



# THE OLIVE BRANCH

MODEL UNITED NATIONS NEWSLETTER



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ONLINE EDITION

## Conference Calendar

### Upcoming Dates:

10/16-10/18  
Qatar Leadership  
Conference

10/24-10/26  
CACMUN

10/29-11/3  
AMMUN XIII

11/6-11/7  
DCMUN VII

11/21-11/22  
BayMUN

### Online MUN:

5/17  
Global Debate

5/25  
Middle East/Africa

5/25  
Pacific Regional

5/25-5/27  
jrO-MUN

## And the Winner is...

By Paul Reilly

A HEART-WRENCHING portrayal of the lives of carriers in Qatar's souqs, Amal Al-Muftah's *Al-Hammali*, was winner of the THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival's award for Best Picture, taking home a check for 10,000 riyals (3,000 USD).

The five-minute film features Mahmoud Ghasemi, Gholam Ahmed, and Mohamed Abdolrahim, who play three Iranian men who arrive in Qatar as teenagers in the 60s. They first find work as hotel porters and Kandaris (water carriers). Forty years later, they continue to carry a heavy load at work as well as in their everyday lives as expat laborers.

The film, which also won the People's Choice Award by YouTube viewers and the festival audience, was nominated for Best Cinematography, Best Sound, Best Story, Best National Picture, and Best Picture.

"We walk past the *Hammali* in Souq Waqif every day and barely see them, but through



**Film Festival Story:** The winners of THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival receive a sum of 10,000 riyals for winning Best Picture.

film I was able to help their voices reach people, particularly in Qatar," said Al-Muftah, a student in her last week at Qatar Academy, who was also recently accepted into Northwestern University in Qatar. "I

have been able to feel the impact of the film I have made—people who have watched the film tell me that they go back to Souq Waqif to speak to these men and make donations."

The award was presented by

Everette E. Dennis, Dean and CEO of Northwestern University in Qatar, who commented: "Effective entertainment can make audiences smile or cry,

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## UWCSEA Student Filmmakers Nominated for Awards

By Janes Hiron

THREE UWCSEA Dover students have been selected as finalists in the THIMUN Qatar Northwestern University Film Competition, held annually in Doha, Qatar.

The student filmmakers are all students whose films were produced as part of the UWCSEA-designed IGCSE course Global Perspectives. The course provides students with an opportunity to explore a wide variety of global issues, from the influence of social media on teenagers to the impact of human rights on us all. The aim is to not only focus on the problems but to encourage students to find solutions. In Grade 10, students create films based around the theme of advocacy, giving them a chance to explore solutions to the problems that concern them the most. The films clear-

ly demonstrate both the values of UWCSEA and the work we do in Global Perspectives.

Congratulations to Alyssa Choo (Best Picture nominee), Htet Hien (Best Picture nominee) and Anya Prasad (Best Editing nominee). Several students were also shortlisted for consideration for the awards, including Sean Asahara Thio, Simran Kundu, Mehak Bammi and Urvi Guglani.

Hein Htet's film, *Books for the Future*, explores the trials and tribulations of young individuals in Myanmar, in terms of poverty and education. He says, "The film has opened my eyes to a new perspective of Myanmar. The process of making the film has shed light on so many issues that I have never realized before. I hope that my film can convey the same message and impact on to its viewers too."

Alyssa Choo's film, *The Technological Trail*, covers the

advancement in technological means seen in the world today and the effects it has on human relations. While recognizing certain advantages, she notes that some developments in technology have their drawbacks, such as the loss of emotional connection. "I see my film as a vehicle to raise awareness of what the world is coming to. Real connections don't derive from text messages with others, they emerge from time spent together. That's a real friendship, and I want everyone to know that."

Anya Prasad says of her powerful work, *The Lack of Security of Women in India*, "This film has given me a perspective on the atrocities that women face not only in India but world over, and has shown how the women in India actually feel about safety issues — which might stimulate some thoughts for the audience too."

## Meet the New THIMUN O-MUN Student Leadership Team!

By Lisa Martin

THE announcement of student leadership positions at THIMUN Online has become one of my favorite days of the year. And last night was the much anticipated reveal of the 2014-15 leadership team. This group of high school students from over 21 nations will work to promote and expand the online debate's program.

Our Secretary General, Rohan Sinha, hails from Taiwan, and is our first male SG. He will be supported by his Deputies Secretary General Andrea He (Asia), Elizabeth Kitange (Africa), Ashish Tharoor (Middle East), Henry Zink (Europe) and Alex Nguyn (Americas). Additionally, O-MUN's specialty programs, also headed up by DSGs include Dylan Sexton (Global Debates), Wesley Chen (Special Conferences), Hana Seita (Moderator Training), Timothy Shu (ICJ) and Cem

Gokmen (Public Affairs). This last DSG position was developed through discussions with current leadership team members, who saw a need to focus on educational outreach. Cem will also continue as our all-important Technology Officer.

Our Global Leadership Team consists of individuals from almost every continent who work together to provide the logistical support for debates and programs. Kari P-Grau (USA) will continue in the Community Development Officer position, and he is supported by Ananya Saxena (UAE) in the Social Media Officer position. Abhishek Patel (Zimbabwe) will take on a new position-Educational Outreach Officer and work to develop Socratic Seminars, Google+ current events discussions, and more. Bassim Ele-dath (UAE) will work in Press and Publications, a busy and in-

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# 2013-2014: Giving Special Thanks

**THE END** of the school year is also a time of thank-you and good byes. MUN conferences are only possible because of the dedication and commitment from teacher volunteers. The organizers of the Olive Branch would like to thank the individuals below for the countless hours of support and work with young people. We wish you all the best in the next chapter of your life.

## Lindsey Peak and Rebecca Cain



Lindsey (Qatar Academy) and Rebecca (Park House) have been an integral part of the THIMUN Qatar Press team for the past three years. The two of them started the THIMUN Qatar press team three years ago along with THIMUN Hague Press coordinator Andrew Newman. Since that time, they have worked tirelessly to contribute a sense of pride and professionalism to the press core. They have introduced numerous innovations to the program including live streaming of events and making online publications accessible. Their commitment to student learning goes well beyond the THIMUN Qatar conference week with weekly meetings, running press teams at other student conferences (Qatar Leadership Conference and DCMUN), and providing workshops to students. All the best in your transition to Serbia (Lindsey) and future studies (Rebecca).

## Aaron Alcodray



Aaron Alcodray (Qatar Academy) has volunteered as a Qatar Academy MUN club director for the past several years. He has supervised numerous international MUN trips and always willing to step in and help out wherever he is needed. Aaron's positive outlook on life and deep commitment to student development has endeared him to many QAMUN club members. A constant traveller, a person with passion about making positive change combined with his global perspective, Aaron personifies the best of MUN Directors. All the best in your new assignment in Peru.

## Luke Davis

Luke Davis has supported the devel-

opment of the THIMUN Qatar Northwestern film festival since its inception. Besides his amazing work in developing the film studies program at Doha College, Luke has been a constant source of support for the film festival. He has



served on the pre-screening committee for the past four years watching endless hours of submissions. He is always ready offer a helping hand and good advice. We wish you all the best as you head back to the United Kingdom.

## Mandy Hollingshead & Robert Krebs



THIMUN Qatar has one of the most amazing opening ceremonies in the world of MUN. One of the main reasons for this is the work of Mandy Hollingshead (Qatar Academy) and Robert Krebs (American School of Doha). Mandy and Bob took opening ceremonies from a small 12 person choir performance and turned it into an elaborate 200+ choir and orchestra musical event. Opening ceremonies became an event both for the delegates and the performers. Their incredible flexibility and commitment to the program cannot be praised enough. From overseeing the construction of stages, moving hundreds of pieces of musical equipment to commissioning our opening ceremonies song to praying that the lighting and rain storm would not destroy our former outdoor opening ceremonies, Mandy and Bob did everything to make THIMUN work. All though someone always seemed to forget to say thank you at the conclusion of the opening ceremonies, we are truly grateful for your support.

## Ruth Tremlett

Ruth has served as the director of Model United Nations at Gulf English School for the past three years. Despite a very busy work schedule, Ruth always finds time to support her student's activities in MUN. If there is an MUN event happening in Doha, Ruth and her students will be there. She has taken a small MUN program at Gulf English School and made it one of the best in the country. Her students have played key roles in THIMUN Qatar executive teams and always come well prepared. We wish you all the best.

## Sara Berhie



Sara is one of the co-founders of the Qatar MUN and Film Leadership Conference held each fall in Qatar. On top of her many other duties at Georgetown University, Sara also helps organize two School of Foreign Service in Qatar -

Georgetown University MUN conferences; one in Qatar and one in India. Many of THIMUN Qatar delegates go on to university and Georgetown and Sara is always there to help with the transition in university life.

## Kathryn King



Kathryn King has been with Georgetown since they started in Qatar. Under her guidance, Georgetown student services are constantly looking for ways to serve the greater community of Qatar. She has been instrumental in its co-founding of the School of Foreign Service in Qatar - Georgetown University MUN conference, offering regular MUN workshops and practice conferences, inviting high school students and teachers to lecture series, and supervising the development of the Zones of Peace Zones of Conflict program.

## Making A Wave

By Bitu Koç

**IF YOU LIVE** in Istanbul, you may notice the little kids in the traffic, trying to sell water. For most of us, this remains a foreign detail, but RC senior Burak Özçelik questioned, "How different would be my life if I was one of them?" He says, "Just like we try to save a person drowning in the sea, I believe we should try our best to not ignore these kids drowning in the immense sea of life and buy the waters they sell, when in need, to reintegrate them to our society." He decided to give it a try with what he knew best: film. Özçelik shared the story through the perspective of a homeless boy, Michael, who tries to sell water in the traffic for a day. He showed the audience the care (and lack thereof) members of society had for the boy. This art initiative resulted in an invitation to THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival as a nominee in the "Best Story" category.

Özçelik's road to success was, of course, easier said than done. "The film needed to be shot on the main road," Burak says, "In order it to be effective, I decided to shoot it in the evening but it was hard to find an actor who can play a homeless boy in the cold winter evenings." At this stage, Özçelik's discovered talent in Oğuz Yıldız (RC '17). Yıldız and Özçelik had been coming across each other on the bus in the mornings, and because they were living in the same neighborhood, Burak pro-

posed him to the idea of acting in his film.

"It required great courage, confidence, and talent to play the boy selling water in the evening traffic," says Özçelik. Yıldız showed the courage to play in the film and Özçelik ran through many practice shoots. "Because it was dark outside, the lights were creating shadows and ensuring the camera doesn't overshadow and people don't stare at the camera were big challenges for me." Despite all the challenges; however, Özçelik managed to shoot his movie.

On the other hand, his biggest challenge was yet to come: On the last day of application, as he was making the final touches in his film, an unexpected error occurred. The school was over and he was sitting in the computer labs but he was unable to fix the error. "I needed to leave the school as well. Thus, I became stressed and felt desperate. At that point, it seemed to me that all my efforts may be wasted."

Özçelik tried every way at that point but couldn't fix the problem. So, he saved his current work and left to school to head to Beşiktaş. Not to feel regretful afterwards, Özçelik entered an internet café in Beşiktaş and almost magically, he fixed his problem and made the last touch.

For his great efforts, Özçelik also gives credit to his "FilmLit" and Photography classes. According to him, any knowledge you gain helps you see things from a different perspective.



Founded in January 2013

## The Olive Branch

**Kevin Felix Chan and Ryan Villanueva**, Best Delegate Co-Founders  
**Lisa Martin**, Online Model United Nations Director/Co-Founder  
**Cameron Janzen**, Head of THIMUN Qatar

**Jullian Bao**, Lead Editor  
**Lwam Stefanos**, Content Editor  
**Brilliant Bao**, Design Editor  
**Staff Writers/Contributors:** Bitu Koç, Alia El Kattan, Janes Hirons, Paul Reilly,

Abhay Valiyaveettil

# A Tribute to Cameron Janzen

By Alain Meidinger

**IN THE COURSE** of the first decade of the new millennium, the THIMUN Foundation succeeded in spreading its programme across almost every continent largely in part because of its affiliated conferences. In the same spirit, in 2005, the THIMUN Foundation launched a second large conference in Singapore. The third step of the Foundation, completed during the years 2009 and 2010, aimed to locate a new venue for a larger conference in the Middle East. A productive meeting with Cameron Janzen at the Qatar Academy encouraged the Foundation to move forward with this next step.

Thanks to Cameron Janzen, as well as conference assistant Ann Rogers, the first THIMUN Qatar was held in November 2011. The year after, in April 2012, the first THIMUN Film Festival was organized, giving young filmmakers the opportunity to explore current issues through their own visual presentations. Later on, in September 2012, we saw the success of the first THIMUN Leadership Conference, which brought together national and international Model UN leaders. Thanks to Cameron, our Regional Officer, these three consecutive events are now organized in Doha on an annual basis: a THIMUN Qatar Conference, the THIMUN Film

Festival, and the THIMUN Leadership Conference.

In addition to the development of the Model UN programme in the Middle East, Cameron succeeded in creating a broad network encompassing the entire region. His efforts brought in educators and schools from Europe, North America and Far East Asia to Doha to share knowledge and exchange ideas with each other. Cameron spent a great deal of time and energy travelling around the Middle East for this purpose. His work included affiliating conferences, giving advice to Model UN teachers, connecting the organization Best Delegate with Middle East schools, and editing *The Olive Branch* newsletter. Furthermore, he also used the Leadership conference as a platform to launch Lisa Martin's Online Model United Nations program worldwide, connecting even more students and educators to the world of debate and diplomacy.

Geographically, Cameron's influence reached even further than the Middle East region. He travelled across South-East Asia and in North Africa. With his help, the THIMUN Foundation managed to modernize the its website and standardize the educational documents used not only by the three THIMUN Conferences, but also by almost fifty conferences that were affiliated worldwide.

On a personal level, the Board will also remember other aspects of Cameron's commitment. Firstly, we will always cherish the Skype meetings connecting Doha with The Hague, during which we could have a look at Cameron's home office and sometimes catch a glimpse of his boys passing by and saying hello. Secondly, we will always remember having the opportunity to see Cameron in action during the THIMUN Qatar events—the Leadership Conferences, the Film Festivals—knowing and taking care of everyone with modesty and discretion. In Doha, we could see how much other people liked Cameron and respected him for his professionalism.

The THIMUN Foundation would like to deeply thank Cameron Janzen for his hard work, his dedication, and the timeless hours and efforts he gave to the THIMUN Foundation through THIMUN Qatar, an indispensable educational programme worldwide. Thanks to him, the Foundation has become a better-known NGO that still seeks to spread the Model UN programme in other parts of the world such as in Latin America.

Finally, this tribute to Cameron would not be fully complete without a special thank you to Cameron's wife, Darla. Cameron could not have done what he accomplished for the THIMUN



Cameron Janzen

Foundation without the support and the love of his wife, who spent so much time without Cameron in Doha while he was travelling the world. Thank you, dear Darla!

The THIMUN Foundation wishes Cameron and his family all the best in their new challenges in their new home of Venezuela.

*Alain Meidinger is the co-chair of the THIMUN Foundation. This article was written on behalf of the entire Board and Office of the THIMUN Foundation.*

## An Oasis for Model UN in the Middle East

By Ryan Villanueva and Kevin Felix Chan

**A VISIONARY** turns dreams into reality, seeing what's possible before others know what to look for. When others are lost in the desert, a visionary shows them a common vision and gives them a common voice, guiding them and moving them toward their promised destination. When others are parched with thirst, only able to see mirages, a visionary quenches that thirst and creates an oasis.

Cameron Janzen is a Model UN visionary. Cameron turned the dream of empowering, unifying, and student-centered Model UN programs into reality. Cameron saw what was possible for Qatar MUN before the rest of us had ever heard of THIMUN Qatar. When students and teachers were looking for guidance on how to bring Model UN to their schools, Cameron started the Qatar Leadership Conference and the Olive Branch. When Model UN was a mirage for many schools, Cameron organized workshops and partnered with O-MUN to make sure that anyone, anywhere in the region had the opportunity to participate in this transformative and life-changing activity. Over the past decade, Cameron has created an oasis for Model UN in the Middle East.

Cameron is an extraordinary professional with a sterling reputation, and it has been our pleasure to work with him on multiple projects over the past two years. We have enjoyed working with him and Lisa on teaching Model UN workshops and delivering the Olive Branch. We're grateful to have been part of the Qatar Leadership Conference and the THIMUN Qatar Conference. Cameron's achievements and professionalism are only exceeded by his genuine kindness and generosity in helping others. Ever since our first meeting at THIMUN Hague 2012, we have been

inspired by Cameron's dedication to empowering students and teachers in Qatar, across the Middle East, and around the world.

Of all the students and teachers we've met throughout our own experiences, we've never met anyone who has so deeply understood the transformative impact that Model United Nations has on students the way that Cameron does.

We were particularly moved by Cameron's speech at this year's THIMUN Qatar:

*"MUN is about forming people who have empathy towards others, who have the skills to engage in purposeful, peaceful, but well-organized action...We may not solve the world's problems, but each and every one of us can make an incredible difference in the lives of others."*

Cameron, thank you for everything. It has been our pleasure to work with you. We wish you the best of luck in your next position and your future endeavors. And although you've said that you're retiring from Model UN, we know from our experience that Model UN is for life -- so we look forward to seeing you at your next Model UN conference!



*Best Delegate co-founder Kevin Felix Chan, incoming Director of THIMUN Qatar Lisa Martin, outgoing Director of THIMUN Qatar Cameron Janzen, and Best Delegate co-founder Ryan Villanueva at the Qatar Leadership Conference 2013*

# A Look Back: Remembering Cameron Janzen's Contributions to Model United Nations

WITH THE end of the academic year comes a milestone of sorts. Cameron Janzen, one of the region's most important thought leaders in the field of Model United Nations, is moving on to new challenges in South America. His impact on the region, and his support to many schools and programs in the Middle East, have not gone unnoticed. The following individuals have shared their thoughts on Cameron's important contributions in the development of the THIMUN Qatar program and the impact this has had well beyond the Doha-based office.



"Mr. Cameron Janzen came to Qatar Academy in 2003, at a time when the school had only a fledgling MUN club that had never traveled abroad. Mr. Janzen energized the dozen students, and suddenly, interest in MUN increased around the school. Within his first year, Mr. Janzen began a training conference for Qatar Academy, introduced a student-led executive team, and registered QA for its first international MUN conference in Dublin. QAMUN was the first co-curricular activity of its kind open to students. In the midst of all of this, Mr. Janzen professional reputation, among teachers and students alike, was held in high regard.

In 2005, Mr. Janzen pursued his vision for a national MUN conference. QMUN brought together the MUN programs at American School of Doha, Doha College, and Qatar Academy, and in the process, introduced MUN to numerous other schools in the country. Between 2005 and 2010, QMUN quickly expanded from 500 students in 2005 to around 1000 students. Mr. Janzen envisioned greater potential in both Qatar and the students as he began to lay the foundation for the THIMUN Qatar office. This brought MUN in Qatar to the forefront of all other programs in the Middle East. Under his leadership, the THIMUN Qatar office expanded rapidly, introducing the Film Festival, and later the Qatar Leadership Conference. The latter brings in over thirty speakers each year. Mr. Janzen's contributions were clearly not only to Qatar Academy, but to the many schools around Qatar, and students across the world."

—**Dr. Eric Sands**,  
Director, Qatar Academy, and

**Mr. Jesse Atkins**,  
THIMUN Coordinator, Qatar

"It has been the greatest of pleasures working with Cameron over the last six years. As we go through life we are honored to meet lots of people, but only a few special people. Cameron is one of my special people. The more I think about it the more I feel he belongs in the diplomatic core but then all of those students would have missed out big time. His way with people is magic. Yes Cameron has the magic touch and we all love him and will miss him so much. I hope Venezuela brings Cameron professional pleasure. I am sure that my feelings of appreciation and admiration extend to all of the Doha College students Cameron has also nurtured."

—**Alan Butler**,  
Director DCMUN, Doha College

"While MUN is Cameron's passion, his vision is for more than students practising policy and sparring with like-minded peers. His vision has always been to put students into 'real world' situations where they can experience first-hand at grass-roots level, the ramifications of global policies. To this end, he and a community member from war-torn eastern Sri Lanka have woven a lasting link between Qatar Academy's MUN community and Eravur, a majority Muslim village in a predominantly Hindu area. Peace-making through education was the corner-stone focus, so once an NGO was established, sponsorship of students to attend school, funding for a dedicated school building and student and teacher exchanges have developed in a sustainable way. Without the strong vision and principled adherence to process by both Cameron and his Eravur-born counterpart, Ansar, such a model would not have developed. Together they have modelled to the whole THIMUN community the necessary partnership protocols for such a respectful, sustainable action program. In so doing, Cameron has left a legacy not only of THIMUN and its far reaching influence, but also a model for all MUN groups to take the necessary actions in fulfilling the rhetoric of conferences. QA Action has made a difference to not only a war-torn community in Sri

Lanka, but also to the students of Qatar Academy in both Primary and Senior school in terms of their world view. And that is a life-long difference for generations to come."

—**Kay Mitchell**  
Senior School Academic Support, Qatar Academy

"Cam Janzen is one of the most dedicated and caring teachers I've ever met. I've worked with numerous high school programs across Qatar - his are the most well-organized, thoughtful and student centered events I have had the pleasure of being involved in. I've worked with Cam for several years on the THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival and the Qatar Leadership Conference. I've always been impressed by how big he dreams. I find hosting hundreds of students daunting, but Cam takes it all in stride and expertly organizes fabulous conferences. Along the way, he is also an encourager. He is collaborative and inclusive of fellow faculty at Qatar Academy and other schools. He often lets others take the spotlight, letting the students and fellow colleagues shine, while he is behind the scenes. The way in which he works with students is incredibly admirable. I know many students at Northwestern who still refer to him fondly - Mr. Janzen certainly made a huge impression on their lives. He will

be sorely missed."

—**Emily Ruth Wilson**,  
Manger for Community Relations,  
Northwestern University

"Cameron is a builder, a builder of programs that impact young people around the world. From Qatar Academy and Doha, to the Middle East and the world, the programs he has supported have translated into real and lasting impact on young people's lives. At heart, Cameron is an educator with a deep sense of the importance of engagement and leadership opportunities. He was the first individual 'over 30' to see the potential of the online MUN concept, and worked continuously over two years to support and position the program to where it is today. Students in over 40 countries have been the direct recipient of his vision for MUN. His work towards a more inclusive vision for MUN will have lasting impact on the growth of the program for many years to come."

—**Lisa Martin**,  
Founder/Director, THIMUN Online  
Model United Nations

"As a student and the THIMUN Qatar 2014 Secretary General, I can firsthand say that Mr. Janzen has been both an important mentor and friend that has aided in my development as a leader. His help and guidance were never solely reserved to those who were involved in leadership but rather always open to everyone who sought them. The support he gave all of us and the empowering opportunities he worked hard to provide us with were invaluable to our growth as individuals and citizens of this world. His contributions to the community and the entire region prove that he will leave behind a legacy of evolving generations of youth that are conscious of the world around them, the issues that shape it, and the methods by which to go about solving them.

On behalf of all of those generations of MUNers, I'd like to thank him for believing in us and wish him the best in all his future endeavors."

—**Wessam Kaness**,  
THIMUN Qatar Secretary General, 2014

**C**ameron, this is in honor just for you

**A**nd for all that you do

**M**UN will stay with me forever

**E**verlasting memories I will treasure

**R**ecognition of what you have achieved over the years

**O**nly you could have such an impact on your students and peers

**N**ow the end is near, I wish you and your family every success and happiness

—**Ann Rogers**, Former THIMUN Qatar Conference Manager

## Free to Learn Their ABC's

By Nismah Jahanzeb Siddique and Shayna Dhanoo

**THE POWER** of a well-directed lens, pointed in the right direction at the right time, has long been acknowledged. Sometimes just one picture is all it takes to bring about change in hundreds of lives.

How about dozens of them put on a reel?

Camera is perhaps the best weapon to fight social injustices, human rights violations and similar menaces. Nothing beats the power of lens particularly when it comes to attracting mass attention towards a neglected segment of the social fabric.

So, if you have a camera in hand, you just need to know where and when to use it. The rest is all instinct. You can make a difference. Two young girls, the students of Media Studies at Doha College, have recently done just that.

Putting their newly-learned skills to work, Nismah Jahanzeb Siddique and Shayna Dhanoo, the two student filmmakers, recently got international recognition by winning a runner-up prize for Best Picture at THIMUN Qatar Northwestern University Film Festival 2014, with their documentary *Madrassa-e-Umeed* (a school of hope).

Inspired by the "Education for all" programme of a non-profit organisation, Pakistan Welfare Forum (PWF), *Madrassa-e-Umeed* shows one of the many ways real difference can be made. PWF is providing free education to hundreds of children and adults from underprivileged segments of the local Pakistani community, people who would not otherwise have access to institutional education.

How did they find their subject? Nismah, talking to Community with Shayna sitting beside her, said they always felt strongly about "education being people's right, not a privilege. They (the PWF) were promoting for all children

to have education and we thought that is good and we should really promote it." This message also forms the core of their movie. The two girls were excited on their efforts being acknowledged.

"In Qatar you think that everyone should have access to education and then you find out that there was this whole community that did not have access to education and that the PWF was [helping them out]," she said.

Armed with Digital SLRs, the two girls shot the less than 10-minute-long film in two days. From preparing the storyboard and writing the script to editing the movie, it was all their own work. They were the directors. However, their peers, the schools and friends did chip in with some assistance.

Luke Davies, their teacher, helped them improve the script while one of their class fellows, Oliver Morris, composed the film's soundtrack on his gui-

tar for them. The school provided them with the required logistical support.

The film's poster, with the picture of a boy looking skywards, gives an indication about the two filmmakers' abilities even before one gets down to watching the movie. Cinematography is excellent and the pictures, captured from all the right angles, are aptly put together. Nismah gives the voiceover.

Who is best with the camera? "I think Shayna, for sure," Nismah replied quickly. Both chuckled.

Shayna added, "I think we both are good at it. She took mostly the moving shots and I took the close up shots. We both took turns and then we collaborated."

It was a brilliant effort to keep the film alive and interesting from start to the end, particularly when it did not include interviews or sound bites.

"We wanted to take interviews as they help the audience to relate to the characters but then those people did not want to be singled out, specified or identified,



Nismah Jahanzeb Siddique and Shayna Dhanoo receive recognition as runners-up for Best Picture.

so we said okay fine we would go without it," said Nismah.

The movie starts by explaining how one in five children does not have access to education. The camera pans to children in their small three-room school behind Pakistan Education Centre receiving free education.

Some students talked to them in Urdu, but this could not be shown on screen since parents could take offense. The filmmakers also faced a barrier in language, as most of the children spoke their native Balochi language.

"But then they would come to us and show how they were learning A, B, C and doing drawings and colouring and that is how we interacted with them," the two girls added.

When their names were announced as runners-up at the festival, the two girls said they were pleasantly surprised. "We were really proud because when they called our names, we were not expecting to win," said Shayna.

The student filmmakers were content with the results, stating that the girl who won first prize truly deserved it. "Her cinematography was brilliant and the story was very good," Nismah added.

Fans of documentary films, both Nismah and Shayna said they would definitely grab any opportunity to make films whenever they find an equally compelling subject. However, they were planning to pursue two different career paths.

Nismah is planning to do fashion designing and her friend Shayna is more interested in environmental sciences and geography. Even so, Nismah believes "this for me was a good experience. If another opportunity comes, we will take it. We cannot let it pass. It was so much fun. If something comes that is equally good as this, I would definitely go for it."

Shayna agreed with her. "Yes, it can continue as a hobby. It is really good, but I love environmental sciences as well."



*"In the hub of variety, we create unity..."*

*Registration begins on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May and ends on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September*

Join the **only THIMUN** affiliated conference in Bahrain, an island where rich culture meets modern style.



Yusuf Jailani {Secretary General}  
yousifjailani@gmail.com



Faris Al Ghareeb {President of the General Assembly}  
fares.alghareeb@outlook.com



Feras Al Saffar {Deputy President of the General Assembly}  
feraswsaffar@gmail.com

# SG for Arabic Online Shares the O-MUN Philosophy

By Alia El Kattan

**MY O-MUN** journey all started with a Facebook post. I saw Ms. Martin congratulating Assistant Director Ibrahim El Kazzaz for his (former) EAO position at Online Model United Nations. Reading the post, I concentrated on one word: online. Naturally, technology is a huge part of my life, and I spend a significant portion of my time working on the computer. Therefore, the fact that I could regularly (monthly or weekly) participate in Model United Nations online, rather than just attend an average of two conferences per year, seemed quite brilliant. Quickly, I got interested in O-MUN, and realized I wanted to become a more active member of the O-MUN community. That was when I applied for my first position in the THIMUN O-MUN Executive Leadership team, and I was assigned the position of the Executive Administrative Officer of Egypt.

Being a part of the leadership team introduced me to an awesome community which I am now honoured to be a part of. The O-MUN community, starting with O-MUN founder and director Ms. Lisa Martin, as well as every member who has contributed to the online debates, has continued to inspire me. I have been impressed by the great friendships that we have made through O-MUN, by the team's perseverance and honesty, and by the youth who were willing to give up their time and effort to help others and spread O-MUN all around the world. I decided that I want to be one of these people. I want to

give up my time and effort to make O-MUN influential for other delegates as it has been for me. Personally, I do not consider O-MUN just any educational program: it represents a message and a purpose. It brings together youth from all around the world to express their opinions, and to gain experiences they might not have the opportunity to gain otherwise. This is where O-MUN Arabic comes in. Unless you are an English-speaking student, it is difficult to experience Model UN without O-MUN. When Ms. Martin introduced the idea of O-MUN Arabic, I loved the fact that we could get even more people to participate in MUN. These students could now experience the intense debates, make the precious friendships, all in their mother language — in my mother language. I was truly flattered when I was offered the O-MUN Arabic Secretary General position, and words could not explain how grateful I was. Not only would I hold a high position in Online Model United Nations along with many great people, but I could be working to help the youth, to allow them to gain useful experiences, and to strengthen the use of my mother language, Arabic. I am honoured to work alongside Salam (AD), and Khalifa (DSG), and hope that working with these two will help the newly founded program could quickly expand and evolve.

A year from now, I am positive that O-MUN will expand even more, with an abundant amount of delegates joining the programs. I hope to continue seeing the quality of debates improving, whether it is regular O-MUN debates,

National Programs, or the Arabic and French programs. Finally, I'd like to thank every single delegate and teacher who has helped me throughout my own MUN journey until this point (I'd like to give special thanks to Hayah Interna-

tional Academy's awesome Model UN director Mr. Karim El Dib), and every person who has been a part of O-MUN and helped the program develop. I wish you all many fruitful debates in the near future!



*The Secretary General for Arabic Online, Alia El Kattan, looks forward to a promising year serving as an O-MUN staffer and expanding O-MUN's program offerings to delegates.*

The AMMUN team hopes that every step taken is a step down the path towards a dream realized, a dream of continuous success, uninterrupted growth, and a spark, which lights the beacons.

The Annual Amman Model United Nations is a THIMUN affiliated MUN conference hosted by the Amman Baccalaureate School in Amman, Jordan.

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AMMUN encourages delegates to adopt different points of view, debate and create an environment where all views are accepted equally and friendships forged.

It has become AMMUN's vision to provide a platform for youth in the Middle East and from all corners of the globe to hear student delegates speak their minds and continue the call for reform.

# From the Techie's Desk...

By Abhay Valiyaveettil



**HI THERE!** I'm sure all of you are super busy with exams, conferences, events and what-not, but hey summer isn't too far away! I'm really excited about all the tech stuff that I'll be working on in the coming few months. Now that most of the confer-

ences and events are coming to a pause, it's time for me to do some research and come up with some new tech solutions for next year's programs. In this edition of "From the Techie's Desk", I'd like to share some reflections from the recently held THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival 2014, in particular, about the technical and production team that I worked with. I also have updates from the test run of the new electronic resolution system (ERS).

The Film Festival is an annual session organized by THIMUN Qatar and Northwestern University in Qatar and this year was the fourth session. There were several entries of films from all over the globe and eventually, about 20 films were shortlisted for the various awards and the directors were flown in to Qatar to attend and participate in the film festival. The main event of the festival is the gala dinner that happens on the final day during which the films are screened and the awards are announced. Now there's a lot of preparation that

goes into this gala event as well. One of the most important part of this night is to provide the nominations and show the clippings of the films in the right sequence. It may seem a straightforward task but actually rendering each clip and getting the sequence and schedule to match is pretty challenging. Nevertheless, I was fortunate to work with a great team of student officers and together we managed to put up a good show. The students used Final Cut Pro for the most part to edit and render the films and also used a combination of rolling slides and sound clips as an .mov file for the nominations. During the film festival weekend, there was also a trailer challenge that took place at Northwestern University's editing lab. The students were paired up and were tasked with coming up with a 60-second trailer for a short film. Again, the students were really excited and seemed proficient with their skills using Final Cut Pro X and Adobe Premiere.

Last month, Doha College organized

the One-Day Training Conference (ODTC) at their premises. It was a successful conference with many local schools participating and warming up for the main conference in November. This was also a great opportunity to launch the new system that I had been working on. The approval panel opened up by about 11 am and the first resolution was uploaded on to the system. I'm glad to announce that the system worked really well for the duration of the conference and more than 20 resolutions were registered/approved/failed during this conference. The feedback received has been really valuable and I hope to continue working on it and improve it for future conferences.

That's it from me for now; I hope you all have a great month ahead. Once again, if you have any tech related questions or would like to know more about ERS or MUNIS, feel free to email me at [avaliyaveettil@qf.org.qa](mailto:avaliyaveettil@qf.org.qa).

## Film Festival, cont.

but it certainly causes them to ponder. The nominees for this year's festival awards communicated their subjects' stories powerfully, and they have all created an impact."

The three-day annual festival-sponsored by Northwestern University in Qatar and THIMUN Qatar—a partnership program between Qatar Academy and The Hague International Model United Nations Foundation. The event was created to encourage high school students to use film as a tool to advocate for social change and development.

In its third international edition, the festival student directors came from countries around the world to attend workshops and take part in skill-building exercises, including a 24-hour team challenge to develop the best short film. The festival culminated in an Oscar-style gala awards ceremony, where judges from NU-Q, THIMUN and Qatar Academy announced winners across a number of categories based upon their critical review of the 15 films submitted.

Cameron Janzen, teacher at Qatar

Academy and Head of THIMUN Qatar, stressed the importance of challenging students to explore themes of social and positive change: "The purpose of the film festival is to communicate the high value that we place on the importance of young people telling stories. Stories about important issues of our day, stories that may not be normally told, stories that challenge us to look at our attitudes and behaviors, stories that encourage us to be positive agents for change. We are very proud of all of the young filmmakers who are already working to enact positive changes."

Winners in other categories were *Maker's Mind* (Best Poster), *Future Steps* (Best Editing), *Qatar Water Crisis* (Best Cinematography), *A Victim* (Best Sound), *Masoom* (Best Story), *Enviro-Man* (Best Junior Film), *The Forgotten* (Best National Film) and *Madrassa* (Best Picture, 1st Runner Up).

You can view all nominated films from the 2014 THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival here: [THIMUN-QatarFilmFest](http://THIMUN-QatarFilmFest).

## THIMUN Leadership, cont.

creasingly important job. Executive Administrative Officers (EAOs) have outreach tasks in their respective countries and organizing debates. Our EAO lineup includes Flo Spiekerman (China), Jay Hyun Park (South Korea), York Wang (Taiwan), Jordan Yoong (Singapore), Zohaib Ahmed (India), Amelia Kenna (Jordan), Anurag Srivastava (Qatar), Sarah Tahir (Kuwait), Alia Al-Amarrri (Bahrain), Karan Wadhvani (UAE), Maahir Jusabani (Tanzania), Michael Borger (Germany), Tamer Kabo (Turkey), Rayane Hadder (France) and Amit Arkhipov-Goyal (UK). EAO positions are also pending for several other countries and regions.

This year saw a marked increase in applications, as well as an increased level of experience. The 2014-15 leadership is our strongest yet, and will ably lead the program into new directions in the upcoming year. Congratulations to all our leaders—welcome aboard!

The THIMUN Online team announced its leadership positions for and in the region:

**Assistant Director:** Salam Keadan, Tel Aviv University

**Deputy Secretary General of the Middle East:** Ashish Tharoor, Dubai International Academy

**Executive Administrative Officer UAE:** Karan Wadhvani, Delhi Private School, Dubai

**Executive Administrative Officer Bahrain:** Alya Al-Ammari, Ibn Khuldoon National School

**Executive Administrative Officer Qatar:** Anurag Srivastava, Birla Public School, Doha

**Executive Administrative Officer Kuwait:** Sarah Tahir, American International School of Kuwait

**Head of Administration:** Maryam Al-Ammari, Ibn Khuldoon National School, Bahrain

**Secretary General for OMUN Arabic:** Alia ElKattan, Hayah International Academy, Cairo

**Deputy Secretary General for OMUN Arabic:** Khalifa Al Khalifa, Ibn Khuldoon National School, Bahrain

**Deputy Secretary General for Moderator Training:** Hana Seit, American Community School, Amman

**Press and Publications Officer:** Bassim Eledath, the Millenium School, Dubai

**Social Media Officer:** Ananya Saxena, Emirates International School Meadows, Dubai

## Sandalwood Heights Student Filmmaker Nominated for International Film Award

**SIDDARTH** Anilkumar Rajashree, a grade 12 student at Sandalwood Heights Secondary School, was recently nominated for the Best Editing Award at the THIMUN Qatar Northwestern Film Festival. Anilkumar Rajashree is nominated for his film High School Hip Hop and explores the influence that hip hop culture has on teenagers and how they emulate the hip hop culture in their everyday lives.

"I didn't want to give a particularly biased take on the issue of whether hip hop, rap, break dancing and beatboxing have a positive or negative influence on teens," says Anilkumar Rajashree. "I wanted to leave that up to the audience. I wanted to ask the question of why they are influenced by the culture in such a big way."

"I was really excited to go back to Qa-

tar," says Anilkumar Rajashree. "THIMUN was the one of the main things that got me into filmmaking in the first place. It showed me that I could make

a career out of doing something that I love. I'm excited to see my old friends, and to represent my school and Canada."

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# Opposing Views: A Look Into Single Gender Classes



*Are single-sex schools better for education than co-educational schools?*

By Cameron Janzen

**ONE OF** the key strategies in preparing MUNers for debate and resolution writing is to develop an understanding of the spectrum of opinion about the topic being debated. Once delegates understand the basic opposing views of the issue, they can better determine on which side and to what extent their assigned nation supports one of the two main views. Each month, *Opposing Views* will outline a debate taken from the website Database. With hundreds of debates outlined in an easy to use format, this is a great resource for MUNers.

Single-sex schools are schools that only admit those of one specific gender, believing that the educational environment fostered by a single gender is more conducive to learning than a co-educational school. Traditionally, educational institutes in the Arab world organized their schools as single gender institutions. However, usually the debate focuses on cultural and religious understandings rather than educational achievement. This month's debate focuses on whether single-sex schools are good for education.

## Points For

### Girls are better off in single-sex institutions

Girls in particular benefit from a single-sex education; research shows that they participate more in class, develop much higher self-esteem, score higher in aptitude tests, are more likely to choose 'male' disciplines such as science in college, and are more successful in their careers. In the USA Who's Who, graduates of women's colleges outnumber all other women; and there are only approximately 50 women's colleges left in the States today. Elizabeth Tidball, who conducted the Who's Who research, later concluded that women's colleges produced 'more than their fair share who went on to medical school or

received doctorates in the natural or life sciences', typically male fields.

### Boys and girls are an unwelcome distraction to each other

Boys and girls distract each other from their education, especially in adolescence as their sexual and emotional sides develop. Too much time can be spent attempting to impress or even sexually harassing each other (particularly boys toward girls). Academic competition between the sexes is unhealthy and only adds to unhappiness and anxiety among weaker students. As Tricia Kelleher, a school principal, argues, "rather than girls defining themselves by their interests, they define themselves by what the boys think of them or what other girls think boys think of them." A single-sex environment is a space where children can learn without feeling pressurized by the other sex'.

### Boys and girls develop at different times and speeds; therefore, they should be taught separately.

Co-educational schools attempt to establish uniformity in the teaching of two groups, boys and girls, who typically learn and develop at different speeds and using different methods. 'They do not develop in the same way or at the same time; boys favour visual processing and do not have the hand-motor control that girls readily achieve in early grades'. It is widely accepted that 'boys develop more slowly than girls.. that's true at every level of analysis'. Furthermore, they develop physically at different speeds, girls often developing earlier which can lead to bullying from the opposite sex for those who either over-develop or under-develop. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that, at least in the United States, elementary school boys are 50% more likely to repeat a grade than girls and they drop out of high school a third more often.

If they were taught separately and the curriculum and teaching was tailored to their needs, drop-out rates may not be so high nor as vastly disproportionate.

## Points Against

### The myth of better performance

The formative years of children are the best time to expose them to the company of the other gender, in order that they may learn each other's' behaviour and be better prepared for adult life. Poor female performance in particular subjects is the result of cultural conditioning and expectations not mixed gender classrooms. Performance of girls on math and science scores in the United States has dramatically increased in the past few decades without any significant changes movement toward single gender classrooms. A 1998 survey from the American Association of University Women, a long-time advocate of single-sex education, admitted that girls from such schools did not show any academic improvement. As the report noted, "boys and girls both thrive when the elements of good education are there, elements like smaller classes, focused academic curriculum and gender-fair instruction". These can all be present in co-educational schools. Single sex education research typically makes the mistake of not controlling for other characteristics, namely socio-economic privileges of those at elite women's schools and colleges. Dr. Alan Smithers, a respected British schools expert, declared in a 2006 report that 'distraction by boys was a myth' and that 'half a century of research has not shown any dramatic or consistent advantages for single-sex education for boys or girls'.

### Single-sex schools are manifestations of patriarchal societies

Single-sex schools are a throwback to the patriarchal society of the past; in many historical cultures, only men were

allowed an education of any sort. To perpetuate this is to remind women of their past subservience and to continue to hold them from full social inclusion. In India, where the colonial yoke of British rule remains, the national average for the difference in male-female literacy is 16.7%, with some districts as high as 28%. Single-sex schools discourage female education and make it increasingly difficult for parents to find room for girls in the limited co-educational schools. A push for single-sex education therefore is 'predicated on outdated, moronic, and destructive gender stereotypes'.

### Single-sex institutions are bad for the emotional health of males and females

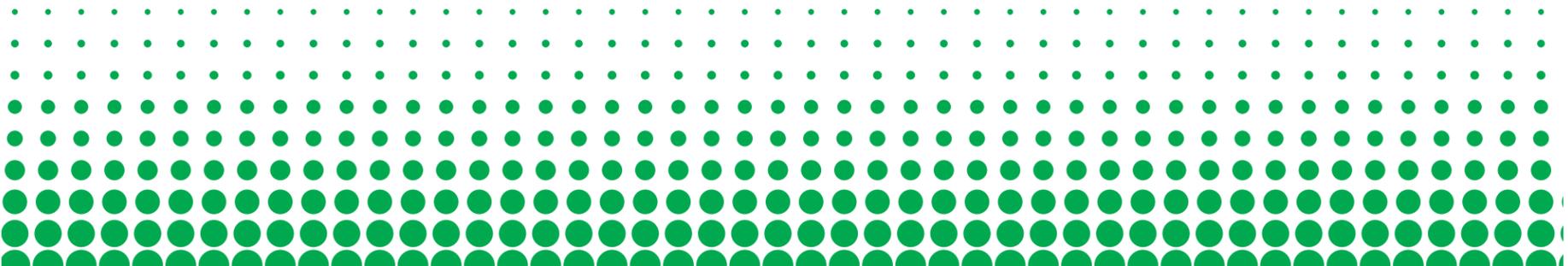
Men always say that they do not understand women, perhaps because they were sent to single sex schools. Research has proved that boys who went to single sex schools as opposed to mixed schools are more likely to get divorced and suffer from depression in their 40. This is proof that we should school our children in mixed schools in order to give them the best bill of emotional health. Dr. Diana Leonard, who presented the findings, concluded that 'Boys learn better when they are with girls and they actually learn to get on better'. Furthermore, the separation of boys and girls only serves to embrace sexual objectification, for they exist for each other only as dates / marriage prospects rather than the classmates and working partners as they would be in a co-educational environment. Furthermore, even if girls naturally perform better in an environment without boys, they need to learn how to perform just as well with boys if females are to be part of an integrated economy. In short, children need to be exposed to the opposite sex in preparation for later life.

You can read the entire debate and access more resources on the topic [here](#).

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