



The Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, Newsletter

October 2013

Dates to remember

- Half-term break 14-18 October
- Public holiday 21 October
- School resumes 22 October
- Safaricom Choir Concerts 2 November, 3pm & 7pm

Inside this issue:

Staff News;	2
Notices	
Junior School News; Re-remembering Westgate	3
International Peace Day; Library of the Year Awards; Choral Concert	4
Juventus Visit; SRC News; LAMDA	5
CAS in Action; Staff News	6
MUN; House News	7
Careers and Counselling Tips; Maths Success; Swim Elections	8

Our Dual Language Programme is Attracting Attention

Dear Parents/Guardian

“I have come to see the Dual Language Programme in action.” These were the words of Associate Professor of Linguistics, Peter Githinji, when he visited the school on 7 October, after reading about it in a local daily. He was here to witness what he called “innovation in action”. The professor has visited the school each day since to study, encourage and advise on how best to continue with our Dual Language Programme. Professor Githinji is from Ohio University in the USA.

This year, the programme has been implemented in Year 3 and students up to Year 5 have now experienced learning in dual languages. Over time, its impact should be apparent in the number that will graduate with Bi-lingual Diplomas.

It was most comforting to hear Professor Githinji echo the beliefs that we hold on the Dual Language programme. Research by various scholars has revealed that studying content in dual languages, especially the 50-50 model that we follow, has benefits that are maximised when the programme is started in the

early years of schooling.

Studies show that there is a clear cognitive stimulus from schooling in two languages leading to enhanced creativity and analytical thinking. Through the programme students learn to navigate meaning in a language other than that in which they are most comfortable. This brain exercise boosts the growth of neurons in the brain, creating new neuropathways to cope with the increased need for cognition. The result is that students that learn in two languages end up with better and deeper understanding than their mono-lingual peers.

The second language learnt also becomes available for lifelong use, ensuring a better international fit, and enhanced capacity to learn additional languages, while the perspectives from which life experiences can be viewed are also greatly augmented.

It is also evident that studying in a second language exposes and immerses the students in the culture of the second language. This has the effect of developing a better understanding and acceptance of the newly introduced

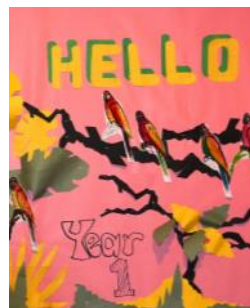


Simon Otieno

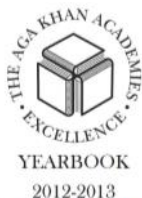
language, leading to a more pluralistic outlook. This is in line with our mission to develop a more tolerant world. It opens up the world view of the students as it includes the knowledge of and respect for the customs and experiences of others.

At a time when there is so much misunderstanding that has led to a segregated, exclusive and divided world, a good dual language programme is one of the ways we can channel the energies of different ethnic communities into a more integrated, inclusive and unified society.

Simon Otieno
Head of Academy



Welcome sign in Junior School



10th Anniversary Yearbook

Staff News

Over the past month we have had a few new staff arrive to complement those who began at the start of the Academic Year. We hope they will enjoy their time here. **Ms Sheikha Bawazir** has joined the Academy as the MYP Computer Technology teacher for the Senior School. Ms Bawazir recently graduated with an Honours degree in Computer Science (BSc) from Kenyatta University and is looking forward to contributing her expertise to the school community. Email:

Sheikha.Bawazir@akam.ac.ke.

Ms Mary Agnes Ngala teaches Visual Arts at MYP and DP1 level. She is also mentor for a DP1 class and runs the Art Club for the enrichment programme which largely deals with creating phenomenal works of art by recycling materials. She has five years' teaching experience and holds a Bachelor of Education degree in Fine Art from Kenyatta University. Email:

maryagnes.ngala@akam.ac.ke.

Ms Shazma Wadhwan is a first-year Teaching Fellow in the Senior School and is a University Counsellor, a DP1 Mentor and Dorm Parent. She believes that student support services are vital to

success and that led her to take a Master of Education degree in School Counselling from the University of Southern California (USA). She also holds a Bachelor of Science in Developmental Psychology from the University of California, San Diego (USA). Prior to joining the Academy, she worked for several years as a college counselling advisor for an educational outreach programme and also has experience in intervention and school guidance counselling. Email:

shazma.wadhwan@akam.ac.ke

Mr Daniel Orwa has joined the Academy staff as a Teaching Fellow. He is a former Academy student who completed his IB Diploma in May 2009 and has now graduated from the University of Reading (UK) with a first class honours degree in Mathematics and Applied Statistics. He enjoys problem solving, football, mountaineering and athletics and has an interest in the application of Mathematics in Finance, Education and Ethics. Email:

daniel.orwa@akam.ac.ke

Mr Adoyo Alvince Ochieng has joined the Maths department, teaching at both MYP and Diploma levels. (Cont'd p6)

Notices and Coming Events

Kampala pre- and primary schools expo 1-2 November, Kampala at UMA (Uganda Manufacturers Association) Conference Hall.

Half-term break—14-18 October; Public Holiday—21 October

Safaricom Choir concerts in the Commons—2 November 3pm and 7pm

Academy Yearbook—There are still some copies of the 10th Anniversary Yearbook available. Feedback has been very positive, so don't miss out on memories that will last a lifetime. Purchase at the Bursar's Office—1000KShs.

Junior School News

The Junior School held its annual parent-teacher conferences late last month. This is an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss each student's performance in order to promote and enhance successful learning. We thank all the parents who took the time to attend.

Several Junior School field trips have taken place. The Year 4s have visited Sapling Institute – a centre for Cerebral Palsy/Autism, as did the Year 6 classes. Prior to this trip, they had invited a guest speaker, Mr Jinn, a blind man who gives educational talks on blindness/disability, and learnt a lot from him about people with disabilities and how they cope positively in society. This along with the educational trip linked the unit of inquiry “Learn to Live and Live to Learn” where the students are involved in understanding how learning takes place in children with mental impairments and how they connect to the world and people around them.

Meanwhile the SRC is progressing with its inquiry into the use of plastic throw-away cups. They have collected data on quantities purchased and the cost and held a meeting with Mr Simon, Mr Amir, Mr Mos, and Mr Wilkins last week to share their proposal – *Walk the Talk*. Valuable feedback was received and the SRC has now written a report outlining the different options and considerations in order to make a sustainable decision and promote a positive change. They have included a decision timeline in their most impressive and comprehensive report. SRC's motivations are both economic and environmental: spend less money and reduce our environmental footprint – a good Talk to Walk.

Remembering Westgate

A ceremony of remembrance, love and solidarity, organised by the UHAI CAS group was held outside the Commons in the evening of 26 September. Messages were posted on a board and candles were lit as staff and students came together to stand with those most affected by the Westgate tragedy. On the following day in the Junior School candles were lit as the school community continued to grieve and participate in the three days of national mourning. Every person in Kenya has been affected in some way by this terrible event, but the service was particularly dedicated to those who lost

their lives, and their families and friends. The message was one of reaching out to support in any way possible those affected – be it through empathy, talking about the tragedy in an effort to understand and ensure it does not happen again, or practically, through blood donations. On the Sunday as soon as the need was communicated, 20 residential students went to the Red Cross Centre to donate blood. Sharing our experiences and supporting others are acts of humanity that enable us to move forward in a positive manner, hoping and praying that such an event is never repeated.



Visit to Sapling Institute

“The SRC’s Walk the Talk proposal is driven by both economic and environmental considerations”



Remembering Westgate



Thinking and talking about Syria

“Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it.”



The choir performing under the direction of Mary Favour

A cause may be worth dying for but no cause is worth killing for *

International Day of Peace was marked in the Senior School Humanities Year 9 and 10 classes by suspending normal lessons in order to take the time to really think and talk about current events in Syria. Students also contributed to a graffiti wall which captured young people’s ideas on how to bring peace to Syria. Some of the questions we considered included: What are the reasons for the continuing conflict in Syria? Are chemical weapons a red line that the world must enforce? What are the alternatives to military intervention in Syria? Humanities teachers were impressed by the level of knowledge and understanding of the Syrian crisis demonstrated by students and urged everyone to continue to follow developments closely. Meanwhile in the Junior School it was marked by a day out of school uniform and an emphasis on doing something that would benefit another person. Putting others first is a good step on the road to peace. **from the graffiti wall.*

Library of the Year Award

The epigram *“Those who cannot remember the past, are condemned to repeat it”* can be applied to the situation in Syria (see above), and is also pertinent to this story as the importance of a library in the learning process cannot be overstated. At the Library of the Year awards held recently in Nairobi a strong defence was put up by the Academy

team to maintain the position of number one School Library of the Year which we won last year. This year the school managed a very creditable second place being trumped only by Makini School. The Library team vows to come back even more strongly next year and regain their rightful position as first in the country.

Choral Concert

The first concert of the year was an opportunity for the Academy community to attend a wonderful display of student singing in solos, duets, trios, ensembles and choral items, as students who had recently taken part in the Kenya Music Festival showed off their achievements. The concert also included many other singers from the Academy’s impressive choral programme, as well as one or two piano and recorder items to add variety. The concert was presented by the Academy’s Choral Director, Philip Agutu, with many items accompanied by our Head of Arts, Tony Ryan. Two Diploma students, Mary Favour and Xenia Karungu, introduced each performance, as well as demonstrating their own very impressive singing talents in solos, duets and ensemble items. The capacity audience were entertained and often moved by some very high-quality performances that ranged through many styles – from operatic extracts, to songs from shows, to popular hits. The concert also included spirited African traditional arrangements that oozed with panache and rhythm. It was a great night, enjoyed by all and capped off by a spirited rendition of *Wantata* from all the performers.

The Day Juventus Came to the Academy

Imagine getting some hot football tips from the best. Excitement ran high when two coaches from the famous Juventus Football Club came to the Academy and ran a demo session with student groups as well as a short training session for coaches. Juventus is the most successful football team in Italy and its name is known around the world. As part of their outreach programme the team has recently set up a Soccer School in Nairobi. It is now looking to consolidate its connection with Kenya through the establishment of further schools, one being slated for Mombasa!



A Juventus coach does some talent spotting!

SRC News

SRC elections were held in late September. There was an overwhelming candidate pool of extremely strong students, due in part to the work of teachers who modelled, and primed them for leadership. The winning candidates were: Year 7: Jeeva Premkumar, Academics; Renish Kanjiyani, Action; Justice Kahindi, Expression; Lucille Kibara, Citizenship. Year 8: Drusilla Talawa, Citizenship; Ashley Mutei, Expression; Hussein Janmohamed, Academics; Amaar Jivanji, Action. Year 9: Kamran Ramji, Academics; Nafisa Raimjonova, Citizenship; Mir Vyas, Expression; Zahra Ahmed, Action. Year 10: Rahul Jotongia, Academics; Rachel Ayugi, Action; Mohammed Waseem, Expression; Dinar Fazal, Citizenship; Ahasan Pujwani, House Rep. Well done to the winners, and all those who participated, on a race well run.

This year's SRC retreat took place over 28-29 September at the lovely Sun 'n' Sand resort and was a huge success. Thank you to the parents, staff, and students who make the weekend possible. A total of 35 students from Year 7 to DP1 were able to get to know one another in a new and stimulating environment. The respective committees (Citizenship, Academics, Action, Expression, House Captains, and Dorm Captains) had a weekend filled with team building and brainstorming activities. The results of these sessions were a unified SRC general body and a realistic laundry list of potential ideas and initiatives that the SRC hopes to accomplish throughout the coming academic year. The SRC retreat is a great start to how we want to "Make It Happen" for the Academy student population.



LAMDA Exams

Excellent results were gained by the students who entered the LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art) exams that were held last term. The tutor, Mrs Jean Hughes, is proud to advise that all students were successful. Of the 90 Academy students who entered, 40 gained marks of 80% or more. They were entered in 8 categories, from entry level to Public Speaking. The highest mark, over all the 308 entrants from Mombasa, was gained by Shamyia Jaffer who gained 92% for the Gold Medal Speaking in Public exam. What great results – congratulations!



Shamyia Jaffer

CAS in Action

Book drive: this month-long event by the CAS IMPACT group will begin after the mid-term break. The group will be collecting reading materials such as magazines, textbooks, exercise books, storybooks etc which will then be distributed to needy schools. The book drive will be in the form of a competition: inter-House in the Senior School, and between classes in the Junior School. Prizes and House points will be awarded to those that collect the most.

DP1 and DP2 students assisted at the recent Sitting Volleyball national women's team selection competition hosted by the Academy. Over the whole weekend a group of students acted as ball

catchers for these fast-paced games, always ensuring that the ball was ready to be passed back to the players. Their assistance was greatly appreciated by the teams.



On Saturday 5 October the UHAI CAS group arranged a fun day for children from two local orphanages. As well as playing games on the sports field the UHAI group had also raised funds in order to provide lunch for them. It was a great day for all.

Staff News (Cont'd from p2)

He is also a Year 10 mentor and assists with the Maths Enrichment Programme. He holds a BEd (Science) degree from Maseno University Kenya and has over nine years' teaching experience—his last posting being at Maseno school (Kenya). Email: alvince.adoyo@akam.ac.ke

Those recently leaving the Academy are Ms Risper Ajode, who left to take up an international teaching position and electrician Mr Simon Kaluku who has re-located to Nairobi. Mr James Askew, who moved last year from Hyderabad to Mombasa, has also resigned. Mr Askew recently became the very proud father of twin boys. As a consequence he decided that the travel required by his position was incompatible with fatherhood and so has settled back in the UK. Mr Wilfred Wambua, who has served as Catering Manager since 2004 has left to pursue other opportunities. We thank all departing staff and wish them well for the future.

Catch Them Doing Good awards were recently presented to: Mr Kennedy Otieno, Ms Khadija Mwarabu, Ms Hellen Mwalimo, Ms Jackline Adhiambo, Mr Samuel Kenga and Mr Fredrick Calloo in recognition of the very hard work done willingly to ready the residential blocks for the arrival of the Global Encounters group at the beginning of the summer break. As the group arrived just as soon as school finished time was tight, but staff worked through the weekend to ensure all was ready on time. We thank them for going the extra mile.



Model United Nations 7th Annual Conference

On the 4 and 5 October we held our 7th annual MUN internal conference which is a wonderful opportunity for all those in both the MS and EA MUN clubs to use the skills taught in the club in an exciting way. While debating various resolutions the delegates who participated were able to demonstrate two of the qualities contained in our IB learner profile: communicators and knowledgeable. This year was extra special as it was the first time that delegates from other schools participated. Aga Khan High and Jaffery Academy were able to take part due to our MUN outreach programme that has been spreading the word to other schools – a great initiative and achievement by both MUN clubs. At the start of the conference the debate seemed slow, but with the help of motivating speeches given by Mr Bardai and Ms Joanne by the last resolution of the day intense

debate had arisen over France's resolution promoting LGBT rights in West Africa. It was wonderful to see this success by the end of the first day as it showed that the students had learnt something and were also able to have a good time. The second day of debate was up a notch and the delegations enthusiastically set about creating fruitful debate from the outset. This did make it a lot harder when deciding which delegates and delegations should be given awards as many people worked hard towards and during this conference. As chairman of the MUN Club, it was great to see the conference take place with such a positive outcome, and the effort put in by the executive committee, the students and the school in preparation was all worth it. I enjoyed the experience and hope that everyone involved felt the same way! –
Reporter: Sonia Soares DP2



MUN Conference

“As chairman of the MUN Club, it was great to see the conference take place with such a positive outcome”



House News

Results of the House Captain elections are: Falcons: Jacob Whitnell and Amisa Mwathethe; Ravens: Aadil Champsi and Lilian Odera; Eagles: Joshua Ekirikubinza and Nancy Mayenga; Hawks: Ahasan Amin and Christine Oginga. We look forward to many lively House events taking place throughout the year, led by the new House captains. ****Ravens** won the House quiz that was held in late September.



House Colours

University and Career Counselling Tips

- ⇒ **Register for Naviance Family Connection.** The Naviance website allows students to build their own long-term goals and success plans, conduct college searches, and explore career paths. The Academy's University Counselling (UC) office uses the service as the main method of communication with students and their families with a weekly UC Newsletter highlighting key deadlines and other important information. The newsletter also features university profiles and SAT vocabulary words to assist students to deepen their understanding of English and its usage.
- ⇒ **Make an appointment to visit the counsellors.** They are available throughout the year including during Parent-Teacher Conferences and also via e-mail and telephone. Encourage your student to meet with the counsellors as well. Be proactive in communicating with your child's teachers and mentors. It will keep you updated on your student's progress and help you build a relationship with those who work with your child on a daily basis and will likely be writing their recommendation letters.
- ⇒ **Emphasise goals and grades.** Ask your child about their current personal goals and where they see themselves in 5 or 10 years. It is important to not only have long-term goals but also an action plan on how to achieve them. Ask open-ended questions to gain more insight; listen when your child discusses their day to discover their interests. Relate these back to your child's current behaviour, grades, and study habits to find areas for growth and improvement.
- ⇒ **Never focus on one school.** There are many great universities and colleges in various countries. Considering one school only may cause disappointment and self-esteem issues. Encourage them to begin their college search early and identify the most important qualities to look for in a university. Look for qualities that match your child's interests and study habits. For example, a student who works better in small groups or individually will likely thrive at universities with smaller class sizes.

To register for a parent account on Naviance, please contact Ms Shazma Wadhwanja, shazma.wadhwanja@akam.ac.ke or Mr Chase Taylor, chase.taylor@akam.ac.ke with your name, your child's name, and year level. All parents are encouraged to register.

Maths Competition Success

George Adede and Zishaan Sunderji competed in the ASMA (American Scholastic Mathematics Association) Contest 2012-2013 both finishing with creditable scores of 31 in this international competition. Congratulations to them and their teachers.

Elections

Elections for the Swimming Club were held at the beginning of the term. The new Committee comprises: Chairman: Mr Gervais Ramar; Faculty Representative: Mr Les Wilkins; Vice-Chairperson: Mr Sanjeev Khagram;

Secretary: Mrs Binti Vora; Treasurer: Mr Raju Shavdia. Committee Members: Mrs Nitiksha Karia, Mrs Hina Vayani, Mrs Farida Chakera, Mrs Renu Bhagani, Dr Zafira Esmail and Mr Paul Mutegi.

The Aga Khan Academy
Mbuyuni Rd
PO Box 90066-80100
Mombasa
Kenya

Phone: +254 720 631 144;
+254 735 931 144

Email: info@akam.ac.ke

Website:
[www.agakhanacademies.org/
mombasa](http://www.agakhanacademies.org/mombasa)

