



The Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, Newsletter

September 2013

Dates to remember

- Choral Concert—5-6.30pm
12 September. Venue:
Choir rehearsal room.
- JS PTC 25-26 September
- Half-term break 14-18
October
- Public holiday 21 October

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Welcome to the Academic Year 2013-2014

Dear Parent/Guardian

Welcome to the beginning of the Academic Year. We hope that you had a restful holiday and are glad that the students are back eager to learn.

A special welcome to the new students and parents of Year 1, Year 7 and DP1. Our DP1 Class is the largest ever at 72 students. The junior school has 309 students, the senior school 409, while our residential population is 196.

The Principals have already introduced the new teachers to you via email. Let me now take this opportunity to formally announce the list of new teachers joining us this Academic Year: Dr Moses Orwe (Chemistry), Mrs Catherine Orwe (Maths), Mr Shouquot Hussain (English), Mr Felix Odimassi (English), Mr Stephen Kulali (Maths), Mr Gervais Ramar (Head of Sports, and French), Ms Fatma Ramar (Head of Physical Education), Mr Jackson Ligaga (Drama), Mrs MaryAgnes Ngala (Visual Art), Ms Anne Carshult (TOK and Students' Support), Mrs Khona Bhattachargee and Mr Chad Walsh (PYP teachers).

From what we have already seen, these teachers will add

tremendous value to the school because of the vast experience that they bring with them. Several of them are IB Workshop Leaders and they bring a combined 70 years of IB and teaching experience.

Also joining us are: Ms Munira Tejpar and Ms Ruth Mwamino as Assistant teachers in the Junior School and Ms Shazma Wadhwanja, Ms Zahra Asharia and Ms Anna Keneda as Teaching Fellows.

The mini Strategic Plan that you made input into at the end of the last Academic Year is still in progress and a Committee retreat was held on 26-27 August. We came out with the overall vision of making the Academy **a school of choice by 2018**. We will keep you posted as we tease out the details.

We are proud to announce that our whole campus now has wifi. We recently upgraded our wireless internet to a fibre optic connection to increase the speed and efficiency of our connectivity. At the same time, we also doubled the bandwidth to improve the internet speed. Coupled with this, our Core IT infrastructure has been upgraded from 1GB to 10 GB. The result is that any student



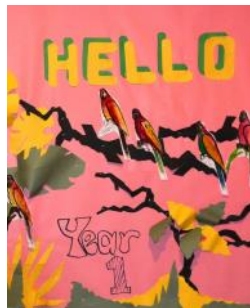
Simon Otieno

can now access, manipulate and send information at a comfortable pace from any point in the campus. Indeed, skype communication is now possible and available even at high traffic times.

The Parents' Association has organised to have the AGM in mid-October; the actual date will soon be communicated. On the agenda will be the election of office bearers and we look forward to you participating in this important exercise. A Senior School meeting will be held on the same day to explain more about the IB Diploma.

We look forward to a year of success and achievement.

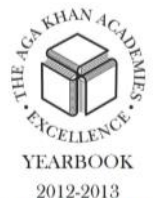
Simon Otieno
Head of Academy



Welcome sign in
Junior School



10th ANNIVERSARY



10th Anniversary
Yearbook

Staff Introductions

At the beginning of this Academic Year we warmly welcome a large number of new staff to the Academy. They are a diverse and very talented group with a wealth of teaching and life experience to share with the Academy community. We hope they will enjoy their time here; karibuni sana to all. As they have previously been asked to write something as an introduction to parents, they introduce themselves here to the wider community in their own words.

Shouquot Hussain: I am an English and TOK facilitator, Extended Essay Coordinator, Dorm Parent and DP Mentor. My interests outside class include Creative Writing, Debate and Drama and I can coach badminton and cricket. I have been teaching IB Diploma English for over a decade now, and am an Examiner and Team Leader for Language A Literature HL Paper 2 and English Extended Essays. I have a Master's degree in English Literature and a Bachelor of Education degree in English Teaching. Email: shouquot.hussain@akam.ac.ke

Gervais Ramar: I am from Mauritius and have joined as Head of Sport, as well as a teacher of French and PE. I am

one of the Block 4 Dorm Parents and I am launching the Athletics Club. I have 15 years' experience in IB CIS accredited international schools. I have also had the opportunity to be a Year Coordinator, a CAS Coordinator and an Athletics Director. Besides teaching I have coached the Mauritian athletics national teams. I studied at Mauritius Institute of Education, Leipzig University (Germany) and at Loughborough University (United Kingdom). Email:

gervais.ramar@akam.ac.ke

Moses Orwe: I teach Chemistry in Senior School and in addition, I am one of the patrons of the President's Awards Scheme. I am now in my 23rd year of teaching, including 6 years at The Aga Khan University in Dar es Salaam. I am happy to re-join The Academy to play my part in the process of lifelong learning. I hold a PhD in Education from the University of Cambridge, an MPhil in Educational Research from the University of Cambridge, MED in Teacher Education from Aga Khan University (Pakistan) and a BEd from Kenyatta University (Kenya). Email: moses.orwe@akam.ac.ke (cont'd p 3)

Notices and Coming Events

Choral Concert—5-6.30pm 12 September. Come and listen to our award winning singers. Venue Choir rehearsal room. Tickets: Adults 250KShs; students 100KShs.

The Parent Teacher Conferences—25 September for the Dual Language classes and 26 September for the whole of Junior school. These are non-contact days so there will be no school for students in Year 1, 2 and 3 on Wednesday 25 September and no school for all JS students on Thursday 26 September. Parents will receive more information shortly.

Half-term break—14-18 October

Public Holiday—21 October

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

Back to school! The new academic year 2013-2014 has once again brought new student and teacher faces to Junior School. To welcome new parents, a **Parent Information Evening** orientation event was held on 20 August, which was then followed by a very well-attended **Annual Open House** on 22 August. This event provided an opportunity for all parents to meet and interact with their children's new class teachers and specialists as well as visit their new homerooms/classes.

Alyssa Jamal, in Year 3, took part in an Inter-School Art Competition on 15 June and was awarded first place in the 8 to 10 years' old category in which there were 110 entries. For her efforts Alyssa received a trophy and a certificate from His Excellency, President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, His Excellency, President Museveni of Uganda and His Excellency, Vice President William Ruto of Kenya. The awards were made on the 29 August at the Opening Ceremony of the Agricultural show at the Mombasa Show Grounds. Well done Alyssa!

Welcome AKA, Maputo! Junior School held a special assembly to congratulate and welcome the new sister school in Maputo when it opened its doors to students for the first time on 19 August. Situated in the city of Matola, just outside Maputo, the new Academy has 50 students in Kindergarten 3, and Years 1, 2 and 3. The Academy is operating a dual-language programme in Portuguese and English, and teachers have drawn from the experiences of the Mombasa and Hyderabad Academies in creating their Programme of Inquiry. Students were happy and excited to receive a video from Mombasa students welcoming them to the Aga Khan Academies network in which our students proudly sang the school song, *We are the Children of The Aga Khan*.

New Staff Introductions (cont'd)

Anna Keneda: I am a Teaching Fellow in the English Department. My additional responsibilities include facilitating the Student Representative Council and Community and Service programmes, and acting as a mentor and Dorm Parent. I hold a Bachelor of Political Science degree from Emory University (USA). Email: anna.keneda@akam.ac.ke

Zahra Asharia: I am a Teaching Fellow in the Senior School, supporting or co-teaching Economics and Geography in the IB Diploma Programme and Year 10 Humanities. In addition I assist with curriculum development for the Humanities, and in implementing programmes for community and service. I am a Dorm Parent and a Year 8 mentor.

Before taking the role as a Teaching Fellow, I worked at a public school in New York City. I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics from Wellesley College (USA). Email: Zahra.Asharia@akam.ac.ke

Jackson Atonya: I am teaching Drama teacher in the Senior School. I hold a Bachelor of Arts in Drama and Theatre Studies degree from Maseno University (Kenya) and a Certificate in Drama from the University of Cambridge. I have come from Nairobi Academy where I taught Drama for 9 Years. I believe in giving young minds an opportunity to explore their strengths and build them to an even higher level. Email: Jackson.ligaga@akam.ac.ke (cont'd p 5)



Assembly for Maputo

They proudly sang the school song, 'We are the children of The Aga Khan...'



Alyssa Jamal receives her award



Abseiling at Kasigau

“I think the Kasigau trip is one of the most enriching experiences I’ve had since coming to this school.”



Xenia Karungu performs at the Kenya Music Festival

DP1, DP2 and the Kasigau Experience

The annual DP1 trip to Mt Kasigau took place over 23-25 August. This is an orientation trip during which the students learn more about the Diploma and meet with their teachers in an informal setting. This year they were joined by nine DP2s who took a mentoring role. Reports from DP1 & 2 students follow:

I think the Kasigau trip is one of the most enriching experiences I’ve had since coming to this school. You arrive at the campsite as an individual but leave as a changed person. Climbing Mount Kasigau was physically and mentally challenging; having to keep up with the group, controlling your temper and helping others when you can. But upon reaching the top, you feel great accomplishment at what you’ve done. You look down and are proud of your work; proud of your friends and grateful to all the people who helped you get there. It was like a foreshadowing of my next two years in the Diploma course. It will require discipline, compassion for others and hard work. Even the immense encouragement we gave each other when abseiling, which was new to many of us, made us grow stronger and get closer as many of us conquered our fear of heights. I believe that through this experience we’ve built the foundation for our Diploma years. A foundation of hard work, compassion, dedication and support that will inevitably lead to our successful completion of the course. – Reporter: Lilian Odera, DP1

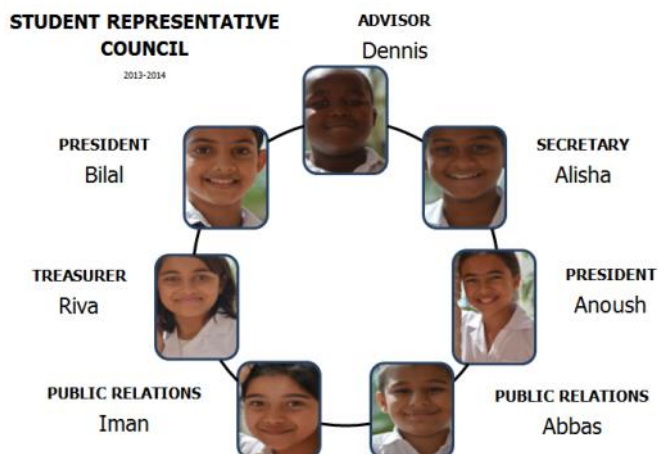
For the first time, the DP2 class was given the chance to participate in guiding and supporting the incoming DP1 class, and I did not want to miss the opportunity to get to know the younger class. Orientation involved a trip to Kasigau, where we climbed up the infamous Mount Kasigau, and where we broke the record for the most people to reach the top! Though many stumbled and fell, and we all came back caked in humus and mud, it was a joy to surmount such a challenge with the DP1 class. In addition, there was the lovely late night scare which solidified the bond created with the DP1s. All in all, it was invigorating, exciting and enjoyable getting to know the new class, especially with hindsight to the hardships that await them. I, however, have no doubts that such a capable class will do as well going through the Diploma course as they did climbing Mount Kasigau. – Reporter: Nicole Cortini, DP2

Kenya Music Festival

Academy students won four top-three placings including two firsts at the recent 2013 National Kenya Music Festival held in Nakuru. It is testament to the fine work of our vocal tutor, Mr Philip Agutu and the talent of the students, that in such a large and competitive arena our students scooped these prestigious prizes.

Individual results for Academy students included: First place: Xenia Karungu, in the Operatic or Oratorio section, singing *Angels Ever Bright and Fair*, from *Theodora* by Handel. Xenia was joined Mary Favour and Pauline Adhiambo to take first place in the Trio section, when they sang *All I Have to Do is Dream*. Second places were gained by Esther Sifa in the Solo set piece for under 10 years, performing *Where are You Going to My Pretty Maid* and Xenia Karungu and Mary Favour once again triumphed, taking second place in the Own Choice Duet singing Andrew Lloyd-Webber’s ever-popular *Pie Jesu*. We congratulate all those who took part, and especially those who gained these top placings.

Junior School SRC



Mr Chad with members of the Junior School SRC

Class representatives have recently been voted in to join the JS SRC for this year. They are: Year 1 Khushi and Aiden; Year 2 Sakina and Colin; Year 3 Hannah and Alyssa (Term 2 Kaleem); Year 4 Rowena and Igjot; Year 5 Hisham and Rahul. Starting as they mean to continue, and focusing on doing a small number of

things really well, plans are already well underway for practical improvements that will lead to better quality facilities for Junior School students and an investigation into better use (and less waste) here at the Academy of the planet's finite resources. Good work—we look forward to reporting on progress as it happens!

New Staff Introductions (cont'd)

Chad Walsh: I am from Australia and have been teaching for 11 years in South Korea, Australia, Sweden, China, Thailand and now, Kenya. This is my first time to Africa, and Kenya was such an obvious choice when deciding my next career move. I have experience in teaching from years 2 – 7 and I'm very excited about joining the team at the Academy, teaching Year 5. I am also the Syndicate leader for Years 5 and 6. Email: chad.walsh@akam.ac.ke

Catherine Orwe: I teach Mathematics in the IB Diploma Programme and MYP Mathematics to Years 9 and 10. In addition, I am Year 10 mentor and conduct the MEP (Mathematics Enrichment Programme). I hold a Bachelor of Education Science degree in Double Maths from Kenyatta University (Kenya). Email: Catherine.orwe@akam.ac.ke

Khona Bhattacharjee: I have 10 years' teaching experience in IB PYP and hold a bachelor's degree in the sciences and also a BED in teaching. I am a workshop leader and have trained teachers in many PYP schools in India. I believe in lifelong learning and as a teacher aspire to learn and make myself better every day and that's the skill that I want to impart to my children. I will be teaching year 6M this year. Email: Khona.Bhattacharjee@akam.ac.ke

Ruth Msae Mwamino: I am from the Taita Community. I have just completed my degree course in Education Arts majoring in Kiswahili and Geography and am awaiting graduation in November 2013. I have had some teaching experience in a government school. Swimming is one of my favourite sports and my hobbies are camping, watching documentaries and cooking. I feel very privileged to be part of The Academy team. I look forward to developing my career as a teacher in the school and I will be assisting Ms Fatuma in the Year 3 Kiswahili Class. Email: ruth.msae@akam.ac.ke

Munira Tejpar: I was born and bred in Mombasa, the beautiful city! This is the second time I have worked at The Academy as I was a volunteer Intern Teacher some years back before I went to university in Cape Town. Teaching is to me the best job in the world. Where else can you have something new and unexpected happen every day? What other job allows you to watch children grow and flourish every day? Where else are you tested, tried and put to the fire every day because you love it? I will be assisting Ms Enitta in the Year 1 Kiswahili Class. Email: munira@akam.ac.ke (cont'd p 6)

New Staff Introductions (cont'd)

Fatma Ramar: I am the Head of Physical Education. I hold a BED from Mauritius and have been involved in educating and nurturing the next generation for the past 20 years. I have been the Head of Department and High School Year Coordinator for different private and International Schools (IB/CIS). Email: fatma.ramar@akam.ac.ke

Stephen Ochieng Kulali: I am a Mathematics teacher in the Senior School teaching both MYP and IB Diploma. I am also Year 7C mentor, run the Mathematics Enrichment Programme and have a special interest in robotics and volleyball. I have five years' experience of teaching Mathematics and Physics. I hold a First Class Honours Bachelor's degree in Education Science (Mathematics and Physics) from Moi University (Kenya) and am currently

working on an MSc (Statistics) at Kenyatta University (Kenya). Email: stephen.kulali@akam.ac.ke

Ann Carshult: My teaching experience has ranged from lower elementary to IB courses in places such as the US, Egypt, Switzerland and Thailand. This year the majority of my time will be spent with the PYP, serving as the coordinator for additional language learners (of English). I will also be teaching Theory of Knowledge to a lucky group of DP1s. Degrees earned in the USA at Virginia Commonwealth University and Michigan State University are: Bachelor of Science, Psychology, Master of Education, Special Education: Learning Disabilities and Emotional/Behavioral Disturbances, Master of Arts, K-12 Educational Administration. Email: Ann.Carshult@akam.ac.ke

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ABRACADABRA Learning Toolkit

On 30 August, the Professional Development and Outreach Department of the Academy held a reception to celebrate the conclusion of Phase 1 of the ICT-Literacy integration project. This Academies Unit-led initiative is a collaboration with the Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP) at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada, and began as a pilot project in February 2012 to investigate the use of the CSLP's suite of software tools to support the development of literacy and numeracy in young children. Phase 1 involved some Standard 2 classes from local schools coming to The Academy for 12 weeks to use the software in the Junior School computer lab. They were compared with other student groups being taught by more conventional methods. The Academy, teachers and students have all benefitted: the teachers have developed new approaches to teaching students to read and write and now enthusiastically engage in collaborative planning and team-teaching; students, especially those struggling, have learnt the essentials of literacy; and the Academy has been gifted headphones and IT hardware. Results show significant improvements in basic reading ability for both boys and girls. In 2013, in partnership with the Academy, the CSLP was granted funding to build on the project to reach a wider scope of teachers and schools. The second cohort from a new group of schools within Mombasa will begin the programme next January. This wonderful initiative brings closer the Government's goal of not only ensuring enhanced literacy in primary schools, but also enables students to acquire computer skills.

ABRACADABRA – it really is magic!

