

University Preparatory Program NEWSLETTER



A Visit to the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute

Nour Nehme

Away from the traditional ways of studying, the visit to the Naef K. Basile Cancer... [Page 2]

Letter from Earth

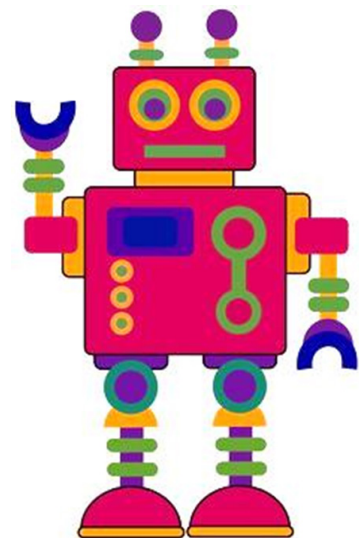
Giselle Marroun

When you think of me, remember the resources I offer you. Remember the beautiful scenes I provide you with. Remember the fresh water... [Page 4]

Being a Robot

Mahmoud Kanso

All of them look at me in a strange way. No one knows my healing deeds. They don't even know that my lif... [Page 14]



This newsletter was completed with the help and guidance of Dr. Samar Harkouss, Ms. Rima El-Harake & Ms. Katia Peltekian, as well as the contributions of the UPP students.

A Visit to the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute

Nour Nehme

Away from the traditional ways of studying, the visit to the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute was very helpful and useful. The doctors were very kind and they answered all our questions in a professional way appropriate to our level of knowledge. After the visit, I learned some important facts about cancer. For example, I now know that there is no sure cure for cancer, but the treatment should be followed systematically and needs time and patience. Also, the media is trying to make us believe that there is a cure, but that is, unfortunately, not true.



Finally, I asked the doctors about their opinions of patients that want to stop their treatment or request to die because of the pain and the depression related to their illness, and their answers were very helpful. They told me that assisted suicide is illegal in Lebanon and patients get psychological treatment if they are considering suicide.



UPP level 3 students with doctors and researchers

However, one doctor told me that when the patient wants to stop the treatment, doctors cannot oblige him or her to continue. Following this visit, I hope that we continue to use this way of learning about new topics whenever possible.



Questions & answer session with Naef K. Basile Institute doctors and researchers

FAMOUS SPEECHES

“I Have a Dream” by Martin Luther King Jr: A Reflection

Diana Herz

Have you ever felt that you’ve been discriminated and segregated from others? Have you ever fought for your basic rights? Have you ever felt that you’ve been judged and refused by others because of the color of your skin, sex, race, or religion? Some Americans experienced this unfair treatment in the 20th century. Most chose to be quiet, but Martin Luther King chose to raise his voice against racism with his “I Have a Dream” speech in 1963.

“I Have a Dream” is the most famous American speech by Dr. Martin Luther King, who was a black American activist in the Civil Rights Movement. Americans needed such a speech to motivate them to struggle for their civic rights that were violated because of racism. African Americans – aka the Blacks - suffered from routine discrimination in different fields, where they were forced to go to separate schools from the ones reserved for whites only, or when they had to sit at the very back of the bus. According to Scholastic website, blacks had the right to vote; but in fact, all over the South of the USA, they were kept away from the polls by taxes, literacy tests, and shotguns. All of this began to change in late August 1963, when Martin Luther King delivered his powerful motivational speech in Washington, which was covered by national television stations in America.

For the speaking class, we had to choose a speech by a famous person; my instructor gave us a very short sample to show us the difference between monotone and intonated speech. The students were asked to listen to the speech they were going to present and prepare their presentations accordingly paying attention to pronunciation, intonation and delivery. I chose “I Have a Dream” because the title attracted me; I am glad I got to choose this speech because it affected me as a person. I have always believed that we all should be treated equally no matter what our color, gender, race or religion is. Every single human being should have the opportunity to be respected by others.



Martin Luther King highlighted his own dream of freedom despite difficulties and challenges the black Americans were facing, and this was clear in the speech due to repetition of the word “I Have a Dream” with every statement at the end of the speech. The most interesting part to me in the speech is, “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” This part holds a potential message about the importance of being valued by personal achievement and evaluated by the character of the person.

The speech, although delivered to the American people, applies to the whole wide world, to every single human being who discriminates and who has been discriminated against. As the world is becoming more and more intolerant towards “the other”, this speech is not only a reminder but also a motivation to fight racism in every corner of the world.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Letter from Earth

Giselle Marroun

Dear UPP Students,

When you think of me, remember the resources I offer you. Remember the beautiful scenes I provide you with. Remember the fresh water, the fruits, the vegetables, the air, ... and everything that is good for you.

However, it seems you can't imagine how much harm you are causing for me by polluting my land; you can't imagine how much pain you inflict on me every time you throw away waste. Have mercy, humans; feel with me. I give you life and you give me garbage in return?!

Do not think that it is too difficult to mend this; believe me, a few steps will make a huge difference. Let's start with the first one. Reduce the consumption of solid materials. Try your best to reuse bottles and containers. For example, instead of buying plastic bottles that cannot be used more than one time because of chemical reactions with the plastic, use glass bottles that you can use not only over and over again but also for more than one function. Second, throw your garbage only in the recycling bins, not with other trash nor in nature. Thus, you save not only my land but also your money and the materials provided for you. Instead of throwing your things away, you can benefit from them.

Next, I have an interesting idea! Why don't you create beautiful bricolage and eco-art from solid waste? Believe me, you will have fun creating art with friends and family and reduce the effects of garbage at the same time.

Finally, don't be sad; be happy. Benefit from me as much as you can, but please, think about me. I want the best for you all.

Much love.
Your big home,
Mother Earth



Lifestyle Changes

Nahia Kanj

"Giselle! Why do you want to donate your organs?" I ask.

"To save the life of many people after my death! What else could there be? In a world full of people who die of hunger, would you allow someone to die? How can you be indifferent?" says Giselle.

"What is my responsibility? How can I help people who are living on the other side of the world? It's unfair to blame me for people who die because of hunger!" I respond.

Every one of you, my dear friends, can be responsible for the death of someone on the other side of the world.

Instead of donating good quality food, you throw it in the garbage!

Instead of storing food for another use, you throw it away with metal, glass and paper!

Instead of creating ideas with leftovers, you create harmful ideas to hurt people and the environment!

Instead of conserving the resources for the coming generation, you leave the earth suffering; you yourselves are the reason for the conflicts happening around the world because of the lack of food and basic needs!

Instead of saving your health, you act indifferent to the landfills which cause toxic gases!

Being eco-friendly doesn't cost you money, time or any extra effort. Quite the opposite; it helps you save money by buying less food, it supports your community through donations, and it reduces the risk of diseases by reducing pollution caused by landfills. Instead of downloading a useless application such as Pou, download Love your leftovers, an application which gives you suggestions to make tasty dishes with leftovers.

The earth has provided us with the highest standards of life. However, we have ruined the place where we live because of our irresponsibility and inhumanity.

"Giselle! Why do you want to donate your organs?"

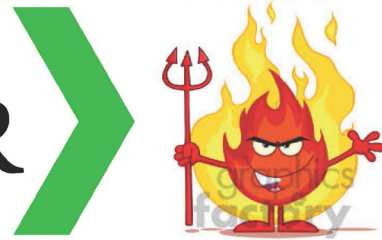


You are the one who decides whether you'll commit suicide because of your indifferent and harmful behavior, or you'll live peacefully protecting the earth: your own shelter and your first home.

Remember, only courageous leaders make the right decisions!



GREEN KILLER



Fires in Rashaya

**Do you like the GREEN Rashaya? Do you want to
Green Rashaya? Do you care about your**

IF IT FLIES IT DIES
HERMEL IS LOSING ITS BIRDS.
HELP IT BY PREVENTING HUNTING
IN THE SPRING.



By: Zeinab Badran



**Fires eat up our green spaces
+
No intervention from the municipality
=
YOU are the only savior**



Rubbish



Fireworks



By: Boushra Abou Hjeily



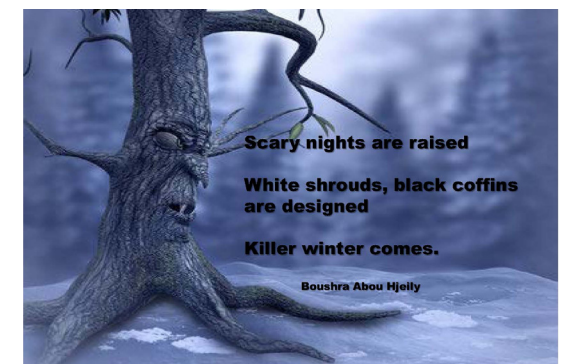
HAIKUS



By Ahmad Al-Najjar



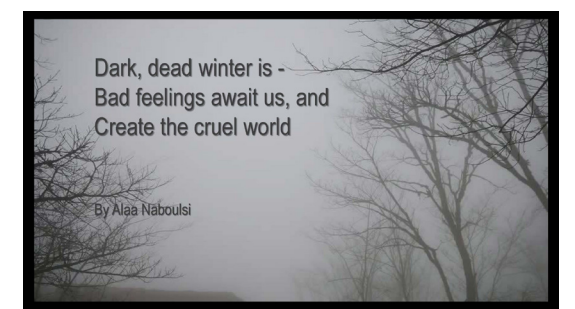
Giselle Marroun



Boushra Abou Hjeily



Zeinab Al-Mohammar



By Alaa Naboulsi

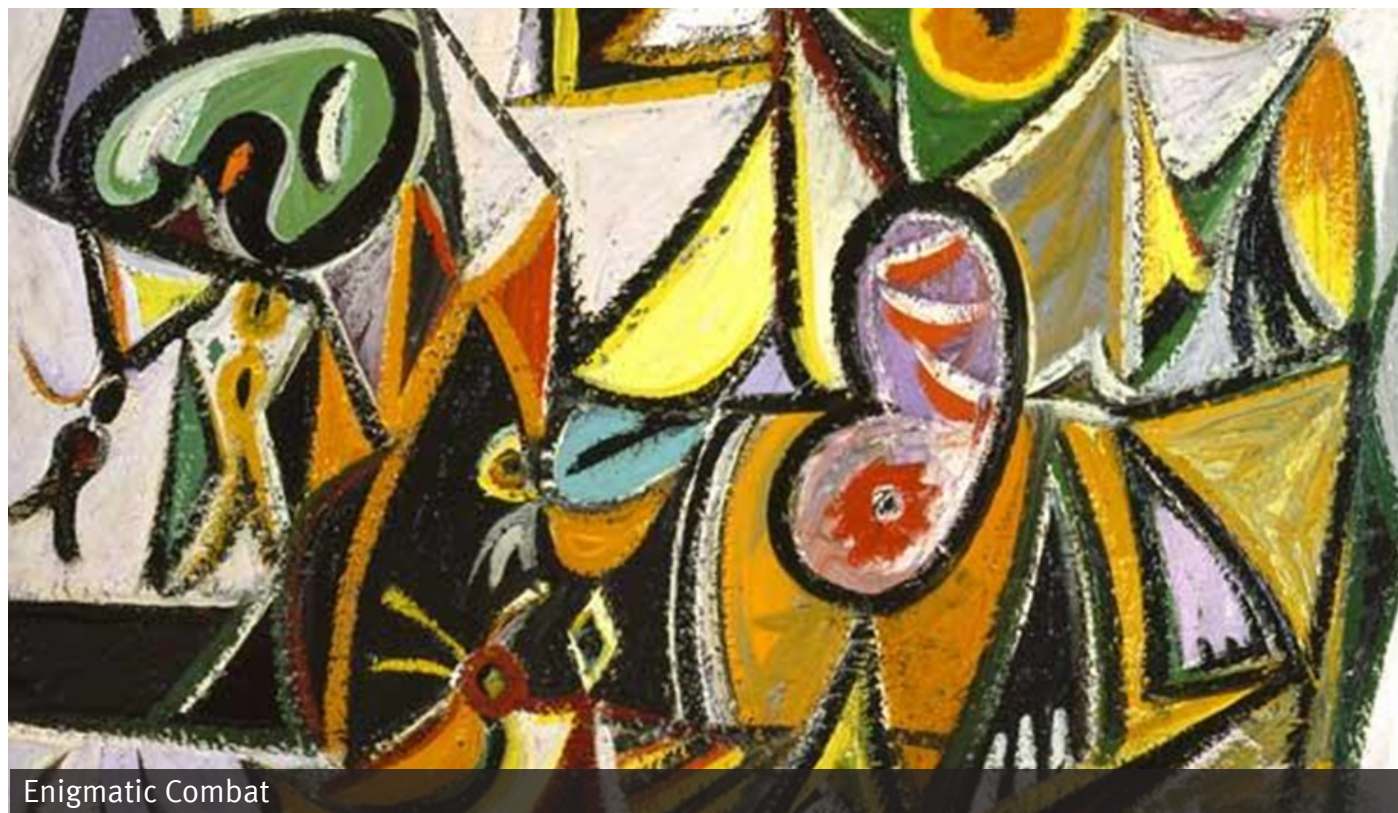
ART & ARTISTS

Arshile Gorky: Reflection

Zeinab Badran

Orally presenting about a famous person requires a lot of research, especially that this was a totally new topic for me; I had never been interested in art before. My presentation was going to be about the painter Arshile Gorky, whom I chose randomly from a list of names of artists that the teacher provided the class with. To prepare for this presentation, I visited many webpages in order to get information about the painter's life, his individual style in painting, and his most famous paintings. In fact, it was amazing to read about a painter whom I had never heard of before, especially that Gorky had an interesting life with a lot of significant events.

Arshile Gorky (1904-1948) was an Armenian-American painter who had a great influence on American abstract expressionism painting. He was born in Van (Ottoman Empire) but fled to Russia during the massacres of the Armenians during World War 1. Gorky went through many difficult times and periods specifically when he was a child. Despite some contradictory information about his life, it was very interesting to get to know about such a famous modern painter. The miserable life that Gorky lived during the Armenian Genocide, the death of his mother in front of his eyes, and his emigration to New York City had a severe and a crucial impact on his painting style. Also, I appreciated the improvement that Gorky made in his artistic education and his talent. He essentially taught himself how to paint.



Enigmatic Combat

“a picture is worth a thousand words”

This self-improvement made his paintings quite interesting and meaningful, especially the one with his mother, entitled “The Artist and His Mother,” which shows the facial expressions of the two people and the silent scream in their eyes. One would wonder what kind of pain those eyes had witnessed.

Gorky painted in different styles: portrait as well as still life. While looking through his paintings for the first time, I did not actually understand their purpose or even their main focus, but what caught my attention was the interesting, striking, diverse and strange mix of the colors in the same paintings.

In addition to learning about an artist and painting, I learned about non-verbal skills from the oral presentation as a whole. The saying, “a picture is worth a thousand words” made sense to me. In fact, since I had to describe three of the artist's paintings and give my opinion about each one of them, I spent a significant amount of time looking at each painting in order to study it carefully. I was able to see the different levels of the painting from the background to the front, judge a painting for its artistic value, and analyze it from a new perspective in order to understand its purpose and message.

With this presentation, my perception of art changed totally. Before this presentation, I used to pay attention only to the paintings of the artists whom I already knew about or to the drawings that are clear and obvious, almost like a photograph. I never considered abstract or expressionist paintings to be good paintings. However, after this presentation, I have become more interested in art and in analyzing a painting, a poster or even a photograph that is taken artistically.



The Artist & His Mother

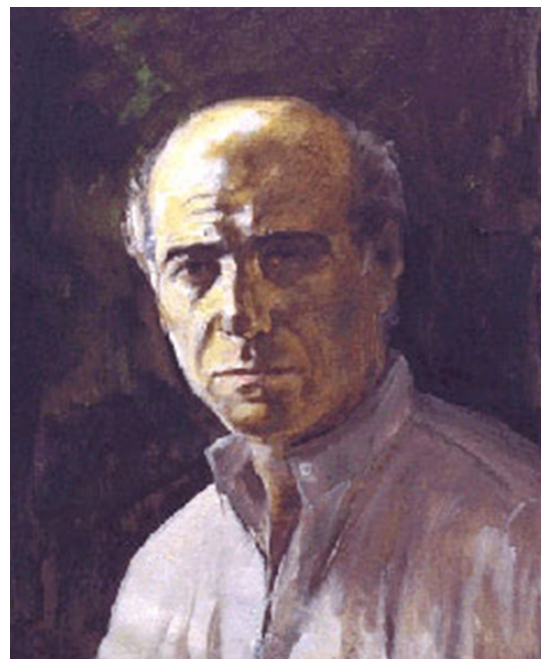
Palestinian Artist Ismail Shammout: A Reflection

Walid Allaw

In class, when our speaking instructor was showing us a number of paintings in order to choose an artist for our second oral presentation, a painting which presented the suffering and the sadness of the Palestinian people drew my attention most. I had not seen this painting before and I didn't know who the painter was until our instructor told us the painter was the famous Palestinian artist Ismail Shammout. Actually, I didn't think twice; without hesitation, I selected this artist as the topic of my oral presentation.

We had two weeks to prepare for this presentation. It needed a lot of research because I knew nothing about Ismail Shammout, so I focused on researching for useful and meaningful information. First, I looked at his paintings: there were a huge number of interesting works that fascinated me because of the mixture of colors and the clear details in some of them. For the oral presentation, I had to research the painter's life and his style, and then choose three of his paintings to describe and give my opinion on. I believed that my presentation would be interesting because the Palestinian issue, which is presented in most of Shammout's works, means a lot to me; it is an interesting and important topic for me.

When I typed Ismail Shammout on Google, I didn't find interesting information about his life. It was really a problem; how can I overcome it? How and where can I find the required information? In that moment, I thought that if I do the research in Arabic, perhaps I will find what I need because Shammout was an Arab artist. I was right; I found all that I needed for my presentation. I believed that this issue can't affect my presentation because a detailed description of the three paintings – The Odyssey of a People, The Crucified Land, and Palestinian Man and Woman – would be enough for a good presentation. In fact, the information I found about the painter was very useful and meaningful: the painter's life and his style were connected to produce his paintings.



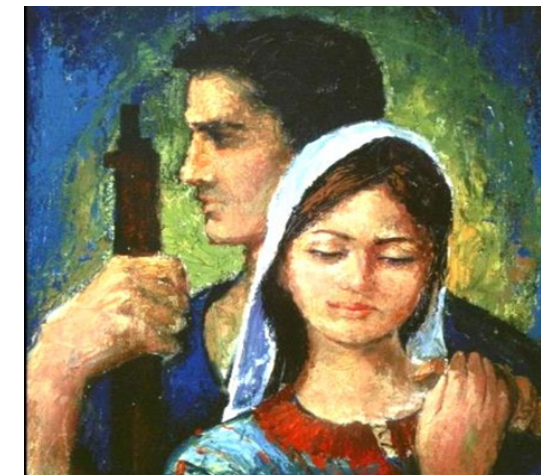
The suffering of Ismail Shammout, because the Israeli forces had forced him and his family to leave their town Laddé, had caused a deep pain and affected his personality. It had also created a strong attachment to his country. These two issues led him to produce paintings which brought at the same time messages about the suffering, the necessity of struggling against the aggressor, and the hope of being independent. The painting called The Odyssey of a People presents all these issues together very strongly.



The Odyssey of a People

In addition, Ismail Shammout showed respect to the Palestinian woman. He highlighted her role in fighting against the aggressor and in exchanging love with the man to show that the will of life within the Palestinian society is stronger than war.

As a person who supports the Palestinian issue, I find Shammout's paintings perfectly transferring the Palestinian daily life on a canvas. I don't imagine that I can find better paintings which can depict this issue with such intensity. In fact, his paintings have taught me to never give up and continue to believe in my dreams, as Shammout did no matter how hard life was for him. I have also learned that love is stronger than anything else in life.



Palestinian Man & Woman

My previous look at art in general is not the same now. I couldn't imagine that one image could describe a whole life and a whole journey of a whole people as The Odyssey of a People does. I couldn't imagine that one painting can show hope, struggle and suffering all at once as The Crucified Land does. I never imagined that a small picture as the Palestinian Man and Woman can bring a bright message about love and struggle at the same time. Now, I believe that art can do anything, can describe anything, can present any event. The task to prepare for this oral presentation has led me to appreciate art that brings messages and ideas. Art is an amazing way to express our feelings with colors and to send unforgettable messages that can have a huge impact on the targeted audience, just as it has impacted me when I saw and tried to analyze the works of Ismail Shammout. If one day I have enough money to buy The Odyssey of a People, I will. It is my favorite.



The Crucified Land

This presentation was a good opportunity to learn about one of our great artists, Ismail Shammout. In addition, I learned that art can bring a message; it is not only for fun or just decoration. I have started changing my attitude towards paintings. It is because of this presentation, I would now stop at a painting and try to understand the message it depicts. In general, the presentation is similar to any other experience in my life which I use it to improve my cultural knowledge and, why not, to change some of my previous convictions.

Dali: A Reflection on Crazy Art

Nour Nehme

As a student who had no interest in art or painting, I was shocked to receive an assignment on art and artist for the oral presentation. When the teacher asked us to choose a painter and prepare a full presentation with a poster about his life and his work, I asked myself, how am I going to do that boring assignment when I see most painters as foolish and their paintings as idiotic. However, I started my research into some painters and I chose to talk about Salvador Dali not because I had no idea about who he was, but because his photograph was funny. I then started reading about his life and his family to discover that although he is a bit eccentric, his paintings are very famous for a reason I still can't understand.

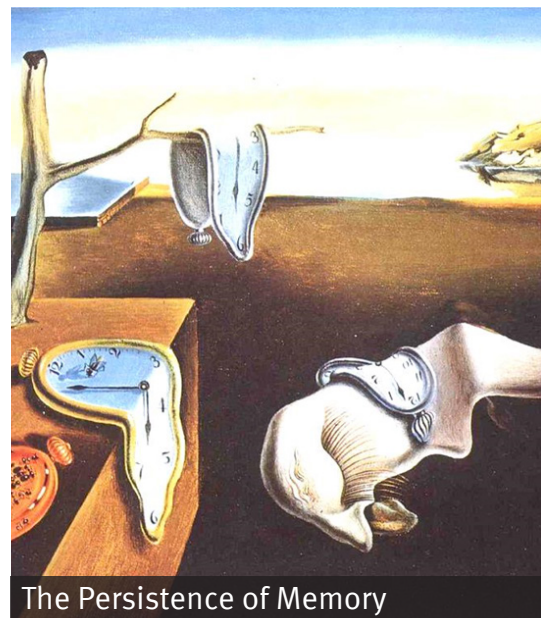
While preparing for the presentation, I got lost because I found many resources with conflicting information.

For example, The Persistence of Memory, which is Dali's most famous painting, is described by some as Dali having a flashback, while others explain that it is his dream, and still others believe it represents Dali's regret for wasting time. Here, I stopped and thought that if art-lovers cannot understand Dali's work, how am I going to talk about him and his art?

Nevertheless, some of Dali's works caught my attention. The paintings related to science and math helped me develop a positive opinion about Dali. In fact, I liked the way Dali put what he had studied in math into his paintings to create a master piece. His paintings reflect the progress in his life and how he matured with time. What I liked most about Dali is that, when he painted something, he didn't care about selling it and making money out of it; he painted for self-satisfaction.

Although I am not a fan of art and paintings, this presentation was very beneficial for me. It gave me certain knowledge about a topic I had never read about before. Also, while researching for Dali, I came across other painters and I actually enjoyed reading about them. I learned about the different genres of painters and paintings and took time to look closely at paintings and try to understand how a painting could be a way to reflect a person's thoughts and feelings.

This presentation let me identify myself as well. While researching, I discovered that I don't really hate art; I just didn't have any information about it. For example, I noticed that some types of paintings catch my attention more than others, such as The Starry Night by Vincent Van Gogh. I also discovered that some paintings are famous for no reason whatsoever, while others may be much better but nobody notices either the painting or the painter.



The Persistence of Memory

Claude Monet

The Water Lilies



Nymphéas French is a series of approximately 250 oil paintings by French impressionist Monet. The painting depicts Monet's flower garden at his home in Giverny.



Oscar-Claude Monet (1840 – 1926) was a founder of French Impressionist painting, and the most consistent and prolific practitioner of the movement's philosophy of expressing one's own perceptions of nature, especially when applied to landscape painting.

Houses of Parliament, London

The Manneporte (Étretat)



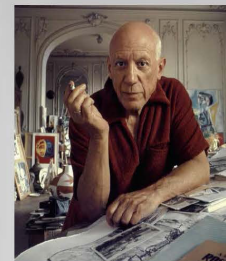
Monet spent February 1883 at Étretat. He painted twenty views of the beach and the three extraordinary rock formations in the area. The sunlight that strikes the Manneporte has a dematerializing effect that permitted the artist to interpret the cliff almost exclusively in terms of color and luminosity.

Claude Monet

by Bouthalna Abdou

Pablo Picasso

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."



Pablo Picasso

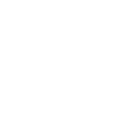
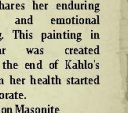
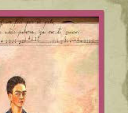
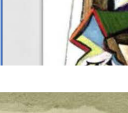
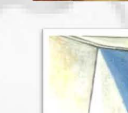
Born in Malaga, Spain, in 1881, Pablo Picasso became one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century and the creator (with George Braque) of **Cubism**. He died on April 8, 1973. He was a painter, sculptor, poet and playwright, printmaker, ceramicist, stage designer.

- He had 6 periods:
- The Blue Period (1901-1904)
 - The Rose Period (1905-1906)
 - Cubism (1906-1915)
 - Classicism (1916-1925)
 - Surrealism (1925-1934)
 - Barbarism (1937-1946)



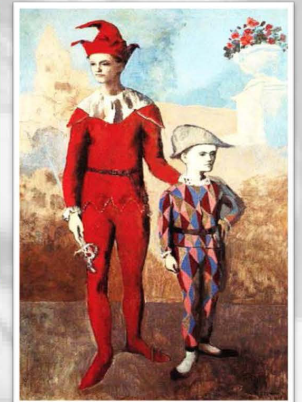
The old guitarist

It is an oil painting, created in 1904, from the **Blue period**. It is now in the Art Institute of Chicago. The guitarist shows no sign of life and appears to be close to death, implying



Acrobate et Jeune Arlequin

It was painted in 1905 from the **Rose Period**. It is an oil on canvas painting. Acrobate et Jeune Arlequin is from his "Harlequin" period when Picasso started using circus artists as his source of inspiration.



Dora Maar au Chat

It is a 1941 painting by Pablo Picasso, from the **Cubism Period**. It depicts Dora Maar, the painter's lover, seated on a chair with a small cat perched on her shoulders.



by: *Farah Sahili*
Spring 2017

Pablo Picasso

by Farah Sahili

Frida Kahlo 1907-1954



She is a Mexican surrealist or magical realist painter known for painting self-portraits; she was also a student of medicine. She employed a naïve folk-art style in her art to explore questions of identity, race, gender, class, and post-colonialism in Mexican society. Her life was full of pain and she was married to the famous



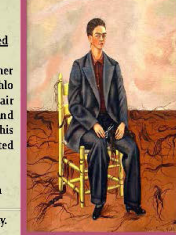
Henry Ford hospital 1923. To help her overcome her grief after a miscarriage, Frida drew her suffering. She shows herself as weeping, with disheveled hair and an exposed heart.

Type: Oil on Masonite
Dimensions: 22.4 cm x 39 cm
Location: Houston, Texas
Owner: Carolyn Farb



Self-portrait with cropped hair (1940): About a month after her divorce from Rivera, Kahlo cut off her long hair because her ex-husband loved it very much and this self-portrait was created around that time.

Type: oil paint on canvas
Dimensions: 40 cm x 48 cm
Location: Museum of Modern Art, New York City.



The wounded deer (1946): Kahlo shares her enduring physical and emotional suffering. This painting in particular was created towards the end of Kahlo's life when her health started to deteriorate.

Type: oil on Masonite
Dimensions: 22.4 cm x 39 cm

Frida Kahlo

by Samiha Wehbi

JOURNAL WRITING

Being A Robot

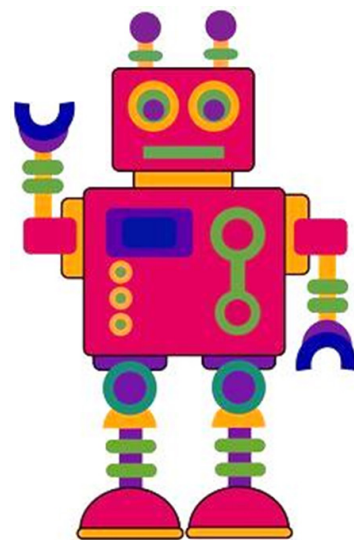
Mahmoud Kanso

All of them look at me in a strange way. No one knows my healing deeds. They don't even know that my life is all about saving lives and bringing them back to this world. I just wish that I had that red organ inside my chest instead of these electronic chips and wires that control my movements. None of the human beings has ever thanked God for having such an organ, an organ that is filled with rivers of emotions and feelings, an organ that either draws a smile on one's face or lets an eye sparkle with drops of sad tears.

However, this is not all. I can't imagine my life without having a majestic center inside my head that can integrate, calculate, think, and even send messages of work to the rest of my body in just a nano-second.

But look at them and how they are laughing together, screaming at each other, and hugging one another! I'm so sad about not having such a life full of hundreds of emotions that keep the heart beating and the brain working.

Wait! If I'm sad now, then I feel! I can even love and hate! Could I have been a human all this time? If not, where did I get this emotion from?!



Dialects

Sara Deeb

In September, 2016, twelve students from different parts of Lebanon came together in one class at UPP, AUB. Although all these students come from Lebanon and share the same language, food, identity and almost the same background, they use different slang words and phrases and speak in different dialects.

For instance, one of my classmates Farah, who is from Hermel, has a unique Hermel vocabulary and accent. She says "ommei" meaning Mom and "hakjein" meaning there.

When we listen to students from South of Lebanon, it is a different story. For example, Zaynab says "ya mshahhar" which is an interjection in reaction to shocking news. Ascending to the north, especially Zghorta, where Gizelle lives, we hear yet another set of words and phrases. The fine vocabulary that characterizes the Zghorta people includes "esheik te'ileh" which literally means how heavy you are, but this phrase has a deeper meaning and it is used to express that what the person said is dull and boring.

However, this diversity in accents among the twelve students was not a barrier to communicate with each other; just the opposite: it was educational for us students as we learned about the different Lebanese dialects and cultures from each other.

I don't want
 /la oreedy/ = لا أريد
 /mush awez/ = مش عاوز
 /ma baddi/ = ما بدي
 /ma abgha/ = ما أبغى

Proverbs from Different Cultures

Samiha Wehbe

Proverbs have no boundaries – they are truly universal. Surprisingly, some proverbs appear in more than one language or country. However, nationality scarcely changes the intrinsic philosophy of a proverb. Proverbs are wise, sometimes humorous; they also describe the culture of other people.

The following are a few proverbs in English and their equivalent in Arabic. Although the words are not the same, the wisdom behind them is.

1. Don't count your chickens before they have hatched

ما تقول فول ليصير بالمكيول

2. Hit the nail on the head.

دعست ببطنه

3. Get something off your chest

فضي قلبك

4. Beat around the bush

يلف ويدور

5. Call a spade a spade

عطيني من الآخر

6. To add insult to injury

تزيد الملح عالجرج

7. An arm and leg

دم قلبه

8. Let the cat out of the bag

مثل القرطل (السلة) المفخوت

9. Go through the roof

دق رأسه بالسقف

10. Cat got your tongue?

بلعت القطة لسانك؟

11. Caught between a rock and a hard place

علق بين الدفة المسمار

12. Birds of a feather flock together

الطيور على اشكالها تقع



Cat got your tongue?

سَتَبْقَى فِي عَقْلِي تَسْطَعُ، شَمْسًا مَنِيرَةً لَا تَأْمَلُ
سَتَبْقَى فِي قَلْبِي مَنبَعٌ، لِإِحْسَاسٍ، لِبَرَكَانِ لَا يَهْدَى
سَتَبْقَى ضَاذَهَا تَصْعَقُ، وَصَدَى قَافِهَا عَالِ
سَتَبْقَى أَرْزَةُ تَشْمَخُ، وَجَذَرُهَا فِي الرُّوحِ غَائِرُ
فَمَهْمَا مَالَتْ الْأَيْدِي، سَيَبْقَى الْقُطْبُ يَمِينِي
وَمَهْمَا هَبَّتِ الرِّيحُ سَتَبْقَى أَرْزَةُ خَالِدَةٌ
فَهَلِ لِلأُرَرْ أَنْ يَغْنَى مِنْ هَبَّةِ رِيحٍ غَدَارٍ؟
وَإِنْ يَغْنَى، فَهَلِ لِلْقَلْبِ أَنْ يَنْسَى؟
فَمَهْمَا سَاكُنَ أُخْرَى سَيَبْقَى الْحُبُّ لِلأُولَى

"اللّٰه يهني سعيد بسعيدة" من الامثلة المشهورة في المجتمع العربي على وجه العموم و اللبناني على وجه الخصوص. يستخدم هذا القول لتمني الحياة الزوجية السعيدة و الهانئة. يعود استخدامه بحسب الأقاويل الى سعيد ابن الملك الذي قرر الزواج

وأقول لهم: تصحبون علي وطن!

نظرت إلى نفسي جسدي حتّى عائلتي . ما من أحد تأذّى . هزعت أُمي بمناجاتي بترك المنطقة خوفاً بتلوثي بغبار الحرب، مقترحةً فكرة اللجوء إلى البلد الشقيق الذي يقطنه العديد من أخواي . حافظت على رفضي البات ومنعي الدائم ، إلى أن أخضعني حنانها الكبير بالقبول بفعل الأمر ولكن اشترطتُ عليها مصابتي السفر لخوفي من الأخبار المتتالية حول اهانة العديد من سكان الأحياء المجاورة.

والقصة لم تنتهي هنا حيث اعترضت سيارتنا اثناء الرحيل مجموعة مسلحة بدأت بفتح النار علينا فلم تكن النتيجة إلّا طلاقة في ساقي وساعات من الإغماء . استيقظت على آيات قرآنية تهمس في أذني طمأنت قلبي، ولكن ذلك لم يدم طويلاً فما إن فتحت عيني حتّى تعالت الأصوات بلهجاتٍ مختلفة، نظرت من حولي فكانت الحالة عبارة عن نساء ورجال عاطلون عن العمل، خرجتُ لأروّح عن نفسي، فزاد ذلك الأمر سوءاً فلم أجد إلّا أطفال هويتي يربعون المارّة راسمين عناوين من الشغب والأذى بدأت أكره جنسيتي .

بحثت عن حلٍّ فوجدت قدماي يسوقانني إلى المحال التجارية و
الأماكن الصناعية، ورحت أسأل هنا وهناك فلم أجد أيَّ عملٍ يملأ الفراغ
الذي أعيشه وحالة التقشف والفقر التي تقتلني .

عدت إلى المنزل سألت رجال هويتي كيف يعيشون لا عمل ولا مال، فتفاجئت أبناء بلاد الخيرات والأموال يعيشون من وراء المساعدات الإغاثية، ولكن مواجهة مشكلة عدم العمل أجبرني إلى وضع كرامتي جانباً والذهاب إلى الحصول عليها .. وعند ذهابي أكتشفت الحالة المريرة التي يعانيها الآلاف حيث انهم لم يضعوها فقط بل باعوها كلياً

إلى أين أذهب؟! أأعود إلى وطن عانفت الأشباح بشوارعه وسكنت الأرواح حطام منازلها؟! .. إلى أين ألتجأ؟! وأرى كل يوم آلاف المواطنين يعانون حالة اليأس والألم ويحترقون بنيران الغربة غارقين ببحور الشوق والحنين إلى الوطن.. ماذا عساي أفعل؟

مامن أحد يستطيع شرح ما حصل ويحصل، كل شيء يختصر بالمثل المأثور "جناء سلبوا منا الحرية فبنتا بلا وطن"



BOOK REVIEW

“Tuesdays with Morrie” Book Review

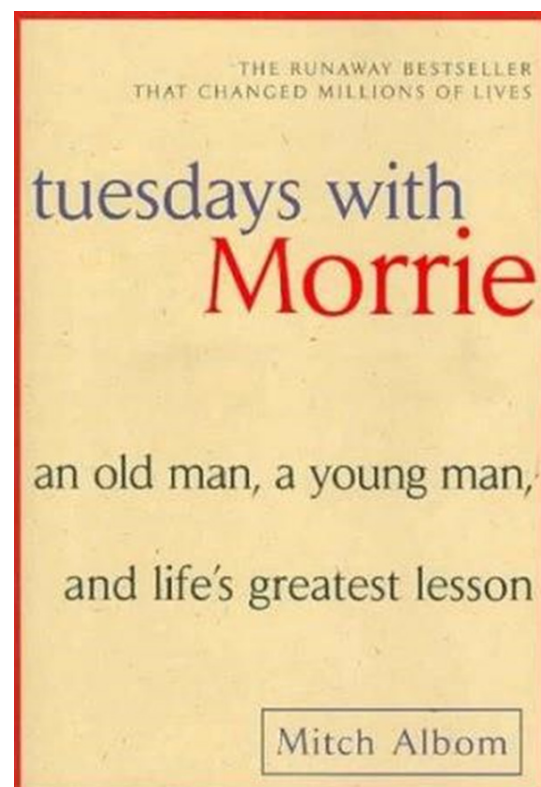
Giselle Marroun

Imagine that you are living an abundant life full of work and responsibilities. Imagine that you have spent your life doing tasks to reach high positions but have missed very important moments. And imagine that you have lived a life that you couldn't understand its true meaning and value. For me, these are the keys to recognize the significance of “life” and the people I meet every day. Thinking and rethinking are keeping my mind agitated all the time. I can't find any answers because I am not finished with my life yet; the only way to know the answer is to benefit from the experience of old people whose life is about to end but their minds are still working, and their hearts are still beating.

At first, I was annoyed when I was forced to read a story which I hadn't chosen. However, when I got it, the cover inspired me to discover what the pages were hiding. Indeed, the subtitle “an old man, a young man, and life's greatest lesson” released my interest and gave me a general view about the book. I wanted to know what lesson an old person can give me and which words can enlighten my pace. My curiosity didn't let me disregard the book, so I started reading it.

Tuesdays with Morrie is a realistic novel written by Mitch Albom and published in 1997. Morrie is a person full of energy and love of life. However, the disease ALS has stopped him from enjoying his source of happiness which was dancing. Morrie, a sociology professor, is Mitch's teacher. Mitch has promised his teacher to keep in touch with him after graduation. However, Mitch has always had a load of work, engagements and deadlines, so he forgets all about his promise to his teacher. After seeing a TV report about Morrie and noticing his bad health condition, he decides to travel every Tuesday to see his teacher because Tuesdays are Morrie's office hours. And there starts the story of the old man giving lessons to the young one until death strikes Morrie.

Although Mitch promised his teacher to visit him, he forgets about the promise for 16 years. This part has led me think: how I can give promises to others without having a sense of responsibility toward my words? My promises will sink in the ocean of work and duties until I receive a signal that reminds



me about them. I may recognize the power of life which has taken me away from my significant people.

I realize how much I will be missing during my engagements and commitments to others. It is hard to change my lifestyle and my overloaded work because I am trying to improve my personal situation and financial benefits.

However, I now realize that it is also necessary to devote time to spend with my loved ones. My problem has started since I started living in the university dorms; I can't see my family, relatives, and friends whenever I or they want because of the distances. I keep promising that on the next weekend I will make up my absence, but what happens is that on weekends I am so tired that I can do nothing but stay home.



I might live a short life without taking the chance to see and spend time with these people who love me and are waiting to spend time with me. What struck me in the story is that although Mitch has failed to keep his promise for 16 years, Morrie doesn't hesitate to hug him. This reflects the tenderness of my parents and friends who ignore my faults and forgive me whenever I visit them. I don't want to let time and distance be obstacles to my target of seeing people I love.

Some quotes which I have highlighted in the novel were very touching and left a positive impact on me: “All younger people should know something. If you're always battling against getting older, you're always going to be unhappy, because it will happen anyhow.” This quote has taught me not to be afraid of getting old and dying. Instead, I must always benefit from my present and plan to live my future full of work and activities that will make me happy. The fact that I can't escape from death should be a motivator for me to start now doing what I want and love to accomplish. Since life does end at one point, I should make it powerful and happy. Since my time on this earth is limited, I should benefit from every second and moment I live.

Throughout my academic years, I used to achieve the highest grades and rank as number one at school; however, the Morrie's question, “What's wrong if we're number 2?” has let me stop, rethink, and rebuild my beliefs about any post or level I am trying to achieve. In fact, knowing our true level and accepting it are the key to improving to finally reach number 1. This related to my situation at the University Preparatory Program (UPP). I was very shocked since I was no more the top student as I used to be at school. Finding the topics hard and getting low grades were ruining my self-confidence unless I told myself that I have two choices: either to give up and fail my courses or work hard to improve. In other words, accepting the fact that my English level was a bit low and working to improve my language skills were my first steps to progress. My ambition can't be limited by numbers; it is all about keeping improving.

Another quote by Morrie, “It's not too late to ... ask yourself if you really are the person you want to be, and if not, who you do want to be” has made me think about me, my desires, and ambitions. It has encouraged me to dare and change whatever I dislike in my personality and my plans.

He also adds, “You're not a wave; you're a part of the ocean”. This quote has inspired me to believe in my capacities; that I am not a coming to the world and leaving it as if I didn't come. I am a part of the world itself. My presence should make a difference. Every person is born to accomplish a mission; I don't want to leave this world without keeping my fingerprint in it.

The book has also made me ask some questions about death and dying. Why do we always want to escape from death? Is it the fear of oblivion? When people meet someone who's dying, they become more interested in him; at this point of their lives, they want to improve their relationships with him. I think that as death couldn't remove Morrie from the memories of others, nor from the impact he has left, it should not remove my people from my memory after they die; they will always be a part of my soul. Furthermore, my loved ones should be my priority when they are alive and before they die. I have noticed how much my presence beside them is important and makes a huge difference in our lives, as much as Mitch's presence next to his teacher was. I also should benefit from the opportunity to say

goodbye to the people I love. I must keep in touch with them and find a way to see them regularly. Old people are precious; aging is growth since the mind develops. If I am afraid of aging, it is because I am not benefiting from every single moment now.

Another important lesson I have learned by reading this book is that happiness is found in the simplest actions filled with love. I should just learn to live even the simplest moments, such as eating ice cream, having a simple lunch or walking in nature, with great passion. I have also changed my opinion toward my feelings. According to Mitch's experience with Janine, I should not be afraid of giving everything to the ones I love because I might lose the chance of being with them. I should always show my affections and feelings without suppression.

This novel is a story of life. I recommend it to all people: children, youth, adults, and even old people because everyone needs these lessons to benefit from the time he/she still has. This novel has filled my soul with a mixture of feelings. Every time I read what Morrie says to Mitch, I would smile for learning a new lesson in life. However, at the end, I couldn't stop myself from crying. Although Morrie's death was expected, my tears came down and wet the pages.

STUDENT PROFILES

Nadeem Bashour

Hi my name is Nadeem Bashour, and I am from Safita in Syria. Before coming to AUB, I was studying in Syria. Although education in my hometown wasn't so good, I enjoyed it, but my parents thought I was just wasting time in school which is "technically right." They asked me if I wanted to study 12th grade at home. At first I wasn't sure because I was really attached to my friends in high school. But after some deep thinking, I decided to study at home. After I finished high school, I followed the same path that my brothers had gone through - basically, leaving my hometown. Indeed, leaving my hometown wasn't easy for me. I had to leave all my friends behind, start a new life and on top of that, I hated finding new friends. Adapting to a new lifestyle wasn't easy, but it would be really awful for me to nag when other people are dying in the war. So, I started UPP and I put a lot of effort to succeed in my classes. At the same time, I started to study for my SAT exam on May 6, 2017.



If I do well on the exam, I can skip level 3, go straight to freshman and save my parents some money. Right now, I am thinking of majoring in business and getting a minor in economics. I still go back to Safita every once in a while and I hope the war will end soon so I can work back in my country after I graduate.

“Leaving my hometown wasn't easy!”

Chekralla Hanna

Hello everyone. I'm Chekralla Hanna from Tannourine, North Lebanon, and my friends call me Chicko which is one of my most preferred nicknames. Most people pass through surprisingly tough challenges. Some of them have little support from others, but they manage to face those challenges successfully; others have a lot of support and a lot of financial power, but then, they fail in facing those same challenges. In my opinion, this is due to the persistence and the will of each person to follow and reach his/her dream. In my studies, I have faced many challenges, but there were two that depended heavily on effort. The first one was in the Spring of 2011. In that year, I left 13 years of my memories behind and started a new life when my family decided to move from Tannourine to Hsarat. Moving to another town, school (at the middle of the academic year), and environment, I faced a lot of pressure to deal with problems that kept coming up.

However, with hard work and persistence, I passed some of them successfully, but like anyone else, I failed in others, too. "It's not the end of the world, and I know that you have the power and the will to move on and to be the man that you're dreaming to be", my physics teacher said, and these words stuck in my head. One day, I was reading in the bible and I saw this verse: "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (Thessalonians 5:11).

Since then, I have known for the first time that people help people, and that I'm not alone. I have my family, my friends, and even strangers who would help me. It was help that any person would appreciate: positive energy, some advice, and someone to listen to him. As a result, I went on with my life and completed my high school years with an honors recognition. However, a new challenge was knocking on my door. It was the university, and I was accepted at the American University of Beirut: this amazing university that uses English as a first language. Unfortunately, I was French



educated, and I knew almost nothing about this language. I suffered a lot in my first academic year, but I let hard work and faith control my world and me.

And for another time, I was reading in the bible and I ran into another verse that says: "... but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." (Isaiah 40:31).

I felt that I can and I will pass all my challenges successfully if I kept the faith, work hard, and persevere. My only advice to you is to let these three factors control your life and always be confident with what you're doing.

“I have known for the first time, that I'm not alone”

Eslam Abo Alhawa

I am Eslam Abo Alhawa. My story started 21 years ago when I was born in a peaceful, beautiful town near Damascus. I lived there till the war broke out in Syria that has caused a lot of wreckage and destruction. In addition, my father and brother got injured there. That is why I came to Lebanon 4 years ago. I couldn't do anything for my country, but I was determined to continue my education and prepare myself to go back and help rebuild it. That made me work hard to pass the baccalaureate exam that I studied for by myself. After I got high grades, I got an acceptance from the MasterCard Foundation scholarship last year to study at one of the most important universities in the Arab world - the American University of Beirut. That acceptance has changed my life entirely. The scholarship gave me the first step to build my future and make my dreams come true. My experience at AUB has been unique and useful especially at UPP, the University Preparatory Program. I can say that without this program, I will not succeed in such a university because I have never studied English language before and most of the courses here require a good English background. But now, I am improving a lot with the help of my instructors who support me continuously. They have motivated me

“My plan now is to work hard and build a bright future for myself, family & country”



every step of the way and now I have an acceptable level in English. When I talk about my experience at UPP, I will never forget to mention my amazing friends with whom I have spent pleasant times. Throughout this year, I didn't practice my hobbies which are swimming, playing basketball and playing piano because of the lack of time. On the other hand, I got many skills from UPP and AUB such as reading, writing and speaking English. In addition, I participated in a lot of volunteering activities and events, and I participated in many competitions at AUB. The most important one was the Hult Prize competition, where my team were one of the top ten winners at AUB. That win has helped me improve my personality too, especially working with NGOs which was awesome and made me feel like I really should do something to help needy people. Finally, my plan now is to work hard during the coming years that I have at AUB to gain knowledge and experience and build a bright future for myself, family and country.

Mostafa Olwan

I'm a Syrian citizen who resides in Beirut, Lebanon. I'm an AUB student. My academic journey started when I was 4 years old. I was in the same school in my area till the 9th grade when suddenly, my dream stopped for one year because of the start of the civil war in Syria. From the beginning of the war until this moment (almost 6 years later), I've been dealing with a lot of obstacles. Many difficulties blocked my way: I lost my home, my friends and even my college. However, my parents' support has continued despite all the psychological problems we have faced. At the end of July 2016, I was luckily accepted with a full scholarship at the most prestigious university in the Middle East.

My acceptance was a gift from God. This made me temporarily forget my problems. However, a new problem showed up: being an AUB student requires a good understanding and working knowledge of the English language because most of the courses are in English, even the exams. We all know that the education in Syria is in Arabic. Thus, I was given the opportunity to improve my English skills through my attendance in UPP (University Preparatory Program). Also, UPP has given me a chance to know more about AUB, to live the experience in the middle of all the challenges that every student in AUB faces. I'm now able to communicate in English with everyone and with more confidence and without anxiety. In addition, my research, presentations, and writing skills have improved dramatically.

Even though I still have one more level in UPP, I feel that I'm able to start my journey in AUB. All I want now is to focus on my future and to help my countrymen overcome this colossal disaster in Syria. is to focus on my future and to help my countrymen overcome this colossal disaster in Syria.



“My acceptance was a gift from God”

Contact Us

University Preparatory Program
Reynolds Hall, 3rd floor
Email: upp@aub.edu.lb

AUB Mailing Address in Beirut

American University of Beirut
P.O.Box 11-0236 / University Preparatory Program
Riad El-Solh / Beirut 1107 2020
Lebanon

Beirut Campus Telephone:

+961-1-340460 / 350000 Ext. 3124