

## IC Secondary School (STEAM) Labs Inauguration

Richard Bampfylde

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The following article showcases the launch of IC's new Secondary School (STEAM) laboratories, October 25, 2018...

The school inaugurated its new Secondary School Science labs in the presence of the Board of Trustees, the Administration and other members of the IC community. USAID representative, Mr Bruce McFarland, as well as students and their teachers from Ibn Khaldoun School, Aley, were also able to attend the ceremony. The Chairman of the Board Mr Don Selinger, visiting from New York, and Dr Don Bergman, IC President, joined in officially declaring the new state-of-the-art facility open. As Mr Selinger remarked at the event, "it is another important investment and step for IC's present and future plans, as the school continues to be a pioneer in the field of education not only in Lebanon but the Middle East region too."



While 'makerspaces' in the Elementary School and Middle School have been established in the past few years, as well as robotics and coding clubs, IC was recently able to secure, through a US Government grant (American Schools and Hospitals Association, part of USAID), the significant funds to update the Science laboratories. Now, with better facilities and technology, teachers can design laboratory experiences that allow IC students to collaborate with classmates and develop their critical thinking skills through inquiry-based activities.

In the school's nearly 126 years of operation, IC has had a strong reputation in Lebanon as an exemplary school that promotes critical thinking, innovation and collaboration. "In continuing IC's high level of education, and with the onset of these new labs, the school will be able to further integrate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) into its curriculum and campus life," commented Dr Bergman. Indeed, students in all four programs at the Secondary School, the International Baccalaureate,

Lebanese Baccalaureate, French Baccalaureate and College Preparatory Program, will benefit from the new labs, ensuring a better understanding of these subjects.

Another important aspect of STEAM education at IC is that both boys and girls from all backgrounds can be introduced to these fields at an early age, with IC being a co-educational school. Women in particular have often been an under-represented group in the ever-evolving tech sector and IC aims to give all its students the hands-on experience to explore and discover the tools required to advance in the sector should they decide to take their careers in that direction. Before the summer, the school successfully held its first '*Creativity and Innovation*' event, arranged by the College Counseling department, and designed to showcase non-traditional careers available in Lebanon, the region and worldwide. Guest speakers from Lebanon and the Gulf, including the Beirut Digital District, Dubai Institute of Design and Innovation and American University of Beirut, highlighted to students and parents just what the workplace and future careers will most likely look like in the years to come.

The new facilities complement another of IC's recent investments, that of implementing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The Framework is a research-based set of components of instruction, grounded in a constructive and demonstrable view of learning and teaching, with student growth a core focus. As Mrs Paula Mufarrij, Vice President for Academic Affairs, quite rightly stated, "the school is focused on ensuring student growth and development at all times, and these new science labs are just one more step to achieving this, providing teachers and students with the facilities and tools to grow and progress in life."

The labs have already begun to be used, by students as well as Lebanon's Center for Education Research and Development (CRDP). Indeed, as Dr Mahmud Shihab, Director of the Educational Resources Center, and a keen advocate of STEAM in education, suggested "our memorandum of understanding with CRDP highlights IC's commitment not only to its student body, but to strengthening the Lebanese curriculum for all students in the country, due to our investment and sharing of resources and knowledge."



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