

# Movers and MAKERS

From biopharmaceutical researchers and spacecraft engineers to journalists and actors, meet the independent school alumni blazing a trail in the world of work



**LUCIA GARCIA LECUONA, 25**  
*Graduate researcher, AstraZeneca*  
**ACS International School, Egham**  
I was at ACS International School Egham for two years, where I studied the IB Diploma programme. ACS Egham helped me hugely in preparing for university and the wider world of work – and supported me, so that I could develop the knowledge and skills to thrive in my career.  
I’m now working at AstraZeneca – a global biopharmaceutical company, based in Cambridge, UK on the Research and Development graduate programme. The programme has allowed me to explore several aspects of the organisation. So far I have been involved in AI and machine learning, asset management, cell therapy, and participated in early oncology research, which I’m really passionate about and want to specialise in later on.  
My goal is to stay in the pharmaceutical industry and undertake a PhD which combines laboratory work and bioinformatics, so that I can help as many people as possible and make a positive impact on lives all around the world.

**SAM WILSON, 31**  
*Spacecraft engineer*  
**Haileybury, Hertfordshire**  
Haileybury’s culture extended far beyond the confines of the classroom. Whether on the playing field or delving deeper into academic subjects like maths and science, Haileybury provided the platform for my confidence, curiosity, growth and self-discovery.  
My post-school endeavours took me on a diverse path, from studying natural sciences at Bath University to embarking on adventurous roles, including teaching in South America, safari guiding in Kenya, and designing nuclear reactors for submarines. Today, at Airbus, just miles from Haileybury, I contribute to ground-breaking projects shaping the future of space exploration by developing new propulsion technologies to enable a range of missions, including climate change surveillance and autonomous landings on the moon and Mars.  
Looking back on my school days, Haileybury’s holistic approach to education had a transformative impact on me, igniting my innate passion for innovation and exploration.



**FUNMI OLUTOYE, 35**  
*Television journalist*  
**St Edmund’s College & Prep School, Hertfordshire**  
From 2005 to 2007 I attended St Edmund’s College & Prep School as a full-time boarder. Seizing every opportunity that came my way, I became head girl of my house, netball captain, and received the Headmaster’s Medal.  
My time at St Edmund’s taught me discipline, ambition and independence – traits that helped advance my career in the media.  
After St Edmund’s, I achieved a BA Honours in English from the University of Birmingham, before beginning my career with internships at various media outlets, culminating in the ITV News Traineeship in 2012. After placements at ITV Yorkshire and ITV Westcountry, I settled at ITV Meridian, before joining the launch team at London Live. Freelancing since 2017, I contributed to ITV daytime shows and worked at City Hall, before becoming a Features Producer at *Good Morning Britain*. In 2023, I was named a BAFTA Breakthrough Talent for 2023, becoming the first person to be selected from daytime television in the scheme’s 10-year history.



**RISH SHAH, 26**  
*Movie actor*  
**Haberdashers’ Boys’ School, Elstree**  
I graduated from Haberdashers’ Boys’ School in 2016 with A-levels in English language, theatre studies and economics. After sixth form, I studied English language and linguistics at King’s College, but it was during my school years at Habs that I fell in love with theatre. The drama department at Habs was really the root of my career as an actor today. I always wanted a career in the arts and I remember how I loved putting on devised theatre at school, travelling with my peers to see the best shows and also working with teachers like Dawn Morris-Wolfe and Tim Norton, who really influenced and helped guide me into the world of movies and theatre. My life as an actor is an exciting one and I feel very fortunate to be able to travel to different countries to film movies and TV shows for big studios like Marvel, Netflix, Amazon and most recently, I had a film premiere in Cannes. As I find my own feet in the entertainment world, being able to learn from others and work alongside industry experts and movie icons really is a dream come true.

**EMIKO ISHII, 38**  
*Actress and stunt and action performer*  
**Francis Holland, Sloane Square, London**  
Growing up in an Asian household, where tradition and education were highly valued, school was the place where I was able to truly discover myself. At Francis Holland, I was given the opportunity to explore my interests and develop the skills that would ultimately lead to my career as a performer and Creative Director of an award-winning dance company and academy, Epika Dance.  
Beyond the classroom, Francis Holland provided me with a wealth of co-curricular activities that played a pivotal role in shaping my future. Drama helped me find my voice and express my emotions, sparking a lasting passion for acting. Being on the netball and hockey teams instilled a love for sport and teamwork.  
Ballet exams and karate competitions challenged me and taught me discipline and dedication, qualities that I continue to apply in my performances. Thanks to the foundation laid at Francis Holland, I’m now able to inspire others to pursue their dreams in the arts, proving that with hard work and determination, anything’s possible.

