



Student Activities Newsletter

Issue 1

Fall 2017

College Counseling at ASM

The college admissions process can be daunting for students and parents. At ASM, the College Counselors help students by guiding them through their college choices and helping them find the ideal place to flourish as individuals.

Mrs. Halladay and Ms. Al-Shammari, the college counselors, warmly invite students to speak about their plans and future. Their goal is to ultimately help the 12th grade students apply to universities and receive good offers of admission, and to undertake conversations about college planning with all students in the high school. College counseling is important in the beginning of high school to understand all the steps and criteria necessary for acceptance at a school of choice. College counseling stresses the importance of going “above and beyond” prior to senior year: students should develop their interests, participate in service learning and other activities such as sports and concentrate on academics each and every year of high school.

Currently, the college counselors are working with all seniors to determine where they want to go and what they want to study. The college counseling office is a space that is used by students to explore options for the future, and ASM fortunately owns many college counseling related books along with files of valuable information about universities.

College counseling invites all students who wish for individual appointments to schedule them during break, lunch, or after school. They want to ensure that there are regular, consistent meetings with students of the 12th grade, in particular but also plan to meet with Grade 10 and 11 students this year.



In October, ASM proudly hosted a successful college fair that generated a lot of enthusiasm from both students and parents. This positive feedback from students encouraged the school to schedule additional fairs. There are at least three additional fairs scheduled for later this year. They also plan to reach out to alumni to guide students and talk about college life and recently invited Yacine BelHaj-Bouadballah (Class of 2014) to speak to our students. Yacine is a recent graduate of King’s College London and editor of the just published *Saving Ourselves: Interviews with World Leaders on Sustainable Transition*.

Alongside their goals is their wish to see students start seeking out service learning opportunities, and they cannot stress enough about the importance of community service enough. Ms. Al-Shammari encourages students to take steps from as early as 9th grade to seek service learning hours, because they are vital in reflecting who they are as a person, outside of their academic pursuits. Community service is a way to develop skills, make contacts within the community, and most importantly, improve the lives of others.

These articles were written by students at The American School of Marrakesh

For more information on all the exciting things planned this year by the college counselors, or for advice on career goals,

please email both counselors at collegecounseling@asm.ac.ma.

Outreach Club

The Outreach Club is a program that is designed to help and encourage disadvantaged members of a community by providing services and educational activities. This year, Outreach Club has set many goals and objectives. As heads of the program, Alia and Mariam have three objectives they wish to achieve. The first is monthly trips to parts of Marrakesh for trash collection. This is an important activity that helps us be aware that a clean environment plays a big role in our daily lives and in the lives of others.

Another rewarding activity is a monthly trip to Malaika, which is a school for children with Down's syndrome. The goal of these trips is to help plan and execute creative activities, with the aim of building relationships with the students, developing their self-esteem, and making them feel loved and supported by their community.

Last but not least is something good for the body and mind, a Family Fun Run Day! At this event, ASM families will gather for a healthy and active time. They will also have an opportunity to interact with each other, share a day full of positive energy, and spend quality outdoor time. What a great way to end the year!

The Outreach Club is rewarding in so many ways. It not only benefits the community but also provides important experiences to include on college applications. Students' commitment towards this organization shows how responsible and caring they could be in the future and how their actions can influence others.

Interested in joining? There are 6 committees to choose from:

Journalism Committee:

This committee is set up to offer a venue for creative writing. Students are responsible for reporting on student-led activities throughout the year and using this forum to inform the ASM community of all the exciting initiatives taking place this year.

Recognition Committee:

The Recognition Committee aims to highlight student achievement in many areas: academic, athletics, community service, and attendance and punctuality. These areas are key to student success and development. Nominations are given by faculty members and announced during the monthly upper school assemblies.

Fun Run Planning Committee:

This committee will be convening later in the year to plan a whole school Family Fun Run with the aim of creating a community spirited activity in which we can all take part.



Feel Good Committee:

This committee is for the creative thinkers and artists and is a forum for designing and producing posters to be used around the Upper School to encourage team spirit and a sense of community.

Rubbish Cleanup:

This initiative was created last year around the COP22. It aims to create and develop a community awareness of environmental issues such as effective rubbish disposal. Students participate monthly in this

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initiative targeting areas in and around Marrakesh that need a clean up.

Malaika [Down's Syndrome Center]:

This monthly initiative aims to take a group of ASM students to the daycare center to

run creative and sports activities with the special needs students. The objective is to create ties with this center, develop a relationship with their students to enhance their self-esteem and offer an opportunity for our students to help others.



Journalism Committee:

- Interested in joining?
- Meetings every Wednesday @ lunch



Fun Run Planning Committee:

- Interested in organising?
- Inform Ms. Al-Shammari
- Meeting TBD



Recognition Committee:

- Interested in helping out?
- Inform Ms. Al-Shammari
- Put up photos & recognition awards



Malaika [Downs Syndrome Centre]:

- Interested in joining?
- Sign up on the form
- Monthly activity



Rubbish Clean Up:

- Interested in helping out?
- Sign up on the form
- Monthly activity



Feel Good Committee:

- Interested in helping create spirit within the US?
- Meetings every Thursday @ lunch



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Outreach Rubbish Clean Up



One of Outreach Club's initiatives this year is a monthly cleanup. In October, Outreach members took their first school trip of the year, to the outskirts of Marrakech for a morning cleanup, an experience that was quite revealing for our first-timers.

This year's trash collecting initiative was the second that the Outreach Club has organized, our first being one that happened last year in the month leading up to the COP22. During that trip, we went to a village expecting to find only few miscellaneous plastic bottles but instead wound up being greeted by mountains of trash. After just a few minutes of taking in the view around us we began making a change. As we were collecting trash, the villagers started noticing. When faces began peering from doors and windows, we decided to wave a few of them over.

What started as a dozen ASM students soon grew to be a mixture of people from

different backgrounds and different social classes, all connected by one cause: making the community a cleaner place. Although we weren't able to clean up all the trash in one day, the connection we made with the village residents was impactful. We had witnessed immense gratitude as a result of investing just a few hours to improve their village's cleanliness.

After such a successful trip last year, we wanted to share that same experience with the new high schoolers by going to the same village to repeat this initiative. As we were driving we noticed a huge logo of the COP22 decorating a wall leading up to the village. We would've never guessed that the influence of the COP22 had reached this place. We had gone again expecting mountains of trash, but instead we were greeted by the occasional plastic bottle here and there. It had been a year since the COP22, and its effects were visible more than ever. The COP22 had not only cleaned the entire village, it had also helped change the mindset of its inhabitants.

Trips such as these are important to allow us to begin reflecting on the importance of our actions, and how such initiatives can inspire and demonstrate respect for others. We should cease to be pessimistic in our views of how little we can do to change the world and instead encourage each other to be active in our community, since each and every one of us has a big role to play in it.

Service Learning

Our school requires Service Learning as a way to develop new skills and understand the importance of involvement in our community. These activities also help students to develop mindfulness, critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills, as well as to appreciate diverse cultures.

As a younger student, I did not believe that service learning was of significant importance. My classmates and I often considered service learning hours to be just a burden imposed as a graduation requirement.

However, as I have matured I am more aware of the benefits that it provides me. I now understand that the good actions we undertake for others ultimately provide benefit to us, as well. It is too bad that many students think only of the hours gained while ignoring the benefits of self exploration.

Service learning provides us the ability to expand on our knowledge and skills. The American School of Marrakesh provides the students with diverse service learning opportunities such as:

- Outreach Club
- Reading Buddies

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- Learning Buddies
- Destination Imagination
- Orphanage visits
- MASAC support
- Volunteering at The Amal Center

Each opportunity, listed above, as well as others allow students to take part in community service in order to achieve the common goal of helping others. The



satisfaction of helping people, whether it comes from teaching a child how to read or giving food to individuals in need, is immense. The benefits of service learning should not be underestimated.



Student Council

This year will be one of immense change within high school student body. After interviewing the Student Council's President, senior Mariam, we have new insight as to what exactly we can expect from student council it this year.

Student Council this year at ASM is hoping to provide us with new and exciting events, that will not only be student led but will also hopefully provide a more positive atmosphere on campus.

The Student Council came up with several ideas which they plan to carry out later this year. "We have ideas for lock-ins, bonfires and more," the Student Council president elaborated. "But we do not want to make this costly for the students who want to participate

in these events, which is why we are planning on carrying out numerous fundraising events."

In order for these student-led events to be implemented, the Student Council will need to host various fundraisers (bake sales, etc.). This will make these celebrations more affordable for those who wish to attend.

Every year, the Student Council finds difficulty garnering support and commitment from the student body, yet this year members are adamant that they will be extremely dedicated and willing to work for the student body. With several ideas up their sleeves, the Student Council President and her team are determined to make this year a most memorable one for all.

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Varsity Sports at ASM

School spirit is the positive attitude students and teachers have about their school. School spirit helps bring different groups of students together and unites a school. ASM is a school of diverse cultures and perspectives, and a positive way to put aside such differences is to encourage participation in common activities that are appreciated by all, such as athletics. Being on a team gives students more pride in their school and makes students feel more spirited, and just plain happy to attend school every day.

The school spirit at ASM unites everyone during MASAC tournaments, the sports competitions that ASM participates in with other

American schools throughout Morocco including: Tangier (AST), Rabat (RAS), Casablanca (CAS and GWA), and the newly added team in Ifrane (ASI).

To give each age group an opportunity to participate in a variety of sports activities, sports are divided into three school teams. The younger students, from ages 11 to 14 are part of the Middle School team. The JV or Junior Varsity team is comprised of students ages 14 to 16. The Varsity squad consists of the school's best athletes from ages 14 to 18. The American schools in Morocco arrange seasons for each sport, and at the end of each season there is a tournament that all American Schools attend. Additionally, badminton is a new sport that has been added to the MASAC tournament roster this year.

Age Group	Date	Host School
Soccer Varsity	November 10/11	ASM
Soccer Junior Varsity	November 16	GWA
Basketball Middle School	December 9	CAS – Boy's team RAS – Girl's team
Track & Field	January 27	GWA
Basketball Varsity	February 2/3	RAS
Basketball Junior Varsity	February 16/17	CAS
Volleyball Junior Varsity	March 9	RAS
Volleyball Varsity	April 6/7	AST
Soccer Middle School	April 21	ASM
Volleyball Middle School	May 5	RAS
Badminton	May 10/11/12	ASI

The table above provides information regarding MASAC Sports Seasons that will take place over the course of 2017-2018 school year.



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