



With the Name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Arizona Cultural Academy's

enigma

school newsletter

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Editorial Board 

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Reflection on Procrastination Sarah Syed

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ!

All praise and thanks are due to Allah that we are both able to read this sentence!

Dawud Wharnsby, internationally known poet, once wrote "This could be the final hour- or this could be the finest hour..."

At the end of spring break, we, the entire nation's students ask ourselves the same question: "Why did I procrastinate?" although by the time we do, it is too late.

Self reflection is a characteristic necessary of a Muslim. While procrastinating during spring break may not be a major catastrophe, it does show the importance we

give to time in our lives. It is certainly a catastrophe if procrastination is our habit, and spring break was just a result of our habit. When will we "get serious" about our time? As Muslims, we need to think about our actions and ask ourselves if we are using our time productively. It would be a calamity of immeasurable proportion if we asked that very same question- "Why did I procrastinate?" at the time of death.

None of the students living in Japan expected an earthquake during their spring break. Our prayers remain with the people in Japan, and may Allah help us to only learn

from this event and protect us from sudden death and natural disasters.

Let us resolve to think and act in the challengingly inspirational context of Mr. Wharnsby's words: "This could be the finest hour, or this could be the final hour..." every hour, right now.

Before ending, I would like to recognize the rest of the Editorial Board for their work in this newsletter- you all are amazing, masha'Allah!

All comments are welcome at:
acaedboard
@azacademy.org

Rome: Creative Thoughts by Tarteel Al-Imam

"Rome was not built in a day." We hear this saying quite often. Rome was perhaps one of the most advanced civilizations. Her people achieved what many others could not. Rome's incredible army, rich literature and alphabet which most of us still use today, are only a few of those accomplishments.

However, Rome was also very brutal and tyrannical civilization. Many of its achievements were due to the arduous work and effort of commoners and slaves. Most of these people had no rights. Slaves were nothing more than just property. They could be bought and sold, punished and whipped by their masters. Working in farms, cleaning

sewers, and serving the wealthy were only some of the jobs slaves had to do.

Rome also had its gruesome ways. The Roman's idea of entertainment was wild beasts tearing each other apart, or gladiators fighting each other to death. Also, some of their emperors were mad. They would act in a ruthless manner in order to attain power. On many occasions, this power would drive emperors to madness. The famous emperor Nero killed his own mother and wife. Also, the cruel emperor Septimus Severus had the body of his dead enemy laid on the ground so he could ride over it with

his horse.

Despite all this, we still admire this ancient civilization. The reason why is because of all of its great achievements. The Romans had incredible engineering. They built excellent bridges, many cities, and amazing buildings such as the Colosseum. Their art and literature are still known today, and many paintings and sculptures today were inspired by the Romans. To conclude, although it had its faults and injustices, Rome is one of the most admired ancient civilizations.

Contact the

Editorial Board 

acaedboard@azacademy.org!

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Students spoke impressively at the Student Council elections on March 9th, 2011!

"Every person went up with a huge smile on their face, proud of what they had achieved. ..."
- National Honor Society Student Hasan Mustafa, 2010



Newly inducted members putting away chairs & having fun!

Student-Run Club Updates

Student Council:

Elections were held the last week of the Quarter! Say congratulations and pray for our new leaders, President Hasan Mustafa, Vice President Fatima Lasker, Secretary Rahma Muslet, Treasurer Lena Sarsour, and Public Relations Geele Yousuf!

Meeting times will be defined.

Honor Society:

Basketball Game: Our first afterschool basketball game, organized by Akram AbdAllah, was an immediate success! Please come attend our now-weekly games on Monday af-

terschool!

Elections: Elections will be held on March 25th, 2011 in our meeting!

Hours Due: National Honor and Junior Honor Society students' quarterly service hours were due the last week of break!

Meetings are held every Friday afterschool from 3:10—3:45 approx.

Editorial:

Editorial meetings are held according to need. If you would like to contribute or join our meetings, please let

us know by sending an email at: acaebd@azacademy.org, or contact Sarah Syed, our Editor!

Big Picture Club: Big Picture Club students will be performing at **Ms. Maesa's upcoming girls' event on April 8th!** Keep your eyes out for their performances! We meet twice weekly during second lunch in Ms. Jane Smut's room. Bring a bagged lunch and a smile!

Honor Society Induction Ceremony By Hasan Mustafa

On Wednesday, February 9th, 2011, ACA's National Honor Society hosted their annual induction ceremony. This is the annual event that certain students that meet certain criteria are inducted into the National Honor Society. It was a day filled with joy and excitement.

Parents and teachers eager to see their young children join such a prestigious group named the National Honor Society. Students were excited they finally get to join the group they have been attempting to get for so long.

The students first introduced the current members of the Society, and had them sit on the side of the stage. Then they called in the new members and had them sit on the stage overlooking the crowd of proud parents and teachers. What felt like long minutes was

just a few seconds. They had us recite the Society's pledge making us ensure the teachers not only that we gained this position but we would



also be the leading role models for all the other students. Once that had been done they called each name, one by

one giving us a certificate, a pin, and a handshake saying welcome to this prestigious society. Every person went up with a huge smile on their face, proud of what they had achieved.

Then it was announced that you could grab a drink or a muffin at the back of the room, while inviting the new members and their families to go to the

spot that was reserved just for them and grab a piece of cake. Each person enjoying eating and talking with others of their achievement.

Once all of it was done the first thing all of the members did was show that they would start from now showing that they are National Honor Society member material by cleaning up. They stacked chairs, folded tables, and put away the stage. Now those members walk the school campus proud of their achievement with



their heads held high and their hands ready to help any person in need!

Seventh Annual Qur'aan Competition 2011

On February 17, 2011 Arizona Cultural Academy had its seventh annual Quran Competition. As usual, it was a most exciting time for all of the people, with students cheering on the competitors and listening patiently.

The event kicked off with Ms. Iman Sarsour introducing the rules and our three judges. Our own Ms. Maesa, the elementary Qur'aan teacher, Br. Abdulbasir Ali the Quran teacher from PMIS, and Ms. Marwa Aboucher. After that, the high school and middle school was dismissed, and the first group started to compete.

It was enjoyable for the elders to watch, with the younger tongues tense and air buzzing! Competition built up

with the middle schoolers and high school. Beautiful voices and powerful words from our talented students resonated in the masjid, astonishing the teachers and students alike. Then there was a break, and after prayer the awards started!

The winners for the first group boys were: Abdullah Arojjoye for first place, Ahmed Juvale and Seraj Khar-chaf for second (tie), and Sami Allaban for third. For the girls first group it was: Sumaya Badi for first place,

Aisha Hasan for second, and Emmen Haq for third. For the second group boys: Farhan Alam for first, Malik Hlayhel for second, and Farhan Rahman for third. For the girls: Kinza Ahmed for first, Afra Nawar for second, and Aisha Aden for third. For third group boys: Hasan Hlayhel for first, Umer Hasan

for second, and Ebrahim Nrhssien for third. Mona Alhadheri was our star, as our

experienced competitor from the high school girls. It was quite an exciting time, congratulations to all the winners!



Trophies twinkled in the front of the masjid tantalizingly !

Charity and Volunteerism: Values

On Saturday February 5th, 2011, Islamic Relief held a fundraiser for Gaza in our very own gym!

The program included a short presentation on the current situation in Gaza, an explanation on what Islamic Relief does for aid work and how we can help, along with dinner and entertainment. We learned that Islamic Relief operated in over 50 countries and did several local projects.

After the moving presentation, even coins were a big deal and young people delved into their pockets to retrieve whatever they could possibly give, while adults wrote checks and sealed envelopes one after another. SubhanAllah, we are always reminded- whatever we sacrifice for the sake of God is

actually almost a self-serving act, for God does not need charity, we need to give it for our own record of deeds and to fulfill our purpose as creation

of God. Not only that, but we are overwhelmed by

the mercy of Allah in that He returns us for whatever we give for His sake multiple times over! After those soul-lifting reminders, we were entertained by the famous nasheed group Noor and our own local boys' nasheed group as well!

ACA students deserve a

shoutout for volunteerism that day! They helped to setup, stood at registration, helped out with food, and collected donations after dinner.

Amongst the audience were students from ASU's Students for Justice in Palestine group, who made it out to an Islamic school to attend this fundraiser! It was heartening to see young people believe in a cause so strongly that they were willing to step out of their comfort zone and attend a Muslim event. BarakAllahu feekum!

May Allah make that night a source of blessing for all of us for days to come!



"...ACA students deserve a shoutout for volunteerism that day!..."

“Seniors. It’s safe to say they are the faces of the pride at Arizona Cultural Academy...”
 -Fitri Cortes, ACA Junior

Double Senior Interview by Fitri Cortes

Seniors. It’s safe to say they are the faces of the pride at Arizona Cultural Academy. Just like in any school, the 12th graders are looked up to. They show great responsibility, leadership and so much more. In this senior corner, I have interviewed two senior guys: Ebrahim Nurhussien and Shadi Smoudi. I asked both of them several questions as they were spending their lunch volunteering for student council by selling chicken shawarmas and gyros on February 4th, 2011.



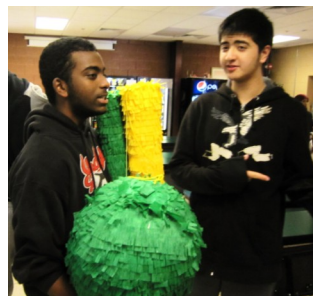
I first started with the most obvious question. “What are you going to miss about ACA after graduation?” Their answers were hilariously different. Ebrahim said he would miss the

sense of family that ACA offers. Shadi admitted that he would miss the free time and leniency. I continued on to the next question that was inspired by Shadi’s answer. “What was the hardest thing about senior year?” Applying to college was the most stressful thing about Ebrahim’s senior year. To Shadi, the workload was the biggest challenge. You see, Shadi has been taking extra college classes outside of ACA in order to get his associate’s degree. He needs to make up for the credits that he should’ve gotten in freshmen and sophomore year before we started the



program for concurrent classes at ACA. Even through all this hard work, I imagine that senior year is naturally still really fun. To clear up my assumptions, I proceeded to the next question: “Describe senior year in 5 words tops.” Ebrahim said “Best year of my life.” Shadi answered “Fun. United. Hard.”

In conclusion, it looks like senior year will be a mix of stress and joy. Thank you Ebrahim and Shadi for letting us have a sneak peak of what senior year is like. I hope that you end high school smoothly and happily. Congratulations on the scholarships, and good luck at ASU!



Imam Zaid Shakir answers a question onstage while Shaykh Hamza sits besides him.

Zaytuna Event: How Do We Respond?

On March 6th, 2011, the Arizona community was blessed with the presence of two internationally known scholars from the Zaytuna Institute. Two ACA students, freshman Umer Hasan, and junior Fitri Cortes were invited to open the event with Qur’an recitation, while several ACA students attended to benefit from the event.

Well-known intellectual Shaykh Hamza Yusuf Hanson, originally Mark Hanson, is an American of Irish descent who

converted to Islam in 1977 and subsequently studied Islam in a traditional style in several venues overseas. He returned to co-found Zaytuna Institute and has been teaching Islam since.



Popular speaker Imam Zaid Shakir, also an American convert

to Islam, came of age during the American civil rights struggle and is well-loved by the youth for his “keep it real” attitude, basketball skills and relevant cultural references.

At this program, our prestigious speakers addressed the issue of Islamophobia in America. As they are culturally grounded in both Islamic and American tradition, both provided a well-researched perspective on the historical significance of Islamophobia.

ACA's "Coolest" Fundraiser!

ACA held its "coolest" fundraiser ever on March 5th, 2011, at the Polar Ice Skating Rink, impressively bringing in almost five hundred dollars!

Organized by our awesome program coordinator Ms. Tara, both students and the community flocked to the rink on Saturday at 12:30 PM to have fun on the ice together.

As we entered the building, we were greeted by bright orange and green balloons adorning the ACA ticket table. Ms. Tara and her sister at the table smiled at all those coming in for registration!



Walking a little further, we were pleasantly surprised to discover our fellow sisters Rana Ali and Mona Alhadheri manning the cotton candy and popcorn tables. They took shifts with Umer Syed and Shadi Smoudi. The giant blue and pink fluffy candy tempted whoever passed the display!

Finally, we arrived clutching skates in our hands, put them on, and hobbled slowly into the rink. Gripping the bars conveniently attached to the walls, we stumbled in... and a whoosh of cold air enveloped us! Kids and adults both zoomed around



on skates. Nervous skaters slowly made their way around the rink, while more experienced skaters streaked through the rink

and held hands forming chains of people. It was heartwarming to see the older students help younger ones and take them around at their own pace!

All in all, it was a really refreshingly creative fundraiser! Thank you so much Ms. Tara and Polar Ice!



Students Rana Ali and Mona Alhadheri stood behind the cotton candy and popcorn tables!

ACA's 100th Day of School Celebration

This year the 28th of January marked our 100th day of school! Elementary school enjoyed a creative celebration organized by their teachers. Ms. Maesa and her art class designed beautiful, giant green and yellow piñatas made of paper-mâché, which were the highlight of the event!

Elementary students waited in line organized by their teachers to get their turn at cracking a piñata! They were impressively well behaved as there are almost 70-80 students in elementary school!



Everyone enjoyed watching the students excitedly swing their sticks, even the juniors and seniors who came to help out and watch! The smiling faces, exciting chants and glittering candy were enough to make anyone laugh and smile. Teachers walked around with

cameras in the loud ruckus and let their students enjoy themselves.

If you were a visitor for Jumu'ah salah at ACA, you must have noticed the bright and beautiful posters at the gate of the



school, created by our resident artists in the elementary classes! One of the posters that really caught my eye was the one with neon purple painted handprints on a hot pink background!

All in all, it was a wonderfully spirit-filled event! Thank you to the organizers!



Artistic posters decorated the school for the celebration, while our manager Br. Adnane organized the hanging of piñatas from the ceiling...



Dua'a of the Quarter: Looking in the Mirror

Dua'a, or supplication, is the core of worship, and worship is one of the foods of the soul.

In Islam we recognize the human being is composed of two distinct parts: the soul and the body. The body of man was created from the earth and will return to the earth, while the soul was created by Allah and will return to Allah. In order to sustain both these components of a human being, we nourish them constantly. To feed the body, we turn to the earth. To nourish the soul, we turn to Allah, and from sustaining both comes true tranquility.

An effective way to consistently be engaged in remembrance of Allah is to learn the supplications that Rasulallah (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to say upon doing certain actions. One of the dua'as he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said was upon looking in the mirror:

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ حَسَّنْتَ خَلْقِي
فَحَسِّنْ خُلُقِي

which means:

"O Allah, as You have beautified my outward appearance beautify my character as well."

Memorize the dua'a and remember to say it next time you see your reflection in the mirror!

Ad-Dua'a (Supplication)

Poetry by Imam Ash-Shafi'i
(rahimahumullah)
Translated by Ammar AlShukry

أَتَيْزاً بالدعاء وتزديبو وما تدري بما صنع
الدعاء

سيام الميل ا تخطي ولكن ليا أمد، ولأمد، انقضاء
Do you belittle du'a and discount it-
While not knowing what the prayer accomplishes,
The arrows of the night do not miss their target

But they have a delay, and the delay then finishes



On 02/23/2011, freshmen Zainab Melosh and Tarteel Al-Imam worked on a poster to promote our campus! "We love our campus, please keep it clean!"

Community Event Announcements

Bayyinah Class: Qur'aan for

Family

When:

APRIL 2, 2011
10 AM—3:30 PM

Register today! -

[http://bayyinah.com/
studentcenter/](http://bayyinah.com/studentcenter/)

Where:

Murdock Hall 101 - ASU
Tempe
450 e. Orange Street, Tempe,
AZ 85287

Cost:

\$35

Br. Nouman Ali Khan, Bayyinah Instructor

The Destroyer of Pleasures

Poetry By Mona Alhadheri

Some people hate it..
And some people aren't even scared of it
Some wait for it to come quickly
Cause they're sick of this world and all of its
humility
..Are you ready for it?..
Are you ready to face the angel of death
while he grabs your soul?
Will he look terrifying..or will he look beautiful?
He won't look beautiful because of how
much money you have or how many stocks
you stocked
But it's how much Eeman you got
When you see him..you will forget ALL the
pleasures of this life
All the games, the fun... and all those
nights
You see him and you're full of fright
He grabs your soul and takes it out of your
body
Then, you don't have anybody
All the friends and families are all gone
Remembering that day you slept right
threw down
Missing Fajr and you don't mind
Now you realize how you were so blind
Blinded by this Dunya..Forgot about Allah,
The Most Kind
Allah gave you so many signs
In incredibly designs
Just to make you realize
To worship Him alone with no partners
And not to worship all those useless dollars
So, I advise all of you who are living
To not forget Allah and keep remembering
Remember..Keep on reflecting on His signs
And Allah is watching you..so Fear Him



Packed auditorium for Zaytuna College's event: "How Do We Respond?"; ACA students were invited to recite Qur'aan to open the event!