

International House magazine



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

International
House

Global leadership for a better world

Ambassador Chowdhury
and the culture of peace

No straws attached: one
resident's global campaign

Meet Dr Jean Lau Chin for
the APA

Alumni profiles, essays
and news





We acknowledge the tradition of custodianship and law of the Country on which the University of Sydney campuses stand. We pay our respects to those who have cared and continue to care for Country.

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Cover: Mallika Arya, IHMA environment and welfare officer, and co-founder of "No Straws Attached" global campaign. Photo: Bradley Kunda.

Inside cover: International House rotunda, main building, and W H Maze Building. By Stephen Sanders (IH 2016-18).

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2017 was a significant year for International House. We are deeply grateful to all who donated during our 50th anniversary year, and particularly to those of you who remain ongoing donors to the house.



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From the Chair of Council and Director

“The hardest problems on the planet will not have singular solutions, nor will they be resolved with singular attempts. Those must be worked on – diligently, collaboratively, with perseverance, and with patience.”

These concluding remarks were made by Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury at his address during last year’s 50th anniversary gala luncheon. They speak to the need for global leadership if we want to make our planet a better place in which to live. The articles in this issue all resonate with this theme. They provide a snapshot of the inspiring leadership demonstrated by our residents, who show a healthy concern for some of the most significant issues of our time.

This year’s IHMA environment and welfare officer is a young masters of sustainability student from India. Mallika Arya has already made an international name for herself on social media for her global campaign “no straws attached”. She writes frankly and reflectively about the need “to start taking baby steps” to reduce the presence of single-use plastics in our lives.

This semester, International House is also home to Professor Jean Lau Chin, who is visiting from Adelphi University on a Fulbright Scholarship as Distinguished Chair at the National Centre for Cultural Competence. In an interview with resident Isha Sandhu, she makes an important distinction between diversity in representation and diversity in leadership. Her thoughts on how International House “operationalises” and “concretises” diverse leadership make for rewarding reading.

For the first time, we invited our students to contribute outstanding essays they had authored as part of their degree programs. Masters of public health student and medical doctor Sayan Mitra answered the call with an intriguing piece about the worrying prevalence of diabetes in India. He looks at how even exceptional research from leading health organisations is struggling to find ways of reducing the prevalence of diabetes in a society that is burdened by unhealthy lifestyles.

It was a singular honour for us to host Bangladeshi diplomat Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury as part of last year’s 50th anniversary celebrations. His abridged keynote speech is presented in this issue, along with his urgent message of empowering women to have an equal place in advancing the culture of peace.

Sustainable and diverse leadership is now in serious need in all walks of life. It is our role, as leaders within academic residential communities, to provide pathways and opportunities for today’s generation of students to become tomorrow’s global leaders, one small step at a time.



Steve Mark AM
Chair of Council, International House



Jessica Carroll
Director, International House



Leading the culture of peace

For Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, the culture of peace has been more than his life's work. It is integral to human existence.

It is a distinct honour to be invited as the keynote speaker for the culminating event of the 50th anniversary celebrations of International House at the prestigious University of Sydney. I am particularly delighted as this International House – and for that matter all I-Houses in other universities – is a place where students can learn to relate to other people from other parts of the world, as well as respectfully debate differences in values and cultures, learn more about world issues, and really begin to become true global citizens.

It is fascinating to know that your residents hail from every continent, and that 22% of the world's countries are represented in the house. I am very impressed by International House's program of activities, which includes its global leadership program, social and cultural events, peer learning and support, roundtable discussions, and its scholarships and grants programs, which includes the remarkable Davis Projects for Peace initiative.

Let me emphasise that anniversaries are meaningful when they trigger renewed enthusiasm amongst all. I am happy to see that your vision for the future is to expand the house to offer more places, which will provide students with the opportunity to participate in and obtain a truly unique IH experience. To achieve this, your aim is to develop a large state-of-the-art facility for 500+ residents on campus. You have my sincere best wishes for that.

My own life has been shaped over the last half-century by various realities, particularly my challenges, struggles and difficulties.

Throughout, my family has been my greatest strength. Defying all obstacles as a young Pakistani diplomat, I was inspired to join the liberation war for Bangladesh, and engaged as a freedom-fighter to mobilise global support for our sovereign existence as a nation. I was deeply humbled by the opportunity to represent my country at the United Nations, thereafter becoming the first Under-Secretary-General from Bangladesh at the UN headquarters.

“Women bring a new breadth, quality and balance of vision to a common effort of moving away from the cult of war towards the culture of peace. Women's equality makes our planet safe and secure.”



Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury.

“In everything we do, in everything we say, and in every thought we have – there is a place for peace.”

My life’s experience has taught me to value peace and equality as the essential components of our existence. They unleash positive forces of good that are so needed for human progress. My initiatives at the UN General Assembly on the culture of peace, in the Security Council on equality of women’s participation, and in leading the UN’s prioritisation of the needs of the world’s most vulnerable countries, all show that when head and heart join to do something big and worthwhile for humanity, no obstacle is insurmountable.

Peace is integral to human existence: in everything we do, in everything we say, and in every thought we have – there is a place for peace. We should not isolate peace as something separate. We should know how to relate to one another without being unpleasant, without being violent, without being disrespectful, without neglect, without prejudice. Once we can do that, we will be able to take the next step in building the culture of peace. We need to focus on empowering the individual so that each of us individually becomes an agent of peace and nonviolence.



Left to right: Jessica Carroll (IH Director), Sayan Mitra (Senior Resident), Steve Mark (Chair, IH Council), Stephen Sanders (2017 IHMA Chairperson), Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, Chancellor Belinda Hutchinson, and IH resident Nusrat Zeba.

The essence of the culture of peace is its message of self-transformation and its message of inclusiveness, of global solidarity, of the oneness of humanity. These elements – individual and global, individual to global – constitute the culture of peace. Everybody can talk about and create the culture of peace because it lives in our communities and in each of us. We do not have to become peace studies experts or street protesters to make a difference. We just have to leave our own mark on this world as peaceful individuals.

The United Nations was born in 1945 out of World War II. The UN Declaration and Program of Action on the Culture of Peace was born in 1999 in the aftermath of the Cold War. I was distinctly honoured to chair the nine-month-long negotiations that produced this declaration. For the last two decades, my focus has been on advancing the culture of peace. The Declaration and Program of Action on the Culture of Peace is a unanimously adopted document explaining, outlining, and defining everything that the international community has agreed on as the focus of the culture of peace.

One soul-stirring inspiration that I have experienced from my work for the culture of peace is that we should never forget that when women – half of the world's seven billion people – are marginalised, there is no chance for our world to get sustainable peace in the real sense. It is my strong belief that unless women are engaged in advancing the culture of peace at equal levels and at all times with men, sustainable peace will continue to elude us.

“When women join politics, they want to do something; when men join politics, they want to be something.”

Women bring a new breadth, quality and balance of vision to a common effort of moving away from the cult of war towards the culture of peace. Women’s equality makes our planet safe and secure.

Two most significant developments since the 1995 fourth-world conferences on women have been: the adoption of the UN Security Council’s history-making resolution 1325 on “Women and Peace and Security”; and agreement on the inclusion of an autonomous, self-standing goal for women’s equality and empowerment in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – that is Goal 5, on women.

“I am proud to be a feminist. All of us need to be. That is how we make our planet a better place for all. We should always remember that without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable. Without women, neither peace nor development is conceivable.”

UNSCR 1325 is very close to my intellectual existence, and my very small contribution to a better world for each one of us. On International Women’s Day in 2000, as the President of the Security Council, and following extensive stonewalling, I was able to issue an agreed statement that formally brought to global attention the role and contribution women have been making towards the prevention of conflict, and the building of peace, which had remained unrecognised, underutilised and undervalued by the Security Council since its existence.

Adoption of 1325 opened a much-awaited door of opportunity for women, who have shown time and again that they bring a qualitative improvement in structuring peace and in post-conflict architecture. When women participate in peace negotiations and in the crafting of a peace agreement, they have the broader and long-term interests of society in mind.

We recall that in choosing the three women laureates for the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, the citation referred to 1325 saying that “It underlined the need for women to become participants on an equal footing with men in peace processes and in peace work in general.”

The Nobel Committee further asserted that “We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society.” 1325 is the only UN resolution so specifically noted in any citation of the Nobel Prize.

Much, nevertheless, remains to be done.

The driving force behind 1325 is “participation”. The main question is not to make war safe for women but to structure the peace in a way that there is no recurrence of war and conflict. That is why women need to be at the peace tables. Women need to be involved in decision-making to ensure real and faithful implementation of 1325.

Gender perspectives must be fully integrated into the terms of reference of peace operations by the United Nations. A no-tolerance, no-impunity approach is a must in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN and regional peacekeepers. The UN is welcomed in countries as the protectors – they cannot afford to become the perpetrators!

I also believe that the historic and operational value of the resolution, as the first international policy mechanism to explicitly recognize the gendered nature of war and peace processes, has been undercut by the disappointing record of its implementation, particularly for lack of national-level commitments. We are astounded by the complicity of the Security Council in international practices that make women insecure, basically as a result of its support of the existing militarised inter-state security arrangements. I am referring to the concept of security based on traditional, outmoded strategic power structures, rather than on human security, which highlights the security of the people.

I believe strongly that we would not have to be worrying about countering extremism if women have equality in decision-making, enabling them to take measures which would prevent such extremism.

It is a reality that politics, more so security, is a man's world. Empowering women's political leadership will have ripple effects on every level of society and the global condition. When politically empowered, women bring important and different skills and perspectives to the policy-making table in comparison to their male counterparts.

Here I pay tribute to the role that Australian women's leadership played in the creation of the UN and in its formal recognition, from the outset, of women's rights. As an Australian delegate to the 1945 San Francisco conference, Jessie Street participated directly

in negotiating the UN Charter, which is the first international agreement to affirm the principle of equality between women and men. The advocacy of Street and "the small band of women from other delegations" resulted in explicit references to equality between men and women in the Charter's Preamble and various other articles, as well as the inclusion of Article 8 asserting the unrestricted eligibility of both men and women to work for the UN itself. This is Jessie Street's contribution to the articulation of one of the basic principles of the United Nations.

Patriarchy and misogyny are humanity's dual scourges, pulling us all back from our aspirations for a better world. We need not waste time digging into the statistical labyrinth to show that women are unequal. Gender inequality is an established, proven and undisputed reality. It is all-pervasive. It is a real threat to human progress!

Unless we confront these vicious and obstinate negative forces with all our energy, determination and persistence, our planet will never be a desired abode for one and all. I will emphasize in that connection that none of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals will make headway in any real sense, until we make progress in realising the objective of women's equality and empowerment. Gender equality is a fundamental matter of human rights, democracy, and social justice. It is also a precondition for sustainable growth, welfare, peace and security.

Increasing gender equality has positive effects on food security, extremism, health, education and numerous other key global concerns.

We are experiencing around the globe an organised, determined rollback of the gains made, as well as new attacks on women's equality and empowerment – yes, in all parts of the world and in all countries, without exception. As underscored by the architect of feminist foreign policy, Foreign Minister Margot Wallström of Sweden: "No society is immune from backlashes, especially not in relation to gender. There is a continuous need for vigilance and for continuously pushing for women's and girls' full enjoyment of human rights."

Globally only one in five parliamentarians is a woman, and there are nearly 40 countries in which women account for less than ten percent of parliamentarians. This marginalisation of women from the political sphere is unfortunate and unacceptable. As I always strongly emphasise, empowering women's political leadership will have ripple effects on every level of society and the global condition. I underscore often that when women join politics, they want to *do* something; when men join politics, they want to *be* something.

I humbly join my voice to Foreign Minister Wallström's assertion on the eve of this year's International Women's Day that "Feminism is a component of a modern view on global politics, not an idealistic departure from it. It is about smart policy which includes whole

populations, uses all potential and leaves no one behind. Change is possible, necessary and long overdue.”

I am proud to be a feminist. All of us need to be. That is how we make our planet a better place for all. We should always remember that without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable. Without women, neither peace nor development is conceivable.

Before I conclude, I would like to address the students of International House directly. I would ask you the students to look into yourselves. In a world where material pursuits seem the be-all and end-all of human endeavour, find a real space for spirituality in your life. In your eagerness to get something quickly, never ever sell your soul. I am confident that you will make every effort to rid yourselves and your fellow men and women of the evils of intolerance and prejudice, ignorance and selfishness, which compel us to repeat the cycle of discrimination, prejudice and violence.

Your positive goals for yourself should not be pursued at the expense of other people. Recognise and value the positive in others. Recognise your mistakes and take responsibility for those. Do not find a scapegoat for your own failures.

Confidence is essential, but it should not be misplaced. Do not be dogmatic to stagnate. Be flexible to move ahead.

I am always inspired by the human spirit and its resilience and capacity to overcome any adversity. You are all aware that the hardest problems on the planet will not have singular solutions, nor will they be resolved with singular attempts. Those must be worked on – diligently, collaboratively, with perseverance, and with patience.

Let me end by repeating Mahatma’s eternal words: “The day the power of love overrules the love of power, the world will know peace.”

Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury was the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations from 1996–2001, and has served as President of the UN Security Council, President of the UNICEF Board, and as UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative from 2002–2007. He is a recipient of the U Thant Peace Award and the UNESCO Gandhi Gold Medal for Culture of Peace. He delivered this keynote address in the Wool Room at International House on 2 December 2017.

Alumni profile

Charlotte Warakaulle (née Clausen, IH 1995–97)
and Dinuke Warakaulle (IH 1992–97)

One of many couples to have met at the house, the lives of these high-flying alumni continue to have a distinctly international appeal.

What drew you both to International House, and what were you studying here?

Dinuke studied medicine, while Charlotte studied history. International House was an easy choice: Students from across the world, a rich social life, and super location. Difficult to beat that!

You both met at the house. Can you recall what that meeting was like? What effect has your experience of the House had on your personal lives?

We actually met in the dining hall on the first day after Charlotte had arrived. It was the only table where there was a seat left so she had nowhere else to go – and the rest is history! IH has had its most profound impact through the friendships we made there. We are still in touch with many of those we spent time with while we were at IH. Many, many good memories, and many good stories to tell!





You divide your work lives between Oxford and Geneva. How do you make this work?

Dinuke lives in Oxford, and works as a consultant interventional radiologist at Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Buckinghamshire, a medical speciality that involves diagnostics through medical imaging and image-guided “pinhole” surgery. After a long career with the United Nations, Charlotte is now director for international relations at CERN, the world’s largest particle physics laboratory on the border between Switzerland and France. There she manages the laboratory’s government relations and all the communications activities of this unique research infrastructure, which hosts over 13,500 scientific users and welcomes more than 130,000 visitors onsite every year. Dinuke commutes to Geneva every weekend, so it is the combination of his ability to get up (very) early, and a low-cost airline that is the secret to making it work!

On both professional and personal levels, your lives bridge cultural divides. What role do you think cultural competence plays in your lives?

Cultural competence is critical, not just in our working lives but in all aspects of life. We all live in environments with people from many different backgrounds, and so sensitivity to differences in perceptions and understanding is necessary. Cultural competence comes with experience and exposure to differences; it cannot be taught in a classroom or through an online course. IH was part of our journey in that respect, together with the wider University of Sydney context, where genuine openness and respect for others were valued. At CERN, for example, more than 110 nationalities work together. It would be impossible to work there without being able to adapt to different styles and ways of working.

Do you have any particularly fond memories from your time at IH?

How to choose? There are so many. From the everyday experiences of going to Newtown with friends, taking the bus to Circular Quay, or watching the news together (remember, these were pre-internet days so we would watch TV together!); to major moments such as watching Sri Lanka win the Cricket World Cup in 1996, with most of IH watching early in the morning in the Wool Room. Common to all of these memories is that they were good times spent with friends. And then of course there all the stories that cannot go to print...

Above: Charlotte on a site visit at CERN. Photo supplied/courtesy of CERN.

Opposite: Returning to IH in February 2018. Photo supplied.



General Waste

YES <ul style="list-style-type: none">FoodVegetablesPanels, Acid & CreamAppleCoffee Grounds in the BinPlastic ContainersPlastic Bags & Paper BagsChemicals & InsecticidesSmall Appliances (Including Hair Dryers and Electric Power Tools)Small Appliances	NO <ul style="list-style-type: none">FlammableChemical, Acid & OilUnwashed Vacuum DuffFragrancesRefrigeratorsRefrigerators & A/C Units
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Which bin? It's easy!

No straws attached

One resident and her call to action: to rid the world of waste, one plastic straw at a time.

Five years ago, I took a leap of faith and decided to become a teacher. To give you some context: I was a national-level athlete, doing my undergraduate degree in psychology, and was absolutely petrified of public speaking. Becoming a teacher meant standing in front of thirty kids every day for seven hours a day, holding parent teacher meetings, and speaking up at staff meetings at school. But something in me pushed me to get out of my comfort zone and take a leap of faith. Fast-forward five years: I barely recognise that person anymore. Teaching students wasn't about me standing in front of them for seven hours a day. It was about becoming a part of their lives and standing amongst them.

My students taught me more than I could have possibly taught them, and most importantly it was through them that I began to understand how deeply I care about the environment. It began with how much I enjoyed teaching them science, and before I even realised it we were deep diving into newspaper articles almost every day about environmental destruction around the world. And then we started brainstorming solutions. The determination, motivation, and courage I saw my students display in the face of ever-increasing environmental calamities gave me hope and inspiration. It occurred to me to ask: for all the "knowledge" we give our students in

class about environmental protection, how much of it are we actually practising at an individual level outside the classroom? This led me to think about the planet I'm leaving behind for those kids. I'd taught them to be independent, strong and solution-oriented, but where would they apply that if all they had left in the end was a degraded planet?

When my two years of teaching ended I decided to take a gap year to travel, learn yoga and spend time with my family. I went and lived in a tiny village in Himachal Pradesh and taught (again!) in a tiny government school. I backpacked across South India for almost three months, and my travels even took me to Argentina and Antarctica. While travelling I ensured that I was producing close to zero waste, and spoke about it with everyone and anyone I happened to meet. My international travels definitely produced a significant carbon footprint. Hopefully the 50+ trees that sprouted out of my compost would help balance that out, even if only a bit! My travels introduced me to new people, cultures, food, and ways of life that I had never known before. Today, when I look back and think about the most impactful experiences and moments in my life, I think not so much about things, but about the people and places I have been introduced to over the last four or five years. My experiences during my gap year and while working for Teach for India have shaped a major chunk of my life so far.



“The plastic straw has become a symbol of over consumption and our over-reliance on single-use plastic items.”

I grew up in a house surrounded by family who knew and communicated the importance of the natural environment around us. Caring for the environment therefore came to me quite naturally. But only in the last few years have I really come to understand that there is still a lot more each of us can do. We get carried away in our daily lives and forget that there is something bigger than all of us; something that we need to take care of. We are not the beginning and end of it all. I often get asked the question, “What difference can one person make?”, and to that my answer is and will always be: “A hell of a difference more than a hundred people who don’t even try.” My belief and commitment to the fact that every individual can make a positive impact on the environment around them has only strengthened since then. A major reason for this has of course been the commitment I saw my students display, and their sheer determination to protect our planet.

I remember the first question someone asked me when I came to Australia for my master’s degree: “So, what do you want to do in life?” I said, “I want to protect the planet.” Their reply was “you’re not five years old.” This kind of mentality is something that bothers me to the extent that it actually worries me! Since when did wanting to save and protect the planet

become a childish dream? Questions like this don’t throw me off my path, and for that I’m glad. Instead they only make me more determined. Earlier this year, while interning at the United Nations in Bangkok, I was selected as one of twenty young and emerging environmental leaders from the Asia Pacific region. I attended a week-long summit with the Global Peace Initiative for Women, and I met some amazing individuals doing everything they can to create a positive impact on the world. We shared stories and experiences, and one of the most important messages I came back with was that you’re never alone. Sometimes being overly caring and protective of the environment seems like an isolated and lonely path, but there are others out there who are part of the same tribe. It’s just a matter of finding one another, and inviting new people to join.

About 10 months ago I began a campaign with two friends called “No Straws Attached”. The idea was simple: to spread awareness about the destructive nature of single-use plastic straws. We would get customers to understand that they have the power! Ultimately it is customers who guide businesses – very rarely the other way around. At the same time we wanted businesses (cafes/restaurants and bars) to step up and play their part by stopping their usage of single-use plastic straws.

In a world that is facing the most severe forms of plastic pollution, I often get asked why I choose to focus on the plastic straw. The answer is simple: The plastic straw has become a symbol of over consumption and our over-reliance on single-use plastic items. It may seem like a daunting task to remove all single-use plastics from our lives (even though that is the absolute need of the hour). The way we have structured our lives over the past few decades makes this seem close to impossible. So instead of scaring people away, “No Straws Attached” is about empowering them to start taking baby steps. Identify and cut out all those pieces of plastic you don’t need, and more importantly talk to everyone about it!

We are lucky to live in a world with access to social media, and I feel there is so much good that can be done when it’s used in the right way. Our campaign has grown from a tiny idea into a multi-country initiative entirely through social media. The three founders of the campaign have not even met once in person, and we have never met some of our volunteers and partner establishments! We live in a digital world today, and it only makes sense to use that platform to create some good.

When I first began the campaign, I got a lot of sniggers and funny comments mainly about how it was a waste of time, and that I should be doing something that will have a “larger impact.” This campaign has been (and continues to be) a great example of what “action from the ground up” means. Today, the campaign is being implemented in five countries across three continents; has volunteers in over 10 countries; has been used as an educational tool in four countries; and has been written about in multiple media outlets. We have managed to get 20 partner restaurants/ bars and cafes on board, who have all committed to using zero single-use plastic straws. Our impact is increasing every day around the world.

In my last year at International House, I have held the position of the environment and welfare officer. This position on the committee was one of the first things I noticed about the house, and I remember mentioning it during my phone interview. Through roundtables, documentary evenings, and even casual conversations in the dining hall, I have realised the power of sharing experiences and communicating about our environmental problems. Sometimes not everyone is equally aware of the problem, and at other times they just don’t care. Interacting with such diverse groups of people has definitely been a learning curve for me as well. There are some residents who have showed an extraordinary commitment to the environment, and I have learned a lot from them.

Environmental destruction seems to be at the forefront of today’s problems, and despite holding all the conventions, treaties, and knowledge in our hands, we continue to live unsustainable lifestyles. I believe that what will truly save us is having honest conversations with individuals, and empowering them to change their behavior, one action at a time. Every individual has the power within to inspire and lead that change. So, what are you doing about it today?

Written by Mallika Arya
IHMA Environment and Welfare Officer

Walter Westman Lecture

—

Finding hope and courage in the era of climate change: how you can make a difference

—

Presented by Anna Rose
Australian author
and environmentalist

Thursday 6 September
International House,
City Road, Darlington

“I have no doubt that
Australians can unlock our
potential for unlimited
clean energy.”

Anna Rose



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[sydney.edu.au/
internationalhouse](https://sydney.edu.au/internationalhouse)

Diabetes research, prevalence, and intervention in India

For the first time, International House magazine invites residents to contribute an essay assessed with a distinction or high distinction mark for publication. In this essay, Master of Public Health student Dr Sayan Mitra tackles a major public health issue in India, and discusses why it is worse there than anywhere else in the world.

Diabetes is a global public health problem whose burden is evident in developing countries such as India.¹ According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), 422 million adults had diabetes in 2014.² The global prevalence of diabetes is estimated to be 366 million by 2030, with India having the largest number of diagnosed individuals.³ More than 62 million people in India are currently affected by the disease.^{4, 5} The rapid rise of the Indian middle class, coupled with sedentary lifestyles and a shift in dietary patterns, fuels the existing burden of this disease.⁶

A considerable reduction in the incidence of type 2 diabetes can result from changes in lifestyle,⁷ or by using metformin.⁸ On the other hand, with the adoption of western dietary habits amongst the comparatively affluent urban⁹ populations in India,¹⁰ and with increased intake of complex carbohydrates, animal lipids¹¹ and reduced consumption of fibre, there's a likelihood

of predisposition to diabetes (due to a high level of impaired glucose tolerance).¹² As Verma et al. argue, however, diabetes is not just affecting the higher socio-economic strata. Even poorer sections of society are being affected by it, owing to rapid penetration of fast food amongst all levels of society in India.¹³ Going by the health impact pyramid,¹⁴ chronic conditions like diabetes, when diagnosed, need constant adherence when it comes to medications, and predicting compliance can be difficult.^{15, 16} Limited access to medications and treatment results in more complications from diabetes in people who have a lower socio-economic standing.¹⁷

Studies which suggested that smoking may have an increased risk of causing diabetes¹⁸ were later confirmed as having a true association with active smoking.¹⁹ An intervention towards cessation of smoking as a modifiable risk factor towards the risk of developing diabetes showed

that initially quitting smoking resulted in weight gain (which is detrimental), but that the overall health benefits far outweighed the weight gain in terms of reduced risk of atherosclerosis²⁰ and ischemic heart disease in the long run.²¹ The Framingham Study confirms the association of heart disease and diabetes.²² Therefore timely intervention is of great clinical relevance, lest diabetes causes other harms to the body.²³ It is therefore important to know how interventions work and how effective they are.

The risk of obesity is linked to chronic heart disease and diabetes in a country like India, even though when compared to the global population, Indians tend to have a lower rate of obesity and overweight.¹ This brings to attention the fact that, on a comparative basis, the Indian population is more prone to develop diabetes, even with a lower body mass index.²⁴

“Accepting the limitations of this disease is the humblest thing a country’s premier health organisation can do, and it is incumbent on its officials to formulate plans to combat and monitor the progress of disease on a national scale.”

Strategies

One of the major strategies in controlling diabetes is in maintaining effective glucose levels. The most recent criteria to be followed for diagnosing diabetes mellitus are as follows²⁵:

- Casual plasma glucose concentration ≥ 200 mg/dl
- Fasting plasma glucose ≥ 126 mg/dl
- 2-hour post-load glucose ≥ 200 mg/dl

An effective strategy lies in primary prevention through healthy lifestyle management, and reducing risk through proper drug therapy. These form the cornerstone for managing diabetes in India.²⁶

Programs

The National Programme for Prevention and Control of Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke²⁷ (NPDCS), launched by the Government of India in 2008, plans to implement interventions in health promotion and education for the community; early detection of cases through appropriate screening; improving existing health systems for tackling non-communicable diseases; and improving dialysis facilities.¹³

Resources

A valuable resource is the guide for health workers under the NPDCS.²⁸ Health workers are the people who are in direct contact with the population at risk. I applaud this guide as it mentions exactly what needs to be done, and what needs to be avoided. Its recommendations for the prevention and control of diabetes hinge on the fact that all diabetic persons, once diagnosed, should get their blood glucose estimation, kidney function test, eye check-up and foot examination regularly in conjunction with proper diet and regular exercise.²⁸

Parallel/Contrast

The Building Indo-UK Collaboration in Chronic Diseases 2009²⁹ workshop held in New Delhi explored some of the challenges faced by both countries, and discussed various ideas for future solutions, as stated below.

The burden of diabetes in the United Kingdom (UK) presents a conundrum that, due to the slow nature of onset, there are a significant number of hidden cases. These hidden cases tend to have more complications due to lack of proper intervention at the proper time. Complications range from severe retinopathy to major amputations, kidney failure and

heart problems such as ischemic heart disease, which includes myocardial infarction.²⁹

By contrast, in India, which has the highest population of diabetic individuals in the world, prevalence continues to increase. One reason, as cited by Venkataraman et al.,²⁶ is that the primary health care system there has been structured and designed with the main purpose of catering to mostly acute conditions. Areas for research therefore include reasons for this increase in prevalence, and differences in phenotype.²⁹

Research and its scope

Areas of possible research include comparing phenotypic differences between patients of Indian and European descent towards answers in pathogenesis of disease. Research towards finding the basis of gene-environment interactions that has a flow-on effect towards disease causation is another avenue for potential investigation.²⁹

Recruiting participants for trials is another challenge faced by epidemiologists in a country like India, the reason being the hesitant nature of people when it comes to screening, due to lack of awareness.³⁰

Another area for research lies in establishing a positive association between diabetes and cancers, as type 2 diabetes and cancers are ‘common diseases’ that are ‘frequently diagnosed in the same individual.’ As stated by Onitilo et al., the risk of developing cancers of the breast, liver, pancreas, rectum and the urinary tract are increased in cases having type 2 diabetes.^{31, 32}

Prevalence and the economic burden

Prevalence is defined as the total number of individuals in a population who have a disease or health condition at a specific period of time, usually expressed as a percentage of the population.³³ The prevalence of diabetes in India has far surpassed the capacity to treat, and that has resulted in a large number of cases remaining undiagnosed.³⁴ The history of diabetes in India dates back to 2500 BC where old Indian texts referred to it as ‘Madhumeha.’ This gives an insight that this disease was known since then, and that the prevalence may not have been as high as it is now.³⁵ The economic burden of diabetes is tremendous, with the cost for obesity in India being 1.1% of the gross domestic product.³⁶ Its prevalence is linked to the economic burden diabetes imposes on a population, as not

only high income countries are affected, but the poorest are as well.

Limitations

Elimination of diabetes is perhaps improbable, because it is a chronic disease and there is no one specific cause for it. The genetic basis of this disease is most intriguing as this exerts the most pressure when it comes to the population at risk – the cohort being the South-East Asian population, with India at the forefront. Accepting the limitations of this disease is the humblest thing a country’s premier health organisation can do, and it is incumbent on its officials to formulate plans to combat and monitor the progress of disease on a national scale. The intertwining of other chronic conditions affecting the cardiovascular and urinary systems makes diabetes more debilitating if not treated, allowing the disease to progress with pride. The lack of good epidemiological data adds to these limitations in a country like India.³⁵ Another limitation is the inability of the national health system to work in conjunction with other global health organisations (the WHO), and this poses serious drawbacks towards fulfilling its policy-based goals.³⁷

Towards prevention and hope

The primary question that I would pose towards prevention would be “Is there a cure for diabetes?” The answer, for now, is a disappointing “no”. The reasons all boil down to the fundamental fact that it is a largely multi-factorial disease with a genetic³⁸ pre-disposition. The Diabetes Research Institute Foundation³⁹ in Florida is doing some exceptional work in cell-based therapy and bioengineering. Knowing that environmental and genetic factors are responsible for type 2 diabetes and firmly controlling for any associated risk factors, would perhaps delay its onset, or not allow it to happen at all. Cessation of smoking, limiting alcohol intake, being physically active, and following a healthy diet all count towards better control. If these are controlled, then the predicted prevalence can be significantly brought down, and the burden of disease reduced. The discovery of Insulin⁴⁰ was a major breakthrough in treating diabetes. We can certainly hope for a newer protocol that could one day lead to a more definitive cure in the face of this disease.

Written by Dr Sayan Mitra

See the full reference list for this essay online at bit.ly/Mag05refs



sydney.edu.au/internationalhouse

International House

The University of Sydney

Message from SUIHAA President

Following our 2017 celebratory year, we have fewer grand events but plenty of occasions to gather and enjoy music, food, and the many activities that make up the International House calendar. These events continue to contribute to the goals of the International House constitution – furthering international understanding and friendship – through both the residence and its community-focused activities. The SUIHAA committee, as always, works with IHMA and IH management on events to celebrate the International House vision, and to enliven and enrich the lives of its residents.

The “music of the world” evening in April was a joyous and mind-expanding evening. We contributed items for the IHMA charity auction in aid of the Bo Children’s Hospital, with Lyn Woodger Grant’s pencil portraits eagerly bid for. And in May we again provided a “salad days” stall at the wonderful food fair run by residents.

International House alumni, including the SUIHAA committee and a spin-off “International House futures (IHF)” group, are continuing to think about future options for the house’s development. We published some of our ideas in our 2017

publication *Celebrating 50 years of International House* (bit.ly/50years-SUIHAA), which also contained a celebration of the house’s history and the vision and collaboration that brought it into being. This year, we will again seek meetings with senior University of Sydney staff to explain our ideas and views about the need for action on the house’s future.

We are pleased that a joint working group has recently been established to decide on the house’s short- and long-term future. This group includes the director and chair of council, who are meeting with University planners. We hope this initiative will not only overcome the concerning lack of progress in the last decade, but will also recapture the spirit of visionary collaboration that created the house. In the formative and early years, embryonic ideas came from the Students’ Representative Council, while the University provided land for buildings that were financed entirely by committed and energetic external funders. The beautiful and much-loved circular building, designed by Walter Bunning, continues to provide large and welcoming spaces for concerts, lectures, exhibitions, resident meals, and community gatherings (turn to



SUIHAA “salad days” stall, staffed by members of the SUIHAA Committee. Left to right: Dr James Kane (IH 2007-09), Dr Rosamond Madden (IH 1968-70), Gwen Ng (1968-70), Lyn Woodger Grant (1971-72).

the inside rear cover of this issue to see a drawing of this room by former resident and architect Nicholas Chor).

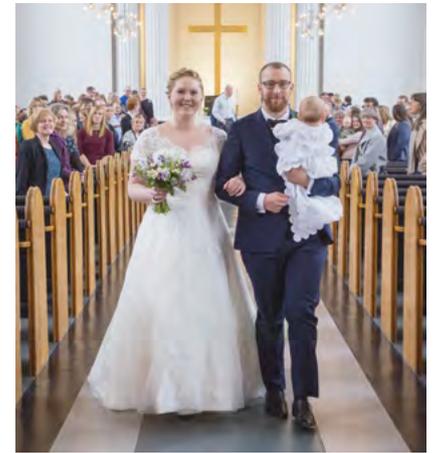
Last year International House was acknowledged as a great success – an institution as relevant today as when it was established. The Vice-Chancellor Dr Michael Spence, speaking at our July 2017 roundtable, said that he was “looking forward to thinking about how the IH tradition is very strongly preserved for the next 50 years and beyond”.

Good wishes to all readers and alumni across the world.

Written by Dr Rosamond Madden AM

On behalf of the SUIHAA committee:
Dr Rosamond Madden (President),
Dr James Kane (Secretary), Julia Krattli/Brittany Ridley (Treasurer)
General Members: Josh Lee, Dr Dominick Ng, Dr Richard Ng, Gwen Ng, Paul Reisner, Karen Rowe-Nurse, Evan Voroney, Lyn Woodger Grant
Ex-officio members: Brieanna Watson (IHMA chairperson), Dr Bradley Kunda (Residential Life Officer)

If you have any information, questions or comments about our message, please contact Rosamond Madden at president@suihaa.org.au



Notices

Marriage: Cheryl Lim (IH 2014) and Jie Yu (IH 2013-14), 6 June 2017, Melbourne VIC, with ceremonies in January 2018 in China and Singapore.

“Coming from two different countries (China and Singapore), we had to accommodate both sides and so had to have weddings in each country. There was an IH alumnus, Esmond Lee (IH 2011-14), who attended the Singapore reception, and we were so fortunate to be surrounded by our friends and relatives in both countries. We felt blessed and really fortunate to have met each at IH.

“In terms of our careers, Jie has pursued an opportunity in the manufacturing area for cosmetic products, while Cheryl has pursued her career path in banking, currently working for a “Big Four” Australian bank. Looking forward to starting our family soon, once the time is right, and we will definitely keep IH updated!”

Marriage: Rodrigo Jarrin Arboleda (IH 2014-15) and Francisca Beltran Married in Vilcabamba (the “Valley of Longevity”) in Francisca’s home city of Loja, south Ecuador on 17 February 2018.

“I made many good friends in Australia and it was a pleasure to count them at my wedding not only as guests but also as groomsmen. I am still playing soccer and basketball often, and still in contact with all the guys from the IH soccer and basketball teams. Did you know that we made the lunch championship twice in a row with the IH basketball team? It was a great time.”

Marriage and birth: Camilla Kaas Frich (née Frich Riber) (IH 2013)

“Mikkel and I got married on 14 April, and during the same service our daughter Safina (born 10 November 2017) had her baptism. The ceremony was held at Saint Lucas, Church in Aarhus, Denmark. For the celebration afterwards, we invited 100 guests to a cabin close to the sea. All guests were able to stay at the venue until the next day, when we had breakfast. It was a relaxed end to a fun and exciting weekend.”

Do you have news to share? Please write to suihaa@sydney.edu.au We would love to include your notice in our next issue.



Reunion: Dennis Schatz (IH 1969–1970) and Fani Nicolandis (née Manikakis) (IH 1969–1973)

Dennis Schatz and his wife Leila Wilke had a great reunion in Athens with Fani Manikakis Nicolandis and her husband Adonis Nicolandis. Fani had many stories to tell about her two children and two grandchildren, plus she showed several photos from her years at IH, when she organised a Greek night at the house. Dennis shared some of the photos from the 50th anniversary USB files. They had a great time reminiscing over many courses of delicious Greek food.

Above: (left to right) Fani Manikakis Nicolandis, Dennis Schatz and Adonis Nicolandis in Athens, Greece. Photo supplied.

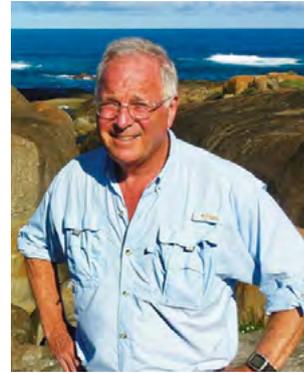
Above right: Andrew Loewenthal. Photo supplied.

Vale

Andrew James Stewart Loewenthal, 3 July 1945 – 20 August 2017 (IH 1967–68)

Andrew’s life was one of continual learning, the excitement of interacting with people, and of travel and far-flung places. He was ever charming, intrigued by people, thought deeply and refreshingly about issues, embraced new experiences with verve, intellect, and rigorous research, and valued independence and resilience. He came from an academic family and was exposed from his earliest days, through his father’s work (Sir John Loewenthal), to living, working and mixing in an international context. Along with his years at International House, this was to set the scene for a life of intellectual and global curiosity, learning and exploration.

He graduated from the University of Sydney with an honours degree in archaeology, and then joined the civil service in Canberra, where economics in the Treasury Department led to his doing a second degree at the Australian National University. This led to a life of working in foreign countries, specialising in transport economics, and acting on behalf of lenders, mostly for the private financing of public infrastructure. He had a gift for learning enough of a language to enable communication wherever he worked, allowing for a deep interaction and understanding of the complex dimensions of economies and their people. He worked in the Middle East, Egypt and north Africa, west and east Africa, southern Africa, many of



the “stan” Silk Route countries, Eastern Europe and Russia, and extensively throughout Asia, both as an employee (World Bank, Economic Associates, WBC in London, Partnership Pacific in Sydney) and as a freelance consultant with engineering companies and many quasi-government organisations such as Asian Development Bank and EBRD. In the late 1970s he did a business degree at the London School of Economics, and in his 50s, a master’s in commerce – competition and regulation.

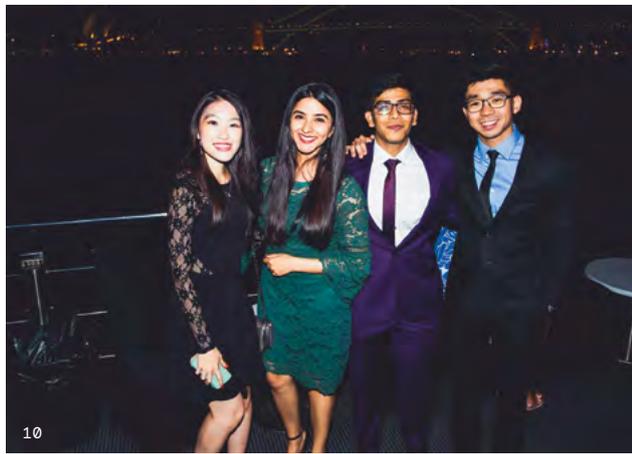
He spent over 40 years based offshore, mostly in London. In his post-retirement years, his love of travel continued, including an intense exploration of outback Australia where he came to value its unique qualities of geology, fauna and flora. He had hoped to return to Australia to do voluntary work with a charity focused on regenerating the natural environment. He died of pancreatic cancer, accepting the wonder and power of nature, but that sometimes it goes wrong. He loved opera and music, all things outdoors, his friends and family, had no children, and is survived by his wife, Eugenie White.

Written by Eugenie White

International House events



- 1/ Gordon Chak Kiu Yen at the flag ceremony.
- 2/ Christopher Pine, Matthew Milano and Brie Watson unleashing their dramatic talents at intramural improv-a-ganza. Photo by Jordan Kim.
- 3/ "Music of the world" with the gamelan-rindik trio from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, led by Gary Watson.
- 4/ Residents from Bangladesh prepare their stall for food fair.
- 5/ Nearly a full house at "IH Idol". Photo by Jordan Kim.



- 6/ Sakura Suga, Rina Omine and the Japanese stall at food fair.
- 7/ Success in the intramural netball competition. Our women's team took home gold, and our men's team claimed silver. Photo by Jordan Kim.
- 8/ Avanish Shrestha entertains at "IH Idol". Photo by Jordan Kim.
- 9/ A converted dining hall for the IHMA "garden of delights"-themed food fair.
- 10/ Residents in their finery on the IHMA Sydney Harbour cruise. Left to right: Jordan Hanxi Kim, Stuti Kaushik, Shivang Agal and Chern Wei Tan.
- 11/ Residents at the flag ceremony and dinner. Left to right: Shih Liz Ee, Sakura Suga, Jooyeon Choi, Masau Kilonzo, Gabriele Pezzolla.

Meet Dr Jean Lau Chin

2018 Fulbright Distinguished Chair at the National Centre for Cultural Competence

Finding time between her research and running for president of the American Psychological Association, the psychologist and author shares her ideas on global and diverse leadership with IH resident and Westpac Future Leaders Scholar, Isha Sandhu.

Isha: Jean, you're living at International House, and you're part of our community. As you know, International House is made up of students from all sorts of backgrounds and disciplines, and I think it's a really unique place to live. I'm curious to hear what you think an environment like this does for cultural competence?

Jean: I feel it's been quite a privilege to live here and to mingle and interact with other residents. This has provided a really important dimension to my experience here; to be part of that network, or community within a community, in terms of the University. What this means is quite significant from the standpoint of diversity in terms of leadership, because International House views its mission and goal as to provide a culture with an international mix, and also to support its residents in terms of leadership within that context. I think International House provides an excellent opportunity to operationalise or concretise those kinds of goals and missions.

I attended the concert of alumni and resident musical performances. It was pointed out to me that the last performance, which included a Chinese ensemble, was a song that was initially composed in Spain in English, and then ultimately translated into Chinese. The performance included traditional Chinese instruments along with the western guitar. And it all came together in a way that made really beautiful music. I think this symbolises how international House can and does promote diversity and leadership, and operationalises these objectives in creating innovation, and in promoting a climate of exchange, inclusion, and participation. It demonstrates how International House is achieving the broader goal of using leadership to achieve the greater good of improving people's lives.

Isha: The focus of your work is on making leadership diverse; making leaders on boards and leaders in the community a diverse representation of the society we live in. Would you like to tell us a bit more about the value of having diversity in leadership?



This article is an edited transcript of a video interview conducted in May 2018. To see the unabridged interview, head to our YouTube channel: [youtube.com/IHouseSydneyUni](https://www.youtube.com/IHouseSydneyUni)

Jean: That's a really important question. When I first looked into leadership, I looked at many leadership models and ended up finding there weren't any that really looked at the issues of diversity in leadership. There's two points that I want to make in response to your question. One is that diversity is not just about representation. It's not how many of x numbers or types of people in particular groups are around the table in the room. Second, it's not only about representation but what you do when you lead, that reflects an attention to diversity. When someone leads and pays attention to the members of the group as if they're all the same, then often they represent and reflect the dominant group in society. That often ends up not being very culturally competent or diverse in one's leadership. It's not only about who the leader is, although that's important, but also how the leader goes about engaging, interacting and leading.

Ishaa: What sort of advice would you then give to the students of today, and what role do we play in driving forward leadership in diversity?

Jean: One of the things that I've talked about in terms of leadership is the importance of looking at our past, present and future. One statement that's been made is 'you need to look at your past to see your future.' And this has many implications, but in terms of students – you are our future. To recognise this is important. So the message is to look at how to be culturally competent, which is self-awareness, and the reflection and recognition of one's biases, but also what one brings, and how to use that in what you do in your career and your life.

So, I think that one message is: how do you keep that mindset, about who you are and what you bring, to the discussion in terms of your future? And the second message is to prepare yourself with the process of asking "what do I need to do to be prepared to live, to lead, and to work in a future that's not going to be anything like what we are in right now?"

Thank you for your support

2017 was a significant year for International House. We are deeply grateful to all who donated as part of our 50th anniversary, and particularly to those of you who remain ongoing donors to the house.

All donations make an impact. Your contribution will provide a student, who may not otherwise have the means to afford residency, with the life-changing opportunity to be part of the International House experience. By supporting IH and its distinctive residence life program, you will help ensure that the life-long friendships and deep cultural understanding that comes from living at the house continues to thrive in the hearts and minds of the current generation of students.

Please continue to support the house by making your gift via mail using the form below, or online at

- sydney.edu.au/donate-ih



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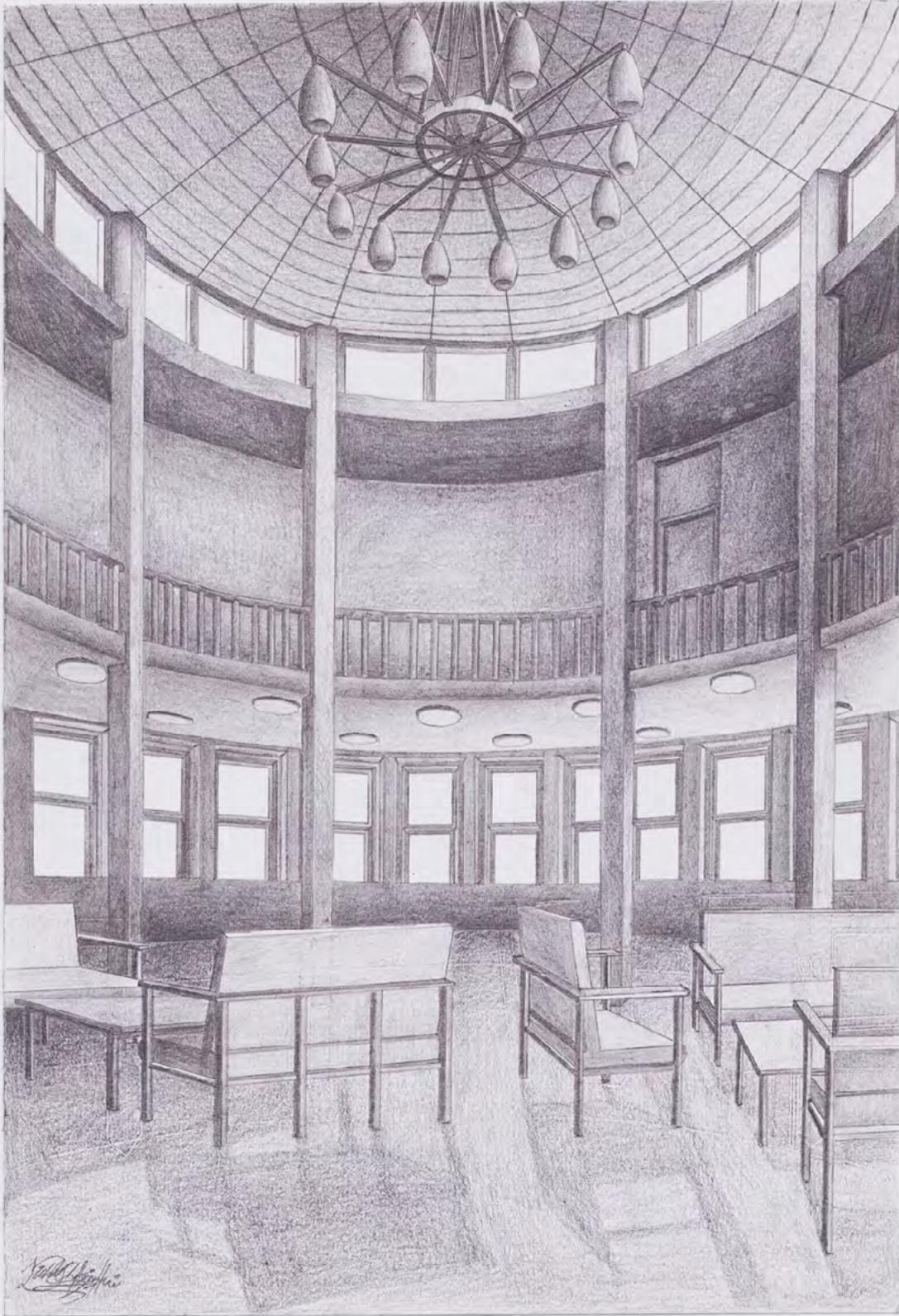
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Nicholas Hsien Hui Chor (IH 2011-15), *The Wool Room, International House*, pencil on paper. Commissioned by International House, International House art collection.



Resident Nusrat Zeba at the 50th anniversary gala luncheon in December 2017.

For more information

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Our community

International House brings together Australian and international students from all over the world. Our diverse and close-knit community has been home to over 6000 students and scholars since we opened our doors in 1967.