



Foundation Times 2015 - 2016

Weill Cornell Medicine-Qatar





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Introduction

by Dr. Rachid Bendriss



I am delighted to welcome you to our latest issue of The Foundation Times. On behalf of our Foundation students, I invite you to explore the vibrant content and creative contributions of our talented class. Students are excited to share their reflections on their learning, fun events, and accomplishments throughout this academic year. Please join me in congratulating the 2016 Foundation class. We are proud of them.

Dr. Rachid Bendriss
Assistant Dean, Student Recruitment, Outreach, and Foundation

Dear Students



by the Teaching Specialists & TA

Being new to Qatar, you have given me so many inside tips that have made my transition here go very smoothly. Your enthusiasm for learning makes doing what I do so much easier and enjoyable! As human beings, I feel you are all talented in your own right. Through your writing, I am very lucky to be privy to your innermost thoughts and feelings. So I thank you for all these things, especially being comfortable enough to allow me these glimpses of your wonderful personalities!

Together with the other Teaching Specialists and Teaching Assistant, I wish you all the very best now and always.



Sincerely,
Ms. Fernandes

Your enthusiasm and motivation makes it so much fun to be in the classroom with you all. Your engagement and diverse personalities creates a wonderful learning atmosphere. I enjoy hearing your ideas and thoughts about chemistry and also the world around you. Your inspiration and creativity inspires me as well (I now have as many colored highlighters as all of you). I am looking forward to seeing you develop into future doctors!

Annalise Schoonmaker

Working with the 2015-2016 Foundation class has been a truly special experience. All of you are not only hard working and smart, but also pleasant and funny. I can see a big difference between my first day with you (mainly during the first lab) and the progress that you made only after a few months. After this year, my hope is to see all of you in Premed 1 and after a few years as doctors. Best of luck in the coming years—Bonne chance pour le future.

Dr. Ali Chaari

Working here with Foundation students has been very enjoyable. I enjoy your company and I am always available to you in your studies because you show a lot of interest in doing well. All this is in order to do one of the most respected and professional jobs in the world—to become medical doctors and to treat patients to the best of your abilities. Good luck to all of you and accept my very best wishes to become physicians very soon. NEVER GIVE UP doing what you are here for.

Dr. Nandeo Choony

It is indeed a great experience to work with the Foundation students—thanks to your smiles, enthusiasm and character. You helped me to see that you are capable of much more than I expected with incredibly complex problem solving and critical thinking skills. You also helped me to realize what I need to learn so I can do better with next year's classes. I am very happy to see you applying calculus techniques in Physics classes. I will continue to brag about how wonderful you are and will look forward to hearing your stories of learning and exploration when I see you again next year in the hallways.

“Be excellent to one another.”

Padmakumari “Padma” Sarada

Orientation

by Khalifa Al-sulaiti

On the 17th day of August 2015, faculty and staff greeted us cheerfully while tending vibrant stations, distributing several souvenirs that included Cornell shirts, cups, and bags. The feeling of excitement surrounded us as we were about to get involved in whimsical activities such as the M&M icebreaker game. The game challenged us to recall certain traits that characterized each individual in the group. It was a nice sensation, since it initiated the bond with our future colleagues. The next day, we had the opportunity to engage in a rewarding charity event. We assisted the faculty with organizing clothes, wrapping gifts, and handling packages for donation. The effort as well as the feeling of gratitude from such a fruitful event will remain in our memories. Time went by so fast as the curtains of orientation drew to a close. We were about to embark on a lifelong journey to become doctors in the future. The immensity of that orientation week was hard to fathom. Now, we are yearning to finish our first year at Weill Cornell Medicine fully enriched for the upcoming years.



Qoutable Quotes

by Shaikha Al-Thani & Haya Al-Sewaidi

“yaaass” - Reem

“PURPLE!!” - Nasser Kh

“Are you serious?” - Khalifa

“3ala kaifch” - Nada

“La walla” - Haya T

“Let’s grip it and rip it!” - Ms. Fernandes

“So good!!” - Nasser Kh

“ooooh nooooo” -Dana

“Let us set the world on Fire!”- Khalifa

“Exactly!” -Annalise



“shd5al” - Nada

“It’s so funny.”- Dana

Foundation Survival Guide

by Maha Ali



- 1 Don't be shy, ask! - Kawthar
- 2 Work in groups. - Hamda
- 3 Not sleeping today keeps good grades away... seriously. - Maha
- 4 Don't over think it! -Haya S
- 5 Don't create a Netflix account during finals. - Mai



6 Delete your snap account during finals... - Kawthar

7 Just do your work and be POSITIVE! - Sumaya

8 Start your chemistry lab report as soon as possible, do not wait till the weekend, you will totally regret it - Kawthar

9 Don't hesitate to sacrifice your weekends. - Maha

10 Befriend your instructors! - Hamda



Bonus tip: If you're about to give up, remember what brought you to Cornell in the first place. -Reem

Poetry

by Al Reem Al Sulaiti

Tender Change

And I know you will never see this,
but if the sky will carry my ink and papers,
if fallen feathers would fledge towards your soul,
and if you ever find the key to my secret garden,

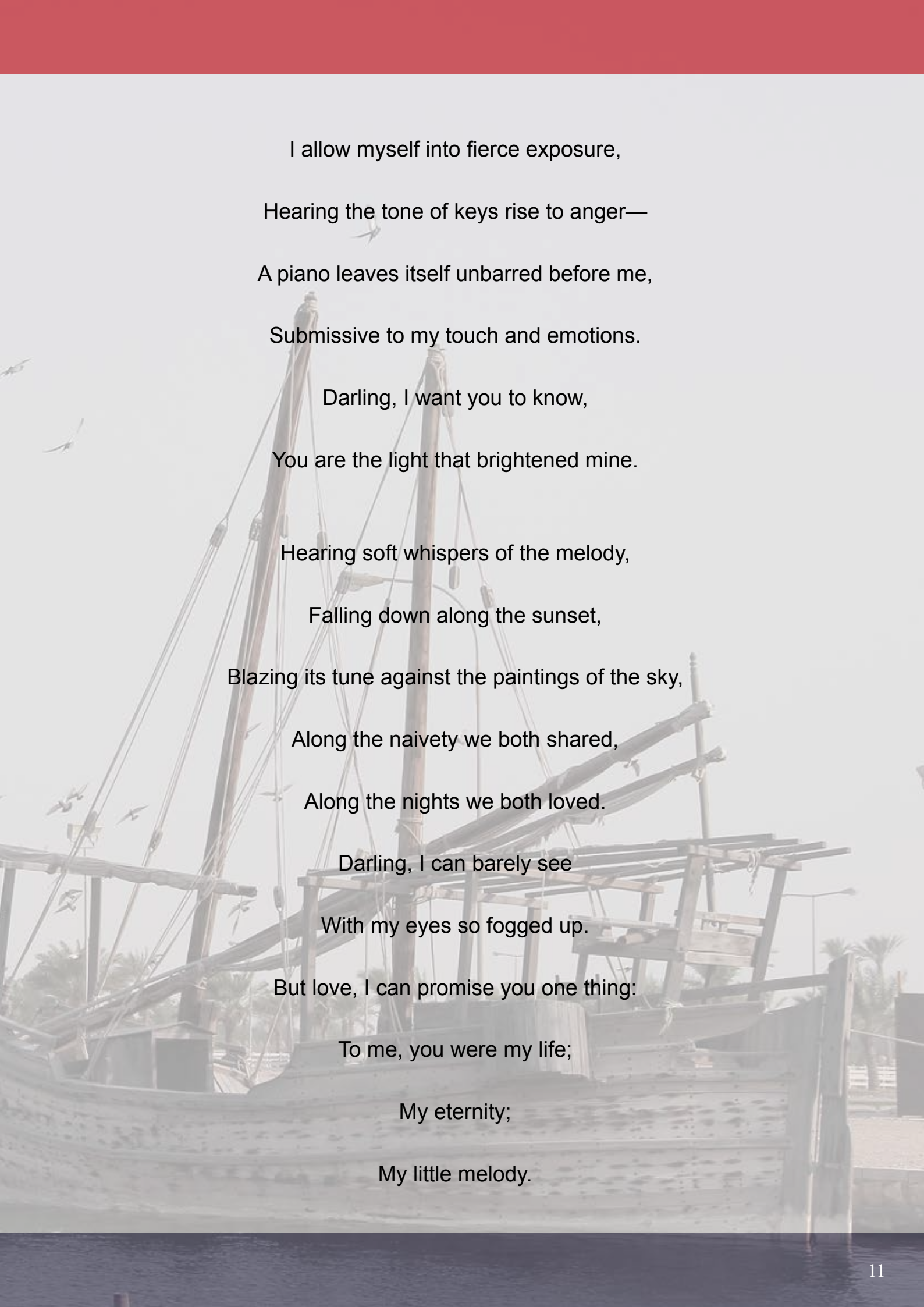
I want you to know
you are the universe that changed mine.

My little fairy tale,
My little wondering dream,

My moonlight sonata;
I quench my heart in grit,

Hold my breath in silence,
And wait for stars to explode.

I want you to know
You are the dream that made mine.



I allow myself into fierce exposure,
Hearing the tone of keys rise to anger—
A piano leaves itself unbarred before me,
Submissive to my touch and emotions.

Darling, I want you to know,
You are the light that brightened mine.

Hearing soft whispers of the melody,
Falling down along the sunset,
Blazing its tune against the paintings of the sky,
Along the naivety we both shared,
Along the nights we both loved.

Darling, I can barely see
With my eyes so fogged up.
But love, I can promise you one thing:

To me, you were my life;

My eternity;

My little melody.

Book Review

by Sumaya Maraghi, Lulwa Alhaddad & Maha Ali

Flowers for Algernon

Sumaya Maraghi

Flowers For Algernon by Daniel Keyes is a tragedy and emotional fiction novel. In 1960, this novel won a Hugo Award winner. I have chosen this book due to the genre of major conflicts between emotions and intelligence in human beings.

The story is narrated from the first person point of view by the protagonist, Charlie Gordon, in 17 progress reports starting on March 3rd to November 21st of that same year in New York City. Gordon is a 32-year-old mentally disabled man who undergoes an experiment that enhances intelligence drastically. The same operation was performed beforehand on a mouse named Algernon, which had tripled his intelligence. As Charlie's intelligence increases, he starts to analyze his past and present relationships and discovers the experience of different emotions throughout the story that cause him to change his perspective about many things he believed in. He has a hard time establishing new relationships due to his underdeveloped emotional intelligence. Soon, his intelligence would reach a level where he would take over the experiment because he found a flaw in it. He later discovers his fate after witnessing what happens to Algernon.

Flowers for Algernon is one of my favorite books because of the amazing storyline and the on-going character development, which brought out the characters' emotions very clearly. I highly recommend this novel for people in their late teens and beyond. The novel has been produced as a movie, but I do not recommend it because the book is much better.

Image: <http://ffathebook.weebly.com/works-cited.html>



The Color Purple

Lulwa Alhaddad

In 1982, Alice Walker, an African-American writer, published the Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *The Color Purple*. Underscored by the award, Walker earned her well-deserved place in the literary world and my endless admiration of her work. I chose this classic for its genre, as fiction is my favorite. I also chose it for its uniqueness among African-American novels. Unlike the African-American novels I have encountered which include black-white relations, the racism in this piece is manifested within the black community.



In this work of magnificence, the author writes in the form of letters used as a method to engage the reader into living in every aspect of the novel. First, she utilizes figurative language to ensure that the reader understands the meaning behind the content of *The Color Purple*. For instance, “I make myself wood”—the metaphor in this quote shows how the protagonist, Celie, stiffens herself when Mister (her husband) hits her in order to minimize the pain. The author also uses simile to make it easier for readers to visualize. For example, from the quote, “Shug Avery black as my shoe,” I can infer that she is dark skinned.

Walker also employs symbolism to provide meaning beyond what is actually written. This tool in particular aims to take the reader into a higher level of thinking towards the backdrop of the novel. For instance, the title itself is a symbol of all the beautiful things in life that Celie, the main character, fails to see. Consequently, Celie loses faith in God and writes letters to her sister Nettie.

Walker’s *The Color Purple* reflects some parts of her life. First, the novel takes place in Georgia where the writer is originally from. Second, some characters in the book exist in her real life. For example, Sophia,



Mister’s daughter-in-law (his eldest son Harpo’s wife), stood for her rights as a woman, exactly as the writer did, and worked as a maid for a white couple just as Walker’s mother did. In addition, Celie goes through teen pregnancy, something that the author went through, leaving her depressed and determined to commit suicide. Finally, Walker also was as a feminist who encouraged women to feel confident and become aware of their abilities. In the novel, this is represented by Shug Avery’s character and her effect on Celie.

The Color Purple is written with a mood of tolerance combined with endless hope. Despite being subject to racism, sexism, and persecution, the characters somehow rise above everything keeping them down. This superb novel deliberates the psychological effect of the events and influence people have on others until you see the big picture at the very end.

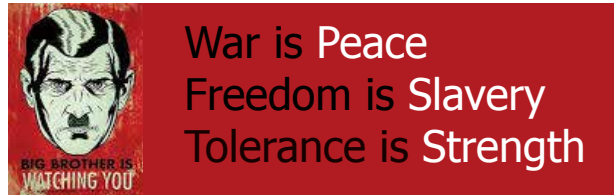
Images:

<http://www.shmoop.com/color-purple/>

<http://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/great-movie-the-color-purple-1985>

1984

Maha Ali



Many novels or literary works summarize a general belief the author has. And if that is so, then George Orwell certainly had some interesting things to say about the reality of our world. Published originally in 1948, his novel, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, is seen as Orwell's own vision of the future. This futuristic dystopian fiction had become a milestone in the history of literature and unique imagination. That, however, does not make the general ideas behind it strictly unrealistic. In fact, many argue that this future he prophesized is to some degree happening today. I chose this book because I love psychologically based fiction as well as futuristic views that involve the impending doom of humanity.

Set in a world where power is divided equally between three nations: Eastasia, Eurasia and Oceania, the latter is the homeland of our main character. Those three nations participate in a never-ending war that nobody can win. It had become less desperate and mostly moderated by the governments of those countries for their own purposes. The reason they continue a useless war is to maintain their own societies. But how? Speaking strictly about Oceania, the ruling force is called The Party (or specifically, the Inner Party), which is governed by the all-powerful Big Brother. This glorious government rules by dictatorship and enforcement of poverty. Moreover, the Inner Party employs a machine called Telescreens that monitors the citizens (Inner and Outer Party members) for any potential thoughts of betrayal. The war distracts the people of Oceania and leads them to blame their enemies on their misfortunes, making The Party and Big Brother loved by the masses. All this does not escape the consciousness of Winston Smith, a regular outer party member. He realizes the injustice of the party, and rebellion sparks in his heart when he finds those who are willing to support his opposition. He finds love in Julia, an alliance in O'Brien, and partnership in Mr. Charrington who allows him to secretly rent an apartment. Everything soon turns upside down when Winston realizes he has been deceived as well as discovered as a dissident.

This piece of art speaks volumes about the reality of our world and the human condition, but an interesting feature has to be the sheer descriptiveness of this novel. It flows through the starry eyes of Winston Smith and showcases his own feelings and opinions. One of the figurative features found in the book is the use of irony. This is illustrated in the book through Julia and Winston's relationship, which we later find out her true identity and her past.

Another fascinating linguistic feature is the abundance of metaphors and similes. An example would be this quotation: "And yet the rage that one felt was an abstract, undirected emotion which could be switched from one object to another like the flame of a blowlamp." This sentence beautifully illustrates the senseless and uncontrollable anger the character was feeling. It was as unfocused as a flame.

This book was one of the few that has ever moved me enough to tears at the end. It is a unique read as it relates so much to us in the present day even though it was a work of fiction that did not actually come to fruition in the year 1984. Truly enough, the writing style was dreadfully brilliant. It made me cringe until the very end, which means that it is varied and unpredictable. I would recommend this book to those looking for a brief round of angst.

Image: <http://www.oykugumus.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/1984>

*A*natomy Lab

by Nasser Al-Kuwari

In the first dissection lab, students had ambivalent feelings. We examined the surface with a strange feeling towards the mammalian specimen, the cat. We then dissected a small sheep's brain with curiosity to see the complex structures in reality. Understanding the spatial direction in the Anatomy textbook was challenging; however, the lab session helped us to embark into a joyful journey of exploration.



Molebrations

by Haya Al-Taweel & Dana Al-Sayegh

On October 20, the day started off by Haya Al-Taweel playing a beautiful piano piece. A group of students, involving Dana Al-Sayegh, Haya Al-Sewaidi, Shaikha Al-Thani, Mai Al Subaie, Sumaya Maraghi, and Khalifa Al-sulaiti performed a play in honor of Mole Day to entertain the audience. After that, Nasser Al-Khawaga hosted a funny "Who Wants to Be a Molionaire" competition, and prizes were given to the winners. Then, Reem Al-Sulaiti and Haya Al-Taweel performed an experiment demonstrating the reactivity of some compounds while testing the audience. Another form of entertainment was Khalifa Al-sulaiti's corner filled with interesting games. The last part, which everyone enjoyed (and was agreeably one of the best parts), was the delicious food in the buffet. We ended the day by celebrating Lulwa Alhaddad's birthday, which drew a smile on her face. Not only did we enjoy the fun we had, but we also learned how to work as a team to achieve the best results.



Birthday Girl!





True Stories

by Hamda Al-Mansoori, Kawthar Al-Najar & Haya Al-Taweel / Illustration by Fatima Al-Najar

Cambodian Disaster

by Hamda Al-Mansoori



After a long exhausting day of renovating a Cambodian classroom, I voluntarily sat in the front of the bus watching the “cool” girls gracefully make their way to the back. I often questioned why they wouldn’t invite me to sit back there and if there was something I could do to join them. These thoughts circulated in my head, and when they became overwhelming, I pulled out my phone, a place where I control everything, and began playing games.

By and by, it was almost bedtime and I hopped into my bed in hopes of drifting away into sleep, bringing this day to an end. This dream was too far away to reach, for I was feeling lonely. I was the youngest volunteer on this trip, an ambitious 13-year-old, who loved volunteering and the rewards that came along with it, but hated everything else, including homesickness. As I was thinking of home, I began questioning and hating myself for choosing to come on this trip. The sound of my alarm, which I set to an hour before breakfast, woke up my fussy roommate. Sabeeka, a chubby eighteen-year-old with sharp hooded eyes, sat on her bed and gave me the most terrifying stare ever; I seriously thought she would snap and start a serious fight. I nervously turned off my alarm and ran into the bathroom to avoid her.

“Good morning, Hamda,” said Ms. Precious. She was always so bubbly and inviting, which helped me endure this trip.

“Good morning, I woke up early today to join you on a walk,” I replied.

Strolling through the city, Phnom Penh looked so mesmerizing, and I was intrigued by all the colors and scents I encountered there. It smelled very woody and there was what appeared to be an orange cloud tightly hugging this vibrant city.

I trotted towards the bus, and made my way to the back of the vehicle. Sitting down, I felt very inspired after that pleasant walk to make a change and decided to socialize with this clique composed of what seemed to be witches, for this lonesomeness was slowly but surely killing me.

“Hi girls,” I said hesitantly. There was a cold silence; goosebumps ran down my back and I had to think quickly to evade humiliation.

“Waiet nobody hia waa’ me shay,” I retorted. It felt like I redeemed myself because, for once, they were actually impressed and I would not let that spark of hope die, I shall befriend them and forever be grateful for stepping out of my shell.

“Oh my God!!!!!!,” said one of the girls, “how come you are so good at this?” she asked eagerly.

“I don’t know,” I murmured, trying to contain myself.

“You should totally come to our sleep over tonight—you will have so much fun,” she offered.

“Cool, I’ll see if I can,” I replied in a cheesy manner to sound as normal as I possibly could, but the bubble of excitement surrounded me all day.

It was another long day; however, the anticipation made it seem even longer. As I made my way through the narrow and cold hotel alley, I made a quick turn to room 101 and caught a glimpse of the girls marching towards it. One of them spotted me creeping, and before she said anything, I spun around in an attempt to escape, but I failed as the creaky wooden floors amplified my presence.

“Is that you Hamda?” she started

“Uh... Umm Yeah, I was just gonna grab some snacks for the slumber party from my room,” I replied awkwardly.

“Oh, there is absolutely no need. We’ve got it all covered, why don’t you come on in?” she offered.

I stepped into the danger zone, and glanced into the intimidating girls faces. The room felt stuffy, the lights were dimmed, and a horror movie was playing in the background.

“Hey Hamda, why don’t you show off your Cambodian accent?” said Dana.

“Who me?” I stuttered.

Yes, go ahead,” she insisted.

After being forced, I had no choice but to spend the next ten minutes rambling on and on with my so-called “amazing” Cambodian accent. At that moment, I felt that the spot light was directed towards me, and I did not have to try and steal the attention. As I was finishing off my act, some of the girls circled into a group and were whispering into each other’s ears.

“We have a brilliant idea,” announced Dana. “Say if we called the trip’s official and pranked him with your Cambodian accent, are you willing to do so?” inquired Dana.

“I don’t think he’d like that; besides I wouldn’t want him to know it was me,” I answered.

“Come on Hamda, you’re so good at this, he would never know it was you,” she retorted.

I thought about going for it to steal the grand finale, and I eventually did.

Picking up the phone nervously, I started thinking how the girl knew his room number because it was a highly private thing, but this idea soon vanished as I began making jokes about Mr. Hassan’s clothes, and how I was not able to get rid of a stain with my Cambodian accent. My act was the highlight of the night. Many girls recorded me and complemented me endlessly. I made my way back to my bed, and went into a coma, similar to the ones experienced by performers after a huge gig. The next morning, I woke up earlier than usual and was the first to get on the bus to find Mr. Hassan sitting in his seat.

He was a tall and hairy middle-aged man with a raspy voice from days of non-stop presentations about this trip. From a distance, he looked intimidating, but when I got closer, he gave me the most terrifying stare ever. I was petrified; I remembered the event that took place yesterday, and that made me shiver. As I was getting closer, his stare became increasingly intense.

“So I heard you would like to wash my clothes, Hamda,” he started.

“Wwwwwhhhhhaaat!” I murmured.

“I heard you were pretty good at it, really experienced at stain removal,” he clarified.

At that time, I wished that the earth would swallow me, and that my life ended there because I was extremely embarrassed. It was evident through my body language. But looking back it, I believe that it was a valuable lesson full of morals. The most important is to never underestimate your potential and what you are capable of—because I never thought that I was talented. However, it turned out that my Cambodian impression was spot on, and it was hilarious to the girls. This experience helped me realize how intimidated I was from being judged by other “cooler” girls when I was younger. Currently, I am definitely more confident in my own skin, and people’s opinions about me are my least concern. These girls, who I assumed were cool, were certainly average teenagers that were older than me. That is probably one of the major reasons that made me think that they were better than me. Therefore, I can safely say that I have ambivalent feelings about this incident. I dislike it because it scarred my integrity in front of a reputable gentleman, but I cherish it because it aided in building a stronger version of Hamda, one that is more self-confident and poised. I guess that the advantage offsets the disadvantage after all.

Telling The Truth Relieves The Pain

by Kawthar Al-Najar

Illustrated by Fatima Al-Najar



One Friday night, my cousins and I did what we usually did—sneak out into the darkness of the night. Between the large scary palms from our grandmother’s beige house towards the next-door house, my home, was where our “formal” meetings were set up. We knew that we were not allowed to go

there by ourselves. How could nine-year-old children wander in the suburbs without being accompanied by their chaperones, the adults? But for us, the cousins, we did it smooth as silk. We listened to the low waves that vibrated inside our souls. “Run quickly between the trunks of the palms, under the sharp spines, towards the huge house. No one is there. It will take less than a minute.”

We, the innocent cousins, preferred that house since it went through some renovation: a new swimming pool, a new boat deck, new wall drawings, and especially, a new living room called “Al-Majlis.” We loved the variety of activities that we could spend our time on: swimming in the pool, or playing with our dolls on the deck, or playing “grownups” in the new Majlis room. I chose the Majlis room to be the location for our “formal dinners” because of its modern decorations that made me feel as an adult. Painted yellow, it had furniture with new modern black sofas and was decorated with valuable fragile vases brought from abroad that were engraved with historical Arabic quotes. However, children were not allowed to go there by themselves.

When we reached our destination, we immediately acted as if we were grownups. I still remember that I used to believe that I was a mature girl who could live by her self, but looking back, it seems I was not. We began preparing our formal dinner by placing the food in different green pottery bowls. What was hilarious about this was that we were not eating real dinner. It was only chip crumbs.

“Each bowl should have a special flavor,” I ordered. Then I continued my orders: “Salt, chili, vinegar, and BBQ should be in the middle of the table and the English breakfast tea cups on the corners next to the flowered plates.” Actually, there was no English breakfast tea; it was only the apple juices from our school lunch boxes.

All of these moments were very important to us, since no one knew about them, and we could finally act as adults. We used to sit on the black-leathered chairs at the rounded glass table pretending to have a formal family dinner. We reveled in the complete, lovely silence.

While we were having our usual dinner, we heard some footsteps coming towards the Majlis room—the room that children were prohibited to enter. We did not know what to do. I tried to hide the pottery bowls; however, my cousins were freaking out. One of them, the skinny Al-Hor who was light as a feather, opened the large window and jumped out. I am grateful that we were on the first floor, so she would not be hurt by this risky behavior. My other cousins followed her immediately. While jumping, CRACK!

I rushed towards the shutter to stop it from hitting the vase, but I was too late. I stopped and involuntarily closed my eyes waiting for the cracking sound. And there it was,

It was totally destroyed. Everyone was looking through the window to figure out what the sound was, but I was just about to cry. After a long moment of silence, all sights were on the crushed glass.



Zahra, my other cousin, who was the real mastermind behind our naughtiness, interrupted the silence and told me to bring a broom and a shovel to remove the shattered glass. We told everyone to stay away from the glass. We did not want anyone to get hurt either. I quickly brought the broom with a big black garbage bag. We cleaned everything and left the house innocently as if we were. We promised not to tell anyone about this incident until they noticed it by themselves in the hopes it would go undetected.

One week passed, and another after it, but no one noticed the empty space of that valuable vase. We were very grateful for that. Nevertheless, our happiness did not last forever. The third Friday came, and the family meeting was in the Majlis room. We, the kids, were on high alert. We remained at our seats, not acting naughty. Innocent as angels. Everyone noticed that we were acting unusually, seated calmly, since we had never been so calm; the adults thought we had a fight. However, the latter was not the case. After two hours of graving ourselves on those stark white sofas, our grandmother spoke to my father with the most hurtful words. Her words reached my heart as a poisoned dart. I panicked and my eyes were sparkling like the stars.



WHERE IS THE
VASE?

“Dear son, where did that beautiful vase disappear to? Why did you remove it? It was the most stunning one among all of the others,” my grandmother spoke. All of us, the evil cousins, looked at each other all at once. This glance made everyone notice that we were the responsible ones. We could not hide this horrible act, so I gave them an approving look—granting them permission to talk. After 18 years, I am still the one who gives orders to my beloved cousins.

We told everyone the truth, our sneaking out and so on.

“Hmmm, it just mmm that we were... playing here,” I murmured.

“What are you saying?” my aunt shouted. “Do you mean you, the kids, were playing in the Majlis room?” Then she angrily tossed her head.

All of our sights, the criminals’ gaze, were looking at the ground to avoid looking at our parents in the eyes, to show the adults that we still respected them and to show them that we were disappointed with ourselves. Everyone was mad at us, and they wanted to know we came to this place. We continued revealing the truth by taking turns, so not only one of us took the blame until they had enough—enough with our naughtiness.

We finally got exposed. We, the kids, could not have any formal meetings anymore. We were punished harshly by having a weekly talk about how to be a good kid. And kids do not like those talks. But that was not it; we were also grounded for two whole months. I could not handle not seeing my partners in crime for those 61 days.

Looking back at the event now, I realize that I was probably trying to be an independent adult, by trying to do everything without my parents’ control, though I did not appreciate the fact that it was too soon for it. I tried to form an independent personality, but that was horrifying. Being surrounded with the family tenderness is what every child needs to grow independently when times allow it, but not before the time is right.

I also realized from that situation if we, the kids, just told our parents the truth from the beginning, they would have allowed us to do what we wanted, and they would not have been disappointed in us. Thus, we would not have been punished or grounded such a long time.

The Experience of a Lifetime

by Haya Al-Taweel

“Everyone dreams of it, imagines it, wishes to be brave enough to get to try it. The moment you skydive is the moment you feel free.”

In between the clouds, under the sunlight, and above the sparkling lakes, just free falling. It was a sunny day in summer 2015 in Interlaken, Switzerland. The cold breeze was like taking your first breath after drowning under the waters. The river was flowing, and the colorful landscape was surrounding us, full of trees and flowers of all kinds; sunflowers, daisies, roses, and tulips were dancing in the wind. That was the day my sister Farah, my brother Faisal and I dared to try it. Actually jumping off a plane, actually skydiving!

It took the three of us a whole lot of courage to decide and actually commit to doing it; after three days of thinking, of wanting to try something new, exciting; we headed there and chose to jump off a plane from 14,000 feet. My mom, of course, was the only person who would not totally approve the idea. She kept on trying to convince us to quit and head back to the hotel, but the three of us were as stubborn as a rock.

“Let’s go back home! Come on guys!” mom said with apprehension.

“Okay, lets just skydive first, mom!” Faisal replied sarcastically.

It was time to sign the contract, where the company disclaimed responsibility for any harm that could happen to us. They, the experts in skydiving, had us ready, wearing the needed clothes to go off and try the most horrifying yet exciting experience of our lives. The bright orange clothes felt heavy and loose. They were as heavy as I was, like a force pulling me towards the ground, preventing me from going up there, asking me to stay on earth safe and sound. But not even that could stop me from flying on that helicopter and jumping out of it. While waiting, I thought of how strangely funny it to fly and land on my own, and suddenly nothing felt scarier.

When Faisal reached the ground, after flying and spinning in air, I felt more encouraged. I got so excited; I even forgot how fast my heart was beating. Farah and I were next. They had us say goodbye to our mom, which was weird funny as well, as if it were going to be our last goodbye. After a short car ride, they drove us to the hangar. It was completely empty. All I remember was glancing at my sister once in a while to seek comfort in her eyes, as if she were my first and last comfort zone in the whole world.

Unfortunately, the helicopter that was supposed to pick us up was late, so we had to wait for a few minutes. These few minutes of my life felt like years. While we were waiting, they filmed us saying our “last words.” That felt weird funny too, saying these things out loud.

Farah declared, “I just told my friends to take everything I own if something were to happen to me.”

While mine were short and fast, I shouted, “I love you all.

It had finally arrived, the helicopter. We hopped in, with two skydiving experts who were going to jump off, one with each of us. Guarding us, my sister and me, wearing their sunglasses, with their thick beards, and their masculine, tanned bodies, probably from how much they trained and stayed under the sun, they were our life guardians, our saviors, and our heroes. I looked at each of them every once in a while throughout the whole journey. “How many times have they experienced this?” I wondered. Until I asked one of them, “are you not afraid of this anymore?” He only answered in laughter.

We had reached 14,000 feet above the ground, surrounded by the great Alps of Europe, above the turquoise lakes of Interlaken, and it was finally time. Farah had to jump before me, since she was the



one closer to the door. It felt terrible watching her jump, as if I lost her forever. She immediately disappeared in between the clouds. A few seconds later, it was my turn at last. My heart was beating, and my mind was screaming, “LET’S JUMP!” I was frightened like a little child who had just lost her mom in the middle of nowhere.

“On the count of three, when I say jump, you jump, OKAY?” the skydiver yelled.

“OKAY” I yelled back, barely hearing what he had just told me.

“3, 2, 1, JUMP!” and I did.

It was completely silent, except for my excited, fearful screams that pierced it. We kept on flipping in the air a few times, until we were only flying. Hands, legs and mouth wide open, I was screaming my lungs out. Nothing felt more liberating. I remember closing my eyes once in a while and breathing in the fresh air that brought me back to life. I literally felt free as a bird, leaving all my troubles behind me and transforming into a new person, a person who was capable of doing anything and everything. I wanted that feeling of freedom to last a lifetime, where everything around me was peaceful and quiet. After a while of free falling, as we were getting closer to earth, we had to open the parachute. Observing the green farms under me, the blue lakes surrounding me, and the white clouds above me, I could at last enjoy the view in peace.



A few minutes later, we landed on earth and my first words were “LET’S DO IT AGAIN!” I still would. I hugged my sister and brother, and went on running towards my mom, “Did you see what I just did? I jumped off a helicopter!” I shouted happily.

“You did! You sure did and you’re still alive, that’s what you should be proud of,” she replied. She was right; I was still alive, but a different alive. I was not the same person I was ten minutes before. I was the new person who could do anything. It felt weird, but not funny-weird, just weird.

I left that day with a new me, and I still know that feeling. I still carry it as a reminder on my tough days. “You jumped off a helicopter, you risked your whole life, but you are still here. What can’t you do?” Recalling how my brother

Faisal’s jumping got me motivated to put my fears aside and take the risk, I am aware now of the necessity of having a person who can be our source of motivation and inspiration in life.

Trusting that skydiver, someone who was a complete stranger to me, and putting my whole life in his hands, hoping he would not crush it, led me to think of how in need we are as humans of such trust relationships. Sometimes, the best thing to do is to blindly trust that thing you’re putting all your hopes in, after doing everything in your power to make it happen. Lastly, as I remember Farah’s looks at me when she was about to jump, as if she were saying goodbye, I realize that life is too short. Life is too short not to surround yourself with things and people you love. Life is too short not to take risks and trust yourself. And life is too short not to seize the moment.

Career Seminar

by Kawthar Al-Najar & Hamda Al-Mansoori

Terrific Tuesdays Medical Career Seminar

Each Tuesday, we ended our day with an enriching session that boosted our motivation to higher levels.

We had the privilege of meeting physicians who are pioneers in the medical field. They provided inspirational, motivational, and empowering speeches from various medical backgrounds, including neurology, pediatrics, psychiatry, emergency medicine, surgery, endocrinology, psychiatry, family medicine, otolaryngology, and anesthesiology. All have provided unique insight into the field that we aspire to be part of.

In addition to these physicians, we met former foundation students, who are currently medical students. Their speech was exceptionally relatable, demonstrating how obstacles in the Foundation Year and beyond can be overcome.



Dr. Javaid I. Sheikh, MD, MBA

Professor of Psychiatry
Dean



“Working with talented people is a stimulus.”

“Do something for your country, make yourself sufficient.”

-Dr. Shanmugam Ganesan FRCS (Ed&Glas), FRCS Ed (ORL-HNS)
Senior Consultant and Program Director, ORL-HNS
Assistant Professor Clinical Otolaryngology, WCM-Q
Hamad Medical Corporation



“Make yourself the exception.”

-Dr. Heidi Sandige
Attending Physician, Department of Pediatrics
Sidra Medical and Research Centre

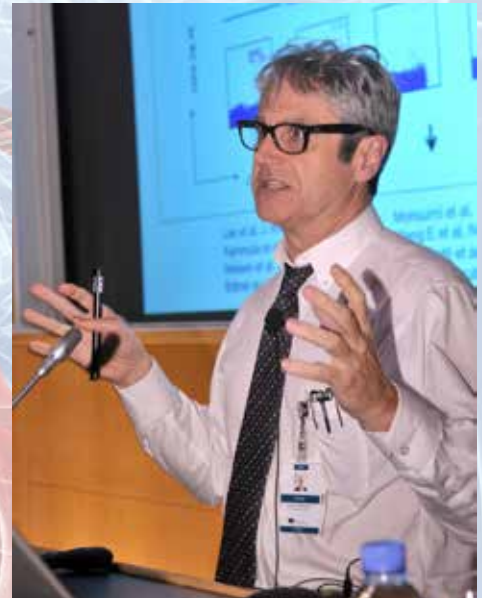
Dr. Mohamud Verjee, MBChB

Associate Professor of Family
Medicine in Clinical Medicine
Consultant, HMC
Consultant, PHCC



“Do not focus on money in Medicine.”

-Dr. Marco Marcus
Chairman of Department of Anesthesiology, ICU and
Perioperative Medicine, HMC
Professor of Clinical Anesthesiology,
Weill Cornell Medicine Qatar



“You cannot win the Tour de France
without a bicycle and you cannot
win the Tour de France with only the
bicycle. There are many other things
you need in order to win.”

-Dr. Francesco Marincola, MD, FACS
Chief Research Officer
Editor in Chief Journal of
Translational Medicine
Professor of Medicine, WCM-Q

Dr. Abdulla Al-Kaabi

Executive Vice Chief Medical Officer
Interim Executive Assistant to Member
of Board of Governors
Sidra Medical and Research Center



Picnic

by Al Reem Al-Sulaiti & Mai Al Subaie

We gathered on this 5th day of November celebrating three birthdays in one picnic. We were all nervous and shy around each other; it was the beginning of a new change—of the start of a new friendship. Being Haya Al Taweel's idea, this day was a day that brought us all even closer as classmates. A picture speaks a thousand words, and honestly, what words could describe the beauty of this class? These photos indeed show the happiness we felt.



International Night

by Sumaya Maraghi



A colorful night full of smiles and laughter, International Night was a success. This wonderful evening on the 26th of November 2015 showcased a mixture of cultures from different countries and included various performances, such as a mock Qatari wedding and Indian dances.



Attendees got a taste of distinct flavours of both Qatari and international cuisine.



Basant

Museum Trip

by Aisha Al Obaidan

On November 10, 2015, we went to Sheikh Faisal bin Qassim Al Thani Museum in a comfortable little minivan full of laughter and lunchboxes from La Cigale. Upon our arrival, we were welcomed by a very kind tour guide. All of us made a connection to our past through all the quirky collection of personal artifacts



“Mesmerizing experience! It showed the customs and heritage of our country that we were not aware of. It made us recall our culture and how Qatar radically improved in a short period of time.”
-Nada Al-Mulla





“The hospital section relates to our future and how medicine has evolved through the years. Hopefully, we will play a huge role in enhancing medicine through the years.”
-Nasser K



“It was enriching and informative.” -Nasser Kh



Museum Trip

by Aisha Al Obaidan



“This experience was relatable. - Khalifa”



P oster Presentation Forum

by Khalifa Al-sulaiti



The feeling of adrenaline rushing under our skin was indescribable when we were preparing for our combined Biology/English poster presentations. As a part of the English course, we had to choose one discovery from the cat dissection sessions and present it in front of professionals and students. The dissection experience led to multiple fascinating findings. One group found that their cat had Domestication Syndrome, which accounted for the white fur on the cat's palm and nose. Other people found some unexpected findings within their cat's stomach, such as worms. Once we selected a possible diagnosis, we dug deeper into that disease through research and summarized our results on a scientific poster. The idea of presenting our findings towards a group of professionals made us anxious, but we realized that the confidence we gained throughout this fantastic journey enabled us to do our best. This experience was very rewarding in the sense that it foreshadowed more presentations to come.



C heck Me Out

by Noora Hassan & Nada Al-Mulla

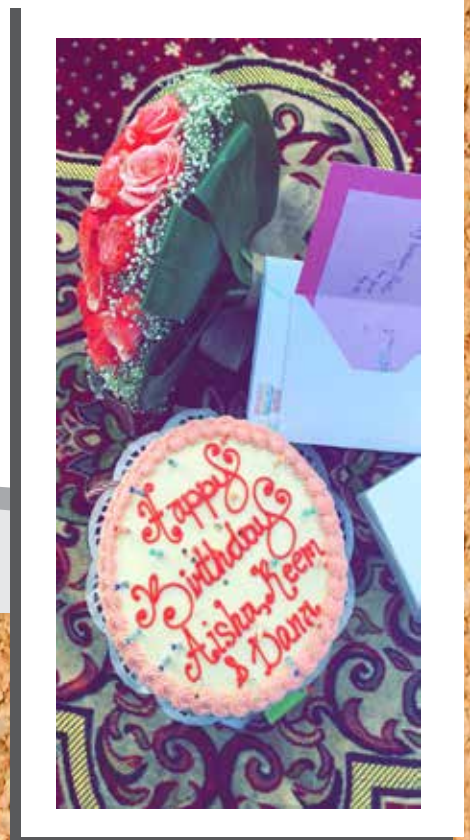
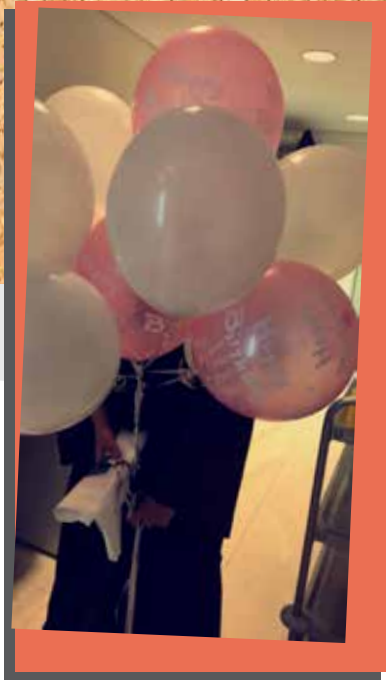
Information literacy sessions were very informative and helped in strengthening our research skills. We had one session per week conducted by two librarians, Ms. Reya Saliba and Mr. Paul Musselman. In these sessions, we learned how to search for information using effective key words. Not only did we learn how to analyze sources and make sure they are reliable, we also learned how to write a citation from scratch without using a website to generate one for us. Moreover, we acquired the skills to cite sources within a text and avoid plagiarism. The sessions helped us mostly in our English course, since we used different citation forms. Furthermore, it helped us in the PBL project where we were assigned to identify, research, and propose a solution to a public health problem, which required in-depth research.





Birthday Corner

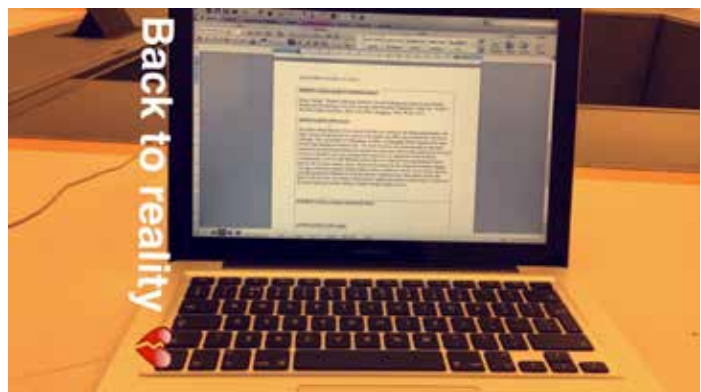




Cornell Nights

by Sumaya Maraghi & Lulwa Alhaddad

From the time we entered Cornell, we have spent numerous night filled with papers, books, and notes all over our desks. Up all night studying, students are the night owls who occupy Cornell. We have worked hard to finish our assignments. Sometimes it was fun, and sometimes it was tiring, but in the end it was all worth the while.



C^hemistry Lab

by Abdulrahman Al-Janahi

Chemistry lab has been a great opportunity to improve our hand-eye coordination. In lab, we can see how chemical reactions happen firsthand and what properties these chemicals possess. The lab also helps us to use quantitative information practically.



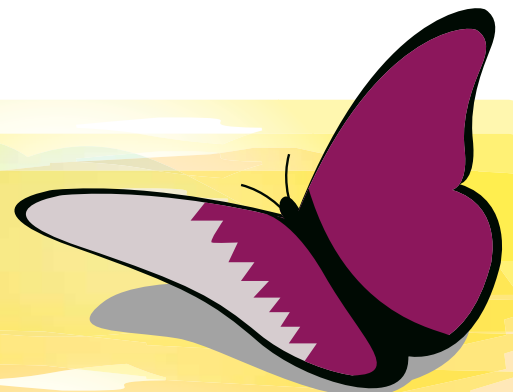
Digital Social Butterflies

by Al Reem Al-Sulaiti & Haya Al-Sewaidi



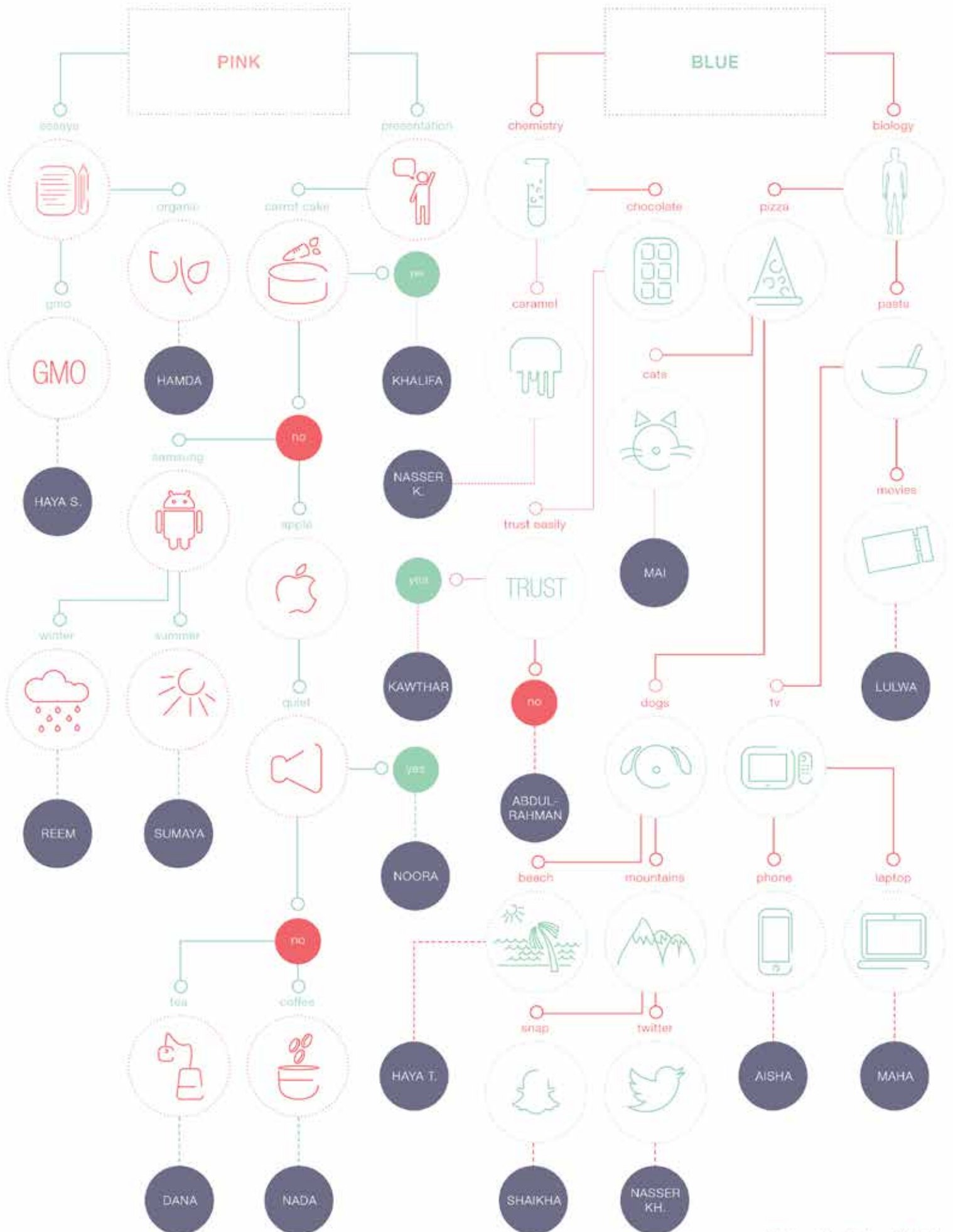


What makes Cornell more interesting other than having its own paparazzi? Here is some insight on the lives of WCM-Q's foundation students...



PHYLOGENIC TREE OF FOUNDATION

by Nasser AL-Khawaga



Designed by: Fatima AL-Najar



Foundation Program

Pathway to Success

2015-2016