Hello, This is the second issue of the welcoming committee newsletter. In these newsletters, we will try to answer most of your questions, at least those that might apply to all of you. For individual concerns please contact your “buddy.” The school will be providing you with his/her name soon.

Snapshtos of Downtown Beirut

ACS e-mail account

Once you arrive you will notice that the school relies heavily on the use of the school email for its communications, it is important that you get yourself acquainted with how to use your school email from outside school.

An e-mail account is created for you as soon as you sign a contract with ACS. You can access it by going to: https://webmail.acs.edu.lb - You might have already received this information.

In case you face any problem, you can send an e-mail to ithelpdesk@acs.edu.lb, using your ACS e-mail account only.
Faculty Apartments

All ACS foreign-hire teachers are provided with apartments within easy walking distance of the school (one-half hour or less.) Apartments vary in size according to family size and the design of various apartment buildings. After your first year at ACS you will be given a choice of continuing to live in the same apartment, bidding on another vacant apartment or being paid a cash stipend to find your own accommodations.

Furniture

All apartments are furnished with a basic set of furniture according to apartment size. The furniture allotment includes sofas, armchairs, coffee and end tables, bookcases, desks and beds. Some smaller apartment may not have room for all the items mentioned above. All apartments have a refrigerator and a stove, and access to a washer and dryer (which may be located in a common laundry room). Kitchen appliances and electrical goods are readily available in Beirut.

Water

A small initial supply of bottled drinking water is provided upon your arrival. After that, there are several companies in Beirut who will deliver drinking water to your apartment. Information about these companies will be supplied in the welcoming packet which will be in your apartment when you arrive. Tap water in Beirut is considered safe for all purposes other than drinking.

Utilities

Electricity on the ACS campus and in all campus buildings is 220V, 60Hz. All ACS apartments are supplied with 220-240V. Transformers and voltage stabilizers are readily available in Beirut. Power cuts of 3 hours or more are a daily feature of life in Beirut. During these power cuts, the ACS campus and all ACS apartment buildings are equipped with generators. Generator power in your apartment will NOT be as strong as government power. Restoring generator power to your apartment after an overload will probably require intervention by your building superintendent. Therefore, it is essential that you run a very minimal set of electrical appliances during a power cut. An i-Phone and Android app (Beirut Electricity Cut Off) is available to keep track of the scheduled power cuts and warn you when one is approaching. However, unscheduled power cuts can occur. Desktop computers must be connected to a UPS in order to avoid damage while switching to and from generator power. Stoves operate from gas bottles. The first canister is free, and you will be responsible for replacing the gas bottle after that. The canisters last approximately 3 months, and refilled canisters cost $15.

Electricity is included as part of your housing benefits, up to $1,000 per year for singles and $1,500 for couples. Each apartment comes with its own private telephone line. Monthly phone bills are charged to the resident as a payroll deduction.
The Cost of Living in Beirut

Beirut is an expensive city to live in. You will notice that many items that are cheap back home are sometimes double or triple the price in Lebanon. However, there are items that are far less expensive here than the prices you are used to paying. Here is an overview of prices to give you an idea in USD.

**Grocery Shopping**
- Milk (1 liter) - $2.00
- Loaf of fresh bread - $.75
- Bag of large pita bread - $1.50
- Rice (1 KG) - $1.50
- Boneless chicken breasts (6) - $10.00
- Bottled water (8 liters) - $1.50
- Dozen eggs - $3.00
- Apples (1 KG) - $2.00
- Oranges (1 KG) - $1.50
- Activia Yogurt (4) - $11.00
- Box of Cheerios - $8.00
- Local Cheese (1 KG) - $8.00
- Limes (1 KG) - $25.00
- Lemons (1 KG) - $2.50
- Potatoes (1 KG) - $1.00
- Tomatoes (1 KG) - $1.00
- Box of Triscuts - $17.00
- Shampoo (Herbal Essence for example) - $4.00
- Conditioner (Herbal Essence for example) - $4.00
- Olive oil (1 liter) - $7.00
- Tide liquid laundry soap - $15.00
- 6 pack of Almaza Beer - $4.00
- Bottle of local wine - $8.00

**Restaurants**
- Meal at an inexpensive restaurant - $14.00
- Meal at mid-range restaurant (PF Changs for example) - $30.00
- Combo meal at McDonalds - $5.00
- Bottle of local beer in bottle - $3.50
- Mixed cocktails - $10.00
- Soft drinks - $2.00
- Large bottle of water - $1.50

**Fitness/Leisure**
- Gym membership (these vary depending on the gym) but on average - $90 per month
- Daily swim at AUB pool - $8.00
- Entrance to beach club for a day (depends on the club and beach) - $30.00
- Car rental for a day - $25.00
- Taxi ride (cabs here are not metered and you need to bargain with the driver before you get in. You will learn quickly what the prices are to go to different areas. You can call a cab company and they will give you a set rate on the phone before you get picked up) - $8.00
- Bus ride - $.50
- Movies - $8.00
- Bicycle rental - $3.50 for the day
- Walk or run on the Corniche - free

*When buying produce it is much cheaper to buy it at a local vegetable and fruit stand than from the supermarket. Many brand name items that you are used to from home are very expensive here but you can usually find a local brand that is similar for much less. There are stores like Costco and Amtrag that carry US products for cheaper prices if there is something you like to have.*

**Check with Your Bank**

Many US banks require that you sign a document if you plan on using your US debit or credit card in Lebanon. A visit to your bank may be helpful to avoid any surprises when you get here. Also, if you are planning on making wire transfers back to the States please get complete routing information from your bank.
Family Fun

Beirut will not strike you as a kids friendly environment, there are not many parks where kids can play. However, everyone loves kids and people are usually very friendly with them, do not be surprised if a person at grocery store starts a conversation with your child, or stranger smiles at them on the street.

The cornice facing the school is a neat place for kids to bike, but they will always need adult supervision.

Places to go with kids:

- Play bowling in Scores on Hamra Street Hotel Crown Plaza.
- Beirut New Waterfont—Perfect location to go biking, roll skating or for a stroll...away from traffic and along the Mediterranean Sea! http://www.beirut.com/l/8149
- Once the weather gets warmer the Bain Militaire is a sports compound that includes pools, a basketball gym, and access to the beach. It is well suited for families and walking distance from school.
- We can also access the AUB Hostler Center for a minimal fee, with it’s fully equipped gym, courts and indoor pool.
- Small kids can enjoy the kids gym at Jumping Jungle and few steps from school.
- Verdun is an area on the outskirts of Hamra and you can find several shopping malls there, all have kids center and the Dunes Center has a Bowling and gaming center where older kids can have fun!
- There are a few waterparks in Lebanon, Waves and WaterGate are the most popular, both need a car to get to.
- A diving center at Zeitounay Bay called Water Nation has special classes to teach kids diving and sailing.
- Beirut Souks has a children science museum, with new activities seasonally.
- Opening soon the KidzMondo concept is coming to Beirut, it is an indoor theme park designed for children between 2 and 14 years of age.
Bringing your Pet to Lebanon?

Please note that not all of our apartments allow pets so please check with buildings and grounds before you make plans to bring a pet with you.

Also, there are many strays here that need a home so adopting here could be an option. If a pet is allowed in your building, see additional information below.

The International Air Transport Association states the following for Lebanon:

*All live animals must be accompanied by a valid health certificate, issued by a veterinarian in the country of origin. This certificate is to be approved and stamped by an appropriate government authority of that country. A Rabies Inoculation Certificate is also required.*

The following site: [http://www.pettravel.com/immigration/Lebanon.cfm](http://www.pettravel.com/immigration/Lebanon.cfm) is helpful and worth a visit.

They provide the following information:

*Lebanon does not quarantine healthy pets who meet the following requirements: Within 10 days of travel, a licensed veterinarian must complete the Lebanon Health Certificate indicating that the pet has received all necessary vaccinations including a rabies vaccination at least 30 days but not more than one year prior to travel. Although it is not required, we recommend that a USDA or CFIA licensed veterinarian complete the Lebanon Health Certificate and that the pet be examined by the USDA or CFIA if traveling from the United States or Canada. A copy of the Rabies Certificate should also be included. This completes your cat or dog passport for Lebanon. The certificate must be legalized by the Lebanon Consulate which charges a fee per set of pet documents. You must also present Proof of Ownership when entering Lebanon.*

Community Members have experienced airlines that had the right to refuse to board pets due to hot weather conditions. So it is a good idea to check with the airlines before going to the airport to make sure the weather conditions will be OK for transporting an animal.

**Vet care is excellent and the following vets are in or close to Hamra:**

Pet Care Veterinary Clinic, Dr. Ali Hemadeh, Souraty St., 961 1 752 343

Canicat Veterinary Clinic, Hamra St., 961-3-904013

Either doctor would be willing to talk to you if you would like to Skype them.

**Following are some thoughts from members of the community with pets:**

**Dogs:** Your dog will need to be left in your apartment for the day while you are at school and when you come home to walk your dog please be advised there is very little open space. You will have to walk them on sidewalks so they need to be leashed at all times. You will notice that many people are afraid of dogs and they will not welcome having them near. Stray cats abound and they can be a problem for people walking their dogs. Kennels are difficult to find so you will need to make arrangements for their care when you are traveling.

**Cats:** Cats need to be indoors; there is no direct access to the outside for your cat. You may decide to allow him/her on an outside balcony but, depending on the cat, you risk them falling from varying heights which can be up to 6 stories.

**Food:** In the grocery store there is a variety of pet foods of varying quality.

- Pedigree dry for dogs: $4.00 per 1.5 kilo bag
- Pedigree can for dogs: $2.00 per large can
- Friskies dry for cats: $12.00 per 2 k bag
- Friskies can for cats: $2.50 per large can
- Fancy Feast for cats: $1.50 for small can

**At the vet, you can get Royal Canin and sometimes AIMS.**

**Royal Canin for cats and dogs:** $24.00 per 2 kilo bag.

*You can also contact BETA–if you don’t want to bring your own pet but like to take care of pets during your stay:* [http://www.betalebanon.org/](http://www.betalebanon.org/)
ACS Welcomes You

MEET YOUR ACS COLLEAGUES

Moving to a new country is an exciting time and it’s always nice to see a familiar face when you arrive. I’m pleased to introduce the new members of our ACS community. If you wish to contact each other just put the first letter of their first name and their last name @acs.edu.lb

Hamilton

Ham & Ceci Clark have been living in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for 10 years. Ham has been the Head of a 200+ year old school from which his own 3 children graduated. Ham is originally from Cambridge, Massachusetts and his wife Ceci is from Washington, DC. Both have been involved in education all of their careers. They are looking forward to joining the ACS community in August.

Rebecca

I have been teaching for 9 years at a school just outside Chicago. I have taught History, Economics, Sociology, Government/Civics and Consumer Education. I have also coached Varsity Girls and Boys Volleyball for 10 years, as well as sponsored the Environmental club. I am a vegetarian. I love to travel and am excited for this new adventure teaching in Beirut. We have traveled to Italy, France, Spain, Turkey, Greece, and fell in love with the Mediterranean culture and of course the weather. As a Chicago girl, I grew up with terrible winters, and am excited to get away from the snow! I enjoy trying new things, and have recently tried Skiing and the trapeze for the first time.

Ryan

My name is Ryan Naughton, I was part of the administrative team at a large high school just outside the city of Chicago, Argo Community High School. So if I happen to add an H to ACS you will understand why. I have been responsible for student discipline and attendance, security staffing and scheduling of athletic and activity events, and a variety of other duties including coaching boys basketball and baseball. Before becoming an administrator I was a Social Studies teacher, at Argo and within the Chicago Public School system. I enjoy traveling, jogging, trying to play guitar, watching both types of football (Chicago Bears and Liverpool FC), and being a part of the educational experience for students.
Hello! My name is Annie Infantino. I’ve been teaching for four years in Virginia, and before that I was in Peace Corps in Honduras. My hobbies include yoga, cooking vegetarian, learning new languages, and playing board games. I am excited to join the elementary school faculty at ACS and to be moving with my fiancé, Jared.

Hello y’all, my name is Jared Peet and I’ll be one of the new high school history teachers. I’m thrilled to be joining the ACS community and to be moving with my fiancée, Annie Infantino, who is joining the elementary faculty. I’m currently finishing my Master’s in Education out in California, but I previously taught at an independent school outside of Washington, D.C for five years. In my free time, I enjoy training for marathons, experimenting with new vegetarian recipes and watching my favorite sports teams (University of Virginia, Washington Redskins and Liverpool FC). During my time in Lebanon I’m hoping to perfect my hummus recipe.

Greetings, my name is Tim Livingston and I will be teaching 6th grade Language Arts at ACS next year. This is my 18th year of teaching and my 15th as a language arts teacher. I enjoy many different activities such as fishing, hiking, camping, biking, reading and history. I enjoy spending a lot of time outside and look forward to exploring Lebanon’s famous sites with my family. This is my first time teaching outside of Washington State as well and I am looking forward to the adventure!

Hello, my name is Midge Livingston. I will be the Middle School Librarian at ACS next year. This is my 21st year teaching and my 6th year as a librarian. I enjoy walking, being outdoors, cooking, reading, and spending time with family. This is my first experience teaching outside of Washington State. I am very excited to be moving with my family to Beirut look forward to learning about the food, culture and history of Lebanon.
My name is Margaret Sather and I hail from Gig Harbor, Washington, USA. I am delightfully excited about my new adventure in Beirut! This is my second time teaching abroad; in 2002-2002 I was at the American International School of Zagreb. Since coming back state side, I have been teaching third and fourth grades in a rural school in Washington State. When not teaching, I spoil my six grandchildren, hike around the Pacific Northwest, spend time with friends, walk beaches, knit, read, get my hands dirty in the garden, and hang out with my dog, Charley. Everything I have heard and read about ACS & Beirut sounds intriguing, I am very excited about being part of the ACS team!

Beirut will be my third international experience with Asia and South America in my recent past. I have recently taken a year off in Oregon, my home state and am ready to start this exciting experience working overseas once again. I am a licensed speech-language pathologist but have used my training with special education positions while abroad. My passion is teaching children how to read and comprehend written text. I am looking forward to the new experiences within the middle eastern/Mediterranean culture. To be quite honest, I'm looking forward to all the good food! Lebanese is one of my very favorite cuisines. See all of you soon. Can't wait.
Hello! My name is Jesse, and I will be the new atelierista (artist-in-residence). Born in Adana, Turkey, and raised throughout Europe and nearly every region of the United States, I have been a nomad since birth. I most recently lived in Hong Kong, where I helped start up an American Art and Design University’s abroad campus. My well-traveled Cavalier spaniel, Eli, will be making the trip to Beirut as well, so keep an eye out for us running along the water. I am inspired and driven by art in all its forms, and thrilled to be joining the creative community at ACS.

I’m Sharon Rogers, an English and Theatre teacher from Napa, California. I’m very excited to be returning to ACS Beirut, and look forward to re-newing old friendships and creating new ones. I love to hike and explore ancient sites almost as much as I love to go to plays and concerts. I’m looking forward to creating and collaborating with students and colleagues in the ACS community.

Hi everyone! Thank you for the warm welcome to ACS; my husband, Jim Lerch, and I are very excited about our next adventure in Beirut. I am originally from upstate New York, and I have lived and taught in South Korea, Honduras, Colorado, Cameroon, Taiwan, NYC, and most recently Macedonia. Some of my favorite things to do are hiking, running, reading, traveling, yoga, and playing Ultimate Fris-

First let me say that my wife, Amy Villagio, and I are very much looking forward to teaching in Beirut! One of my favorite quotes is from author Barry Lopez, who says despite the obvious difficulties in life, we must continue to live it out, making our lives a “worthy expression of a leaning into the light.” I have tried to live my life in that way, both in my former profession as an attorney, and in my current teaching profession. Since becoming an educator, I have taught in a variety of places around the world. I first started teaching at Alchesay High School in beautiful Whiteriver, Arizona. Since then I have taught in Yaounde, Cameroon, Hong Kong, Atyrau, Kazakhstan and most recently in Skopje, Macedonia. My success as a lawyer and as a teacher is based in large part on working hard, staying focused, and doing what I love. I hope that through my efforts, I can help instill in students the vision, the intention and the means to make the world a better place. Again, I look forward to teaching in Beirut.