

# Choice in Ink

The Choice School  
Tripunithura

## Exceed Expectations

**A**nother year is half way through, giving in your best in all we do. Every day speaks a mile more in our efforts to prove the best we are capable of. To look beyond and exceed expectations has always been our motto. One has to observe, contemplate, plan and execute, only to come out with the best results. Any venture taken up should be made contentful and complete before hitting conclusion. Every morsel of chance you are darted to in life, be it academic or personal, should add to your personal integrity. Choiceans are never short of opportunities to perform at. To reach out with courage, dedication, determination and optimism is what we need to do. A leap farther, is our aim. A bunch of potential to harness and channelise it to more productive work is our focus. All the very best for a power packed year ahead.



- Sunitha Sathesh  
Principal, The Choice School

**N**o xenophobic speeches to count, but the zeal and enthusiasm inculcated at every juncture should come in hand, in everything you step up for. No time for atonement or complacency. To turn opportunities to an avalanche of possibilities should be your aim. Chiseling at the right corners to sculpt out a complete individual is our endeavor. As adults let us encourage them to sprint into constructive action. Deconstructing the age old norms, let us ace with their spirit to learn more. Nurtured in an age of unerring challenges, let us gear up and walk forth, only to give the right kind of impetus for the young and promising generation we have in hand.



- Jose Thomas  
President, The Choice Foundation

*"The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward."*

## Investiture Ceremony

- George Paul

**A**long selection process followed by campaigning and an election all culminated in the Investiture Ceremony 2017. The ceremony was held on 4th July and hands over the duties and responsibilities for each of the posts in the Student Council to its newly elected members. The morning began with a prayer song and was followed by the investing of the Jr. House Captains, House Vice Captains and House Captains of each of the houses. Next was the Asst. Cultural Secretaries and Cultural Secretaries, then the Jr. Sports Captain, Sports Vice Captains and Sports Captain and finally the Asst. Head Boy, Asst. Head Girl, Head Boy and Head Girl.

After various dignitaries had spoken we had the Student Council Oath after which the Head Boy and Head Girl gave a few words and the Ceremony was concluded by the Investiture Song.



The Student Council for the year 2017-18

- Amelia Earhart

## Race for the Council

- Joshua Mathew

**T**he Student Council Election is the first major event of the year and it is something that everyone looks forward to. With the candidate speeches, campaigning, voting and the announcement of the results, the school is always buzzing with excitement during the election week. As a candidate it is obviously quite a stressful time as one has to clear a number of rounds and interviews, give a speech and go around school asking everyone for votes. Reaching out to 5 batches is not an easy task but social media definitely helped with Instagram and Snapchat being one of the main ways of garnering support. Voting took place on 1 July and the results were expected to be announced during dispersal, but it turned out to be an anticlimax as a glitch with the computers meant an agonising wait over the weekend for the candidates.

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# Awards Evening

- Ruth Susan Joseph

**A**t the Choice School, we strive to acknowledge and reward the meritorious and to encourage them to reach for greater heights. The Awards Ceremony is an event held annually to recognise the achievements of the students of our school. It is an evening during which trophies and certificates are given to those who won prizes for academic as well as non-academic events during the past school year. The Ceremony was held in our very own JTPAC on the 7th of July with many present to witness the ceremony. It was hosted by Kevin Tom, Parvathy Suresh, and Ruth Susan Joseph, all of class 12. Our Head Boy, Joshua Mathew, welcomed the gathering and our Head Girl, Ayesha John, closed the event by extending the vote of thanks. The prize winners were announced by Reshma Ma'am and Padma Ma'am. The subject toppers and batch topper, Nevin Thomas, of the batch of 2017, were also recognised. As for the entertainment, there were many performances, but the standout was the performance of an excerpt of the aria 'Turandot', with Anovi Sir on the vocals and students of Choice as the dancers. All in all, the ceremony was well organised, and the future of the students of Choice looks very bright, with the students exploring new ideas and carving niches for themselves in this world.



Anovi Sir and the students of The Choice School performing 'Turandot'

## The Young Entrepreneurs

-George Rohan

**R**ecently, a group of five class 10 students went to the USA to participate in TYE Global, an international entrepreneurship presentation competition with the potential to win over 4000 dollars. However, practically nobody except for those involved in the initiative knew what it was. Well, before you go around making puns about "ties", sit down and take a look at what TYE is, and how you could, not only, potentially win 4000 dollars, but earn something more valuable as well. So what is TYE? Well, TYE(TiE's Young Entrepreneurs) is an initiative taken by TiE(The Indus Entrepreneurs), an organisation which primarily consists of successful entrepreneurs. TYE was started with the sole purpose of capturing the interests of high school students and fostering the spirit of

entrepreneurship in them. The process consists of 3 phases, nicknamed 'Crawl', 'Walk' and 'Run'. The First Phase consists of a weekly workshop drawn out over a few months, where trainers, assigned by TYE, would teach the students the necessary skills required to formulate their idea; not limited to Design Thinking, creating a Lean Canvas, creating a winning presentation and much more. After gaining an understanding of these basic skills, the teams progressed to Phase 2 where they would split into teams, separate into different roles and begin to form a business plan based on their idea. They would work on their ideas. Fine tuning them to perfection. During this phase, all the teams in a particular TiE Chapter would begin to present their ideas before a panel, thus giving each group an idea of what they're going up against, as well as learning about how to refine their plan, from feedback given by the various judges. However, once Phase 3 begins, the competition gets real. While the initial presentations matter, the final round is

## The TYE Experience

- Rohan Sunny

**A**lthough TYE was aimed at high school students(grades 9-12), only the students from classes 9 and 11 were allowed to participate, due to the uncertainty regarding the future of the 10th and 12th batches. The beginning stages of TYE seemed promising but many students dropped out in the following months, citing exams and a lack of interest as the catalyst for their departure. As time passed, there were days where there would be only 1 or 2 students attending the learning sessions. However, once the time came for them to begin working on their ideas, a fraction of the participants began attending TYE again, driven with the desire to create a winning presentation. The inaugural state level TYE competition was held in Rotary Balbhavan in Panampally Nagar. There were 2 practice rounds and a final, each

held a few months after the other. The teams from Choice had lagged behind their competitors from the other schools and this was visible in the team presentations, with Team CampCom often feeling last and Team Krishi Connect, while presenting with energy, often missed out key details. Soon, with just a few weeks remaining before the concluding presentations, both teams stepped up their game considerably, forgoing the final weeks of their summer vacation to report to school for some hardcore brainstorming, toiling to achieve perfection. With only one team given the chance to go to the USA and compete against proven international teams, the stakes had never been higher. After a nerve-wracking final, the judges announced the results, with Team Campcom emerging victorious! This win felt even more special, considering that they had the youngest team in the competition, and were technically the least qualified of the bunch. The Krishi Connect team came a close second.

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# The Subhramanyan Effect

- Manasi Thiruvillakat

**M**s. Nalini Subhramanyan, over the past 3 years (completing 3 years this August), has become a fond fixture of this proud institution. With a history of 22 years of teaching, she's taken this school by storm in order to achieve greater heights. Ms. Subhramanyan received her post graduate degree along with her BEd from Delhi University and an MA in English honors.

**“**Choice has been wonderful. There's lots been academic enhancement and she has been deeply

involved in the planning of the school to further its progress. She has encouraged workshops for teachers, visiting faculty for students and has emphasised the importance of competitive tests for students, involving herself in the analysis of the results. There has been the encouragement of training sessions in order to familiarise students with testing trends.

Currently, Ms. Subhramanyan is attempting to push for enhancement classes after school to help overachievers in different subjects, along with math and science clubs.

## The Junior MUN

- Joel Geemon Korah

**T**he MUNing world took our school by storm once again through a student-run Model United Nations for students of The Choice School. In which, "delegates" of different countries worked together to form solutions to global agendas. The students had to behave as if they were a representative of a country in the United Nations. While being professional and formal, they worked hard to give their valuable insights and opinions to form, in the end, a final solution. This time, there were three committees and we are glad to say that all three put their resolution to vote and passed them. The MUN ensures that the students who took part would gain knowledge of other countries and of problems in the world.



The JMUN Organising Committee

# The Ashoka Adventure

- Joshua Mathew

**D**uring the summer holidays, I spent a week at Ashoka University in Sonepat, Haryana as a part of their Young Scholars Programme (YSP). The programme was aimed at giving high school students an idea of what liberal arts education is. The application process itself was like a dress rehearsal for college as I had to submit my Statement of Purpose, and an essay along with my marks and extra curricular activities. I was thrilled to be selected and the time I spent there was a real eye opener and gave me a first hand experience of how college life would be.

Over a week packed with activities, I attended lectures on history, economics, design thinking, film, literature, law, art and so much more. It was a nice change from the CBSE textbooks that are so rigid and one sided. The faculty were fantastic and they really made you think about the topic and question, quite essentially, everything connected to it. We also had workshops on writing and expressing our thoughts, which was given a great deal of importance at Ashoka. Debates were also a daily affair. Every evening we spent a couple of hours at the sports complex which was my favourite time of the day where students could choose from a range of sporting activities including football, squash, badminton, basketball, swimming, table tennis, cycling and, not to forget, frisbee which to my surprise was a favourite among the students there.

There were 120 of us in the program, from almost every part of the country. With me being the only one from Kerala. It was interesting mixing with people from different backgrounds and I forged friendships with many of them and still keep in touch. Even the seniors I met there were extremely friendly, helpful and intellectually developed.

What I loved was the relaxed atmosphere with a combination of world class facilities but the focus and commitment to excel!

## Summer in Symbiosis

- Manasi Thiruvillakat

**O**ver the summer I enrolled in the Symbiosis Summer School. The summer school consisted of two sets on a first come first serve basis. The first set, the Summer School, was available to college students who intended on a specialized course (photography, filmmaking, international relations and creative writing). The second set, the Pre-University Program, was available to students from 10th to 12th.

The Pre-University Program that I had taken part in consisted of three courses of our choice along with required career counseling and academic skill development segments. The program not only helped in introducing us to colleges and careers that we would enjoy, but due to the fact it was residential, there were also opportunities to interact with children from across the country. We learned from each other and also from the college interns that looked after us.

It's an opportunity that cannot be missed, so I would urge everyone to apply for programs like these.

## Science at its Best

- Dr. Padmanabhan Nair (Director of Academics [STEM])

**S**cience has always fascinated young minds. At the school level, science needs to be taught in such a way that the fascination takes the learners through the path of testing genuine ideas through experimentation, trials, repeated retrials, variations in procedures of trials until a temporary conclusion is reached which then warrants refinement. This is the way to breed young researchers. All of this requires dedication, devotion, perseverance and lot of hard work and continuous fine-tuning. As far as Science Practitioners are concerned, there is no time for relaxation instead they have to aim for the extra mile for their learners to achieve the above.

Academics generally are under increasing pressure to learn to teach well, better or differently than before. Academics must engage in self-reflection to better their teaching, or chat with colleagues and supervisors to improve their teaching. They must also watch senior staff and those who are known as excellent teachers, learning from their examples. These approaches are extremely powerful; sometimes even more so than the formal training programmes. Formal and less formal approaches can complement each other positively.

Society's expectations of school education are changing. People want more students than before to successfully obtain their School Leaving Qualification, no matter how prepared they were for their exit-level examinations. There is also an expectation that students should not just pass exams and receive a certificate or diploma. They must also attain real skills that will serve them well in the higher education band or in the workplace. Otherwise, artificial intelligence machines will take their place!

## ...The Tye Experience Continued from Pg.2

The CampCom team and their representative from school, Ma'am Nalini, were overjoyed but the excitement was short-lived with all eyes now set on the international competition held in Irvine, California. With only 2 weeks before their flight, they worked with some staff from TYE, but didn't comfortably finish their preparation before leaving for California on the 23rd, reaching America a day later. At the arena, a stall was set up, displaying their app and its features. They were fortunate enough to meet people from various countries, and saw how, while TYE Kerala was still in its infancy, the other seasoned chapters were practically bursting with experience. Though they put in all their effort, the next day the results were announced with Team Atlanta winning 1st place followed by Hubli and Delhi. "We weren't disappointed with the loss and are thankful for the once in a lifetime opportunity" said Joel, a member of team Campcom. They returned with their heads held high and were greeted with open arms. Despite the negative end, the positives of the experience greatly outweigh the final result. TYE has already shown that it's changed countless lives, and will continue to do so. Whether you want to be one of those, though, is your choice.



The CampCom Team at TIIE Global

## An Introduction to Haute Couture

- Rhea Menon

**W**hat are you taking in the 11th grade? This is an inevitable question and one which will definitely leave you stumped at one point of time. This lack of answer can get you branded as one of those people who just want to pass their exams and become an engineer or something, but does anyone stop to think why we might be confused? Obviously it isn't because we're racking our brains trying to figure out whether we want to become doctors or engineers, although that may have been the case 30 years ago. So, is it the lack of choice in the subjects available to us in the 11th grade? The rigid criterias to which we have to adhere while choosing our subjects may not provide us with combinations that appeal to us. Students may want to study biology with psychology or computer sciences along with sociology. There are so many careers out there that need a variety of skills, so much so that you simply won't believe a few demands a particular career may ask of you. On that note, picking a wrong career isn't the end of the world either! Just keep going until you find that one career that suits you best, regardless of it being an accountant or an undercover bridesmaid (yes, that's an actual job). Speaking of careers, job opportunities in the design field have become increasingly popular and these are perfect for the dynamic, easily bored youth of today. Keeping this in mind, our school has introduced Fashion Studies and Mass Media for the 11th grade, which can be chosen irrespective of the stream. Learning about the glamour, as well as the technicalities beneath the glamour in the fashion world is extremely interesting and has proven to be a refreshing break from the usual subjects. A major portion involves practical exercises, field visits and projects that get you thinking outside the box.

# Interschool Competition Report

- Aryan Nair

**C**ompetitions play a role in motivating students and do a lot more than just offer a prize. It gives students a chance to gain valuable experience, foster the important skills of teamwork and working under pressure and gives students a chance to showcase their talents. It also teaches them to adopt innovative techniques to outdo competitors and develop ideas and skills. The Cultural department once again proved fruitful with our students bringing home several prizes in multiple competitions held all over the district.

The trip to Chinmaya Vidyalaya for the **Chaitanya** interschool competition turned out to be the most successful one, when we left our competitors in the dust. The contingent stood out in every event, from music to fashion, and as a result, fetching the 1st prize overall. The Choice School also produced a performance to remember in the **Crossroads** interschool competition held at Global Public. Despite winning in several competitions, including the impersonation event and the team surprise event, they had to settle for a very closely contested 2nd place, but still showed immense determination under unfavourable circumstances. The Choice team's trip to Rajagiri Kalamassery for the **Vista** interschool competition was a memorable one too where, in spite of not being able to bring home the Overall trophy, they produced some standout performances. The Mime team's top class show left the audience speechless, landing them 1st place. The Music team placed 2nd with a show that struck a chord with the judges among others. In the **Enguizard** interschool Competition, a Harry Potter-themed literary event held this year at Bhavans, Elamakkara, the Choice contingent outwitted the competition on their way to securing the 2nd place Overall.

Lastly, Our trip to Vidyodaya School for the **Vox** interschool Competition proved to be a memorable one too. The brilliant quiz team secured 1st place, the talented photography team landed 2nd place, and the versatile and reliable Surprise team won 1st in their respective events.

Despite performing with great skill and determination, we weren't lucky enough to boast a notable prize haul in the **Fresco** Inter School competition (Rajagiri Christu Jayanti) and **Ensemble** Inter school Competition (St.Peters School). However, like the other competitions, both proved to be hubs of experiential learning and valuable knowledge.

## Practice Makes Perfect

- Esha Paul

**S**chool life plays a big role in carving out your personality as you grow older. The experiences we have of learning how to make friends, how to lose them, how to tackle the haters and bullies, how to deal with failure and even how to accept your success with gratitude are ones we will carry with us our entire lives. A big part of this is competition. Kerala's rich culture is integral in promoting students in school to take part in different events like music, art, dance, literary events, drama and more, and the high standards ensure that children always put their best foot forward and play to win. Most of the exposure I have received these past few years in school have been through participation in interschool competitions. Almost every school in the city conducts its own interschool fests, completely organised by the students themselves. All types of different events are held for students of all ages, and schools in the city participate to ultimately win the overall trophy and a name for themselves. This year, our school has already participated in many interschool events and more are yet to come. The students left no stone unturned when it came to perfecting their performances. Whether it was a mime, an enactment, dance, music or even cheering, they practiced for days on end, making sure they would live up to the name The Choice School has made for itself in the past few years. There was nothing short of excellence from the teams who performed and this was proved when we lifted the overall cup for the Chaitanya interschool fest held by Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Vaduthala and the runners up overall cup at Crossroads fest held by Global Public School. We had even won a few prizes at other events, reassuring everyone that our school still had the same fire in them. But as we are told time and again, it's not just about winning. The experience that we get is a prize in itself. Participating in three interschool events this year reaffirmed something that I already knew was important but never had: practice and confidence in myself. The more you practice, the more confident you become in your ability to win and thus the more chance you have of actually winning. This was something that I probably would not have understood soon enough if I didn't take the opportunities I was given, for it is programs like these which teach us the lessons a book ultimately cannot. I was also lucky enough to make new friends because of these events, from our school and other schools and I have priceless memories with them that I will treasure forever. It's prepared me to be ready for any situation, any obstacle life aims your way and taught me to choose my battles and even welcome failure, for only if I know what it feels like to lose, will I have the drive to win. My message for the school would be this: Make sure you reap the most out of the opportunities and the benefits you are given. Our school provides us with a lot of exposure, but none of it will matter if we do not take the initiative to use it to cultivate our talents and passions. Immerse yourself in the events at school and be an active Choician. Letting any of these opportunities go would be a shame, because trust me, life will never be this exciting.

# Impulse 2017

## The Oracle

- Naina Mary Pottamkulam

**I**mpulse was one experience of my school life that I'm sure I'll never forget. Organised and arranged by the senior students themselves, it was an exhibition of more talent and creativity than I've ever seen before. The program began on Wednesday, 20th September with the Spirit Walk – a tradition that The Choice School has been following for years. This includes a good spirit, who is chained and bound, while the bad spirits take over. Impulse takes place for the duration of the captivity of the good spirit, and comes to an end when he is released. Following the spirit walk was the inauguration of the program by our Chief Guest, Mrs. Usha Utup, who had the crowd mesmerized with her powerful voice. In fact, her voice was so beautiful that we didn't want her to stop even after three songs. Though this was a hard act to follow, the Choice School music group did an amazing job, and had the crowd spellbound with their mix of English, Hindi, and Greek songs. Soon, it was time for the start of the events. Since this year's theme was Greek Mythology in the 21st century, all the events required some element of this to be incorporated into them. The events included were dance, cheering, music, drama, fashion, art and sculpture, and the surprise event, and, being a part of the judges committee, I was blessed to have a first-hand view of most of these. What surprised me the most was how well all the schools managed to incorporate the underlying themes into their acts. In fact, one of my personal favourites was the fashion event, and I admired the way each team managed to portray elements of Greek Mythology into clothes that one would wear everyday. After the winding up of the events, it was Choice School's turn to shine, with fashion and dance events that kept the crowd captivated. Then came the icing on the cake, which was a jamming session with none other than our Chief Guest Mrs. Usha Utup, who once again took away the breath of the crowd. Finally, after much anticipation, it was time to announce the results, with Global Public School emerging victorious.



## Why Do People Read Fiction?

- Ruth Susan Joseph

**N**owadays, fiction is one of the most popular genres of literature. For a lot of people, fictional characters take up a large part of daily conversation. Their lives, their deaths, their relationships, and so on. But what is it that makes them so interesting to us? Is it because they're so similar to us that we relate to them easily? Or is it because they're so different that we can't help but try to understand them? I think it's a mix of both. Authors have the talent to execute this amazing feat of weaving in real-life possibilities with completely far-fetched ideas, leaving us hooked. But why are we so hooked? Is it just entertainment, or something more?

Fiction allows us to dive into worlds where the impossible seems possible and the crazy seems normal. Where tapping a single brick could take you to a magical world or being at the wrong place at the wrong time could plunge you into a thrilling romance.

The authors take us to new worlds that are still very much a part of us even after turning that fateful last page. "The End" is hardly ever the end of a book, as we try to extend the stories through our own fanfiction, fan theories, and more. However unbelievable our favourite fiction is, we still wish it to be true. That, I think, is the reason that people read fiction. It gives us an unreal reality that we want as a reality in our own lives, but we cannot possibly have, so we keep going back.

# Alumni Connect

- Arvind Thadi

**W**hat do you call a creature that walks on two legs, spends a quarter of their day sleeping, a quarter spent studying, hunched over books another, quarter spent in tuition centres preparing for something they aren't even passionate about, and spends the entire day stressed? If you guessed an Indian School Student, congratulations! We make our lives hell for our education. Spending most of our waking life in front of books, to the point that we end up not having a life, the best part being we don't even learn anything from the books. But why do we do this? Well, it's pretty much the same reason we do anything. We're scared. Scared that we won't be able to have a future, or scared that we'll end up failing in life. Not to say these fears aren't warranted, but do they have to dictate our entire being? At the end of the day, we rule ourselves, not fear. Sure, we don't know what we might want. This can lead to making hasty choices, which you could regret later down the road. Or, it might just lead you to make some of the best decisions you could. The point of Alumni Connect wasn't just to check in on our old students and see what they're up to, but to learn from them, and listen to whatever advice they might have. Our graduates have achieved so much, in so many different fields, all over the world. Might as well see if it's worth anything.

**Aishwarya Sreenivas** (Fun fact: Teaches a salsa class in her spare time) - High school students might remember her, as she was a popular figure in her years here. A constant figure in the school council, she could be seen on her feet almost constantly around her last years here. She's a rising sophomore at Cornell, one of the prestigious Ivy League institutions in the USA, studying architecture, and is currently doing an internship with 'Cetraruddy', the same architecture firm that designed the Choice School's Thiruvalla branch. In the summer, she was part of a project for the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), which managed to bag MoMA's young architecture award. However, she never realised that architecture was what she wanted to do until early into her final year at Choice. "I always knew I wanted to do something related to art, but it never came through. During 9th, the teachers began sending me for art competitions, and that's when it became obvious that 'Okay, this is what I want to do for the rest of my life!' She doesn't think that the group you take in school should limit your possibilities after it. "The system back home tries to make it look like whatever group you take has to be what you do, but it's not like that. Once you get out of school you start to realise that, there's so much you can do with the little knowledge you have. So I don't think anyone should be restricted by the groups that they take."

## Excerpt

**AT:** What's something that you would want to tell students in school right now that you wish someone told you while you were in school?

**AS:** I definitely want them to know that it's not just about the grades. A lot of people seem to think that the best student is the one with the best grades, which isn't true at all! I think it's important, especially while you're in school, to just try as many things as you can... and keep doing what you love! Now that I'm in college, I've definitely decided that the one thing I wanna do is just try everything I can, no matter how stupid it may seem. If I like it, if I want to try it, I'm going to go try it.



**Ranjini Haridas** (Fun fact: Is TIGHT with KS Chitra) - Yes, the Ranjini Haridas. To those living under a rock, here are a few highlights off her portfolio. She was named Miss Kerala in 2000, hosted Asianet's Star Singer program for five seasons, winning the Asianet award for Best Anchor in 3 of those seasons, was lucky enough to be a social escort for Diego Maradona during his visit to Kerala, and currently hosts hit celebrity interview show, Run Baby Run. And the best part? She's a Choice Alumnus! However, contrary to the extroverted personality on display these days, Haridas was quite the shy one in school. "Till about 8th or 9th grade, I don't think I was super talkative or chatty! I didn't really go up for solo competitions, and I pretty much only went for the group dances or songs. The only thing I did myself was pretty much just saying the pledge! Sometimes a lot of these things just happen by chance. I think Choice laid a great foundation for me, and I'm happy I had such great friends and teachers." She misses her school days immensely, and she feels those days were easier, compared to the current generation. "Once you're an adult, you're going to miss your school days. The fact that you don't have any responsibilities in life was such an amazing feeling, other than studying and scoring. It was pressure free, again, except for the pressure of getting good marks, and that's the way life should be. Compared to today, life then was very simple, and we weren't as stressed. I have very strong memories of Choice, and I wish I could go back."

## Excerpt

**AT:** What advice would you give to children who might want to become hosts like you?

**RH:** I think one thing that you really need to do is just be yourself. They might say "Oh an anchor has to do that, has to do this," actually not. The main thing is to just be a great moderator, and entertain the crowd and according to the type of show you have to be suitable, you know? But the only way you'll be able to change yourself to do this stuff is to accept yourself first. This doesn't have to only apply to hosting, and it's something that applies to anything in general. I wouldn't be able to go onstage for anything if I hadn't accepted myself, for who I am, my limitations, so on.



**Nidhi Suresh** (Fun fact: Spent a long time invested in the studying of cows) - From teaching kids to dance to interviewing militants, Nidhi has made quite a Choice. After moving to Choice from Bangalore, Nidhi became popular as a dancer in school, from participating in interschool competitions to preparing the younger batches for the school displays at the annual Sports Days. She subsequently went and completed her dance diploma, but after realising that dance "wasn't her thing", she got a degree in English Communication and got a job writing for the Kashmir Observer. Right now, a lot of kids are confused about their future, and they don't know what they should do. According to Nidhi, that's the best place to be at. "I've always had a plan in my life, it's always been a different plan every time! It's important to be engaged in the idea of wanting to have a plan; it's dangerous to take life a little too easily. I think it's important to always be interesting in anything, it doesn't matter what it is." She didn't fail to mention how she feels students in Choice can also tend to be a little lazy. "The students all come from a very good economic background, and so a lot of kids take it easy, everything's served on a platter. That was something that really annoyed me while I was studying there. Choice pampers you a lot, and it's easy to get laidback in a place like that."

## Excerpt

**AT:** What made you choose journalism? Why Kashmir?

**NS:** Well, because I hated it! I hated what I was seeing; I hated television news (I still do to a large extent). The newspapers were extremely confusing, especially about Kashmir, like newspapers from Kashmir had very different conversations than what national media reports at the same time. So, because I hated it so much, at some point I realised it's very easy to sit and hate something from the outside, so then I just decided I needed to move to Kashmir, realising the best way to do it was to just join a local newspaper there. So then I just applied, and it just happened!



# The Rickshaw Man

- Sridevi Gopalakrishna(Director Academics)

I did this every day. Until I was old enough to take the public transport to school. I had for company my little sister and five others. Every morning at 8 I would hear the distinct clang of the metal bell. Ganesh, the tall well-built man with a twinkle in his eyes would arrive at my door step. He was punctual and always wore a smile that would erase all Monday morning blues.

At first he would help us on to his modified tricycle, which to me was a humble version of an Elizabethan carriage. It had a soft padded seat and being the senior most, I was entitled to sit on it along with two others. A wooden plank was fitted to the right and the opposite side for the juniors to sit. He would tuck our school bags beneath the wooden planks and hang our lunch kits to the sides. Next he would lift the long hanging rod and secure it to a hook that kept us safe within this cubicle. A thin red towel would serve as his headgear. Pating his seat, he would get onto it and start pedaling barefoot through the streets.

I felt like a queen surveying the lanes. A collapsible half hood protected us from the sweltering heat. At the next stop, little girls and boys would climb onto the rickshaw. He would arrange them like he was arranging a stack of same sized books. This little cubicle defined our school journey. He followed a rhythm, ringing his bell and sometimes applying the brakes to avoid any mishap. He was responsible for our safe journey, our parents trusted him and we were his joy as well as his source of livelihood.

Today, when I read about the gruesome murder of a little boy in a school and many more unspeakable atrocities committed against children, I recede into a shell. I ask questions that have no answers. Somewhere along the road to civilization we have lost it. In my mind's eye I see the familiar faces that held me as a child. Caring hands, gentle faces, protective glances and loving embraces. They came to me as soldiers of God. Where have they disappeared? Why have some become so sick in their minds that they pluck innocent lives? Has this tribe become extinct?

P.S

Last week my sister sent me a picture of an old man and asked "Guess who?" It took me a few seconds. I recognized the twinkle in the eyes. I replied "Our rickshaw man, Ganesh".

## Fresh Air

- Ria Jovan Joe

**E**xercise isn't just getting sweaty, tanned and sick from the sun, it's as important for your body as eating or drinking water.

Being inactive is equally harmful to your body as smoking for a long period of time, say the experts in this field. It prevents heart diseases and high blood pressure, because no matter what you weigh, being active boosts the HDL or "good cholesterol", decreases the unhealthy triglycerides in your body, and keeps your blood running smoothly, which decreases the risk of cardiovascular diseases. Exercise also prevents stroke, metabolic syndrome, type 2 diabetes as well as a number of types of cancer, arthritis and falls.

Besides these, the next time you're feeling sad, angry, stressed or simply having one of those times when things aren't going the way you want them to, try running a few laps around your house or down your street, try cycling or any kind of exertion and you will find yourself feeling a whole lot better and more carefree. This is because when you do any physical activity, it stimulates various brain chemicals that leave you happy and relaxed.

Exercise also makes you look better and boosts your self esteem. If you think that exercising is too much work to simply look good and that skipping meals are easier, then you're terribly mistaken. Skipping meals doesn't help as you're denying the energy that your body needs to help you get through the day and it just makes you look weak instead of slimmer. It also doesn't really help you lose fat especially if you try making up for skipping a meal by eating.

To conclude, go outside. Get some fresh air. Get some exercise and you'll definitely see a change in your life.



## A Young Girl's Perspective

- Mehnaaz Mather

**T**he world doesn't have good and bad people anymore, it's not possible to classify humans into the two categories because every good person has bad in them and every bad person has good in them. You must have heard, there are three versions of yourself. One, you show to the world. Two, you show to your friends and three, you show to yourself. Since you yourself haven't discovered who you are ,you're so very vulnerable to others' judgement and you give in so easy because of your insecurities. Now friends, can you really call them that if they're not obligated to stand beside you through your hardships? You can't because whether or not you accept it you expect that from every person you meet. Personalities differ, perspectives differ but that shouldn't stop you from being who you are. Who are you? You're the person you try best to hide because you assume that you're not good enough to be in the world. The fake profile covering you like fondant on a cake. It's not necessary but it makes you seem perfect. You must have heard the saying "nobody's perfect" and as far as each and every one of us know, there's those few people among our friends, our class, our batch or our school that we envy and those are who we want to be. But who knows the things going on in their lives? The picture perfect image creates a sort of thought in your head that you don't deserve to be living in this planet. Cut yourself, Hurt yourself, physically or emotionally. Why? That one life you have and just because your life isn't unicorns and rainbows you decide to end it you decide to torture it and you decide to give up. The bright side, not every story has a bright side now that's something we ourselves have to create from the way we perceive the situation. This world, has dark webs, dark places, dark issues but we also do have people with humanity, we have smart and educated people. Success being put into good use. Yet we aim to focus on the bad. I still don't understand.

Sometimes because of your insecurities you tend to seek attention and when you want to receive that attention you would go to any extent of negativity for the fake sympathy. Now, here's something I have to say to each and every one of you - not everyone leads a dark life but not everyone leads a beautiful life. Life is the way you perceive it.

## Disney Has Been Telling Us Lies

- Diya Isha

**A**re you one of those people who believe in fairy tales? When I was nine, I believed that I had a fairy godmother who'd rescue me from all the dictation exams I had to face. Well ... she never came. That's when reality hits you like a ton of bricks and you depend on fiction for the mere sake of having a euphemism for the harsh and prosaic reality check you encountered. Wouldn't it be ironic to fathom that sometimes, fairy tales are not actually blissful in all aspects? Yes. There are stories where the prince doesn't show up on time or where the fairy god mother forgets her wand. One tragic illustration of juxtaposition would be that of the Disney version and the original version of the story 'Little mermaid': In the Disney version –Ariel, a beautiful mermaid, falls in love with a human prince. She wanted to transform into a human and for that, she traded her voice for legs. Luckily for her – and the viewers – the prince was completely content with Ariel the way she was, and they live happily ever after. Love isn't just blind, it can be deaf too! But hey, let's see the contrast with comparison to the real story. In Hans Christian Andersen's 'Little Mermaid', Ariel again exchanges her voice for feet. But Ariel finds it really painful to walk on her newly acquired feet. She loved the prince with all her heart and to please him, she danced. It is a blasphemy that the prince married another woman at the end of the story. This leads to the appalling death of Ariel and she dissolved into sea foam signifying the transient notion of love. The truth is a matter of perspective but it is quite crystal clear that fairy tales don't exactly exist. But ... they can, yeah? We'll never know. Fairy tales aren't just plain idealistic thoughts of a kid who loves princesses and tiaras. It is the instinct to have an assurance that hope is something we can hold onto. The real story of Ariel is regarded as a 'fairy-tale' even though it has a tragic end. But they say it's not the end if it's not right. We all are living a fairy-tale. We just don't have seven dwarfs, pumpkins that turn into carriages, and princes that search out for us with glass slippers. But, we have red veins, magic in our souls and this teeny tiny thing called hope.

# Study Smart

Modern Help for the Modern Student

- Arvind Thadi

## Khan Academy

This amazing little website could probably put a lot of your teachers out of business (Just kidding, we love you).

Remember that horrible concept in Physics that you could just never grasp? Remember when you spent more time wondering why algebra kept asking you to find his ex, instead of actually learning how to find his x? Well, that's why Khan Academy exists.

Founded by Sal Khan, it provides educational videos for almost every topic in school, and even for preparation for important tests like the JEE examinations! The best thing about it is the fact that it's completely free. Khan Academy is a non-profit website, and probably the best thing you never knew you needed.

Visit khanacademy.com for more information.

## Seeker

Science has never been this quirky. We all love science, either directly or indirectly. Everyday, new discoveries are being made in some corner of the world, something potentially life changing, that could rock the foundations of what we think we know, or something that's just plain awesome. But how would we know this? It's not like we have the time to check out every single ground breaking discovery. The kind people at Seeker probably do though. Hosted by lovable science dorks Amy and Trace, Seeker covers the latest in scientific studies and revelations, without resorting to the confusing language. The simple dialogues and short 2 or 3-minute videos entertain and enlighten millions of people around the world.

Check out amazing ideas at Seeker's YouTube channel.

## Seeing the World

- Esha Paul

**O**n 5 September 2017, 41 students and 4 teachers from our school had the pleasure of going on a cross country tour across Europe. We left from the Delhi Airport on the 6th and after a 7 and a half hour plane ride, we landed in the Eternal City, Rome. The next day was officially the beginning of our tour as we made our way into Vatican City and visited the Vatican Museum with its religious artefacts, the famed Sistine Chapel and St.Peter's Basilica. The day continued with a visit to the ruins of Rome's gladiator arena, the Colosseum and the Pantheon. The city itself caught our attention more than the sights. Its cobblestoned paths, lively restaurants and shops and its amicable, musical citizens were a stark contrast to what we Keralites are used to. The next morning, we moved to the tiny city of Pisa, where we saw the famed Leaning Tower. Later, we made our way to the town of Ivrea where we stayed overnight before heading to Geneva, Switzerland. As the days dwindled down, so did the temperature and we began pulling out our multiple jackets and gloves in Switzerland.

On reaching Geneva, we were taken to CERN, the European Council for Nuclear Research, where we were given an insight into the world of particle physics and saw various instruments that helped the scientists perform experiments that helped them make some landmark discoveries. The next day was taken up by a city tour of Geneva, with a guide who explained the city's importance in the history of war and peace. The day ended with leisure time at the mesmerizingly beautiful Geneva Lake, the highlight of which was the Ferris wheel, which gave us a bird's eye view of the whole city. Our next stop was Germany, where we rode through the dense, deciduous Black Forest and visited the Cuckoo Clock museum within it, where we learnt about the history of clock making that began in that very forest. On our second day there, after visiting the Mercedes Benz Museum, we made our way to Brussels, Belgium, where we were guests at the Euro Space Centre. At the Centre we got the opportunity to train like astronauts, using state of the art technology to mimic a walk on the moon. We also made models of rockets, which we saw being launched into the air. That same afternoon, we left for Paris, where our first stop was the Eiffel Tower. Because we reached at around 6 in the evening, we were lucky enough to witness the Tower in daylight and in the dark, fully lit up and sparkling. It was nothing short of glorious. Though we were all tired, none of us could

# Prends ça , Quick!

- Anna Mathew Lawrence

**N**ous savons tous combien tout le monde aime la restauration rapide. Moi aussi. Mais il ne faut pas nier le préjudice qu'il nous fait. Quelques-uns d'entre nous, doublés comme des freaks de la santé, prendre soin de notre santé, et de se détourner de ces délices, et choisissez des options plus saines.

Prenez le français par exemple. Ils étaient accro à la restauration rapide, et la plupart d'entre eux sont encore. Mais ces derniers temps, nous pouvons constater qu'ils sont retournés à leur plats traditionnels, incroyables et à la bouche.... Je veux dire, si vous obtenez des aliments comme ça, pourquoi veulent-ils la nourriture rapide? Mais je suppose qu'il fait un certain temps pour que le penny tombe.

Les touristes qui visitent Paris préfèrent généralement manger de la nourriture rapide, car il prend littéralement moins d'une minute pour recevoir votre nourriture. Mais récemment selon un sondage on a observé que c'était tout le contraire. Les touristes préfèrent la cuisine traditionnelle comme le bœuf bourguignon et la quiche aux fast foods comme les hamburgers et les pizzas. Fait dans la ville de l'amour, ce n'est pas un secret que beaucoup d'amour a été fait pour préparer ces plats raffinés.

De sorte que la prochaine fois que vous visitez la France ou tout pays européen pour cette question, assurez-vous d'essayer les délices traditionnels de la région.

## From the Other Side

- Devanshi Gupta

**R**achel ma'am has been with The Choice School for an astounding 23 years now and is definitely an inspiration to all of us.

*I don't work. I am paid for doing what I enjoy doing most, everyday.*

From being a kindergarten teacher to the principal of The Choice School, Thiruvalla, she captures the hearts of children wherever she goes. Not only does she impart joy to the students through her warm hugs, wide smile and understanding, empathetic attitude, she also finds teaching students extremely joyous.

She has a vision of expanding the name 'Choice' and making it known across Kerala, India and even the world. She believes that there is a lot to be done in society and is proud to head Choice School, Thiruvalla- a new concept, a different culture altogether- which she believes is a small yet significant step in bringing a positive change to the lives of millions of children around the world.

"For me, leaving Choice school, Tripunithura was extremely difficult, it was insane. I came here as a mark of gratitude to the institution, however, with the results seen among my 200 children here in Thiruvalla, I know that we are here for a purpose. I miss you all-terribly. My prayers and blessings will always be with you." she tells us. We miss you too, ma'am.

contain our excitement for the next day, the most awaited part of the trip: Disneyland. They say Disneyland is a magical place, and they're absolutely right. The rides, the cosplayers, the food and most importantly the Magic Castle, it was all like something out of a fairy tale. Since we were with our friends, nothing could stop us from going on the most dangerous and heart stopping rides and surprisingly, our teachers joined us for some of them too! The last day in Europe was spent in the Louvre Museum in Paris, where we saw the famous Mona Lisa. Contrary to our beliefs, the Mona Lisa wasn't the only beautiful painting there. Huge canvases of intricately detailed paintings ran through all the walls of the museum. Every single student was enraptured by the beauty and sheer magnificence of the art around them. We also visited the Notre Dame, one of the oldest churches, the setting of one of the most famed classics, The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Our final activity in Paris was a serene river cruise along the River Seine. This trip was like a dream come true, but the beautiful reality surpassed anything my mind could come up with. Very few times in my life have I been speechless, and this trip was one of them. To say a simple thank you to our school that made this possible would be inadequate, but words are all a man has. One thing I will always carry with me from this trip, is to remember that it is you who makes your life worth living, you who makes the memories that will sustain you, you who makes life beautiful. Because, 'la vie est belle' - Life truly is beautiful.



The European tour students along with the accompanying teachers in front of the Leaning Tower of Pisa

# STUDENTS' CORNER

## Turning Tables

- Hayathi Ayoobkhan

You told me, that the tables had shifted,  
moved along their legs into some other  
space  
that the shutters had come down  
with the blinds  
and it was down for good.  
You said this place held memories  
that etched into the parts of your mind  
you let it navigate through  
and I thought of the tables turning away  
in departure as their wood settled another  
grim layer of  
dust and particles  
and I thought of how similar tables would  
move into the spaces you'd let them occupy  
and reclaim their title  
all with their same legs and spine  
standing straight across a plain, against which you  
set cards and pushed down charades  
and I thought of how the things we leave behind  
take up portions of us, clinging to our skin  
and I thought of telling you  
that this feeling won't escape you  
but I want you to know  
you can always trace your mind around maps  
of places that exist only in memory  
revisit them sometimes, and bring your defenses along.



A painting by Arjun Devraj 7B

## 'George' by Alex Gino

- Arvind Thadi

**G**eorge is a heartwarming novel about a young ten year old transgender child, and how "she" learns to be herself and come out to others as well. According to writer Alex Gino (who personally identifies as genderqueer), the story came to be after someone mentioned, "There should be a novel about a trans kid!" That simple comment jumpstarted a twelve year journey which culminated into one of the most culturally relevant novels for the children of today. George lives with her mother and elder brother, Scott, in a small town in Pennsylvania. In her class, she's an outcast, for no good reason except for the fact that she isn't like any of the other boys. The only friend she has is her spirited best friend, Kelly. Despite the closeness of the two kids, Kelly is unaware about George's inner conflict, and just thinks that she's a typical introvert. However, after George's class

prepares to put up a dramatization of these two characters share is incredible, 'Charlotte's Web' for the school, she paired with the typical childish innocence. becomes determined to play the eponymous spider herself, regardless of her physical identity. I initially bought the book as a childish way of annoying him an entertaining chap to watch. At friends named George, not really caring about what was inside. Although the book is meant for children of the same age as the protagonist, it doesn't have to be limited to that demographic and has proved enjoyable for ages all around the spectrum. The novel is nothing like I've read before. Then again, there isn't much like it around. While the writing is simple, it's genuine and honest. George is amiable and easy to relate to, because you see she's just a normal kid, not an over complicated Frankenstein of emotions like some of today's young characters. It's easy to root for her, and she's practically an open book. The other characters aren't far behind in their emotional depth! Kelly, the ultimate best friend is also isn't overly preachy, or needlessly though! Kelly, the ultimate best friend is emotional. It's simple. My only qualm is pretty much energy personified. The bond that I didn't discover it earlier.

## A Friend to Reminisce

- Dhruv Menon

An unbecoming failure he was,  
Everyone ignored him because  
They could not recognise his inner potential  
Only I knew that he was special.  
I was the only friend he had,  
Yet he would never sit sad.

The sky was dark and grave  
But he stood very brave  
The exam thunderstorm had finally come  
There was an all encompassing gloom.

The unbearable stench of failure was  
Like the aroma of delicious food to him  
He said with an air of tremendous authority  
"I will score more than all of you  
And prove to you my ability."

Surprisingly so he did and won  
His success story had already begun  
I will always treasure him in my heart  
Till my soul departs.

**GEORGE**

ALEX GINO

The cover of 'George' by Alex Gino