

2024 State Journalism Championship



#11 Yearbook Feature Writing

Time Limit – 1:15

Directions: From the given information, write a feature story as you would for the high school yearbook. You may use statements attributed to individuals as direct or indirect quotes. You may not change the meaning of a statement. Entries will be evaluated on accuracy and quality of writing.

When you are finished:

1. Type or print your name on your entry.
2. Save your document as a PDF using a filename of your choice. ****Remember where you saved the file.**
3. Go to this link <https://secure.nsaahome.org/nsaaforms/jo/login/student/index.php>
4. Complete the form, hit LOGIN
5. Choose file. **MUST BE A PDF FILE**
6. Click UPLOAD
7. When done, please raise your hand for the proctor to confirm the upload was successful.

A group of fourteen International Baccalaureate (IB) students and two chaperones from Cornerstone High School traveled to Vietnam, immersing themselves in Vietnamese culture and history with a focus on creativity, activity, and service (CAS) during winter break. Led by CAS Trips, the group started in the north, eventually ending the trip in the south 11 days later. They made several stops along the way in areas including Hanoi, Mai Châu, HaLong Bay, and Ho Chi Minh City. From the countryside town of Mai Châu to the bustling city of Ho Chi Minh City, the group packed a variety of rich experiences in just over the span of a week.

The trip offered various creative experiences for students to participate in. The highlights included a cooking class, and dance classes in the Lac Village in Mai Châu, and a To he (colorful figurines made of glutinous rice dough) workshop taught by a local master artist in Xuan La Village.

Along with the CAS-centered activities, the group visited the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi as well as various historical sites and museums. Most notably, the Cu Chi Tunnels and War Remnants Museum offered a different perspective of the Vietnam War.

Benny Chavez, CAS President

“During our third and final visit to the village, we took an hour and a half hike through the mountain valleys parallel to the rice paddies. It was the most beautiful place I’ve ever seen in my life. I didn’t know that there was such a beautiful place in such a small village. This experience was life changing.”

Dr. William Smith, CAS Sponsor and Cornerstone High History Teacher

“In Mai Châu, our group refurbished and built additional structures for the village’s hospital playground with a focus on social and cultural sustainability. In Mai Châu, we were able to offer something that the hospital needed and wouldn’t have had an opportunity to redevelop on their own through the playground. The students performed a variety of tasks, providing a helping hand for the local Mai Châu community: they swept and cleaned the area, designed the playground’s new layout with the help of an architect, built new climbing structures, repainted existing structures, painted playground games on the floor, and more. According to Linde Barrett, International Baccalaureate CAS & Extended Essay Coordinator, the hospital services Mai Châu’s 60,000 residents.”

Jeffrey VanWesten, CAS Parent Chaperone

“Students have told me that this trip was one of the most transformative events that they had done in their life. The trip really helped us to understand and be involved with other cultures and I found that it was really an incredibly rewarding and unifying trip for everyone who attended.”