



- ACSI SWIM FAMILY -

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My name is Mark Chan and I graduated from Anglo Chinese School (Independent) in 2016. I am currently a second-year medical student in NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

To describe my time in ACS, would be to describe that of culture, professionalism, and family. In your formative years, the people and culture that surround you will invariably shape the way you perceive the world and shape your overall character.

Having been surrounded by a culture of strong moral values and steadfast traditions has enabled me to focus more on the “we” rather than just “me”. This is true of every student who walks through the gates of ACS and emerges an ACSian. ACS (Independent)’s core values of “Steadfastness, Humility, Integrity, Empathy, Loyalty and Diligence” or SHIELD for short is embodied by the teachers, staff and students. It is a place of growth and maturity and is where I found a home.

Amongst my extracurricular activities, was a heavy commitment to swimming, which saw me training anywhere from 7-10 times a week. Having to manage my time, energy and concentration would have been a tall order had I done it alone. Thankfully, with the strong support system of the teachers and staff, I was in safe hands and never feared falling too far behind. There wasn’t a single teacher who didn’t readily approach me and enquired if I needed additional help coping or having the sympathy and understanding to extend my deadline when I missed my occasional homework submissions.

It was here that I made many of my best friends, many of whom I still keep in close contact with to this day. In fact, in 2019, I met up with my Secondary 4 class for our 5th year reunion! I’m sure you might have heard of the term “AC Pride” before and having gone through 2 years of National Service and being surrounded by people of all backgrounds in NUS, I can tell you with certainty that no other institution has such an unmistakable, strong bond that instantly unites us all despite many of us having graduated from ACS in different years. An example of this would be during Founders’ Day each year when current students and graduates living all over the world come together to express their appreciation and love for the

school. It really warms my heart knowing that I am a part of this wonderful, inclusive and exceptional family.

A little about my personal journey from ACS to NUS. I entered Secondary 1 in 2011 with a PSLE score of 248, which put me in the express stream. To be completely honest, I was slightly disappointed in myself as I had hoped to score higher and be admitted into the IP program. Yet, I quickly learnt that as unpredictable as life is, when one door closes, another opens. In ACS, the teachers and upper management are ever so cognizant that each individual matures and blooms at different times, and as such provide their students with ample opportunities to excel during their time in the school. Of the many that the school provided, one such opportunity for those who had excelled in their studies in Secondary 1 and 2, was the chance to transfer into the IP Program at the start of Secondary 3. Having studied hard and done well in the express stream, I managed to cross over to the IP Program. In the beginning, the pace of the IP Program was a shock to the system, but with the guidance and mentorship of my teachers, I persevered, stayed diligent and reaped the rewards for my hard work.

From the IP Program, I transitioned directly into the IBDP Program in years 5 and 6. The IB Program was a very holistic program that offered a wide breadth of study that gave us all a very good foundation and footing for our university studies.

Getting to where I am now was no straightforward path either. In fact, I was met with rejection not once but twice before I was finally admitted on my third attempt. However, as my time in ACS had already instilled in me the value of perseverance, diligence, and determination, I was not disheartened but instead found ways to better myself in the hope of achieving my lifelong goal of becoming a doctor.

From my experience, there is no shortcut in life, there is no one way track to success. Often, you may find yourself having to take 1 step back before you can move 2 steps forwards. Yet, do not despair and know that there will be many paths for you to try and many doors for you to open in ACS. By joining an institution such as ACS, rest

assured that you will come out as one with strong morals, friends, and a lifelong family. ACS is able to bring out the best in you, to turn you into a scholar and a gentleman.

The school's motto and ethos "The Best Is Yet To Be", serves as our guiding reminder to never settle, to never truly be satisfied with what we have achieved today, but to strive and dream of what we may achieve tomorrow.

Dream big and never settle,

For The Best Is Yet To Be!

Mark Chan

ACSI Alumni, Class of 2016

NUS Medicine Year 1



Most of you reading this are currently facing one of the biggest decisions in your life - Deciding which secondary school to go to.

Having gone through the same dilemma 6 years ago, I hope that my sharing of my experience in ACS(I) will provide you with a valuable insight into the ACS family of school and help make your decision easier.

Why choose an education at ACS(I)?

I have always wanted to attend a school which not only had a strong academic background, but also provided me with opportunities to pursue swimming. For me, I felt that the holistic education offered by ACS(I) suited me very well. The school gave me many opportunities and guidance which allowed me to realise my potential.

My student life in ACS(I).

If anyone were to ask me what my most memorable moments in ACS(I) were, I would reply - my first and my last day in school.

I still vividly recall my first day in ACS(I), wandering around a foreign school in a sea of unfamiliar faces, clueless as to what the future would hold for me. I remember sitting in a huge freezing auditorium, listening to then principle, Mr Winston Hodge, drone on about what was expected of us as ACSians. Although I forgotten most of what was said, one quote he said resonated within me.

“They will get wings like eagles: running, they will not be tired, and walking, they will have no weariness.”

At that point in time, I did not appreciate the significance of the quote. Little did I know these words would echo throughout my life as an ACSian, perfectly encapsulating what my ACSian journey would be like...

My ACSian journey was not always smooth, I remember constantly struggling to juggle academics and swim training. Often, I was so tired from my daily schedule that I would have difficulty paying attention in class. This caused me to lag behind my peers and greatly demoralised me.

Thankfully, I had great teachers and friends around to help me with my struggles. My teachers were always supportive of my swimming endeavours and tried their best to help me achieve them without compromising on my studies. From meeting me during their lunch breaks to preparing my assignments in advance, they ensured that I was never left behind. My friends always tried their best to offer any help to me. From sharing their notes with me to studying together, I always felt immensely happy whenever I was in school.

Moreover, the curriculum of ACS(I) was planned in such a manner that allowed students to explore different areas of their life. For instance, we used to have CAS sessions, where we would volunteer in various charity work. This first exposed me to charity and service work, which would eventually ignite my passion for medicine.

Over the course of my time in ACS(I), I soon realised what significance the quote held for me. Eagles are commonly known to be the apex predators of the food chain. Known for its ferocity and ability to fly higher than any other bird, eagles symbolise man's ambition to constantly strive towards greater heights.

However, it is a little known fact that eagles are also caring animals who nurture their youth. It is common for adult eagles to nurture their eaglets to full maturity, caring for them and guiding them throughout life. As the eaglet learns to fly, it will stumble and fail numerous times. Thankfully, the adult eagle is always nearby ensuring that the environment is safe for the eaglet, allowing them to slowly learn at their pace.

This is what aptly describes the environment at ACS(I). Indeed, it is without a doubt each of us will encounter our share of failures during our student life. Nevertheless, at ACS(I), failure is not something we fear since we have such a strong support system amongst our school, teachers, students and friends. Instead, we are encouraged to explore our passions and use every opportunity we have to develop into a better person.

On the last day of school, as the current principle Mr Arene Koh concluded our final chapel session, I glanced around the auditorium. It somehow felt as though it had gotten smaller and warmer, filled with my closest friends and my best teachers. That day, as each of us ventured out of the auditorium into the future filled with uncertainty, we all held our heads high, eager to chase our passions-with eagles wings.

I would never forget the values that ACS(I) ingrained in me - from being steadfast in my decisions to having empathy and compassion for others. ACS(I) accomplished this by providing me with a nurturing environment to learn about these values... These are the values that prepared me for the rigours of medical school and beyond.

I would gladly live through that again, in a heartbeat.

Francis Fong

Currently NUS Medicine Year 1

Favourite event is 100 and 200m backstroke



I graduated from the class of 2017. Back in 2011 I was stuck with the dilemma of choosing where I should go to pursue my secondary school education. I wanted a school that not only provided me an excellent holistic education that emphasize on character development but I wanted to study at an institution that supported me in my journey to achieve my dreams as a competitive swimmer. And that is why I chose ACSI and I have not regretted my decision one bit.

Now I am currently an officer at 3 Guards and am leading a platoon of 28 men. ACSI has given me many opportunities to hone my leadership skills which have definitely helped me many times as I serve my nation.

My favourite event would have to be the 100m Butterfly.

Dylan Koo Long Hai



9 years later, I still remember my first memory with the ACS(I) Swim Team: being invited to play basketball with captains 6 years my senior, and enjoying Mrs Goh Hwee Hwee's baked pastries as the sun set by the pool. Here, despite the highly individual sport that is swimming, I found a "team", and a "family".

My friends in the ACS(I) Swim Team motivated each other toward excellence in training, but we also knew how to unwind, have fun together, and forget about swimming for a while. When I missed a week of lessons while competing overseas, my teachers and classmates gladly spent weeks tutoring me personally after school. When I served as Head Prefect and Student Council President, nobody pressured me to cut down on my commitments: in fact, everybody generously offered their support and advice. In ACS(I), **everybody** wants what's best for you, inside or outside the pool.

I've had the privilege of representing Singapore at the World Juniors, World Cups in Dubai and Beijing, and many regional meets. But I say without hesitation that swimming for ACS(I) was the highlight of my career. I'll cherish my time here for the rest of my life. Join us, and I know you will too.

Kevin Ong

ACS(I) Class of 2016

Favourite swimming event: 50m Backstroke



ACS (Independent) was always my first choice because of how the school is always so supportive of student-athletes. They understood how important being an athlete was and always made sure that we had a great balance between academics and sports. In school, it always felt like we were one big closely knit family and it was just a fun loving environment. Aside from swimming, it was always fun to experience supporting your fellow schoolmates in other sports which were all equally excellent. After leaving ACS, I learned that people often looked up to us for everything we do and achieve. ACS also helped me prepare very well for the future especially in university.

Lionel Khoo

Currently a student athlete the University of South Carolina, attended Singapore Management University for 1.5 years previously.

Favorite swimming event: 200m medley relay



Back in 2008, upon graduating from ACS (Primary), my next hurdle was to choose a secondary school that would best fit my pursuit of being a student-athlete. Most of my friends who had DSA offers made their decisions without much hesitation, but that wasn't the case for me. I weighed the advantages and disadvantages of all 3 schools that offered me DSA and the outcome was the same every time. The Bishan school would somehow emerge with more merits than the others. I showed my older brother the comparison chart that I had drawn and asked if it would be the best idea for me to be decked in a full-white uniform for the next six years of my life. I asked him "Will it be too stressful?", "Will I have friends?", "Will I be able to juggle both studies and sports?", and I went on and on without giving him a chance to answer me. He then abruptly stopped me and asked, "Will you have fun?". That question struck me like a truck, and suddenly the entire chart was deemed useless. What is FUN? Fun refers to Family, Unwavering support and Network. In ACS, you will find friends and brothers that are like Family to you, people you care about and people that will be there for you to celebrate your highs and pull you up when you experience your lows. Unwavering support is nothing less than what the ACS family expects from every individual in this big community. Teachers like Mrs Goh Hwee Hwee and Madam Ivy Quek ALWAYS made the effort to support me for my races and willingly offered their free time to tutor me, hear my rants and give me food. Friends from other sports would take time out from their trainings to watch you compete, friends who will get scolded with you and friends who will be there with you forever. So.. what is Network? HAHA! You will know this in no time when you step into the workforce and trust me, you will not regret it. Lastly, if you read this, thank you for taking the time to know my story and I hope this honest experience has given you the information you need to help you make a clear decision on which school will give you the best 6 years of your life. Remember this, your teenage life is the period where you grow and play the most. It is also arguably going to be the most memorable time of your life. Don't waste it. To God Be The Glory, The Best Is Yet To Be!

I am Jerryl Yong from class of 2014 (IB). I have been swimming competitively since I was 5 and started representing Singapore at age 12. My favourite event has always been and will always be the 100m Butterfly. (PS: I think my 100m butterfly records still stand for the P6 interschool 1:02 unless one of you amazing swimmers broke it!) Anyway, I am 23 years old this year and I am currently completing my second year of tertiary education in NUS and I do not swim anymore. I enjoy playing Golf and bouldering during my free time so if any of you share the same interests as me I can guarantee you will grow up as a charming and successful gentleman (like me.... Haha kidding!)





The Best is Yet to Be