

27th January 2025

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In my remarks at the first assembly of the new year, I spoke about the values that bind our community as part of the UWC movement—values of peace, sustainability, and mutual understanding. In a world that often feels fractured and uncertain, these principles are more vital than ever. They challenge us to be brave enough to engage in difficult conversations, wise enough to listen deeply, and strong enough to act with compassion.

I also shared that kindness is one of the most powerful forms of leadership—quiet, yet profound. Sadly, it's a quality often missing in today's political landscape, but one we can nurture in our community. This was beautifully exemplified over the Winter Break by the many RBC and UWC families, as well as our Host Families, who generously opened their homes to students unable to return home. Every hosted student I've spoken to has expressed heartfelt gratitude for the warmth and hospitality they received.

As we settle into the rhythm of the new term, it's remarkable to reflect on all we've accomplished in just two and a half weeks. Time at RBC really seems to have its own unique pace. Highlights so far include:

- **Basel's Museums Nacht:** Half of the student body took the opportunity to explore 40 museums and institutions during this incredible cultural event on January 17th.
- **First-Year Academic Milestones:** First-year students have embarked on their Theory of Knowledge (TOK) journey and started to consider ideas for their Extended Essays.
- An informative **Global Affairs** entitled "Solar in the Global South: the potential of renewable energy for lower income countries". Two student testimonials were accompanied by guest speakers (Joseph Awinbilla Ayeebo and Nicolas Travieso Perez) from the world renowned Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy (based here in Freiburg) talking about research projects in Namibia and Honduras respectively.
- **Student TEDx Talks:** A series of thought-provoking talks organized by the student CAS group.
- **Cultural Celebrations:** The Latin American and Southeast/East Asian communities shared their vibrant traditions through workshops, films, and a wonderful Latin American show. We're now eagerly anticipating Friday's Lunar Dinner.
- **Remembrance:** As we mark the 80th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, the Stolpersteine CAS will lead the community through a number of events including workshops, presentations and a candlelight ceremony as we remember the 6 million Jews murdered during the

Holocaust and commemorate the millions more people murdered through the Nazi persecution of other groups, and in other more recent genocides. But as [Ban Ki-moon](#) said in 2008 “We must also go beyond remembrance, and make sure that new generations know this history. We must apply the lessons of the Holocaust to today's world.”

Looking Ahead

- **Special Focus Day (Thursday):** Our second Special Focus Day, titled *Let's Talk About Race*, will center on racial inequality. This student- and staff-organized event will center on racial inequality, inviting our community to "learn about other people's realities and lives." The day will conclude with a sensorial theatre piece exploring power and solidarity.
- **Project Week (Sunday Onwards):** While some groups will remain in Freiburg, others will travel as far as Vienna and Budapest. Students will be engaging in a variety of meaningful activities, from service projects like working in soup kitchens, animal shelters, and on farms, to creative endeavors in photography, painting, and music.
- **Visit of Shelby and Gale Davis April 21st:** As I wrote in my letter to parents and guardians (24.09.2024) UWC graduates have the extraordinary benefit of the financial generosity of Shelby Davis, who has partnered with around 100 US universities and colleges to make it financially possible for UWC graduates to receive scholarships that meet their financial need for both tuition and accommodation. In 2023/24, the total number of Davis UWC Scholars attending these schools has now reached 4,209 from 164 countries. Further to this, Shelby Davis funds the “Dare to Dream” initiative <https://www.uwc.org/daretodream> providing 100 scholarships per year for students selected through National Committees to attend a UWC as well as providing scholarships for all students selected by the USA NC. We are therefore delighted and honoured to be able to welcome Shelby and his wife Gale to our campus on Easter Monday.

Important Updates and Reminders

1. Spring Break:

- Spring Break begins on **Thursday, 17 April**. Students must remain on campus through their final commitment/class on **Wednesday, 16 April** but may depart afterward.

2. Closing Ceremony and Visa Invitation Letters:

- Parents or guardians requiring visa invitation letters for the Closing Ceremony should ask their child to contact Lisa, our student secretary.
- Please note that seating is limited. Each second-year student will receive a maximum of two guest tickets for the event.

3. Key Dates for the 2025/2026 Academic Year:

- **Student Arrival:** Thursday, 28 August 2025 (Incoming flights to Frankfurt will be met by prior arrangement. Students arriving at Basel Airport should take the airport bus to Freiburg train station. Similarly, students arriving in Freiburg by train or bus will be met by prior arrangement.)
- **Winter Holiday Departure:** By 10 a.m., Thursday, 18 December 2025
- **Winter Holiday Return:** Campus opens at 10 a.m.; students must return by 7 p.m., Wednesday, 7 January 2026
- **Summer Holiday Departure for First-Year Students:** By 10 a.m., Friday, 19 June 2026

Thank you for entrusting us with the education and growth of your children. As this next term unfolds, we look forward to supporting them in their journeys and inspiring their curiosity, resilience, and commitment to creating meaningful change.

Best,

Helen White

Rektor