

## **IDS Families Open Their Homes – And Their Hearts – To Spanish Students From Madrid**

*International study program between Independent Day School-Corbett Campus and Colegios Ramón y Cajal in Madrid, Spain builds meaningful, personal connections.*



*Ten students in grades fifth through eighth and two teachers from Colegios Ramón y Cajal in Madrid, Spain participated in the most recent international study program at Independent Day School-Corbett Campus. Each Spanish student was placed with a volunteer IDS host family for the three-week stay. During the day, they attended classes and after-school activities with their IDS student “buddies.”*

**March 15, 2011 (TAMPA, Fla.)** – It happens every time. The thank yous and the goodbyes always bring some tears.

It was the traditional pizza-party farewell – time for the group of students from Colegios Ramón y Cajal in Madrid, Spain, who had been attending classes at Independent Day School-Corbett Campus for three weeks to say goodbye to their host families and their student buddies.

Independent Day School and Colegios Ramón y Cajal have been working together for years. It started when Paloma Sanz, whose grandfather founded the family-owned school in Madrid, visited IDS to learn about teaching strategies and the [IDS M.O.R.E.](#) principles for increasing student achievement and success.

Since then, several groups of Spanish teachers have visited IDS, and IDS Headmaster Dr. Joyce Burick Swarzman has trained teachers at the school in Madrid. In addition, four groups of Madrid students have come to IDS, and a second group of IDS students and teachers will travel to Spain at the end of the month.

So, it is only natural that IDS and Colegios Ramón y Cajal consider themselves ‘sister schools.’

And as a result, students like American Seth Cashen and Spaniard David San Miguel consider themselves ‘global brothers.’

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*The story is continued here.*

While most international programs are designed for high school or college-age students, the students participating in the IDS study program are in grades five through eight. It is coordinated by the school's Spanish Department: 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Cathy Clark, 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Odette Figueruelo, and K-6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher Sonia Morgan.

IDS is an International Baccalaureate school and emphasizes the development of future citizens who are internationally minded and the study of world languages at all grade levels beginning in PreK3. The international study program brings those language and culture lessons to life for all students, who benefit from the opportunity to interact with their visiting Spanish counterparts.

For the students whose families serve as volunteer hosts, the benefits are even more abundant.

At school, Spanish and American students practiced English and Spanish with each other. They studied math, social studies and science together. They played matball in P.E. and sat side-by-side in schoolwide assemblies.

At home, they shared bits and pieces of their cultures. They marveled at the similarities – the love of soccer, video games, music, and staying up past bedtimes. And they appreciated the differences. “They learned that there’s no word in Spanish for ‘stuff’, and s’mores are an American-only treat,” said middle school Spanish teacher Cathy Clark.

Throughout their time together, something more than knowledge and cultural insights were exchanged. The visiting students become part of their host families.

“Both American and Spanish students and families developed lasting, global connections,” said Spanish teacher Sonia Morgan.

“What they enjoyed most were the simplest things that create unity within any family, in any country – evening meals, laughter and time together, said Spanish teacher Odette Figueruelo “It was exactly what we as teachers had hoped would happen.”

Seventh grader Corey Shamley and his family hosted Iñaki Martinez Godinez. “It was very exciting to have him with us,” said Corey’s mother, Debbie Shamley. “Iñaki brought us together even more as a family, and we had even more fun than normal because he was here.

The Cashen family has hosted David San Miguel two times. “David is really part of our family,” said Seth’s mother Ann. “Seth’s ‘brother’ is going back to Spain, and we are really going to miss him.”

It won’t be long, however, until the boys are reunited. Later this month, Seth will accompany the group of teachers and students travelling to Spain.

“Now you will have a family in Spain,” David told Seth during their goodbye, “as I have a family in America.”

*Founded in 1968, Independent Day School-Corbett Campus is a fully accredited, nonsectarian private school located on Orange Grove Drive in northwest Hillsborough County with over 500 students from PreK3 through 8th grade. At IDS, all children experience the International Baccalaureate Programme in a highly academic and nurturing environment focused on excellence and excitement in learning. IDS-CC has become recognized as an exemplary school with over 6,500 visitors observing and learning from IDS-CC teachers. For more information, visit [www.idsyves.com](http://www.idsyves.com) or contact the Admissions Office at 813-961-3087 for a personal tour.*

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