

THE OLIVE PRESS

RAMALLAH FRIENDS SCHOOL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Realize Potential | Fulfill Dreams | Share Hope

Designed by: Mohamed A. Daoud | Editor in Chief: Besan Jaawan

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Farewell...

Letter from Head of School

I want to begin by congratulating the Ramallah Friends School community for a successful year. This has been a difficult 18 months and we have all worked under stressful and difficult circumstances. None of us could have imagined this current scenario back at the beginning of 2020. I want to thank the staff for their dedication. I want to thank the parents for their support and the students for their perseverance.

I write this as I go into my last month in Palestine. It has been my pleasure and my honor to be the Head of Ramallah Friends School. I came to RFS because it was a school promoting peace in a place that was under occupation. I found it to be so much more.

You are a community that is proud of your school. When I meet the many alumni of this school they speak with pride and great fondness of RFS. We have families that go back generations of association with this school. This school has a profound effect on its students.



Ramallah Friends School is unlike any other. I cannot think of a more appropriate place to have a school professing Quaker values - Peace, Equality, Integrity, Community, Simplicity, and Stewardship. We believe that all people are equal before God regardless of gender, creed, culture, color or social status and each person here is that of God to be nurtured. RFS is a remarkable school because of its history and because of its present.

I will leave Palestine with great memories of friendships formed and the warmth of the Palestinian people. I want to thank my colleagues who I work with on a day to day basis. Palestine is a beautiful country and my experience here has changed me forever.

Adrian Moody - Head of School

Challenge Accepted... RFS Yearbook 2021

By Besan Jaawan – Development & Communications Manager

As one of the most challenging academic years comes to an end here at RFS, our youngest students shared – through the yearbook – some of the positive outcomes & experiences they learned during the Covid19 era of quarantine, closures, and distance learning. These are a few of their writings...

“Being caring & grateful is what Corona helped me with and I was able to see my family more...”
Bana Tahboub – 5A

“I was grateful that I have a house to live in and a roof to protect me...”
Oday Musleh – 5B

“When everyone in Ramallah stood on their balcony and sang, I felt like we were inseparable with my family and everyone in Ramallah.”
Leanna Abu Ghazaleh -5C

“I learned to become more patient... This was a time that helped me get closer to my family.”
Mohammed Qudah – 5D

“During COVID19 my brother and I helped my mom.”
Mohammad Ashwa – 4A

“I learned at school about COVID19 and that I need to wear a mask, social distance, and to use sanitizer.”
Nabil Abu Rdeneh – 4B

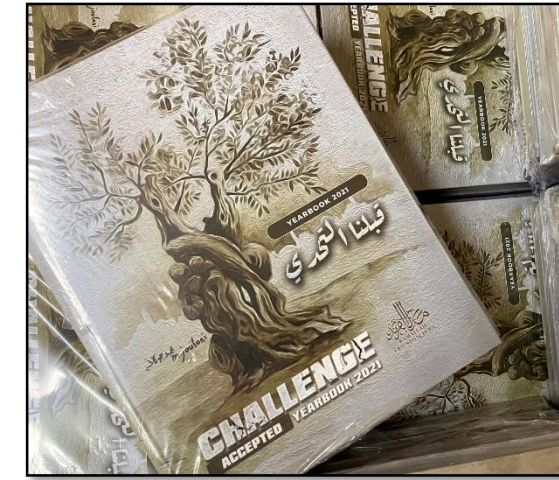
“...When the school did online classes, I was happy but not so much. I love school very much.”
Layal Rafidi – 4C

“My favorite hobbies during quarantine were dancing, singing and swimming.”
Marielle Hanania – 4D

“The good thing that happened during Covid19 was that we went back to school and I have amazing teachers!”
Laila Abdulhadi – 3A

“I had online classes. I had fun with my family for six whole months.”
Mirna Rabah – 3B

“I enjoyed cooking and baking cookies with my mom. When we came back to school, I was happy to play with my friends.”
Lourdes Alkhoury – 3C



“During the lockdown, my family and I did lots of things like painting, recycling and we went to the beach. In addition, I read a lot of English stories.”

Musa Habash – 3D

“I went out to the mountains with my dad and my sister. I also read on Razkids and played games on the phone.”

Kenzi Fallah – 2A

“I went hiking with my family and friend. I saw spider webs while hiking in the mountains. I also saw a water spring. It was a nice trip.”

Zeineddine Issa – 2B

“I learned to ride my bike without wheels on the back. I learned how to play chess and I learned to write a lot of things.”

Andrew Rukab – 2C

“My mom taught me how to subtract in math. We watched a lot of movies.”

Ahmad Abuelkhair – 2D

“I played with my cat!”

Leah Omari – 1A

“I ate healthy food.”

Adam Habash – 1B

“I did more outdoor activities. I also did gymnastics at home.”

Layali Bosheh – 1C

“I learned how to treat my dog. I learned how to play handstand. My grandma and I had fun with my baby cousin.”

Natalie Mashal – 1D*

Living Our Quaker Values

FRIENDS SCHOOLS PLACE A PRIORITY ON TEACHING THE VALUES felt necessary for leading a life of service in the community.

We seek to encourage our children to explore their individuality and their responsibility as school community members in the framework of a person of faith.

Friends School staff seek to permeate the whole of our school life in each classroom with these values. The school staff seek to reward those who enhance the life of our school community and to encourage better behavior from those whose actions or words are unacceptable to us.

We will be sharing with you the statement of our school Quaker Testimonies and their implications. This month we focus on the Quaker Testimony of Integrity.

Integrity
Friends believe that our words and actions must reflect our truest selves.

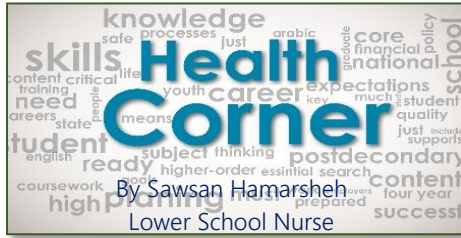


Integrity

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*To know more details please visit our website www.rfs.edu.ps



Lessons Learned from the Pandemic

Getting used to a new way of living during the COVID19 pandemic era was full of challenges. Dealing with this pandemic drained our energy, our attention, and our emotions. And what was more important than that, was preserving the school community and giving all of our efforts to support and keep our students' lives at school safe and in continuity while ensuring their health remains safe at the same time.

We end this school year and look forward to the incoming academic year hoping and expecting a return to normalcy, especially if vaccines cause a reduction in the numbers of positive cases. But it is worth to look back at some lessons learned from this pandemic.

Face masks have proved to be useful tools, and they have become a healthy modality that we need in many situations; as gatherings will return, safety measures may decline, but wearing masks and specially to those who are less immune, remains a necessity.

In addition to physical care, mental health care is also important. Isolation, loneliness and distancing can cause harm to mental health, and here lies the importance and need for self-care in all its aspects. This pandemic also showed us the significance of the existence of family. We always emphasize the importance of community, and of technology as well, but along with that we need a dose of humility in adapting to change. We do have the ability to endure and adapt so we can secure stability by being ready at any time to reverse.*

End of Year Lower School Principal's Letter

By Frieda Dahdah Khayat – Lower School Principal

Hope comes after pain, as we have all endured a pandemic (COVID19) that annihilated humanity during the past year or so. This pandemic has also affected people dear to us, whom we miss for the influence they left on our lives. We have lost our colleagues and former teachers Jeries Abu Ezam and Samir Hishmeh. And a few weeks ago we witnessed a devastating war against our folks in Gaza, and its consequences are still felt all over Palestine.

Between the wounds and the pain comes another, and at RFS we have prepared ourselves and our student community to face this together, for us to heal together as one community. We work hard and strive to continue our mission despite how deep the wounds have become. Success is doing ordinary work in an extraordinary way and under extraordinary circumstances.

We went through an educational experience that was imposed on us in its different forms, including distance learning and the transformation to blended learning, to face-to-face teaching, and then switching between them all over again. We

have completed the requirements of our school's IB Primary Years Programme (PYP), celebrating it with the concluding PYP fifth grade project virtual exhibit as well as graduating another generation of youngsters whom we had nurtured since childhood. And they carry with them an innocence in their education and the school values they grew up to learn including giving, compassion, peace and tolerance. And we continued in our educational mission believing that education is a duty and a right for every individual.

I would like to thank and commend all teachers for their efforts, perseverance, and insistence on continuing the educational process throughout this academic year. They overcame obstacles together as one community. I would also like to thank parents for their cooperation and students for their perseverance, as we all believe that education is the base for a healthy life.*



When everything seems dark, consider you may be the light.
Quaker Proverb

02.295.22.86 tel
02.295.83.20 fax

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Editor in Chief:
Besan Jaawan

Translation by Besan Jaawan.

Design, photos and graphics by
Besan Jaawan, Mohamed Dawud.

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Middle School Library Corner

Dear Friends ,
What a year! What an experience!!
We're almost at the end of this challenging academic year...and you've made it!
It wasn't easy...but you've grown. You've learnt...and you should be very proud of yourselves!
The library was the daily class for so many...For many others was the book exchange spot: bring the book. Take a book and run away!



Hopefully , next year you will be able to enjoy this great place called the library..with all its pleasant spaces and interesting events.
But until then, you might find lots of things to do..even away from the library ..on our library's virtual site(<https://sites.google.com/site/rfsmiddleschool/home>)..Keep checking for updates during summer!
Wishing you a great vacation. A well-deserved one after all your efforts!
And see you. Back to the "shhhh" in the library..soon!
Read!Read!Read! Much love, always! *