



The Aga Khan Academy Mombasa, Newsletter

January 2013

Dates to remember

- President's Award Bronze Qualifying Expedition 15-16 February
- Mock Examinations 20 February–1 March
- Simba's Pride 27 February–1 March
- Half-term break 4-8 March

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“Don't Be Expecting Leftovers”

Dear Parents, Students and Friends

Among the demands of the rigorous International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme is the expectation that each student completes an academic study of a subject of personal interest. This culminates in the Personal Project that every student must complete for MYP certification. “*Don't be expecting leftovers*” is the topic of a Personal Project by one of our students this year. I have personal knowledge of the project because I was supervising it and was engaged in the process from the outset. In the project, the student has put together a recipe book for easy-to-make foods for his age mates. The prospect of raising a hobby to the level of a recognised and published intellectual pursuit rarely comes our way. Thus the personal project becomes a unique learning opportunity which deepens and solidifies knowledge. Other students in the same class had

different topics on show during our Personal Project Exhibition held at the school on 8 February. We thank all of you who were able to attend.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) ensures the quality of its programmes, offered worldwide, through regular on-site evaluations visits, every three or five years, depending on the programme. Having been authorised to offer the MYP in 2009, we had our first three-day Evaluation Visit in late January. The evaluation team expressed total satisfaction at the way the MYP is being implemented at the Academy. They concurred that there was a close congruence between IBO's expectations, and what is happening here. We thank the group of volunteer parents that met the evaluation team, the parents that participated in the survey, and the entire school fraternity for



Simon Otieno

exuding confidence in the programme. It is noteworthy that the team pointed out the confidence of our students as an outstanding quality that has been well developed, and we await the official communication for any matters to be addressed once the full report is received.

Our best wishes to our Class of 2013 as they prepare for the forthcoming Mock Examinations. We know that you have worked hard for the coming exams and are confident that you will fare well.

Simon Otieno
Acting Head of Academy



Mr James Askew



Mr Aquinas Murungi



Miss Rose Wahome

Staff News

This term we welcome new teachers in both Junior and Senior School. Miss Rose Wahome has returned to her Kenyan homeland after 10 years teaching in the UK and replaces Mrs Rukiya Cochu as the Year 3K teacher now that Mrs Cochu is the PYP coordinator and Vice-Principal in the Junior School. Mr Aquinas Gitonga Murungi is a welcome addition to the Senior School Science department. He comes with 18 years' teaching experience most recently having taught for 12 years at Memon High School where he was also Dean of Studies.

Mr Samuel Kiragu will be teaching drama classes this term and more recently we also welcomed Mr Rodney Bosire who has joined the Mathematics Department. We hope their tenure at

the Academy is fulfilling and enjoyable.

Congratulations to Milkah Gatungoh and Bakari Kazungu who have been nominated for a *Catch 'em Doing It Right* award. This award, for which any staff member may be nominated, acknowledges and rewards extraordinary work effort or performance. The recipient of the award is given a Nakumatt Voucher.

James Askew has re-located to the Academy; since July 2011 he has been based in Hyderabad as Language Learning Manager for the Aga Khan Academies network. James has held positions of responsibility, such as residential Housemaster, Head of Modern Languages Department, Assistant Head Pastoral, in a variety of schools and

his last post in the UK was at St Edward's School Oxford, a leading IB co-educational boarding and day school, as Head of Languages. His main focuses are the development of Dual Language Programmes, supporting the Teaching and Learning of Languages and Literacy from MYP through to DP, professional development, and assisting with the Outreach programme, as well as continuing to support colleagues in Hyderabad and Maputo. James can be reached via [email](#) and is very happy to discuss aspects of Language Learning with interested parents. Welcome James!

Congratulations to Mr Simon Otieno and Mr Naheed Bardai on their new appointments as Acting Head of Academy and Principal of Senior School respectively.

Notices and Coming Events

Half-term break 4-8 March the dates have been changed to avoid possible disruption due to the elections.

President's Award Scheme Bronze Expedition 15-16 February 24 students will have the opportunity to go on this qualifying expedition which will take place at Kasigau, Voi. The President's Award Scheme is a National Programme similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award. The venture will provide an outstanding opportunity for the students to learn about and engage actively with local environment at Kasigau.

Term break 22 March (noon dismissal) -7 April.

Junior School News

Salaam za mwaka mpya kutoka Junior School!

After a much deserved rest and exciting Christmas festivities it was back to school at the beginning of January. The students and teachers are abuzz in and out of their classrooms, keeping busy with learning, planning, and going on field trips for their units of inquiry. Some of the activities in the month of January included several Field trips: the Year 1 classes visited Palm Farms, Kikambala for their unit of inquiry on *Watch Me Grow*, the Year 4 group made a visit to Marine Park with Buccaneer, through Voyager Beach Resort, for their unit of inquiry on *Biodiversity* and the Year 5 classes also went to Voyager Beach Resort for their unit of inquiry on *Sustainability*. The Year 3 classes invited a speaker from the Kenya Red Cross to come and give them a talk on safety to learn more for their unit of inquiry on *Natural Hazards* and on top of all of that, rehearsals for *Simba's Pride* are now underway with Mr Alistair Lowe. The show is set to open on 27 February and runs until 1 March. Put it in your diary now!



Mrs Debbie Duckworth at Tumaini Children's Home

HIV/AIDS and Little Red Ribbons

On 1 December the Aga Khan Academy community came out to support not only the Zawadi Bazaar but also World AIDS Day. Red ribbons were on sale and our students helped to ensure that everyone had a splash of red on their outfit. Nearly 9,000 KShs was raised by this simple and effective means and it was then delivered by Mrs Debbie Duckworth, Health and Wellness Centre Manager and

Sister Milka during a visit to the Tumaini Children's Home. The home is the only establishment in Mombasa to take care of orphans affected by HIV and AIDS and cares for around 60 children ranging from 1 to 16 years of age. When they arrived it was play time and the children were happily running around and enjoying the protected environment provided by their carers. The children at the home

send a big thank you to all those who thought of them and donated by buying a little red ribbon.

Thanks also to the members of Kenya Red Cross who gave a short presentation at the Bazaar about HIV and AIDS, discouraging discrimination but encouraging kindness and understanding towards people who are living with this life-changing illness.

The Personal Project offers the students the opportunity to look more deeply into a subject of their own choosing ...

Personal Project Exhibition

After a showing of work in progress for the PP last term, the students unveiled their final work at an exhibition held on Friday 8 February in various locations at the Academy. The Personal

Project offers the students the opportunity to look more deeply into a subject of their own choosing where their passions lie and as a possible subject for further study. The

students' ability to present their subject matter was most impressive and spoke volumes of their commitment to that which lies closest to their hearts.



Tulsi Vyas explains her Personal Project



Beverstone Ochieng' who won a Best Speaker award at MSMUN



Gakenia Siika speaking at MSMUN



Outside the United Nations

Storming the UN: MSMUN Conference in Nairobi

During the week of 21-26 January, a group of 21 students took the Middle School Model United Nations (MSMUN) conference by storm. The team, accompanied by advisors Mrs Mary Nyandieka and Mr Chase Taylor, represented five countries at the conference which was held at the UN headquarters in Nairobi.

The Academy students were among the most confident and well-spoken of those present at the Conference and showed their abilities during the numerous Crisis Situations where, in nearly every group, an Academy student was very clearly providing leadership and facilitating the discussion.

To crown a highly stimulating and successful week Bevertone Ochieng' won the Best Speaker award, for Human Rights, and the team won two Best Resolution awards, out of the total of four they presented. These were moved by the delegation representing Denmark, led by Chizi Gakuo (Ambassador); Katumba Mukasa, Ashley Mutie and Alisha Janmohammed who received the Best Resolution Award in the Ecology Committee. The delegation representing Ghana led by Aabid Shamji with fellow delegates Racheal Ayugi, Gabrielle Namadoa and Shameer Shah received the Best Resolution Award in the Health Committee. Congratulations to all the Academy delegates – the future is in good hands.

IB Workshops

As part of our Professional Development for our teachers, the Academy runs IB workshops each year to further enhance teaching skills and knowledge. This year we ran eight workshops in Mombasa and one in Nairobi. Our workshop leaders are all very experienced IB practitioners and they travelled from far afield to spend an intensive and invaluable 2.5 days with our teachers and external participants.

Travel Broadens the Mind

Just before the end of last term five students from the Academy had the privilege of travelling to Geneva. The team consisted of Amsal Lakhani, Aun Lakhani, Valentina Solani, Sonia Soares and Sahir Vellani, and they were escorted by Mr Bernard Dudi. The main focus of the trip was attending a workshop organised by the Earth Focus Foundation about the evolution of human rights law. This proved an involving and thought-provoking topic and of course is also very relevant to anyone living in Kenya. The team presented a Kenyan perspective on the International Criminal Court, and discussed its role, importance and criticisms in Kenya.

Apart from attending the remarkable conference, the group also had the opportunity to visit both the UN Headquarters in Geneva, viewing with awe both the current and historic conference rooms, and CERN, the science facility which is at the forefront of modern physics. They also spent some time at the alpine village of Verbier assisting with a Green Maps stall, and at the AKDN office in Geneva.

The trip was an outstanding educational and cultural experience, and the Academy's continuing relationship with Earth Focus presents an excellent opportunity for students to maintain their involvement for years to come. This trip certainly broadened the minds of these lucky travellers.

Science Online Trial Test

ACER, the organisation that runs the ISA tests, requested our participation in a Science Online trial test for Years 8 and 10. We selected 30 students from each of the two year levels to take the test on 31 January. The feedback we have given will help in finalising the actual tests that will be rolled out later in the year. This is the second time the Academy has taken part in such a trial test since we began taking the ISA tests which measure reading, mathematical literacy and writing.

SRC News

December was a busy month for the SRC with a number of substantial events in the final few days of term. It began with the Zawadi Bazaar and after a month of solid preparatory work by the SRC, student groups and faculty, the Bazaar ran smoothly and seamlessly. An estimated 350 people attended and were able to purchase all sorts of finely crafted goods and delicious foods. There were also fourteen raffle winners – many thanks to our generous raffle donors. The Bazaar was a great success on the Service side as well as it raised over 200,000 KShs to go directly into the Citizenship fund to help sponsor student service initiatives. We thank everyone who came to enjoy the event and who contributed to this great fund-raising effort.

The term ended with a week of Cultural celebration to recognise and appreciate cultural and religious diversity at the Academy. During lunch each day a different SRC committee organised a special event ranging from talks with local religious leaders to a henna table. The week culminated in a Cultural Clothing non-uniform day where students were able to express their own personal diversity. The SRC finished the term on a strong note they hope to carry on through the rest of the year.

Wrapping Up 2012

The very successful Sauti Sol concert held on 6 December, organised by DP students Jane Mwengi and Annette Mokua, raised a substantial amount of money for educational materials and awareness for the Tana Delta community as well as being a wonderful evening's entertainment.

The Talent Night held for residential students on 8 December was won narrowly by the Block 2 girls, with the Block 6 boys coming in second place – but every performer was a winner!

Musical groups from the Academy performed at the Christmas Service at the ACK Memorial Cathedral on 9 December and again at the lighting of the Christmas tree held the next evening. The Head of Academy, Mr Rob Burrough, officially "lit" the Christmas tree at the well-attended ceremony and concert and the musical items concluded with the large assembled crowd singing Christmas carols together. More than 14,000 KShs was raised for the Wema Centre by donations from

the audience.

Several special assemblies were held to celebrate a successful term and to farewell departing staff including Junior School Vice-Principal Ms Naheeda Karmali and Head of Academy Mr Rob Burrough. There was also an Awards Ceremony held just before the Academy closed for the term which recognised year level achievements.

Then it was time for a well-earned holiday!

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

