



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO.14. October. 2011

The International School of Choueifat
Alumni Association

linking Generations



Dr. Zalfa Ammar Abdel-Malek, '71



Professor of Dermatology
Professor of cancer and Cell Biology

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times". This is how I can describe the 1970's. This is the decade that shaped my life, and opened my eyes to many social and intellectual issues. It began with the wonderful year of graduation from the National College, Choueifat, in 1971. This year was a landmark in my life, with very fond memories of friends and teachers, and important decisions that had to be made about career

choices. I always loved science, and my science teachers throughout high school were an inspiration to me. I used to tease Mr. Salibi, our Biology teacher, God rest his soul, that I would graduate from the A.U.B. with a Bachelor's degree in Biology and replace him as a Biology teacher in Choueifat. He always had a great sense of humor, and took my joke very well. He was very proud when I scored very high in Biology in the Baccalaureate part II exams. In 1974 I obtained a Bachelor's degree in Biology from A.U.B. This was a time of tremendous political activities, which raised my awareness about social issues, and got me involved in social campaigns, such as illiteracy campaigns for adults, and mentoring students in underprivileged communities. After graduating from the A.U.B., I worked for about three years in the Hematology laboratory at the A.U.H. During this time, my father, God rest his soul, was constantly urging me to go to graduate school. This came about when I got married in 1977. When my husband proposed, the only condition my father had was that my husband and I leave the country, which was being ravaged by civil war, and seek higher education somewhere else. My father was very passionate about education, and although he was not highly educated himself, he was a self-taught person, a savvy business man who spoke several languages, was very open minded and believed in gender equality. My husband took my father's request seriously, and arranged for us to travel to the U.S.A. Without my husband taking the initiative, I would never have made this drastic decision, being so close to my family, and having been content with my job at the A.U.H. at that time.

In February, 1977, we arrived in Tucson, Arizona, and the new chapter began. It took me a few months to get

accepted into the graduate program in the Department of General Biology at the University of Arizona (USA). I studied and taught during the first two years, and obtained a Master's degree in 1980. I then decided to continue with Ph.D., which I earned in 1984. Amazingly, my Advisor, Professor Mac Hadley, had the same kind of personality as my father: hot tempered, yet a very kind heart. When he first interviewed me before accepting me as his student, he flatly asked me whether or not I wanted to be treated as a first-rate student, and if the answer is yes, then I have to work hard to prove that I was a first-rate student. Luckily, I did not disappoint him. I graduated from his laboratory with flying colors, and had six publications in high ranking scientific journals, a record number for a graduate student.

After obtaining my Ph.D., I had to start carving my own career path. I joined the Department of Dermatology at the University of Cincinnati as a postdoctoral fellow in mid 1985. It was a very bold and risky move, since the Department at that time was purely clinical, and I am proud to say that I was a major player in establishing the research component of this Department. I had a wonderful mentor, an internationally known dermatologist, Dr. James Nordlund, who had a great passion for research. I put my heart and soul into the research program in my laboratory, and the reputation of the laboratory began to spread nationally and internationally. We started by investigating how skin color is regulated, and what accounts for the diversity of pigmentation among humans, and the role of genes and the environment in this diversity. These basic questions were totally unanswered when I began investigating them. For more than 15 years, I have been investigating a gene that is a major determinant of human skin and hair color, which dictates how individuals respond to sun exposure (whether they tan or burn). This gene is now recognized as a skin cancer susceptibility gene. If it is expressed normally, then it protects against, and if it is expressed abnormally, then it increases the risk for sun-induced skin cancer. Pioneering this important area of research that is very relevant to skin cancer and ageing (both of which are caused by sun exposure) increased the visibility of my laboratory worldwide and provided me with the opportunity to train students and scientists from different countries, Japan, Korea, China, Brazil, France, Spain, to name a few. "Zalfa" became a household name in the pigment cell research and melanoma community, and what I am mostly proud of is that my career has helped me shape the careers of many young scientists,

Cont. p2

Mission Statement:

To create and reinforce lifelong intellectual, professional and personal connections among its members.

To serve our community.

To strengthen the link between the alumni and their alma mater.



Dr. Zalfa Ammar Abdel-Malek, '71

and to establish long lasting friendships worldwide. I still conduct my research with full force and vigor. One of my laboratory staff calls me the "Lebanese tornado", not intending that I am destructive, but because of my constant energy. So far, I have over 90 publications to my name, which include 33 reviews and book chapters. Next week, I will be participating in the International Pigment Cell Conference in Bordeaux, France, where I will be receiving a prestigious award in recognition of my outstanding contribution to my field of research. I will be sharing this award with another researcher from Yale University.

Lessons I learned from having grown up in Lebanon and living in the U.S.A. is that life is what you make of it, and home is where you have friends and loved ones, and where you are respected and appreciated. I still miss the good and care-free life I had in Lebanon, and I make a concerted effort when I travel to Lebanon to see the precious good old friends from the High School years. I was lucky in 2009 to be in Beirut during the Alumni reception, which I attended and enjoyed tremendously, having met friends that I had not seen since I left Lebanon in 1977. Thank you my High School and teachers for inspiring me to be the person I am now. To all my High School friends wherever you are; I wish you the very best.



ART EXHIBITION



Art For A Good Cause

On the 10th, 11th & 12th of June and for the very first time, the Alumni Association held an Art exhibition exclusively by alumni artists.

In the beautiful old Alumni Club House and its garden, the paintings and sculptures were arranged in a manner that brought

them to life, especially with the clever lighting set up by Mr. Bilal Hassouneh ('86).



Mrs. Saad with Board members and Artists

As this event was a fundraiser, all the artists, namely Leila Kanso Nasreddine ('68) - Lamia Saab Muhtar ('69) - Dina Darido Azar ('75) - Nabil Richani ('79) - Dr Emad Saab ('79) - Joumana Jurdi

Ghazal ('82) - Nisreen Mohtar Al Ahmadi ('97), generously donated 30% of their sales to the scholarship fund.

The alumni office would like to thank all those who worked hard, in great harmony and camaraderie, to make this event a smashing success.



CLASS NOTES

Akram Mardini ('09)



Akram Mardini

I have been living in Sydney for 2 years and can't say I don't like it, but there is no place like home. Currently, I am enrolled at the University of Sydney, studying Mechatronic Engineering, a course combining both electrical and mechanical engineering.

I am also working in Student World, as an Education Counselor; my job is to overview applications to study in Australia

from students coming from overseas. I help in getting offers from Australian Universities, find accommodation and resolve immigration issues and Visa Complications.

I graduated from ISC-Choueifat in 2009 after 15 years of constant whining about the school and exams. Now being in the corporate world, makes me think about everything I learnt at the school, through SLO, my teachers and advisors, all helped me overcome the many hurdles that came my way.

Pascale Kiwan ('05)



Pascale and Maan

We are happy to announce the engagement of Pascale Kiwan ('05) to Mr. Maan Beayni on August 13th; Pascale graduated from AUB and is currently working as an Accreditation Consultant at Fouad Khoury Hospital. We wish them all the best.

Majeda Rizk ('82)



Majeda Rizk

I was a boarding school student at NCC (now ISC) from 1972 till 1982. I have a Masters in teaching and am still studying towards a graduate degree in TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language).

I have three boys 27, 25 and 21 years old, and a beautiful 2 year old granddaughter. I

am now remarried to an Italian business man and lead a fulfilling life as a junior primary school teacher in Australia. I love traveling and have done so extensively. I live in Adelaide, South Australia, which is 2 hours by plane from Sydney and 1 hr from Melbourne. I live on the beach and it is a lovely and peaceful place.

I love Australia and am very proud of my new home country, but still have good memories of my life in Lebanon and of friends that I made at school as well as teachers that passed away.

I want to thank the school for the good ten years of my young life.....even though back then I hated school...:) :) Now I can see what my teachers had gone through..... Life is funny, we all hate what is good for us.....

I send you peace and love from Australia and hope to hear more success stories from other alumni.

Maan Hilal, ('04)

I hope this finds you well. I often follow up on how things are going through fellow alumni who are still in the area. Unfortunately most of my trips have only been to Dubai lately where I have set up a consultancy that is advising local and federal government there on education reform. I intend to visit Beirut hopefully by the end of the year and will most certainly pass by for a visit. Keep up the good work and thank you for your continued efforts to keep the ISC family in touch.

Tala Seifeddine ('05)



Tala and Rayan

After graduating from Choueifat, Tala went on to study at the Arab University. She graduated last year with a BS in pharmacy, and was ranked the 1st in the Lebanese pharmacy colloquium exam (the Choueifat effect). Tala just got engaged to Rayan Nahas. She would love to start a teaching career at ISC.

Lubna Zeidan ('70)

Thank you for contacting me about the upcoming newsletter. From 1993-2001, I taught at the mother school and was head of the English Dept. after which I moved to the US. Currently I live in Austin, Texas where I am the coordinator of a Refugee School - an English Second Language program for newly arrived adult refugees from all over the world.

I am looking forward to the newsletter and news from my old classmates!

One old classmate I am still in touch with is Dr. Marcelle Grassi (was Atallah). She is also in the States in Buffalo NY - her email is maracellegrassi@yahoo.com Thanks for your hard work.

Walid Abu Fakhr ('97)



Walid and Family

I would like to share my news with my friends and colleagues.

I graduated from Choueifat Mother school and then went on to LAU here I received a BS in Business Management in 2000. Currently I am married to Mrs. Randa Adra, and we

have 2 boys: Khaled, 4 Years and Majed, 6 Months.

I am working with SABIS Facilities Management Services in Abu Dhabi, UAE as an Academic Quality Controller (AQC).

Nabeel Sulieman, Class of 2000



Sitting left to right Amer Sharafeddine - Rashad Abu Ghida - his wife Rana - Nabeel Sulieman
Standing Rashad Salman - Ibtissam Saadawi

After Choueifat I went to AUB for a BE in Computer and Communications Engineering and a minor in Philosophy. I then moved to Munich for a master's degree in Communications Engineering. After studying and working in areas such as Bioinformatics, Microelectronics and Mobile Communication, I made a switch to software engineering, which has always been my passion. I currently work in Munich for Microsoft, developing search technology for Bing. I still rely heavily on

the fundamentals taught to me by the late Professor Ahmad Hajjaj in his computer science class at Choueifat. I'd like to say hello to all my Choueifat classmates, friends and teachers. I hope all is going great. Feel free to drop me a line if you're in Munich ;-)



TESTIMONIALS

Jack Chami ('75)

It was great visiting the school of my youth. It was and still is one of the best schools.

Thank you for spending the time with me and I hope Lebanon will see some kind of peace in the near future.

Leen Saidi Kirbage ('85)

My best years were spent at Choueifat and I carry in my heart very special memories of everyone who contributed to my education during those years, from the late Mr. Saad and his beautiful Monday speeches in the auditorium, to Mrs. Leila Saad who managed perfectly to keep the legacy going, to Ms. Dallal, Ms. Sobhieh.....too many to name.



ALUMNI WORKING AT AUB/AUBMC

- 1- Dr. Nabil Dajani ('53) Professor & Chair Department of Social and Behavioral Science
- 2- Dr. Wadah Nasser ('55) professor in the Philosophy Department
- 3- Dr. Faruk Abi-Khuzam ('62) Professor of Mathematics, Mathematics Department
- 4- Dr. Samir Alam ('65) Head the Cardiology Division
- 5- Dr. Mohammad Mansour ('65) Professor at the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department
- 6- Dr. Huda Abu-Saad Huijer ('67) Professor of Nursing Science
- 7- Dr. Wadih Jureidini ('70) Department of Computer Science

- 8- Dr. Bilal Hamad ('72) Professor at the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
- 9- Dr. Hazar Abu Khzam ('72) Chairman Mathematics Department
- 10- Dr. Wassim Wazzan ('73) attending Neurology surgeons at AUBMC
- 11- Dr. Salah Salman ('74) Dermatology Department
- 12- Dr. Maher Hussein ('74) Surgery/ Medical Center
- 13- Dr. Nadim Kanj ('75) Director of Smoking Cessation Program. Assistant Professor Clinician Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine Dept. of Internal Medicine
- 14- Dr. Basem Saab ('76) Professor, Program Director External Medical Affairs (Department of Family



ALUMNI WORKING AT AUB/AUBMC

- Medicine)
- 15- Dr. Efat Abou-Fakhr Hammad ('77) Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Agricultural & Food Sciences
 - 16- Mrs. Leila Khawli Hanna ('80) Instructor of Marketing Management
 - 17- Dr. Kamal Bou Hadir ('83) Chemistry Department
 - 18- Dr. Hala Kaidbey ('86) Cell & MOLL Biology Unit
 - 19- Dr. Raya Hamad Saab ('92) Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine
 - 20- Mrs. Thouraya Eid ('93) Administration Pathology &

- Laboratory Department
- 21- Dr. Rania Safa ('95) P.C Internal Medicine
 - 22- Dr. Makram Abou Nassar ('97) Teacher at the Department of Agriculture and Food Sciences and Economics
 - 23- Ms. Arwa Bou Ali, ('04) Department of Clinical and Patient Affairs
 - 24- Ms. Shatha Abi Ghanem ('05) Department of Quality Accreditation and Risk Management



SAGA Launch

Please contact us if by oversight we missed a name

June 6, 2011

SABIS® officials recently announced the launching of the SABIS® Alumni Global Association (SAGA). SAGA is designed to unite all SABIS® graduates and provide a networking vehicle to facilitate the establishment of personal, educational, and professional connections. Specifically, SAGA members will enjoy various benefits such as a lifetime E-mail account, access to an alumni directory, announcements on alumni events, career services, and access to SABIS® school facilities. SAGA supports SABIS® graduates by providing a vehicle for them to forge and maintain lifelong relationships among alumni and to provide them with resources that enrich their post-SABIS® experience. For more information about the SAGA or to join the network, please visit www.saga.sabis.net.

We would love to hear from all our Alumni who reside all over the world, from Australia in the East all the way to the Americas in the West.

UPDATE US WITH YOUR NEWS, WHERE DO YOU LIVE?
WHAT YOU ARE DOING?
DID YOU GET MARRIED?
DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN?

Any news you would like to share with your fellow alumni? Should you care to send us photos, please make sure they are high resolution pictures.

IN MEMORIAM



Dr. Abbas Abu Saleh
(1943 – 2011)

Dr. Abbas was a distinguished author, historian and teacher who graduated from Choueifat in 1962. After getting his degree from the Lebanese University with merit, he went on to get his Masters and PhD from the University of Austin, Texas, with distinction. He was a prolific writer with many publications and books. He also taught at the Lebanese University, American University and Salal University, Oman. He will be greatly missed by all. May his soul rest in peace.

Abbas Abu Saleh



Mrs. Alice Murr Jureidini

Or Miss Alice, as many of her students used to call her, was born on April 5, 1922 and passed away on 25 January 2011. She was a pioneer, for at her time when she was only 18 years old she taught in Iraq, Egypt and Kuwait for a minimum of 15 years, then came to Choueifat where she taught English, Maths and Arabic for many years, in the elementary department. May her soul rest in peace.

Alice Murr Jureidini

MEMBERS OF THE ALUMNI BOARD

President, **Mr. Fadi Abboud**
V. President, **Mrs. Wafa Saab**
Financial controller, **Dr. Toufic Eid**
Treasurer, **Maitre Hassan Keshli**
Advisory Member, **Mr. Victor Saad**
Advisory Member, **Maitre Majed Fayad**
Advisory Member, **Mr. Pierre Khodor**



CONTACT US

Get in touch & share your news.
www.iscalumni.com

Keep in touch and share your stories from the past as well as your news today. We need you to help us make the Alumni Association go forward, prosper and grow.

Mailing Address:
PO Box: 5004-5611/-5612,
Charles Saad Street, Choueifat, Lebanon
Tel.: (961 5) 430430, 433253 Fax: (961 5) 433254
E-mail: iscalumni@sabis.net
Website: www.iscalumni.com