

RECENT PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Greetings, participating families and friends! We hope that our newsletter finds all of our contributors in the best of health and experiencing safe travels over these summer months! We would like to offer our deepest appreciation to those families who have participated in the study and welcomed us into their homes. Also, we would like to thank all of our Community Advisory Panel members who have supported the project in many different ways. We are writing to share some new developments.

We have expanded our project recruiting efforts to include Lebanese immigrant families living in the Worcester, Providence, and the Southeastern Massachusetts metropolitan areas. If you know of eligible families that live in these areas, please share a copy of this newsletter with them! Reminder: We are now recruiting families with 8-14 year old children who have at least one Lebanese immigrant parent. In order to meet our participant goals, we rely on friends of our project to refer us to other families who may be eligible in the study. Even if you do not personally know any other families with children in the target age range, you may have friends or acquaintances who do know families with children of these ages. We would greatly appreciate any contacts or referrals you may have for us.

In order to learn more about children and families in the Lebanese community, we are interested in talking to leaders of youth organizations, religious education programs, or after school programs that may involve Lebanese youth. If you know of any such individuals or programs, we would love to hear from you!

Enjoy the rest of the summer!



Culture, Identity, and the Economic Socialization of Children

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COMMUNITY EVENTS

Highlights from some recent events in the Lebanese community

- We were happy to support Medical Missions for Children by attending its 1st Annual fundraising Gala on May 5th. Medical Missions for Children is dedicated to providing quality surgical and dental services to under-privileged children in countries throughout the world. Please see www.mmf.org for further information.
We were pleased to attend the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee of Massachusetts 2nd Annual Community Banquet on May 5th. Please see www.adcma.org for information about ADC's initiatives against discrimination and civil rights infractions.
We were delighted to attend The Sounds of Arab Classical Music on May 8th featuring The Bassam Saba Ensemble in honor of the late Evelyn Abdelah Menconi with proceeds supporting the "Boston to Lebanon" campaign. Please see web.mit.edu/lebanon for details about this and future events sponsored by the MIT Lebanese Club.
We recently attended a fundraiser for the new Center for Arabic Culture on June 16th featuring Simon Shaheen. To learn about Arabic language classes for adults and children or the many other programs offered by the CAC, please visit www.cacboston.org.
We are pleased to report that the American Lebanese Awareness Association awarded \$44,000 in scholarships to young Lebanese scholars at their 24th Annual Scholarship Banquet on May 20th. Please contact amerleb@comcast.net for details about future scholarship opportunities and ALAA membership.

We are always looking for events in the Lebanese Community that we can attend in order to learn more about the culture and to support our friends. If you know of events that you would like to see posted in our Connections Newsletter, or as a website link, please let us know!



Showcase Your Photographs!

Our new project website is in the final phases of construction! We expect the website to be a forum for project news as well as a place to highlight information that is directly related to Culture, Identity, and Economic Socialization among Lebanese immigrant families.

We are currently seeking photographs of individuals and families of immigrants to showcase on our website. Photographs submitted to us can be provided with a caption that corresponds directly to the image if you would like to share some details about your photo. In order to showcase as many photos as possible, those received will be regularly rotated for website exhibition on our website photo gallery. We are sensitive to the fact that personal photos are part of your history, thus, original images received by us will be carefully scanned, and then returned as quickly as possible to you.

If you would like to share a photograph that highlights some aspect of your own or your families' Lebanese immigrant experience, please contact Jeannette at jeannette.belcher_schepis@tufts.edu or (857) 234-1152. We are looking forward to hearing from you!



An Invitation to Join a Research Study at Tufts University

We are excited to tell you about a very important research study that is being conducted at Tufts University. As you may know, helping children develop the skills to function effectively in today's global economic world is an increasingly important challenge for parents and teachers. Global competition, ever-changing workplace technologies, and expectations that workers will assume more responsibility for their own financial welfare and future—these are conditions that require that children and young people begin to acquire an understanding of fundamental economic concepts and practices, and that they become self-reliant, able to make sound decisions in regard to spending, saving, and investing; credit and debt; career planning; entrepreneurial activities; property ownership; and other economic practices. Given the widespread absence of curricula in our schools to help children become economically and financially literate, this challenge may be particularly difficult for immigrant parents to address alone on behalf of their children. Some immigrant groups, including the Lebanese, tend to respond quite effectively to this challenge — **How do they do it?**

How does culture— ethnic traditions and religion, in particular— influence the process of acquiring the values and skills that families use to adapt to the U.S. economic world?

To answer these kinds of questions, social scientists at Tufts University are interviewing members of Lebanese Christian and Muslim communities in Eastern Massachusetts. According to the most recent U.S. Census, the Lebanese are among those immigrant groups that tend to adapt well to economic challenges. Our initial goal is to learn more about what accounts for their success, and examine the kinds of experience their children have that enable them to develop into healthy, productive, and successful adults.

What are the benefits of this research?

In the second phase of the project, the Research Team plans to collaborate with school teachers, after-school teachers, curriculum specialists, and others, and apply our research findings to aid the development and/or improvement of middle-school curricula focused on economic and financial literacy, youth entrepreneurship, and career planning. In the final phase of the project, the Team will talk with policy makers and others about the results of this collaboration—to obtain their support for legislation and funding for school and after-school programs fostering the development of a full range of economic skills that children of immigrant families need to succeed.

Participation

The Research Team is currently interviewing families with at least one Lebanese immigrant parent and an 8-14 year old child. In later phases of the project, other ethnic groups will be included as well. The interviews are a positive experience, and provide the children with a unique opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions.

How to Get Involved

If you or anyone you know is eligible to participate in the study, please contact Dr. Lawrence Gianinno at Tufts University by phone at 617-627-4449 or by email at Lawrence.Gianinno@Tufts.edu. This is the first step to help improve the economic curriculum for our children. We hope to hear from you soon. **Thank you!**

Checkout Our Team:

Lawrence Gianinno, Ph.D., leads the project, and continues to look for ways to increase our understanding of the ways in which culture influences the development of children and young people, including how ethnicity, religion, and media affect what they learn about the economic world. Dr. Gianinno can be contacted by email at lawrence.gianinno@tufts.edu.

Kathleen Cobb Leonard, Ph.D., a cultural psychologist, is the project liaison for participating Lebanese Muslim families. Katie can be contacted by email at kathleen.leonard@tufts.edu.

Jeannette Belcher-Schepis, a graduate student in the Sociology Department at Boston College, is the project liaison for Lebanese Christian families. Jeannette can be contacted by email at jeannette.belcher_schepis@tufts.edu.

Ghenwa Hakim, is the newest addition to our team, joining us from Boston University where she will be a Senior this fall majoring in International Relations. In addition to her previous work experience and many academic achievements, Ghenwa was born in Lebanon—a background that provides our Research Team with very useful perspectives.

Welcome Ghenwa!

Ana Maria Vidal, is a recent Tufts University **JUMBO—Congrats Ana!** Ana will continue to assist the project part-time after attending a summer program at Tuck School of Management at Dartmouth College.

Our Webmaster, **Jon Gregorowitz**, has just returned from working with Engineers Without Borders, and is hard at work finalizing our new website. Jon will be Senior at Tufts, majoring in Civil Engineering.

As we try to gain a better understanding of the Lebanese immigrant experience, we often have questions that we would like to pose to the community. We are very interested in the books that you may be reading related to your cultural or religious background in addition to the kinds of materials you encourage your children to read.

Some books for adults recently recommended to us by some of our friends:

Pity the Nation by Robert Fiske

Kingdom of Strangers by Elias Koury

Remember Me to Lebanon by Evelyn Shakir

Please feel free to call or e-mail and share with us the books your family has enjoyed.

We would love to hear from you!