

# The World Outside

After two years of frantically scribbling CAS reflections, rushing from one activity to another, and organizing events, our CAS program is finally coming to an end. The memories range from the exciting, the tiring, the thought-provoking and the challenging. It is not only the enjoyable experiences that will stay with me, but also the frustrating and difficult times. Perhaps it is through these more challenging times that I've learned the most through CAS. It has helped me look beyond the books and computer screens to the world outside our classroom. A world, in which we were all students and teachers at the same time.

Over the course of the CAS program I've edited the school newspaper, played with the students from the Mtoni Community School, played Netball on the school team, acted in the school production of The Crucible and was a member of the Student Council. Perhaps the activity I was most heavily involved in was *The Image* – the school newspaper, where I served as co-editor-in-chief for the two years. The activity involved assigning articles, editing articles, revising layout and often writing editorials and other articles as well. Being editor was often a difficult job as we had to balance criticism with encouragement while editing articles and had to make sure the articles in the newspaper would interest a range of people. I enjoyed working on the paper as it became an arena for student's to voice their opinions about their school.

I found my action requirement to be the most challenging aspect of the CAS program as it forced me to take up activities that I wouldn't normally be involved in. It led me to join the Netball team at school where I took part in two tournaments. Through Netball I was challenged to try something new and to persevere with something that I wasn't necessarily good at. It introduced me to the value of team work and sportsmanship and encouraged me to take part in sport outside the CAS program as well.

However the most rewarding of my CAS activities was definitely working with the children from the Mtoni Community School. In this activity students with mental and physical disabilities visited our school campus every week and we played with them in the swimming pool as well as did art activities and other outdoor activities with them. I was in charge of organizing the activities outside the pool. We did a range of activities with the students including playing with hula hoops and parachutes, finger painting, cooking and playing with bubbles. It was the most rewarding as I began to realize that with empathy and compassion you are able to touch lives of others even if in very small ways. Even though the students from Mtoni and us were from worlds apart it was the ability to sympathize and bridge such differences that will stay with me.

Through CAS I've been able to take my education a step outside the classroom, and have had the opportunity to take previous learning experiences to places where it really matters.