

This newsletter presents the successes, dreams and aspirations of our staff and students, all survivors after the harrowing experience of the pandemic with illness, loss of jobs and even loss of family members; all of us reborn from the ashes after our journey through the fire of adversity, phoenix like - stronger, positive, determined to grow and succeed!

When asked to write about her dream for the new year for Aseema one of the teachers sent us this: “A poem by Langston Hughes speaks about a dream. Here it is.



Rejuvenation of Mother Earth during the Lockdown
-Alfiya Ansari, 15y, Standard IX, (KMS)

Harlem
What happens to a dream
deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester
Like a sore and then run?
Does it stink
Like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over
Like a syrupy sweet?
Maybe it just sags
Like a heavy load.
Or *does it explode?*

The poor settlements around the city of Mumbai have something in common with Harlem. The pandemic with

which we are still struggling could very easily have put paid to many dreams! Aseema, on the other hand was not about to let a virus disrupt the aspirations of the teachers and young people in our care. So, if a dream is likely to explode, it will be to erupt into remedial action where myriad sparks settle onto all of us, igniting alternative initiatives and creating new, different attitudes and opportunities through which to express cherished dreams.”- *Dorothy D’Souza, Teacher, (SMS and KMS).*

“All of us have our own dreams and hopes for the new year. ‘We never expect the unexpected.’ 2020 proved this statement right! The new normal is here. The pandemic has

taught us to be grateful, to empathise with people facing helpless situations. It made us ponder on how we could make use of the time and things we have and make the best of both without cribbing about what we didn't have. Social distancing has been challenging yet a blessing. Where once we catered to our children in physical classrooms, we now do so through the social platforms Google Classroom and Google Meet- our new classrooms. It has been a learning experience for both students and teachers getting equipped with this new teaching learning style. We used the opportunity to identify our strengths and weakness and to work on them. At the start it was a struggle as most of our students had no android phones. Phones and laptops were provided by several of our kind hearted donors so that our students didn't miss their classes and the academic year. In the secondary classes, the syllabus is vast and every concept important, this led us to brainstorm and explore ways to teach and guide our students. The transition has taught us how to adapt to changes in situations where one has no option and to look forward to exploring ways of doing something differently in the best way we can! I shall continue to keep my team together and motivate the teachers and students to move forward and to always look at life with hope. I hope this year will be more positive and blessed for all of us and our children. Even though there could be limited opportunities, may our students shine and bloom to their best potential.” -*Ramona D’Souza, Secondary Incharge, (KMS).*



“Everyone has a dream which they want to realise. Everyone wants to start with a new resolution at the beginning of the new year. As a kid my dream has been to become an artist, it is my passion. To achieve my dream, I will have to work hard and face all the difficult situations that come up.

I wanted to participate and win many competitions in the year 2020. I dreamt of representing my school but it was not possible with the imposed lockdown due to Covid-19. So, I practiced and improved my drawing skills. After a month our Art teacher invited us to participate in several drawing competitions and I participated in all. I won in some, while in some I lost. In my free time, I did several paintings for Room 13. The Covid-19 days were very different and unusual but these days helped me to improve my colouring and sketching skills. ‘Use

your time wisely,’ is a useful piece of advice. Many lost hope as Covid-19 affected us. People faced various problems and challenges during this pandemic. But since I used that time wisely, I have improved a lot in my painting. I also learnt different painting techniques from videos and apps. The pandemic days were tough but they were also useful. Now I will move forward to achieve my goal and dream of becoming an incredible artist!" -*Sauhel Shaikh, Standard X, (KMS).*



From Negativity to Positivity
Gulam Muheddin Shaikh, 15y, Standard IX, (KMS)

“Last year when the lockdown started, my classes stopped, exams were cancelled. The situation was difficult. It was as if I was stuck, trapped in my house. I did not know how to handle the situation. However, as time passed, I found ways to deal with the pressure. I realised that the lockdown gave me more time to do the things I loved and to explore hobbies that had always been a dream. I had

plenty of time. I worked on improving my drawing and writing skills and realised how good it felt to be creative. I spent more time with my family. I hadn't realised how much I had missed them. A month later, I felt much better. I understand how difficult this must have been for everyone, but it's important to remember that none of us is alone in this situation. Now, 2020 has ended and 2021 is here. I hope that the new year will be the best year of my life. I want to become a doctor and I need to work hard at my studies. I will study very hard in Standard IX so that I am promoted to Standard X as it is one of the most important years for me. I will start preparing this year for my board exams. I pray that my dreams come true and I look forward to a better future.” -*Nasreen Shaikh, Standard IX, (KMS).*



Dependence on Social Media for survival during the Lockdown & dreams for India.
Nitin Chawla, 15y, Standard X, (KMS)

“Every individual has a dream to achieve something. I too dream of becoming a Graphic Designer. I know that with hard work and strong and true determination my dream can come true. But suddenly there came the news that the whole world stopped due to Covid-19. Many

lost their jobs. My determination towards my career was very positive. I took positive advantage of the pandemic. While at home I got various video editing projects from school, which I accepted. I've learnt some professional editing from online lectures on social media and have won a competition held online for editing a Covid-19 poster. All this helped me to improve my hobby of graphic designing. I would like to tell everyone that whatever the difficulty, we have to overcome it by thinking positively and not by stressing. I plan to use this time to improve more in graphic designing and move towards my goal. I'll make that goal come true one day." -Nitin Chawla, Standard X, (KMS).



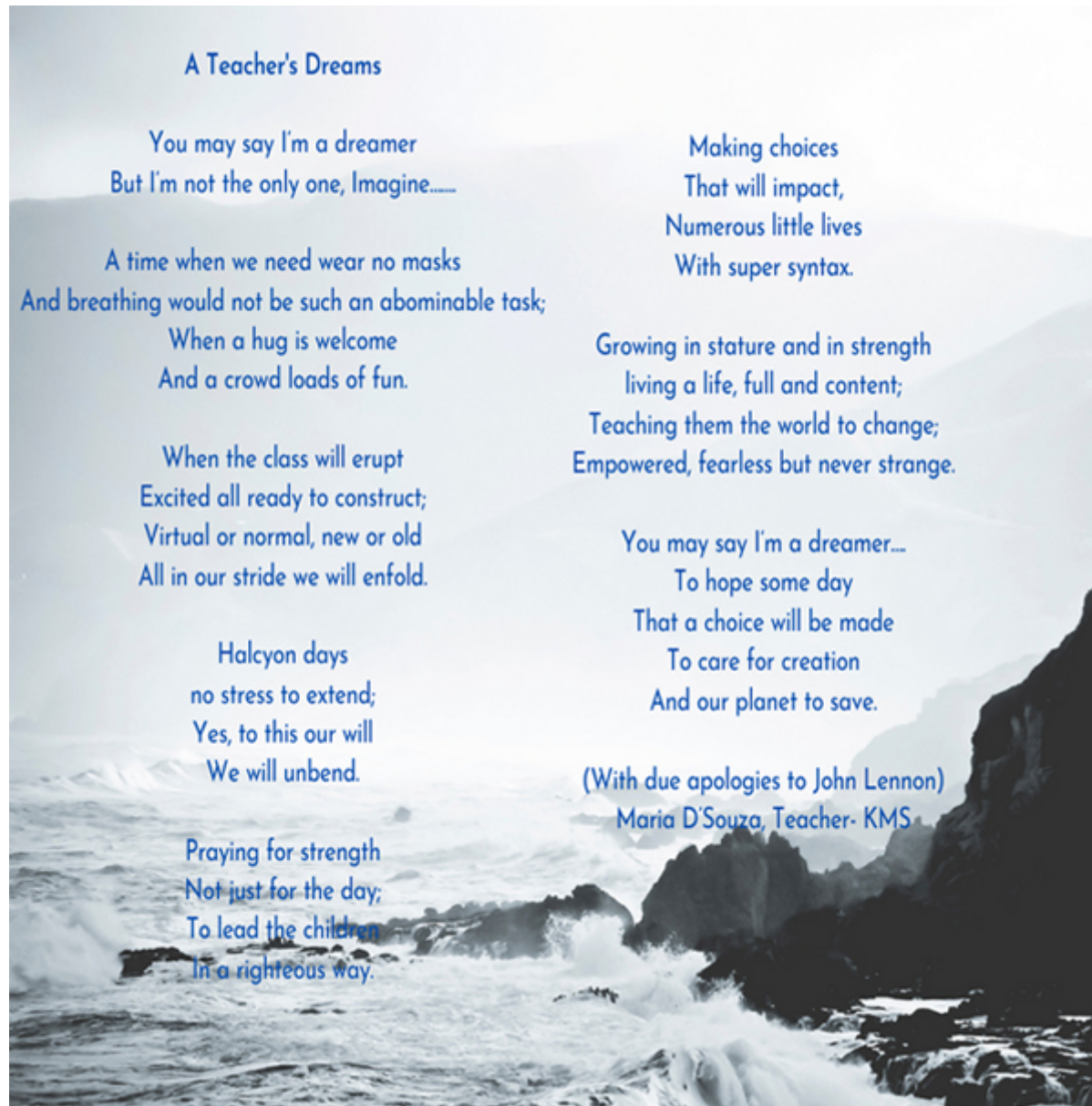
"I think 2021 has been the most awaited year by most people around the world! After our experiences from March 2020, all of us eagerly awaited the coming of this new year. It was wished that the New Year be filled with lots of hopes and wishes for a better tomorrow and most importantly one filled with prayers for good health for everyone. It was wished that the dreaded Corona virus vanish, just as suddenly as it came into our lives, turning them upside down.

I have now learnt not to take things for granted and to value the small things in life. Most of us teachers, would never have dreamt we would be taking remote teaching classes. Our jobs and the way we conducted our classes, interacting with our students face to face were all taken for granted. I miss seeing my students faces light up when a concept is grasped, or when they know the answer to my question.

My dream to have all the students attend the online classes may be difficult to realise but at Aseema, every effort is being made to fulfill this dream by giving most of the students a mobile phone donated by generous donors so that they can continue with their studies. Remote teaching has helped us enhance our computer skills to a great extent, something which might not have happened in normal times, more so as we were very comfortable with the normal way of teaching. The positive part of this pandemic is that it has made us take

stock of our priorities, forced us to get creative, we've realised what is important for us and appreciate what we have. Things might not go the way we have planned but we can recreate new plans to fulfill our dreams.

Don't let the corona virus take away your dreams, remember all the things you have done and learnt and have faith that things will improve. As it is often said – this too shall pass, we need to be grateful for the small things we have and can still continue to work towards fulfilling our dreams.” -*Sharon Pereira, Assistant Teacher, (PCMS).*



Aditya Singh says, “There are so many disasters we have learnt about. My mother told me about the Tsunami, it was before I was born. I didn't imagine that the whole world would suffer so much from this pandemic. The virus felt so much bigger than me. But slowly by following all the precautions we were able to get some relief. I told my mother I would protect her. I feel like Superman!" Also, "I am looking forward to going back to the park and playing with my friends. But I know we have to take precautions." -*Aditya Singh, 10y, Standard V, (PCMS).*



Art by Aditya Singh, 10y, Standard V, (PCMS)

"Our students are adept at using information technology and will now be able to look up information, complete assignments and learn to research topics covered in class."
Teachers -Sana Shaikh, Taposhi Khatua, Kulsum Ansari and Assistant Teacher Khulood Ansari.

Other teachers expressed their experiences and dreams for this year

"We plan to use more activities and the videos that we prepared last year. There is a library of these videos. Our classes will be interesting and our students will look forward to them." -
Senior Teacher Uma Sharma, Teacher Swati Chavan, Assistant Teacher Madhura Pawar.

"We now have the support of parents who are learning a lot in terms of the methods we use and the material too. In fact, lots of them are learning English too. They are concerned about their children's progress and support us a lot." - Assistant Teachers Alisha Khan, Sunita Pujari.

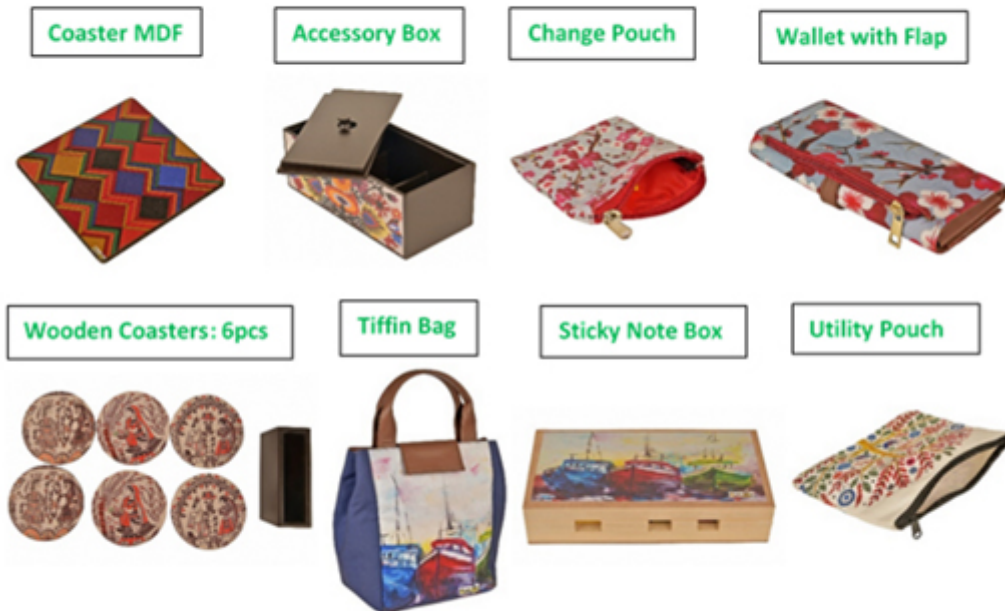


Click here to watch 9-year-old Ahmed Khalid Shaikh from Standard III of (KMS) talk about his dream. He is now waiting for only good things to happen.

Products and Exhibitions:

The Aseema Annual Product Sale is here again!

Aseema Products



Aseema Diary & Calendar



Aseema Gandhi Diary



SALE! SALE! SALE!

We are happy to announce the annual sale of Aseema's products at rock bottom prices. Browse through our catalogue and visit Aseema's product division office or our website to order your favourite products. The products will be available at our product outlet at:

3, Shyam Sadan, 93 - S.V.Road, Khar (W), Mumbai 400 052.

Time: Monday to Saturday 10:00am to 7:00pm.

Contact Number: 022 - 2648 8034 or write to products@aseema.org

Date: Ongoing up to March 14, 2021.

A big thank you to all our funders, donors and well wishers.

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Exhibition Hosts:

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