



# GYEL NEWSLETTER

Volume 6 April 2026

## WELCOME TO OUR APRIL 2026 GYEL NEWSLETTER!

Our goal is to keep you updated on our program sessions, guest speakers, and showcase our students' global impact projects related to the UN's SDGs. We will also share helpful tips and insights to make your college application stand out, as recommended by some of the industry's most trusted professionals.

[Read more about our program](#)

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## MESSAGE FROM THE LEAD INSTRUCTOR OF PROGRAMS

As we move into April, we're delighted to share that the Spring Term at GYEL continues with strong momentum and a positive spirit across all programmes. Now well beyond the halfway point of the term, it has been inspiring to see the growth of our students in their confidence, collaboration, and leadership.

At this stage of the term, students are turning their focus toward their capstone final projects. These projects represent a meaningful culmination of their learning, giving students the opportunity to explore ideas they care about and apply their knowledge in thoughtful and creative ways. We are already seeing impressive progress and look forward to how these projects evolve into tangible impact in the weeks ahead.

The energy in classes remains vibrant, with students continuing to engage in rich discussions, collaborative learning experiences, and reflective practice. It's especially encouraging to see the strong sense of community that has developed, with students supporting and learning from one another.

As we enter a period of seasonal holidays, we hope all members of our community enjoy a restful and rejuvenating break. This is a valuable time to pause, reflect on achievements so far, and recharge for the final stretch of the term.

I would also like to extend our sincere thanks to our dedicated instructors and the wider GYEL team for their ongoing commitment, passion, and support throughout the term. Their efforts play a vital role in creating such a dynamic and nurturing learning environment for our students.

We look forward to an exciting and fulfilling conclusion to the Spring Term, filled with creativity, accomplishment, and continued growth.

Sincerely,  
Ms. Hannah Kidner, Lead Instructor of Programs

## SPRING TERM 2026 UPDATES

- Spring Term 2026 is entering its final stretch, and April marks an exciting and important phase for our students. As the term begins to wrap up, we're proud to see how much our students have grown—both academically and as emerging leaders. This month, our High School Part 1 and Part 2 courses will cover Topics 9–11, while our AI Horizons course will focus on Topics 7–9. We hope final projects are coming along well, and we encourage students to take full advantage of office hours and connect with instructors for guidance and support.
- Please note that there will be no classes on April 4 and 5 in observance of Holy Week, and our offices will also be closed during this time. We extend our warm wishes for a restful and blessed observance to our Christian families.
- As we continue to grow, we've introduced a new application link to help streamline the admissions process—making it easier than ever for interested students to apply.
- Applications for Summer Term 2026 are filling up quickly as excitement continues to build. With the term beginning in June, we encourage interested students to secure their spots as soon as possible.
- We're also excited to share that we are in the process of launching a new course for Summer term: Planetary Health & Climate Program. This interdisciplinary program explores the connection between human health and the health of our planet, addressing critical issues such as climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. More details will be shared soon!



[Start Your Application Today!](#)

Hola! I'm Gina Sosa, a physician and educator with over a decade of experience in international development and humanitarian aid. I've lived in different countries across the Americas and Europe, responding to crises and supporting communities in both emergency relief and longterm development.

Q: What's a fun fact or hobby you have outside of work?

I used to be quite adventurous. I encountered wildlife in the Amazon rainforest, slept in ancient ruins like Machu Picchu, climbed a live volcano, rode on top of moving trains, and even jumped out of an airplane! But the greatest adventure of my life has been my career. As a physician in global health, I've entered people's lives at their most vulnerable, helping after disasters, guiding them through difficult situations, and sharing in their most joyous moments, such as witnessing the reunification of families. Over time, I've realized that the most adventurous thing of all is simply living and being fully present for it



## INSTRUCTOR INSIGHTS

Q: If you could give students one actionable step to make a difference in the world using what they learn from your course, what would it be?

Volunteer! If you want to make a real difference, don't just stay in the classroom. Step into the world and apply what you've learned in real situations. True knowledge doesn't come from books alone; it comes from engaging with people, facing challenges, and learning to navigate complexity firsthand. By volunteering, you'll see how your skills and ideas translate into impact, gain empathy and perspective you can't get in a lecture, and discover strengths you didn't know you had. Your education multiplies when it meets experience, and your life becomes richer, fuller, and more meaningful.



[Learn more](#)

## COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TIP

The habits you form in high school directly shape how smoothly you transition into college-level learning. College requires more independence, time management, and self-discipline, so starting early gives you a strong advantage. Focus on building habits like reviewing notes regularly, planning your study schedule in advance, and staying consistent with assignments instead of relying on last-minute preparation. The earlier you establish these routines, the more natural and automatic they become when academic demands increase.

*Cole Claybourn*  
*U.S. News & World Report*

# GYEL SUMMER 2026

Enrollment Open for Summer until May 31

Generous Financial Assistance Available (see website for more info)

Summer Term set to begin the 3rd week of June

[Apply today](#)

[Hear from our students](#)

## SMART READS FOR FUTURE LEADERS

Explore articles that empower students and families to make informed choices about their academic and leadership journey.



### THE TOP 3 COLLEGE APPLICATION MISTAKES THAT COST STUDENTS IVY LEAGUE ACCEPTANCE

Students across the country are meticulously crafting their essays, assembling their activities lists, and requesting recommendation letters in the hopes of earning an acceptance letter from their dream school. Many have checked all the boxes: they have the grades, test scores, robust extracurricular profiles, and glowing recommendations. And yet, the majority of them will face rejection and be left wondering why they fell short even after doing everything “right.”

Every admissions cycle, tens of thousands of students apply to Ivy League and other top schools—valedictorians, entrepreneurs, national award winners, and class presidents. Given the competitiveness of these applicant pools, every single aspect of a student’s application matters. At the Ivy League level, the majority of rejected applicants haven’t done anything glaringly wrong, but seemingly insignificant mistakes can rule a student out of contention. Many students fail to realize that it’s not simply about what they do but how they tell their story that will set them apart from thousands of other applicants. Many mistakes students make in the application process result from failures in compelling storytelling rather than unimpressive resumes.

[Read More](#)



## Student Spotlight

From Innovation to Impact – Siddharth Kulkarni's Journey

This month, we are honored to highlight Siddharth Kulkarni, a GYEL student whose dedication to leveraging technology, science, and creativity to address real-world challenges exemplifies the GYEL mission in action.

## SIDDHARTH'S SOCIAL IMPACT JOURNEY

- Passionate about computer science, serving as Programming Lead for his robotics team, leading them to 1st place at the BEST Robotics State Competition, and earning the State-level Simulink Programming Award for three consecutive years.
- Conducted research at the University of California, Irvine on nicotine and fentanyl addiction in adolescents to understand the science behind substance use.
- Founded LyfeLine, a mobile app that helps teens combat vaping through AI-driven, personalized cessation plans.
- Designed LyfeLine to redirect cravings toward meaningful, dopamine-generating activities in a supportive, teen-friendly way.
- Collaborates with local cessation centers for beta testing and partners with his school district to expand vape education and awareness.
- Plans to scale LyfeLine across additional school districts in Dallas to increase its impact.
- Pursues music as a trained pianist, vocalist, and multi-instrumentalist, while teaching and staying connected to his cultural roots.



Through GYEL, Siddharth has deepened his understanding of how technology, research, and human connection intersect to create meaningful solutions. His work reflects the heart of GYEL: cultivating young leaders who think globally, act compassionately, and lead with purpose.



# LYFELINE

## LYFELINE

LyfeLine is a mobile app that empowers teens to overcome vaping by combining AI, neuroscience, and personalized support to help users replace harmful habits with healthier, meaningful alternatives.

## WANT TO BE FEATURED IN OUR NEXT STUDENT SPOTLIGHT?

We love celebrating the incredible impact our GYEL students are making around the world. If you'd like to share your journey, achievements, or community project, send us your details at [inquiry@un.gyel.org](mailto:inquiry@un.gyel.org) and you could be our next feature!

