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## 1? 2? No, 3! New Beginnings, New Ideas, New Energy

We are growing and so is our circle of partnerships and programs. The three new programs that were added to our curriculum this last quarter expanded our services to include new and exciting ideas and energies. The common factor between all three programs is that they bring marginalized children and youth closer to understanding each other through giving them access to quality services to help them reach potential, integrate better with their peers and ultimately, succeed.

1. Action for Children of Today- ACT. This program is supported by Future First – HSBC. ULYP developed this new program and submitted it as a proposal last year as one of many others submitted worldwide. The moment we learned that we were selected we started working. The first semester of two was completed in December with 150 children ages 7-12. The program offers English classes, Art, Drama and music along with conflict resolution workshops. Semester one was a success and concluded with a TOT whereby the caregivers and teachers from the children’s different organizations participated in a training on active learning, receiving many materials for them to extend their skills development beyond the program.
2. United By Environment is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the U.S. Department of state. The main question this program asks is: the environment does not discriminate between us, so why do we? The sun is for all of us to benefit from, a natural disaster hurts all of us. In this program, the participants ages 14-18 did not plant trees or clean beaches, instead they learned about local and global environmental issues and what they can do about them TOGETHER. They also created short films with messages they developed to raise environmental awareness. We have completed one out of three modules and are busy preparing to start the second.
3. CIRCLE is carried out in partnership with UNICEF. A circle is one of the most universal symbols that commonly represents unity, wholeness, inclusion and continuity. CIRCLE is a multifaceted program that targets the psychosocial wellbeing of children, youth and caregivers through offering activities and programs for participants to better understand and express themselves, as well as cooperate with each other. The program brings to its 525 beneficiaries a set of activities that are interlinked and spiral off each other while all focusing on the beneficiaries’ psychosocial wellbeing. This is divided into five sub-programs: Mothers, Young Learners, Team Sports Camps, Artists and Actors and Football Retreats.



A continuation of CIRCLE, leveraging lessons learned and program refinements, as well as adding new sub-activities is now in the pipe line. CIRCLE II would reach out to 2000 beneficiaries. Fingers crossed!

To learn more about these new programs:

<http://www.unitelebanonyouth.org/web/ourprograms.php>

# Running Programs

## Open up for Human Rights

In October, a new module of our RARE (Rights And Responsibilities Empowerment) program started, funded by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives, CFLI. 60 Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese vocational students aged 15 to 17 had the opportunity to learn about conflict resolution and human rights, specifically the right to health, education and employment, and to put their new knowledge into practice through public speaking and social media.

The program's aim is not just to give students new knowledge, but also to provide them with the tools to use this knowledge to improve their lives and the lives of others in their communities. To this end, students participated in



workshops on public speaking, presentation and debating skills so as to discuss and present their own ideas or issues affecting them. The final two sessions consisted of training in the benefits of social media, and learning how to implement a 'Town Hall' style meeting.

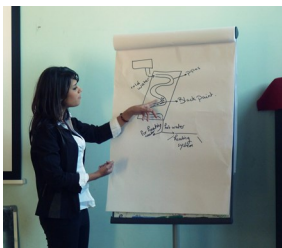
We are very proud of the students, many of whom obviously had difficulties opening up and expressing themselves to their peers, but eventually contributed to the lively discussions with their personal stories. There were several participants who had never left their own communities or interacted with people outside the confines of their immediate environment. Together they discussed solutions to various personal conflicts and human rights issues, and got to know each other on a personal level through team building activities.

We were honored to welcome the new Canadian Ambassador, Her Excellency Michelle Cameron, as well as Kate Powers, Political Officer, and Nicole Maillard, CFLI Coordinator, to the closing day to witness the end of the Town Hall meeting, hand out certificates and chat to students. We are optimistic that we will continue to see progress amongst the participants, and we hope that the buds of friendship developing within the groups will continue beyond the end of RARE.

## Take Your Chance and Lead



This January, 25 of our Skills4Life students who had developed business ideas with great potential during the semester got the chance to develop their ideas further and present them in front of a panel of judges at the second Leadership Weekend. We were again amazed by the potential of the youth and the ideas they develop. The 5 finalist teams presented in front of a panel of judges: Salim Karroum from FNB, Mohammad Khattab from al Gezairi and Nada Khorshid from Welfare Association. The students were well prepared in terms of concepts, presentation skills and teamwork and we are all proud of their achievements. The winning team's business idea, Solar Power Machine, is developing and selling solar panels for traffic lights.



The 'Leadership weekend' is the final activity that culminates the skills learned by secondary students throughout the Skills4Life semester. Winning teams are offered internships in organizations depending on their interests and future ambitions. The runner up teams also get to intern within Skills4Life's three partner organizations, ULYP, Welfare Association and INJAZ Lebanon.

To prepare our 25 students, aged 17 and 18, for their internships, we will conduct a workshop addressing topics such as: what is an internship? Internship do's and don'ts, how to benefit from your experience, work ethics, office etiquette and more. The organizations hosting these students will give written assessments on their performance during the internship, which students can include in their profile as they apply for universities and jobs in the future.

We appreciate all the effort the participants, judges, trainers, partners and schools that went into making this Leadership weekend a success.

Skills4Life is funded by the European Union.



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Twitter: [www.twitter.com/ULYP](https://www.twitter.com/ULYP)

UNITE LEBANON YOUTH PROJECT

## Winter Wrap-Up



United by Environment

In the quarter September – December, ULYP had more programs running simultaneously than ever before. With over 1000 participants in programs every week, including Sundays, it was our busiest ever period. In December most of our programs came to a close for the winter break. Children, youth and women on Skills4Life, ACT, SAWA, United by Environment, and three sub-components of CIRCLE – Young Learners, Mothers, and Team Sports Camps, all participated in closing ceremonies, receiving certificates and program souvenirs and celebrating their achievements over the term. Participants on RARE will attend their closing ceremony in early 2015, when Skills4Life, ACT and United by Environment will begin again. ULYP is very thankful to all our donors, partner organizations, teachers, facilitators and volunteers, who helped make 2014 so successful.



Skills4Life



Mothers



ACT

## ULYP at the Annual CSR Lebanon Conference



For the second year in a row, ULYP participated in the CSR Lebanon Forum that took place December 8, 2014, at the Phoenicia Hotel. Now in its 4th year, this year's conference had a greater number of attendees, larger panels, and more topics. Ten of ULYP's BRIDGE students, who study business at AUB and LAU, were invited to attend the whole day and receive first-hand information about CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) in Lebanon.

ULYP hosted a booth in the NGO Exhibition Hall where many conference guests learned about us and added their names to our contact list to receive our publications. ULYP's director, Nicole Eid Abuhaydar, also presented the work we do during the final session of the conference, namely the Civil Society Hyde Park. Mr. Gilbert Doumit from the Beyond Reform and Development organization moderated this session.

We are grateful to be part of this fantastic opportunity to learn, network and gain visibility. Great conference, we look forward to the next one!

## Peace- Love – Run for ULYP

A grand total of 205 people participated in this year's Beirut Marathon for ULYP, raising an incredible \$3,189.67 for our *Together in one Basket* program. We are very grateful to everyone who supported us this year, especially to First National Bank, the American Community School and all our wonderful station volunteers!

This is the second year in a row that people have been able to run in the marathon for ULYP and for a united Lebanon. We were pleased to have a group of runners of mixed nationalities and ages, like the ULYP family itself. This included: 58 runners from First National Bank, 45 runners from American Community School, six ULYP staff and volunteers in the Relay Race, several friends of ULYP, and our star runner, Aliaa Ghaddar, who ran the whole marathon. Paul van Sprang, the father of a ULYP team member, made his way from the Netherlands to Beirut to bring the \$2,550 he kindly raised for us and to run the 10km. In addition, 82 children currently participating in our programs had the opportunity to take part in this fantastic event, 42 running 10km as an 'Adopt a Team' guided by their coaches and teachers, and a further 40 children sponsored by FNB to run the 5km.



10 students from our BRIDGE program volunteered at our fruit and water station and another 10 at our Gatorade station to keep all the runners refreshed, hydrated and motivated.

We are very grateful to all our friends and supporters who ran, donated and volunteered for us, especially to FNB, ACS and Paul van Sprang!



## Caring Coats Campaign

### Thank you for spreading the warmth!

Our first ever winter clothes drive, the Caring Coats Campaign, was a real success! Thanks to many donors and helpers we collected 41 boxes of warm winter clothing which have been distributed to Syrian refugees in the Bekaa.

In November we asked our friends and supporters to spread the warmth to underprivileged families by cleaning out their closets and bringing their spare warm clothes to our collection stations. The response to the campaign was amazing and we were able to collect:

15 boxes of sweaters

8 boxes of pants

9 boxes of coats

1 box of baby clothes

2 boxes of shoes

2 box of hats and scarves

3 boxes of bags

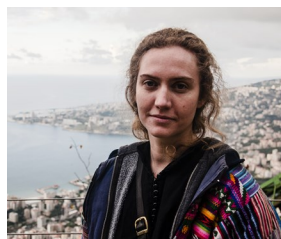


This was only possible with the helpful hands of Dany's, T-marboutah, Halak Optics, Houry Hearing, The Garderie, LAU, ACS and FNB, all functioning as collection stations. We are also very grateful to the Palestinian Cultural Club at LAU who set up their own drive for us, and to our 12 enthusiastic volunteers who helped to sort out the clothes.

In January, a second clothes campaign, Give Warmth, was set up in collaboration with Tara Hermez. This was in response to the storm Zina, which hit Lebanon bringing inches of snow and leaving many families freezing in the harsh conditions. ULYP collected approximately 100 more boxes of clothes and blankets, which were also sent to families in the Bekaa for distribution by two local NGOs, SAWA for Development and Aid, and URDA.

## “The Most Positive and Dynamic Environment”

Saga joined ULYP as an intern in September 2014, and dived straight into to our work, both in the office and on various programs on our campus. We asked Saga for her thoughts on her time with us:



“For a long time I have been interested in migration issues and in the rights of migrants. I am currently studying a master's program in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Lund in Sweden. Before heading off to a field trip in Jordan—where my classmates and I would be visiting Palestinian and Syrian refugee camps—my supervisor asked me if I had plans for my internship. He suggested that I apply to ULYP.

I have seldom learnt so much and experienced so much as during the few months of my internship here at ULYP. I was given the opportunity to work both in the office and on campus, (“in the field”), being part of the Young Learners and ACT programs. When I look back, I can't believe how all these experiences fit into only a few months' time; getting to know a group of five-year-olds and teaching them the first 48 English words in their vocabulary, taking photos of Syrian kids forming a perfect orchestra, offering advice to aspiring photographers and poets in the girls' bathroom on campus, handing out energy drinks to Marathon runners, designing an annual report and taking part in meetings in the most positive and dynamic office environment I've ever seen.

After a few weeks of winter break in Sweden, I am now back in Beirut. I hope to conduct a study here that will eventually lead to a master's thesis. The topic? Life in a refugee camp and the right to access water.”

## My ULYP Family

Meet Abdulrahman Saddiq, one of ULYP's BRIDGE Students, who is about to graduate with an extraordinary final year project.



"My journey started with my second family, ULYP. I joined this family in 2011, when I was seeking to get a scholarship and continue my studies at a university which provides high-quality education. As a Palestinian refugee living in one of the camps in Lebanon, namely Baddawi Camp, this was not an easy goal, since one has to overcome many obstacles to get accepted to a good university. Despite this, I persisted in following my goal, and found someone willing to help, and to give my dream the nourishment it needs to grow up.

Eventually I decided to apply for Mechanical Engineering at LAU. At the moment I am working on my final year project, which has received a lot of attention from many people outside the university. We are working on designing an effective exoskeleton to help paralyzed people gain back their mobility. LBCI even came to LAU to report about it and interview us (see

the link to the video here). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnRQDIRnI8g>

This would have not been possible without ULYP. By being part of the ULYP family you learn to become a responsible person and acquire social skills without which you can't get anywhere else. You are responsible for keeping your scholarship, and at the same time, you socialize with students who have ideas, cultures and even religions that are different from yours.

Mr. Jalal Lahham, my donor, is the person who has inspired me through my academic life. Mr. Jalal is not just a person who covers my scholarship, but also a caring person who really wants to harvest and develop the young minds of his country. In other words, he is an inspirational leader for the whole community.

I am looking forward to continuing my studies with a master's degree abroad. Helping the community is an important consideration for me, and innovations that are related to community services will have a higher priority for my life. However, my main aim is to build a family."

## A Big Smile- Ruth's experience with ULYP

It's early morning and I'm sitting on one of the petite chairs in ULYP's pre-school, when the bus arrives. Suddenly I'm surrounded by a group of shy, but excited-looking five year olds. It's my first day of working with the HAPPY program and I feel exactly the same combination of shyness and excitement, except that I'm disguising it with a big smile, trying to make the children feel at home.

When I applied for an internship at ULYP, as part of my Master's Degree in Middle Eastern Studies in Amsterdam, I said I would like to be mostly involved in office work. To me that seemed to be the place where I could learn the most, and be of most use. However, what I discovered is that to make sense of things like proposal writing and program planning, it's good to know what goes on in the field, as the ULYP leadership team advised. Accordingly, I volunteered with HAPPY, ACT, and SAWA, and so I was able to learn a lot about what ULYP actually is doing, how a program is implemented, the different children who come to our campus, and how passionately the teachers are involved.

Working for ULYP means being surrounded with idealistic, passionate and strong people, who make the office and the campus an inspiring place to work. I am happy to be able to continue with ULYP for a little while longer and I look forward to the coming



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