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SCII Agenda Newsletter

October 2021 Issue

The mission of the Schoolcraft College International Institute (SCII) is to coordinate cross-cultural learning opportunities for students, faculty, staff and the community.

Introducing Samer Hariri

By Sharon Christian



Professor Samer Hariri is the faculty representative for the Earth and Environmental Sciences Department at Schoolcraft College, and has worked at the college since 2013. Samer is currently involved with a project on merging the previous departments of Geology, Geography, and Environmental Studies into the newly formed Earth and Environmental Sciences discipline. The environmental and geoscience fields explore such topics as climate change, pollution, natural disasters, natural resources, Earth materials, sustainability, Earth through time, and many more. This new department includes the Geographic Information Systems program and will involve the creation of new courses that will augment this merger and provide Schoolcraft students with opportunities to excel in these fields.

Samer always wanted to teach at the college level, a passion he gained during his early years as an undergraduate student. As he was finishing his graduate degree, he contemplated an industry job as a precursor to teaching; but since he enjoyed sharing his knowledge and experiences with students, he decided to skip the industry all together and dive right into higher education. Samer teaches physical and historical geology, mineralogy, weather and climate, environmental science, Earth systems, and Earth science for elementary teachers. In his classes, Samer inspires students to learn more about the geosciences through hands-on experiences that focus on the interpretation of rocks and their link to our

everyday lives. Samer teaches his classes with the goal to expand students' knowledge of environmental science from a local perspective that then turns global. Ultimately, the real world is the classroom in Samer's courses and he aims to provide students with a perspective that allows them to develop an appreciation of the planet we live on by simply understanding the relationship humans have with Earth.

Samer hopes in the near future to establish a geo-science/environmental science club, or more broadly a STEM club, via the Student Activities Office. The goal is to have students in the natural sciences engage with one another and participate in service-learning activities, field trips, seminars, and various other events within the College, and with local partnerships such as Friends of the Rouge, the Mineralogical Society, the Farmington Community Stargazers, area and State parks, local educational institutions, and various other organizations.

Overall, Samer is excited to continue building on the past strengths of the programs while creating new opportunities for student involvement within the community, nationally, or even globally. He truly hopes to draw meaningful connections so as to give students a better understanding and means to find passion with Earth and environmental science. Samer is excited to be a part of this discipline and even more excited for what the future holds for the Earth and Environmental Sciences Department at Schoolcraft College!

Professor Hariri can be reached at shariri@schoolcraft.edu and welcomes students and faculty dialog on earth and environmental issues across the globe. Also, please join Samer for a [SCII Focus Series](#) presentation on Friday, November 19th at 1:00p.m. titled "Breathing Rights" which highlights air pollution as a human rights issue. Global and local examples will be used to demonstrate the impact of low air quality on the health and well-being of people.

Sharon Christian is the Director of Learning Support Services and an Associate Editor of the SCII Agenda; she can be reached at schristi@schoolcraft.edu.

SC Alumna: Suhayr Solangi

By Kristin Fruth



Suhayr Solangi is a Schoolcraft alumna who came to the United States in 2012. She originally started her education at Madonna University, but heard great things about Schoolcraft College and decided to transfer. She grew up in [Jeddah, Saudi Arabia](#) and attended a diverse, international school with classmates from different countries. From a young age, she knew she wanted to be a scientist and started making plans for her education. However, with limited options for higher education in Saudi Arabia, she knew she needed to study elsewhere. She had the opportunity to live with her sister in Michigan and considers her decision to attend Schoolcraft College as one of the best decisions of her life!

As a Schoolcraft student, she enjoyed the small class sizes and was thankful for the opportunity to meet so many wonderful teachers, professors, and mentors. During her time at the College, she was able to experience different language courses, the campus-wide diversity at Schoolcraft, and the delicious foods from our culinary program. One of her favorite experiences at Schoolcraft was participating in and attending the annual Multicultural Fair each year, which she stated affords the opportunity to learn about so many different cultures.

As a science student, Suhayr was impressed with Schoolcraft's state-of-

the art laboratories and learning resources. As one of our top students, she demonstrated strong leadership and knowledge in the classroom, and was recruited to serve as a Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) leader for both Principles of Biology and Microbiology. Suhayr worked as a PAL leader for almost two years and received an outpouring of support and appreciation from her fellow students. Suhayr not only helped her fellow Schoolcraft students with the subject content, but taught study strategies which allowed struggling students to be successful.

In addition to being a PAL, one of the most meaningful parts of her experience at Schoolcraft College was the support from her International Student Advisor, Laura Leshok. Suhayr wants others to know how thankful she is for the support from Ms. Leshok who fosters a warm and welcoming environment for international students; Ms. Leshok was always available to answer questions and provided needed support and help. When Suhayr first came to the United States, she was hesitant to talk about her childhood in Saudi Arabia. After connecting with other students and instructors, she discovered that they very much enjoyed hearing about her life in Saudi Arabia. She especially liked being able to talk about the challenges of being a Middle Eastern woman pursuing higher education.

Suhayr's stellar grades at Schoolcraft led to a prestigious scholarship from Madonna University, which enabled her to complete a Bachelor of Science degree. Upon graduation, she attended graduate school in Ontario, Canada at [Western University](#) in molecular genetics (biology) and just recently finished and defended her Master of Science thesis titled [Analysis of the chemotactic and anti-ovarian response to honeybee Queen Mandibular Pheromone \(QMP\) and its constituent components in *Drosophila melanogaster*](#). She attributes much of her recent success in graduate school to the great academic foundation she received at Schoolcraft College.

Her advice for new international students? Do not shy away from talking about and showcasing your own unique and diverse background; be proud and open to conversations with your peers. Make sure to attend the Multicultural Fair and enjoy this unique Schoolcraft opportunity to connect with other international students. Her final word of advice for students contemplating higher education: *Just do it! If you are considering a college degree, it speaks volumes to who you aim to be.*

The hard work will be worth it and the degree you earn will forever be yours. If in your life, you do something for yourself, let it be this. Invest in your future, invest in yourself!

Suhayr is currently taking some time away from academics in her role as mother to her daughter Ayla Ubaid who will be 1-year-old in November; she can be reached at ssiddi87@uwo.ca.

Kristin Fruth is a Biology Professor and an Associate Editor of the SCII Agenda; she can be reached at kfruth@schoolcraft.edu.

Human Rights Events

Pageturners & SCII Focus Series



The book *Human Rights: A Very Short Introduction* by Andrew Clapham considers the current controversies surrounding the movement and discusses the torture and arbitrary detention in the context of counter terrorism. Clapham also considers new challenges to human rights in the context of privacy, equality and the right to health; looking at the philosophical justification for rights, the historical origins of human rights and how they are formed in law, Clapham explains what our human rights actually are, what they might be, and where the human rights movement is heading.

[Virtual Book Discussion Link: Tuesday, October 26 from 1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.](#)

On Campus Panel Discussion: Thursday, October 28 from 1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m. in LA200



[Dr. Mark Huston](#) “Making Sense of Human Rights”

A presentation in the [SCII Focus Series](#) examine the nature of Human Rights. More specifically, it will clarify the different ways Human Rights are understood (moral, political, etc.) and present how the Human Rights scholar James W. Nickel “makes sense” of human rights.

Virtual Meeting on Thursday, November 11th at 3:00pm
Zoom Link at the [SCII Focus Webpage](#)

Ongoing Campus Event: Cultural Coffee Connection



Visit the first portion of the event to hear from a Schoolcraft English as a Second Language student on cultural values and traditions that are important or interesting to them. Followed by time to ask questions and break out into small groups of conversation. This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with others of different backgrounds and learn something new! Staff, faculty, students, and community members are invited to grab some coffee and have a conversation with others about a variety of topics.

Virtual Meeting Days: Wednesday Oct. 20th 3-5pm / Wednesday, Dec. 1st 3-5pm

<https://schoolcraftcollege.zoom.us/j/3829922327?pwd=MWR3aUU2eWl0ajBCUTVVR1paVWVhUT09>

Meeting ID: 382 992 2327

Passcode: 123

On Campus Meeting Day: Tuesday, Nov. 9th 3-5pm, Bradner Library, Room 110

For question please contact Annika Sholander as the International Learning Support Academic Success Coach in Learning Support Services (LAC); she is also an Associate Editor for the Agenda and can be reached via phone (734)462-5326 or email asholand@schoolcraft.edu.

Upcoming Virtual Conference: Midwest Institute



The Schoolcraft International Institute is a member of the Midwest Institute for International/Intercultural Education (MIIE), which is a self-funded consortium of two-year colleges located in the Midwest region. Its primary objective is to promote and support curriculum and professional development in international and intercultural education by organizing curriculum workshops and conferences, overseas projects for faculty and students, assistance with grant development, as well as providing faculty mentoring and professional networking. The Midwest Institute is directed by [Theo Sypris](#) and located at [Kalamazoo Valley Community College](#), Kalamazoo, MI.

The MIIE will host a virtual conference on Friday, Nov. 5th and Saturday, Nov. 6th and is open to all Schoolcraft College and community members. Please

visit the [MIIE webpage](#) to view the conference presentation topics and register for the event.

[The Fight for Human Rights:](#) [Student Learning Resources](#)



The Nobel Prize, as part of their [educational network](#), provides lessons, video interviews, and other materials for the classroom and learning opportunities; given that the SCII current focus is on human rights across the globe, we encourage our campus and community members to take a moment to view the [Fighting for Human Rights: Student Learning Resources](#).

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