30th Year Marks Milestone Accomplishments and Successes

2015-16 A YEAR OF MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND AWARDS!

As the principal of Aqsa School, I feel honored and privileged to serve our community, students and staff daily. Everyday I see growth in our students and I am so proud. This year students took on a new challenging Math curriculum and their test scores show that the hard work paid off! We also piloted a new hands-on science curriculum, STEM SCOPES which brought science to life. Students in computer classes learned computer coding and participated in the international HOUR OF CODE day. The list of positive accomplishments is long and full Alhamdulillah. In this newsletter are just a few highlights of awards and accomplishments from this year. May Allah bless us with ongoing goodness and successes now and in the hereafter.

30th ANNIVERSARY: 2016 marked the milestone 30th year for Aqsa School.

We were the first Islamic school established in the state of Illinois and the only all-girls Islamic school in the entire United States. This year we celebrated the strength and legacy of our school, having served generations of Muslim youth—with parents, their children and now even grandchildren calling themselves proud Aqsa students and alumni. We ask Allah to bless us with many more years of success and growth to serve multitudes of generations to come. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of Aqsa School over the last 30 years and May Allah bless and reward you for your support!

Bridgeview Mayor and State Senator Steven Landek Grants Award to Aqsa School and Ms. Laila El-Amin for being the first Islamic School teacher to win the prestigious Golden Apple Award

At the 30th Aqsa School Commencement Ceremony, the school was honored to have State Senator and Bridgeview Mayor Steven Landek in attendance. Mayor Landek presented Aqsa School and Ms. Laila El-Amin with a special Proclamation marking the historic win of a Muslim and Islamic school educator with the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The Proclamation reads, “State of Illinois Senate Recognition: The Illinois Senate of the 99th General Assembly of the State of Illinois Acknowledges LAILA EL-AMIN and AQSA SCHOOL in recognition of receiving the 2016 Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching from the Golden Apple Foundation, and joins in the commemoration of the effort, dedication and hard work that led to receiving this honor and further expresses its best wishes for continued professional development. Offered by: Senator Steven Landek, Senate President, John Cullerton, Secretary of the Senate, Tim Anderson.”

Aqsa School thanks Senator Landek and the state of Illinois for this recognition.

RAMADAN and EID MUBARAK to ALL AQSA Families

WATCH THE GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS at http://www.goldenapple.org/awards

ACADEMIC COMPETITIONS
and Recognitions:
Aqsa Student Achievers

Aqsa Students are talented and intelligent Mashallah. We are always impressed by their leadership, scholarship and service. It is especially rewarding when outside organizations recognize the academic strengths of our students.

The following are students who have competed outside of the school and have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement.

3 Students go to SPEECH NATIONALS in California: After winning for the state of Illinois, three students, Tasnim Jaber, Zahrah Bennett and Amani Khatib, went on to represent Aqsa School and Illinois at the National Catholic Forensic League national competition.

Aqsa 8th grader chosen to go to SPACE CAMP: Tala Dissi was chosen from hundreds of applicants for her strong science background to attend a week long summer space camp in Alabama.

NATIONAL ESSAY CONTEST WINNER: Nadia Abu-Elreish, Facing History and Ourselves

PRESIDENT’S AWARD FOR SERVICE: Tasnim Jaber

State Science Fair
Gold
Saja Taha
Sahreesh Mirjaat
Iliana Sughayar
Jeneen Zahdan
Hana Ishkirat
Amatullah Mir
Amineh Ayyad
Hiba Sandouka
Misbah Mowl
Hanna Ziyad
Amani Khatib
Lena Abushaban
Tala Dissi
Shadin Zayyad

Silver
Amineh Ayyad
Hanna Ziyad

Bronze
Hana Ishkirat

Best of Category in Cellular and Molecular Biology - Sahreesh Mirjaat

Apple Dental Care
PC Award - Amineh Ayyad

American Water Works Associa-

IIT Global Leaders Program
Nora Nofal

MIST
Firdaus Boufath
- 2nd Place
Short Fiction,
2nd Place Science Fair
Esraa Elkossei
3rd Place
Nasheed
Danya Elzahdan
3rd Place
Nasheed

You Be The Chemist
Lena Abushaban
Lana Jaber
Hana Ishkirat
Haya Khalaf
Jeneen Zahdan

Assistant Coach: Amatullah Mir

MIST
Firdaus Boufath
- 2nd Place
Short Fiction,
2nd Place Science Fair
Esraa Elkossei
3rd Place
Nasheed
Danya Elzahdan
3rd Place
Nasheed

Saja Jaber was selected from all 2016 ambassadors at Hugh O’Brien Youth (HOBY) Leadership Seminar to be the Official Illinois State Representative to the 2016 World Leadership Congress (WLC). The WLC features students from over 20 countries and all 50 states.
Prevent Summer Learning Loss

Mashallah our students have spent this year engaged in learning and they have made great gains and academic growth. It is important that we maintain the learning that has already taken place and look to enhance it throughout these summer months. Our teachers and librarians have created learning packets, summer writing journals and reading challenges for all students. Please be sure to have students complete these packets to keep their minds sharp during this break. Additionally, I have compiled some resources that I hope will be helpful as we all work to support our children’s learning throughout the summer months.

“All young people experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer.” Research shows that students typically score lower on standardized tests at the end of summer vacation than they do on the same tests at the beginning of summer vacation. On average, students who do not continue learning over the summer lose 2 or more months in reading and 2.6 months in math.

Some helpful websites include:

ReadWriteThink.org
www.readwritethink.org Go to the Parent & Afterschool section for activities and projects and more for ages kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Reading Rockets
www.readingrockets.org you can find summer booklists for children of various ages, online activities for parents

MATH:
https://www.splashmath.com: Register students and get progress reports and parental updates on student progress.

www.figurethis.org Created by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

www.IXL.com/Math a comprehensive site to practice math in a fun way

**ELEMENTARY STUDENTS:** Complete the summer learning packets your teachers created that were in your end of year portfolios. Write daily in your summer journal.

**JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS:** Don’t forget the English Department Summer Reading.

JOIN A READING CHALLENGE

Barnes and Noble Summer Reading TRIATHOLON: Aqsa Students, this is our summer reading program. Complete the form and Barnes and Noble will let you choose a free book! BN.COM/summerreading

LOCAL LIBRARY SUMMER PROGRAMS: Many local libraries have great summer reading programs with fun incentives for children and adults. PLEASE JOIN, it’s free and a great learning experience!

Need help selecting the right book for your child? The Find-a-Book website (flyer enclosed in the summer mailing), www.lexile.com/findabook, can help you do just that.
MINNA SALIHI SCHOLARSHIP: HELP US, HELP OTHERS

Alhamdullah, Aqsa School was blessed to have Minna Salih as an elementary student in our school from preschool on. SubhanAllah, during her 6th grade year she was diagnosed with Leukemia and she returned to Allah that summer. Minna was a vibrant child who exuded positivity and noor.

As a student at Aqsa School, she once wrote in her journal that her wish was that the Islamic education she received at Aqsa School could be affordable for all children. It is with that sentiment in mind that we began the Minna Salih Scholarship Fund.

2016 would have been Minna’s high school graduation year. Our goal this year is to raise $50,000 so that many students in financial need can have the gift of an Islamic Education. Please donate to this worthy fund—JAZAKUM ALLAHU KHARUN

Minna Salih (May Allah have Mercy on her) during her 6th grade year.

AQSA ACHIEVERS: RECOGNITIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Out of over a thousand applicants, AQSA Students win big, in Letters About Literature National Essay Contest

LEVEL II Semi– Finalists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lena Abushaban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aysha Affaneh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lana Jaber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misbah Mowla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saja Taha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeneen Zahdan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sondos Ellythy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanifa Ahmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatema Abouzeekry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nada Abdallah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nadia Abu-Etreish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esraa El-Kossei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasnim Jaber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wardha Mowla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa Ortega</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanna Ziyad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Finalist:

Fourth Grader:

Jeanine Abedelal