

# LamCca

ISSUE 1 : AUGUST

NEW  
BEGINNERS

# Editor's Note

***LAM<sub>2</sub>A /Lamha/, or a glimpse. A glimpse, and we keep these gorgeous and whimsical days.***

Carnegie Mellon in Qatar is truly an intriguing place for all of us. The nods given to so many people by just walking around the Food Court, the awkward silences and giggles during Thursday Majlis, the deep and meaningful conversations that could happen anywhere, in a lecture hall or over the lunch tables - they are so profound, yet so brief that sometimes they become hard to appreciate.

For that very reason, **LAM<sub>2</sub>A** was created. To capture these snapshots of the CMU-Q life that are inspiring, fascinating, or intimate, quiet yet powerful. From Student Activities to exclusive interviews, style reviews to opinion pieces and open discussions, **LAM<sub>2</sub>A** aspires to be an anchor for your monthly conversations, and an archive for your university experience.

With that, welcome to our debut. We want to dedicate this August issue to **New Beginnings** - new beginnings for **LAM<sub>2</sub>A**, and for the CMU community as we step into a new academic year with many new members. Our sincere hope is that you can find, somewhere in **LAM<sub>2</sub>A**, more reasons to feel that you belong, more motivation to strive, and more impulse to embrace the new beginnings.

Sincerely,  
**LAM<sub>2</sub>A** Editorial Board



**Thuc Ngo**

**Mariam Hamad**

**Hala Al Darbasti**



# Social Synergy

## Orientation Rewind

By Thuc Ngo

This year, CMU-Q welcomed **9 new nationalities** to our diverse community with Orientation. Let's have a conversation with Mary Effie Olouch (E) - one of our beloved Head Orientation Counselors, and Gabriel Souza (G) - our very first Brazilian student on our campus to know more about their experiences!



**So Gabriel, how has your experience in CMU been so far?**

I just had my first Calculus I exam, so it's been very surreal. I come from a very small high school, so the academic pressure is getting more visible. But I know it's a part of the process, you learn from making mistakes, but maybe not too much in Calc exams! I'm also making new friends. Though I was afraid I might feel lonely with only a few South Americans, it's really fun now getting recognized as "the Brazilian" on campus.



classes. You can walk around and say hi to anyone just because they've been in Orientation.

**Gabriel, what friends did you make and do you keep in touch with them after?**

A lot, and so many of them wouldn't have known me without Orientation. With the shared dorm, the space for us to socialize is extended outside of class and class time, also beyond CMU too.

**Effie, what are the new things the Orientation team did to welcome so many new countries coming this year?**

E: Our Orientation team took note of each and every country represented in the new Class of 2026, and made these signs with all of them and the distance from their country to Qatar. It was kind of to say: "Look how far you have gone!". We really hoped the very first thing they saw was the warm welcome.

G: Yeah, actually one of the first things that made me feel represented when I arrived was the Brazil sign I spotted!

**What other activities were organized during Orientation for the first-years who may not have had a community in CMU?**

E: We really focused on bonding activities through groups. For instance, the Flag and Chant activity creates a space where the OC group can create a group representation together, or Reflection Time where they could have a smaller space to have conversations and reflect on the day. We also organized meals and chats with professors and staff, which is a nice way to introduce them to many different components of CMU-Q, not just other students.

G: They were great to be honest, very interactive. And I find it so helpful to know people before starting

**Did you get any cultural shocks coming to Qatar?**

G: Everything is so different! I come from Carvalhos, in Minas Gerais state - a very small town in Brazil and this is the first time I ever travel out. Even with a lot of preparation, everything is just in theory. I really miss the food!-

T: What's your favorite food?

G: Oh I'm too liberal to decide on that, sorry. Anyways, the weather in the Southern Hemisphere is the opposite of here, so I was coming from a 15 degree chilly morning to this 50 degree afternoon, quite a jump! I also grew up on a farm, and I do miss being surrounded by all the lush trees.

**Effie, so how did you embed the cultural experience in Orientation?**

We had the Ice Cream Social with the Qatar Student Association, Muslim Student Association and Carnigraphy, where first-years can grab ice cream and find out more about different aspects of the culture. Also, we tried to diversify the meals with different cuisine, like Desi food and Lebanese food instead of just Shake Shack.

G: Don't forget to mention the Karak Connection! I really liked the drink, and I got to talk a lot about this new culture although it wasn't its main purpose. And I sent my friends back home so many pictures about the food!



**Transition from high school must be tough. So who has helped you the most with this?**

G: I'm the kind of person who just comes to people for help, even if I don't know them. But specifically, my OC Leader Malak and Juan from our International Office helped me out a lot. I would text Juan everyday before coming, and I remember one day I even texted him at Qatar 2AM, and still got an answer!

This is my first time abroad, so I kinda struggled with understanding people in English at first. Also the Arab names (Why are there 4 Nours?!!) - I would constantly say "I'm sorry, I'm sorry" to people. I could be talking to you but have no idea what your name is. It took me almost 3 weeks to remember my OC Leader's names!

T: Totally get that! I myself know like 6 Sarahs :)

**Effie, how did you use your own experience as a first-year in Orientation to make Gabriel's Orientation better?**

I had an online Orientation, so I really tried to make sure that they can make friends and bond in this space and time before beginning to spend the 4 years of their life here. Another thing is trying to make this logistics-filled thing (Orientation) to an interactive, fun Orientation. Of course they still have to do some modules and quizzes on Canvas, but most of the time they got to spend on fun activities. We also emphasized how to make them feel like a part of this community, while finding yourself and your space in it - that's really the meaning of this year's theme Finding the U in the CMUnity

G: And I think I do feel located, represented and comfortable here. I'm still finding and re-finding myself every single day, finding out about new things, creating new connections beyond Orientation. This has become my brand new motto for this period of life, which brings me momentum because everything is so new and novel. It's so crazy that many of the things I wrote in the supplemental application essays about how I expect CMU-Q to be are now reality. When you come, you are like, oh this is the new 4 years of my life, and in a blink of an eye it's already a month since I'm here. I couldn't believe 3-4 months ago I was this completely different person, and it has honestly been almost surreal to look back.

E: Wow you make me so reminiscent of my time being a freshman!

**Thank you so much for this talk! For the last remarks, can you share something to the other**

**first-years and the community in general?**

E: From the Orientation team, *our hope is that you have felt like we've handed the torch to you after this first week to keep it lit. In the long term, we hope you could reflect by yourself on what your CMU-Q is and will be, keep finding yourself and moving forward. Stay open to new things, and be willing to try new ideas. Life is just as hard as the time you have to make your first college friend!*

G: If I were to advise my 3-4 month earlier self, I would say: A lot of gray is waiting for you - homesickness, loneliness, but a lot of these amazing things too - new culture, interesting people and lessons. *College when you're 18 only happens once in life, so just embrace and enjoy it!*

**Mary Effie Olouch,**  
**HOC**



# *Gabriel Souza, class of '26*





# Humans of CMUQ:

## Doha → D.C.

By Mariam Hamad

Hi everyone! My name is Rafay Khan and I am currently an Information Systems senior here at CMU. I went to Washington DC for a semester abroad and did a minor in Public Policy and Politics. There I did an internship at Georgetown University Center for Security and Emerging Tech, under Anna Puglisi, a professor at Georgetown, who was a former counterintelligence officer for the USA. I worked in the Biotech department in the Think Tank where I learned about policy organizations that advise the US government on merging tech issues. I worked on analyzing China's engagement in Southeast Asian countries, specifically health and agriculture. It was really cool, as I had to follow a lot of protocols and security measures while conducting my research. I listened in on a lot of biosecurity talks where everything needed to be kept secretive, as my supervisor attended a lot of congressional hearings where I followed along. I even attended some of my supervisors' grad school classes at Georgetown.



The CMU Campus was right across the Supreme Court, and I could see all the protests that were happening in DC. I even attended a few. I actually saw Bernie Sanders and an ex vice president at the Senate. I also met Senator Bob Casey of Pennsylvania at the second congressional committee hearing where my supervisor was testing. Funny story, I shook his hand and a few hours later he tweeted that he contracted COVID, and I had to get tested.

I traveled around the USA and had a lot of great experiences. I went to LA and actually met Euphoria star Sydney Sweetie. I visited Pittsburgh a couple of times and got to go to the CMU campus there. I also traveled to New York and got to try all the popular BuzzFeed food places. I'm a big foodie so I enjoyed trying all types of cuisines. DC is known for its Ethiopian food, and I ate a ton of it. In DC, they had an open embassy day where all the embassies opened their doors to the public. I went to Guatemala, Kenya, Haiti, Cameroon, and a bunch more. My favorite was Guatemala, as they gave me a guatemalan bird and I got to try some guatemalan coffee.

I think Qatar and DC are very different. Although Qatar was more diverse in the case of nationalities, DC has more diversity of thought. There are many different perspectives on all sorts of different topics, and being able to participate in these diverse discussions was really memorable. I liked that DC had more interdisciplinary courses, and am currently working with Hope Rodefer from Academic Affairs to expand the interdisciplinary perspective here in Qatar. Here in Qatar, we tend to think in binaries, but there's so much more to explore.

Something I learned from this experience was my passion for evidence-based policy making. I learned that Information Systems and Public Policy blend really well together, because policies need data to back them up. IS doesn't need to be only core coding or programming, it can be used with any other expertise. IS can be blended with anything really, as data is everything nowadays.

If you ever find yourself in DC, go to museums, talk to new people, and be sure to try new food! It's also a wonderful experience for professional development. DC taught me how to network and how to build a professional relationship over a quick cup of coffee. I learned a lot about myself during this experience, and I would definitely recommend it to anyone who is interested in public policy.



THE  
Sydney Sweeney!



meeting  
→ Senator  
Bernie Sanders

PITTSBURGH  
CAMPUS



inside  
the congress  
building



meeting a  
prof. who held  
office hours  
at this bakery

# Humans of CMUQ: Exploring Pittsburgh

By Mariam Hamad

Maya Salameh is a Biological Sciences junior at CMU-Q who spent the summer at CMU-Pittsburgh. Here's a look at her experience.

## What did you do at CMU-Pittsburgh?

I worked under Dr Eric Yttri for my undergraduate research this summer in Pittsburgh, where I had the opportunity to work with mice and study the striatal part of the brain to learn about anxiety inducing neuronal activity.

## What were the main differences compared to studying in Qatar?

Studying at a bigger campus made my university experience feel more real. In shows and movies they usually portray American university life, and it was similar, but it was more intimidating because there was more to learn about the environment. I also felt a bit more isolated and disconnected from the university community, unlike CMU- Qatar.



## What interesting things did you do?

Because I went during the summer, it was very hard to explore the city since most of the Pittsburgh students were gone for the summer. But, I did get to go to a few museums and found it interesting how they shaped the city and represented its history. One building in particular, The Mellon Institute, was very interesting because the building had columns that were stained black at the bottom and this was due to the coal that was burnt, as it used to be a factory.

## Did you experience any culture shocks?

I've previously been to America and was exposed to American culture through shows and movies but one cultural shock that I mostly experienced was how self-service was a big characteristic most Americans had.



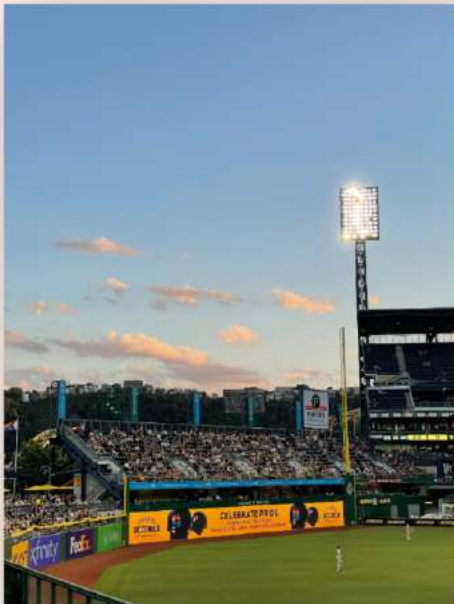
## Did you travel anywhere else?

I traveled to DC and found it cool how Pittsburgh was very European styled while DC was very modern. I also noticed that DC was more diverse in terms of races and nationalities while Pittsburgh was dominantly white. Pittsburgh is an old city and that was reflected by the buildings





## PITTSBURGH PHOTO DUMP!





# MEMBERS



## Club Fair Rewind

By Thuc Ngo



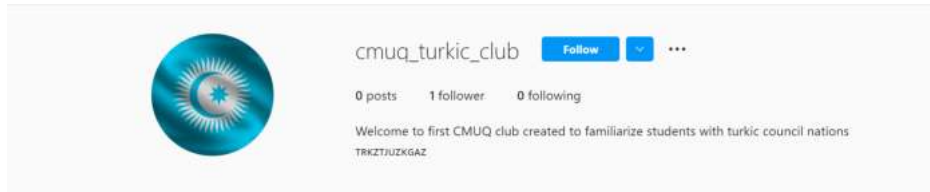
# ONLY!



Club Fair has successfully ended on August 17, marking the new beginning of 35 clubs this academic year. We are so excited to see what they have planned to bring the community together and make a positive impact, as well as the different ways they will make this happen.

This year, we welcome new clubs that will create more representation, more opportunities for more people in our community. Let's take a look at some of them!





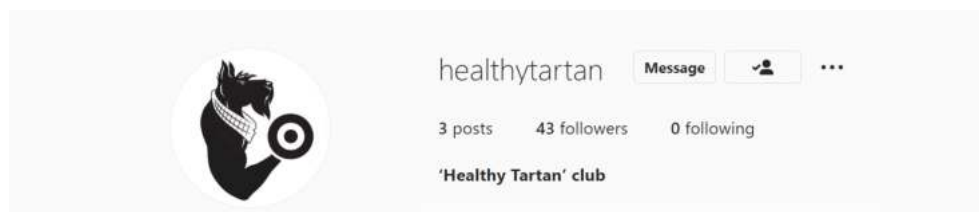
**Turkic Club** - We aspire to promote support among Turkic students in the CMUQ community while representing our culture and values. Our mission is to introduce Turkic nations' values and culture to the CMU-Q community, engage in activities that will strengthen its members' intellectual and social objectives, and provide awareness and resources about the Turkic Nations and their culture among their members and the community.



**The Egyptian Club** - The Egyptian Club aims to celebrate the Egyptian culture and heritage in CMUQ through organizing fun and interactive events for Tartans from all cultures. We aim to provide the opportunity for culture exchange within the very diverse CMUQ.



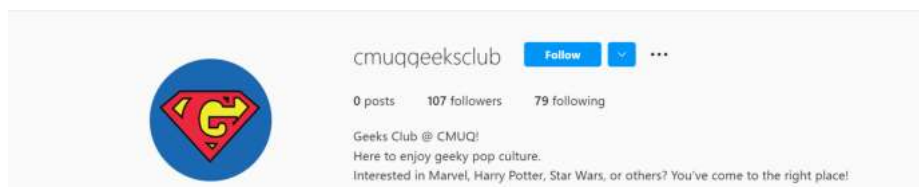




**Healthy Tartans** - With the intense workload and academic activity in the university, students often forget the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. For that reason, our club intends to promote a healthy lifestyle among CMU-Q students. The 'Healthy Tartan' club will form a friendly community and space that will encourage Tartans to participate in different sports activities, maintain a healthy diet, and take care of their health.

The main goals of the club are :

- To show that physical activity is a necessary part of students' daily routine;
- To support students in cultivating healthy eating habits;
- To form a community of healthy Tartans that will inspire and motivate each other in a long term.



**Geek's Club** - It's about time we bring Geek culture into CMUQ!

Geeks Club is all about embracing and enjoying your geeky pop culture interests, whether it be Harry Potter, Marvel, Star Wars, or so many others. We aim to cater to those geeky interests in the CMUnity and provide a space where pop culture lovers can feel at home.

# — Contribute —

You can contribute to **LAM7A** through many ways:

**Opinion Piece:** Submit your writing on anything, really, as long as you feel like it will add value to the community.

**Event Coverage:** Reach out to us if you want to spread the word about an event, or have us cover the event and interesting outcomes/insights that come out of it

**Club Affairs:** Fun things that your club has been doing? Why not!

**Arts Submissions:** Any piece of art that you want to share with the community. They may be selected to be the cover of the next issues!

- Cartoon
- Paintings
- Photography
- Poetry

We're also opening our editorial team for interested individuals in many positions: Editor, Writer, Photographer & Designer. Please send any inquires, submissions and applications to **lam7a-mag@andrew.cmu.edu**

We look forward to hearing amazing ideas from you!

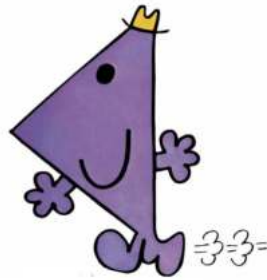
# ArtScape

## **LITTLE MISS**

**failed a course and  
retook it in  
pittsburgh**



**MR. always late to  
class**



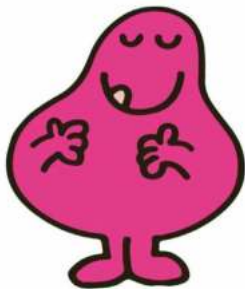
## **LITTLE MISS**

**"business at cmu is  
technically STEM"**

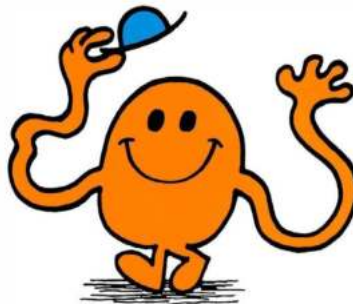


## August Comic Strip

**MR. shows up to CMU  
events for the free  
food**



**MR. always chilling in  
the cafeteria**



**LITTLE MISS  
hates 8:30am  
classes**





**A creative initiative brought  
to you by:**

**The Thought Club  
&  
All Around CMUQ**

