

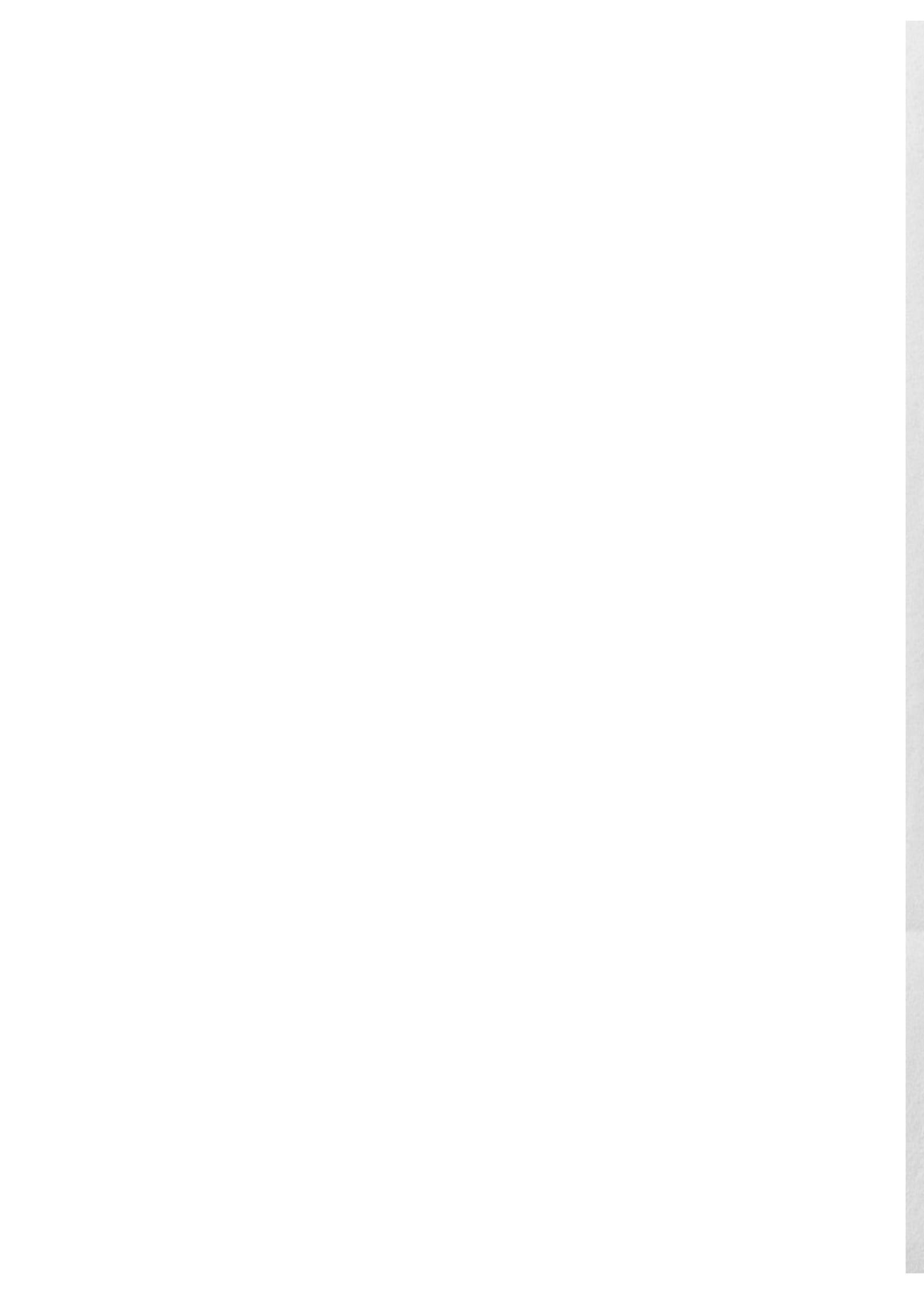
# Lam Za

ISSUE 7: SEPTEMBER

*Greetings from*  
**CARNEGIE MELLON  
UNIVERSITY**

*Qatar*





# Editor's Note

LAMĞA /Lamha/, or a glimpse. A glimpse into our student life, and we keep these gorgeous and whimsical days.

In every moment of your time in CMU-Q, there exists a myriad of experiences waiting to be woven, opportunities waiting to be seized. At the beginning of this semester, every path is still open, with uncertainty and excitement shaping your university experience at the same time. It is a perfect time to hear stories of other members in our community, learn from them and expand your list of potential opportunities during your academic career here.

It is this very sentiment that has inspired our latest issue, where we wholeheartedly embrace the variety of journeys our community members embarked on, with the expectation that you are inspired to explore more paths and encounters - perhaps in a new country, a new discipline, or a niche interest that you never knew you had.

In this issue, through Postcards from various corners of the world, we celebrate the countless ways in which individuals from our community have seized opportunities, embraced diversity, and created remarkable stories. From the intrepid traveler discovering new horizons to the artist finding inspiration in unexpected places, from the consultants spreading impact through a path less traveled to the curious student researcher exploring unpopular topics, each story is a testament to the power of embracing your CMU-Q journey's rich tapestry.

As you delve into the pages of this September issue, we invite you to open your heart and mind to the vast array of experiences and opportunities that await you. Whether you find inspiration in the pages of these stories or discover a new perspective on your own journey, remember that the world is a vast playground of diverse experiences, and the opportunities to make them your own are boundless.

With boundless curiosity and unwavering optimism, LAMĞA is for the students by the students. We are more proud than ever to continue being an anchor for your monthly conversations, and an archive for your university experience.

Sincerely,

LAMĞA Editor Board

Thuc Ngo  
Mariam Hamad  
Hala Al Darbasti  
Maryam Al Ghanim  
Dana Al Disi  
Deema Al-Shirawi

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# Mindful Waves

Mindful Waves is a new column where we explore the deep currents of life's lessons, self-help insights, and mental health wisdom. In this column, we'll navigate the ebb and flow of everyday experiences, offering practical takeaways for a more resilient and mindful existence. Submit a piece if you have a lesson or experience on self-discovery and wellbeing you would like to share!

## Changing Your Narrative, Changing Your Life

By Dema Al-Shirawi

Dema is LAMC's newest Editor, who spearheaded Mindful Waves. Her passion lies in arts and crafts, and books.

In today's fast-paced and often stressful world, maintaining a positive mindset is essential for our mental and emotional well-being. It not only improves our overall outlook on life but also enhances our resilience in the face of challenges that come our way.

Many people have various views about what constitutes a positive outlook and some believe that by doing so, we are ignoring the reality of our situation. Rather I think that a positive mindset is the decision to see the good in every situation and choosing to interpret events and circumstances in a way that empowers and uplifts us.

A wonderful book that explores the good that comes from positive thinking is "The Power of Positive Thinking" by Norman Vincent Peale. The book discusses the idea that a person's thoughts have a tremendous influence on their outcomes in life. Peale promotes using the mind's ability to overcome obstacles, accomplish objectives, and live a happier, more full life. He makes the claim that positive thinking can alter both our reality and our perceptions.

The gist of the book is that Power of Positive Thinking comes from believing in yourself, for some this task could be easy and for others not as much. But with working on your mindset and having faith in your abilities and maintaining a positive attitude you're more likely to succeed in this lifetime. There used to be a girl I knew, Sarah, who fully believed in

her abilities and was always positive; she wouldn't stress about an exam or about anything really. Because she fully believed and relied on her abilities, she had no doubt in her mind that eventually everything would work out. Having this mindset really helped her achieve anything she set their mind to. She never wasted her time worrying away about bad things that would or could happen, she focused her energy in believing that good things could and would happen to her. She always told me that anxiety could really take away the good in life and nerves and stress could cause so many mishaps. "Anxiety holds everyone back", she told me. That's not saying that she didn't experience anxiety, she just chose to focus on more positive things than worrying about the next bad thing that could happen. And if you really think about it, imagine a time you were extremely anxious or nervous, would the outcome be a lot more different if you weren't. Again, things like anxiety and nerves take practice to slowly get over, but again they are natural human emotions that we should all learn to better handle and treat.

Adding on to Peal's ideas, he argues that your true and honest belief in yourself and your capabilities can profoundly influence your actions and outcomes. In order to start believing in yourself, he says that, you should start by creating a positive self image in your mind, this increases your belief in your self worth and you are more likely to attract positive opportunities and experiences into your life.

Another concept the book introduces is the concept of visualization, where you vividly imagine your goals and desires as if they've already been achieved. Going back to Sarah, if she had a certain goal in her mind, she would actively try to visualize and imagine it actually happening to her in real life. Knowing Sarah, most of

her dreams did turn into reality. Peal explains that by regularly visualizing your desired outcomes, you send positive signals to your subconscious mind, which in turn influences your thoughts and actions in a way that aligns with your visions.



He also encourages replacing negative thoughts that pass through your mind with positive constructive thoughts. He advocates the power of positive thinking as a countermeasure to worry. And that replacing negative thoughts and worries with positive affirmations and constructive thinking can shift your mindset and reduce anxiety and stress. The book encourages readers to adopt a problem-solving approach when

facing worries. Instead of dwelling on problems, Peale suggests taking action to address them. By focusing on solutions, you can reduce the mental burden of worry. And I quote "Believe that problems do have answers, that they can be overcome, and that you can solve them." Peale also encourages the development of constructive habits that promote mental and emotional well-being. Engaging in activities

you enjoy, maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and seeking positive social interactions are all suggested ways to combat worry.

All in all some of his methods could be seen as ludicrous to some, but still there are many things we can learn from through his book in order to achieve the positive mindset so many of us wish for.



# Social Synergies

## Summer Chronicles

By Dema Al-Shirawi

Take a look at different adventures our community members embarked on this summer, curated by our Editor Dema.

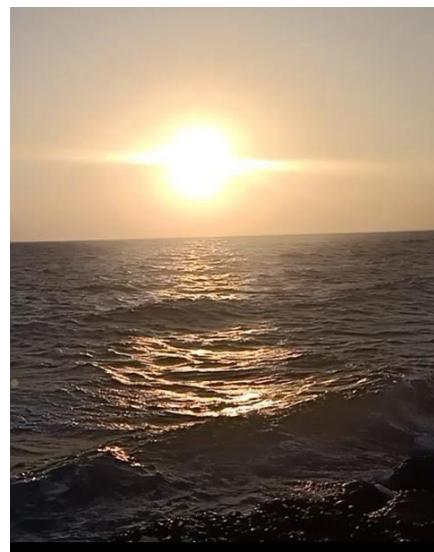
### Ulpian Kaiyrbayeva

This summer, I embarked on an unforgettable journey across Europe, venturing through eight captivating cities. Among the highlights of my trip were the enchanting destinations of Cannes, Barcelona, Rome, and Palma de Mallorca, each offering a unique and mesmerizing experience. What made this adventure even more special was the fact that it was a cruise along the stunning Mediterranean Sea. The landscapes were nothing short of spectacular, with picturesque coastal views, historic architecture, and vibrant cultures awaiting at every port. This voyage allowed me to immerse myself in the rich history and diverse traditions of three remarkable countries. From the glamour of the French Riviera to the bustling streets of Barcelona, the ancient wonders of Rome, and the tranquil beauty of Palma de Mallorca, my European adventure was a true odyssey of discovery.



### Mariam Abdeleaf

As an international student, this vacation was an important one for me to connect more with my family and younger cousins. We chose to spend part of it in Hurghada, one of the most beautiful cities overlooking the red sea. Swimming in the clearest water I have ever seen, collecting shells, and attending different activities were all golden moments that I got to spend with my family and create new memories that will be engraved in my heart till I get to meet them again.

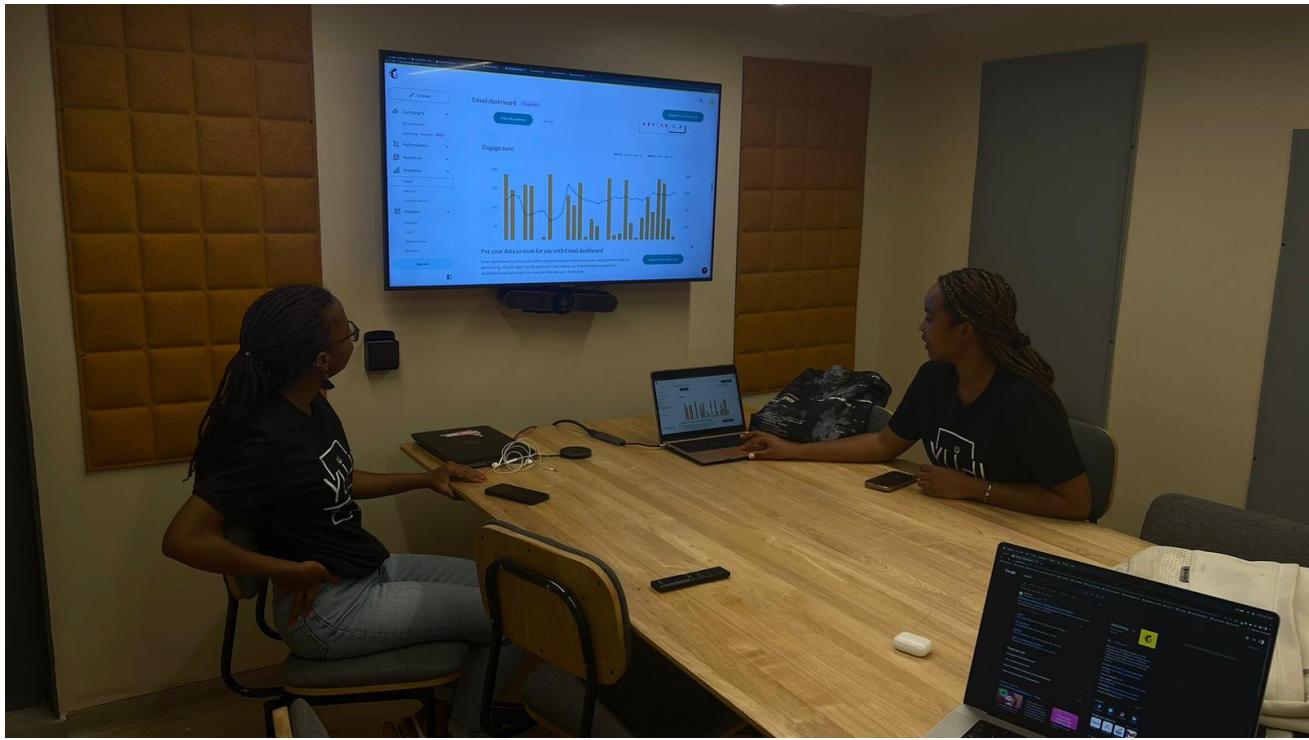


### Cynthia Akaliza

This summer, I embarked on an unforgettable experience as an intern at an IT company back home in Rwanda. Amidst the bustling tech scene, I discovered the fusion of innovation and sustainability. Surrounded by brilliant minds, I contributed to campaigns that advertised the good this company was doing not only in providing IT services but also committing to being carbon neutral.

The other highlight of my incredible time home was when I ventured into the wild, visiting Akagera National Park. There, I marveled at Rwanda's diverse wildlife, witnessing the graceful giraffes, and playful zebras. The park's beauty, framed by the stunning landscape of rolling hills and shimmering lakes, left me awestruck. Those three months were not just a professional milestone, but also a transformative journey through nature's wonders and technical aspirations.





### Nada Alaeddine

This summer, I spent most of my time with my relatives in Saudi Arabia. Despite the scorching heat, which was as intense as it is here, or perhaps even hotter, it didn't really matter to me. The reason was simple: I had

the chance to spend quality time with my cousins, whom I hadn't seen all year. We filled our summer days with activities like watching movies, playing games, and baking. We also avoided going out before 4 pm so we wouldn't burn. Regardless it was an enjoyable experience, especially

after completing an exhausting first year. It also served as an opportunity for me to recharge and prepare for my upcoming fall semester as a sophomore, something I am genuinely excited about!



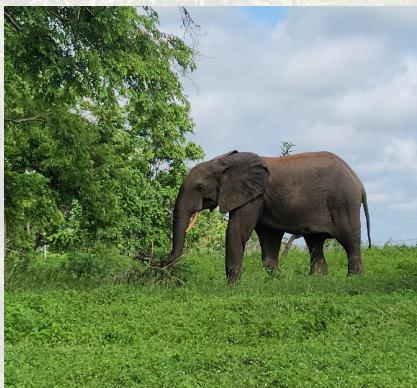
# Social Synergies

## Ghana Summer: Bridging Boundaries

By Thuc Ngo

I met with Kekeli Tsoekewo, a proud Ghanaian, and Massa Coulibaly, a son of Côte d'Ivoire, earlier this month for a conversation about the vibrant summer they spent in Ghana for the Technology Consulting in Global Community (TCinGC) program. The program partners CMU students with local enterprises in developing communities to provide digital solutions they otherwise could not afford. With infectious energy and a delightful sense of humor, they walked me through their journey of uplifting the local communities while unveiling things in common between the two nations.

Upon knowing that Friendsance Eye Center in Ghana was on the radar as a new community partner, Kekeli, now a Business junior, immediately contacted Massa, an Information Systems senior, to make the pair. Before the summer sun gets scorching hot, they already met up in Accra - Ghana capital, caught a 30 minute flight to Kumasi, the second largest city in South Central Ghana - where their 10 weeks of immersive learning and experience would begin.



### Technology consulting for an under-resourced community

Reflecting on their experience creating a patient diagnosis and payment system for Friendsance Eye Clinic, Kekeli & Massa recalled the clunky, overworked computers that would groan after just 20 minutes. Working with limited resources and a resistant staff, they learned key lessons in adaptation, flexibility, and change management.



### First 2 Weeks: Problem Diagnosis

Upon arriving in Kumasi, Kekeli & Massa assessed Friendsance Eye Center's issues. Despite the staff claiming occasional technical errors, the consultants discovered significant structural issues. Firstly, the clinic lacked the ability to modify the software in-house, relying on an often unavailable provider who charged high fees. Secondly, the diagnosis list was incomplete, leading to inaccurate patients' medical records. Lastly, at their Tamale branch, patient records were still paper-based, causing extremely long wait times and highlighting disparities in cross-branch technological access.

### Weeks 3-7: Developing Solutions

Recognizing the infrastructure and digital knowledge constraints, our consultants built a new system



for Kumasi's beloved eye clinic. Over four weeks, Kekeli & Massa juggled sensitive clinical data transfers and system design, successfully implementing a local software solution that synchronized data across all clinic computers and offered remote access, seamlessly integrating with existing infrastructure.

### Last 3 Weeks: Change Management, Staff Training & Sustainability Plan

"Change management was surprisingly the toughest part of this project." - Kekeli noted. Staff resistance and technological inexperience posed challenges. Many were frustrated, as the new system exposed financial corruption they often partook in. Despite this, after extensive training across both branches, the clinic saw revenue doubled, efficiency improved, and financial integrity restored.

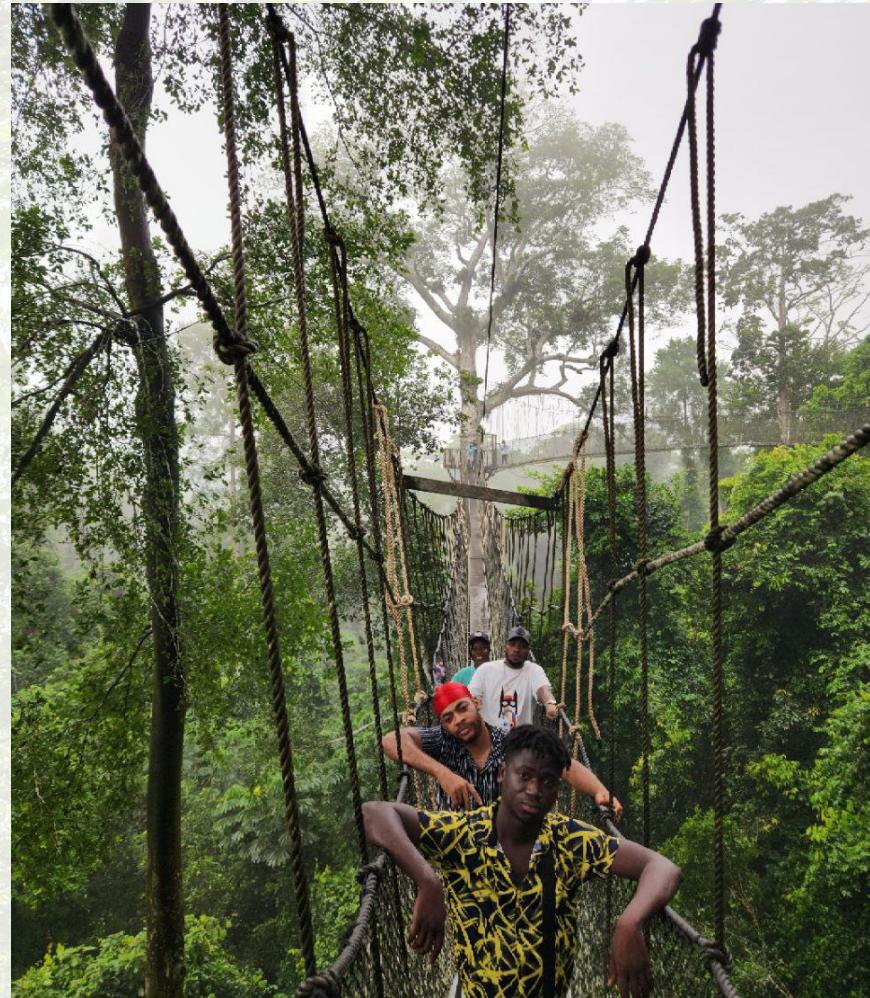
**"The internship was really eye-opening in terms of leading a project, having the freedom to take the initiative and create the solutions. I also realized that change is one of the hardest things humans have to go through - especially in my West Africa region as the infrastructure is vastly different from other developed markets. But when you bring a solution to an under-resourced community, you could see the impact in such a short amount of time - which was so rewarding and meaningful." - Massa**

### We Are All One

In the lush nature and warm breeze of Kumasi, Massa recounted his impactful personal learning moment as he visited the Cape Coast Slave Castle. This is one of the main depots holding enslaved people over all kingdoms in Africa before they were shipped across the Atlantic Ocean, including people from Massa's Côte d'Ivoire. After a dehumanizing 30 day period jailed in dungeons together, the "survivors" would have to throw their fellows' corpses to the ocean. Passing the Door of No Return, on that very water that swallowed people they share blood with, they would leave the motherland forever. The two friends walked on the worn-down stone, eroded by the feet of thousands of people that never saw a day back, and hardened by the residuals of a traumatic past. On top of the dungeons, they saw a church and imagined the colonizers praying everyday, willing God to bless the ships that took away their fellow countrymen forever.



Bonded by trauma, but also by a rich cultural history. Visiting the cultural center in Kumasi, Kekeli & Massa discovered the fascinating commonalities between their countries. The Baoulé in Côte d'Ivoire and the Ashanti in Ghana share the same clothing, customs and speak very similar languages. In both Baoule and Twi (Ashanti), 'Welcome' is 'Akwaba', 'How are you' is 'Ete sen?', 'Come' is 'Bra' in both languages, 'Go' is 'Kô'. Additionally, they have the same tradition of naming after the days of



the week: Monday born are called "Kouassi" but just pronounced with a French accent for the Baoule and an English accent in Twi. Nevertheless, the main language in Côte d'Ivoire is French, and Massa would find him having more in common with French speaking countries like Senegal, Togo, Burkina Faso or Mali than his very own neighbor Ghana, due to a shared language **imposed by the colonizers**.

**"It's astonishing for me to learn that we Africans have more things in common than we could ever imagine. This truly showed me firsthand how borders are fictional and product of colonialism" - Massa**

Ending the interview with wide smiles, Kekeli and Massa talked about their plans to help digitize West African communities with their expertise. I absolutely enjoyed learning about their Ghana experience and wish them the best of luck for their future ambitions.



# Social Synergies

## The Land of Ancient Wonders

By Katrina Agcaoili

My summer study abroad experience in Jordan was just incredible. As a student in CMUQ's summer study abroad program, I had the opportunity to spend one month in this captivating country. The program offered a diverse range of experiences that allowed me to deepen my understanding of Jordanian culture, history, and language.

Living with a Jordanian host family and sharing my accommodation with a fellow student from the main CMU campus provided an invaluable opportunity for cultural exchange. Meals prepared by my host family were a highlight, as I got to taste homemade Jordanian food and build connections with my hosts and their children. These interactions allowed me to gain insights into the daily lives and traditions of Jordanian families.

During my time in Jordan, I was lucky enough to experience two remarkable events: Jordan's Independence Day and the royal wedding of the Jordanian crown prince. Witnessing the royal wedding parade was a truly special experience, allowing me to engage in the celebrations that swept across the whole country.



One of the core components of my summer in Jordan was the Arabic course I enrolled in. I learned how to read, write, and converse in basic Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Arabic. I also took an intercultural communication and leadership course. It was an intensive journey, with six hours of classes a day, but it was rewarding to be able to communicate with the locals and immerse myself fully in the culture. Once a week, I volunteered for a couple of hours at Ezwitti restaurant, where we prepared meals for low-income individuals. This provided me with the opportunity to engage more with Jordanian locals and broaden my cultural interactions.

Apart from the classes we took, we had the chance to explore Jordan. My favorite destination was Wadi Rum. Being surrounded by mountains of rock was an overwhelming experience - I felt as if I was in a movie! We spent a night at a campsite with complete amenities like air conditioning and bathrooms, which was a surprise. Camel riding through a sandstorm, driving across the desert while sitting at the back of pickup trucks, and devouring traditional Bedouin barbecue known as 'zarb' were memorable experiences. Swimming in the Dead Sea was surreal. As I floated, I thought it would be hard to drown in the Dead Sea! However, when I got just one drop from the Dead Sea in my eye,

it was so painful and stung so I had to rinse it with normal water straight away.

Exploring historical and religious sites, such as Madaba with its ancient church and well, Mount Nebo with its stunning mosaics, and the baptism site along the Jordan River, provided valuable insights into the rich history of the region. Ajloun Castle and the impressive Roman ruins of Jerash offered glimpses into Jordan's architectural and historical heritage.

In Amman, the capital city, I explored bustling markets, ancient citadels, and the well-preserved Roman Theater. And, of course, no visit to Jordan would be complete without a day in Petra. Petra was just astonishing, a whole city built out of rock without the use of machines. Petra is huge and we did not get to see everything but the architecture we saw was just remarkable.

Participating in cultural activities was another highlight of the program. I had the chance to learn traditional Jordanian dances like dabkeh and even tried belly dancing. Cooking classes introduced me to the art of preparing kunafah and maqluba. Disclaimer - I love kunafah! My summer study abroad experience in Jordan was intense but also culturally immersive, making it really memorable.



# Social Synergies

## What Is Love?

Aziza Abugaliyeva

Science says, love is when your dopamine, norepinephrine and oxytocin level up when you see, talk to, or even touch someone you fancy. For some, the heart beats faster and stronger, pupils get dilated, and crazy butterflies fly inside the stomach. For others, calmness and peace take over their body and soul, and instead of butterflies, they have birds singing on their shoulders.

It's interesting how we always associate love with another person. Every definition of "love" is about family, friends, and soulmates. But what about ourselves? Although we meet a lot of people in our life journey, we are actually alone in this world. We have our own thoughts, struggles and hardships which no one might not know and might not understand...

Let's look at ourselves: How Far Have We Come? Don't we all deserve true self-love? We absolutely do! Therefore, the right definition of love, I think, should be "**fully accepting and truly loving yourself**".

Vienna, Austria

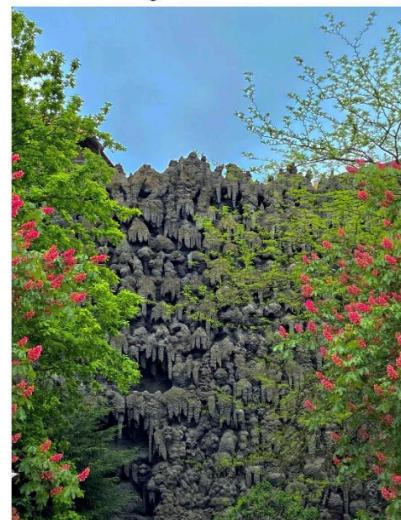


Recently, I found out that 6 in 7 people globally experience persistent feelings of insecurity. Why does it happen? Well, beauty standards are being set higher and higher because of which most people change their natural beauty through multiple surgeries. Introverts struggle to accept their natural personality

because society prefers extroverts and being a social butterfly. Society thinks that having shyness and modesty is equivalent to being insecure and unconfident, although shyness and modesty actually display one's uniqueness and good manners.

Nevertheless, no matter what you do, you will never succeed at pleasing people. If you keep pleasing others and forget about your true self, you only destroy that growing flower of self-love. And if you want to flourish that flower, start being gentle to yourself, accepting and loving yourself!

Prague, Czechia

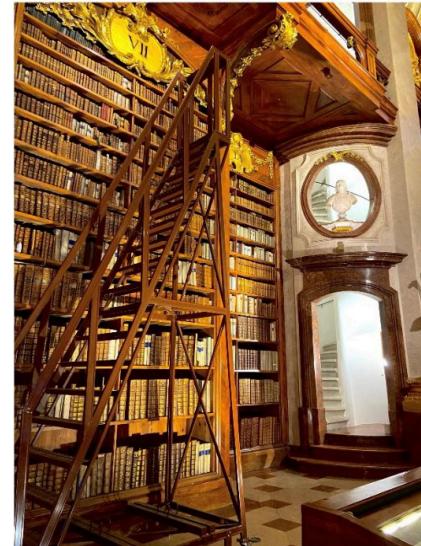


This is what we tried to achieve with our team of wonderful women from CMU-Q. Our women's empowerment trip to Vienna & Prague was designed to boost confidence and self-love to prevent identity crisis problems and discrimination towards women. During our Eurotrip, we could create a very comfortable and healing environment where everyone could easily express themselves, their emotions and feelings. Our mini sessions nurtured the bond between us that gradually contributed to self-growth and self-love of each one of us.

During our trip, I realized that when you let love enter your heart, you start seeing the beauty everywhere, especially, in yourself and your surroundings. This love let me see the beauty of European streets that won my heart in a special way. I fell in love with Vienna's magnificent

architecture, its beautiful and rich world full of art. I was mesmerized by the Grand Hall of the Austrian National Library and its thousand fascinating books. I enjoyed our talks at Cafe Louvre and our walks under the rain in Prague.

Austrian National Library



While wandering around Wallenstein Palace in Prague, we met one white peafowl with its white feathers spread wide. A big crowd gathered around a bird: people were genuinely admiring the beauty of the peafowl. That bird and its magnificent feathers reminded me of self-love. When you truly accept your unique features (be it physical or personality traits), you emit some kind of light that attracts the right people and positive energy into your life. Your heart becomes clean, and you start seeing the good in yourself and others. You forgive the past, enjoy the present, and look forward to the future.

This is what I think as a fellow human being. And now, I want to bring your attention to what God has to do with self-love and acceptance.

In Islam, we call the Almighty God by one of His greatest names, Al-Musawwir (The Forming, The Shaper of Everything). Al-Musawwir is the Perfect Shaper, who beautifies His creations and gives them various unique forms and shapes. Therefore, every single creature, be it a human being, an animal, or even a plant, is unique and beautiful in its own way. In the Quran, chapter 95 (Surah At-Tin) and verse 4, Allah says:



لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَاكُمْ أَنْاسِنَةً فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ

It is translated as "Indeed, We\* created humans in the best form". Al-Musawwir shaped your body and your face, gave you unique character and personality traits. Your eyes, nose, ears, lips, teeth were shaped according to Al-Musawwir's wisdom. God wanted you to be just the way

you are! In fact, you were meant to be this shy and quiet, or bold and loud, introverted or extroverted. Your unique beautiful features are already appreciated by Al-Musawwir, so let yourself accept and love you for who you are. Look at yourself in the mirror: look, how beautiful You

Are! You deserve love, acceptance, appreciation, and respect!

\*\*"We" is used not as the plural of number but as the plural of respect that indicates munificence and magnificence of Allah (the Almighty God).

# Social Synergies

## A Grand New World

By Anupama Anilkumar

I am Anupama, an Information Systems senior. This summer I worked as a student technology consultant for the Office of the Attorney General in Palau, a micronesian island country. I got this opportunity through CMU's 10-week summer program Technology Consulting in Global Community (TCinGC). Throughout the process, I was very worried and confused about certain procedures, but the faculty and staff were really helpful. Looking back today, the Palau experience have brought me valuable lessons and new acquaintances, and I would highly recommend this program for any student interested in putting

in cheering for the Belau Marathon 2023, experimented with cooking, made friends on a language learning application to improve my Korean language skills, went on boat trips, and did more fun things than I ever imagined myself to do.

Unexpected memories from an internet outage

A very interesting experience that I would always remember from the program was the time we had an internet outage in the country for four continuous days. Those four days, I did things I would never have done before. I went jogging with my friend one evening to see the sunset. Another day we played a Chinese card game with a few Taiwanese and Japanese people we met for the first time that day in our hotel. We played a dance off game on my friend's Nintendo in the hotel lobby amongst

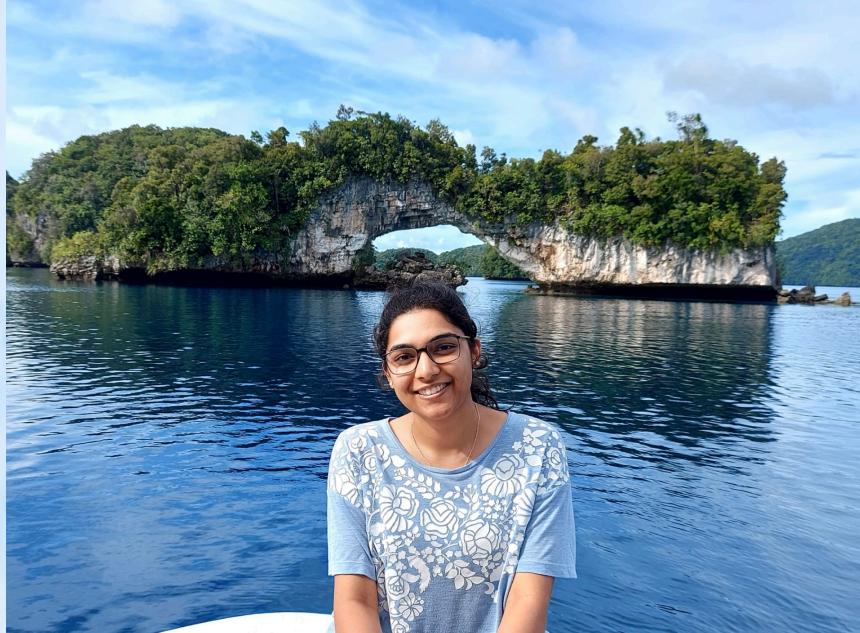


wrote, and by the end of work day she

would have sent me her reply with a picture of her handwritten letter. This experience was just beautiful. I would talk to my mother on video calls everyday before the outage, but the handwritten letters brought me so close to my mother and my mother tongue. When I think of that time, I don't think I would ever have written a letter if there was no internet outage.

Venture out and trust the process

The program made me realize that I just have to trust the process and my skills, which will then end with everything falling into place in time. Those 10 weeks of summer 2023 hold a special place in my heart because it helped me understand myself and my potential more, both personally and professionally. Working in a different community where people are curious about me and I am curious about them was very insightful. I made friends who were part of the program and learning their cultures was also an interesting experience. As a person who rarely travels, it was hard for me to believe that I had signed up for many travel plans within 2023. Here I am, my minds and horizons opened through a whole new world at sea that is so grand and beautiful.



their technology skills to work for global communities

The 10 weeks went by fast and slow in many ways. In 10 weeks, I worked on improving one of the database systems for the Office, watched Belau Games, joined the Attorney General

people walking up and down.

As a part of the executive branch of the Republic, our community partner's office had internet coverage to send emails. I would update my mother about my last day through an email, along with a letter scan I hand



With AG Office Admin Ms. Numi and Ministry of Justice IT personnel Mr. Blekuu



With Attorney General of the Republic of Palau, AG Ernestine K. Rengiil

# THE INSIDER

By Thuc Ngo

Students in CMU-Q always have cool stories to tell about different entities, whether it's a company they interned at, or a local NGO that they volunteered with. Thus, we introduce The Insider - a series dedicated to unveiling insights about organizations that CMU-Q students engaged in, from global corporations to small nonprofits.

For the first debut, I met with Ulan Seitkaliyev to peek into Bloomberg, where he interned as a Software Engineer this summer.

screening interview, followed by a second technical interview with discussion about fit for the company with two engineers, each asking a question. At the third round, he met with very senior Bloomberg engineers for an hour and a half system design interview. It centered around open-ended questions about creating and optimizing systems, which aimed to test software architecture and principles. Finally, the last round was a behavioral interview to understand how one works and cooperates in a team setting, which he spent extra time perfecting his performance this time around.

significantly from then.

## A highly collaborative team

Ulan was part of the Custom Strategy Indices team, operating within the Financial Analytics department, housed under the Engineering department alongside five other sister teams. While his team works with internal clients, which are Bloomberg's Product & Operations teams, other engineering divisions may work directly with the Bloomberg Terminal or face external clients. As a fresh intern, Ulan was entrusted with a self-contained exploratory project to develop a system for creating custom indices. Before



## The journey began with a rejection letter

As Ulan was writing an email to reschedule another interview when a Bloomberg Interview offer popped up. From January 2022, Ulan successfully passed 4 rounds of interviews spanning 3 months, only to receive a rejection letter at the end of March. After applying again, around September of the same year, Bloomberg reached out to invite him back for a third round interview. By the end of October, he became one of the first Software Engineer interns to get the offer for Summer 2023 cycle.

After the CV scan, Ulan went through in total 4 rounds of interviews. The first round was a technical phone

Reflecting on the interview rounds, he really appreciated how well the resources and knowledge gained from CMU-Q have prepared him. Our library's premium LeetCode subscription provided access to frequently asked questions from big tech companies, which prepared him well for the first rounds of technical interviews. Alongside arduous independent learning, the highly challenging Cloud Computing course he took online during sophomore year also provided valuable industry insights about systems. Ulan remarked that his advice for a successful behavioral interview is to be nice, honest, but highlight your desired qualities at all times. The first time rejection didn't hamper him, as he demonstrated how he improved

working, he built a project framework with his mentors, and along the way collaborated with him and internal clients from the New York office to refine intricate details. By the mid-internship evaluation mark, he had improved the performance of the auto-complete system by 25 times, and gauged high interest from other teams for the potential of his solution to optimize other internal tools. After this check mark, he climbed a steep learning curve of learning to create industry-standard codes within a project that had lasted for over a decade. The opportunities for learning and cross-functional training were abundant over the course of his internship.



Reflecting on the work environment, Ulan really appreciated the freedom Bloomberg provided for engineers. Different teams have different conventions, and the overall structure is relatively fragmented and collaborative, not hierarchical. Moreover, interns are not far away from higher management as they would have weekly 1-1 with managers, catch-up meetings and demos every 3 weeks with higher managers. The collaborative spirit is very high, partly due to the project-based structure allowing his team to work with other departments on multiple projects.



#### Philanthropy at the core

Philanthropy is an essential part of Bloomberg's culture. Ulan and his intern cohorts attended various Best of Bloomberg events dedicated to philanthropic purposes. Employees can get corporate philanthropy credit that can be donated on their behalf by volunteering and attending these initiatives. His favorite event was the partnership with Bikeworks CIC, in which they learnt to build bikes for disadvantaged communities. They also had fun blindfolded bicycle racing at Queen Elizabeth Park afterwards!

Working for a corporation with high involvement in the community, Bloomberg employees also receive a lot of corporate art and cultural membership. Ulan visited various London iconic landmarks and

saw art works from every walks of history thanks to this, such as the Kew Gardens, Tower of London, British Museum and Tate Modern. The highlight of his cultural immersion in England was theatrical performances. He attended a musical for the first time with Hamilton in Victoria Palace Theater, and saw Groundhog Day Musical in Old Vic twice. Beside exploration of a new city, he also joined other interns in many Bloomberg social events and meaningful conversations.

Overall, Bloomberg was a great company to be a part of. Ulan enjoyed every part of his experience here at the London office, from working, learning to cultural and social interactions. He's always welcoming anyone interested in the opportunity to reach out!



# THE INQUISITIVE

Welcome to "The Inquisitive," a column dedicated to celebrating our students' pursuit of knowledge and academic exploration. In each installment, we uncover the key interesting insights from students' research, coursework or independent learning. If you have a topic you'd like to shed light on, write to us.

Let's push the boundaries of our intellectual curiosity, one inquiry at a time!

## "Very" Interesting: How Our Use of Language Changes Over Time

By Osman Mohamed

Alright you, yes, you the reader probably used the word "very" a lot behind every word that you can. When you think of the word "very," you might regard it as a simple filler, an intensifier, an easy way to give more emphasis to what you're saying. But have you ever considered how often you use it compared to others? Or how its usage might vary across time, generations, genders, or social classes?

In my recent publication, I went on a journey of spoken English, using the Spoken British National Corpus to compare the usage of the word "very" between 1994 and 2014 (I know, it's strange, but fascinating nevertheless).

What did I find? One of the remarkable findings was that the usage of "very" has increased over

time. For those who have elderly relatives, it might be surprising (or not surprising) to learn that individuals aged 60 and over are leading the pack in the use of this intensifier.

What about gender? In the 1994 corpus, men used "very" more frequently than women. Fast forward to 2014 corpus, and both genders are almost neck and neck in their usage. You see, men, it seems, were dropping "very" very often. A scholar theorized that guys are a tad more assertive in their chats. But here's the twist: not all scholars think men and women are worlds apart in their language use. Another scholar says it's less about gender and more about the context and society; women may tend to use "very" in male-dominated fields. That could explain why women were sprinkling in "very" more often between BNC 1994 and BNC 2014.

By social classes, back in the 1994 corpus, retired individuals used

"very" the most, but by the 2014 corpus, it was middle-class folks who topped the chart.

But why should we even care about the frequency of "very"? It's not just about one word. It's about understanding the ever-changing fabric of language and how societal shifts influence the way we express ourselves. Such research shines a spotlight on the intricacies of our language, revealing patterns that might go unnoticed in daily conversations. So, the next time you say that word "very", appreciate its layered history and remember my paper. Dive into linguistic studies like these, and you'll uncover a world of revelations about our society and ourselves.

By the way, if you want to know more about the research and actually look at the nice stuff (data and charts) check out my publication the CMUQ undergraduate journal Majāl, got to plug.



*Artscape*

## i care about what you think

a loud smacking sound resonates around the pool  
you look around and you see, nobody cares  
the child has just attempted diving into the pool for the fifteenth time today

the child is about seven years old  
he has short, curly brown hair, with a faded-olive skin tone

he pulls himself towards the pool's ladder, and he climbs out of the pool,  
he stands in front of the pool again,  
he holds his hands above his head,  
and throws himself forward,  
you look around and you see, nobody cares

he kicks his feet slightly back, but it doesn't at all resemble a dive

after five more attempts, the child laughs and then begins to wade around the  
pool,  
he's made progress, and he knows it,  
it's just a matter of time before he masters it and can dive!

the child looks up with a grin, knowing that nobody cares

his older brother watches him, wearing a clear scowl,  
he's not impressed by his little brother's foolishness,  
his little brother looks silly, he thought

even a dog would look more graceful jumping into the pool,  
and that loud flopping sound, how annoying,  
there are people trying to tan and talk with their friends,  
they don't need to hear my little brother making a fool of himself

and does he really think that he will get better by doing it over and over again?  
"i've tried learning to dive too, but it's just too difficult" he thought to himself,  
how futile, all he's accomplished today is making a fool of himself,

he can get away with it though,  
since he's a kid  
no one cares

but after two months, the kid can dive,  
and me, you, and the older brother  
still care about what people think

# Why Art & Artists Matter

By Aya Al Sabahi from the Arts & Crafts Club

The new Arts & Crafts Club hopes to open a medium of dialogue between creatives, inspire change, and foster creativity. Artists and aspiring artists in CMU-Q could look to the club as the space to unleash your creativity and tell your story.

Oftentimes, especially in the Arab world, doing art is looked down upon as your main thing. It was always the stereotypical Engineer, Doctor, or Business and if you were to do art, it was a hobby at the side. Of course, having said that, things are changing and it is only up to us on how far we can push this change.

Speaking specifically about artists in the GCC, more and more are beginning to take power in the stories they tell through various mediums, a lot of them intertwining culture and futuristic art. These mediums are not just visual pieces such as traditional art, we have Khaleeji based musicians, film makers, photographers, and even designers.

Art tells stories that can span hundreds of years, all put together in one piece, that

speaks more than an 800 page history book. Art is a medium that one does not need a certain language to understand from, instead art conveys emotions that can be felt. It is so much easier to digest rather than words on a piece of paper or mathematical equations to be solved.

Art does not have an age limit to who can consume or who can create or enjoy, or be limited by the tools someone has. There is a type of art that is even created by sand. By being an artist, you simply create. Without limits.

Your only limit as an artist is your limit to think creatively. How far can one push their minds and think outside of the box, as far as into a multidimensional box even.

Being an artist is not being born with talent, but rather, it is being committed, and practicing over and over till you are satisfied with the work you have. Then you move to another project, or medium and repeat the creative process, telling a different story to the world.

As said in Dead Poets Society "We don't read and write poetry because it's cute. We read and write poetry because we are members of the human race. And the human race is filled with passion. And medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for."

The Arts & Crafts Club will hope to open a medium of dialogue between creatives, inspire change, and foster creativity. We would like to hear from you, what creative pursuits you hope to expand and bring light to in our community at CMUQ. This is your space to unleash your creativity and tell your story.

# Songs of the Month

By Abdulrahman Darwish



**Soulless Friends - Peter Cat Recording Co**

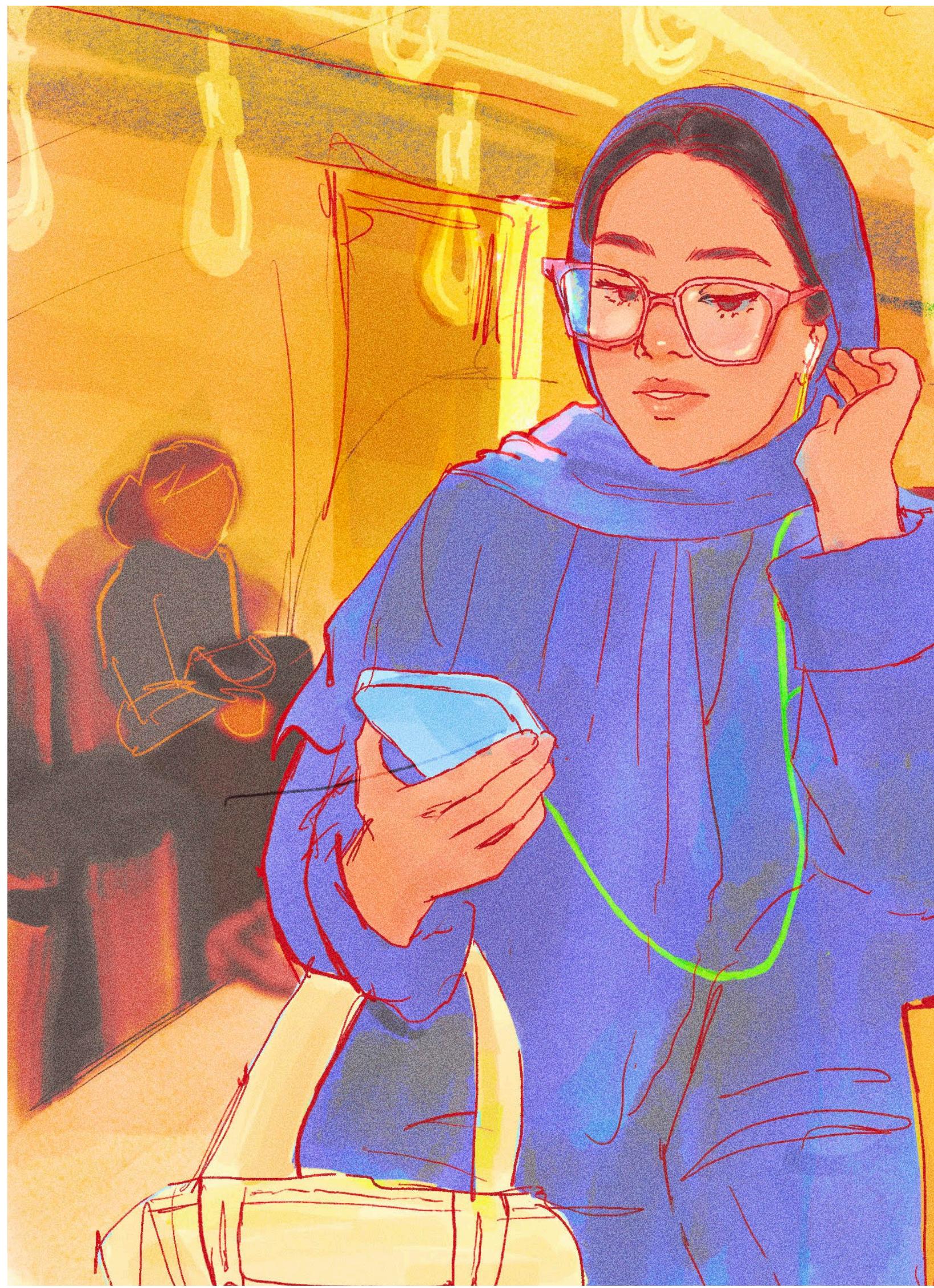
I kinda wanted to gatekeep this band and song, not gonna lie, but they're just too good to keep to myself. I Recently found out about Peter Cat Recording Co, this modern jazz band based in Delhi, thanks to a friend and I've been vibing ever since. The way they mix jazz with other genres? Seriously insane. The song's got this sad feel to it and the lyrics are kinda depressing and raw. Even so, the beat and rhythm give it this uplifted, kinda breezy tone. They're definitely some underrated and overlooked talent. Give it a listen and let me know your thoughts. Once again, shoutout to LFI for putting me on.

To be honest, don't even know how I found this track, but I'm so happy I did. Ish is pretty much the definition of underground; living in Germany, around 17,000 monthly listeners, and like 7k followers on Instagram but let me tell you, her sound and this song is crazy. It's like she took R&B and house and mixed them in the perfect way. The beat drop, the vocals with Ish and Sam, and just the whole mood? Absolute 100/10. It's been on repeat for me ever since I found it ages ago, and you can bet it'll make my Spotify Wrapped. Showed it to some friends, and they all loved it, Shazamed it, added it to their playlists, and thank me every day for it l. If you don't wanna take my word for it, Saif Al Namla, a Business Administration Sophomore, was like, "Darwish, this song is crazy. What's it called? Send it to me now" after just one listen. One. So yeah, listen to it now after reading this.



**Unreachable - Ish ft Sam Sumner**

As always; go follow me on my spotify @darwiish for all my playlists and to find 10/10 music :)





By Fajer Al-Shamari

# The Baghdadi Art of Painting

By Noran Al-Safar,  
Arts & Crafts Club Vice President.

The Baghdadi Art is one of the Iraqi school of arts' newly introduced narrative. Back to the beginning of the 20th Century, Baghdadi Art of Painting mostly specialized in engaging the artful creativity of the artist on the realism verge, color-blasting and creative approach to make reality closer to dazzle the viewer eyes. It mostly celebrates the real atmosphere and oriental of the Baghdad's neighborhoods in particular, while working on the aesthetics of dazzling spectacles without being restricted to the spirit of rigid reality. It adds the colorful touches that influence it with the fun of visual spectacles, and to make the viewer dream of the present that seemed to be in the past spirit. All coming from the joy of the lost present, alleys, Baghdad women and the domes of the houses and mosques in the presence in of the folklore memory of Baghdad as the capital of historical beauty.





for  
you  
to  
see  
think

Design and Layout by Hala Al Darbasi