VIRTUS HERALD

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SECRET LIFE OF TEACHERS
MS. GREEN



Ms. Green, our biology teacher, was born and raised in Almería, growing up in a bilingual household with an English mother and a Spanish father and she is really grateful of her background as it allowed her to develop fluency in both languages from a young age. As a student, Ms. Green always loved science and was deeply curious about how the world works. She completed the Spanish Selectividad and went on to study Veterinary Medicine at Universidad Complutense. Although teaching was not originally part of her career plan thanks to her final degree project (TFG) and its relation to education she started considering this career path although she has always had an interest in teaching as she impressively began teaching at just 13 years old working with primary school students teaching science.

Her passion for teaching also developed at university when she became a rugby coach. This was unexpected, as when she first arrived at university, a friend showed her a poster about the rugby team and Ms. Green was not initially interested in the idea. It was the combination of science, rugby and teaching that ultimately led her to become a Biology teacher. Her path to teaching continued to develop and she found that calling at Virtus. Even though she joined recently, she has connected strongly with the school's teaching methodologies.

Ms. Green has also had valuable international experiences. She lived for one year in England, an experience she enjoyed but wouldn't repeat as her love for Spanish weather is greater. She also spent a year in Slovakia through the Erasmus program, where she met people from many different countries and formed lifelong friendships including her best friend Anjali. One of her favorite travel experiences was visiting Morocco last year, a country she loved for its incredible food and active lifestyle.

Outside the classroom, Ms. Green has a very active lifestyle as she continues to coach rugby for five and six-year-old kids, a job she loves as she gets to collect plenty of funny stories along the way. In her free time, she also loves running in the mountains. Ms. Green hopes to continue growing at Virtus and to help her students develop a genuine enjoyment of Biology. Her main goal is for students to feel curious and open-minded when approaching science, while also helping them explore future university/career paths.



BY: Gabriela Andronis

CHRISTMAS AROUND THE WORLD

Christmas in the United Kingdom is celebrated on December 25 and is a special time for families to come together. Homes are decorated with Christmas trees and lights, people enjoy pulling Christmas crackers at the dinner table, which contain jokes, paper hats and small gifts. Families usually eat a traditional meal of roast turkey with vegetables, followed by Christmas pudding or mince pies.





Christmas in Australia is celebrated on December 25, but it takes place during summer. Many families enjoy spending the day outdoors, going to the beach, having barbecues or picnics in the sunshine. Traditional foods may include seafood, cold meats, salads and pavlova instead of hot meals. Homes are decorated with Christmas trees and lights and children believe that Santa Claus delivers presents, sometimes shown wearing shorts or surfing. Carols by Candlelight events and family reunions are an important part of the Australian Christmas celebration.

Christmas in Japan is celebrated on December 25, but it is mostly a non-religious holiday. It is often seen as a romantic occasion, with couples going out for dinner and enjoying colourful Christmas illuminations in cities. A popular tradition is eating fried chicken from KFC, which has become a national custom. Families and friends may also share a Christmas cake, usually a sponge cake with cream and strawberries. Although it is not a public holiday, Christmas is enjoyed for its festive atmosphere and bright decorations.





Christmas in Brazil is celebrated on December 25, during summer, so the weather is warm. Families often come together on Christmas Eve for a late-night celebration called Ceia de Natal, where they share a large meal that may include turkey, ham, rice, farofa and tropical fruits. Many people attend Midnight Mass, known as Missa do Galo. Children often open their presents at midnight and fireworks, music and outdoor celebrations are common, giving Christmas in Brazil a lively and joyful atmosphere.

By: Daniella Gibello

THE HISTORY OF THANKSGIVING



Thanksgiving is one of the most important holidays in the United States, celebrated with food, family, and gratitude. But the holiday's history goes far beyond turkey and pumpkin pie. Understanding where the tradition began helps show why Thanksgiving remains such an important part of American culture.



The tradition of Thanksgiving traces back to 1621, when the Pilgrims in Plymouth, Massachusetts, held a harvest feast after surviving their first difficult year in the New World. They gathered with the Wampanoag people, who had taught them key skills like farming and fishing. While this event wasn't originally meant to be an annual celebration, it later became remembered as the "First Thanksgiving".



Thanksgiving didn't become a national holiday until 1863, when President Lincoln declared a day of thanks to help unite the country during the Civil War. Over time, traditions such as sharing a large traditional meal, watching parades, and enjoying football games became part of the celebration. Today, Thanksgiving focuses on bringing people together and reflecting on what they're grateful for, while also acknowledging the complex history involving Indigenous communities.



From its early roots in Plymouth to its role as a modern family holiday, Thanksgiving has grown into a meaningful tradition centered on gratitude and community. Whether it's through food, reflection, or time spent with loved ones, the holiday continues to remind people of the importance of giving thanks.



By: Ana Margazo

ELIMINATION GENDER VIOLENCE DAY
25TH NOVEMBER

Every year on November 25, the world observes the International Day for the Elimination ofViolence Against Women. This important date reminds us that gender violence is a serious global issue that affects millions of people, especially women and girls. It is not limited to one country, culture, or age group, and it continues to be a problem that society must address with responsibility and care.



Gender violence can appear in different ways, including discrimination, harassment, and unequal treatment. Even when it is not physical, it can still cause emotional harm and affect a person's confidence, education, and future opportunities. For this reason, it is essential topromote respect and equality from a young age. Schools and families play a very important role in teaching values such as empathy, communication, and mutual understanding.

As students, we can contribute to the elimination of gender violence by being aware of our actions and words. Treating others with respect, rejecting harmful stereotypes, and supporting classmates who may feel excluded are simple but powerful steps. Silence can allow injustice to continue, while education and dialogue help create positive change.

One way to make this change real is by taking responsibility in our everyday lives. This means noticing unfair behavior, refusing to laugh at or accept harmful jokes, and standing up when someone is being treated badly. It also means learning about gender equality, listening to the experiences of others, and encouraging safe spaces where everyone feels heard. Small actions like these may seem simple, but when many people practice them, they create a culture of respect and care that can prevent violence before it happens.










November 25 is not only a day to raise awareness, but also a moment to reflect on the kind of society we want to build. By promoting equality, respect, and kindness in our daily lives, we can help create a safer environment for everyone. Ending gender violence requires commitment from all of us, and change begins with understanding and respect.

Finally, it is important to remember that everyone has a role to play in stopping gender violence. Even small actions, like speaking out against unfair treatment or supporting friends and classmates, can make a big difference. By learning, sharing knowledge, and practicing empathy, we can create a future where everyone feels safe and valued, regardless of their gender. Awareness and action together are the strongest tools we have to build a more just and caring world.

BY: Adriana Martinez

FUN SECTION

For this section I decided to try bring down stress from universities we are having and ask teachers what embarrassing moments from university they can share.



“Back in university, one of my favourite memories was a field trip to Arusha with my classmates. The cultural clash was fascinating...

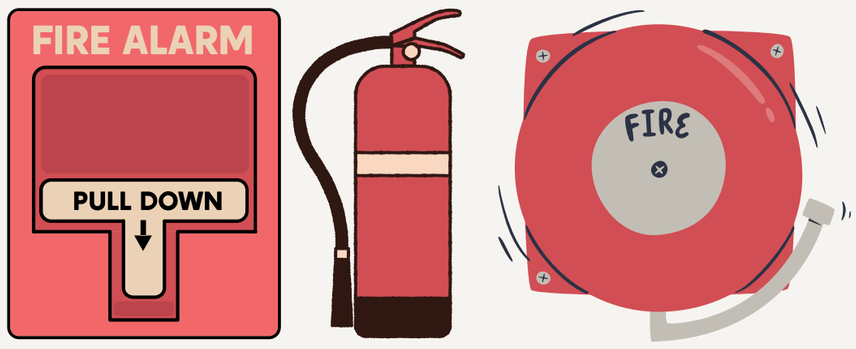


So was the unexpected biological reaction some of my friends had to the local cuisine. Let’s just say half the group spent more time becoming “experts” on nearby bathrooms than on the actual fieldwork. It was messy, hilarious, and unforgettable, and a good reminder that even when things go wrong, university is full of moments you’ll laugh about later.



Accidentally setting the fire alarm off in halls by making toast in my room.





(Happens more often than you think)

“Every Friday my friends and I would go to a game center and compete to get the most amount of tickets. We would have a blast.





BY: Cecilia Heras

FUN SECTION



I had a law conference on St Patrick's Day, and my friends and I assumed it would be a normal talk followed by a casual cocktail. Since we were planning to go out afterwards, we all dressed up in green for the occasion. It turned out the cocktail was actually hosted by Cherie Blair, the wife of the former Prime Minister — and she asked to take a photo with us. So now there's a photo somewhere in an archive where, instead of looking like a polished future law graduate, I look like a full-on leprechaun!









"I didn't start the essay until two days before, convinced I could easily finish it in time. I realise I was also supposed to print a copy and physically post it in the submission box on campus. My boyfriend drove me as fast as he could, but we immediately hit a huge traffic jam. Somehow, I made it to the submission box just as my professor walked up. I cried, got back in the car, and slept all the way home and for the entire next day.



I usually was —and looked— quite tired. I remember that on one occasion I had to take a final exam. I grabbed my concealer and drew a few lines under my eyes. I looked like Kung Fu Panda about to go into a major battle. Suddenly, my friend Eugenia, who always got very nervous during exams, looked at me and burst out laughing. "You never blended your makeup, and your face is full of beige lines. You can't take the exam like that."

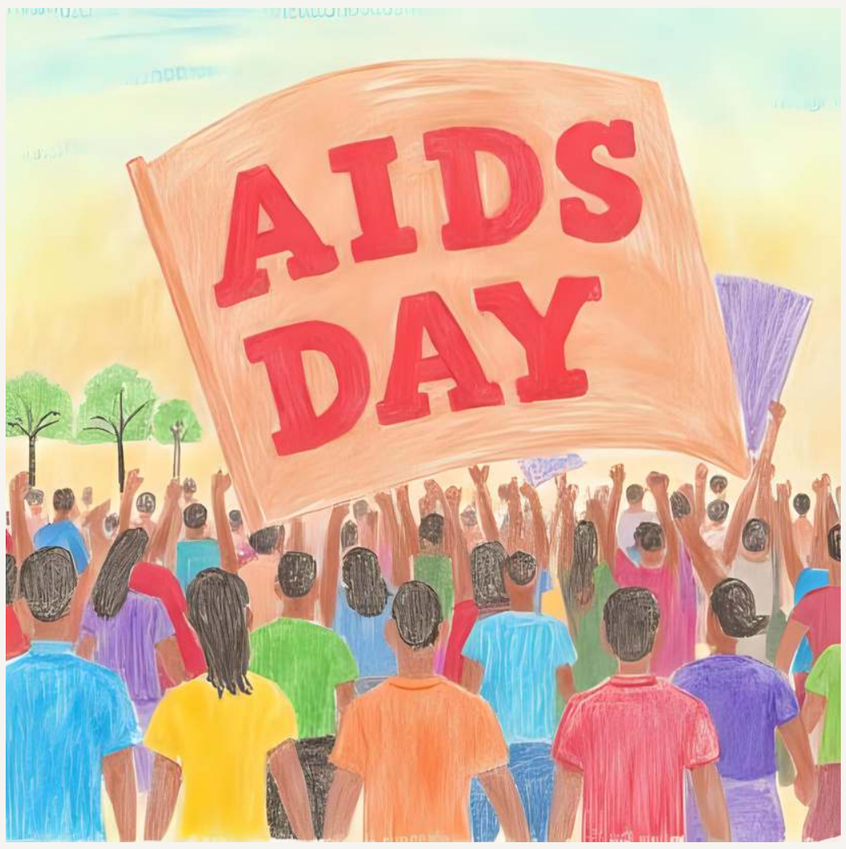
BY: Cecilia Heras

INTERNATIONAL AIDS DAY

What is AIDS?

AIDS is a chronic condition transmitted through bodily fluids such as: blood, semen, vaginal fluids, rectal fluids and breast milk. It isn't transmit through casual contact such as kissing or sharing toilets though.





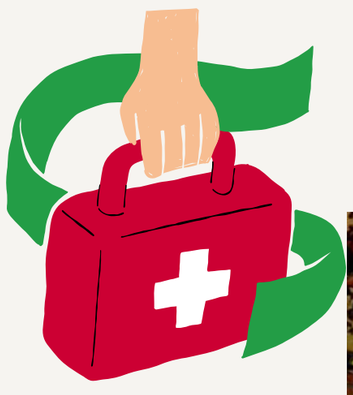
Why does international AIDS day exist?

Established in 1988 the 1st of December was officially named the international AIDS day to raise awareness and honour those who had died from the desease and the queer community that was attacked and isolated because of it.



Why do we still need to bring awareness to AIDS?

Because it still exists and affects people to this day. There isn't a fixed cure to AIDS yet and around 630,000 people died from it in 2024. Many people still believe it can only be transmitted through anal intercourse which is missinformation as it can be transmitted through many other ways.



Interesting fact about AIDS

Princess Diana famously challenged a stigma that surrounded AIDS in the 80s by shaking hands with a patient, proving that casual contract didn't transmit the desease.





By: Gabriella Guallart

ECOALF - RIVER CLEANING VOLUNTEERING ACTIVITY

Last month, our school organized a meaningful environmental volunteer activity — a river clean-up. The purpose of this activity was to raise students' awareness of environmental protection and to encourage us to take responsibility for preserving nature. On the day of the activity, under the guidance of our teachers, we went to a nearby river. Before starting, the teachers explained safety rules and basic knowledge about waste sorting. After that, we were divided into groups and began cleaning the riverbank. Wearing gloves and carrying trash bags, we carefully picked up litter such as plastic bottles, food wrappers, paper, and cans. Some rubbish was hidden in the grass, while others were floating near the water, which required patience and teamwork to remove.

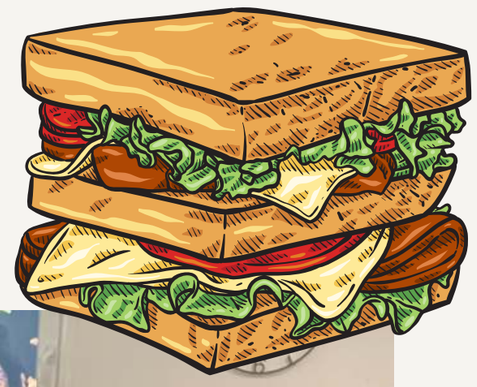


Although the work was tiring and some areas were muddy, no one complained. Instead, we helped each other and worked together efficiently. After several hours of effort, the riverbank became much cleaner and the surrounding environment improved significantly.

Through this river clean-up activity, we not only contributed to protecting the environment collecting **over 90kgs of waste**, but also gained a deeper understanding of the importance of environmental responsibility. Many students said that they would pay more attention to their daily behavior and actively participate in similar activities in the future. Overall, it was a valuable and rewarding experience for all of us.

By: Flora Shi

CHARITY AND VOLUNTEERING - BOCADILLOS



Two weeks ago, our school came together to make bocadillos for homeless people who do not always have access to food. Students and teachers worked side by side, bringing ingredients like bread, cheese, ham, and tuna. In the classrooms and cafeteria, we prepared the bocadillos with care, making sure each one was fresh and neatly wrapped. While we worked, we talked about why helping others is important and how even small actions can make a big difference. The atmosphere was full of teamwork, kindness, and responsibility.





After finishing the bocadillos, they were delivered to people in our community who needed them most. Showing how grateful they were reminded us that food is not something everyone can rely on every day. This activity helped us understand the struggles faced by homeless people and taught us the value of empathy and solidarity. Our school's effort showed that when we work together, we can support those in need and help make our community a more caring place.



By Sarina Katariya

VIRTUS IN SPORTS

Zahira Cargiolli currently does horse riding. Zahira started horse riding when she was five years old, first through pony rides. She had always loved horses and being around them, so her mum took her to a horse riding club and thats where her journey began. What made her start doing horse riding was her love and passion for horses. Everytime she passed by a horse-riding club, she wanted to stop and be with them because she feels happy and connected with them.

Now, she practices at a private equestrian estate in Brunete, where she trains with a professional rider. She competes at a national and international level. Zahira's routine in horse riding consists in riding two days during the week and throughout the weekend. She trains four to five days a week, depending on the exams and the homework that she has at that time. What Zahira likes most about horse riding is having the opportunity to spend time with horses and being around them all the time. It is a sport where you lose a lot, probably more than in any other sport





Zahira points out that the results are not what drives her, it is not the right motivation, it is more what's around it and loving the horses and the sport itself. Zahira definitely wants to keep with horse riding in the future because it is a big part of who she is and she can't imagine a life without it.

Horse riding has helped Zahira to be organized and disciplined. She has learned to balance the academic work with the sport and to realise how important consistency and time management are, especially when things get busy. Finally, what Zahira las learned about horse riding is responsibility, patience, resilience and discipline. It has also helped her to develop confidence and emotional control, as horses reflect how someone feels. Most importantly, it has taught her perseverance and respect, both for animals and for the sport itself.

By: Lucia Murphy

MRS. RADFORD VISITS DUTCH UNIVERSITIES

In the last month, our headteacher visited a wide range of universities from The Netherlands, acquiring first hand insight into what Dutch universities can offer Virtus students. She spent one week there and visited seven different institutions. Including research universities such as Erasmus University, Rotterdam and Leiden University, also some Applied Sciences Universities like Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and Rotterdam Business School. Not leaving out Leiden University College in The Hague and The Hague Hotel School.

Although each of the different universities had its own strength, Leiden University was Ms. Radford's personal favourite. She described how she was deeply attracted to its ethos, history and cultural heritage. She explained how walking through the city that figures such as Nelson Mandela, Winston Churchill and Albert Einstein was an incomparable experience. However, she clearly emphasised that different Dutch universities would suit different students, depending on their interests, learning styles and career goals.





One of the key features that distinguish the Dutch universities and UK universities is the clarity of pathways. In the Netherlands, there is a clear distinction between research universities, applied sciences universities and colleges. Applied universities have a focus on hands on learning, smaller class size and internships. While the colleges offer liberal arts degrees in an international campus environment. This difference will make it easier for students to find the right fit for them.

The facilities and teaching methods was also something that stood out, specially at Leiden, where the science labs are used in collaboration with some of the major pharmaceutical companies. Across many of the universities there was a strong emphasise on critical thinking, problem solving and the real world application rather than remote learning.

For Virtus students, studying in the Netherlands has many benefits such as high quality education that is taught in English (depending on the career), strong international environments, flexible degree and excellent employability. Her visit also strengthen the schools' ability to help guide students wanting to apply there more effectively, helping them match their personalities and ambitions to the right university. The main advice was research, apply early and secure housing as soon as possible.

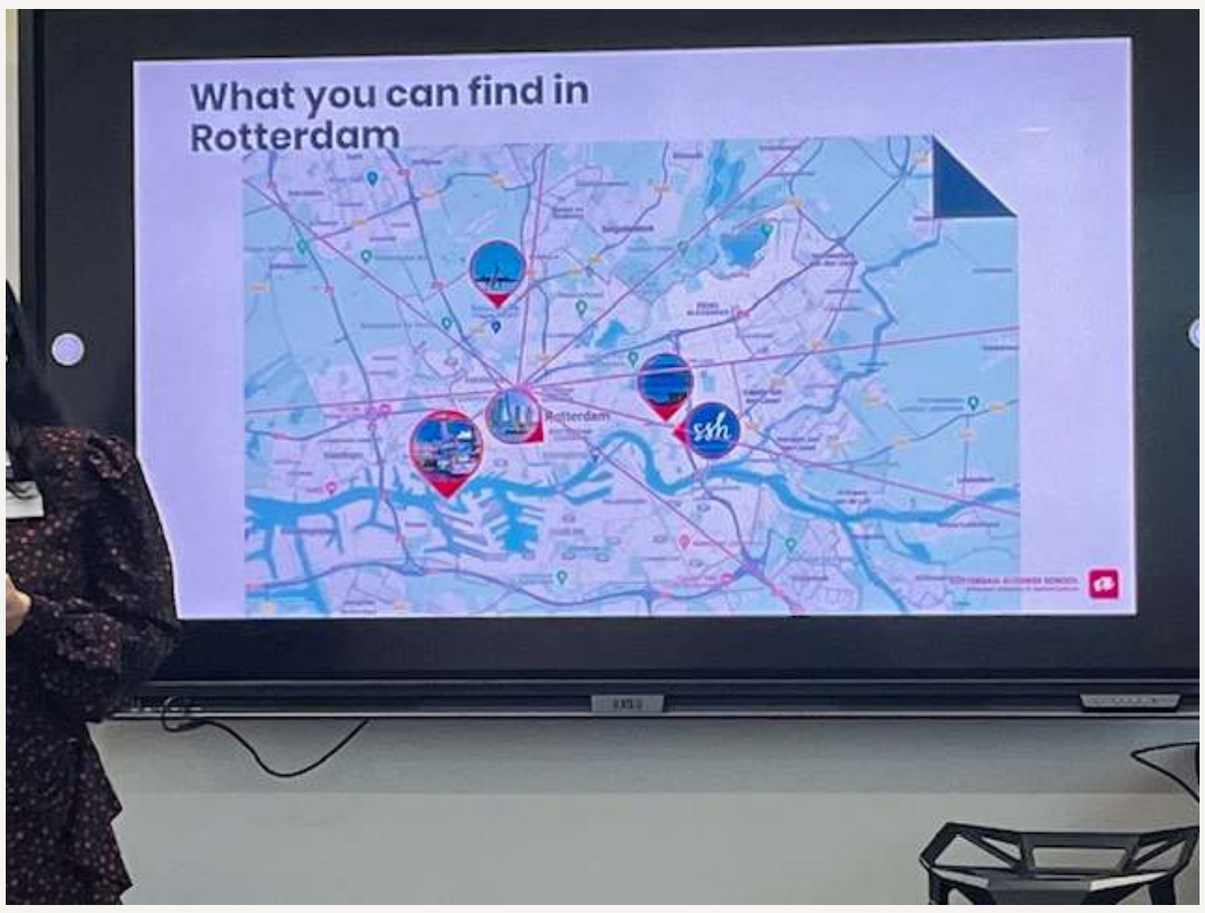
By: Catalina Janse

















By: Catalina Janse

HOUSEPOINTS

Message from our house captain Catalina: "Keep it up guys, no going down from here!"

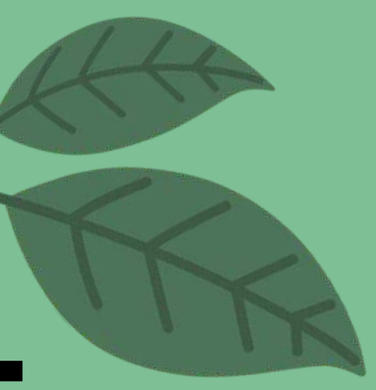


By: Cecilia Heras

HOUSEPOINTS



Seacole
1104 points



Attenborough
938 points



Austen
432 points

2

3

4

By: Cecilia Heras

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