

Culture, Identity, and the Economic Socialization of Children

RECENT PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS

Greetings participating families and friends! We hope that our newsletter finds all of you in the best of health! **We would once again like to offer our deepest appreciation to those families who have participated in the study and welcomed us into their homes.** Thanks also goes to all of our Community Advisory Panel members who have continued to support the project in many different ways. We are writing to let you know that we have completed nearly two-thirds of our interviews for the current phase of the project. As you know, 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. **In order to interview as many families as possible before the end of the year, we need your help with participant referrals more than ever!**

Reminder: We have expanded our project recruiting efforts to include Lebanese immigrant families living in the Worcester, Springfield, Providence, and South Eastern Massachusetts metropolitan areas. If you know of eligible families that live in these areas, please share a copy of this newsletter with them! **We are also now recruiting families with 8-14 year old children who have at least one Lebanese immigrant parent.** 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 you may have for us.



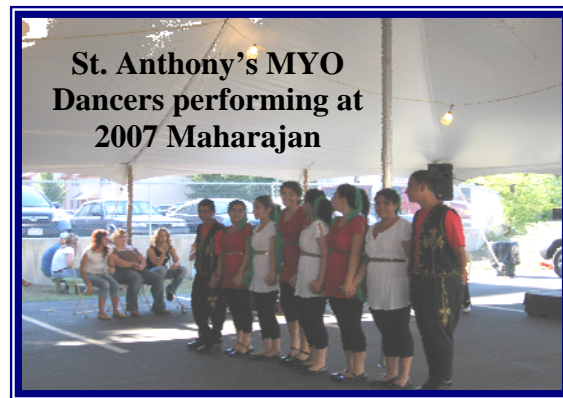
Enjoy the beautiful autumn days ahead!



COMMUNITY EVENTS

Highlights from recent events in the Lebanese community

- We were delighted to re-visit photographs by Rania Matar recently. Visit "In Sights" at the Arsenal Center for the Arts in Watertown thru November 18th, or see her on-line portfolio at www.raniamatar.com.
- A brand new season of Arabic Learning has started at the Center for Arabic Culture. Classes run through 12/16/07. For further information about CAC and Arabic classes, please visit www.cacboston.org.
- We were happy to attend the **Annual Maharajan** at St. Anthony's Maronite Church in Lawrence, MA over Labor Day Weekend.



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!

NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON!

Our new project website will be live in October! 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 still seeking photos of individuals, families, and businesses of Lebanese 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 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 photo that highlights some aspect of your own or your families' Lebanese immigrant experience, please contact Jeannette by e-mail at jeannette.belcher_schepis@tufts.edu or phone at (339) 368-1761.



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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, joins us from Boston University where she is a Senior majoring in International Relations. In addition to her previous work experience and many academic achievements, Ghenwa was born in Lebanon and provides a very important perspective.

Ana Maria Vidal, graduated from Tufts University this past spring. Ana continues to assist the project part-time while applying to graduate programs in sociology.

Our Webmaster, **Jon Gregorowitz**, has just finalized his work on our new website! Jon is a Junior at Tufts, majoring in Civil Engineering.

Recent Additions to our Research Team:

Marie Rahme, is a Freshman at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in the Accelerated Nursing Program.

Farah Namvar, is a Junior at Tufts majoring in Political Science.

Welcome Marie and Farah!

Ramadan Kareem!



All of us here at Tufts would like to extend our sincerest wishes for a happy and blessed Ramadan to all of our Muslim friends and families!