

AJB INSIDER

THE ELECTION PROCESS FOR STUDENT COUNCIL AY 2020-21

The Voting Process

On 13th of September, Al Ain Juniors (the British high school) started the process of electing its Student Council for the year. There were 6 stages to the voting process: the nomination, the student candidates' campaign, campaign assembly, the official Presidential Debate and finally, the voting. There were 23 positions to occupy and big shoes to fill. Firstly, it all began with the nomination. Candidates were asked about their academic history, record of behavior and times they showed leadership skills. The students who distinctly wanted to make a difference this year and felt like they had the leadership skills necessary and the ability to do it, were stepping up and nominating themselves to be a part of your student council. Then came the questions. Who are these individuals? What are their goals for the year? How are they going to make this year better for everyone? That's where the campaigning and the campaign assembly stepped in, as it allowed the candidates to be formally introduced and to introduce themselves to the Student Body and explain their goals, as well as the promises that they shall strive to keep. As the heads and critical parts of the Student Body, the president and vice presidents had a deeper look into their aims, which happened during the presidential debate. Finally, the actual voting process where students were sent a link in which they were to vote for the person they felt represented them the most. And thus, your Student Council was born. (Epic music plays in the background.) This year we had a very peculiar way of electing the team, due to the circumstances, but I personally believe our Student Council will try their absolute best to make this school year a little better for all of us regardless of stress level, study load and keep the student oath. - Lina Khalid



Presidential Debate 2020

It already seems like a lifetime ago. (Thanks, quarantine!) Our school had its first ever online presidential debate on the 4th of October 2020. The moderator, as per usual, was Mr. Christison, as well as Mr. Ummer and Mr. Nisar. They did a lot of preparation and were the key to a smooth event. (Mr. Manoj is also an honorable mention.)

Our candidates were varied, and they all had solid plans. Our vice-presidential candidates were Farhana Yesmin Mohammed and Hannah Jordan Padia. (Me). Our presidential candidates were Abdulrahman Elsabbah, Dania Ezz Fath, Muhammed Hayid Saqib and Shaika Alam.

The debate began with Mr. Christison introducing all the candidates with their campaign videos. They were a minute long and went through all their plans for the next year. After that, the national anthem played, along with an Islamic prayer.

The vice-presidential candidates went first. Our moderator asked which one of us should've gone first. I jokingly said that we should go in alphabetical order, and Farhana went first. (Oops.)

The first question Farhana was asked was, "How will you connect to the Student Body during online learning?" She responded, quite intelligently, by saying "We can connect to the Student Body by using things like social media, and Microsoft Teams." Then, Mr. Christison asked us both why we had been the leaders of our own teams on the fringes of the Student Council, instead of being part of the executive branch. Farhana said, "I gained experience from being the Art Director, and thought I was capable of doing more."

Then, it was my turn. During that exchange, I was in awe of my opponent. She was erudite, well-prepared and generally awesome. Our moderator asked me "How will you prevent the Student Council from being an exclusive club that doesn't benefit the students who elected you?" I thought that that was a fair question, and I said "I plan to enlarge the Student Council to include representatives of each class, so that everyone has a say in how we can improve the school." Then, I answered the question about my involvement in our Student Council. I said that I had accumulated valuable experience in the Journalism Team. I learned to listen, to try to make sure that everybody felt like they belonged, because they did. I feel more prepared now than I did last year, and I knew then, just as I know now, that helping people is what I want to do.

Finally, it was time for the presidential debate. All of the candidates, except for Abdulrahman, were able to attend, and they brought their A-game. Mr. Christison asked the candidates how they would differentiate between the attainable and unachievable. They all had different opinions, but the overarching theme was that they would do their best given the platforms in question, and that they would listen to the faculty and Student Body.

Next, he asked them about maintaining the concept of democracy without anarchy breaking out. The candidates responded by acknowledging the fact that, even though the students shall elect them, it's impossible to make everyone happy all the time. They also vowed to make sure that they would make plans in the best interests of the students.

The third question was quite a lovely one. Our moderator asked what quality each of the candidates' opponents they each admired. Dania said that she would like Shaika's confidence and Hayid's intelligence. Hayid said that he admires Shaika's enterprising nature and Dania's sense of responsibility. Shaika said that she respects Hayid's easy-going personality and Dania's intellect as well.

The fourth main question was, again, about the Student Council becoming an elite club, and not involving the students. They all were very concise and Shaika pointed out the fact that part of her motto was inclusion, and she planned to stick to it. Hayid and Dania also said that the students' benefit was the most important thing, and that the Student Council is, well, for the students.

At last, it was time for the students to ask questions. Hayid was asked about his plans for online schooling. He said that he would like to institute things like a Gaming team, so that even though we don't have as much freedom as we used to, we can still include fun activities for the students.

At the end of a very interesting debate, Mr. Christison wished us all well, and reminded us to vote for the most deserving candidate who we think would do well. - Hannah Padia

Results

The elections were held throughout the month of September of 2020. Some of the results were very close calls for some of the candidates too!

But all in all, most students and staff are happy with the results. As for the winners of the elections, first we have Shaika Alam, who has been elected for the position of President.

Winning with a large margin of votes, Shaika has already proved to everyone that she is a very responsible, reliable person with amazing leadership skills. She was elected as Secretary for the year 2019-20 and was directly involved in organizing several successful events!

Those experiences amongst other things makes her the perfect candidate for the role of President, and as seen by the votes the students seem to believe so too. Shaika brings some amazing plans to the table, the first of which is breaking the multiple stereotypes and biases that had been set in place over the years in our school, biases that have stopped us from exploring our full potentials as young students. Secondly is making sure that there is full transparency between the Student Council and the Student Body about the decisions being made, and we know that she will not disappoint!

On the sides of Vice Presidency, we have Hannah Jordan and Hayid Saqib. Hannah says, "When I'd found out that I'd won, I felt like I was dreaming, and it was incredible. I have a lot of experience with working with a team and planning ahead, so that definitely played a part in my decision to run for Vice President." Those qualities were shown and seen by students and faculty members alike with Hannah's experience of being on the Journalism Team in the academic Year 2019-20, showing off their abilities as a great multi-tasker and a person with great amounts of wisdom when it comes to hard decisions. Hannah plans on implementing a tutoring program for students, and maybe even a Student Representative section to the student council to make sure that all students have their voices heard!



Hayid Saqib, who shared similar experiences, states, "I was over the moon to be very honest; I was in the Council last year and the memories we made, the things we did, it was absolutely amazing for me! The Council was like a family for me and all the things we'd achieved made me very happy."

Hayid has experience with being in the Council and has proven to be very responsible with all his Council duties, making sure everything goes according to plan and helping to keep things going smoothly.

He also says that thanks to everything being online this year, the Council is looking into making this year as unique as possible by making each event huge and very different from other older events that were hosted in the past years!

It is indeed great to hear that even amidst all the chaos that this year brings, our beloved Student Council are holding their heads high and aiming to provide the best year for the students of Al Ain Juniors' British High School.

For the positions of secretary, we have Faryal Mehmood and Mouhammad Ali Abid, followed by Mahenou and Hassan Ali for the Treasurer positions.

For the Sports Captains we have, Fatima Mohammed and Malik Mobeen for the Flames House.

Noor Fatima and Zakaria Akbar for the Rapids House.

Kainat Saleem and Mohammed Haroon for the Rockies House.

And finally, Hafsa Yasmeen and Ahmed Mohamed for the Tornadoes House.

Following the Sport House Captains are their Assistant Captains, Lojain Mahmoud and Muhammad Johaifa for the Flames House.

Rida Faizal and Fahad Ahmed for Rapids.

Sabiha Mohammad and Suhaib Ahmed for Rockies.

And finally, Ishaa Faiza and Arslan Masood for Tornadoes.

These are the captains who will be leading these Houses and helping get all the possible sports events arranged for this academic year, without these roles we would not have had all the exciting years we have had lately, and the same goes for the entirety of the student council members, the older councils, the new councils and the upcoming councils! - Marwan Jamal



The United Nations Day

Al Ain Juniors School is proud to tell you about 'United Nations Day,' which was celebrated last Sunday on 25th October. Many of our students had participated in organizing and attending the honorable event, but due to the current worldwide pandemic, we were unable to conduct the event face to face, leaving the participants and respective organizers disappointed as they weren't able to go all out for the event, yet it was still successful nevertheless. Now, you might be asking what 'United Nations Day' really is, and how it came to be...

What is UN Day?

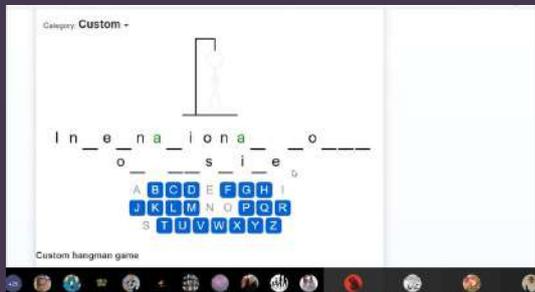
On October 24, 1945, the UN Charter was created, and since 1948 this day has been celebrated as the 'United Nations Day.' 75 years ago, the major members of the UN, including the permanent five members of the Security Council, signed the document containing all the laws and aims that the parliament agreed on.

This document was called the UN Charter, which contains information about the committees within the United Nations, their aims, goals and regulations. It also contains other kinds of information such as voting rights, functions, powers and other procedures. This was the United Nations' starting point thus, how it first came into being. The United Nations has done countless things to help make our world a better place. They helped stop wars, ensure security, enforce human rights, prevent conflicts and so much more. We think this is more than enough reason for this day to be celebrated.

As for the actual event, most of the participants' feedback for AJB's UN day celebration was positive, and even though we lacked participants, we were lucky enough to get more than 50 entries this year! Awesome, isn't it?

Organizers and the Activities

Our Secondary school Humanities HOD and MEP Coordinator, Sir Riyaz Nagori, was the master-mind behind it all, and our newly assigned Secretary-General John Magdy led the event planning, with his team which consisted of Noreen Munir, Lindsay Ignacio, Rawan Walid and Rida Faizal along with the MUN team. Together, they had come up with innovative and interesting ways to celebrate the event. John had arranged a short quiz, Noreen was in charge of the poster making competition, Rida had arranged a fun game of UN themed Hangman while Rawan oof helped host it and Lindsay had shared short videos about the United Nations. Everyone did an amazing job and the participants were very eager to answer. We would like to thank the organizers for being able to execute the occasion in an organized and eventful manner. In conclusion, UN Day was an enjoyable event for the students to learn more about The United Nations, and we're glad that we were able to conduct it in such a way. We hope the students who have participated in this event have enjoyed it as much as we did and we certainly hope that you, the reader, have learned something new and useful from this Article.



To end this letter, we would like to share with you some of the feedback we got from our organizers who have organized this event:

Feedback:

“It was fun and all but I wish we could've prepared more activities so the participants would have had a better time. But overall, it was the best way we could have celebrated UN Day online” -Lindsay Ignacio, Organizer

“I personally think UN day was delightful. It went pretty well, despite the fact that we had less than a few days for preparation. Students were involved in the different games and activities held. I certainly enjoyed it.” -Noreen Munir, Organizer

“I really appreciate the fact everyone was enjoying it and had an opportunity to showcase our talents. I got to know a lot of new information about MUN, that was the best part! And once again, thank you to all the members working hard on it!” -Amina Mansur, Participant

“The UN day was an amazing event, which engaged and enriched the students with full-fledged information about the UN, indeed being enjoyable, entertaining and educational. I’m really happy that we could execute the event better than planned and I’m looking forward to the event for the upcoming years.” -Rida Faizal, Organizer

-Rida Faizal, Noorhan Ali, Lindsay Ignacio



Breast Cancer Awareness Month- Pinktober

Despite learning being virtual thus far in the year, the AJB student council tries to make the most out of the situation by engaging students in interactive annual activities and events. For this month, the council announced they would participate in Pinktober, a campaign for promoting breast cancer awareness. The students were encouraged to send selfies of themselves wearing pink to show solidarity with survivors of breast cancer. The campaign highlights the significance of early discovery and diagnosis, which could further prevent the illness from emerging into a life-threatening disease.

A few students had also given their thoughts regarding their experiences with Pinktober.

Sabiha Mohammad, the assistant Rockies captain, said that she felt honored to support the program by wearing pink. “Our aim is to show a sense of community, love and support for the survivors, those still fighting, those that we have lost, and their families,” she said. Muntaha Nadeem from Grade 12 remarked, “I think that the entire initiative on Pinktober was a wonderful way to spread awareness about breast cancer and how it can occur in both male and females.

Participating in the event was a great opportunity for me to contribute to the cause.”

Rida Faizal, the assistant Rapids captain said that she loved that the school was promoting Pinktober, however, she wished more activities surrounding the campaign were introduced.

Certificates were made and issued by the AJB art team to honour the students who participated in Pinktober by sending in their selfies. The process of making them was documented and posted on the student council's official Instagram page.

Pinktober is recognized internationally as an effort for spreading awareness about a health issue prevalent amongst all communities, predominantly in women—although men can also be affected. By educating students about the symptoms and perilous risks of this illness, AJB successfully emphasized how acknowledging the full gravity of breast cancer could potentially save lives.



Article of The Month

BE AN OPTIMIST

Be strong that nothing can disturb your peace of mind. Talk health, happiness and prosperity to every person you meet. Make all your friends feel that you appreciate their good qualities and strengths. Look at the sunny side of everything. Think only of the best, work only for the best, and expect only the best. Be as enthusiastic about the success of others as you are about your own. Forget the mistakes of the past and press on to the greater achievements of the future. Give everyone a smile. Spend so much time improving yourself that you have no time left to criticize others.

A TAKE AWAY

- Do more than exist – live
- Do more than touch – feel
- Do more than look – observe
- Do more than read – absorb
- Do more than hear – listen
- Do more than listen – understand