



Modern Montessori School

Volume 1, Issue 1

11/12/2001

Principal

As this is the first newsletter for the scholastic year 2001-2002, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you all back. The year has started exceptionally well; a lot of preparations went into welcoming our students back, including building expansions, two new computer labs (one for the IT and one for the DT) and adding more professionals to our already impressive teaching and administrative staff.

It is a pleasure to see our students, staff and parents working closely together towards the com-

mon goal of offering our students the best possible educational environment, encompassing all the important aspects of a healthy and holistic atmosphere.

I wish you all, students, parents and staff, a very productive year and I am looking forward to our achieving the same 100% pass rate in the International Baccalaureate Program (diploma and certificate) as we did last year.

I extend my thanks to all the participants in

the production of this newsletter and I would like to extend a very special thanks to the CAS students, especially Ayham Barghouthi, who have worked very hard in designing and creating a beautiful website, which I'm sure you will enjoy visiting at: www.casmms.4t.com

My very best wishes to you all for the forthcoming holiday season.

Randa Hasan

Academic Director

Being a newcomer to any situation means listening, observing and learning. That is what I have been trying to do since arriving in August at The Modern Montessori School.

I have listened to parents, to students and to my colleagues. I have observed all the new teachers and will do so to the rest of the

staff after the winter break. I have learned a good deal about the school though there is, certainly, much more to learn.

I have learned that I am working with very competent administrators, whose goal is simply to do the best they can for the staff, the students and the parents they serve. I have learned that the

school has an owner who is committed to providing the finest facility and education possible for the community served by the school. I have learned that the faculty and staff are committed and hard working. I have learned that the vast majority of students are positive and

Browse through our website to find out about the school and its facilities, online registration, job opportunities, learning support and the PTA.....



www.montessori.edu.jo

♦ I find that when we really love and accept and approve of ourselves exactly as we, then everything in life works.

♦ Louise Hay

anxious to succeed. Is everything at the school perfect? Of course not, but this must be said for every school and, indeed, every



institution. Communication is not perfect. George Bernard Shaw states, "The biggest problem with communication is that you think you've accomplished it." I subscribe to that. It is one of the main points I addressed at the four parents' nights

that were held last month. We were rightfully proud of the results of the first class of International Baccalaureate students. The 100% pass rate is something we should continually try to emulate. This is, quite possibly, an impossible task, but one that we shall try to achieve. The IB coordinator when I was in Dusseldorf always hated to publish the results of the IB exams, not because the students did poorly but because they did so well that he feared the next year's would not be as good. His concern is something we will do well to keep in mind. The "Open Day" was an unqualified success. Though the purpose was, obviously, to raise money for the school and for charity, the

friendliness and positive spirit of the day was a tribute to all who planned and attended the event. The attitude of all concerned, from the nursery school to the senior school, from the staff, from the parents, from the students is most heartening to someone new to the school. Finally, I suppose the most important thing I have learned since arriving is that I am proud to be part of the school and will do whatever I can to contribute to its, already considerable, success.

George Hofmeier

Head of Senior School

Dear Parents,

As the first semester is coming to an end, I would like to thank you all for your cooperation and help during that time.

I would appreciate your taking note of the following important points:

◆ **Parents of students in Grades 9 and 11:**

Please check on your child's progress report, which will be issued before the school breaks up for Eid Al Fitr and Christmas, well before the end of semester exams. These reports will give you an indication of your child's academic standard and allow you time to give serious consideration to what action you may need to take to help your child improve his or her end of semester results.

◆ **Parents of Grade 11:**

Starting in the second semester, your children will be engaged in the internally assessed work, in-



cluding world literature essays, TOK essays, math projects and portfolios, etc. Diploma students may also start writing their extended essays. The school will produce a calendar to indicate the internal deadlines for every piece of work and we hope you will be able to help us ensure that these deadlines are met.

◆ **Parents of Grades 10-IG and 12-IB:**

Please be aware that the mock exams are around the corner. They will be held in February of next year. The purpose of these exams is to give our students the experience of coping with a full, intensive exam period, during which all subjects must be revised at the same time, thus pre-

paring them for their final IB and IG external examinations.

Just a brief note about the academic deadlines (IB and IG): these deadlines are set to comply with the requirements of the external examining boards. If the deadlines are not met, the school can accept no responsibility for work reaching the examiners in time for inclusion in the final overall assessment. Potential marks may thus be lost, so your support in ensuring that work is handed in punctually will be very much appreciated.

Adnan Merie

Performing Arts Department

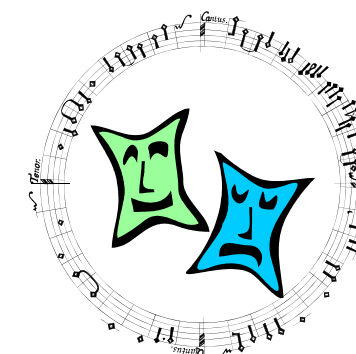
Anna Al-Ma'ali

The current Academic Year 2001-2002 has given a start to the newly formed Performing Arts Department comprising three full-time and six part-time specialist teachers. Perhaps one of the most important among the new ventures initiated by the Performing Arts Department, was the opening of the programme of Instrumental Tuition on a number of orchestral instruments. This semester we are offering individual music tuition with our experienced and highly reputable instrumental teachers on Piano, Violin, Flute, Recorder, Saxophone, Trumpet and Guitar. An impressive number of our students have expressed their interest in taking the Drum-set lessons. For those interested I am pleased to announce that we shall be inviting a professional Drum-set teacher to coach a class of percussionists from the beginning of the next semester. Currently there are approximately fifty students participating in the Instrumental Tuition programme throughout the school. Recently the Instrumental Tuition specialists presented two successful musical performances for the MMS community, one on 10th September and the other during the annual Open Day of MMS on 23rd October, as a part of their programme promotion.

Among the other functioning activities of the Performing Arts Department are the MMS Choir and Orchestra, currently comprising approximately 40 students from various grades throughout the school, and the Junior School Recorder Ensemble. For the moment the MMS Choir and Orchestra is working really very hard preparing the elaborate repertoire for the end of semester Winter Musical. It is certainly worthwhile mentioning that the full-scale school musical production will involve quite an impressive number of students from various sections of the MMS and in different capacities, e.g. actors, singers, performers, dancers and stage-designers. For those interested in attending our Winter Musical, there will be tickets on sale from the end of November with the MMS Public Relations administrator Mrs. Hala Aghabi. The proceeds from the ticket sales will be used as donations for some Jordanian organizations in charge of socially deprived and physically challenged children. At the moment the whole artistic crew is optimistically and enthusiastically looking forward to the week of performances in December 2001.

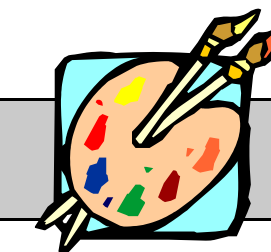
Among the activities planned for the second semester of the Academic Year 2001-2002 are the Student

Talent Show and the end of year Performing Arts Musical Show, to mention just a few. I would like to use this opportunity to wish all our students involved in the Winter Musical preparation the best possible and the most successful performance as a result of all these endless hours of practice and all our joint efforts dedicated to the common aim. Good luck to you all in this enterprise!



Art and Design

Eman Oteibi



The Art department welcomes a new member of staff, Mr. Abdel Aziz Abu Ghazaleh, as a part-timer. He is specialized in clay and 3D sculpture. This year the department will work jointly with CAS students to produce an art calendar containing different pieces of students' work covering KG-G12. This is to be sold to students and parents. The department will also be holding an annual exhibition at the end of next semester which will include the work of all students in all grades. Some art students will be going on a

trip to Italy. This is intended to enhance the art students' skills through better experience of and exposure to original art pieces and to enrich their overall cultural knowledge. Miss Iman Otaibi gave a lecture at Grand Hyatt Hotel under the sponsorship of STS (Computer company). Her lecture focused on the use of computers and software in high quality designs. As a tradition grade 9 students will again be competing to create a poster, which will be used as a cover for the yearbook and the graduation station-

ery. Grade 12 students and their parents will be invited to vote for the best poster. Grade 9 and grade 10 students will design special packages for the products of Mr. Fikri Shraim's company. There will be two big prizes: one will be assigned to the best design, voted by the parents of students, and the second prize will be to the one voted for by a specialized, professional panel. The design chosen will be adopted by the company

Being new to the position, the past months have been spent orienting myself to the duties that come with such a responsibility.

The plan of action that I placed for myself has, so far, been adhered to, with various positive results:

1. Grade 12 is starting to feel the heat that comes along with being in their final year at school, and are placing more importance on achieving higher grades to get into good universities around the world;
2. The University Resource Room is filled with catalogues, pamphlets, posters, and even some CDs with lots of information on hundreds of universities in the US, UK, Canada, and around the world;
3. Quite a number of Grade 11 students have been helped in

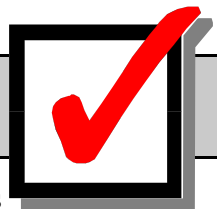
choosing their IB subjects in order to correspond with what they would like to specialize in at university level, so that when the time comes to apply to universities they will have all the necessary requirements for particular majors;

4. Students of Grades 9 and 10 are starting to think about their future, and what careers are appealing to them, and
5. Grades 10 and 11 have already been given the chance to sit for the PSAT test to prepare for the SAT test prior to applying to universities, where all US universities (and some Canadian universities) use SAT scores as a way to qualify applicants.

A Careers Day was also part of this semester's plan to help students in making decisions regarding the career

they would like for themselves. Students from grades 9-12 were taken to various work places to see what people in different professions do. They were able to ask any questions regarding the work that these people perform.

I would like to ask from parents that they talk to their children regarding career choices and university education, which will give the students a goal to work for, and help the school achieve one of its many objectives.



This year saw a great expansion within the department. The number of LSA's has increased to a total of 12 in both the Junior and Middle schools. These LSA's are working with a number of different students with various



difficulties. Their presence in the classrooms has become accepted by the students and the teachers and has even reached a point where they are being missed by both in their absence.

The establishment of the Resource Room, where lessons are in place of French lessons, has proven to be quite

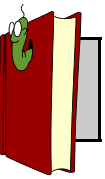
successful. Only the Junior School, however, is at present making use of it since their French lessons were assigned at the very beginning of the year. Due to the 'carousel' in the Middle School the students will only be taking French for two months and this therefore limits any program assigned for them. We are slowly gathering various educational tools and making good use of them.

Awni Hassan and Taghreed Qarqash, two of our LSA's, attended a workshop called "Speech Difficulties in Children" organized by The Queen Zein Al-Sharaf Institute for Development. During one of the Tuesday development sessions they are planning to present to the rest of the staff what they learnt. The department will also be presenting a workshop on "Inclusion" in the

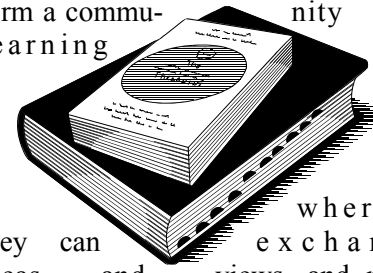
Private Schools Council.

After establishing the department only a year and a half ago, we have come a long way. We are continually working on developing the department, the staff in general and ourselves. The workshop that was organized for the teaching staff in the summer with Zuhair Zakaria and Rena Shaban proved to be quite successful and the teachers are continuously trying to apply what was learnt.

It has been a good year so far and will hopefully continue so after the New Year.



"The most effective programs will be those that involve the whole learner in the experience of language as a network of relations between people, things, and events". This is our conviction and our vision. The English Department at the Modern Montessori school believes that teachers should form a community of learning

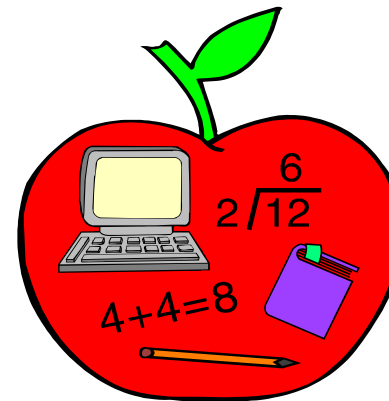
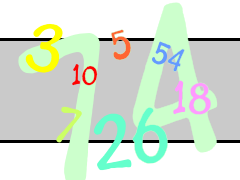
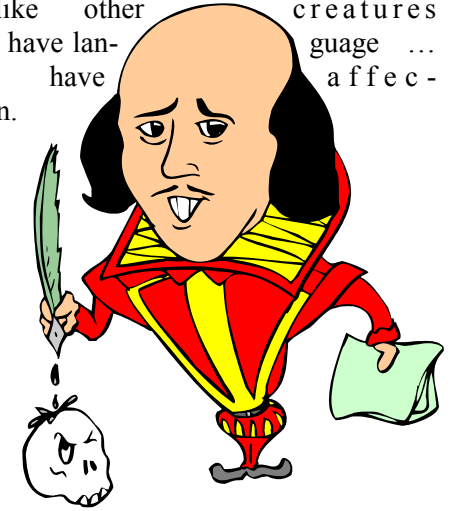


whereby they can exchange ideas and views, and make sure that the learning process is accumulative and challenging to both themselves and their students. On the other hand, students should also be highly motivated, able to broaden their horizon, and ready to deal with an impending situation easily. After

all they are the backbone of the whole learning/teaching process.

Apart from its communicative purpose, language is the manifestation of one's belief, aspiration, and thought. "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, and the Word was God". Our strength lies in the fact that we are armed with God's best creation. Therefore, our major contribution is to provide students with the needed tools to expand their knowledge, experiment with things and interact positively and constructively with the world around them. We need to encourage them to have enough confidence in their performance to excel and leave their stamp on whatever they do and wherever they go. We need to make sure that they are well equipped and shielded and no matter what happens they are willing to rise from ashes, lifting up their

heads and carrying on. This is an open invitation to those who share our vibrant vision to devote their effort and time to making education a meaningful and enlightening experience. After all human beings in Lewis Thomas' words are "a spectacular, splendid manifestation of life," since unlike other creatures we have language ... we have affection.



books extra worksheets are being used.

Teaching math utilizing the mastery learning strategy has also been started with grade 8.

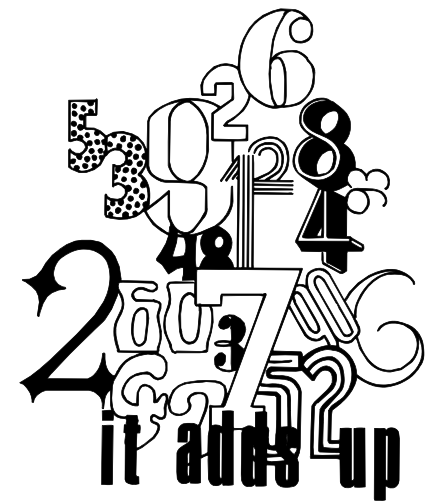
Cooperative learning style has been implemented within the middle school.

Non routine problems, investigations and portfolio projects have been introduced to the students in the middle school to enhance problem solving and reasoning abilities and promote their mathematical communication skills.

Twelve students from grades 10 and 12 joined the National Math Olympiads organized by the King Hussein Foundation (The Center for Excellence in Education).

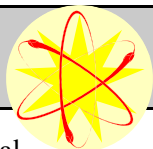
Mathematics teaching staff consists of one part-time and four full-time teachers for the middle and senior schools. This includes two new teachers who joined the school this year, Iman Zaghal, the head of the department, and Osama Rabba', a teacher in the middle school.

The math syllabus for the middle school has been restructured to meet the scope and sequence of the IGCSE syllabus. To fill the gaps in the text-



Science Department

Silva Avakian



In May 2001 the Montessori students sat for the first time for the IB examination. We are happy to announce that in the subjects of Biology and Chemistry the pass rate was 100%.

In the Biology subject, the Montessori students achieved very good results, the school's average grade in standard and higher level were higher than the worldwide average. The IGCSE results were acceptable and as predicted.

In a previous newsletter we announced our goals and objectives, and this year we are pressing forward with them. We are emphasizing teaching science through experiments, field trips, and the use of computers to allow students to learn analytical skills. Here is an idea about how the department is carrying out these objectives.

Senior School International Baccalaureate

We are currently preparing grade 11 and 12 students for their IB exams. Internal assessment is taking place on a weekly basis and lab experiments are being carried out regularly to develop the students' experimental and investigative scientific skills.

screens" (Chemistry), "Studying the factors affecting the bounce of a dropped basketball" (Physics) and "The relative efficacies of different s u n -



Grade 9 Biology students testing for biologically important compounds

screens" (Biology). The exercise is a collaborative experience where the emphasis is on the processes involved in scientific investigation rather than the products of such investigation.

IGCSE

Grades 9 and 10 Biology and Chemistry classes were divided to two sections, with maximum 15 students in each section. This way we are making sure that each student is getting the appropriate attention.

The main concentration is on the theoretical part as it is very valuable to prepare the students for their external examination; they are practising solving previous exam papers in class. Nevertheless, students are having lab sessions whenever it is considered helpful towards improving their understanding of a particular topic.

The IGCSE Biology and Chemistry teachers attended a two-day workshop on 26 & 27 October 2001 entitled "IGCSE Teachers' Training Workshop". It was conducted by Cambridge International Examinations. The teachers who attended this workshop are now certified to assess coursework assignments. If the school adopts this alternative program, teachers will be able to prepare students for

the compulsory IB internal assessment program.

As there are no comprehensive textbooks for the biology and chemistry subjects for the IGCSE and IB programs, the department's teachers prepare from several textbooks to cover all the material in the syllabus. The textbooks with the students are, however, the best available and are excellent, both to complement teaching and for reference.

Middle School

Academically, Middle school is the important link between Junior and Senior school. During the three years of Middle school students are prepared to cope with Senior school requirements.



Grade 7 students during a lab session

The material they study is pre-IGCSE, and the assessment criteria is related to IGCSE.

Junior School

Grade 1: Students learned many things about their surroundings including the different types of soil by obtaining samples from the school's garden and testing them at the school's lab.

Grade 2: Students learned among various things, the differences between mammals and birds: the latter having two wings, a beak and being covered with feathers. Also, a dentist visited the students at school and talked about the importance of teeth, how they develop, and how to take care of them.



Grade 2 using art work to demonstrate features of birds

CAS Coordinator

Wa'el Abdullah

Creativity, action, service is known by its acronym CAS and is a fundamental part of the IB curriculum. The CAS requirement takes seriously the importance of life outside the world of scholarship, providing a refreshing counterbalance to the academic self-absorption some may feel within a demanding school programme.

Participation in theatre productions, student magazines, IT skills, Model United Nations, sports, and community services activities such as helping handicapped kids and elderly people and environment issues encourages our students at the MMS to share their energies and special talents while developing awareness, concern and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

Students are required to take a minimum of 150 hours during the IB programme, with an average of 3-4 hours per week. I advise all students to check the CAS website (www.casmms.4t.com) which was done during this term. Our CAS activities will end on 13/12/01 for this term. The

students will hold a party for the handicapped kids and are collecting



donations (excluding money) for the children. We would appreciate all the support you can give.

All students who submitted their photos have received a school ID done by the CAS committee students. They should take care of it. Very soon we shall be receiving good offers from many different sectors which will be valuable to our students and their parents.

A few words of advice:

*If a student wishes to conduct an ac-

tivity outside the programme assigned by the coordinator, he/she should get approval first.

*All students are advised to cover around 50 hours per term, providing a service activity is done every semester. Plan it right!

* All students must be in the programme; besides it is very helpful in gaining admission to the western hemisphere colleges.

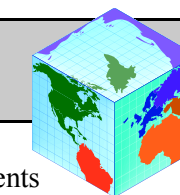
Many more projects and activities will start in February 2002 and a big expedition will take place during May/June.

If you have any comments, either give me a call or use our CAS website...

We're on the web!

Humanities Department

Hana Abu Hijleh



This year, the Department of Humanities has enriched its menu by offering 2 additional courses to its traditional selection. We now offer Economics and Business IB in addition to Business, Economics, Sociology, History, Geography and Child Development IGCSE.

Through a collective effort, the Humanities Department is now embarking on an ambitious Action Plan---designed to enrich and develop students' learning and thinking skills in all levels. The underlying principle of the Action Plan is to instill in our students a sense of appreciation for learning, to allow students the opportunity to learn through social interaction, and to enhance the

students' abilities to inquire for knowledge on their own. In the end, our aim is to produce critical learners, capable of learning on their own.

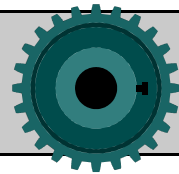
Due to the complexity and diversity of the Department's course selection, the school has offered the Humanities a resource room, especially designed for the collection and display of all the necessary learning tools in the area of social studies. We have also invested in ecological equipment designed to allow for the application of theoretical knowledge in a setting by which students can feel and experiment with social studies. We anticipate receiving this valued equipment in the very near future.

As it is inherent in our philosophy, we

are ensuring that students are involved in applied knowledge as opposed to the traditional spoon-feeding process. For that purpose, we are running several course works in the areas of Business and Economics at the IB and IGCSE levels and Sociology and Geography at the IGCSE level.

As for the Middle and Junior schools, we are working with our staff to ensure the proper facilitation of knowledge to our lower grades students in a systemic process. This should lead to an elevation of the students' skills that we feel critical for achieving the objectives set for the IGCSE and IB programs in the Modern Montessori School.

The group 4 project is an interdisciplinary activity in which all Diploma Programme science students must participate. The intention is that students analyse a topic or problem which can be investigated in each of the science disciplines offered by the school. The topics for this year were: "Comparing the effectiveness of the ingredients of sun-



Two professional teachers joined the department this academic year: Mrs. Rozana Alawi, design and technology teacher, holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture. Rozana worked in an architectural firm before joining MMS.

Mr Nidal Shahin, design and technology technician, holds a diploma in Interior Design. Nidal worked for Amman Baccalaureate School for nine years, and he is an expert in the Technology field. Welcome to MMS.

The Head of Technology Department participated in an IB workshop in

the IB students to excel. This machine is the only one of its kind in the Middle East.

Last year we had the first students completing DT IB. We had 100% pass rate; the mark range was between 3-6. *Mabrouk!* The department would

like to thank all who contributed to this success.



The department offers the following

1. Design and technology foundation course, grades 5-8.
2. Design and technology/Graphical Communication, IGSCE.
3. Design and technology, IB standard and higher levels.

Foundation course grades 5-8:

We sent with every student in the first week of this semester a course outline of what the children will study and we included the homework policy, as well as an introduction to Design and Technology. We hope that this gave you an idea of what your child is doing. Also parents are welcome to contact us for any further information.

Grade 5: They are now busy making their own clocks; everyone has managed to design his/her individual clock.

Grade 6: They completed the drawing course and its project, the Advertising Gimmick. The students were given the chance to come up with new designs for the Advertising Gimmick.

Now students are working on producing a mechanical toy called Mechan-

ical Dog.

Grade 7: They completed the drawing course and its project, the Robot. The students were given the chance to come up with new designs for the Robot.

Now students are working on producing a mechanical toy called Mechanical Surfing Dog.

Grade 8: They finished designing their own houses. The eighth graders will now start making models of these houses.

Grade 9 IGSCE: Technical Drawing, Technical Drawing is what grade 9 is doing now. Most of them have managed to sharpen their drawing skills.

Grade 10 IGSCE: This year all tenth graders are working to complete their major project and there are many good ideas. Some selected to design a cereal or snack package, while others chose to design a sign.

Grade 11 IB: 65% of grade 11 is taking DT, both at standard level and higher level. We worked on three mini-projects (practical) and now we are planning to visit a wind farm in the north of Jordan.



Grade 4 students at the marble factory

Grade 3: Students visited ZAI Water Treatment Plant and learned about the different treatment stages. At the school's lab they made yoghurt from milk to learn that certain changes to a material can produce a new material.

Grade 4: Looking at onion and blood cells at the school's lab introduced grade 4 students to cells. The students visited a marble factory and learned about rocks, their shapes, kinds, origins, and the processes they go through, how they are cut and used.

Grade 5: In the lab Students dissected fish during the study of vertebrates and differentiated between mixtures and solutions.

In all the above activities, projectors, video films, art classes, and the use of computers were used for demonstration purposes.



Grade 3 students at ZAI Water Treatment Plant

Science teachers (grade 1-5). A science workshop was held at the school's premises for junior school science teachers (grade 1-5). Ms. Victoria Coronado of the Harcourt International Teachers' Training – U.S.A, conducted it. The objective of the workshop was to improve the teachers' teaching skills.

In conclusion, we are preparing students from the Junior School, both academically and psychologically, to adapt smoothly to the IB

program once they reach that level.

Finally, we would like to welcome the new teachers that joined the science department and thank all teachers in this department for their untiring devotion to their work. Also we would like to thank those who contributed to this newsletter.

Lastly, but for sure not least, we are grateful to our beloved graduate of last year, Yaser Amad, for

his contribution to the Biology and Chemistry Department's section of this newsletter, and for his words of advice and encouragement to his fellow students.

Yaser writes:

"Hey fellow MMS'ers, This is the best time of the year, especially for the grade twelve students who face four weeks of IB finals in about five months (do you sense the sarcasm?). This may seem like plenty of time but it really isn't. I am saying this because I remember very vividly being in your place last year and thinking to myself "Oh five months, I don't need to worry about it until April or maybe March". And due to this attitude I got slaughtered in April and May. Overall I guess I did all right, but it was nowhere near what I could have gotten with just the slightest efforts. I know this seems extremely repetitive but the point I am trying to make is that everyone who wants to do well should start studying very seriously now.

As grade 12 last year we spent more time complaining about the quality of our teachers than we did actually studying the subject at hand. However, I currently attend the University of Texas at Austin and am pursuing a double major in Neuro-Biology and Psychology, and I must tell everyone that my high school education at MMS far surpassed that of most of my peers. Our teachers did an excellent job in preparing us for the ins and outs of the work and thought required at the university level. Moreover, let me tell you a little secret: most of the professors at college are horrible. They are great researchers but they can't teach anything at the undergraduate level, and even more to the point they are tenured. So even if you have a bad teacher, deal with it, because in college there is absolutely nothing you can do about it. All in all, at MMS you have (and we had) some of the finest teachers available (especially in Biology, Economics, and English!) so take advantage of them and try to learn as much as you can before you get to college. That way you can be prepared. Ah God, I am beginning to sound like Ms. Randa!!! The scary part is that she was right.

Take care everyone and make MMS proud!!! Peace, Yaser Amad"



Yaser during biology lab session