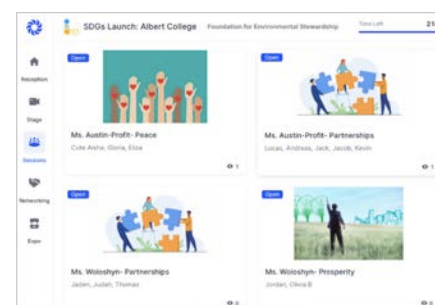
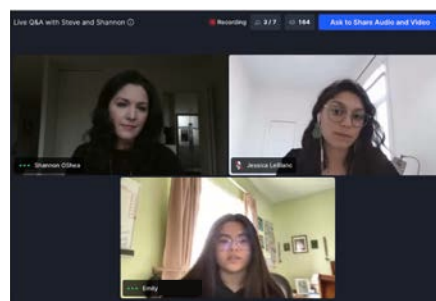
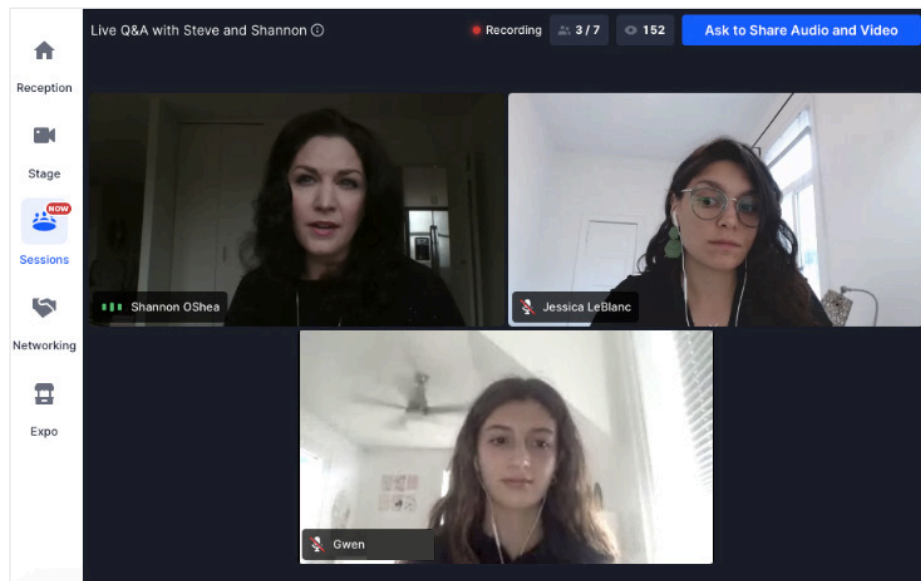


# Academics

## THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE BOTH INSIDE AND OUT

During the summer of 2020 our curriculum consultant, Ms. Spiropoulos, and I designed a template for a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum scope and sequence that aligned with our whole school teaching philosophy and incorporated the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). Our teaching philosophy, inspired from data gathered through interviews with Albert College faculty, includes three crucial elements: (a) nurturing meaningful relationships with students, (b) fostering deep learning through inquiry-based pedagogy, and (c) emphasizing our core values of inclusivity, integrity, compassion, and individuality. Ms. Spiropoulos and I realized that any effort made towards fulfilling the 17 UN SDGs would not only help the global community but would also be in harmony with our teaching philosophy. Through piloting the scope and sequence template with faculty members and unveiling it at a faculty meeting, we found everyone whole-heartedly embraced the pedagogical integration of the UN SDGs. One teacher even created a life-size poster of the goals to display in the hallway as a visible marker and teaching tool.

As the 2020-21 school year continued, Mr. Musca received an email from the Foundation of Environmental Stewardship (FES). FES is an organization founded by Steve Lee, a climate change activist and a policy advocate for the UN (also personally trained by former American Vice President Al Gore) and dedicated to the mission of raising awareness about the 17 UN SDGs coast to coast in North America. They offered to host a virtual conference on the mornings of April 27 and 29 to officially launch the UN SDGs by providing students as young as Grade 5 with the opportunity to learn about the history and importance of the SDGs, have live Q & A sessions with both Steve Lee and an official from UNICEF, Shannon O'Shea, and participate in an action plan development workshop. We jumped at the chance and began giving the



UN SDGs a more visible presence during Senior School Chapel sessions and in Grade 5 and 6 classes.

Students were thrilled with the conference. For many, it was the first time they had taken part in a virtual conference set on a novel digital platform containing a rolling chat and the opportunity to navigate from workshop rooms to main sessions. They applied themselves with diligence during the workshop period, filling out online collaborative documents with teammates while watching other groups' ideas also materialize as they worked. When I saw the calibre of work produced, Ms. Purdie, Assistant Head – Senior School, and I decided that we needed to help students continue with the journey of actualizing their ideas. We gave them short 20-minute sessions throughout the month of May (four in total) where they could further develop their ideas, present their findings in small groups, and listen to the presentations voted to the final round. Topics included, raising awareness about violence against women, creating more connections at AC to further enhance inclusivity, reducing homelessness in Belleville, and taking a second look at local waste management systems.

The final round of presentations given by students from Middle School to Senior School on May 28 not only inspired the AC audience, including the Grade 6 students, but also impressed our guests from FES, Steve Lee and Kat Cadungog. They wrote in an ensuing email, "...it was such a wonderful meeting. It is so refreshing for us to see our work rippling out into projects like the ones at Albert College." Some teachers who had already started integrating the UN SDGs into their curriculum were able to dive deeper into a particular SDGs, empowering students with a voice to further develop and support connected causes. For example, one Senior School class looked at specific targets and indicators of goal 4, Education, and wrote persuasive essays that examined the goal from the perspective of a country other than their own. A visual arts class focused on creating works based on a UN SDG. Two science classes put together an action plan for reducing the use of plastic water bottles at Albert College and garnered thought-provoking feedback from FES. In fact, one set of Middle School students, on their own time, developed an action plan for reducing the use of non-disposable coffee cups that they will



# Congratulations, 2021 Graduate



## Farid

**Q. What will you miss most about AC?**

A. I will miss the friends I made because of the memories we shared, and the staff who made me feel at home and comfortable.

**Q. Where do you see yourself in 10 years?**

A. It is really hard for me to make any predictions as life is so unpredictable and it is all about how you handle the obstacles in your way. I do hope, however, that I continue to improve myself and every aspect of my life over the next 10 years.

**Q. How do you feel about graduating during COVID-19?**

A. It does not feel right graduating during this pandemic. It would have been nice to have Convocation where we would have all celebrated our achievements together. Hopefully, we will find a way to make up for it in the future.

implement over the summer. They garnered feedback from Grade 10 students and FES. The ripples are multiplying. It will be exciting to see what our students accomplish next year as this initiative continues.

What can you do to support AC students in their endeavour to make the UN SDGs more visible in our local and global community? You can find out more about the UN SDGs and raise awareness about at least one that, for you, holds significance.

Subsequently, you can examine how your new understandings have modified your perspectives and personal habits. Finally, you can reflect upon your personal growth in relation to the Albert College core values. Together, with intentionality, we can progress towards making a sustainable difference, both inside and out.

—  
**Dr. Suparna Roy**  
*Coordinator of Teaching, Learning & Innovation*

