

# THE HAROLD POST

Official Newsletter of Hong Kong Adventist Academy, Vol.2, No. 4, Oct 2025-2026

HKAA is where students achieve academic excellence and find Jesus

HONG KONG ADVENTIST ACADEMY  
香港復臨學校

## Pastor Manny and Pastor Melanie Inspire Students at Gospel Week



## Middle & High School

*Chelsea Yau, Freshman*

From October 20 to 24, we had the honor of welcoming Pr. Manny Cruz, who came all the way from Mexico, to be the speaker for our Gospel Week here at HKAA. His preaching centered on the importance of finding identity and belonging. Not only that, he connected his life experiences, struggles, and how he eventually found happiness to his teachings. As a father of four daughters and a pastor who frequently engages with adolescents, he has made it his life mission to help kids understand their own paths and purpose. During his week here, he encouraged students to remain open about their experiences. To follow up with being open to yourself, he said, "both positive and negative moments contribute to personal growth and character development." Pastor Manny also advised students who have felt pressured to fit into certain groups to embrace their uniqueness, reminding them that imperfections are a part of what makes them so beautiful.

When asked why he is so motivated to preach these ideas, he said his motivation and happiness stem from his faith, and, humorously, from tacos. Pastor Manny's guidance during the Gospel Week has helped many students discover their own identity and steer them toward their unique paths.

***If you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right***

*Chelsea Yau, Freshman*

During the Week of Prayer from October 20 to 24, elementary students received several important messages from Pastor Melanie centered on the theme "made for more."

Pastor Melanie encouraged young students to discover their unique values and purpose, helping them understand that they are loved and chosen, which served to unite the elementary together rather than separate them. This helped reduce students' self-doubt when working on academics or facing any challenges. Highlighting the

importance of being made for more helps with the adjustment of thinking among students' self-perception.

***"God has shaped each person differently, preparing them for distinct paths in life."***

This theme reinforced the idea that ultimately, Pastor Melanie's words reminded students that they are capable of far more than they might imagine.



## Letters to the Editor

We want to hear from you!

Do you have an opinion on a recent article? Want to comment on an event? Your voice matters!

The Harold Post is now accepting Letters to the Editor.

**Email:** Send your letter to [hkaa-newsletter@hkaa.edu.hk](mailto:hkaa-newsletter@hkaa.edu.hk)

**Word Limit:** Under 250 words

# Beyond the Spotlight



**Brogan Archer, Senior**

If you look through this edition of our Newsletter, you'll see many spotlights and achievements: an improved football game, a beautifully crafted artwork, a rising student-led club, an engaging Week of Prayer, and more. These successes are rightly celebrated, but there is more beneath the football team behind the striker who scores the goal, and beneath the artwork behind the creator who designs the piece. Our community runs on the work that happens beyond the surface: the custodian who arrives early to set up everything, the student who quietly helps their classmate with a math problem, the staff member who takes extra time to plan for a school event. These contributions are what make our success possible. In this edition, let's step

behind the show curtain and take a look backstage.

These unseen heroes can appear in many forms. In the HKSSF Competition, we celebrate Edwin's goal, but it couldn't have happened without Meod's assist and the prior passes. In our Student Art Spotlight, we see the polished masterpiece, but it couldn't have been finalized without the teacher's constructive feedback. The success of the Acapella club in our ECA Spotlight depends not just on Mr Brondo, but every member who shows up and contributes to the harmony. Even our Week of Prayer program relied not only on the speakers but on the many teachers and students who helped out, from song service and set-up to planning. This pattern reveals a simple truth: our community is a single, interconnected system. The moments in the spotlight and the work done backstage are equally integral to the final product; every effort is necessary for success.

As Editor-in-Chief, I can say that the Newsletter is able to operate because of

each individual contribution from our team. Each photographer, reporter, and layout role delivers something irreplaceable. In fact, the very edition you are reading is a product of their collective work.

I encourage you to dig beneath the surface and recognize the essential involvement behind achievements.

***"Focusing solely on the final score or outcome completely misses the point of the game; we need to appreciate every step and contribution that helped lay the foundation for the end result."***

Starting today, let's take the time to look actively and appreciate these unseen "assists."

# College Advice Column: The One Thing More Important Than Your Grades

**Brogan Archer, Senior**

In an admissions pool of students with stellar grades and high-achieving test scores, how do you stand out as more than just a number? How do you get those admissions officers to see your potential and vouch for you?

The answer, says Mr. Brandon Chu, the HKAA registrar, is crafting a personal and powerful narrative. He advises that presenting "the qualitative story of who you are as a person, a student, and community member" is imperative to becoming someone admissions officers can believe in. Students can carefully structure their narrative through three components: the application essay, extracurricular activities, and letters of recommendation.

First, the application essays, whether the personal statement or any supplemental essays, are designed for students to express their unique voice. "It's your

chance to show your personality, character, values, and how you think," says Mr Brandon. When deciding between multiple candidates with similar statistics, what matters most is a compelling essay that demonstrates genuine insight and passion. Students can communicate this passion through their experiences, thoughts, and contributions.

The significance of these essays cannot be stressed enough. They can really make a tremendous impact on whether students will wake up to a "congratulations" or a "we regret to inform you."

Second, extracurricular activities are more than just laundry lists or collectable cards. When it comes to different clubs and activities, colleges "are looking for depth, commitment, and impact," Mr. Brandon claims. Essentially, dedication and reach say more about students than the number of clubs they have been involved in. According to Mr. Brandon, "it is far more impressive to show a multi-year commitment to one or two activities where you achieved a leadership role, took on responsibility, or created a tangible impact, than to list 10 clubs you only attended passively." Therefore, students should engage selectively, participating only in activities where they can showcase their passion, make real impact, and tell their narrative.

Lastly, letters of recommendation affirm students' narratives and provide an additional, yet essential perspective. They come from teachers and a



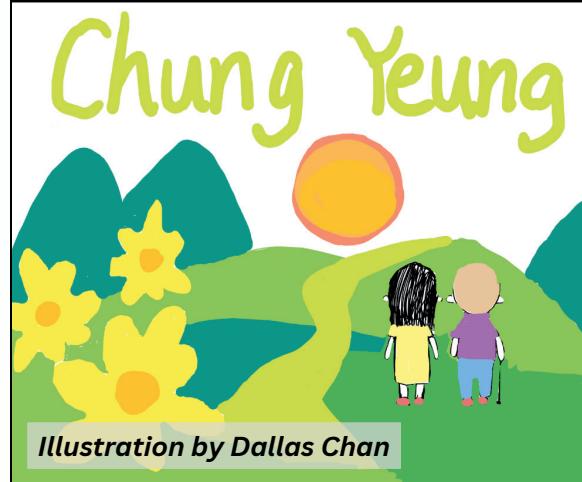
counsellor who genuinely know you. According to Mr Brandon, "they don't just say you got an 'A'; they tell a story about your intellectual curiosity, your resilience, or how you contributed to the classroom, which validates the narrative you're presenting."

Ultimately, essays, extracurricular activities, and letters of recommendation all add to a student's narrative, which is arguably the most important factor colleges consider when deciding who to admit to their institution for the next four years.

Grades and test scores are the first step, but the narrative is what distinguishes each individual student. Today, start or continue building this narrative. To each student, ask yourself: "What is the story that no one else, not even the statistics on my application, can tell?"



## Cheung Yeung Festival



*Jocelyn Tong, Junior*

The Chung Yeung Festival is a traditional holiday observed on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month. Rooted in an ancient story about seeking safety on higher ground, the day is often marked by outdoor activities such as hiking and spending time with family.

The festival is a meaningful time to reflect on God's protection, give thanks for family heritage, and show love and respect to the elderly. Rather than focusing on rituals, many families use the day to strengthen family bonds and express gratitude.

At HKAA, students like Tiffany Mak (G12) observe Chung Yeung by spending time with family and sharing meals together, making it a day of remembrance, reflection, and togetherness.

Overall, the Chung Yeung Festival provides a meaningful moment for families to reconnect, appreciate God's guidance, and honor elders—values that align with valuable teachings of family, remembrance, and faith.

**“But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord’s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children’s children.”**

**Psalm 103:7**

## Club Spotlight: The Acapella Club

*Sekela Mwamakamba, Senior*

In recent years, HKAA noted that while classes like choir, has seen a spike in orchestra, and handbells exist, they focus students inspired to more on learning and academics than organise original clubs expression, which is a main component of based on their the Acapella Club. Carina cheerfully revealed that members just “jam out” fact, our very own during sessions with Mr. Brondo there to professionally guide them. Other club members praise the club by noting it is helping them “recognize notes more” and “stay on tune when harmonizing”.

We had the privilege of interviewing the newest club in HKAA: The Acapella Club. Founded by grade 10 students Carina and Quincy, the Acapella Club is there for students to “express artistic freedom” through music. When asked why the club was founded, Carina expressed concern for there not being enough musical representation in the student body. She Club co-founder Carina invites students who wish to musically convey themselves. Signing up for the club is as simple as walking up to either Carina or Quincy and asking, “Can I join the club?”



*The Acapella Club during Gospel Week*

## HKAA Secures a Hard-Earned Draw in Sha Tin Wai Tournament



*Jocelyn Tong, Junior*

The HKAA football team concluded a three-game tournament at Sha Tin Wai on October 30 with a resilient performance, securing a 1-1 draw in their final match after losses in the first two fixtures. All matches were competitive, especially the final game. HKAA found themselves trailing 1-0, but responded immediately, with Edwin scoring an equalizer shortly after the opposing team's goal.

The squad, coached by Mr. Marcelo, included players these players: Kyle, Edwin, Enoch, Suan, Sarang, Siddharth, Eason, Allen, Reidy, Samson, Jayden, Jason, Mike, Steven, Garfield, and Meod.

After the final whistle, the HKAA players discussed as a team. They focused on analyzing their performance, identifying areas for improvement, particularly regarding communication and teamwork, aiming to address weaknesses observed during the tournament.

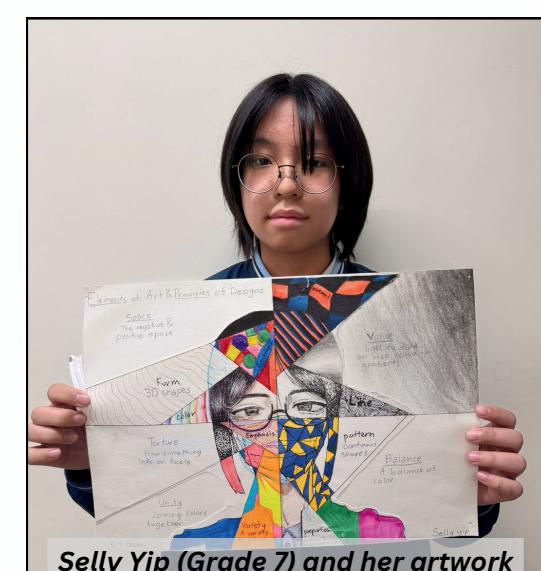
## Student Art Spotlight: Selly Yip

*Dallas Chan, Junior*

Selly Yip's piece is a striking example of how artistic elements, creativity, and personality come together to form a spectacular piece of artwork. The self-portrait draws the viewer in with various art elements such as texture, pattern, value, and emphasis. These different elements allow Selly to express her character on a deeper artistic level.

What makes this piece so engaging is Selly's ability to blend realism with bold abstraction. The central portrait shows a pair of expressive eyes surrounded by dynamic sections filled with color and patterns. Crosshatching, shading, and colored pencil gradients showcase her ability to use different techniques, while geometric shapes give the piece structure and versatility.

The expressive eyes at the center of Selly Yip's artwork act as a focal point, suggesting curiosity and awareness. By placing them where all the elements meet, Selly hints that perception, how we see ourselves and the world, is at the core of her piece. The surrounding sections of color, pattern, and texture feel like different layers of identity. Some areas are bold and energetic, while others are calm and detailed, showing that a person can hold many sides at once. Through this mix of realism and abstraction,



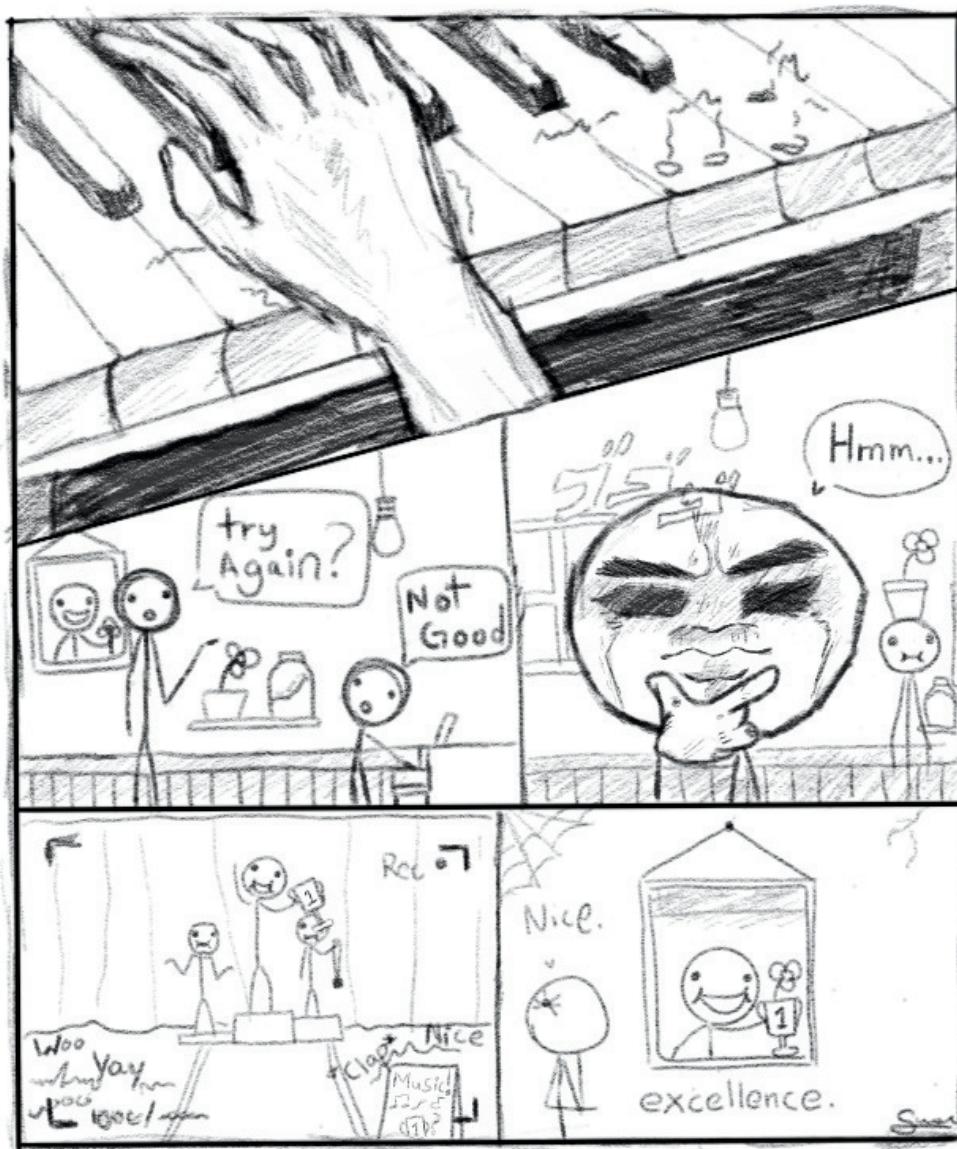
Selly conveys a character that is thoughtful, creative, and open to exploring complexity.

Selly's attention to detail reflects a keen understanding of how each artistic element fuses to support the work as a whole. Her portrait isn't just an ordinary piece of classwork—it's a thoughtful reflection on how art principles bring meaning and balance to creativity. Through careful technique and imaginative composition, Selly celebrates the complexity and beauty of art itself, proving that even in grade 7, mastery can shine through with both skill and heart.



## Value of the Month: Excellence

*Suan Hlaing, Junior*



## Autumn

*Kelly Yip, Sophomore*

I reached out and gently plucked a single crimson leaf from the branch, its vibrant color standing out vividly against the subdued backdrop of autumn. As I did so, a sharp, cold breeze suddenly brushed against my face, carrying with it an earthy, musty scent that instantly awakened my senses. I hesitated for a moment, taking in the scene, then turned away and began my walk home. With each step, the satisfying crunch of dried leaves underfoot echoed in the cool air, a rhythmic symphony that accompanied my thoughts.

When I finally reached the house, I pushed open the door and was greeted by a gust of cozy warmth that instantly banished the sharp chill I had felt outside. The air inside was rich and sweet, infused with the comforting aroma of hot chocolate simmering

gently on the stove, its rich scent filling the entire space.

I lowered myself onto a chair, holding a steaming mug in my hands, feeling the heat seep into my bones as it chased away the cold. I pressed my lips close to the mug, allowing the warmth to defrost my icy lips, and let out a deep, satisfied sigh. Then, as my friend and I settled onto the sofa, we watched the sky turn from a brilliant orange into a dusky hue, darkness creeping in slowly. I felt a profound sense of peace settle over me—an overwhelming feeling of contentment and belonging. Outside, the world was cold and dark, but here, inside this cozy sanctuary, we were wide awake, sharing stories, silent moments, and laughter. It was a perfect, fragile moment of connection and peace, a fleeting slice of time where everything felt just right.

## Fiction

## The Trip to Chungking Mansions

*Kelly Yip, Sophomore*

On October 31, the middle schoolers visited the Chung King Mansions, accompanied by two tour guides who assisted them throughout the trip. They engaged in a variety of activities, starting with a scavenger hunt that took them through multiple buildings, encouraging exploration and teamwork. In addition, they participated in several question-and-answer sessions with local shop owners, gaining firsthand insights into the market. The students also took advantage of the numerous food stalls and snack vendors available, allowing them to purchase a wide range of treats and souvenirs. After exploring the marketplace, they ascended to the rooftop via



spiralling stairs, where they enjoyed panoramic views. Their visit continued at the African Centre, where they had the opportunity to play traditional drums and even create their own rhythmic patterns, making the experience both educational and fun.

## Sudoku

**Instructions:** Use the numbers 1 to 9 to complete the Sudoku. Only use each number once in each row, column and grid.

5			2		7			
4	2		9		6			
	9		8	1	4	2		
	5		7		3			
2	6		4		9	8		
4			6	5	7			
3	1	5				7		
7			3	2	6			
2			7	8	5			

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