



Head of School Message October 2012

Like the mesmerizing currents of the Arno, ISF is into the flow of student life at our two schools. I always look forward to the fall, a cooling reprieve from the scorching summer temperatures in Florence, and also because it is a time that our students begin to hit their stride. They understand the importance of immersing themselves into their studies, giving their best and also exploring interests beyond the villa walls. This fall, even more so than last year, many more students are participating in after school extracurricular activities and the ASIL Sports League. In these settings, students find out more about themselves and the balance they achieve when they meet and interact with others with whom they would otherwise not know. Joining the choir, signing up for drama, sharing literary experiences in the book club, learning about the environment on the green team, assuming leadership roles on the student council, playing on the volleyball or tennis teams and a host of other experiences available to them is an invaluable way to take a step beyond themselves. "Taking that leap" is sometimes uncertain, but in the end, it is always beneficial.

For me, I launched my "cycling career" by purchasing a motorino this summer, with some (no, really a lot!) initial trepidation, but have since wondered why I didn't do it sooner for the adventure that it has opened up for me. One of my students, seeing me for the first time on it, of course, (and not to miss his "iPhone moment") had to take a quick photo and later commented, "mister, it looks like you were born on that bike!" As the Nike brand motto implores, I urge our students at ISF, "just do it" and good things will happen.

It is a busy time on both campuses with mid trimester pre conference reports for parents at the Upper School available on eportal as a means of communicating progress for your child(ren). Parent conferences, held last week at the Junior School and on Wednesday and Thursday this week at the Upper School are timely opportunities to connect and talk with our teachers about your child(ren). Of course, we have the tradition of Halloween celebrations with the annual parade on Wednesday, the 31st at the Junior School and a Middle School dance this Friday evening.

Among the top priorities of the Board of Trustees is their continuing strong support of academic excellence. A second, and equally important one, is to identify/ explore alternate school sites for educating our students. To hear more about that topic and others, we will be hosting the annual Meet the Board event on Thursday evening, November 15th, at 6 p.m., at the Upper School. Please join us to give your invaluable feedback and to engage in healthy dialogue with our Board. Lastly, so that it is on everyone's calendar, we are planning a Festival of Song, to be held at the St. James Church on Friday, December 7th. More details will follow, but as you have probably already noticed, music has "come alive" on both campuses this year!

I wish all of you a wonderful fall break to enjoy time with your family. As always, I am grateful for the opportunity to work with your children in my role as Head of School.

With warm regards,
Larry Hobdell