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Student Council elections
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November 2018

Message from the Dean



Dr. Salma Khamis Al Musharafi

Sur College of Applied Sciences works with the mission of providing targeted programs that produce graduates responsive to the changing needs of the labour market and supportive to national plans by contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Graduation is an important milestone in every student's life. It is achieved by a systematic approach of practice, commitment, planning and good execution. I urge you to always remember why you chose your respective field and the sacrifices that you endured in order to make it happen: To serve our nation and improve the quality of life.

Over the past few years, you have made choices that will have a huge impact on your future. Your experiences in Sur CAS have altered your perceptions about the world and about yourself. Your experience will continue to be the lens through which you see the world and prepare yourself to make a great contribution in your profession for the welfare of the nation. In the coming years, we hope you will not forget Sur CAS, your professors and friends. I encourage you to update us on your achievements and we will always take pride in your achievements.

I wish you continued success and that graduation brings you and your families great joy, happiness and pride. Congratulations to each and every one of you.

138 graduate with degrees, diplomas



File shots of graduates of 2017



Sur

By Seham Ali Al Amri

One hundred and thirty eight students will walk on stage to receive their graduation degrees and diplomas in what promises to be an exciting ceremony in Al Sharqiyah Hall, Sur College of Applied Sciences (CAS), on Monday, Nov. 12.

The ceremony will be held under the patronage of His Excellency Saadeh Sheikh Hamad bin Hilal Al Ma'amari, Undersecretary for Cultural Affairs, Ministry of Heritage and Culture, in the presence of His Excellency Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed Al Sarmi, Undersecretary, Ministry of Higher Education and Dr Salma Bint Khamis Al Musharafi, Dean, Sur CAS.

Distinguished guests will include leaders of security and military agencies, prominent members of the community, members of the academic and administrative departments of the college and graduates with their family members.

In keeping with the trend of past years, the ceremony will be held at 12:00 noon.

Sanaa Al Hadabi, a faculty member of the Department of Mass Communication and an organizer of the ceremony, says, "We always strive to draw a smile on the faces of our graduates and their parents."

While 125 students will be awarded Bachelor degrees, 13 will earn their Diploma. Of the graduates from different specialization, 35 are from Mass Communications with 5 of Journalism major, 25 from Public Relations and 5 from Digital Media.

Of the 55 graduates from Information Technology, 24 are with IT security as their major, 9 with Software Development and 22 with Computer Networks. Applied Biotechnology graduates number 35 with 12 specializing in Environmental Biotechnology, 9 in Marine Biotechnology and 14 in Agriculture Biotechnology.

Anticipating an impressive graduation ceremony with full decorum, Mr. Yaqoub Ibrahim Al Farsi, Head of Student Counselling and Guidance Center, said: "Congratulations to the graduates of Sur CAS. After their struggle and effort in their studies and after facing the challenges of academic and student life, their strong determination has helped them to achieve their goal for their homes and their future. Today, they harvest the reward of the hard work they have put in the past years."

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Every moment is a fortune...

Graduates look back on defining moments of their life as students of Sur CAS

Abdulhamid Mohammed Al Qasbi
Communication, Journalism

Words cannot describe the beautiful moments I spent in Sur CAS with my friends and colleagues. They were beautiful days filled with hard work and diligence – a difficult yet exciting stage of our education.

Also, I do not forget the best time that I had -- participating in student activities! Being a member of the Media Group played a prominent role in developing and refining my abilities and skills in various fields of media. The Theater Group has made me a representative and a speaker, who can enunciate his ideas and opinions with confidence on the stage.



Haitham Saif Al Mawali
Public Relations

My educational life has been very enjoyable and useful to build a strong and good personality to enter the workplace actively and dynamically. My most enjoyable time was my

participation in the Sur CAS Theatre Group and being a representative of this college in inter-university theatre festivals.

When I received personal awards, I felt happy and proud of myself. I won an award for 'Best Actor' in second place and 'Best Play', also second place. I won in the 'Sur's Got Talent' show as well and also received a Scholar award, all of which have contributed to the development of my personality. On the study side, I faced pleasure and fatigue in pursuing success. I always ask of God Almighty to crown our pursuit of success with success.

Alyqadhan Nasser Al Bulushi
Journalism

The time and moments I spent in the college included beautiful and difficult moments. It made me feel proud and delighted in some of my own achievements here, and these I have stored in my memory where those feelings of joy remain always fresh. The academic aspect is the most important step of the educational process and is the main reason for my entrance to college. I have



learned a lot and gained knowledge and information through attending lectures and university seminars. Initially, I faced some difficulties and faltered at some stages of study. But family, friends and teachers with their motivation, boosted my interest to continue my studies. They helped me with all that I could do. I went over all these consequences and started my involvement in student activities. I made a mark for myself in all the work done at the college.

The first thing that led me to complete my university studies was my passion for theater activity in which I got all the ingredients that made me able to refine my talent and my personality. I joined the Theatre Group as a member, worked hard and took care of things and was eventually appointed President of the Theatre Group. And so I walked on the path of success and achievement.

My involvement in theatre helped to dispel the negative energy and pressures experienced as a student studying for exams, and this in turn helped to raise my GPA score. Student activities is the area in which the student develops and changes his thinking and direction. It makes the student a ready person with multiple skills equipped to give his best in the future job.

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'Students are the nucleus and future of society'

Student Advisory Council elections have featured on campus since 2015. However, this year for the first time Foundation year students too have cast their votes in the election held in Sur Hall on September 19.

Students **Khamis Ahmed Al Balushi & Ali Abdulaziz Al Balushi** spoke in detail with **Dr. Hulies Al Aرامي**, Assistant Dean for Academic Support Affairs who guided the Student Advisory Council election process. Speaking about the importance of the Student Advisory Council (SAC) and its annual election, **Dr. Hulies**, also professor of economics at Sur College of Applied Sciences, noted, "Students are the nucleus and future of society."

Here are some excerpts from the interview:

Q. How do students benefit from the student council?

The establishment of a Student Advisory Council (SAC) strengthens the principle of transparency and encourages criticism, opinion and responsibility so that students have a voice in the working of the college. The SAC and its election process is necessary for the university student to learn how to vote and, in the future, to raise their voices for the community.

Q. Do all students vote? How can the college raise awareness about why students should vote?

The college is keen to encourage students to vote and participate in the SAC elections. In the past, some students were not interested in voting or participating in the SAC. In the fourth year of the student council elections, students are more aware of it. The deanship of the college also always seeks to develop plans for students and motivate them to vote in the college elections.

This year, students of the Foundation year were included so that they could participate in the voting of the council in the college and all the procedures that allow them to register and vote in the student's council were completed in advance to enable them to vote..



Dr. Hulies Al Aرامي
Assistant Dean for Academic Support Affairs
& Head of the SAC election process at Sur CAS

Q. Do students become more aware of the importance of the voting process by participating in the student council election? And will they take this understanding to the community in the Shura Council elections and Municipality elections?

Yes to both questions, because students practice a mini-parliamentary electoral process through which they actively participate in the SAC, and in this way, learn the advantages of voting.

We know that students are the nucleus and the future of society. When they realize that there is an electoral practice after college too they will, in the future after graduation, use this knowledge of the right to vote in other electoral

What is the role of the SAC within the college?

The role of the Student Advisory Council is to serve the educational process as a link between students and the Deanship as also with other departments in the college. All proposals and problems of the students are conveyed to the Deanship in a scientific way along the guidelines of the prescribed guide for Higher Education Institutions.

How can a student be nominated to the SAC?

According to this guide, there are specific rules for students to be nominated. Two committees will be able to choose the candidates to be nominated. The candidates will then be selected by other students through voting by electronic means. The winners will then represent students on the Council of the college.

How do SAC member serve students?

All student members of the Council have a role in discussions on the proposals and opinions that come from the students and in determining and identifying student priorities. Students have presented proposals that have been implemented.

So the SAC has been effective in past years?

Through our experience of the last three years, there has been an hierarchy of knowledge and transfer of culture to students and also, in the process of selection of the president and his deputy, students have become aware of the choice of the right person for candidacy. This is a parliamentary experiment for students in the college and is considered to be a mini-operation of the Shura Council.

How do you see the future of the SAC?

In the future, we expect members of the student council to be trained and to have acquired many skills in this parliamentary experience in the Sultanate. In the future, we hope these council members will have a strong role in society -- in the Municipal Councils or in the Shura Council.

programs in Oman.

Q. We have had SACs for some years now. Have any issue put forward by these councils been addressed by the higher authorities? If yes, which issues?

Yes, there are some topics that have been raised and discussed in the past years. Some things have been taken seriously and applied, such as providing printers to students in the library and dealing with their problems quickly and efficiently.

Tahani Aamer Al Sinani

Communication,
Public Relations

One of my greatest moments in college was when I found a mistake in my exam marks and pointed it out to my lecturer, and she corrected it! So I stood up for myself!

Another moment was when I kind of led my graduation project with my mates. I got a chance to learn about decision making, problem solving, time management and created powerful relationships with my colleagues! Back at that time, I hated group work, but now I can see that I learned so many things!

My friends were probably the greatest thing that happened in college, especially in my freshman year. It was crazy and we were crazier! There were moments when we should have paid attention in class, but all we did was laugh and challenge each other! Everything thing in college was perfect. You know guys, every situation doesn't break you. It makes you stronger.

Mazoun Ali Al Ghailani

Communication, Journalism

I spent enjoyable moments with my friends and learnt new life lessons everyday. I also attended the plays that took place at the college by the theatre group. My fourth semester has special memories because I started the practical part of media when I hosted a radio program at the college studio with Omani author Mohamed Eid Al Areimi.



Every moment is a fortune...

Shaimaa Juma Al Mukheini

Information Technology, Security

I have a lot of nice memories that I will never forget. These memories are both happy and sometimes sad. I still remember the hard time I spent with my friends together in the college. We studied in the college preparing for the exam till 6 pm. Despite being really tired, we encouraged each other. I remember how many times we gathered in my home to work on a project, to stay and study together. It was really fun.

I believe that college days were a special time in my life that I will never forget. I liked and enjoyed every moment of it. I advise all current students to utilize their time well because they are in the college to learn, to enjoy and to develop themselves. These days will not come again. I will never forget these memories.



Aseela Nasser Sulaiman Al Kitani

Communications, Public Relations

It is said, to realize the value of four years, ask a person who graduated from college recently. Time does not wait for anyone and every moment you own is a fortune and you will only gain if you use it by participating in something with someone unusual.

The first of my best days in the college was when I started to take part in college and college-level competitions. In the second year of my studies, I got the best research paper at the department of mass communication at the college where my joy in this success is indescribable. I was also a member of the Student Advisory Council and have provided a good number of ideas and suggestions that may benefit students in their academic life.

In the third year I wrote another research paper as an assistant researcher with the help of a lecturer in the Department of Mass Communication. It was a great feeling because it gave me the opportunity to accomplish a valuable academic thing. With this, I participated in the Annual Symposium of the



Colleges of Applied Sciences held at Sur College this April.

I also do not forget my teachers who supported me and highlighted my talents. My English teacher who guided me on how to build my confidence for an oral presentation and how to write research correctly.

I also benefited by learning to write news and develop my ability to think effectively, all helping to boost my self-value and confidence. At such a special moment, I hope to become like one of them.

Ahmed Said AL Hasani

Applied Biotechnology,
Environmental Biotechnology

I will cherish memories of the times I spent in college, with friends and teachers. Among these beautiful moments were those spent in the labs, carrying out new experiments and discoveries to gain knowledge and skills that help gain entry into the labor market.



'Graduation Projects add value to student profiles'

Students understand teamwork and standards and learn to face the world with confidence, Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs & Scientific Research, **Dr. Ramkumar Lakshminarayanan** tells **Asma Al Jalubi & Amal Al Shabibi**, as he explains why research is important in undergraduate studies.

Excerpts from the interview:

For the first time in the Communications program, research is being introduced as a necessary project for graduation. What is the reason for this?

Any academic program has two parts: learning by theory and learning by practice. But these are not implemented in real time. Having a Graduation Project adds value to the program. It gives the graduate an opportunity to practice the skills that they have learnt through their courses.

Are students of Information Technology and Applied Biotechnology programs also doing research projects? What is their response to these projects?

Information Technology students already had a Graduation Project (GP) spread over two semesters in their old study plan. They would design their GP over one entire semester. In the next semester, they would develop it as a software program. For example, in the first semester, they went to the Human Resources Department to get an idea to make their research design. In the second semester, they developed the



Dr. Ramkumar Lakshminarayanan
Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs & Scientific Research

software program and wrote the report.

The Graduation Project adds value to the profile of IT students, giving them the advantage of presenting real-time solutions. Students face the situation directly so when they do their project, their confidence level goes up.

In Applied Biotechnology (ABT), it is a little different. In IT and Communication, there are no credits for internship but in ABT, there are. The students join internships for six months

training and work on their projects at the same time.

As they combine this, they get the opportunity to function in the workplace situation. They work in an environment of different age groups and people of different knowledge levels. Their research-based projects give them an exposure to industry and to the workplace.

The faculty-mentored research projects have been successfully applied in the ABT Department and some students have published their work in reputed journals.

In what way do undergraduate students benefit from doing research?

They understand how to face the world; they understand teamwork; they understand standards in practice and in writing; they get motivation and they gain confidence in what they have studied.

Do you think research will help graduates to get jobs? In what way will it help?

Yes, 200 per cent! Research adds value to a student's profile.

If the Graduation Project is not part of the course, only the grade point average (GPA) has value. But with the Graduation Project, students can show their involvement in their area of interest. Industry asks for experience and internships too add value.

OLNG exhibition spreads message of traffic safety



SUR
By Amal Hamed Al Shabibi

A car driving-simulator machine was a major attraction at a traffic safety exhibition held on Sept. 27 at OLNG Qalhat Company. Public Relations students of Sur CAS, who visited the exhibition as part of their course of PR Practice, took turns to try out the simulator and browsed through other exhibits at the event titled "Peace in our Minds and Family in our Hearts".

The exhibition was opened by His Excellency Dr. Darwish bin Saif Al Mahrabi, Undersecretary for Administrative and Financial Affairs at the Ministry of Health.

The exhibition is a result of cooperation between PDO, Omani Association of Peace on the Roads and the Oman Oil company, which together spread the message of traffic safety to the community so that people become aware of how to drive safely and avoid dangerous situations on the road.

Khamis Al Balushi, a Public Relations student who also helped as an organizer of the exhibition, said, "Traffic safety is so important for our society.

"LNG company has done a campaign to raise awareness among the

people to know why traffic safety is so important."

Exhibits educated visitors on legal speed limits on the road and how to rescue people involved in traffic accidents, including how to get the injured out of damaged vehicles.

Each section dealt with different aspects of safety and rescue to prevent injury or death due to road accidents and provide security, peace of mind.

PR student Amal Al Arai said, "Our visit to this exhibition was exciting, useful and valuable. It provided us an overview of the ways of organizing and presenting such exhibitions. We also benefited from the tips and guidance related to safety during driving, which were presented in a friendly and helpful manner."

Her friend and fellow student Razan Al Falahi added, "I benefited from this exhibition because it provided us with much information on ways to spread security in the community."

Road safety is said to be everybody's responsibility, and this exhibition aimed to raise awareness to reduce the rate of accidents and deaths on the road by promoting safe driving methods that ensure car drivers and passengers are safe.

Staff urge students to seek out their advisors

SUR
By Suad Ali Al Alawi
& Mashaal Khalid Al Saadi

Students of Sur CAS face problems with their courses and study plans because they do not seek advice from their assigned academic advisors.

Every student who enrolls in the college is assigned an academic advisor to guide him about the courses and academic plan. But most students do not understand that in order to achieve academic success, planning is necessary, and it is the academic advisor who would put him on the right track.

"The academic advisor is familiar with the student's study plan, and this includes completed courses as well as the list of courses the student must choose from for the next semester," explained Ms. Sana Al Hadabi, faculty member at the Department of Mass Communication

She, and other instructors, works regularly with students, advising them on the course of action for academic success. "Academic advisors have complete information about the academic system and the laws of the college and other things. They are also the most appropriate persons to assist the students to choose their courses, especially students facing academic challenges or whose graduation is delayed due to postponement of a semester or because they fall under probation due to poor academic performance," Ms. Sana said.

She added that academic advising helps students find and assess a program that is best for them, brings to light the resources available to them and helps them develop strategies for academic success.

Besides advising students about their study plan, the academic guidance process closely monitors students under academic probation for GPA scores of less than 1.99. With individual attention



Mr. Bahaeldin, Head of Department, Mass Communication, advises a student

and constant follow-up by their advisors, such students have managed to get out of this problem and successfully complete their studies

Communications student Shatha Al Moashri has personally come through such an experience. Thanks to the guidance provided by the academic advisor, she managed to get out of probation and "get rid of the academic problems" she was facing, she said.

This emphasizes the importance of the academic advisor in the mentoring process at any time.

However, a large number of students do not make the effort to meet their advisors. Officials said this is because of a gap in the system that allows students to register in courses even without their advisor's approval. The only situation

in which meeting the advisor becomes binding upon the student is in the case of probation, they point out.

Some of the reasons why students do not meet their advisors are that they may be misguided by their seniors, and also new students may face language issues that inhibit them from meeting their advisors, college officials add.

Another communication student, Norsin Al Sobhi, frankly admitted: "I do not meet the academic adviser unless I need to have some papers signed."

The lack of communication between the academic advisor and the student is a challenge that the academic guidance system is now trying to address through the development of new software for the advisor to track students and other measures.

News Briefs

By Mashaal Al Saadi

Student Council elections held



Almost 330 students voted electronically, and also through ballot papers, in the Student Advisory Council elections held on Sept. 19 in Sur Hall, K-block, at Sur CAS. The students were exercising their vote to elect 11 members to the 4th Student Advisory Council at the college. The elected members of the Student Advisory Council contribute to improving the academic environment and the quality of student services and career guidance by sharing their suggestions, participating in resolving problems and facilitating communication between students and the Deanship.

Theatre Group gets into action



The Theatre Group of Sur CAS is already preparing for its participation in the Youth Creativity Competition of Spring 2019 to be held on the Sur CAS campus. A play, written and directed by student Mashaal Khalid Al Saadi, has been selected by the authorities concerned. Allocation of characters and rehearsals and training sessions are in progress. The Youth Creativity Competition targets young people to promote their skills and abilities in various fields of academics related activities and in the Arts.

Sur CAS at OMIFCO meet



Students of Sur CAS took part for the first time in the 9th GIPCA Fertilizer Conference held in Muscat at the initiative of the Gulf Union of Pharmaceuticals and Chemicals and the support of Sur-based OMIFCO company. More than 300 participants from all over the world attended the three-day conference which started on Sept. 18. The conference included a workshop for students from universities and GCC countries and a visit to OMIFCO headquarters.

IT Club workshop on VOIP

An IT Club workshop, held on Oct. 2 in the IT Network Lab, focused on the practical application of "Voice over Internet" transmission in connecting office phones. It also discussed how 'voice' was converted into data and the manner in which it was transmitted through the network and protocols used. Some 55 students and teachers of the IT department attended the workshop targeted at IT students of all majors -- programming, networking and information security.

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Internships were taken up by 30 students of the Mass Communication Department in eight public and private sector organizations in the summer of 2018. Their aim was to understand the workplace and gain experience in their respective majors. Here, students offer a glimpse into their summer work experience:

Ashwaq Hamed Al Arimi

Journalism, Trained at Sur Industrial Estate

When I began my professional training, I didn't know what was going to happen. It was all new and strange to me, but I was happy to have started training with a well-known establishment. I was trained at Sur Industrial Estate and it was good experience.

During the basic training, which initially takes place in the training workshop, I gained important knowledge for my training. I always enjoy new experiences and bringing creative ideas into whatever I do. During my training, I got an opportunity to do so.

I wrote a report about 'law and investment'. I wrote official letter and news reports for the Estate. I also visited factories in the area, such as a fisheries factory called 'Dawn of the Seas' and a wood factory. I designed and produced a newsletter called 'Peie' and made an advertisement about a tender. I communicated with other companies to complete forms. I learnt many things from other employees in the organization. I also attended the security and safety workshop. This experience was very good and I hope to work there in the future.

Marwan Al Belushi

Public Relations

Bank Muscat, Main Branch, Sur

I wrote news for the media when I visited the Bank Muscat Branch in Ghala, Muscat to learn about the latest financial systems and services used in dealing with companies.

I was also involved in the organizing of events inside the branch, such as an activity for small investors, which focused on instilling values and raising awareness to deal with banking services. I also helped with such projects outside the branch. I joined the social responsibility department, which focuses on helping the community, especially families with social security issues and limited income. We helped to provide items of domestic needs and also supported civil teams to set up playgrounds and supply them with water and lighting.

There were several programs that were used to deal with employees within the organization and provide them with important information and alerts about any occurrence in the institution.

Marwa Al Taukali

Digital Media student

General Authority for Consumer Protection

I got the opportunity to get training at the General Authority for Consumer Protection from June 19 to 28, 2018. I enjoyed my training and participated in all sections of consumer protection, such as dealing with complaints, identifying the laws that apply, looking through the digital information and using digital information technology to address the consumers. I completed several tasks, including receiving citizens and codes electronically.

There was routine work too, but it was more important to communicate with people and find solutions for them quickly. Digital media is the basic or important destination for me. We were responsible for this section, and so we were responsible for the media. The digital media section receives all the digital business from the two main parties involved in a consumer complaint. Amazingly, the director of that section wanted to know from us about the digital media programs we use and how they are used. But we had limited time so we could only brief them.

What we did this summer

Amal Al Areimi

Public Relations, Oman LNG

My two-month internship at Oman LNG was a useful experience for me. I have gained new knowledge, skills and met many great people. I gained experience in many things in this internship that helped me practice my major. The most important one was to be the producer of the first newsletter for the 'CPL department'. I completed my internship with a good impression of the workplace and gained many exciting experiences. This internship has definitely been an introduction to the actual work field for me.



Shrooq Hamed Al Ariemi

Journalism

Directorate General of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources

I took my training at the Directorate General of Regional Municipalities and Water Resources, Sur, in the 'Awareness and Public Relations Department'. As a person who has no previous such experience, I tried to find a good place that would benefit me by adding new skills and giving me the chance to applying everything I have learnt in college.

In the first week, we began to identify the department of the Directorate and the staff and the head of the department and identify the roles played by the department. We trained on how to write the news and prepared a plan for the annual summer activities forum for the children of the staff. We designed posters for the summer forum and worked on coverage through photography and the work of montage of effectiveness. It was a rich knowledge experience and I learned from them how to work within the procedures of the department as an employee.



Razan Al Falahi

Public Relations

General Authority for Consumer Protection

I trained this summer at the General Authority for Consumer Protection in Sur. It was a great experience that allowed me to know more details about consumer protection and how to maintain this right of the citizen. My training showed me how to interact directly with the customer, and also by phone, communicate with them and to solve their problems in a friendly manner.



Students of Mass Communication took training in several public and private companies as part of their summer internships

Photos by Ashwaq Al Arimi

Azhar Al Shukaili

Public Relations,

Al Musannah Health Centre

I have trained at Al Musannah Health Centre. It was a very educative experience. This training served as an opportunity for me to develop the skills that I learnt in my studies in the field of public relations.

Al Anoud Al Musharafi

Public Relations, Sur Industrial Estate

I did my summer training at Sur industrial estate, although it was my second such experience here. This time, I learnt more, as this training was an opportunity to develop the skill of speaking and dealing with investors in two languages and to develop my writing skills. I hope in the future to become an employee of Sur Industrial Estate.

Yousef Al Mamari

Digital Media, Public Authority of Radio & Television, Muscat

I completed my training course last summer at the Public Authority of Radio & Television, Muscat, in television. This section deals with different aspects of visual media, such as providing programs, how to produce them and their videography aspect. I also worked digitally on the application of sound, montage, lighting and photography. The training was a practical application of the theory I had studied at the college. The advantage I had was that I was a specialist in digital media. I participated in the production process and photography and learnt many things under the guidance of Professor Mohammed Al Hulai and Professor Hilal Al Hilali, who were a source of inspiration to me. I learned to commit to the contexts of training and to never delay or be absent. As a trainee, I benefited greatly from the experience of these basics, which will hopefully contribute to make me deserving of the real work place.