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Graduates look back

(The following is from a November 2008 interview. It has been edited for length.)

... on their TIS teachers

Toryn Slater, Class of 2002: I have to say Maria Abad [was my favorite teacher]. I remember my first week of school, I was terrified, I didn't want to leave my parents. And she just embraced me. I would come into class bawling in tears, and she would take me from my parents' and cradle me in her arms and carry me around all day. She could tell that I had something more than just a crying little 3-year-old, she was able to look beyond my cries and develop me into a better person.

... on doors opened

Cory Abbe, Class of 2002: A couple of things my Spanish has done for me. For one, I get to put it on college admissions papers. I did the Spanish AP and got a five, and I got A's in all my Spanish classes which looks great on a transcript.

[For my high school internship] I was a bilingual receptionist for two lawyers. They had a lot of Spanish speaking families who had moved from Mexico and needed help. As the receptionist



Cory Abbe, Class of 2002

I definitely had to speak Spanish, talk to people on the phone and help them out. That was definitely an interesting experience and I wouldn't have been able to do it at all if I didn't have my Spanish.

... on native-speaking teachers

Toryn: [Having native-speaking teachers] has made such a huge difference. I'm currently at Jesuit [High School], and I took Spanish AP as a freshman. I was lucky enough to have a native Spanish speaker, but at Jesuit only two out of the seven Spanish speakers are native. I traveled down to Ecuador with a non-native speaking teacher. And it's not that their comprehension of the language is less, because they have studied their whole lives. But the way they sound, you can definitely tell when a native speaker is teaching you. You learn so much more from someone who is actually from that culture.

... on learning English and SATs

Toryn: I actually think that learning how to read in Spanish before English almost made it easier for me. In high school I won the English award sophomore year – so it definitely wasn't a problem for me. And I became an accomplished writer at Jesuit. So as long as you put your mind to it and set your goals, the whole late English integration shouldn't be an issue. It just takes time. You just have to be patient and persistent and trust that The International School knows what it's doing.

Cory: It's very true. I had a tough time transitioning into English because English is a much more complicated language to learn how to read versus Spanish. But I really enjoy English now.

The kids [in my high school] who learned two languages in grade school have better grades, better SAT scores. I



Toryn Slater, Class of 2002

think that comes when you're learning so much more as a kid. Learning a language definitely helped me in every subject.

Parents' perspectives

Laurie Slater, parent Class of 2002 & 2008: The International School has given my kids amazing opportunities to just experience life in a really fulfilling way. I feel like because of The International School they see life in a more global perspective, I feel like they really are the children of the future. And I feel like it has given them opportunities to feel confident, to feel like they excel in another language and to see the world as a smaller place.

Wendy Manula, parent Class of 2006 & 2007: They see the world in a complete different manner than their peers. It's quite obvious as they go through their daily activities. They understand the news, they're aware and really in tune to the world, as opposed to the little block that we live on.

I feel that my boys really have the opportunity to be and do whatever they want because they have really received such a well rounded, grounded education. They learned about culture and love and life at The International School. I really believe that the sky is the limit for them.

