



ULYP Winter Newsletter

February 2019, Issue 28

Through plenty of rain and snow, ULYP has been busy with a number of our wonderful education projects this winter. Our projects continue to reach more and more marginalized children and youth, and the students we support with university scholarships continue to grow. None of this would be possible without the support of the donors, schools, universities, communities and of course our amazing students!

Thank you all and best wishes for 2019.

This newsletter highlights activities, success stories and announcements since the last issue.



Cold Weather, Warm Smiles

The HAPPY program has been running for over seven years and continues to support early childhood education and development in marginalized communities in and around Beirut and Saida. Now funded by the Beit Jeddi Foundation, we are working with children, teachers and parents across six pre-schools, helping to transform the way young children are taught and supported through their most formative years. This winter, we welcomed over 160 pre-school students and 12 of their teachers to our campus with plenty of room to play and explore. With fun and interactive lessons, the children learnt English and Maths through inquiry and creativity. Our lessons have been combining art, music, drama and games to provide the children with opportunities to learn in a collaborative, creative and inquiry-based way.

Our interventions also involve the teachers, who have been able to observe different teaching styles and take back classroom strategies for student-centered learning. We also organized two parents' sessions; where parents learn about the science of early childhood development, positive development strategies and how to support children through stress and displacement. The sessions also gave the parents an opportunity to discuss the problems they have at home and share best practices, with our experts and each other. Including the parents and teachers in the program spreads the influence of the program to touch the lives of siblings and classmates outside the HAPPY program. The cumulative effect of these activities ensures that, despite a relatively short intervention, the HAPPY program has a huge impact!

happy



Sharing is Caring



The end of 2018 marked the end of the first semester of the new SHARE program, and we have just begun semester two. This cycle of the program is working with 80 children in middle school grades residing in and around the refugee camp of Shatila, Beirut. Every week, the children engage in interactive English classes to improve their language skills. There have also been days enjoyed on campus, where they have continued their English sessions alongside workshops on team building, resilience strengthening and sports! As the winter comes to an end, we are really looking forward to welcoming this group to campus more often.

Alongside the HAPPY program, SHARE is funded and supported by the Beit Jeddi Foundation.



Learn, Inspire, Focus, Engage

LIFE, funded by Taawon/Lebanon was launched in September 2018. LIFE engages 70 students from Haifa School, in Beirut. This program supports children, grades 7 and 8, through English language and life skills lessons but is also tasked with changing the way these young learners approach and appreciate education. As many of this group are at risk of dropping out, our teachers ensure that lessons are customized, fun, and interactive to help the children feel more confident about their academic ability in school. It is exciting to witness the improvement in their English language levels, and their growing eagerness to collaborate with teachers and peers. We look forward to supporting the children on this journey as another semester starts.



Just like all of our programs, we make sure to support the parents too, so they understand and embrace the changes in their children. During the first semester of this program, we hosted a parents' session to explore theories of childhood development, discuss development strategies during the teenage years, and share challenges faced by the parents. Mothers and fathers attended the session, helping to ensure that we are working together, scaffolding the education of these young people at school and home.



Towards Tertiary Education and Beyond

As announced in the last newsletter, ULYP and the Abdul Aziz Al Ghurair Fund for Refugee Education (AGFE) have joined forces to provide equal access to high quality education for young refugees across Lebanon. The scale of this program, and the opportunity it affords us to transform the educational journey of our beneficiaries, makes it a very exciting new intervention. This project will directly benefit over 500 students, over four years, and has three key outcomes. The first component is the Secondary Education Program, *Change*, providing 300 students from Beirut, Saida and Mount Lebanon with two years of English language and life skills lessons, followed by university entrance exam preparation and application support. Despite the cold weather, all the students have engaged in the activities and taken the first step of a journey towards successful school results and better preparation for tertiary education.

The second component is funding for 210 students pursuing undergraduate degrees or higher diplomas in fields that are market driven and lead to employment.

The third component is working with students to prepare them for employability and equip them with leadership, interviewing, resume development and other related skills. This will take place in year two of the project.

We are honored to have partnered with AGFE, a foundation that shares the same goals and values as we do, and we look forward to continue working together in the coming years providing access to education to an increasing number of students.

CHANGE
...starts with education

عبد العزيز الغريير
صندوق تعليم اللاجئين



Volunteer Spotlight: Nell

“Hello Teacher!” I hear as we’re setting up the classroom; students arriving early, ready to learn, laugh and challenge themselves in another day’s lesson. For the past three months, I have volunteered with the SHARE and LIFE programs. I have grown and learnt so much about myself, while also watching our students learn and grow every day. The classroom is a place where our students can laugh and joke, but also a place for them to work together to develop new skills. Covering topics from bullying, and how to deal with stressful situations, to ecosystems and natural habitats, ULYP’s students are eager to challenge themselves and gain new knowledge.

Every day is different, some days more challenging than others, but great colleagues are always there for support and encouragement. Our students never fail to remind us that the work we are doing is important and meaningful. From a simple, “Thank you,” at the end of a class, to, “We will miss you so much,” at the end of a semester, they are not shy to show us their gratitude. For me, the biggest breakthrough is seeing those who were quiet and nervous in the beginning, now feeling comfortable and eager to participate and help their fellow classmates. During my time with ULYP I have gained valuable new skills and confidence, allowing me to become a better teacher. I have had the opportunity to work with hardworking, creative and caring colleagues, who have motivated and inspired me every day. Most importantly, I have learnt that ULYP’s work is important and necessary for spreading hope, positivity and change.

Student Spotlight: Mohammed

In this issue, we decided to let the student tell us about their journey with ULYP, in their own words:

“I took part in Change, a two-semester program providing academic support in English, which got me ready for the official (BACCII) exams in the first semester, and prepared me for university in the second, while giving us enriching English and facilitator sessions throughout.

The sessions aimed at official exams helped me a lot because my performance in school, which wasn’t that good, improved and I got an excellent grade in the official exams. The second semester is where I got the most out of the program. The second semester helped each student individually in their applications to different universities, which helped me apply to AUB, and supported me in completing my application for the MasterCard foundation scholarship. Thanks to the support I got in Change, my application was selected among hundreds. In addition to the BACCII English support and assistance with university applications, the program helped me gain a lot of skills such as leadership, public speaking and teambuilding as well as time management. I gained such skills through the sessions conducted by facilitators and activities embedded in the English sessions (acting, presentations, games...etc.) which took place on different campuses. In addition to the education, the skills and the experiences I gained from workshops delivered by professional speakers, I had a lot of fun. Finally, the program helped me a lot in my first semester in AUB especially for my presentations in the English course where I got excellent grades. To sum everything up, ULYP’s Change program funded by the Asfari Foundation helped me a lot in the official (BACCII) exams, at university and in my life.

Thank you for this Change, I’m really grateful.”

Bridging the Gap



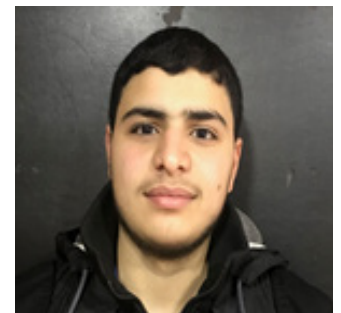
For the Academic Year, 2018-2019, ULYP welcomed 114 students to the Bridge program, joining the returning scholars at universities in Lebanon, North Cyprus, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Spain and, for the first time; Malta! Thanks to all our donors and partners, ULYP's new cohort is now well established in their universities and have just completed their first semester.

Of course, the Bridge Program is not only about scholarships. Diala Diab, who studies Medicine at Yeditepe University in Istanbul, and Maysam Azzam, BA Media and Communications, AUB Class of 2018, both represented ULYP at the *Investing in the Future Conference: Youth – Challenges and Development Opportunities* (IIF Mena 2018); a regional conference hosted by the Big Heart Foundation, one of our major donors in Sharjah, UAE. Diala and Maysa participated in the session entitled “Engaging Youth in Regional Development” aiming to empower all young people with a voice in the making of decisions that affect them.



ULYPAA and a BRIDGE Star

The ULYP Alumni Association (ULYPAA) annual subscription fees have been collected and were matched with a scholar. Abdulrahman Al-Mousa is now enrolled at Texas A&M University, Qatar. He started in the Fall 2018 semester and has now completed his first semester with an outstanding GPA of 4.00! This very important milestone validates ULYP's mission and vision to continue granting youth equal access to opportunities and education. It also highlights the generosity of the ULYP Alumni; giving back to others the same chances they were offered, in one form or another, and helping us continue our work to support a larger number of students!



A New Partnership with the Asfari Foundation

To start off 2019, we are delighted to announce that we will be continuing our work with the Asfari Foundation, who have agreed to support capacity building at ULYP. Most of our funding is directed towards our external projects, so it is wonderful to have the opportunity to build the organization from within and improve the way we deliver our services. This project will improve the ULYP services in five areas. First, ULYP is excited to announce that a new space is being developed at our office that will serve as a training and teaching venue for future activities. This will save on rental costs and make us a more independent training provider. Also, a student management system is being created that will allow ULYP to store, monitor and evaluate student data more efficiently. Third, an online BRIDGE application system will be introduced. Both of these online systems will save students and ULYP staff time and effort, and increase efficiency. The fourth component of the Asfari Foundation grant will cover the cost of hiring a Monitoring & Evaluation specialist to consult with ULYP on a part time basis, over three years. This will help ULYP measure, analyze and evaluate the efficacy of our programs and continue to improve our services going forward. Finally, this fund will support some of the needs of the *Change* alumni as they pursue their undergraduate degrees. This support is vital in ensuring that marginalized students are not discouraged from continuing their university studies by the cost of living, and can achieve their dream of graduation. Overall, the Asfari Foundation partnership will be vital in ensuring that we continue to grow as an organization and improve the way we support our beneficiaries.

مؤسسة الأصفري
THE ASFARI FOUNDATION

TLC is Back!

"I thought it would be very hard, but quickly realized that coding and programming are so simple, especially with all the help and support that I was lucky to have. It helps us in any field we wish to pursue" Malak H., 15 years

"I didn't expect it to be that interesting for me!" Nour I., 13 years

ULYP is pleased to announce that the partnership with TheirWorld is back for the third year in a row. In 2015, when ULYP piloted its first ever coding program to females only, the project document started as follows: To code or not to code is not a question to ask. The future is coding and the future starts now. *"Coding is a new literacy, and it gives people the potential to create, innovate and quite literally change the world."* (Susan Wojcicki, CEO of YouTube and early Google employee). Since then, ULYP has implemented the program supported by different donors, scaling it up to be more effective and impactful. As of 2017, when ULYP partnered with TheirWorld for the first time, the program morphed into the TLC Code Clubs and now follows the curriculum developed by TheirWorld. The implemented joint program continues to validate that coding is not only a much-needed technological skill; it is also a tool used to foster creativity, problem solving, collaboration, communication and other personal attributes that are all byproducts of the TLC Code Clubs. The participants in the TLC Code Clubs 2019 are 150-156 females, aged 10-15, from underprivileged and refugee communities living in Lebanon. Stay tuned!

Together
Let's
Code

Their
world

Thank You for Warming Hearts

The last two months have seen high winds and heavy rains across Lebanon. Unfortunately, this has caused a huge amount of devastation and further displacement to many marginalized refugee communities. According to UNHCR, more than 360 areas, hosting 11,300 refugees, have been affected, with a number of these being completely flooded. At least 600 Syrian refugees in the Bekaa have been forced to relocate, and one young Syrian girl lost her life in the floods. A number of wonderful NGOs in Lebanon have come together to support those affected, including ULYP.



In the last newsletter, we announced our Caring Coats Campaign, asking for donations of warm clothing and blankets. Thanks to your kind donations, ULYP was able to deliver these essential winter items to those refugees affected by the weather. Your items were delivered to camps and gatherings in the Bekaa, an elderly center in Naher El Bared camp in the North, and a pre-school in Ein El Hilweh camp, Saida. This could not have been possible without your generous support, and the support of First National Bank (FNB) and other partners. The American Community School, Beirut, is still collecting winter clothes and blankets so please continue to donate everything you can, to help those in need. When individuals, communities and organizations work together, we really can make a huge difference to people's lives here in Lebanon.



ULYP and Liban Jazz

We are pleased to announce ULYP's new partnership with Liban Jazz, which began at the turn of the new year. Liban Jazz has been supportive of our mission over the years and together we have hosted two fund raising concerts for ULYP. To launch the season, The Grammy nominated artist: Hot 8 Brass Band will perform at MusicHall on Sunday the 24th of February. More information is available on the Liban Jazz Facebook page. If you are interested in buying tickets, please contact us at ULYP on 01 745 887, and ask for Jana, who will help you reserve your spot.

