



## STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

*"I would say that one of the more beneficial features of the IB is the multitude and diversity of subjects that you can select. You develop some skills in a variety of areas—the diversity of perspectives I gained helped me have a more creative and broad approach at university."*

Rohit Pothukuchi  
2008 IB Diploma Programme graduate  
Kodaikanal International School  
Kodaikanal, India

Rohit Pothukuchi, an IB Diploma Programme graduate of Kodaikanal International School in India, working as a lawyer in New York City, is on the cusp of launching Verdentum—a non-profit social network aimed at connecting and empowering teachers and students around the world to do good in the world. Rohit is also interested in research on legal citation practices in India; he is the founding editor of Standard Indian Legal Citation and is an Affiliate Student Research Fellow, Harvard Law School Program on the Legal Profession. He completed his university studies at the NALSAR University of Law in Hyderabad and received a master's in law from University of California—Berkeley.

Having grown up in the United States, Rohit wanted to find a multi-cultural international school with a lot of programme options after his family moved back to India. The IB Diploma Programme stood out, as Rohit explains: "I liked the holistic approach and the ability to explore different subjects. Looking back I wish I had taken more of a variety of subjects than I had."

As an undergraduate student, Rohit worked on creating small recycling programs that linked private schools with several public schools in India. Their efforts not only brightened the community's appearance, but also brought together students with very different educational experiences. This interaction caught Rohit's attention. "It was fantastic to see kids from totally different worlds and totally different backgrounds connect with each other. I started thinking," he said, "how could we involve more people and make more of an impact?"

From this Verdentum was born. Verdentum is a social network that allows policy-makers to introduce programmes or issues that schools classes anywhere in the world can connect to discuss and address locally. Rohit believes the project fills a void in the type of volunteer opportunities available for students. "A lot of individuals feel that they're doing something that is very local, but I think students want to feel part of a broader picture and more connected."

In transitioning to an Indian university, Rohit credits the work ethic he developed while in the Diploma Programme. According to Rohit, "in the two years of the DP, you have a good feel for how the work load is going to be at university." His experience helped him realize the need for "better time management and scheduling."

After completing a degree in India, Rohit went on to pursue a law degree at UC Berkeley. "I think the DP did help with a number of law-related subjects...DP courses, specifically English and TOK [theory of knowledge], were helpful with courses such as jurisprudence and legal writing." The reasoning and critical thinking he developed, as well as the deep and creative thinking encouraged in TOK he also cites as benefits.

In advising future students on making the transition from international schools to universities in the US, he suggests, "keep up your grades but also try to do things that are out of the box ... Being outside of the US gives you opportunities to do things that you wouldn't be able to do otherwise. Outside the US there are often many more problems to solve and many unique things you can do to set yourself apart as a university applicant."

As one of the world's leading research universities, Berkeley exposed him to individuals who provided valuable insights and helped him continue to develop and continue to refine Verdentum. In 2013, he received an invitation to speak at the UNESCO World Summit on the Information Society Review Committee meeting, where he encouraged leaders to come forward and propose volunteer projects. It was a big step in making Verdentum real, with pilot programs scheduled to start at the end of 2014.

"CAS inspired me to continue to be a part of social service even after I graduated from high school. It felt really good to be involved with those activities and...I am still continuing with it. I also think it's important to be introduced to this component of life earlier on when you're in 11th and 12th grade. It really had an impact."

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