

A Successful Journey with a Difficult Start

I can't tell you how much I rejoiced when I saw the students of our Deaf Unit being capable of producing excellent crafts, such as inlaid boxes, crosses, wooden toys and Khyamia (patchwork quilting) tablecloths, and pillow cases.

The Deaf Unit succeeded in increasing the skills capacity of the hearing-impaired children. At the beginning of this school year it was decided to put more emphasis on vocational training in addition to school subjects.



This success was achieved when the Deaf Unit decided to become a center for skills-capacity building and vocational training.



Seven different workshops began to offer training not only for the current students but also for those students who graduated and would like to learn a craft. The students also get income from selling their crafts.



However, I remember the intense resistance and criticism we got at the beginning of this new direction of vocational training. Now when we hear the students' words and see their crafts, I can say that the way to success was not easy especially at the start of this journey.



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We made sure to observe some of the students' reactions to the Deaf Unit and their feelings about the developments of the vocational training programs.

Fadi: In the years passed, I was bored; I couldn't find anything I could do. Now I am happier and less bored because of the many workshops, such as carpentry, accessory making and painting.

My education is now better, and I keep learning. I focus more on learning, because the day is divided into two parts, a part for education and the second part for workshops.

Last year I was so happy when I was in the Internal Section (studying and living at the Deaf Unit) because I spent the whole day in one place. Now I'm tired because I have to travel a long distance and spend a lot of time in transportation.



Mariah: I am happy because of the variety of workshops, such as accessory making, thermal clay making, and painting.

The teaching time became two and a half hours, so that encouraged me to stay more focused and it allowed me to spend more time with my parents.

I hope that the Internal Section opens again, because I am tired of the transportation which is very crowded.



Verena: The last year was better for me, because the teaching time was longer. I love learning a lot, because I dream to go to a university.



Bishoy: The year was very special, because I'm learning new things like painting, carpentry, and many other workshops.

This year I am very happy that I go home every day and see my dad and mom and my sisters.

My mother also learns with me in school and this makes me comfortable as we learn together in the same place.

I hope we go on many trips like we did in the past years.



Philopater: The last year was better because I and my friends, all of us, lived together. We also had more time for education. Now, I'm happy from the many workshops I attended.



Julia: I am happy this year because I learned to make hair pins from thermal clay and also accessories in the accessory workshop. Education this year was better because the day now is divided between educational classes and professional workshops.



Rita: I was happy last year because all my deaf friends were staying with me in the same place. This year, I like learning science and math. I don't prefer to learn the Arabic language and social studies. In the workshops, I became a fan of making accessories out of thermal clay.



From the past, you find that some children are missing out on each other in the boardinghouse, but education specialists for hearing impaired children say it's important that these children have to spend more time with their families so they don't feel marginalized and become violent.

Finally, I would like to say that success sometimes requires change, and change is not easy and not acceptable by everyone, so patience, perseverance and continues assessment will lead to success. We hope to continue to assess this development in the Deaf Unite in the coming months.

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Archbishop of the Province of Alexandria