smith

Graduate Memory Pages



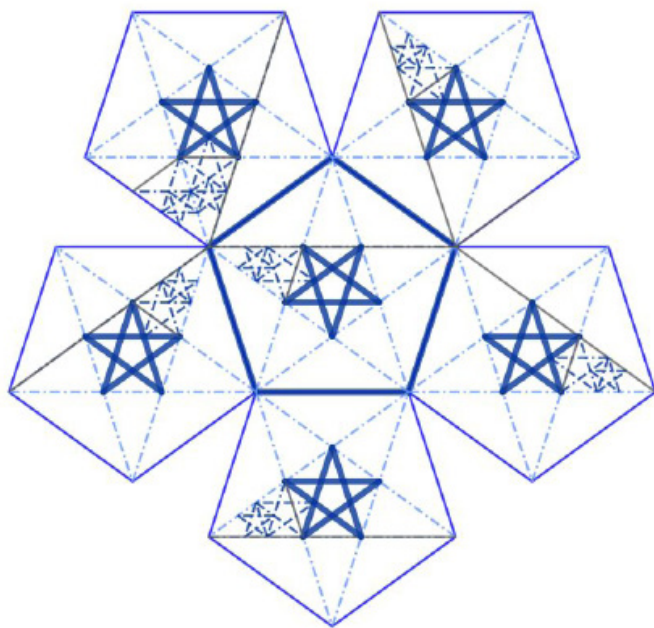
Bry Evans

My name is Bry Evans, and I enrolled in TLCI my senior year. TLCI has offered me a vastly different learning medium than I have previously experienced at other traditional in-person schools. I was used to studying general things in a general group that did not necessarily prepare me for college and eventually law school. TLCI assigned an advisor who worked with me to create my Individualized Learning Plan and Custom Courses. My courses were designed around topics of interest to me and my future goal of attending law school.

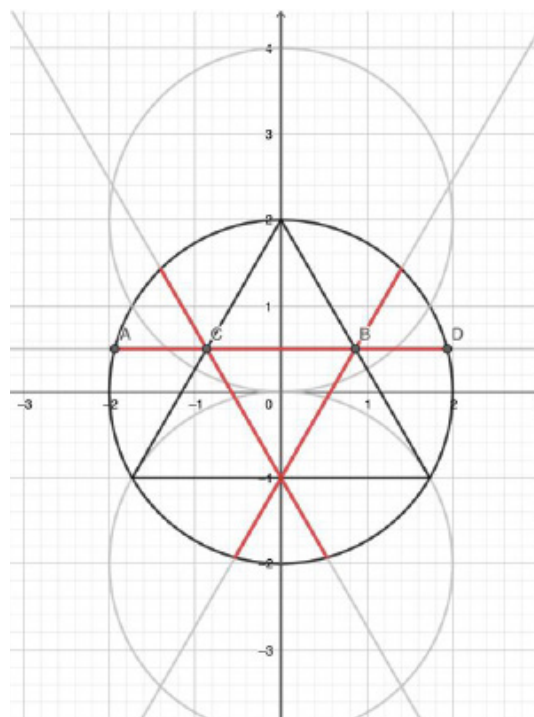
Working with my TLCI advisor, we designed my senior year courses such as college admissions, SAT prep, student success, personal finance, AP Government and Politics, and critical thinking.

The college admissions course prepared me for the upcoming rounds of college admissions and made me more aware of what aspects I should look for in selecting a college that was the right fit for my future goals.

Now, as I prepare for my first step into college life, I can't help but reminisce and reflect on the journey that took me to this point. My journey would not have been successful without the support of my family. My mom has been a pillar of unconditional support, and I wish to thank her, my family, Mrs. De Luca, Mrs. Hughes, and everyone from the TLCI community for being there with me on this journey.



Sacred Geometry



Golden Triangle



Chris Ghim

While I was preparing for this speech, I had mixed feelings; I couldn't believe that I finished my high school year but, at the same time, I looked forward to being pushed to the real world. Today, I want to share my experience that help me to improve further.

For most of my school life, I was a math-science student. I was fond of solving math questions and learning chemistry and physics. I thought I would probably go into math-related fields such as computer science and finance math. I did not enjoy taking English, History, and other subjects that typically require endless rote memorization in schools. So, something like journalism felt totally foreign to me. In 11th grade, I realized that my writing ability was not skillful enough to get a good grade in my English class. In order to solve this problem, I applied for the Herald Insight & Tomorrow Student Reporter program and Joongang Daily newspaper.

At first, I felt uneasy about writing or interviewing people because as you know, the first step is the hardest. Sensing my unease, my mentor assured me, "I understand that writing articles and interviewing people seem foreign to you. But as you keep doing it, you may be surprised how much you learn to enjoy it." It would also help me in the future. The "storytelling" that I would learn would help me with writing term papers, making presentations, and many other tasks in life. He added, "life is all about storytelling." I decided to give him the benefit of the doubt, and give it a try. As I struggled to write my articles, I was astonished to find out that I began to actually enjoy expressing my thoughts to others.

I was on a roll. I wrote numerous articles on exchange student programs, basketball, the college application process, coding, fan death, and others. The most satisfying thing of all was that I was conveying what was in my head to others in an informative and even persuasive way. Maybe I was really learning to "tell stories." This is important because, although I will probably become a math/computer science nerd, I want to be a nerd who is capable of constructing, selling, and leading a project through this storytelling ability.

Last but not least, I am grateful to God. Had it not been for God, I wouldn't have come this far since he gave me the strength to accomplish my high school years. I want to thank all the other people whom God had put in my life. I would really like to thank my family, especially my mom and dad for supporting me. I am also appreciative of Mr. Manfred Smith and all the teachers for helping me grow and learn. They are no more than just teachers; they are my role models, mentors, and friends. Thank you.



Interview with Richard Son



**With Minsu Park,
3x3 Korean League**



**On defense (white shirt, left)
Minsu Park, right**



Jinyoung Kim

My name is Jinyoung Kim, but when I was studying abroad, they called me Jake. I studied at a certain American International School in China before studying at TLCI. However, after the outbreak of COVID-19, I started attending TLCI from the 11th grade.

Before studying at TLCI, school life was very difficult. I have been studying abroad in China since the second semester of 9th grade without any preparation. I have had many experiences, but it was very difficult mentally. Living alone without parents in another country also had an impact.

While studying at TLCI, I was very interested in art. When I started doing art, I was able to make a variety of friends. In addition, I was able to find the mental stability that was difficult due to studying.

And while studying at TLCI, I knew what I wanted to do. When I went to university and was able to choose a university major that's right for me. In other words, thanks to TLCI, it helped me a lot with my personality and my career path and enabled me to lead an active life.)

Thanks to TLCI, I was able to think a lot about myself in the bad situation of COVID-19, and I was able to engage in various activities regardless of time. I have chosen art and physical education as electives because I am interested and want to do it and also to gain experience. Won a gold medal in an art competition.

While attending TLCI, I was able to get enough rest and do things I hadn't been able to do before. I was able to do active sports such as riding, skiing, and golf that I had never done before. When I was living in China, my school life was so hard that I didn't have time to exercise. But after I started attending TLCI, I was able to devote more time. But after I started attending TLCI, I was able to devote more time to exercise. Because of this, I have become physically as well as mentally healthy.

While studying abroad, I didn't have time to spend with my parents, but while attending TLCI in Korea, I was able to spend more time than before, and I was able.

I believe that TLCI is a cornerstone that has opened a new path for me to pursue my career and my major.



Art painting



Art contest



Snowboarding



Dongwoo Lee

My name is Dongwoo Lee but most of my friends simply call me D. My friends also call me “sloth” because I tend to speak and move slowly. I used to attend a small private school in Seoul until 9th grade but I decided to move to TLCI to study at a high school that could provide me more chances to foster my academic potential.

Before attending TLCI, I was no different from other students. I had to wear the same school uniform, and ride the same yellow school bus at the same time. As a person who can’t stand being stuck in a cycle, a place like “school” was not a good memory until I met the TLCI. However, my thoughts against “school” began to change slightly after I began attending TLCI school. Unlike my prior school, TLCI had allowed me to take more courses that I truly wanted to learn and offered an unparalleled breadth of opportunities to gain my academic curiosity. I then started to change my mind that school isn’t a place that bothers me but a place that allows me to achieve my dream.

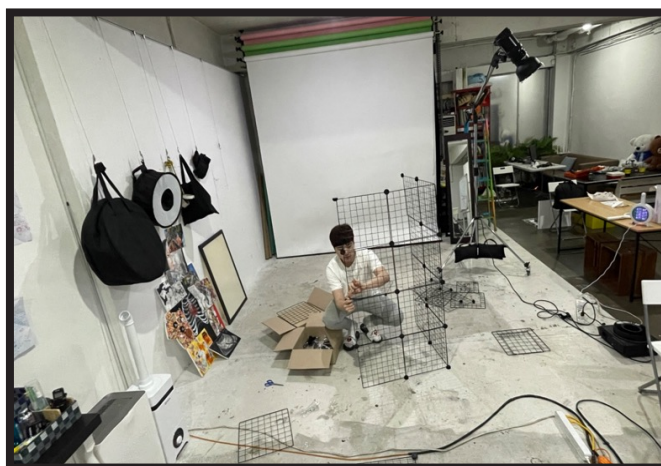
I was able to find my path and my interests during many of my studies at TLCI School. I discovered that art is something I truly appreciate while attending several art classes at TLCI (AP Studio Art 2-D/ 3-D Design and Photography). After that, I began to widen my passion for art by establishing organizations and electives such as the TLCI Photography Club.

TLCI School not only aided in the development of my interests but also taught me fruitful lessons. When I was in 11th grade, I had a chance to share experiences with Malaysian children through the “Global mind-set” club. We shared cultural ideals and held weekly discussions about each country’s distinctive traditions. My clubmates and I realized the genuine value of sharing and felt a feeling of community as a result of this club activity.

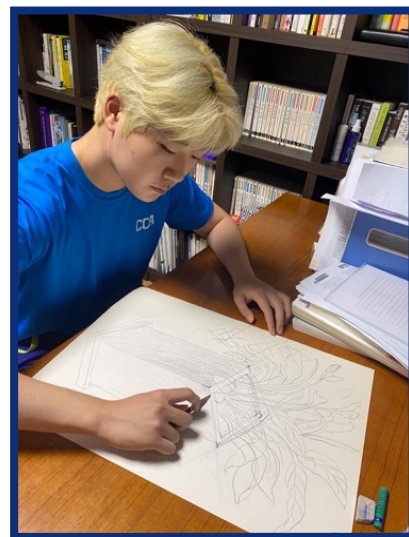
To that end, I am certain that TLCI is the cornerstone that has opened the lead to a wide chapter in my bright future. Based on my experience at TLCI, I am confident that I will make a great effort in my future college life as I used to do.



Me taking photo



Me working on my portfolio



Me drawing



Seok Nam

Since I was a child, I've been interested in art and visiting art exhibitions. Until a few years ago, art was just a hobby. More recently it became a passion of mine. When I admire the colors and techniques used to express another artist's subject and thoughts within a single painting, I am often surprised how much can be expressed by art.

I personally enjoy creating works in various ways, though I mainly prefer making three-dimensional art forms. It is because I usually come up with more interesting ideas for my art when making three-dimensional work rather than when I try to make flat two dimensional work.

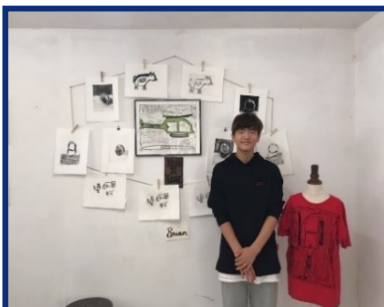
In recent years I have had the privilege to chance in camps related to the art field. Several times I went to an art workshop in France. The month-long schedule was a fun learning process and experience.

While in high school, I participated in the UIUC artwork contest for the first time and won the first prize. When I heard the news that I had won the award, many thoughts went through my head. Even though I won the prize, I wasn't completely satisfied with my work. Perhaps as an artist, we're always trying to make an art piece a little bit better. But, even though I hadn't quite got my work the way I wanted it, I was so happy to have won. I thank my parents for their encouragement and support.

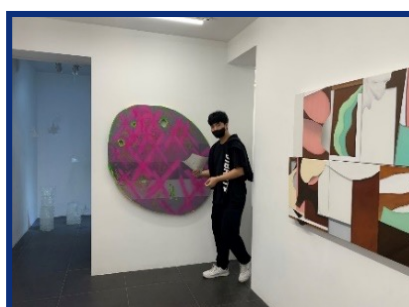
Recently, an official from SCAD University came to my art academy. We prepared for the entrance exam, interviewed, and talked about various works I have made over the years. It was rewarding to be able to get feedback from an art professional.

Outside of studying art, I have enjoyed a number of other experiences as a high student. I have had a lot of experiences with my family. The most memorable of them is I went to the Japan with my family last summer. We went to the city of Osaka together. We enjoyed many different and interesting Japanese dishes. I was very surprised, because in many ways Japan and South Korea are almost the same. While I was a student, I also did volunteer work to help children in need. It's important to me that I not only improve my own skills and experiences, but that I also help other people who are in need, even if it's not always easy.

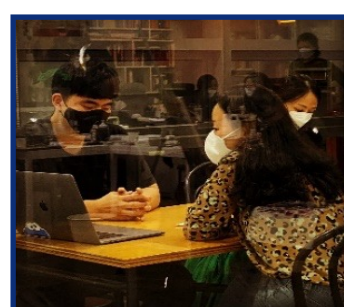
My plan is to finish applying to school and continue improving my art skills. In addition, I would like to travel internationally more. It's my belief that experiences are important to grow and learn. As I can more experiences, ideas for my next art piece are just around the next corner.



Workshop in France



Art Museum



SCAD Interview



Volunteer Program



Sangjun Park

My name is Sangjun Park but almost everyone calls me Lukas instead. I love to make experimental art pieces as an artist. As I grew up in a household where art was everyone's fondness, it was natural for me to show my artistic expression and be an art enthusiast from a young age. My childhood practices have helped me grow into a more experienced and skilled artist.

Beyond my personal background that helped me grow as an artist, I believe that teachers in TLCI have lead me to grow as an artist as well as a better human being. The times I studied in TLCI could have been not as long but long enough for me to develop in both educational and personal ways, they taught me how to face the world as an adult being.

I personally believe that I had a challenging schedule as a senior student with five AP Courses, and I don't think I would have had a successful final year of high school without the teachers who guided and taught me, I have learnt a lot from them.

I want to recognize my parents for guiding me through my life thus far. I could not imagine a world without them.

My plan after graduating high school will not be as dramatic, I will keep my passion for art and study the unity between music and art in college and zestfully continue to become an artist to engage all audiences by actualizing a distinctive audiovisual experience.



YongPyong Beach



With Changmo in concert



Mountain Bukhan with friends



Luke Parker

School has always been a great challenge for me. I transferred to TLCI my freshman year of high school coming from a poor experience in elementary and middle school. My school experience had me struggle to understand why graduating from high school is important. With the support from my parents, advisor, and tutors, the school experience was better, and I now know you need to have a high school diploma.

My classes throughout high school have mostly been customized courses based on my interest to help motivate. The customized courses were interesting, but I still felt school was challenging and an obligation and needed support to complete my work.

Using reflections for two classes, model railroading and dam building, helped me grow past the thought of school as challenging and an obligation and helped my writing and communication. The class required two weekly reflections. At first, I struggled to come up with things to say. I found my reflections to become easier as I wrote, and I enjoyed this class. I would sometimes spend hours typing long multiple reflections on my hobbies.

Looking back at my older posts, I have improved my writing style and presentation, and a lot of this can be credited to my advisor who provided feedback on most of my posts and gave me tips on how to improve. By the end of my third year, I was writing reflections on weekends and summer break, I enjoyed it that much.

As my final semester nears its end, I have reflected on how I managed to get this far. And as mentioned at the beginning, my success has been credited to the people who helped me. My mom is particularly always very supportive and always seemed to keep a positive attitude on things. My advisor was also very supportive and helpful. Although I did struggle in high school, it was far less stressful than middle and elementary school, and this wouldn't have been possible if it wasn't for TLCI and my parents, who wanted the best for me; and I will always be grateful.

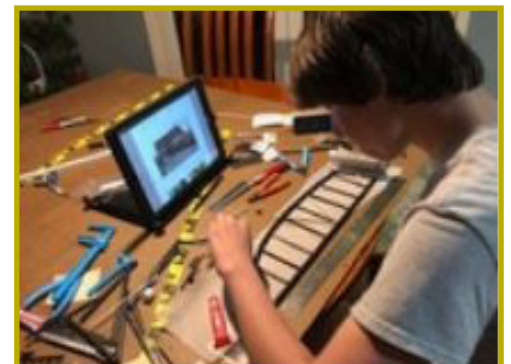
With high school out of the way, I will have to prepare for the next stage of life and decide if I want to go to college, and by extension, figure out what I want to do for my career then finalize my plans for college.



Build railroad model



Scholarship Recipient



Design and build model dam

Hello students, teachers, parents, and relatives.



Nyah Smith

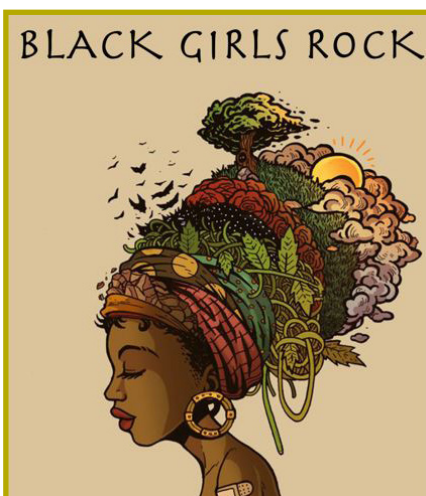
My name is Nyah Smith. First, I would like to send congratulations to all my fellow graduates. We have all worked hard to persevere and push forward through these last few school years.

Ever since I was young, my education has been my top priority. No matter what was happening in my life, school always came first, and everything else was secondary. Some may believe that this was my parents' doing, but I have always enjoyed learning. I loved being able to learn and understand new topics; in fact, I craved the process of learning. If someone were to look at my browser search history throughout my childhood, you would see diverse topics, ranging from animal facts, historical figures, musical artists, and other intriguing topics.

Since around third grade, my parents have consistently emphasized the importance of higher education and the benefits as I navigate my life. These conversations should have been intimidating for a young girl, but it was exciting because they helped me to dream big. Around eight years old, I began to seriously consider what I wanted to be when I became an adult. First, it was an elementary school teacher, then an entrepreneur, and then I jumped to an FBI behavioral analyst. I finally decided to major in psychology to become a developmental psychologist and eventually open a mental health center.

Before I end my speech, I would like to express my appreciation. First, thank you to The Learning Community International. If I had not attended this school, I would not have honestly spoken about my learning struggles in certain subjects, such as math. Having had the opportunity to express myself freely without judgment led me to pinpoint my exact problems and find the best way to succeed. I owe the most gratitude to my parents. Thank you both for always supporting me and telling me that I could strive and achieve greatness as long as I placed God first and worked hard. Even though you always say this is what you are supposed to do as parents, I appreciate everything you have sacrificed for me. I am starting from an excellent foundation as I begin to spread my wings on my journey into adulthood.

Again, I congratulate all the other graduates, and I wish you all blessings and success in your future endeavors.



Graphic art



Scholarship Recipient



Graphic art

Closing Remarks



Nancy De Luca Stempel
Executive Director

My name is Nancy De Luca Stempel, Executive Director of TLCI. Congratulations and welcome graduates, parents & families, guests, TLCI advisors, and our educational partners.

In addition to thanking everyone who played an essential part in assisting our graduates to this 2022 high school graduation celebration, I sincerely thank The Learning Community International's Principal Director, Manfred Smith, for his unwavering commitment to his unique vision for over 38 years. I also thank John Ghim, Associate Director, East Asia, and Romana Hughes, Director of Academic Affairs, for their significant contributions to TLCI's organizational development and continued growth.

TLCI has a mission of empowerment. Some think empowerment is about having choices. TLCI's definition of empowerment isn't just about giving individuals choices, but it gives them resources and the tools to make informed choices. TLCI's learner-centered vision of education has guided us in embedding a system of self-reflection, self-evaluation, and self-correction as a resource that facilitate learners to develop success skills allowing them to make those informed choices.

Introducing these success skills like self-awareness, intrinsic motivation, and lifelong learning to name a few, is not just a theoretical exercise. Instead of promising our learners that these skills will be essential in their lives someday through their TLCI journey, they are applying them in real time as collaborative project-based learning opportunities.

TLCI recognizes that children have an innate drive to explore, learn and grow, and we are passionate about inspiring and nurturing them to honor their natural thirst for learning.

We believe that by providing our learners with a customized, creative, and inspiring program of learning tailored to their needs, interests, and goals, the learner's intrinsic motivation will awaken with personal awareness, a love of learning, and a belief in themselves.

To our 2022 TLCI graduates...

I congratulate you, and may your lives always be empowered with sound judgments and informed decisions.

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