

Note from Editor

Greetings,

First of all, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Abir Nasr and I have the privilege of being the Alumni and Public Relations Developer at Ahliyah School. It is my honor to provide you with the February 2016 edition of the new and improved Together at Ahliyah newsletter. I look forward to highlight the present school activities and accomplishments; in addition to, revisiting and celebrating the glorious past and unfolding our beaming future. I also look forward to communicate with all members present and past to exchange information, suggestions and wishes.

الاهلية في ربع قرنها الاول

للمدرسة الأهلية تاريخ مُمَيَّز منذ ١٩١٦، عمره مئة سنة، امتدَّت جذوره عميقًا في تراب الأداء الأكاديمي، والعمل الخيري والاجتماعي. واعتبارًا من عام ١٩٣٩، باتت المدرسة رائدة في إدخال الموسيقى والفنون المسرحية في صُلب مناهجها. أسست ماري كساب، وهي امرأة رائدة ومُدرِّسة في الوقت عينه، المدرسة عام ١٩١٦. خلال الحرب العالمية الأولى، في الوقت الذي كانت فيه بعض الإرساليات تُغلق أبواب مدارسها في مدينة بيروت. ولمَّا كان العديد من أهالي هذه المدينة ينتظر مثل هذه الفرصة، بادروا إلى إلحاق بناتهم بالمدرسة.

بعد بضع سنوات، وبدعم من عائلتها، ومن معلِّمين تبرَّعوا بجزء من جهودهم ووقتهم، وبدعم مادي ومعنوي من المجتمع، تمكَّنت ماري كساب من شراء العقار الذي تقوم عليه المدرسة حاليًا. وكان للنجاح الذي حقَّقه المدرسة الفضل الأكبر في استقطاب الدُّعم الكبير من المواطنين، والشخصيات الرُفِيعَة، من جميع أنحاء البلاد، والعالم العربي، والمهجر. ونتيجة ذلك، تمَّ لاحقًا افتتاح القسم الداخلي، وتأسيس صندوق المنح الدُّراسية. أما الدُّعم الكبير الذي تلقَّته المدرسة من معلِّمها، وأهل الطلبة، وأهل البلد، والمنطقة عامة، أعطاهها اسم «الأهلية»!

أنشئت المدرسة كمؤسسة مستقلة، غير هادفة إلى الربح، يُشرف عليها مجلس أمناء يحدِّد لنفسه، ويؤمِّن استدامة المدرسة، ويرأسه بولس الخولي، أستاذ ورئيس مؤسس لدائرة التَّعليم في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت (AUB). وكان من شأن تطوُّع عدد من الأكاديميين والمواطنين البارزين، للقيام بمهام مجلس الأمناء، أن تشكَّل مجلس يُمثِّل مُختلف شرائح المجتمع.

يومها، عُرفت المدرسة باسم «المدرسة الأهلية للبنات»، واستقطبت قسمها الداخلي طالبات من مختلف أنحاء البلاد، ينشأن معًا في بيئة متنوِّعة، ما عزَّز في نفوسهنَّ مشاعر الوحدة الوطنية. كانت الأهلية المدرسة الأولى في العالم العربي السَّابقة إلى احتضان الحركة الكشفية الدُّولية، المُنشأة حديثًا آنذاك، والهادفة إلى تعزيز روح القيادة، وخدمة المجتمع، والتَّعاون مع المؤسسات العالمية الأخرى. هذا، وحرصت المدرسة على تنشئة الطالب قلبًا وقلبا، وأنتجت المواطنين الملتزمين والفاعلين في المُجتمع.

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Vanessa Redgrave Visit to Ahliah

Vanessa Redgrave, the celebrated English actress, 6 times Oscar nominee, Academy award winner and political activist who championed several humanitarian international causes, came to Beirut for 3 days at the invitation of Ahliah School in preparation for her **September 2016 play "A World I Loved"** to launch the **centennial celebration** of the school. The play was performed with sold-out performances at the Brighton Festival in the UK and the Miller Theater in New York City.



During the 3 days, Vanessa Redgrave visited several theaters in Beirut to choose the most suitable for the performance. The play is based on the **memoir of Wadad Makdisi Cortas**, "A World I Loved", given to her by Mariam Said, the daughter of the author Waddad Cortas. Vanessa Redgrave fell in love with the book and decided to create the play. The play portrays the changing physical political landscape of Lebanon and the region over half a century, from the First World War till the

beginning of the Lebanese civil war in 1975. The play's rich performance combines music, storytelling, choral singing and video projections from the past.

During her visit at Ahliah, Vanessa Redgrave met with students in Ahliah's Assembly Hall, read passages from "A world I loved" and shared parts of her life experiences while answering their questions.



Human Rights week

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights; with that in mind Ahliah Student council launched many activities during "Human Rights week" the first was **a pledge** they wrote and read on the 7th of December during the Monday morning assembly in front of Ahliah community. *Do watch the video on our facebook page.*

I Vow

*Today, I pledge to be a person worthy of trust
With an open heart and clear mind, I vow
To accept others who are different in every sense
To be considerate in choosing my words
For I know words could become daggers*

*I vow never to misjudge
To stop stereotyping and embrace our differences
For it is our differences that unite us
And together we stand stronger as one*

*I will not contribute to any act of discrimination
I will accept the diversity of thoughts
Opinions, backgrounds, and abilities
We're all unique in our own ways
We will stand together, we will not fall
For with our unity, we conquer all
Today, we vow*

Ahliah music club also had the opportunity on the 8th of December to participate and rock out the school's playground with their performance celebrating diversity and supported an end to discrimination campaign. The band played 3 remarkable songs: black and white by Michael Jackson, wind of change by the Scorpions and imagine by John Lennon.



Ahliah School also had **2 powerful guest speakers** that tackled the problem of prejudice behavior and discrimination.

Grades 10, 11 HS and 12 HS were honored to have Mr. Hani ALSalhani as a guest speaker. Mr. Hani is a representative from ABAAD NGO, a non-profit, non-politically affiliated, non-religious civil association that aims at achieving gender equality as an essential condition to sustainable social and economic development in the MENA region. As for Grade 2 and 3 they had an engaging opportunity with Ms. Farah Salka who is a representative from the Anti- Racism Movement (ARM); an organization that focuses on raising awareness on issues of racism and

Saving Winter



Ahliah School launched for the second year a project called "Saving Winter" during the month of November. **"Saving Winter"** aimed at collecting items (clothes, shoes, blankets...) in order to improve the quality of life and well-being of the needy children in our community. This year, Ahliah School collaborated with Unite Lebanon Youth Project - ULYP in helping out and was able to send the donations of generous community members before the winter season started.

discrimination; in addition to managing the Migrant Community Center (MCC), which is a community space for migrant and domestic workers in Lebanon. Both Ms. Farah and Mr. Hani led interesting conversations with the students about discrimination and made it clear that such behaviors or beliefs are neither acceptable nor encouraged worldwide.



The Human Rights Awareness campaign also extended to a **poster competition** for students. Participants designed creative posters under the theme "I don't put up with put downs". The work, care, passion, and thought put into all the posters were very much appreciated by the audience and panel group. Ahliah School was heartened with the level and variety of talent found in its students and would like to congratulate Reeda Fneish and Sarah Chatila for winning the award.

Ahliah is pleased and committed to creating a caring community of upcoming ambassadors.

Supporting our Community

From Monday, **October 12th till Friday the 16th** Ahliah School organized an **Anti- Poverty Week**. The activities aimed at strengthening students' understanding of the hardships of poverty and encourage them to take action in helping to address both the causes and consequences of poverty in the hope of sculpting the next generation of compassionate and responsible citizens.

The week started on Monday, October 12 during the morning assembly, with **SamerLadiki**-Grade 12 student **broadcasting poverty facts in front of all Ahliah community**; shocking facts that we might not be aware of or tend to disregard simply because they do not emerge in our every-day-life routine. Facts like that 80% of world population live in poverty, or that preventable diseases like diarrhea claim the lives of two million children a

year elicited a sense of compassion and empathy from our Ahliah students who decided to take immediate action to help mitigate the adversities of poverty even if in a humble way. Students and teachers contributed to a **1 Kilo Day** throughout the week, bringing sugar, rice, flour and other essential food items. Hundreds of food items were collected and delivered to Cedars for Care NGO- a Local NGO focusing on social and environmental work. In addition, students also organized a **lemonade stand**, where they prepared and sold lemonade to other students, teachers and staff. Their efforts led them to collect the sum of 244,000 L.L. that eventually went to Food Blessed NGO-a local hunger relief initiative run by a group of volunteers with a passion and will to fight hunger in Lebanon. In addition, students covered many aspects and issues related to Poverty around the world in language and Art classes in the aim of raising awareness.

Beirut Marathon



As active community members, a group of Ahliah students and staff teamed up with Brave Heart Fund (BHF), an NGO that provides financial assistance to needy children with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD), to take part in the Beirut Marathon Association on November 8, 2015.

Community Service

Numerous studies have shown the importance of **civic participation** at a young age including volunteer work, as a means of strengthening our community. At Ahliah School, we aim at bringing up a better generation not only academically but also emotionally and physically. Through the **Community Service Program**, students of grades 10, 11, and 12 have to fulfill the requirement of completing a minimum of 25 hours of community service per year, adding up to a total of 75 hours in three years, before they graduate. The program provides students with the opportunity to better their community and help

in making the world a better place. The opportunity also help students enhance their resume and acquire a variety of skills at a young age.

Our students have participated during the first semester in numerous activities:

- November 18, 2015, **Ahliah School donated 1,200 English and Arabic reading books** from its library to the public library in Chatilla. Volunteer students from grades 10, 11, and 12 spent three afternoons checking the books, fixing and sorting them; in order to donate them in the best condition possible.



- Saturday, November 21, 2015, students from grade 10 went to Cedars for Care to help the NGO sort all the **donated clothes and food** they had in store. Students enthusiastically worked nonstop from 9:00 am till 1:00 pm.
- Wednesday, November 25, Ahliah student volunteers from grades 10 and 11 spent their afternoon at the headquarters of Caritas Lebanon and **helped sort donated clothes**.
- Sixty senior citizens at Daruna- Caritas where joyful and merry because of 48 Ahliah students. On 27th and 30th of November, some students decorated 500 pencils and 200 magnets and then sold them to raise money to buy gifts for **senior citizens**, others wrapped the gifts and made each beneficiary a personalized cards on the 4th of December, and a third group visited the seniors on the 11th of December at Darouna soup kitchen in Furn Al Shibak, delivered gifts and roses and spent a delightful time with them.



Ahliah School is proud of all the amazing and outstanding work that has been done so far and encourages secondary students to check with the upper school head of division and school counselor about future activities in which they can participate in order to help the community and themselves.



Independence Day



We at Ahliah School celebrate Independence Day with great enthusiasm every year. This year great preparations were made in the school.

On the 20th of November, Students came prepared wearing their **national costumes** and they began the day with the tunes of the National Anthem. In the occasion, Ahliah Principal **Mrs. Ayache addressed students**, teachers and staff emphasizing



that independence is a festive celebration of unity, cooperation and freedom; true freedom comes with great responsibility and there is no greater responsibility than being ready to handle the greatest of challenges and most dangerous of enemies united as a community. She then shared our common hope and aspiration that next year our celebration would be complete without any heartbreak or loss. Especially the loss of those we love on the hands of terrorists. A moment of silence was then requested for all the martyrs in our homeland and around the world on the hands of terrorists.

After that students from all the divisions marched into their classes each to integrate activities and lessons highlighting this special day.

On the 22nd of November, under the support of the Lebanese army, Les Amis Du Cèdre launched a new campaign at Piste Warde Kfardebian, attended by patriotic citizens and community members. The event was under the guidance of UNIDO, Jouzour Loubnan, Fabiano and in partnership with ZRA3A NGO; all attendees, including Ahliah School representatives (Miss. Rana Haj Sleiman- Art Teacher and students-Mohammad Zahwi and Razan Fleife), **planted over 150 cedars**, in the aim of reforestation and reinforcement of the ecological environment in Lebanon.

Moreover, another group of Ahliah ambassadors attended an event prepared by Hussein Massoud High School, in collaboration with the municipality of Bshamoun. Hussein Massoud High school hosted a **painting competition** for 10 schools who are members of the



UNESCO school network. Ahliah School was one of the privileged schools who were chosen to participate. Five of the best art students- Aya Naboulsi, Taher Youssef, Hussien Abdelkarim, Sara Hijazi, and Samia Soubra; guided by the schools art teacher Ms. Sarah Khayat **drew a beautiful mural** representing freedom of expression.

After that, students were invited to visit the "Independence House" where the country's first national flag was raised and all secret meetings were held at that time by the first Lebanese government. Students saw artifacts (rifles, signed paper, pictures...) that belonged to the members of the first Lebanese government. Following that, students were presented with a carved medal as a gesture of appreciation for their participation.

School Clubs

Ahliah School is committed to offering students a well-rounded education through providing them with varied opportunities for extracurricular activities. The School believes that participation in clubs enables students to **develop various talents and skills** like athletic abilities, artistic competencies and cultural proficiency. In addition to the sports teams, debate club, and robotics club, the school provides students **7 other clubs** which include taekwondo, ballet, zumba, choir, pallet, music and football. Many of these activities are offered in partnership with voluntary or private sector coaches.



Debate Club: Ahliah School encourages students to **hold open dialogues** which allow them to share and discuss their perceptions of specific issues freely, while showing respect toward opposing views. This year, we provided our students with the platform to do so through our Debate Club which was launched on **Monday 7th of December**. The first debate was held on Monday the 14th of December and the appointed topic was Discrimination. After reviewing several articles and videos, students debated the issue of whether discrimination was an imperfection of human nature or a vice that could be eliminated. The participants are on the fast lane to gaining public speaking and critical thinking skills, mastering the art of persuasion, and learning to resolve conflicts in a civilized manner through the use of argument and reason while working collaboratively in teams. Certainly, these are the skills Ahliah strives to equip its students with and believes would be of major assistance to them while dealing with all post-graduation challenges and pursuing their careers.

UNESCO's 70th Anniversary

On Friday the 11th of December, **Ahliah School** along with 5 other schools was selected to celebrate **UNESCO's 70th Anniversary**. Hours of hard work and preparation by our talented students, ended in a **charming performance** of a classical Indian dance for the song "Baadshah O Baadshah" by the singer Abhijeet. Ahliah School was proud to have been involved in the protection of the world's common cultural and natural heritage.



Beirut International Arab Book Fair



«كُلَّ وَعَاءٍ يَضِيقُ بِمَا جَعَلَ فِيهِ، إِلَّا وَعَاءَ الْعِلْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَتَسَعُ»
 ولتعزيز حبّ المطالعة في نفوس أبنائنا، قصد تلاميذ الصّفين السّابع والثّامن، خلال الدّوام المدرسيّ، معرض بيروت الدّوليّ للكتاب في «البيال»، بتاريخ ٢٠١٥/٢٢/١٠، وذلك برفقة معلّّمت اللّغتين العربيّة والإنجليزيّة في هذين الصّفين، ومسؤولة قسم الأنشطة اللّاصفيّة.
 وقد جال التّلاميذ في دور النّشر المختلفة الموزّعة في أرجاء المعرض، واختاروا القصص باللّغتين العربيّة والإنجليزيّة، بإشراف معلّّماتهم.

Halloween and celebrating Birthdays

Children **learn best when they are engaged in activities**. That's why focused play is a key component of our balanced learning at Ahliah School. During the month of October, the preschool and lower elementary classes celebrated students Birthday and Halloween in the most unique way. Students came to school dressed up in costumes and engaged in a variety of activities. The day was a success due to the efforts of all the teachers.



Safety Awareness

No task is as important as creating a **safe learning environment** for our children. Mrs. NaimeKayal, Ahliah School Nurse and Safety Committee Chair, gave a presentation (16th till the 19th of November) for grades 7 to 12 regarding different drills that the school does throughout the year and all the safety procedures followed. Furthermore, students were introduced to the emergency response team. We are proud to say that our students are now aware of their vital role in drills and the importance of emergency scenarios preparedness in order to minimize injuries.

Personal safety lesson by AUB Nurses



Personal Safety is addressed in Ahliah's character education program. This year, the school collaborated with the **American University of Beirut** community public health course where three nursing students visited the school and instructed our grade 3 students to the personal safety issues. Students were advised on how to behave with strangers and

the importance of being honest and transparent with their parents/ guardians.

Parents Gathering with Mrs. Rida Ayache

Mrs. Rida Ayache, school principal, invited Ahliah parents for two afternoon gatherings on the 2nd (Grade7-12) and 4th (KG1-Grade6) of November. During the event, Mrs. Rida Ayache highlighted the **importance of parents' involvement** in school; and stated that throughout Ahliah's history, parents exist as a major constituent of Ahliah



community. Ahliah believes that Parental involvement in school should go beyond the direct communication about the learning of their children. She emphasized that parents are encouraged to be involved in the plans for the future development of the school. Then, the session went through **cooperative learning activity** where parents practiced one of the learning approaches used at Ahliah and brainstormed, shared, and projected their thoughts for effective and practical parental involvement.

Parent committee elections: academic year 2015-2016

Parents at Ahliah School are encouraged to participate as part of the community and serve on the parents committee in order to **help achieve the schools vision and goals**. This year's parent committee was elected on the 2nd of December, 2015 in the presence of, Mr. Nazih Bou Shibl, a representative from the ministry of education (based on the Act 81/11). The parents committee consists of 13 members representing the four school divisions; preschool, lower, middle and upper. They will be meeting twice per month to address general issues and concerns of students' life at school.

Members of the Parent Committee: Mohammad Arnaout (President), Jamal Malak (Vice- President), Arwa Anouti El Zein (Secretary), Houssam Jaat (Treasurer), Khodor Berjawi, Awatef Barkouk Hammoud, Mariam Damaj, Mona Baghdadi, Samiha Olleik, Rima Alawieh, Heba El Shaar, Kinda Al Khalifah, Leila Hasbini.

Student Committee election: Academic Year 2015-2016



Within its aim at promoting student leadership and involvement in school life, the student council body at Ahliah School is comprised of class representatives from all classes. Students from grades 7-12 were encouraged to run for the positions of class presidents in order to be able to **voice their class concerns** and **be the change** they wanted to see in their school community.

Candidates from each class prepared speeches on why they believe they should be elected and their vision for their classes. Students from each class casted their votes afterwards in an independent, democratic manner which reflects the Ahliah spirit. Winners from each class were as follows:

winners from Grade 7 to 12 (Mohamad Rakka, Abed Khatib, Mariam Arnaout, Nour Kazoun, Dima Houssami, Aya Chour, Reeda Fneish, Sara Akhras, Houssam Iskandar, Layan Srou, Sarah Tello, Rouaa El Dash)

2015 Prom Committee Activities



At Ahliah School, we believe extracurricular activities are one of the most important first steps in a **lifelong journey of learning**; student's behavioral, organizational, leadership and teamwork skills are molded on the way to achieving a common goal. This year the schools Prom committee is working extra hard on Fundraising activities.

Movie Night on the 20th of November
Christmas Bake Sale on the 14th of December

Trips



At Ahliah School, trips are considered as a **powerful and positive teaching tool** that enhances the student's social, personal and emotional development. This semester, Grade 1 to 6 spent a superb day at **Frizzy** an educational and fun center in Verdun- Dune; where they engaged in different activities from craft and painting activities to dancing, baking and puppetry. As for preschoolers, they had the opportunity to gain new experience while being exposed to a new environment during their visit to **Playtown** - Raouche. Students benefited from hands-on crafts and activities in a fun and safe environment while bonding with their classmates.

Field trips



Ahliah school field trips offer a chance for students to **explore knowledge beyond the books** and include interactivity and fun in the process. A fieldtrip to **Elite printing house** in BcharaAlkhoury, on Friday 18th of Dec, for KG3 students was a great experience; students were guided through all the steps and procedures of printing a book and all the people involved in the process.

Student of the Month Award

Each month, Ahliah teachers choose **Student of the Month** for each class from Grade 1 to Grade 9. These students are chosen for their contributions to Ahliah School and community and for being caring, energetic students and good role models to their friends.

Awards went to:



October	November	December
Grade 1: Ahmad Kammourieh	Grade 1: Abed Alrahman Al Hanoun- Lea Daya	Grade 1: Amir Jawad Mariam Tawil
Grade 2: Sara Daouk	Grade 2: Jana Allouch- Adam Merachly Naya Abou Dan	Grade 2: Naji Ghazzawi Hamzeh Haffar
Grade 3: Thouraya El Hanoun		Grade 3: Reina Moukalled
Grade 4: AyaSinno	Grade 3: Habiba Maktabi	Grade 3: Yousef El Ezzi
Grade 5A: Mariam Aldach	Grade 4: Shahla Abou Dan	Grade 4: Celina Noamani
Grade 5B: Al Zahra Alwadee	Grade 5A: Joudie Al Baghdadi	Grade 5B: Joelle Majed
Grade 6A: Faisal Al Kudiri	Grade 6A: Marya Safadi	Grade 6A: Ali Assaf
Grade 6B: Martina Atanasova	Grade 6B: Mohammad Daya	Grade 6B: Lea Alameh
Grade 7: Hamza Saim Al Daher	Grade 7: Rabab Makmouk	Grade 7: Rouaa Al Dach
Grade 8A: Nour Hijazi	Grade 8A: Lynn Doughan	Grade 8A: Ali Al Amin
Grade 8B: Hinda Fneish	Grade 8B: Rain Tarraf	Grade 8B: Omar Haffar
Grade 9A: Nourah El Kudiri	Grade 9A: Mohammad Sadderha	Grade 9A: Mohamad Sadderha
Grade 9B: Mohamad Karim Enayeh	Grade 9B: Khalil Makmouk	Grade 9B: Tamara Daouk

Development News

International School Award 2015-18



Ahliah School was proudly awarded the prestigious **International School Award**, in the presence of H.E. Hugo Shorter, UK Ambassador to Lebanon and the **British Council** at the **UNESCO Palace**, along with 35 Lebanese public and private schools on Monday 7th of December 2015. The event celebrated the success of Ahliah School's work over the past year regarding developing and practicing an international dimension to the schools policies and activities.

Lebanese Red Cross- First Aid Tutorial



Ensuring children, staff and visitors **safety at school** is a top priority at Ahliah. That's why a first aid training session was given on campus for all the staff and teachers by the Lebanese Red Cross for 8hrs. Attendants at the end where certified for mastering the below skills: Adult Airway obstruction Heimlich, Adult Airway Obstruction or pregnant, Infant airway obstruction, External bleeding, Recovery position, Cardiac arrest chest compression and rescue breaths, Sickness any medical case, Serious wounds, Severe burns, and Trauma.

Development in the French Department specifically teaching method and implementation

Ahliah aims at graduating students who are proficient in three languages; Arabic, English, and French. The school has been working on **developing Ahliah's French program** and curriculum since 2013-2014. The first steps of the plan included the addition of 2 sessions/week for teaching French starting from preschool to be followed each year in the lower school grade levels. The curriculum clearly identifies the outcome expectations at each grade level. The preschool and cycle I follow a thematic approach. For all other classes, 4-11, the French curriculum is based on the DELF (diplome d'etude de langue francaise) standards.

Ahliah has been collaborating with the **French Institute in Lebanon** (InstitutFrancaisLiban) to improve the quality of Ahliah's French teaching and learning. In support for the promotion of French abroad, The French Institute in Lebanon is involved in supporting educational institutions to enhance teaching and assessing French as foreign language.

The main objectives of this collaboration with the French Institute include:

- Help Ahliah team implement the DELF program and prepare students to pass the DELF Junior exam.

DELF (Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française) is an official qualification awarded by the French Ministry of Education to certify the competency of candidates from outside France in the French language. DELF Diplomas are of 4 levels A1, A2 (Basic users), B1, and B2 (independent users).

- Train and Certify the French Department teachers so that they become DELF Examiners and Correctors based on DELF standards.
- Assist in choosing the resources that enhance students' learning.

During Months of July, August and September, Ahliah French teachers received intensive training sessions in teaching and learning and active implementation.

Technology Integration in Teaching Workshop

SMART Boards are revolutionizing today's classroom all around the world and Ahliah School is no different. For the second year in a row, Ahliah teachers attended a workshop that helped them learn about the importance and the use of these powerful interactive smart boards. During the workshop teachers learned how to design a lesson that **engages learners** and **addresses their diverse needs** using ActivInspire software.

What's on my mind?

It is not about the machine, it is about you

Marya Safadi - Grade 6A

What do machines do for us? Why is everyone impressed by machines? If you have a machine and you think a machine makes you cool, it is not about the machine, it is about you. How do you feel? How do you sing or dance or do anything? Like Albert Einstein said, some day we will be stupid. Are we stupid? Is anyone stupid? No, we are not stupid. We have those talents, minds, and humanity. We are not rocks; we are not like machines. We are humans. We have to be happy. You do not have to be happy, like being the smartest kid in the world. You just need to be yourself. We do not need machines; we have a body. I seriously want to say that life with machines is really garbage. We will be so lazy and fat. We will go to outer space and be like the people in the movie Wall-E. If we do not control machines, we will be slaves for them, and they will control us. There is no communication between every one of us. My sister told me that everyone has a gift. Some open it sooner and some of them open their gift later.

My Beirut

Reeda Fnieche - Grade 10 A

The fired up feeling and emotion she gave me sucked the living energy out of me. She had passion that lived amongst her imperfections; she created a form of art from every chaotic issue she faced. Her disguise beautifully merged hiding her impurities, repulsive ideologies and needs creating a hypnotizing contradicting exterior. I fell in love with her unconditionally...even after every time she made me lose faith, even after the time she made me weep creating a river of tears, cursing the time I woke up with such heavy boulder on my shoulders I couldn't not look at her and dare to open my mouth stating the harsh words she made me mumble to myself. I always sensed sorrow towards herself...rummaging through the debris searching for the unfortunate souls that took their last breath; A constant battlefield...that's what she was, that's what we claimed, but to me she is my one and only true... she is My Beirut.

English is Earth and Math is Jupiter

Mr. Jihad Srouf, English Teacher

Ms. Salam, and I discussed the possibility of attending one of her Math sessions. I wanted to personally feel, understand and go through a math lesson. I wanted to re-experience math again as it is buried deep and beyond my reachable memory.

My deepest desire was to witness how to introduce such a dry, colorless and characterless subject to young minds. How to explain circles, angles and fractions to teenagers living in the 3D age, to kids who are reaching across the globe by merely touching a piece of glass in the palm of their hands. Well, I survived her math period without the Red Cross standing by to rescue me in case I am lost between parallelogram and square root. I admit that she made me

feel lucky and now more thankful to be teaching English.

I found out it is much easier to explain the five elements of a short story in comparison to minus power of two. English is Earth and Math is Jupiter, and Ms Salam brought that distant and strange planet closer and closer with the aid of the active board.

I listened and took notes and few days later I took a quiz with my classmates in G7 A. You would think, at my age and higher level of education that I would get a prefect grade. Well, guess again, I made the same mistake that irritated me with many of my students. My tough teacher deducted one point, for I simply did not write my name.

I will be more careful next time!

Alumni News (Alumni in the spot Light)



My Journey with Ahliah
Mrs. Leila Fawaz

Numerous things make me infinitely proud to be an Ahliah graduate. It is particularly significant to me that when it was founded in 1916, one of the first secular, non-for-profit, independent institutions dedicated to teaching young girls and empowering them to become active members of society.

When I joined Ahliah as a 9 year old girl in 1951, most of the teachers and administrators who welcomed me, helped me grow to be the person I am today, were graduates of Ahliah school themselves. Widad Cortas, Salma Makdissi, and Nida Baroudi to name a few, were strong and open-minded women, true role models that emulated the lessons they spoke of through running the school with a unique commitment to values of social justice, gender equality and responsibility.

At Ahliah, I learned to become an active citizen, involved in the causes of my community. Back then it was the Palestinian cause, we at Ahliah aided the free fighters by knitting them sweaters and later during the 1967 war, sewed bandages for the red-cross to help heal the wounded. Secularism was a wonderful value I inoculated at Ahliah as well and probably the most prominent one. I learned that there were more similarities than differences between religions, that they all preach peace and coexistence when properly understood. Students from different religions celebrated Christmas reading about the birth of Jesus from The Quran as much as

the Testaments. They also commemorated Al-Adha, Al-Fitr, and Easter as occasions that brought us closer together while sharing with respect our religious heritage as a source of communal wealth. Besides that, at Ahliah I learned empathy for those in need specifically those with visual impairments through people like, Shams Inati, today a scholar of Islamic thought and civilization and a professor in the United States that attended Ahliah School. In addition to, Widad Lahoud, one of the school's most memorable graduates, that went on to establish the first school for the blind. Back then we at Ahliah had the privilege to watch Helen Keller make her appearance in the auditorium in front of mesmerized girls who watched and heard her play the piano in disbelief.

Eventually, when I graduated and started working at the school, it was these educators and women that inspired my choices, example Mrs. Cortas that imbedded in us that the merit for teachers is not only in supporting the most gifted but also in lifting up those who needed a hand; with that in mind, especially during the civil war, as the city sank into violence and Wadi Abu Jmeel's conditions became increasingly untenable, we worked with numerous children in difficulty, sometimes the sons of militiamen, refugees, and others. We felt the responsibility to support a well-rounded learning that included principles of fairness and coexistence aside from math, science, and literature for these children.

Furthermore, my involvement since the 1970s with the school's Alumni Association taught me that my experience at Ahliah was as special and unique as that of other graduates that turned to be wonderful women who work

Alumni News (Alumni in the spot Light)

with enormous dedication to uphold the principles of Ahliah. It was them, who upon the death of Nida Baroudi Salameh came together to build a school library in her honor. Since then, the graduates have undertaken numerous activities to support Ahliah and maintain its mission.

My work over the past two decades with these inspiring women has showed me how the passionate spirit of the school still lives in each one of us, a sense of citizenship, love and responsibility towards others, and believing in a better world.

Advice to our students/parents

"Knowledge overcomes ignorance in the way that sunlight defeats darkness", goes an old Indian proverb. It is true that students need a break, especially high school students that are loaded with daily assignments. But what I wish to emphasize, is that learning goes further than schoolbooks and school activities. Learning should not be associated to educational contexts only. Learning is a continuous process that commences at birth and continues until death; it is the process through which we use our experience to deal with new situations and to develop relationships.

The following list is generic but identifies the key principles associated with all types of learning and can be applied to group situations

- **People learn best when they are treated with respect.**
- **Learning opportunities should, when possible, be linked to previous positive experience.**
- **When possible learners should take part in the planning of learning activities.**
- **People learn best when their physical environment is comfortable.**
- **Interaction with a facilitator is vital.** People need to be able to react, question and voice opinions.

• **Learning activities and/or delivery need to be varied,** to cover the range of different learning styles and help the learner maintain interest and motivation.

• **Self-evaluation and reflective practice is important.**

Weekends and days off can be a wonderful time for all sorts of special learning experiences within families.

1. Come together as a family: Discuss particular outings and activities the entire family can do together during the holidays.

2. Be inspiring. Don't let bad weather interfere with learning. Encourage everyone to do arts and crafts, play music and develop home videos, maybe teach them how to cook, play chess.

3. Go on an adventure. Don't waste your time. Seize the day! Hit the slopes for some ski, snowboard, and if you are not a fan why not snowshoeing or hiking. When time is used properly and wisely to engage with children in original, inspiring activities, family bonds are strengthened, as well as love for learning.

Modified from:

"Tips for Parents: How to Keep Learning Alive During Winter Break," by Annie Fox

"Skills you need: what is learning?"

A word from our teachers/ parents committee

Mr. Rabih Murr - Middle and Upper school Head of Division

Dear Students,

I am confident that many of you have read the Ahliah School mission statement and reflected on its words and meaning and maybe even attempted to compare yourself to the learner profile that it describes and aspires to create. Self-confidence, creativity, compassion, responsibility, being knowledgeable, and being socially involved are much valued characteristics that you can acquire, nurture and possess throughout your journey at Ahliah. However,

the purpose behind this message is to make you think beyond those words of the school's mission, and depart from the last part of it which states "bettering life and the society in which they live". The school's mission does not end by its students acquiring those characteristics and values, actually, this is where it really starts to achieve its social value. Our country is more than ever in great need for young active citizens who possess the adequate set of skills and values to make a real change. Use your creativity, your compassion, your knowledge, act responsibly and make it your everlasting mission to engage in bettering life and the society in which you live.