



ACS MATTERS

The American Community School at Beirut Newsletter | Fall 2013



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Head of School Speaks

Thoughts on Board Meeting

Hamilton Clark, Head of School

When I was hired last year, the Board of Trustees asked me to spend my first months at school learning all I could about ACS, and to share my observations when we gathered for the November Board meeting in New York City. That meeting has now concluded, and I want to share with you the same thoughts I shared with our Board.

1) We have an excellent faculty at ACS. Great teaching has long been a hallmark of our school, and that continues to be the case. We have a powerful mix of outstanding local hires who give us continuity and institutional memory, combined with experienced overseas hires who tend to stay for three to four years before moving on to other international assignments. Our teachers challenge every student to learn and grow, while also standing ready to provide nurture and support when that is necessary. We budget generously for professional development and help our teachers to study and attend workshops and conferences all across the globe in order to have the opportunity to strengthen their skills and learn best practices.

2) We work to enroll interested, curious, and talented students, who for the most part work very hard, and are eager to take advantage of all that ACS has to offer. All of our students will attend university, and many are exceptionally ambitious, wanting to challenge themselves in every way possible and matriculate to the most competitive colleges. In high school, we provide three different diploma tracks, catering to nearly every student interest, and we offer a rich array of extracurricular

opportunities from the arts, to forensics, to athletics. There is something here for every motivated learner.

3) We do a terrific job of educating all the children in our care, but we are held back by modest facilities. We currently have our first new building in 60 years going up, an important new structure between the gym and the arts wing, but even this building will not solve all our space constraints. The new building will provide a beautiful new home for our fifth grade as well as 2 Arabic classrooms, a music and multipurpose room, 16 faculty apartments, and the Head's apartment, but it will not address our chronic needs for new science space, new playground space, and classrooms that can be organized and flexible enough for project work and for discussion. Of course, we must complete and pay for our sorely needed new building, but our construction and dreams of purposefully designed space cannot stop there. Collectively we must commit to updating all of our facilities and ensuring that our teachers and students have the necessary space to do their very best work, linking our educational vision with modern facilities.

4) It is my observation that ACS does not have as international of a population as it could in order to mirror and learn from the many communities that exist in Lebanon. In fact, currently we do not have a program in place to add new international students to MS or HS. We have no ELL teachers to assist bright students with limited command of English at those levels. When I arrived and was reading applications for MS and HS, I read about applicants whom I thought could be successful contributors to ACS and add diversity, but we were unable to admit them because we did not have ELL support to offer them. I am hoping to change that next year and to make our school more international while broadening our safety net for foreign students.



Hamilton Clark

5) Finally, I think that we can do a better job advancing English language fluency for all of our students. If our students are going to successfully compete for places at the most competitive universities, and if they are to excel in future job interviews, we need to ensure that they can read, write, and speak English with near native fluency. We can do better in this regard to support every child at ACS. I want to lead a literacy campaign at ACS and have every teacher at every grade level commit to fostering more reading, writing, and speaking in English. I am hoping that parents will join us by reading more to their children at home, that more books will be taken out of our libraries, and that we will see a steady rise in our students' verbal scores. We will launch an English literacy campaign early next year and will share additional details at that time.

Celebrating and preserving the best of ACS while instituting some change will require hard work, attention to detail, critical analysis, and a willingness to seek input from all involved. I am delighted to be with you at ACS and am eager to hear your thoughts as we move forward. Ceci and I already feel at home because of the warm welcome we have received in this community, and we look forward to working with you to realize the full potential for our school.

Health Matters

ACS Emergency Vehicle

Nada Halawi & Tamar Avedissian, ACS nurses



Over this past summer, the infirmary had the privilege of receiving support from the ACS Facility & Grounds Department to upgrade and furnish the ACS emergency vehicle with medical equipment and supplies.

The result is a fully equipped car that is ready to provide our community with any first aid treatment, should the need arise.

We owe a big thank you to Dr. David Warren and Mr. Ziad El Hdary for making this happen.



First Aid Class,
You are doing an amazing job in your weekly training!
You are always available and ready when we need you!



New Mission Statement Matters

Adoption of the New Mission Statement

Hamilton Clark, Head of School

At our fall meeting in New York City, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to adopt a new mission statement for ACS. The statement was drafted by a committee of faculty and school administrators last spring as part of our self-study for accreditation and fine-tuned by the Board over the last few months. The purpose of creating a new statement was to clearly and concisely capture the vision for our school. Many school mission statements are generic and can be easily interchanged for one another. We wanted the ACS mission statement to capture the unique nature of our school and to be short enough so that everyone in our community could recite it. I am confident that we have achieved our goal.

The new mission is only 26 words and it reads, "ACS empowers students to solve problems with creativity and integrity, to lead well-balanced lives, and to serve Lebanon and the world community with understanding and compassion." Let's look more closely at all that goes in to those 26 words. At ACS, our students are learning to be activists, to find solutions to the problems they encounter, and to do so with creativity and integrity. Here we are committed to character education and to teaching students to think critically. This is not a school where one simply learns to memorize, but a century old institution that focuses on helping students to become independent global thinkers. We are a school that promotes service to others and helps students to contemplate how to use their gifts to improve the lot of others in Lebanon and throughout this region. Students at ACS learn that academics alone are not enough, and that to lead a "good life," they must strike a healthy balance between their academic, athletic, artistic, and humanitarian interests.

We have poured a great deal of time and energy into this 26 word new mission and I hope very much that these words will become familiar and meaningful to all our constituents. We are proud of what they say about our school and trust that our students, faculty, and alumni can live up to them. The Mission, Beliefs, and Objectives follow below.



New Mission Statement Matters

The ACS Mission Statement:

ACS empowers students to solve problems with creativity and integrity, to lead well-balanced lives, and to serve Lebanon and the world community with understanding and compassion.

We believe:

- Students learn at different rates and in different ways.
- Students achieve success by being active participants in their learning.
- Students develop character through engagement with others from different backgrounds and through interaction within the community.

We achieve our mission by:

- Setting high expectations for ourselves and our students
- Empowering students to be critical thinkers and independent learners
- Working collaboratively with all members of our community
- Understanding and utilizing innovative teaching and learning
- Creating a safe environment for students to take risks and learn from their mistakes
- Facilitating students' intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth
- Engaging students in relevant and reflective learning
- Encouraging students to explore different forms of personal expression
- Providing opportunities for students to make choices, to lead, and to demonstrate responsibility
- Supporting students to be caring, empathetic, respectful and tolerant
- Developing cultural awareness and communication skills through the study of languages
- Involving students in local and international community service projects
- Preparing students to seek admission to the most selective colleges and universities



Student Learning Feedback Matters

Unhelpful vs. Helpful Feedback: Tips for Parents & Teachers

Dania Maaliki Tarabishi, Science Department Head, Chemistry Teacher (IB & 10), Grade 12 Coordinator, ACS Go Green Faculty Advisor

In giving feedback, it is important to keep in mind what can move things forward. Check below some interesting tips on how to change unhelpful feedback to more helpful feedback, and why!

| Unhelpful feedback | Reason | Helpful feedback | Reason |
|--|--|---|---|
| 'Your body language wasn't very good at the start' | Judgemental | 'At the beginning you were looking at the computer screen records and not at the patient as she started to tell her story' | Descriptive, detailed, behavioural |
| 'You weren't very empathetic' | Non-specific | 'You didn't acknowledge the problems she has dealing with her husband's illness' | Identifies specific problem |
| 'You're very abrupt' | Personality issue | 'You interrupted a lot, for example...' (give specific points in consultation) | Behavioural, specific |
| 'I think it would be better if you did it this way' | Advice | 'Have you thought about trying it like this?' | Generating alternatives |
| 'I don't think you heard everything with your hearing problem' | Hearing problem not resolvable in this situation | 'You have always discussed your hearing problems with us. Was there any point at which you thought it was affecting the consultation?' | Supportive, possibly can be changed by altering the environment |
| 'You didn't notice how upset she was' | Judgemental | 'At one point she was looking down and appeared quite upset. You quickly continued by asking her direct questions about her medication and she never returned to the problem of what was upsetting her. Did you notice that?' | Descriptive, non-judgemental, specific |
| 'It was really good' | Non-specific | 'At the start you asked an open question and then allowed her to tell her story. You left silences so that she continued in her own words' | Positive, specific, descriptive |

Extracts from: Wood, D. (2010). Formative Assessment. Understanding Medical Education, Theory & Practice. The Association for the Study of Medical Education.

For more on feedback and definitions of helpful feedback: <http://evaluate.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/5providing-feedback-for-student-learning.pdf>

Go Green Matters

ACS Go Green:

Beach Clean Up & Earth Day

Lilnaz Rouhani, IB student & ACS Go Green member

Beach Clean-Up

On April 6th we went to a beach clean up as a part of ACS Go Green activities. The beach we chose for the clean up was the Coral Beach, which is a 15-minute drive away from school. However, I was shocked to see what it looked like: a small under-developed village in an isolated part of the city. It did not seem like Beirut.

The beach itself looked awful. With one glance, you could see all the litter covering the sand. The beach we went to last December seemed perfectly clean compared to this one. On the beach there were two garbage cans only, right next to each other. They were filled and were surrounded by a full circle of garbage as if people had thought it was okay to throw the garbage outside of the can, as long as it was in close proximity.

We had to choose a piece of the beach to clean up, because unfortunately we could not clean everything. As we were putting the gloves on and getting ready to start the clean up, something surprising happened. All the children from the small village-like neighborhood came to us, asking for gloves and garbage bags so they could help us. I found this very moving and realized how important it is to start raising awareness in early ages when children are eager to help and learn.

In the end, we filled more than 50 bags with garbage that included juice boxes, cigarettes, plastic bags, cups and even shoes. Although I was very proud of what we did and above all I was very happy to see the small children eagerly helping us, it made me sad to think that for us, it was a few hours of beach clean up and we might never go back to that beach again. But what about the people who live there? What about all the careless, ignorant people who don't know about recycling and garbage cans and keeping our planet clean? What if one day our planet turns into a bigger version of that beach?

Thinking about these questions, I thought: so far, we have spent the money we have raised in ACS Go Green to make our school more eco-friendly. But we have reached a point where our school is relatively eco-friendly. The bigger community we are living in however... not so much! I think that our future plans for ACS Go Green should be to raise awareness outside of our school as well. Maybe we can raise money to buy garbage cans for the beach we cleaned up and other similar beaches in Lebanon. I now have a clearer picture of how important it is to take care of the earth. After all, it is the only planet we know of that we can live on.



Earth Day

The biggest and most important event of the year for ACS Go Green was Earth Day. We had designed a series of activities for high school, elementary school and early years to make them appreciate and celebrate the earth, and make them realize how important it is to take care of our planet.

This year was the first time that we had the Early Years and Elementary students participate, and this was the highlight of my day. The kids were so enthusiastic and they had very good ideas on how to take care of the earth. We asked them to draw one thing they like about earth and one thing they dislike about earth in 1st to 3rd grade (the years I was responsible for). After a few minutes we all sat in a circle and talked about what they drew and what they thought. Some of the things they said truly surprised me. Not only did they talk about how "we should keep the water tap off while brushing our teeth", or "don't throw garbage in the sea", but also they came up with good ideas about how to recycle if there are no recycle bins in our houses. A lot of the children came up with great ideas on how to make recycling boxes at home, such as painting a shoe box with green color and using it as a paper recycling bin.

The elementary kids were so enthusiastic to talk about the earth and share their own ideas. They were all eager to talk, and when the time came for me to leave, some of them asked me to stay more, because they didn't get to talk. Spending time with the elementary class was so inspiring for me. I learned that I can always learn from kids who are less than half of my age. It is always fun to work with them, talk to them and spend time with them.

Planning the Earth Day took the collaboration of 5 executive members together with all the other members in ACS Go Green. It was tough to plan this event. However, the success, especially in Elementary and Early Years, made us even more eager to plan the next Earth Day with more diverse and creative activities.

Go Green Matters

Farewell Reem!

ACS Go Green says goodbye to its co-founder

Dania Maaliki Tarabishi, Science Department Head, Chemistry Teacher (IB & 10), Grade 12 Coordinator

Three years ago, with my IB 12 Chemistry students, we planned and executed the first Earth Day celebration at ACS. Around that time, a couple of grade 10 students initiated a student-led activity that also centered on Earth Matters. This group was soon to be called the ACS Go Green group. It was therefore quite natural of them to ask me to be their faculty advisor, along with Mr. Crook who was the IB ESS teacher at the time.

I knew Bilal because I taught him in chemistry, but I had no idea who Reem was. However, because of this common passion for Earth, I agreed to their request. I didn't know what I was committing myself to and that I would soon become a student again, while Reem would take on the teacher and mentor roles.

Indeed, the leadership that Reem demonstrated in running the ACS Go Green group and their activities, including the Earth Day celebration, was unique. First, she was full of great ideas, and ready to implement ideas shared by others. Second, she ran the meetings that always included more students in a calm and systematic way, involving everybody, disagreeing in a non-threatening way when necessary, and empowering all volunteers in their desire to make a difference. Third, the organization that Reem has shown in her actions, her talks, her notes, her files, her planning, her thinking, and her meetings was remarkable. Indeed, she led all the preparations for Earth Day last year and this year, coordinating activities and events on a large scale, and all this with no effect on her achievement and grades. The feedback from her teachers was always very positive. This year, she was also getting ready for her two self-taught IB exams and LB official exams, and yet, with her crew, she proposed expanding the celebration to Early Years and Elementary School, and succeeded at bringing expertise to the curious and eager little kids. On top of all that, she was a very active member of National Honor Society, Model United Nations, and a peer-mentor. Who can do all of this so successfully but someone who is super organized in her mind and in her actions? Finally, the thoroughness and maturity that Reem demonstrated in dealing with issues was refreshing for me who thought that only adults of a certain age could reach such sophistication. She could deal with all offices

of the school and all personnel, soliciting their help, and was able to follow-up on all aspects and requests until execution. Many times, she challenged my opinions, my ideas, or my questions, never taking them for granted, and it felt great because she had valid arguments and thorough reflections.

I soon felt that Reem was more of a colleague than a student, and our discussions moved to a totally different level.



Go Green Matters



For three years, Reem ran ACS Go Green with a contagious and inspiring dedication, engagement and perseverance. She got herself involved in all aspects of the Earth Day celebration, contributing ideas and suggesting creative twists. She did that in a quiet way, always smiling, always ready, always as interested and engaged as ever. Without her, Earth Day at ACS would not have been the same.

For all of us, Reem was a role model of leadership, dedication and conviction. I don't think she truly realizes how much we have learned from her and how inspiring she was for us throughout the process.

On behalf of all ACS Go Green students, thank you Reem for your work, for your passion, and for your serious engagement in saving our planet. We will make sure to keep ACS Go Green, the group that you and Bilal have created, alive and active, but for sure, you will be missed.

Good luck and all the best!



Go Green Matters

Mini-NESA Going Green!

Dania Maaliki Tarabishi, Science Department Head, Chemistry Teacher (IB & 10), Grade 12 Coordinator,
ACS Go Green Faculty Advisor

Welcome to our exciting green initiative at mini-NESA!

This year, mini-NESA joined in the initiative of minimizing its carbon footprint. You can find the definition of carbon footprint at: http://www.marioninstitute.org/what-carbon-footprint?gclid=CPTY_9_41rkCFUVb3godcjEA Tw.

While there is rarely any human action that makes the carbon footprint close to 0%, we have implemented several steps by which we tried to at least achieve a lower one. Some of the steps we have taken are summarized below:

| What we used to do | What we did this year |
|--|---|
| Registration on posted papers in the Community Lounge | Registration on-line (started last year/ improved for this year) |
| Folders with paper schedules, papers, forms and pens were distributed to all participants | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Folders and contents no longer distributed• Participants highly encouraged to bring their own electronic devices (laptops, phones, ipads...) or their own stationary (if absolutely necessary)• Guests were handed a username and password at registration in order to access the internet on campus. |
| Schedule of the day and sessions printed and placed in the folders | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Schedule posted on the ACS website + some copies posted at entrances and in hallways• Participants were encouraged to save them on their phones or computers |
| Handouts for the sessions were printed and copied for attendees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handouts posted on the ACS website• Participants were encouraged to save them on their phones or computers |
| We used a lot of plastic items for the food service (lunch and coffee breaks) | We no longer used plastic items for the food service |
| Plastic ID holders of non-ACS participants were not re-collected | Plastic ID holders of non-ACS participants were re-collected for re-use |
| Papers marked with room number and name of presenter were placed at each room door and were then discarded | Smaller papers were used and were laminated to be re-used each year with the room number only |
| Papers marked with "reserved" were placed on chairs during the key-note speaker presentation and were then discarded | Smaller papers were used and were laminated to be re-used each year |
| Certificates were printed on thick paper | Certificates were distributed electronically on the ACS website |

Thank you to all presenters and participants for their eager cooperation and support!

Go Green Matters

ACS GO GREEN - the mission continues!

Dania Maaliki Tarabishi, Science Department Head, Chemistry Teacher (IB & 10), Grade 12 Coordinator, ACS Go Green Faculty Advisor

“The ultimate mission of the ACS Go Green club is to make our school as environmentally-friendly as possible and to bring awareness regarding environmental issues within our community. Because there are so many ways to achieve this “Eco-friendliness”, we aim to be engaged in a variety of projects that encourage green actions on campus.”



This is the mission statement of the ACS Go Green students who will continue their work this year:

- raising awareness among students through their activities and through their Fact Friday announcements in the daily bulletin
- recycling
- collecting bottle caps
- planning beach cleanups
- celebrating Earth Day school-wide



The ACS Go Green students have also engaged in the Athletic Department stairs beautification project. Additionally, the ACS Go Green executives, Lilinaz Rouhani and Adriana Smith, have initiated discussions with the Middle School to create an ACS Go Green branch there. They have also helped in assessing the school participation in nation-wide environmental projects.

Go Green Matters



Lilnaz and Adriana add: "We have also begun to work with Ms. Landry and Ms. Norman on a reduced paper consumption campaign. We aim to reduce the amount of paper used around school." They are working with the other ACS Go Green students on a proposal for the cafeteria to stop selling plastic water bottles.

We look forward to more from our ACS Go Green students... and to Earth day!



Chemistry Matters

Metacognition in the Chemistry 10 Course

Dania Maaliki Tarabishi, Science Department Head, Chemistry Teacher (IB & 10), Grade 12 Coordinator, ACS Go Green Faculty Advisor & Cayanne Chachati, Chemistry 10 Student

At the end of each unit, students in the Chemistry 10 course are asked to self-assess their progress in reference to indicators of success, reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in approaching the unit, and set goals for improved achievement. This is in line with self-regulation in Bandura's social cognitive theory. As mentioned in Schunk (2009)*, teachers "motivate learners by having students set goals and monitor goal progress". This also reinforces metacognitive skills and is proven to increase self-efficacy and commitment, which lead to success.

According to Prescott (2001)** "metacognition refers to the learner's knowledge of and control over his or her cognitive processes and includes strategies that incorporate planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed".

Here are extracts of some reflections from Cayanne Chachati:



About unit 1: At first, it was challenging to understand the heterogeneous and homogeneous mixtures, and even how to calculate density.

However, after multiple exercises, and various activities, I now fully comprehend them. During the test,

we couldn't ask questions. This is a great challenge for me since I'm used to asking a lot of them. I raised my hand to ask once, but the teacher shook her head, I then looked again at my paper and thought for a while. I realized that I was just scared and I needed someone to spoon feed me, the answers were there, I just had to be confident enough. Through one small test, I was able to learn a very important lesson.

I believe it's the teacher's way of teaching as well as our understanding and dedication to this unit that allowed us to do well. Ms. Maaliki used multiple methods of teaching us. She began by using the book, then explaining from a PowerPoint, and she even created very fun and useful games. In addition, whenever we couldn't fully comprehend something, like distillation, she didn't just throw an answer at us, but instead conducted a small experiment. I felt so comfortable in her class, like I could ask any question, and I'd always get a positive response. On the other hand, I reviewed what Ms. Maaliki had to offer every night, and I solved all the applications. I also focused during class, asked questions, and took great notes. Especially in this unit, the PowerPoint presentations elaborating on the definitions gave useful applications- something not found in the book, and only learned through the habit of taking good notes.

About unit 2: What I thought was best about this unit is the background we first

grasped before learning the material. We weren't just randomly asked to learn electron configurations or atomic mass and the properties of atoms. We first started by learning the history of the atom and the logic behind its discoveries. We could then always, after learning something new, refer back to Dalton or Ernest and truly that was my favorite part, relating between the past and our knowledge today. This was emphasized clearly by the teacher who created an entire project behind the history of the development of the atom. Similarly, we learned the logic behind the periodic table, and now we can really understand chemistry instead of just memorize it. Personally, I found the orbital diagrams the easiest as well as the periodic trends because it all made sense at the end; it was like putting together pieces of a puzzle. Finally, the highlights of this chapter were the games we played, and the tiny glass diagrams that Ms. Maaliki had. Ms. Maaliki tried every way possible to make us understand the topic and truly enjoy it, from white board activities to wearing funky T-Shirts. The glass models in particular, showing ionic radius, allowed the trend to stick in our minds because we understood it.

Metacognitive thinking in action!

References:

- * Prescott, H. M. (2001). Helping students say how they know what they know. Clearing House, 74, 327-331
- **Schunk, D. H. (2009). Learning theories: An educational perspective (5th ed.). NY: Merrill Prentice.

Science Matters

Middle School Science

Talar Partiyon, MS Science Facilitator

It is time to report back on some of the highlights in Middle school science. Grade 6, 7 and 8 have been having many science research based activities that have added learning value to science.

In grade 6, many inquiry based activities were introduced to enhance the concept of the scientific method. The M&M and toothpaste activity was performed to help students with prediction, setting hypothesis, collecting data, analyzing, concluding and communicating results. Technology was an integral part of science classes, the cell's project was divided into two parts a hands-on model build from consumables or recycled materials and a choice of the best technology tool to share their research results. Another skill grade 6 students have been working on is evaluating the reliability of online resources.

Grade 7 students have the annual science fair project coming up; looking for topics, researching, working with a partner, designing an experiment are just some of the things the students were busy doing. Everyone is getting ready for the science fair day on December 17, our community will be invited to join and learn from the students. Hard work, focused time, group work, cooperation are a few of the things you can witness if you happen to be in our classes. Following the scientific method is the basis of all the work done.

Another major unit covered so far in the physics unit Physics on Motion and forces. Students had to rotate around 12 stations covering the benchmarks of the unit. They also had to write a report matching the stations to the benchmark. Students had the following feedback to share:



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"The stations were fun but challenging- I learned many things"
 - Anas Adam

"I liked and enjoyed the stations" - Farah Bindakji

"I enjoyed these stations. It was a fun learning experience especially with the longer stations" - Rami Darwiche

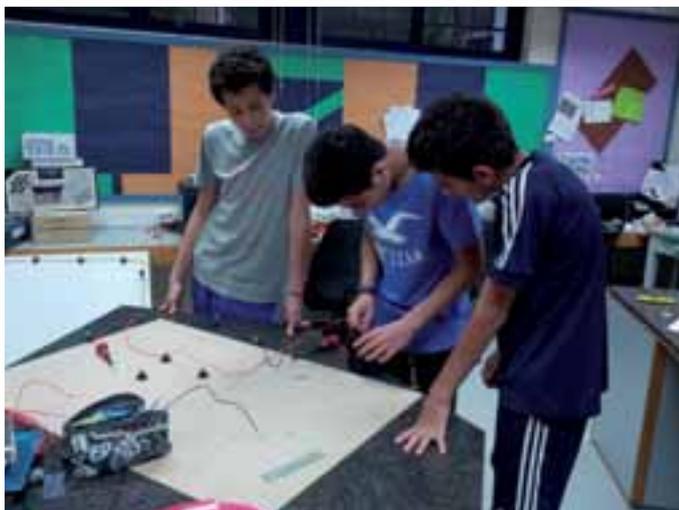
"This activity was different from traditional teaching, it was nice that for once we were teaching ourselves- I found this activity challenging yet fun" - Juliana AbdulRahim

"It is a different experience because I had the responsibility of working on my own which made me feel more mature" - Hani Al-Hindi

"I learned from this project that Newton's first law is present in many situations in our daily lives" - Andrew Fouladfar

"I enjoyed this project; it was a fun way for learning about physics"
 - Alexandra Assaad

"I enjoyed this unit particularly because it was up to us to teach ourselves and find out more about each benchmark. We also enjoyed it because we had to be more responsible and depend more on ourselves, it was a good lesson to learn. It was a fun way to get to understand this unit because we were doing hands on activities."
 - Liana Safa



Science Matters

Grade 8 has been working on a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) approach to learn about electricity and magnetism, the culminating event being the "Science Showcase", students have been working hard creating projects that combine all their learning about current and electricity. Grade 8 students have created various scenarios from stadiums, to rotating light houses, to cheering podiums, moving planes, cars, boats and elevators, to buildings with lighting just to name a few. Students mixed and matched circuits in series and circuits in parallel; added switches, circuit breakers, simple motors, variable resistors etc. Grade 8 shared their creative designs with everyone in our community on December 4 in the upper school auditorium.



Science Matters



21st Century Learning in Middle School Science Class”

Simon Barakat, Science teacher, Middle School

Our students are raised in an interconnected and complex world and should be educated in a way to be ready to face the challenges of the 21st century. It is important to have a well-defined curriculum, and it is very important to know how we deliver the curriculum to ensure students' learning.

We often ask ourselves, What are the students learning? How much of the learned material is retained after a few months, or even a year?

We, as science educators in the Middle School, work collaboratively to ensure that our 21st century learners are acquiring the knowledge and skills that are needed to face the challenges of today, as well as those of the future. Students are taught in a variety of ways, and different minds are dealt with differently. Otherwise, as Gardner explains in his article “Big Thinkers: Howard Gardner on Multiple Intelligences”, students will be getting the most unfair education.

A 21st century classroom should be targeting 21st century skills. In the Middle school classrooms, we engage students in activities that are designed to enhance higher order critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication with others, application of learned concepts in real life situations, innovation, decision making, collaborative work, collecting and analyzing data, and reaching conclusions.

The teacher's role is to facilitate the learning process and make sure that learning is happening in a safe and engaging environment. Students play a key role in their own learning where they get several opportunities to have input in their own work, as well as design their own learning activities and projects.

In future ACS Matters articles, our Middle School science team will share various examples of how our teaching practices are in line with 21st century skills.

Community presentations of our grade 8 Electricity and Electric Circuits Project “Science Showcase” (December 4th) and our grade 7 Science Fair (December 17th) are just a few opportunities to witness our students' work as designers and builders of projects.



MUN Matters

MUN Trip to Amman

Sinan Abi Farraj, Grade 11 LB Program

We barely had our last glimpse of our home country, Lebanon, bid our farewell to the greenish Mediterranean shore, and said our goodbyes to the huge skyscrapers along the coast before the pilot announced that we were ready for landing at the Amman International Airport. All seven members of the ACS student delegation left the plane searing with excitement for the upcoming AMMUN 2013 conference.

To be completely honest, whenever my advisor asks me to write about my experience in a conference that I attended outside the country, I always try to talk about the cultural differences and how it was so hard in the beginning for us to cope but then towards the end everything just worked out for the best. But Amman was different. Not only was the plane ride so short, but the similarity is uncanny between our two countries. Even though the official language of the conference was English, you can spot many Jordanians arguing amongst themselves, and then throwing in a couple of "3rifit keef" (you get it now?) and "ya Allah minnak" (oh my God) between every few sentences. Not to also mention the extremely necessary hand gestures that directly correlate to the intensity of the debate, and the expected "khalas ma fiyye" (I can't do this anymore) when one person figures out that the debate is going nowhere and leaves in frustration. The mother of the host family I was with would sit in front of the computer every few days anticipating her college-abroad daughter to go on Skype. She kept asking her daughter if she is eating well, and if she likes the food there or if she would like a shipment of her homemade delicacies.

The similarities in our cultures enthralled me to the point I forgot I was in a whole other country (well, that was of course before I looked outside the window to see 75 acres of empty deserts only filled with camels and insipid scenery). But nonetheless, I've let go of how traveling teaches me how big the world really is. With every trip I see how much we are all the same at heart and that the world isn't big enough for us to shy away from each other, for our differences are trivial and inconsequential.



Fine Arts Matter

Notes from the Band Room

Jeremy Chapman, Fine Arts Teacher

The instrumental program in the middle school and high school continues to flourish here at ACS. From 7am each day and during recess, lunch, and after school, the band room continues to be a wonderful space where students from grades 6 through 12 come to be with their friends, to do some last minute homework, and, above all, to practice. I am particularly impressed with the enthusiasm of our grade 6 students who love the challenge of learning a new instrument. In the space of two months, they have already learned so much. It shows me that when students are faced with the right kind of challenge, one that engages their hearts, minds and bodies, they can choose to persevere and this leads to the thrill of music-making in a community of friends.



As well as the middle school and high school band classes, we have a wonderful ensemble that meets on Thursdays after school. In addition to the flute, clarinet, saxophone, trombone, euphonium, trumpet, tuba and percussion, I am excited that we also have several violinists, a cello, and double bass which allows us to call ourselves the "ACS Orchestra" for the first time!

The musical highlight of our year so far was undoubtedly the Harmony for Humanity concert on Tuesday 29 October. The concert featured a great variety of instrumental and vocal music-making, as well as dance and drama. We ended the concert with the Community Choir singing Bi Sabah el alf el talet accompanied by the orchestra.



Fine Arts Matter

Singing

Nick Thornton, Fine Arts Teacher



This quarter has seen an unprecedented number of students singing in all sorts of venues around the school. Large and small ensembles alike have been making vocal music almost daily at ACS, and things show no sign of letting up. The year started off with a bang at Mr. Clark's reception for Upper School new parents when the high school rock/alternative band "Cruise Control" gave a mini concert on the terrace of Beit Clark. They were impressive with their polished presentation of two original songs "Seeing Sound" and "Wind Walking", written and sung by band members William Thornton and Amin Mortada. Both of these young men are IB Music students in their senior year and will be looking for entry into a university music program after graduation.

The magic continued when, within a week, two more upper school students performed at Mr. Clark's installation as Head of School. Tania Kombarji sang a very moving rendition of "Empty Chairs and Empty Tables" from the musical "Les Miserables" and Samia El Harake stunned the crowd with her cover of Sarah Bareille's "Love Song". Both students were more than ably accompanied by student musicians from the upper school.

While things seemed to relax for a few weeks on the performance front, work was continuing behind the scenes as Community Choir got under way, led by Ingrid Thornton, which included students from three divisions, teachers, and parents all joining forces to prepare for their up-coming performance at the Harmony for Humanity concert. Also, a number of solo singers were working up numbers, grabbing almost every free moment to practice honing their skills and

preparing nervously for their performances. And, new on the music scene, a sixth grade singing group started to meet on Day 3 during the lunch break, bringing new energy and continuing the flow of talented youngsters singing at ACS.

The culmination of all this hard work, laughter and sometimes tears, was the spectacular Harmony for Humanity concert, held outside in ACS's Rabbit Field venue on a perfect Beirut evening. As the lights dimmed, the ACS Community Choir opened with the enchanting a capella "Senzanina" and moved to a rollicking version of "Give a Little Love", thus setting the scene for ninety minutes of light hearted and beautiful music. This was a fitting tribute to the memory of Catherine Bashour, to whom the concert was dedicated.



Also singing in the concert were two middle school soloists. Riwa Saab brought her inimitable joy and style to the stage with an engaging rendition of "Bad Day". For her and the audience, it was anything but a bad day! Pia Abu Mikhael made her debut performance as a singer with a soulful performance of "Beautiful". While it was her first time on the big stage, she showed a lot of professionalism and really brought out the beauty of this song's important message.

We were also treated to some zany musical theatre numbers from the upcoming show "Dr. Horrible's Sing-along Blog", the serenity of our elementary Hula group, another electric performance by "Cruise Control" who sang even more original numbers, and a stellar performance of "Confetti" by Samia El Harake. The concert ended with

Fine Arts Matter

a rousing version of the lovely “Bi sabah el alf el talet” sung by the ACS Community Choir, with Mona Hussein and April Armstrong providing strong solos. There were numerous other performances, but these I will leave to my colleague in his companion piece “Instruments Matter”.



Fine Arts Matter

So, where do we go from here? We have a long line of upcoming performances in both the upper and lower school: The ACS Community Choir, The Elementary Choir, The Elementary Hula group, the Grade Six Singers, our various soloists and more. A new event on the concert scene is the IB Recital which will be taking place in the spring as well. A special mention needs to go out to the 9 accomplished musicians who were selected to participate in the prestigious Honor Band and Honor Choir festival hosted by the Association for Music in International Schools. This festival takes place next March in London and includes the participation of over 60 international schools.

While much of this practice comes from the classroom, a vast majority of it comes from the dedication of students willing to stay after school, give up lunch breaks and come in on holidays to pursue their passion: the love of music.



French Matters

Le Français... Autrement

Joelle Yacoub, French Coordinator

Le département de français à ACS a organisé une activité destinée aux élèves du primaire afin qu'ils prennent goût à la langue de Molière. Les élèves ont assisté à un spectacle de marionnettes qui a duré 40 minutes.

Dans un premier temps, les élèves ont vu défiler le personnage principal "Alex le drôle" et les animaux de la forêt qui ont raconté leur histoire. Dans un deuxième temps ils ont répondu aux questions posées par les différents personnages et leurs professeurs.

Grâce aux marionnettes, les élèves ont suivi avec beaucoup d'intérêt l'histoire des animaux de la forêt et ont joyeusement participé à toutes les activités qui ont suivi ce spectacle.

À ACS on apprend le français en s'amusant.



Sports Matter

No Pads, No Helmets... Just Volleyballs

Kyla Wickens, Grade 11

Volleyball isn't just a sport where one just hits and passes the ball over the net endlessly. It also isn't just rotating around to different positions. When one plays volleyball, it is so much more than that. There's the communication and the teamwork involved that helps tie all the skills and the team together. This year, both the Varsity and the Junior Varsity teams showed their teamwork and their determination to get better. They worked and played hard, and went through all the practice. For instance, whenever I would see the JV Boys practice, I would always see them moving, shouting each other's names, and having fun all at the same time. In a way, through the sport itself, it seems to have brought the team closer as friends. On the days where we would share practices with the JV girls, I would always see Coach Rayan put the girls to work with the basic drills since many of them are new to volleyball, and I would see these girls try their hardest every time. As for the Varsity players, we know each other so well since we've been playing with one another for such a long time. The boys' team has their inside jokes,

memories such as William's loud motivation noises, and their practices on the court to reflect everything they have been working for. The girls' teams have been through almost everything together; we're practically like family. It goes from practices, to both successful and not so successful tournaments, injuries and dinner/game night gatherings. I enjoyed this season and I am very happy to be working with a team like them.

Tournament Outcomes:

Both the girls and boys Junior Varsity teams travelled to Cairo for a major volleyball tournament. After several long days of playing, the boys' team returned home with the 3rd place title and the girls went home with 2nd place. I bet coach Rayan and Mr. Trozzi were very happy with the outcome. As for the Varsity teams, they left to Kuwait ready and pumped for the tournament, which consisted of five challenging teams. The boys took home the 2nd place banner while the girls returned with the 1st place title, undefeated. In addition, there was a recent local tournament at ACS where schools such as Sainte Famille, Collège, and IC came to participate and play against our Varsity teams. Both Varsity teams came in second place! Lastly, the Varsity girls' team had a minor tournament with their parents, and parents got to see what it is like to play with their kids.

Thank you Coach Danai, Coach Rayan, Coach Joseph and Coach Trozzi for a great season!



NHS Matters



NHS Ping Pong Tournament

Reem Husseini, Grade 12



The Ping Pong Tournament was the first NHS sports tournament of the year, a fundraiser to raise money for the NHS fund. Money from the NHS fund is used to continue the Adopt-A-Janitor Program and contribute to the school's scholarship fund. NHS students went around the school, encouraging both students and teachers alike to come and compete in competitive Ping-Pong games. It is important for students and teachers to be given chances to come together and play each other in fun situations outside of the classroom.



Throughout the tournament, students came to the gym and cheered the competitors along, and after a week of games, the finals took place on Friday, October 25th, with the winner of the girls' section playing against the winner of the boys' section. Fayez Barakat (Grade 10) took home third place, Reem Husseini (Grade 12) took home second place, and Rawad Yared (Grade 10) took home first place, along with a fresh pizza. It was nice to see members of the ACS community coming and participating in the tournament, and we thank everyone for their contribution in helping us continue our various programs.

National Holiday Matters

November: Lebanon's Month at ACS!

Wafa Kays, MS- AFL Teacher

What a wonderful gathering took place at the ACS Gymnasium to celebrate Lebanon's Independence during the month of November. After hosting "Souk e Tayyeb" and exposing students to farmers from all over Lebanon, ACS welcomed one of the Army Music Bands with 21 musicians. The Army Band opened the ceremony with the National Anthem, then played several national songs and army marching tunes. Students came from all divisions of our school carrying Lebanese flags with pride. They swayed, sang, danced the "Dabkeh", and applauded the musicians.

Long Live Lebanese Army!

Happy 70th Independence, Lebanon!



Accreditation Matters



From the Desk of the Re-accreditation Internal Coordinators

Hanadi Dayyeh & Jonathan Acker, Re-accreditation Internal Coordinators

Nine months ago, the re-accreditation process started at ACS. Eighteen committees were formed to perform a self-study in the following areas: Governance & Leadership, Mission & Philosophy, School Improvement & Planning, School Climate & Organization, Facilities, Finances, Educational Programs, Assessments, Information Resources & Technology, Student Life & Activities, Student Services, and Health & Safety.

Members of those committees represented faculty, staff, students, parents, and board members. They performed an intensive self-study using standards and indicators set by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSA). They collected evidence to support their findings, performed an analysis for areas in need of growth, and developed goals and action plans to achieve them.

Based on the work of all the committees, the school identified four school-wide goals for the coming seven-year term of this accreditation cycle. Two goals are focused on student performance, one in the area of English Language proficiency and the other related to higher-order thinking skills. The other two goals are focused on organizational capacity in the areas of communication and strategic planning.

A planning team, representing all stakeholders of the school community (administration, faculty, staff, parents, students, Board of Trustees) has been formed to oversee the implementation of these goals and supporting action plans.

The school will host a visiting team representing MSA in March 2014. This group will review the school's accreditation self-report, collected evidence, goals, and action plans, and will interview many members of our school community. This will be a time to celebrate the work of the committees, and receive recommendations to further refine our school-wide goals.

The planning team will be communicating with the ACS community further information about the re-accreditation process and the team's visit in March. A link will be added to the school's website to keep you informed.

Community Service Matters

Fall Athletic and Activity Community Service Project

Ryan Naughton, Athletic and Activities Director

If you haven't been up the stairs that lead to Bliss Street, just west of the school, recently, please take a walk and marvel at the great work the students of ACS have done to transform the stairs and alleyway. What used to be a scary, stinky, dark, and obscenity filled graffiti shortcut is now a very well lit, art filled, and enjoyable walkway. Over the course of three days in November, groups of students from the middle school and the high school worked for multiple hours to completely change the walk to and from work for not only ACS students and teachers, but for all the residents of Manara.



On the first day, students from the Middle School Volleyball Teams and the Middle School Community Service Club cleaned the garbage off the

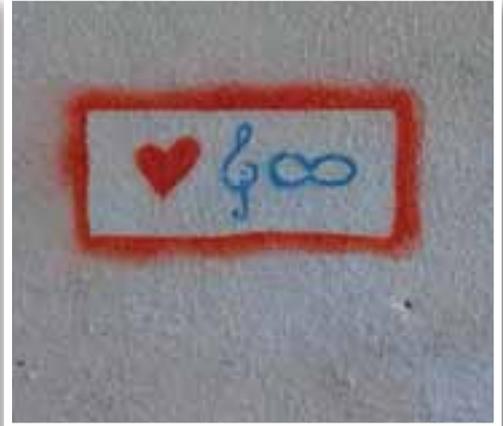
stairs, around the trees, and in the alleyway. These students then shoveled hundreds of kilograms of dirt and debris from the alleyway to fill in the plots of flower beds on the sides of the stairs. These students, dug, swept, and used a wheel barrow to completely remove a large garbage and dirt pile and change the look of the alleyway. During the second day students from the Swim Team, the Middle School Girls Soccer Team, and the High School Go Green Club came out in force to paint the primer coat on the entire area and trim the trees and bushes on the stairs. These trimmings and a fresh coat of paint allowed the street light to illuminate the entire stairway. On the final day the Varsity Volleyball Team, Student Council, and multiple individual students came out on a Saturday morning to put their artistic visions on the clean walls.

Over the course of those three days, multiple students and teachers left the stairs and alleyway sweaty, dirty, full of paint, and definitely tired, but mostly they left this small part of Beirut and the ACS community better than they found it.



Community Service Matters

Without the help of the following people this project would not have been possible: Mrs. Samhoun, Mr. Simmons, Mrs. Beydoun, Mrs. Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Feia, Ms. Ibrahim, Mrs. Hayeck, Mr. Wendel, Mrs. Bade, Mrs. Khoury, Mrs. Naughton and Mrs. Chalati. Also big thanks to TINOL.



Community Service Matters

Hekayat: telling the stories of displaced Syrian students through the Middle School Digital Photography and Digital Media classes

Phil Wendel, MS Assistant Principal

The 8th grade Digital Photography and Digital Media classes are currently involved in a community outreach project called Hekayat –this means “tales” or “stories” in Arabic. Hekayat is a project between the ACS 8th grade Digital Photography and Digital Media classes and the Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP), a local non-profit organization that promotes respect and cooperation amongst the children, youth and women of Lebanon.

Twenty-five students of the 8th grade Digital Photography and Digital Media classes met with twenty-nine displaced Syrians and Palestinian Syrians living in the Burj El Barajneh camp on Monday, November 25 on the campus of ULYP, located in Dibbeyah. The day was comprised of team building activities followed by lunch and concluded with the ACS Digital Media students conducting interviews to document the displaced Syrians’ stories. The ACS Digital Photography students captured the project with their cameras throughout the day.

The overall objective of the day was for youth from very different backgrounds to meet each other and explore similarities, rather than focusing on the differences between them. While fostering the values of mutual respect, acceptance and trust, there was an increase in the understanding of the “other” by both groups.

Another similar visit between our ACS students and the Syrian students is being planned. The ACS Digital Media and Digital Photography students will use the material they have gathered from both visits in the editing of a final product that incorporates the audio interviews and photography of the visits.



Community Service Matters

“Tahadi School”

Community Service Project

Tamara Dalloul, Grade 12

It's been about 3 years that Mohammad, Marya, Jida and I have been working on a CAS project involving a school called Tahaddi, located in the Sabra and Chatila refugee camp. I started off this project last year, when one of the teachers in Elementary had told me about the school and about the backpack drive she was having for these kids. I was really interested and wanted to take part, so I helped out with the drive. I later got Catherine (the founder of the school)'s email and contacted her. I planned a visit, and asked Moho and Marya to come along; Jida then joined us last year. We visited the school, played with the kids and got a tour of the camp. It was a very memorable and emotional experience for us. After our visit we decided that we really wanted to help these kids, so I kept contact with Catherine and was able to have visits, coat drives, toy drives and our biggest event- a carnival. The carnival took place last year in the ACS gym and field. We hosted 40 kids, and we were able to use the toys collected in the toy drive as prizes for the kids to win. It was a massive success! After the carnival we took the kids to Burger King for a meal and some play time in the playground. However, last year it was difficult to schedule visiting times since they had to match our hectic schedules with their own, so we decided to make our CAS project into a co-curricular in order to see the kids more often as well as get people in the younger grades involved.. So far, our co-curricular group was able to raise money in a very successful hot dog sale and a bake sale. We have visited the kids to play and tutor them three times, and we will continue to do so consistently. The money raised in the different sales will be used for a Christmas surprise that we will be offering the kids. Thank you.

Dr. Horrible opens Dec. 6 at ACS

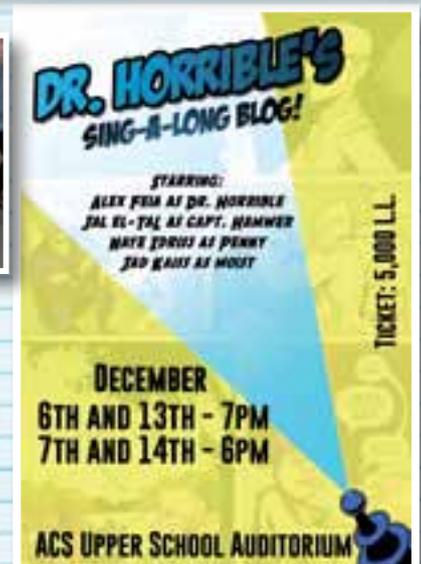
Joseph Feia, HS Math and Drama Teacher

Dr. Horrible is coming to ACS! The high school drama department presents “Dr. Horrible’s Sing-along Blog”.

This “Internet Musical”, written by the creator of Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Joss Whedon, tells the tale of an aspiring super-villain named Dr. Horrible who desperately wants to get in to the Evil League of Evil. Unfortunately, he is thwarted at every turn by the heroic Captain Hammer, who is always one step ahead of the bungling Dr. Horrible. Meanwhile, Captain Hammer is also stealing the heart of Penny, the woman that Dr. Horrible loves from afar.

The show stars Alex Feia as Dr. Horrible, Jad el-Tal as Captain Hammer, and Naye Idriss as Penny. They are supported by Jad Kaiss as Horrible’s henchman Moist, and a talented ensemble cast.

Dr. Horrible’s Sing-along Blog will be performed December 6 and 7 and December 13 and 14 in the Upper School auditorium. Come and enjoy a night of musical theatre!



Fine Arts Matter

Digital Media

Nick Thornton, Fine Arts Teacher

This year, the middle school has piloted a new Fine Arts offering: Digital Media. Offered to 8th grade students, this year-long class has one section taught by Mr. Chapman and another section taught by Mr. Thornton. The course focusses on capturing and editing both sound and video.

So, what do students do in media? For the first semester they have been learning audio recording and editing techniques through a series of small, and not so small, projects. Recording includes microphone technique and choice- there are lots of choices! It also includes learning about Digital Audio Workstation or DAW software that is used to edit and mix sound clips. While this sounds technical, there is also a great deal of creativity that is brought into play as the students create narratives from the sounds they have captured.

The second half of the year will be devoted to video. Camera work will take up the first part of the semester as students learn how to frame shots, light them, get great sound, and how to organize a film project. Then comes editing! Using linear editors such as iMovie, students will learn how to edit scenes to achieve the “right” emotional impact and how to structure scenes into a coherent narrative.

Currently, a section of Media Students are working with a section of Digital Photography students, UNLYP (Uniting Lebanese Youth Project) and about 25 displaced Syrian students to create a project we are calling “Hekayat”, or “Stories”. This project is about capturing the real lives of the Syrian teens who have found themselves in Lebanon because of the conflict in their country. We have met once at the UNLYP campus and had a great day playing, photographing and interviewing. Work is ongoing and we are excited to see the results, as well as to meet again with the students whose stories we are telling.

Middle School Drama Presents: DON'T DO IT - 12 Reasons NOT to be in a Play

Sharon Rogers, Drama Teacher

Middle School drama students are busy rehearsing 12 Reasons NOT to be in a Play which they will perform on Thursday, January 16th in the upper school auditorium. Our first production is a comedy about a group of students complaining about why they DON'T want to put on a play. There are some flashbacks to stories of being in an elementary school play with a crazy teacher/director; there are moments where students share how they forgot their lines, got sick, fell in love with another actor.... and the list of angst continues. Yet for all the “drama” involved, the students come to appreciate the power of theatre to tell stories and recognize how much they love to perform.

Sixteen middle school students are participating in this production, and they are excited to share their work with the ACS community. Meeting twice a week after school, the students participate in warm-up games and activities that help them develop characters, voice and stage presence. Our goal is to create a strong ensemble to show a variety of stories that might seem frighteningly familiar to anyone who has ventured onto a stage. We hope you'll join us for this light-hearted presentation.

Fine Arts Matter

Graphic Design

Nadine Moubayed, Fine Arts Teacher

The graphic design students have been working on several projects for different school activities such as TOK, Dr. Horrible Play, Te Dance Posters and other invitation cards going around in school.

Each of those students has chosen his/her favorite design which is shown in this spread.



Alejandro Gonzalez

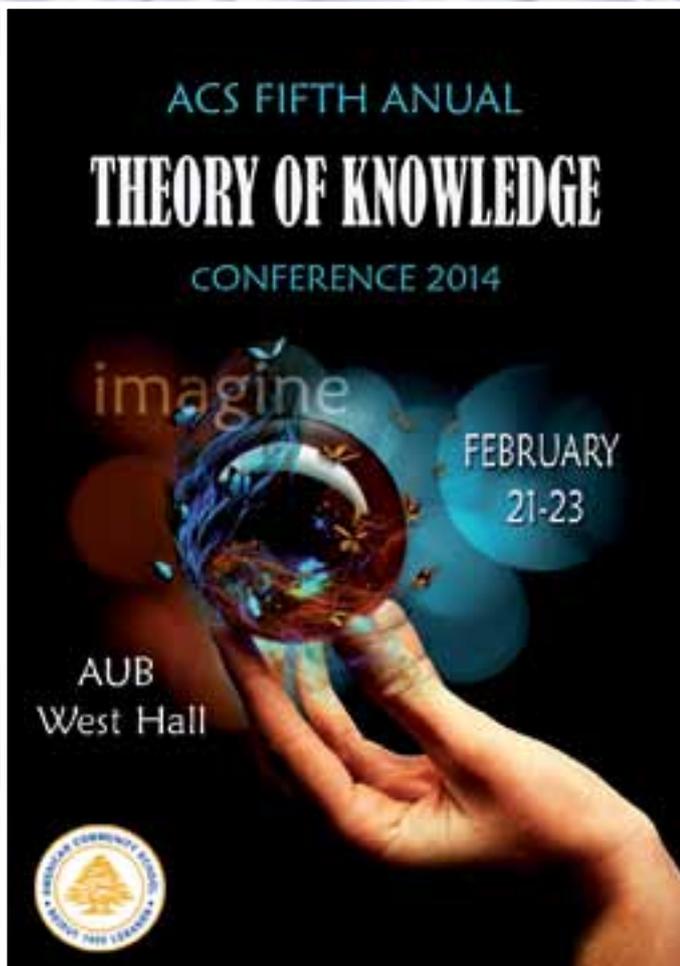
This poster was created for the 5th annual TOK Conference that will be held on February 21-22 at the AUB-West Hall and which theme is "Imagination as a Way of Knowing". I decided to create this poster with Photoshop program so I could combine and modify images easily.



Michael Bayoud

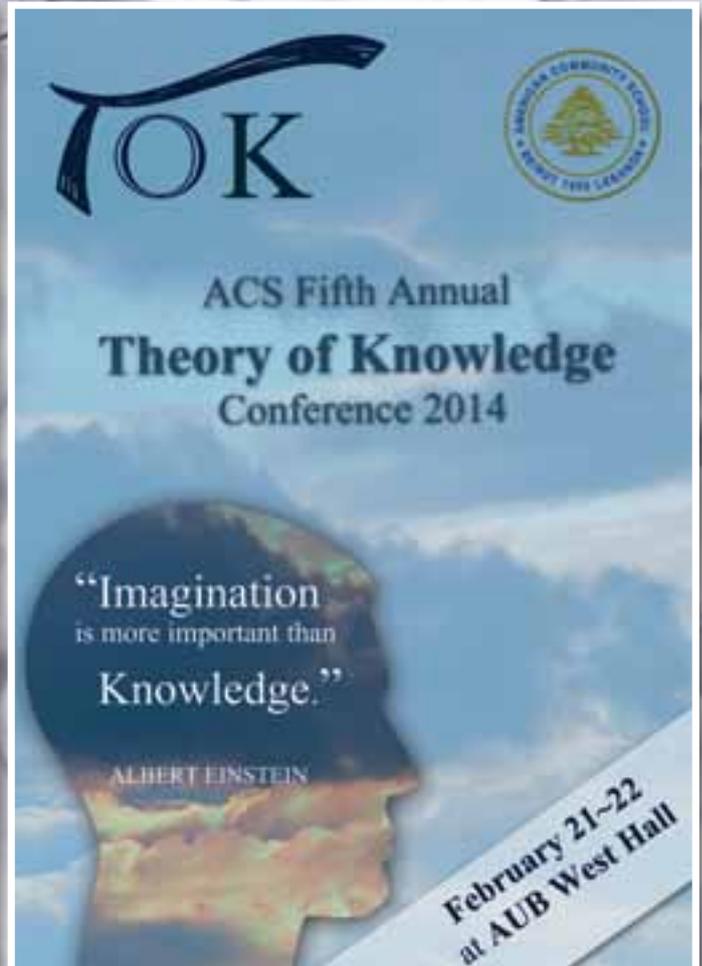
This poster is for the play Dr. Horrible. It was chosen out of many and placed around the whole school. I chose this poster because I'm proud of it. It was my first piece of work that was displayed everywhere. It made me feel like I meant something to the world.

Fine Arts Matter



Fayez Barakat

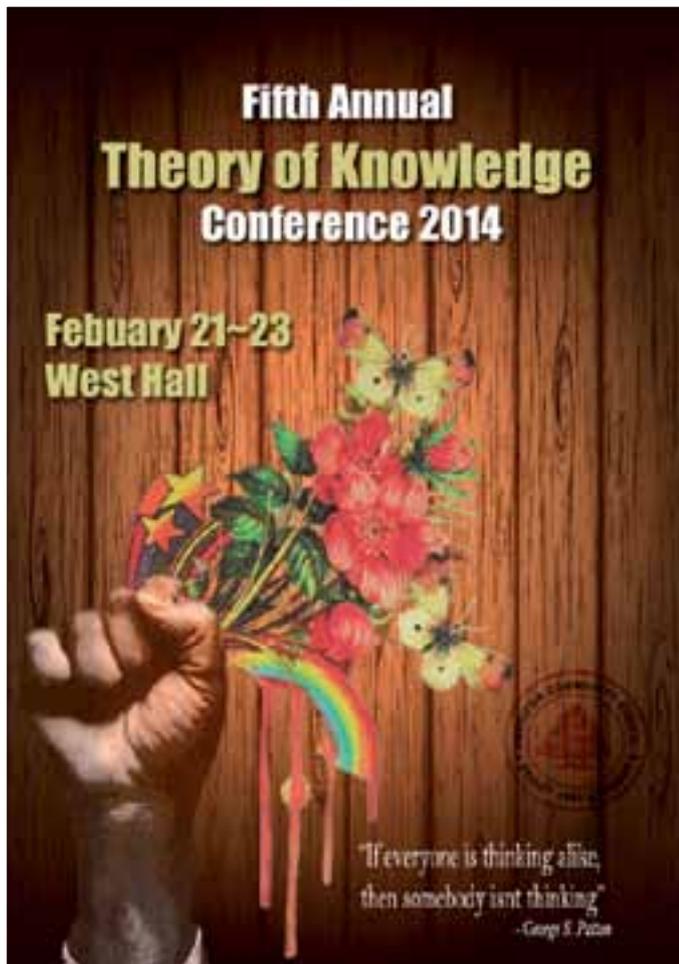
I made this poster for the theory of knowledge 5th annual conference. With the theme of imagination in knowledge. My favorite tool the magic WAAND helped me throughout the construction of this image, thank you.



Rawan Masri

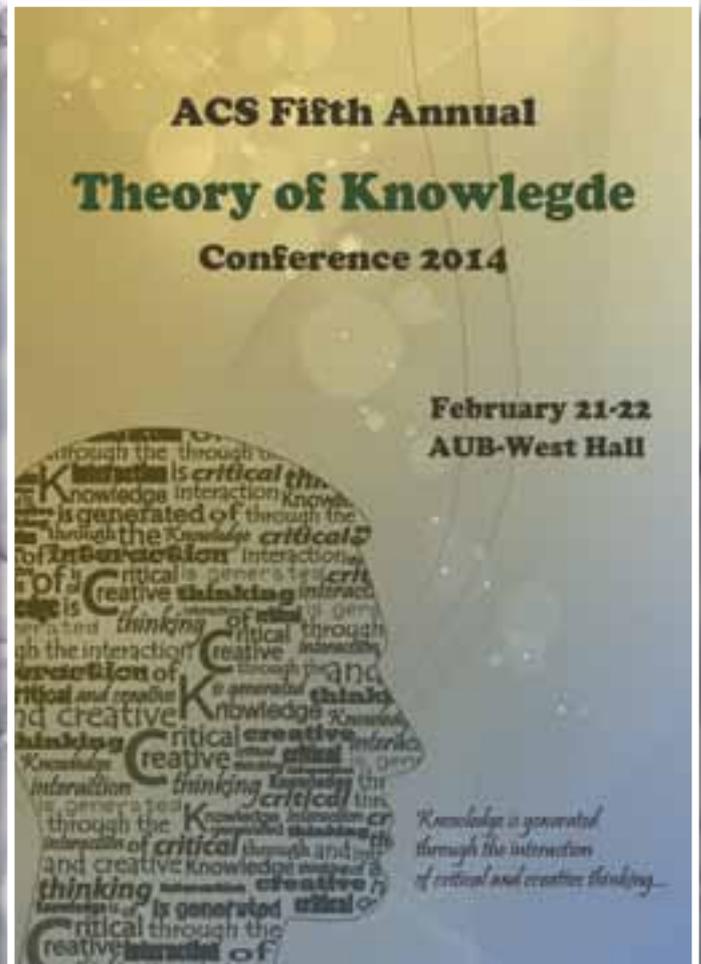
The Theory of Knowledge (ToK) Conference is an annual conference where IB students from ACS and other IB schools get together and learn about knowledge from different perspectives. This year the conference will be held on February 21-22 at AUB- West Hall. The theme of the conference will be "Imagination as a way of living"

Fine Arts Matter



Ryan El Harake

I chose my TOK poster to present in ACS Matters because I am proud of the work I put into it. The theme used to create the TOK poster was "Imagination as a way of knowing". The hand represents "knowing" while the contents inside of the hand represent "Imagination".



Sakshi Bhatia

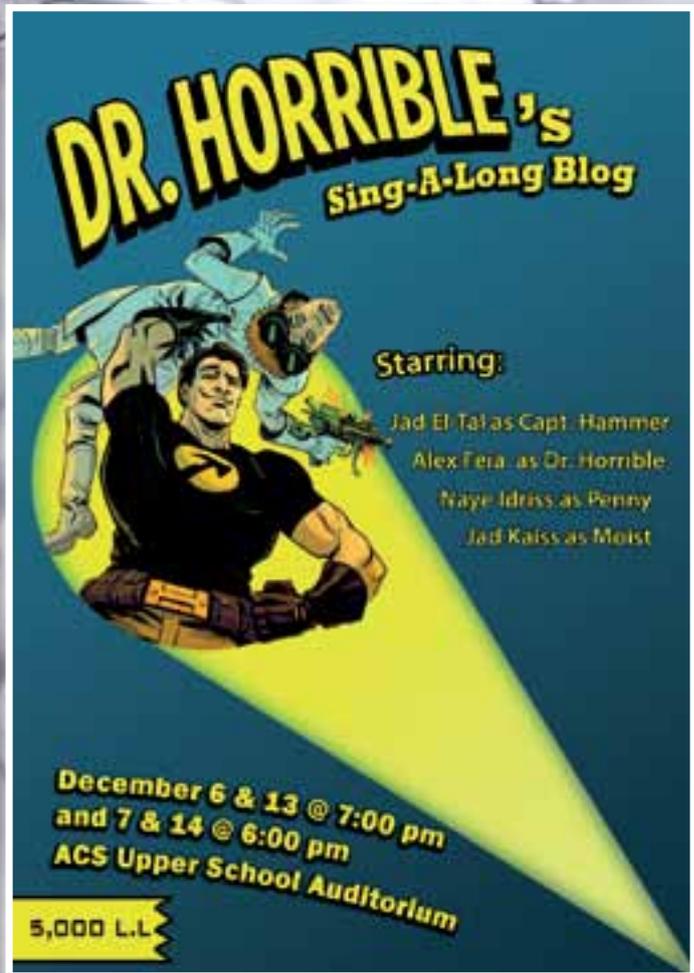
This poster was created for the Theory of Knowledge (Tok) Conference. I used both programs; Illustrator and Photoshop to make this poster. This year's conference will be held on February 21-22 at AUB- West Hall. The theme for this year's conference is "Imagination as a way of Knowing."

Fine Arts Matter



Hassan Ahmad

I chose my TOK poster to present in ACS Matters because I am proud of the work I put into it. The theme used to create the TOK poster was "Imagination as a way of knowing." The figure that is placed in my work is to express the fact that you can think in many different ways.



Wesley Armstrong

This poster was created for "Doctor Horrible's Sing-a-long Blog". I chose to put Captain Hammer holding Doctor Horrible in the spotlight to show how Doctor Horrible is considered the hero. The picture of Captain Hammer and Doctor Horrible was from the comic. This poster was designed on Photoshop program.

Fine Arts Matter

ACS IB Visual Arts & Theatre Students Take in London

Mary McKone, IB Visual Arts Teacher
Jim Mclean, Fine Arts, Department Head

Working through any IB curriculum can be an arduous task or it can be... FUN! This fall several IB Theatre and Visual Arts students took advantage of the ACS IB Arts Trip to London where they explored, experienced and participated in a variety of artistic adventures. Our itinerary offered a wide selection of authentic experiences that encouraged the students to build a contextual and conceptual understanding of historical and contemporary art and theatre.

- All students attended workshops at the Globe Shakespeare exploring: Stage Combat, Fight Choreography and Elizabethan Costume Design in a historical context.
- All students participated in the workshop "Modern Art as a Stimulus" offered at the Tate Modern.
- All students attended a diverse range of high quality theatre performances pertinent to the course – "Billy Elliot": Political musical theatre, "The Drowned Man": Immersive theatre, "The Light Princess": Bunraku, physical theatre, "The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night": A multi-media presentation.
- Theatre students participated in an ensemble experience that engaged them with the philosophy of the program and its core components: Theatre in the Making, Theatre in Performance, Theatre in the World and "Tool Box" - the tools and strategies required to manage their own discoveries and learning in theatre.
- Theatre students worked in collaboration with other students drawn from international schools worldwide – 21 international schools were represented, providing students with the opportunity to take Master classes, taught by the professionals from the prestigious Central School of Speech and Drama, focusing on a specific area of theatre.
- Art Gallery visits to venues such as the Saatchi Gallery, the Hayward Gallery, Ayyam Gallery 1&2, OXO Design Tower and the Southbank offered students opportunities to meet working artists and build an aesthetic understanding of art currently being shown throughout London.
- Several experiences were tailored to meet individual students' needs and interests, allowing them opportunities to build a body of research through documentation and individual investigation.



Fine Arts Matter



In the students' own voices:

"This exposure helped me to look at new aspects of art, it expanded my horizon, opened my mind to new ideas and inspired me!"

"The IB TaPS Trip is an unforgettable experience that not only teaches the students about the many perspectives of theatre, but also brings them together to form new friendships and allows them to grow individually as a person. It's everything you'd expect from a theatre workshop, and more."

"I became aware of the options that are available outside of Lebanon in terms of art as a career and I learned how important research is to working artists!"

"The TaPS program taught me things I never would've thought I'd be able to do. Going on that trip was the best decision of my life."

"This trip made me realize how serious the international art world is as opposed to in Lebanon where art seems not as highly valued or noticed."

"It was amazing to just focus on theater for a week and in so many different ways, I had the best time, I can't wait to go again next year."



Fine Arts Matter



Student Activities Matter

International Emerging Leaders Conference '13 (October 5-15)

Feryal Berjawi, Grade 11 - Lebanese Baccalaureate Program

"You are all the same despite your different languages, backgrounds, and cultures", said Ms. Clare Sissiky on the first day of the conference. She is the director of Global Studies at the Collegiate School of Virginia. I turned to the Kazakhstani girl, Tokjan, on my right. Then, I looked to my left and examined one of the Indian boys, Soham. It was then I realized that all the other students were doing exactly the same thing; we were not so different after all.

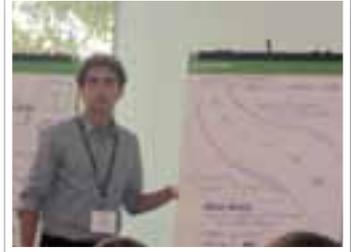


Student Activities Matter

I was one of four students from ACS who spent 10 days with 60 students from 11 different countries (Mexico, Morocco, Spain, Italy, China, Lebanon, United States, Malaysia, India, Kazakhstan, and South Africa). We collaborated to find solutions to some of our nations' most destructive environmental issues that affect the world today and will affect future generations. Issues such as natural resource allocation, corporate responsibility, green technology, and product design and marketability were discussed thoroughly.

We were put in 12 different groups, and each global team had to come up with products that would contribute to diminishing the negative effects of an assigned problem. In the process, we took part in an innovative program called Design Pitch, where we followed certain steps to reach our final designs and solutions. "This kind of experience... may not happen again. ... It's very rare to find true collaboration... It's very rare to truly work on something together" (Sisisky). The experience of working as a global team for a common cause in such a creative and collaborative setting was really powerful. The products and product pitches were amazing.

Getting to know so many students from so many different cultures was the best thing that has ever happened to me. So, thank you ACS and Collegiate American School for this wonderful opportunity.



Student Activities Matter



Student Activities Matter



Halloween Matters

NHS Reverse Trick or Treat Activity

Lilinaz Rouhani, Grade 12



It was very heartwarming to watch the children ask enthusiastically for a specific painting on their faces, or excitedly trying to come up with a new rhythm in the music station. But there was also something else that made us very happy and proud to be there, and that was the overall desire to share feelings and experiences. Whether it was the NHS students who had invented different games to share their love for music, the boy who proudly pulled my hand to show me the game he invented with a skateboard and a jumping rope, or the children who gave my friends their paintings, everyone was willing to share anything they were feeling or experiencing with others.

In the end, although we may have not been able to make a big difference, for a few hours we were all part of a very positive atmosphere and we gained very valuable experiences.

One important role of student led activities at schools is to help students become more effective members of society by giving them the opportunity to experience new things.

At NHS, these opportunities are usually in the form of raising funds for different causes such as the school's scholarship or the Adopt-a-Janitor program. The Reverse Trick-or-Treat, however, is different.



During this event, the students plan an afternoon with children at an orphanage and then, on Halloween, they spend a day with the children. At the end of the day, each child receives a bag of candies prepared by NHS students.

This year, too, we were looking forward to the event. We had already planned the afternoon and each of us had volunteered for one of the three stations (games and sports, arts and face painting, and music).

On October 31st, we all went to an orphanage and met a group of 60 children. The teachers helped us in dividing them into three groups so they could rotate easily in all three stations.



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