

Daniel Cunha'94 Back at TBS-RJ

On the 4th Dec 2009, **Daniel Cunha, Class of 1994**, visited the school at the Botafogo site. He met Mr Paul Wiseman, **Mrs Adriana Nogueira de Andrade'94**, and was part of a really nice assembly for Classes 3, 4 and 5.

He then wrote to us this beautiful letter which we would like to share with you all.

"Dear Paul,

Just writing to say it was great to see you, and even better that we had a chance to meet at the old grounds - it is always a very special experience to go back there, where literally every corner holds a good memory.

Also, thanks for the chance to sit in during the assembly, it was really great. I meant everything I said that day, and I guess I got a little emotional during my interventions, but the whole day really struck a very strong note for me. First, being there that day, it hit me that since a very early age our teachers were talking to us in very serious and mature terms about such important issues as the fundamental values that makes a good person in a great community. It sounds strange that kids of eleven would be talking about responsibility, attitude, teamwork and leadership. But looking back I remember very clearly how much we talked about these matters, in assembly, in class, at sports, and how seriously we took them since an early age.

A lot of remembering! But more importantly, following your presentation I was amazed by how deep those values settled into my conscience of what it is that makes a great person - it is by those very standards that I measure myself to this day. And there is no doubt that my years at The British School had the most profound effect on who I am as a person, second only to my immediate family. The reason I am going into this is that I have always looked back on the benefits I took away from those years in terms of the academic skills and capabilities, which undoubtedly gave me a strong edge in my future years, and shaped a curious and well informed mind. But that day I realized finally that the effect was much deeper and went far beyond skills - it really was about who I was to become, who I am, who I want to be, and how to choose the paths to get there. And, clearly, it was all part of the plan! Not having had any children yet, I have never really put much thought into what I expect from a school for my kids, beyond a good education. What, in fact, makes up a *great* education is a subject that is in many respects new ground for thought.

So I guess what I want to say, having acknowledged all this more clearly and completely over the past days, is a grand thank you to everybody who was a part of that period of my life, and a very special one to you, who put much of it all in motion and always strove to make sure that the school was a special environment in every respect. In between all the memories these last few days, I remember how much the school began to change since the first year of your tenure (quite a clear memory as I was part of the revolutionary committee that boldly took to the streets demanding for change at the British School! Remember?). I recall very clearly how much communication and respect within our community grew to become an essential element of the whole experience, in fact, how the sense of being a unique and strongly bonded community really came into place, and how the school continually raised the bar in terms of its goals and achievements, academic and otherwise. I was very happy to see that the tradition lives on and has reached new and exciting levels, that the drive to grow, expand and improve the school's capabilities continues, and that the fundamental values that shape people are still the centrepiece of The British School experience.

So thank you, deeply and sincerely, and my congratulations to you and the entire staff, old and new, for such an important and well performed work, that has such a deep and lasting impact on those whose lives you touch. Please extend this message on my behalf to everybody else to whom it is due. I wish you all a great end of year season, an excellent new year, and a happy inauguration of the new facilities at Botafogo (somewhat jealous I confess - how I would have loved to practice my basketball skills in that new court!).

All the best,

Daniel B. Carneiro da Cunha – Class of 1994"