

10 YEARS SPENT IN HANGZHOU



Yu-Tin "Cherry" Hsiao is a senior at Hangzhou International School. She has spent the last ten years at HIS, seizing opportunities and excelling at whatever she puts her mind to. She is a National Honor Society member, three sport athlete, All ACAMIS Tournament Soccer Star, member of the student council, and dedicated community service member. Cherry recently sat down with me to talk about a lifetime (for her) at HIS.

Good morning Cherry. First off, is Cherry your actual name?

No, Cherry is not my actual name. My legal name is Yu-Tin Hsiao.

So, in essence, you have an alias? Like on a tv show or a movie?

[slightly amused] Cherry is just a nickname that I use at HIS

I love hearing international stories. So please, tell me where you were born, what your ethnicity is, and where you have lived?

I am Asian, and I was born in Taiwan. However, I have lived in Hangzhou, China since I was eight years old.

So how many languages do you speak then?

I only speak two languages: Mandarin and English.

You have been successful inside the classroom and outside of the classroom. How do you balance your workloads?

I have heard some students say that there is simply not enough time in a day to do everything, but that's not true because you just need to use time efficiently. For example, when I am in class I don't goof off with my friends; I take a lot of notes and ask as many questions as possible, so later I don't have to relearn everything from the beginning when exams comes around. When I go to practice I am ready and focused, and I give 100% of my attention to the task at hand. Just as importantly, my extracurricular activities are a way for me to relieve stress. When I get too anxious about schoolwork I go workout. And when I get too worried about my athletic performance I take a break from sports and go study.

To be successful both inside and outside of the classroom requires a lot of determination and discipline.

What other extracurricular activities do you participate in?

In addition to participating in volleyball, I joined the basketball, soccer teams, Community Outreach, and Student Council. Through hard work and involvement in extra-curricular activities, I became a National Honor Society member my junior year of high school. While I am an active member of our school, I have also done things outside of the H.I.S. community, such as illustrating for children's books and volunteering in hospitals.

How does participating in these extracurricular activities contribute to your education and growth?

These extracurricular activities, specifically the sports teams, and Student Council have taught me two very important skills: leadership and teamwork. Leadership means much more than the title of captain or president because you don't have to have a title to lead. When my teammates see me work hard they will also push themselves to their own limit. You can be a leader by simply being positive and encouraging regardless of the situation. The ability to work well with others is critical, and I have not always been the most diplomatic; however, being a part of a team has enabled me to understand that not every person gets motivated the same way I do. The leadership and teamwork skills I have learned from extracurricular involvement will surely come in handy during college and my career because I will have to work with others in the future.

Moreover, being a part of a sports program has pushed me to always be optimistic and hope for the better. Hope is really important concept in my education and growth because it is what keeps me going when the current situation suggest otherwise. As the leader of our sports teams I follow Napoléon Bonaparte's words, "[a] leader is a dealer in hope."

After having spent 10 years at Hangzhou, how much differently do you think your life would have gone had your parents never relocated here?

I believe that my life would have gone very differently if my mom had decided not to relocate to Hangzhou. No one would believe me if I told them I used to be very shy because many people here see me as a confident young lady, and it is H.I.S. that fostered my confidence. I went to a public school in Taiwan although I didn't remember a lot I do recall that they did not allow much room for independence. At H.I.S. teachers encourage students to be creative and be independent individuals and thinkers, where students are in charge of their own learning. However, in Taiwan, I was taught to not ask many questions, and just accept the information as they are given. If my mom had not moved to Hangzhou I do not think I would have ever become such a well-rounded student with skills needed beyond classrooms.