

AL NOOR-ABA NEWS

12th December 2019

Important Notice: *Kindly note that there was a date error in the PTA calendar for the return date after winter break. The school will re-open on 5th January 2020.*

Message from the Head of School

There are so many facets to a school of over 1000 students. We have students entering every day. We are also sad at this time to say goodbye to 17 students whose families are moving at midyear. Whenever one of our students departs, we feel a loss. In talking this morning to Noorah, one of our longtime, wonderful student aides, she said how meaningful it was to her that her now grown-up student had come to say goodbye to her. We have relationships with our students and it is important.

The Board has been working on enrollment initiatives that are designed to be good for families and good for the school. Early in January, I will explain the re-enrollment process that includes a change in the payment schedule to February 15th with a very tolerant full refund by May 15th if circumstances change. This plan also has new sibling discounts for self-paying parents and discounts for upfront payments that will be attractive. More will be explained in the new year. The hard work of the board was openly discussed at the Board meeting on Tuesday evening, 10th December.

At the Board meeting, I reported on my five goals and participated in discussions on marketing, academics, policies review, governance and strategic planning. We saw slides from the Al Irfan campus and saw the progress on the construction site. The meeting lasted as scheduled until 6:45pm.

Thursday 12th December, the 6th through 12th graders gathered in the gym to have a large group send-off into the vacation days! The children are beyond excited and many are traveling. I hope my grandchildren are as excited to see me as many of these students are to see their grandparents!

If you are staying in Oman - Lucky You! If you are traveling - Be Well, Be Safe! I will greet you in the New Year!

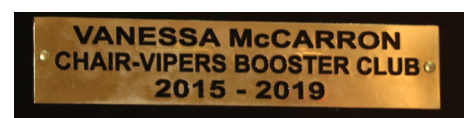
Sue

Dr. Susan R. Groesbeck

Upcoming Dates

13 Dec - 4 Jan	Winter Break
5 Jan	Back to School
6 Jan	Gr 1 - 3 Sports Day Grass pitch 9 - 11:30am
7 Jan	Gr 4 - 5 Sports Day Grass pitch 9 - 11:30am
8 Jan	EC Sports Day Grass pitch 9 - 10:45am

"The ABA Chair and the Head of School, along with members of the ABA community, celebrated the contribution of VANESSA McCarron, Booster Club Chair with a gift and a plaque on the Friend of ABA Wall".



Message from the Middle School

As we look towards the new year, we will resume our monthly coffee mornings on Wednesday 15th January and would greatly appreciate your input on Middle School topics for these mornings. Please use this [form](http://bit.ly/MSCoffeeMorning2020) (<http://bit.ly/MSCoffeeMorning2020>) to submit suggestions. As always, Claire, Kathleen and Megel are available to meet with you should the need arise. We wish you and your family a happy and safe Holiday and look forward to seeing you in 2020.



We would like to celebrate one of our MYP 3 students accomplishments. Kayla Al-Sharif was one of nine dancers that traveled to Milan, Italy representing Oman at the 2019 European and Asian Irish Dancing Championships (European Irish Dancing Championship). There were over 800 competitors at the event and the dancing throughout the event was extremely competitive. All of the BMA girls were truly outstanding. Kayla participated in 2 solo dances and 1 team dance. In the team dance her team placed 5th overall and in one of her solo dance she medaled. Congratulations Kayla, we are very very proud of you!

Kathleen Bowin - Middle School Principal

Message from the High School



Making the Most of the Holidays

It's that time of year: students are full of anticipation at the prospect of a 3-week reprieve from their hectic schedules. Amidst the travel, the reunions and the seasonal cheer, families might also have a moment to start making solid plans for the summer. The summer represents a unique opportunity for students to stay engaged by using that unstructured time to indulge in their preferred familiar hobbies or engage in new experiences. It is a time that, if well used can prompt students to develop additional skills and

discover new passions. The personal benefits that can be derived are significant and this can also be a way for students to boost their individual profile as they look ahead to their university years.

Committing to enriching activities can really help students develop competencies that universities are seeking in their applicants. It can also be a way for students to showcase on their application their broad range of interests and the value they place on living a balanced life. Students might choose to:

- travel and immerse themselves in a new culture
- attend a multi-activity camp
- volunteer at a local organization
- take an online course
- join a sports academy
- initiate a fundraising drive to help the needy
- work to raise awareness about a certain cause

There are also many structured summer schools where students can enrol to gain exposure to an unfamiliar subject area, gain practical experience of a particular career or learn a new language. Organised group or private campus tours and pre-college programmes are also a productive way to use holiday time. If you haven't yet done so, please view our new Summer Programmes database (now featured on the school's website under the University Counseling section).

Summer Experiences for High School Students	
Broadreach	Global Summer Adventures
Bucksmore Education	Academic Summer Courses in 'Prestigious Locations'
Cardiff University, Wales	Cardiff Summer School Programmes
Carl Benz School of Engineering	CBS World of Engineering Summer School , Germany
College for International Citizenship	Identity and Global Citizenship Summer Course
EU Business School	International Summer School , Barcelona
Florida State University	FSU Academic & Civic Camps
IE University	Summer Schools at IE , Madrid & Segovia
Immerse Education	Cambridge Summer School
Imperial College London	Global Summer School
Interlochen Center for the Arts	Summer Arts Camp - Michigan, USA
InvestIN Education	Young Doctor Summer Internship , University College London Young Engineer Summer Internship , University College London Young Investment Banker Summer Internship London & Frankfurt Young Lawyer Summer Internship , University College London Silicon Valley Summer Internship California

Some of these summer experiences have registration deadlines in January so it's worthwhile having a look now to see what is available. Happy holidays!

Denise Barker - University Counselor

Congratulations to Alia Sadiq Khan, Grade 9/2 who won first place with a Gold Medal in the 12th Oman National Karate Championship, held on Friday 6th December 2019 at Sultan Qaboos Sports Complex. The competition applied rules of the International Governing Body of Karate, The World Karate Federation.



Simon Walker - High School Principal

Message from the Extra Curriculum Program

Games after the Break

6th January	U16 Boys B'Ball vs ISO @ ABA	3:15 - 4:30pm
6th January	U12 Boys Soc vs ISO @ ABA	3:00 - 3:40pm
6th January	U12 Girls Soc vs ISO @ ABA	3:00 - 3:40pm
7th January	U16 Girls B'Ball vs ISO @ ABA	3:15 - 4:30pm
7th January	U14 Boys Soc vs ABQ @ ABQ	3:00 - 4:00pm
7th January	U14 Girls Soc vs ABQ @ ABQ	3:00 - 4:00pm
8th January	U19 Boys B'Ball vs TAISM @ ABA	4:00 - 5:15pm
9th January	U12 Boys Soc vs TAISM @ TAISM	4:00 - 5:00pm
9th January	U13 Boys Soc vs TAISM @ TAISM	4:00 - 5:00pm

*Paul Brace
Athletics Director*

Message from the Fine Arts Department



ABA Trumpets Entertain at the Winter Festival

The group comprises of trumpeters from Elementary, Middle, High and Staff. We started to meet in October and work on a variety of music to entertain. Last Thursday was our first public showdown and we really enjoyed performing to a large audience. Sadly, our second performance was cancelled due to rain, but we are going to play again on the last day of term at the Middle and High School Assembly.

ABA The Tribe entertained us during the Winter Fest. Lovely enthusiastic singing to start us off in the Holiday mode. Well done to Ms Zita and The Tribe for creating a programme in one month. Hopefully they will entertain us with more songs later in the year.

ABA Concert Band Weekend

The ABA Concert Band Weekend is one month away on 17th and 18th January. This is promising to be a weekend filled with amazing music making, good food and social activities. Please discuss with your children about their participation. It really is the best way to develop a love for music and to enjoy a weekend! There will be specialist coaches for each instrument and a wonderful conductor coming here specially to lead us.





CONCERT BAND WEEKEND

For Middle School
(Ages 11-15)

January 17-18 2020
World Class Artists and Musicians
Brass and Woodwind Workshops
Cost: 10 OMR

Free Concert 5pm
Saturday 18th January
ABA Performing Arts Center

Anthony Langrish - Fine Arts Director

Message from the ABA Alumni

You have probably never come across ABA's Alumni Association, but it was started 7 years ago and has been quietly beaver away in the background ever since. Christmas is a busy season for us, as it is when many former students come back to Oman to see family and catch up with old friends. Our Alumni are our school's institutional memory, so it is important we stay in touch with them.

Like school, the Alumni has its own social media pages, so we can both follow students once they have left and keep them up to date with what is going on at school now. About a month ago, whilst browsing these pages, we were reminded about a much-loved ABA Alumnus, Paul Uche. Paul was an exceptional individual, both academically brilliant, artistic, a recognised leader among his peers and a caring friend. He graduated from ABA in 2009 to take up a place at MIT reading Chemical Engineering, but was sadly diagnosed with Myeloid Leukaemia and died in 2014. The reason for the reminder was something Paul's brother Bernie posted on Facebook. Shortly after his death, Paul's family set up a Foundation in his name, to keep his memory alive. Its sole aim was to revitalise the only health centre in a village back home in his native Nigeria. Thanks to the funds raised (in large part from the ABA community at the time), the centre has been a respectable facility for the past 5 years, allowing patients to be seen under dignified conditions. However, a problem with the solar panels forced Bernie to put out a request for more donations. Thinking it would be lovely if the ABA Alumni community could rally around to help, we shared the post on our page. However, we didn't realise help was actually much closer to hand!

ABA is such a busy school that few of us can really say we know everything that goes on. For example, did you know Teens Giving Back, led by Ms Bina and with Janathan Balakrishnan, Harshita Haribaskar and Sara Al Barwani and executive officers, have been raising money since 2018 solely for the Paul Uche Foundation? The Alumni Association discovered this quite by chance this past week, so posted about this wonderfully active group and how they had managed to raise a significant amount of money in one day alone last week. Fortunately, the post was seen by Paul's friends who alerted his brother Bernie, who sent us these kind words:

Bernie Uche This is amazing! Our family is so very grateful. This is the power of the human spirit. We'd love to get in touch with the students and Ms Bina to personally thank them for this – please let me know how we can make this possible.

Thank you very much from the bottom of our hearts

It is messages like this, especially at this time of year, that make the Alumni Association's work so worthwhile. It's not just about keeping in touch with our students, but it's about creating shared bonds between the past and present. Together we are all so much stronger.

Message from the PTA



"Building our community together!"



The Winter Festival was a hit and helped us usher in the festive season and a spirit of giving at the school. Thank you Alison for leading the event and creating a warm festive atmosphere of cheer with your team: Anjum, Bex, Bokamaso, Christine, Ingrid, Malinka, Minita, Meeta, Paula, Penny, Theresa and Terry. Some moments captured in our lens follow.

A last word on Winter Festival

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to ensure Winter Festival was such a great success. We're incredibly grateful to Home Centre who provided the beautiful decorations – on the stage, at the Grotto and the Christmas trees around the carpark. We're also very grateful to the catering companies – Mani's, Frescoes and Jannat Moosa for their delicious food, the Hyatt for turkey sandwiches, Radisson Blu for the gingerbread house kit, Terry and Ingrid for their wonderful gingerbread houses, Muscat Singers who gave us

rousing renditions of well-known Christmas songs, Santa Claus in his grotto and Santa Claus who played the bagpipes and led the student dress up parade. Special thanks to Trinidad and the OIG staff for their important contributions to ensure set up, JP who provided stage technical support, all the student NGO's – SAP and UNICEF who provided hot chocolate and glüwein, LOMA and TGB for supervising student games, Student Council – Vice Chair Naman who was stage MC and his colleagues for providing a festive movie, ABA nurses – Nurse Merl and Nurse Suni for their presence ensuring health and safety, teachers - Nick, Zita and Anthony from the music department for preparing the folk-dancing, the Tribe choir and the Trumpet Band, Kumar for ensuring additional electricity provision, Vasu in the business office who supported logistics, Sylvia and team on the baked sale stall, ABA security staff. Last but not least the organizing team:

Anjum – Winter Festive dress up parade, additional lights arrangement, additional drinks for sale,
BK – communication with music teachers, Muscat singers and stage co-ordination
Christine – ABA ambassador organization
Theresa initially – set up and logistics and laterally Malinka
Minita – café organization
Nandita – communications, signage,
Paula – Santa's grotto, accounting work,
Penny – crafts, Santa on his bagpipes
Bex – name the reindeer
Terry and Ingrid – gingerbread house
Meeta – bazaar co-ordination



Thank You

Venise "Santa's pony"
comes visiting...

Ms Theresa for bringing Venise to ABA! Kids from ECE, middle school and even grown ups all adore the visits from Santa's pony. We thank you and Mr Ghulam for demonstrating the healthy choices that Venise makes! We look forward to this visit every year and for the children that wrote to Santa, I am sure they are eagerly waiting for replies.



PTA DATES

Mon. Jan. 13th @ PTA room
Community Meeting, 7.40 - 8.40 am

Thu. Jan. 16th @ Secondary Cafeteria
Parent Art Exhibition, 6 - 8 pm

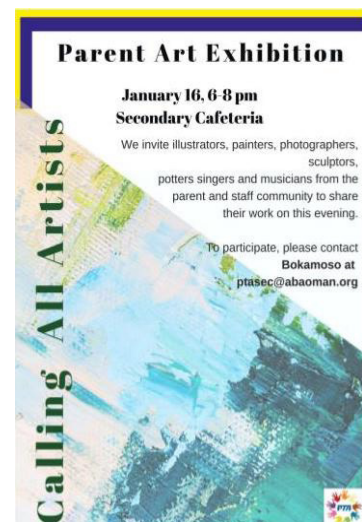
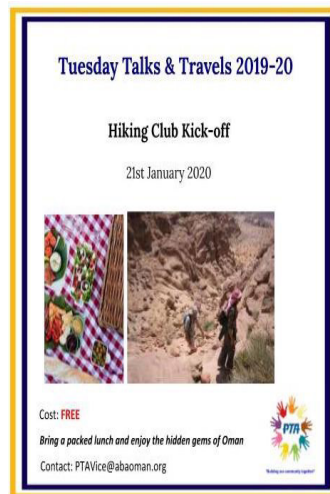
Tue. Jan. 21st
TTT - Hiking Club kicks off @ 7.40 - 1 pm



A Sneak preview to January 2020!

We will usher in the new year with the Parent Art Exhibition. Scheduled on 16th Jan, the exhibition celebrates amazing works of artists from within the community. Inviting all artists to share their wonderful work. Please contact Bokamasso at PTASec@abaoman.org for information or to register.

The much acclaimed and popular TTT Hiking club kicks off January 21st. Make the most of the cooler weather; [contact Laila at PTAVice@abaoman.org](mailto:PTAVice@abaoman.org) for details.



We hope that you all have a wonderful vacation. For the families celebrating; we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year. See you in 2020!

*Your PTA
'Building Our Community Together'*