

IN THE HOUSE

the Bali edition



PGP House (PH) is always trying to do something new for its residents. More importantly, this is done keeping in mind the core values of PH- Frugality and Sustainable Living. In line with this, PH organised a trip to Bengkala, Bali. Was it a normal trip? Definitely, not. It was unique in every sense. Two members of our team- Manan and Devika, joined the other 15 people in this cultural exploration trip.

"Om Suastiastu"

Welcome to the Bali Special Edition.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE HOUSE?



We are sure you haven't missed these. Noticed the two new things at the first level of PH? They sure are a delight to every residence-

1. Table Tennis- A mini-TT table is never enough! And our management realised that. A full-fledged table has made PH its home, complete with playing rackets and balls. Isn't that amazing? It is heartwarming just to see people play and have fun around the table. But do note to always keep the rackets and balls back in the box, and not to play during quiet hours!

2. Sandwich Vending Machine- Getting late for your morning classes? Famished at midnight? Or simply watching those calories? FRET NOT. The Hot & Healthy Sandwich machine is here. The machine is serviced daily to ensure freshness of the sandwiches. Fresh fast food? Wow, never knew this was a thing

INTER HALL GAMES



Hearts were racing, as the PH soccer team stepped on the NUS pitch for our very first match. Anxiety mixed with excitement, a plethora of emotions was going through all the players as we were certainly out to make our mark as a new hall. Being grouped with stronger teams from Eusoff, Raffles and KE VII for the preliminary rounds, we were disappointed with our defeat in first 2 matches against Eusoff and Raffles.

However, we made a comeback with a sweet 2-1 victory against KE VII. This was a consolation and motivation for the team to train harder to perform better in future IHG.

- Rama



IHG was an unforgettable experience for me. Football has always been a big part of my life since I was a kid. Growing up, my idols were footballers and playing competitive football was my boyhood dream! Fortunately enough in this IHG, I was given the chance to play in such an amazing team. No doubt we faced challenges along the way, exhausting training sessions, tough opponents, but it all paid off in the end - although it was PH first year in IHG, we managed to secure PH first ever win in IHG, against KEVII hall! To all who supported us this year, thank you and we promise to come back stronger next year!

- Alex

meet our

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE



Dr Eleanor Finger

Hi there! Say hello to our affable and venerable Scholar-in-Residence if you happen to see her at PH! The Scholar-in-Residence Programme was initiated in 2018 with the goal of promoting active engagement between the PH community and distinguished scholars from around the world. This year we have invited Dr Eleanor Finger from Elon University to visit us and here is an exclusive interview the PH Newsletter team had conducted with her!

Dr Finger serves as the Assistant Vice President for Student Life, Dean of Campus Life, and Assistant Professor at Elon University, where she is responsible for several offices and university initiatives for diversity and inclusion, service learning and civic engagement, and the integration of residential and academic student experiences.

TÊTE-À-TÊTE WITH DR FINGER

What do you like most about your job? -

I fell into my career quite by accident and it has been such a rewarding and wonderful adventure! I love that every day is different, that I have the opportunity to meet with students, faculty, and staff both formally and informally to focus on different aspects of the college student experience and ways to make it most meaningful. I am able to support students and develop mentoring relationships with them as well as with other staff. Being able to co-create experiences with faculty who want to engage with students outside of the classroom is particularly rewarding as it all ties to practising a growth mindset and being engaged in deeper learning which is one of my passions. I also know I am called to connect people around diversity, equity and inclusion and help develop intercultural competency and humility. I have learned so much in my own experiences and keep growing and stretching as I learn with and from my colleagues, our students, and the community members. If you ever want to talk about careers in Higher Education, please let me know. I love what I do and every day is a gift!

What is the most important life lesson you wish your students can remember?

You are enough. You are perfect just as you are and are meant to be your own unique, individual with special qualities and gifts you'll share with the world. With so many smart students going to school and working so hard, I see competition rear its ugly head sometimes. I also see the fear of not being good enough getting in the way of trusting their own inner voice and moral compass. You have the answers within yourselves and I want students to stop comparing themselves to others, worrying about their limitations and instead say, "Today, I'm going to share my truest self with the world. I'll be honest, do my best, work hard, accept that I'm not perfect, listen, be kind, be open, be brave, question, brush my knees off when I fall and get back up and try again, afford grace, laugh, love, breathe, and practice gratitude around me." I want students to experience real, caring relationships where they give and receive support, celebrate diverse identities, perspectives and experiences of each other in community, take risks to be vulnerable with others, lift each other up, get excited and have a sense of wonder about people, places and things. Lean into your lives, learnings and love yourselves!

PROJECT *Bali*



How would you describe your Bali experience?

Wonderful. Haha. I am a Balinese, hence it was kind of going back home. However, this trip is more than just going back home. I get to bring our residents to live with and to interact with villagers, despite the language barrier (not least due to the hearing impairment of some villagers).

Mention something unique that you learnt

Besides learning what our residents are capable of doing, I learnt about the amazing attitude of the villagers. When I was about to end the farewell, lo and behold one of the villagers, who have a speech impairment, raised hand as she wanted to speak to. I was stunned and humbled to see a person, who cannot speak but want to be heard.

In retrospect, what would I have done differently

There are a lot of things to improve. But I don't have a particular thing I would do differently. The reason is this: part of the learning comes from surprise, and that makes the journey all the more meaningful. The villager who raised a hand to speak that I shared earlier is an example of how we can learn though unplanned. On the side note, one thing to improve may be to start the signup two to three weeks earlier.

THE *Bali* EXPERIENCE



How would you describe your Bali experience?

My time in Bali was simply fantastic. I felt a myriad of positive emotions while visiting different places in Bali. The trip itself can be divided into two parts- the learning journey and the tourism journey. The learning journey was set in the Village of Bengkala. It was definitely amazing how most of the village (even the non-hearing impaired villagers) knew a common sign language that taught us how inclusive they are of their community. The tourism journey took us to many picturesque places. All in all, the place and the company definitely made this trip one of the best ones I have ever had.

Mention something unique that you learnt

The main take away from this trip was learnt by me while living among the villagers in Bengkala, where I learnt the difference between a need and a want. Since we live in a very comfortable and connected place like Singapore, electricity and internet are somethings that we feel we can't live without. But during our stay there, we had minimal electricity (no fans!) and almost no internet as well. But we never felt bored for a single moment and engaged ourselves in socialising with the villagers and playing games etc.

In retrospect, what would I have done differently

If we had been given more time, I feel we could have explored more and learnt more about their culture and perhaps get new insights about their needs.



This was one of the most exhilarating experience of my life. Being a part of this trip helped me gain a new perspective. The attitude of the people of Bengkala inspired me and made me realise there is so much in life to be grateful for. It was amazing to associate with so many new people, getting to know them and building strong friendships. **Devika**

Project Bali is one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I shall always cherish the friendships, the memories, the smiles on the faces of the villagers and all the feeling of having done something memorable. I am so grateful to everyone who helped materialize this trip. I really hope I can continue to be a part of such trips and add value wherever I can!

Manan



Project Bali was an amazing chance for me, as an exchange student, to see a beautiful part of Bali that I otherwise would not have been exposed to. I knew Bali beforehand by its beautiful beaches and surfing but now I leave Bali with another thought in mind. That it is home to beautiful communities that work together and not against one another.

Mara

Project Bali was a very fun and exciting trip. It was an eye opening experience as I got to interact with the deaf and mute community and I was able to understand the hardships that they have to endure daily. I was very happy to be given the chance to participate in this project. **Syed**





Mind-opening and priceless. My experience in interacting and sympathizing with hearing impaired people didn't only make me realize of my privileges, but also my disadvantage in not being able to converse through sign language. Moreover, being exposed to their unique culture and habits added on to this amazing opportunity.

Andrew

: From bonding with the villagers to swimming in the river, project Bali was definitely a trip packed with excitement and priceless memories. Looking to experience a natural way of waking up? Do visit bengkala village! The roosters' morning call works like magic :)



Jessica



Project Bali was more than a meaningful engagement trip, it was an inspiring one. I have always believed that it is not about sympathy, but empathy, for any kind of community services to be carried out. It is never about just helping the underprivileged, but to really get to know them and to understand the social issues that we should be dealing with. Through interactions exchanged, we have not only bonded well with the locals but we were also able to understand the real needs of the local community.

J Man



The best part of my trip was the people of Bengkulu, who are so very loving and friendly. The children are the absolute sweetest; they were so eager to let us join in on their activities, they danced with us, and one adorable little girl insisted that I take her pair of earrings after I had complimented her on them. Last but not least, I was so lucky to be able to stay with the sweetest host mother and her son. Despite my

poor attempts at communicating in Bahasa Indonesia, she could understand it all and treated us as if we were her own children. Project Bali, although short, really helped me to form bonds that last and I am immensely grateful for the experience! **Natalia**

Project Bali was truly an eye opening experience for me. My favourite part of the trip was interacting with the residents of the house I stayed in. We taught one of them how to play the cards game UNO and I was amused by the fact that he picked the game up very quickly and also beat us in subsequent games. We had a huge language barrier and I sometimes did not understand what they were saying but that's when it hit me that that's how the villagers with hearing impairments have been feeling throughout their lives. My main takeaway from this trip would be the fact that language is not the only form of communication and there's something beyond that. **Amritha**





I got super emotional waving goodbye to my host mom through the car window. We don't share the same language but it's so fine cause in Bengkulu, the words have given place to the movements of body. For a ballroom dancer like me It's very inspiring cause dancing is also supposed to convey emotions and messages without words being involved.

Yanan

Having embarked on multiple OCIPs before, Project Bali stands out to be an extraordinary one for me! Despite our short stay, I was able to accomplish many things set in my heart - helping the local community, engaging with the locals, understanding the locals' way of life and more! With new insights gained and new friendships forged, Project Bali was a wonderful and unforgettable experience for me, and will serve as an impetus for me to continue helping communities with a humble heart.

Hui Lin



The project Bali was a mesmerising experience that I will remember for life. The Bengkulu village is so unique that I felt I was home on just the second day there. The villagers were so welcoming and my 'Ibu' gave her best things to us. We set our expectation low as we had seen the environment there, the professors even warned us that we might only have potatoes as breakfast, but turned out that she prepared chicken & noodles for us. When we moving out of the guest house in the morning, we gave our hosts chocolates as souvenir gifts, which the whole village knew about in the evening (talks about efficiency huh).

Ngoi Zi Liang