



# Dreamers

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A MUFFLES COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Our teaching team once more eagerly embraces the challenges and rewards of this new upcoming academic year. We promise to be innovative in our

lessons and we also continue to pledge to make learning a more rewarding experience. We have led as a group that is inspired by the teachings of Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Her teachings, along with our catholic faith, make us confident in God's loving providence.

This year we will continue to tell the story of Mercy, of excellence and of hope for the future. Our members of faculty, staff and students will continue to practice faith leadership and spiritual growth, academic excellence and justice for all.

Maria Johnston, M.Ed.  
Principal

## 2017 CXC Breakdown

*CSEC results are in. We would like to honor this year's top performers and reflect on our collective achievements, both academic and social.*

**Results.** CXC results are back from Barbados and this year, like every other year, Muffles College students rose to the occasion. Faced with the challenge, out of the 127 students that took the examination - a record-breaking number for the school - 91 passed 6 or more CXC's. There was also significant improvement in subjects such as Caribbean History, which saw a boost of 21 points. As a school, Muffles College had an impressive average of 84.4%.

**Top Performers.** This year we also saw the flawless performance by three of our students who accomplished the near-impossible feat of taking 11 exams and passing them all. They are: Raul Castillo, Astrid Lopez and Crissani Sabido. Congratulations to you all. Also worthy of mention are: Aldair Cuello, Angelo Huang, Alexander Perez and Shanice Adolphus, who were able to pass 10 CXC's. Congratulations.



Astrid Lopez



Crissani Sabido



Raul Castillo

**The situation.** Not everything was peaches and cream, however, and as good as it can be, for Muffles College did experience a decline in the overall performance of its students. A drop of approximately one percent was observed in the school's average in comparison with last year. This was certainly the result of this year's political turmoil which took teachers and students to the streets to protest for better governance in the country. A similar trend can be observed in the whole country. This is a story nobody talks about...

Here at Muffles College we would like to say that there is no excuse for low academic performance but we will endure a one percent drop with pride if it means better governance, justice and truth for our country. What do you think?

## WELCOME

Everything starts with a dream... All the things that we've created as a civilization, all the inventions and the theories that shape our minds were all once dreams, ideas, and higher aspirations. Galileo Galilei, William Shakespeare, Mother Theresa of Calcutta, just to name a few, all started out as dreamers.

It takes guts to dream, it takes perseverance and great commitment to one's vision. That's why Muffles College has decided to print Dreamers, a quarterly newsletter to remind students and anyone who wants to read of the importance of their dreams. In addition, the newsletter will include information about the school and its various activities. Here at Muffles College, we take your dreams seriously, will you do the same?

Romel Mendez, editor



## Cultural Day at Muffles College

Belize is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the region with Creole, Garinagu, Mestizo, Chinese, Hindu, Mennonite, Maya and many more living peacefully side by side. This is something to be proud of and to celebrate. This year Muffles College observed Cultural Diversity day on October 13th. The activity was held at the Muffles auditorium and students were asked to come dressed with the traditional clothes of a local ethnicity. The mestizo *huipil*, the Hindu *kurta*, the Chinese *cheong-sam*, the Garifuna *dashiki* or Mennonite straw hats could be seen everywhere. Parents were also invited to the celebration, food representing the different ethnicities was offered for lunch.

The event was blessed with a mass by father Orozco who asked for God's guidance. Presentations began shortly after. There were performances by local dance groups and by Muffles students. An excited audience enjoyed dances such as the 'zapateado', the East-indian 'durga' and the traditional Garifuna dance.

These presentations were followed by a speech by Joannie Cantun, Miss Estereo Amor 2017. With gentle words she encouraged students to be proud of their culture, to not shy away from their roots. But the main attraction was the exhibition performed by the Belizean Pok-ta-pok team, who had recently come back victorious from a championship in Guatemala. They shared with students about their experience and gave them some lessons on the ancient Maya game. At the end of the event, a student, asked about how he felt, expressed "I want to learn some more about pok-ta-pok, it seemed like a lot of fun".

## Mercy day: Honoring our Leaders

*This year Muffles decided to do something different for Mercy day. Various community leaders visited the school and shared valuable moments with the students.*

**Background.** One hundred and ninety years ago, on September 24th, 1827, in a distant land called Ireland, a house was erected in the middle of a vast turbulent city filled with poverty and despair. It was no ordinary house, however, but a house of hope, of mercy. In it the homeless, the hungry, the sick and the vulnerable people of the city found a place where they could alleviate their suffering. There they found a woman of extraordinary character, of immense compassion who took care of them all. Her name was Catherine McAuley and that house was the first Mercy House, birthplace of the Sisters of Mercy.

*"The first house of Mercy was built on 1827 in Dublin, Ireland".*

Every year on Sept. 24th Muffles College celebrates the achievement of the first House of Mercy on Baggot St. in the city of Dublin, and with that example, try to build a similar house here in San Andres St., Orange Walk. This year Muffles College celebrated the occasion, which also marked the 50th year of Mercy education in Orange Walk, by inviting community leaders, living examples of the principles of Mercy, to the school to share with the students about their experiences and life reflections.

**Guests.** Activities began shortly after 9 am with a mass by Fr. Smalls at the Muffles auditorium where the voices of students and guests sang in unison to praise and ask for God's blessings for the day. Students and guests also took turns in the parts of the mass. When the service was over, students went back to their classrooms and made preparations. Classrooms had been decorated appropriately with Mercy Day posters and Welcome signs could be seen everywhere. Students spent the greater part of the morning sharing with their guests and



The Mercy House on Baggot st., now known as The Mercy International Centre.



Students and guests come together before God.



Mr. Belizario Carballo and his hosts

listening to their wise and humbling messages. After these classroom activities, students spent some time outside in the compound, touring the school, showing their guests the different places where they learn. Activities went smoothly until midday when students were dismissed. Approaching a student and asking him what was the most striking thing he found about his guest, his response was "With over 70 years of age, Mr. Belizario is still working hard to help people, I am not sure if I will be able to do that".



*Students and teachers come together for the Language Department Symposium to discuss this year's September celebrations theme*

Speakers: (left to right) Nasya Novelo, Krystal Ifield, Jamel Tun, Kristy Luna, Tristian Moreno.

**Catalysts.** In Chemistry when we talk about a 'catalyst' we mean a substance that is able to make other substances react, but when we talk about a catalyst in social terms we are usually referring to those individuals, those dreamers who, through action or word, inspire others to create change. One requires a petri dish or any other appropriate medium; the other, however, requires strength of vision, courage and great compassion.

**"Confronting challenges! Celebrating triumphs! Renewing our resolve!"**

**Symposium.** On September 20th this year, one day before Independence celebrations, the student government and the language department held their annual symposium at the Muffles auditorium. The main objective of the gathering was to discuss this year's theme and for this purpose

a student had been chosen from each form to present a speech based on the theme.

As well, as part of the program, several guest speakers comprised mostly of prominent Muffles College alumni were invited to take part in the conversation. These speakers were: Ms. Ginelle Ozaeta, Ms. Shantel Casimiro, Ms. Samira Verde, Mr. Jaime Burns, Mr. Josue Carballo, Mr. Andrei Chell, Mr. Carlo Benavidez and Mr. Raul Castillo.

The students began to arrive at 1pm and shuffling of feet and murmurs filled the auditorium, while teachers organized their classrooms in their places. For preliminary activities, a prayer was said and the anthem was sung. The event was moderated by Mr. Felix Mai.

**Speeches.** When the turn came for the speeches, 4 students, all girls, got up from the audience and sat on stage. Representing first form was Krystal Ifield, from second Jamel Tun was chosen, from third Kristy Luna and the fourth form speaker was Tristian Moreno. In order to move, a catalyst

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## Mad City Money

*Personnel from La Inmaculada Credit Union made a presentation at Muffles College to teach students early financial responsibility*

**LICU.** Financial literacy is a skill that can never be learnt too early. Many people deep into their adulthood still struggle with it. In an attempt to educate students about this issue and protect them from learning these lessons 'the hard way', Muffles College, in conjunction with the La Inmaculada Credit Union (LICU) organized an activity for all fourth formers which included basic training in budget balancing, chequebook handling and overall financial responsibility. The name of the event was Mad City Money and it was held on October 19th, 2017, at the Muffles Auditorium. Activities began with a presentation by LICU personnel where students were asked, "What is the

difference between a want and a need", and students debated about the issue.. The recognition of this difference allow us to create better financial priorities. Is food a necessity? Is a car a necessity? An iPhone? As it turns out, for some students an iPhone represents a necessity on the same level as water...

**Role Playing.** The activity involved students playing a role. They were given a booklet that contained all the financial information such as income, responsibilities, and a cheque book of their new persona. Students were all of a sudden nurses, forest rangers, carpenters, forensic pathologists trying to make a living. After they reviewed



Students practice budgeting for Mad city money simulation.

these details, they were taken to an area of the auditorium that had been previously set up with simulation vendors where they could spend their income in anything that they needed or wanted. The activity was lively and dynamic and students had fun learning about financial literacy. Some were able to budget their income, some even had some money to save, but others at the end of the day were left with a negative balance. Hopefully, students will be able to apply good budgeting skills in their personal lives.

# Catholic School Power

Catholic secondary schools meet at Muffles College to talk about the issues that affect our country

## The Issues.

What is happening to our country? What are the issues affecting us? What can we do as a surging generation to make things better? These were some of the questions being tackled by students from all over the country at the annual Catholic Secondary Schools Leadership Conference which was held at the Muffles College auditorium on Nov 4th, 2017. From early in the morning many buses could be seen parked in front of auditorium and the place became filled to capacity. Eleven schools gathered for the occasion: Bishop Martin, Palotti, St. Ignatius, Delille Academy, Sacred Heart, Mount Carmel, Saint Viator, St. Catherine's, St. John's, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and Muffles College.

## Presentations.

It was a fun and exciting day even though the topics dealt with were grave. Students displayed their acting skills and each school made a skit presentation depicting an issue they wanted to address, while the other schools in the audience cheered, laughed and applauded. Some of the issues represented were gang violence, drug abuse, bully-



Students from 11 schools nationwide share experiences and exchange thoughts

ing and depression. There was also a panel of guest speakers who energized the crowd with motivational messages. The speakers were: Eider Romero, Crissani Sabido, and Anthony Mangar. They encourage students to seek God for guidance and never give up on their dreams and aspirations. At around 11am Fr. Scott Guiliani said mass. As part of their presentations, schools had also prepared various stalls around the auditorium and held informative talks based on their topics. There they had extra material to support their points, visual aids such as posters, brochures, and video presentations. Students went around the auditorium listening to the presentation they liked. To wrap up the day, students were split into different groups and asked to go out on the compound and several outdoor games and activities were then held where students from different schools shared and interacted with each



other. Talking to a student before the end of the conference, she said: "I had fun, I learnt a lot of things I didn't know and made many friends".

Students played different games and interacted with each other.

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must be moved herself and these girls certainly showed great passion and knew to pick the right words. They all delivered strong, powerful speeches.

The guest speakers chimed in afterwards and reinforced what the girls had to say, adding something new here and there. They reminisced about their years at Muffles College and nostalgia was in the air. It was in this emotional state that stories and anecdotes started coming out, and with these, some memorable moments. One of the speakers, Mr. Jaime Burns, a promising young lawyer working in Belize City, a committed social activist told the audience about an experience he had at school. He recalled the strike he and some of his friends started at when they felt a teacher had acted inappropriately. He remembered the struggle they faced and how stressful the situation was, "but at the end", he said, "it's these moments that made me who I am today. "

**Muffles College High School established 1953**

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**Congratulations to the male varsity Volleyball team in capturing the Regional Championship 2017. All the best as they travel to Nationals in Belize City on November 11th!!!**