

# THE SANDSTORM SCOOP

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## *Teacher Comeback*



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## Teacher Shaylin & Teacher Christian

by Coco Lei E8-2

The 13th in November, Friday, was truly an exciting day for SMIC middle school students, as it brought back two teachers that the students really love from a far away island located in the Indian Ocean. They are Teacher Christian and Shaylin. They had been away from the school for ten months. When the coronavirus was prevailing in every corner of the world, blocking millions of people from traveling around, teacher Shaylin and Christian were among them. We were not able to meet them in person, but to only communicate through screens. But lucky for them, unlike those who were stuck in countries like the U.S., they were stuck in the famous vacation paradise—Bali. In addition, there was no time difference to deal with. However, this is just the one side of the story, let's hear what teacher Christian and Shaylin think about their time in Bali!

Teacher Shaylin said that the coronavirus “affected my holiday greatly because I got trapped in the country that I went on vacation, so I was stuck in Indonesia.” And teacher Christian indicated that “it turned a three week vacation into a ten months trip overseas, so it was very interesting and we got to learn about a new culture that we didn’t expect to learn about and it all worked out.” Things went great, but there are still some challenges during online teaching. For example, teacher Shaylin pointed out that “having stable wifi was very hard on the island we were at, it was very challenging. So I think that is the number one challenging thing. And then the number two challenging thing, very close behind, was that I just missed you guys, so it made me sad when I was on my computer, because I just want to be in class.” And teacher Christian shares the same feeling: “I would agree with the wifi, because we often have classes at the same time, so that made the bad wifi even worse. But luckily for us, there was no time difference, so it wasn’t like the teachers in America who had to teach classes at midnight.” Despite being trapped in an isolated island which is far away from everything, teacher Shaylin and teacher Christian were able to find silver linings around the cloud. “We learned how to scuba dive, so we took scuba diving lessons and then we really liked it, so we actually got our advanced certification and we got to see things that were really cool like a bunch of sharks underwater, and octopus, and all the other interesting creatures.” Which was said by teacher Shaylin.

We are so happy to have teacher Christian and Shaylin back. With more and more teachers coming back, and as the middle school teacher family is getting back together, we feel like the world is getting back to the right track.





# Teacher Michael & Ms. Son

by Coco Lei

During this pandemic, Teacher Michael and Ms. Son went through a long period of quarantine before they made it home. They were quarantined in QingDao which was the first entry city, they also had to be quarantined in Beijing for another 7 days there was a few more cases spotted during their quarantine. But finally, they made it back.

Their holiday was greatly affected by the coronavirus, it restrained them coming back to China. Teacher Michael said that, "We were stuck with our families in America and in Korea. It was a very long time before I can come back." And Ms. Son agreed with him by saying, "It was supposed to be three weeks, and it turned out to be nine months. Even though I was working, I didn't feel like I was a working working, because I was not at school physically. So it was like half working, half enjoying the vacation. Yeah, but it was a very interesting year as a whole." However, it wasn't as pleasant as Ms. Son put it, there were also some challenges when the teachers are not at school. Ms. Son pointed out that "it wasn't the same thing, because you don't get to interact with kids physically. Like when you see them on the screen, and you try to teach them information, but you don't really know, as a teacher, if they're getting it. I wondered if they really understand what I just said? Do they really get it or

are they just pretending to get it because they don't want me to teach more of it. So the challenge is really just not having good relationship with kids, because at school, I know if you're struggling, I can see your face if you didn't get it, so let me go over again, but on the screen you can not do that, you don't really feel that, so that was my biggest challenge." Teacher Michael concurred with that, "Transitioning to zoom was quite difficult because I'm so used to being in the classroom and walking around the classroom and getting students to interact, so having to do that online through computer was quite difficult just because I couldn't really get hands on, I couldn't really see the kids, I couldn't interact with them the way I would normally do, and that I been so used to do."

Despite of that, the experience also had the fun part. When speaking about the best part of vacation, a smile spread over teacher Michael's face. "I guess the best part, I mean it's sad as covid has been, and has impacted a lot of families in a bad way, but if I'm looked over the silver lining, I would it did give us some extra time to spend with our families that we normally don't get, since we live in Beijing and our family live elsewhere. So that's a positive I would say." Ms. Son feels the same way with him, "Well, I get to spent a lot of time with my family I guess, I have a lot of families, so we get to stay in America for almost three month and I stay with my parent in Korea for almost five month, so I don't get to do that because I'm mostly here teaching, but this year I was able to stay a lot of time with my parents, so it was really nice."

The coronavirus is scary, but with love and family, we can always keep the happiness in our hearts.





## Teacher RC on online learning

by Tina Zhuang E8-2

Interviews by Kevin Cui E7-2

This year is a special year, and we were not able to meet our teachers in school because of coronavirus. Teachers were not allowed to comeback because of all the regulations of the government and the virus itself. We can just meet them in screens and having zoom class and that is a very difficult time, however, in some day of November, Teacher RC came back to school, and we were so exciting about it, therefore, Kevin decided to ask teacher RC some questions and stories that happen during these days.

Kevin: What is the feeling to teach on zoom?

Teacher RC: "I think when teachers were on zoom and that kind of platform like that, you lose a lot of connections with students because you are not able to walk around and see students specifically, you're not able to engage students directly, and so my feeling of teaching on zoom is basically it wasn't a necessary evil at the time, but it was not a preferred means of instructing for my self."

Kevin: How did the corona effect your life?

Teacher RC: "It changed my travel plan from being able to return to China in February to not being able to return until October. It put me back in the States where I don't have any of my things, so it kind of change how I lived on daily basis, well they are the negatives, some of the positives is that I was able to spend the time with my family after being in China for like about 6 months. So, the benefits are I'm really able to spend more time and value more time and slow down and kind of have some quality time and quality experiences that I probably wouldn't have."

## Midterms

by George Han E8-1

In the past two weeks, the SMIC students had their 2020-2021 year's first semester midterm test. Most of the students found the questions pretty hard, but they are still able to overcome them. Let's listen from a few teachers and students about what are their thoughts about the midterm test.

Andy Pan from E8-1 said that: "I think the tests were unnecessary, but projects were meaningful."

The midterm is the first tough challenge for the students of the entire year. However, we are now moving forward, onto the second quarter's learning. So get ready for it!



