

THE NEW STAR

independent student newspaper

ISSUE 3

NOVEMBER 30, 2020



PHOTO FROM: PINTEREST

**CASE
CLUB**

PAGE 3

**ONLINE
EXCHANGE**

PAGE 6

**ZOOM,
WEBEX,
GOOGLE?**

PAGE 7

MEHREGAN AS A THANKSGIVING DAY IN PERSIAN CULTURE

Iranian people have many different traditions and celebrations. Persian Thanksgiving Day is named Mehregan. It is celebrated in many cities of Iran after the harvest of pomegranates in the early days of autumn and winter.

Pomegranates are thought of as a sign of good health in Iran because of the supposed therapeutic features of this fruit as it is mentioned in Holy Quran. Pomegranates are served at ceremonies such as Yalda, night of the winter Solstice, and used during the Mehregan celebration. In the distant past, pomegranates were served at wedding ceremonies as well.

To celebrate Mehregan, people wear local clothes specific to their region. They congratulate each other by spreading sweets and burning pecans. They use their national musical instruments and make the atmosphere pleasant with the sound of local music. Then they go to their gardens and harvest pomegranates.

Each village has its own way of celebrating Mehregan. In some cities, it is customary to wait until the day of Mehregan and harvest the crop on the day of Mehregan. In some other places, farmers pick all the fruits from the tree a few days before Mehregan and sell them on the day of Mehregan.

Mehregan is for the infinite and unstinting blessings that, by the grace of God Almighty, grow from dry, the ruby pieces of pomegranate. As it is said: don't think that your life is created disorganized because your God and the God of the seed of pomegranate are one.

Susan Azizi
ICP

THANKSGIVING DAY

Oh, give thanks to the creator and the protector of life, who has been good to us,

And I asked why I should be grateful. 2020 has been so difficult for so many people, and my instinct replied and said, you have 101 million reasons to be grateful.

So many lives were lost to the virus,
Some cannot work at the moment,
Some are battling hunger,
Some are homeless and without shelter,
Some homes have been broken,
Some wives have lost their husbands,
Some husbands have lost their wives,
Some children have lost their parents,

Then at that moment I realized I was ungrateful,
Because for you and me to see this moment, this is the greatest gift of life.

At this point I understood that Thanksgiving is a moment for saying thank you,

Have you helped someone this year?

Don't worry, it's not too late,

At any point in life, always say thank you, and be ready to make people happy so they can say thank you.

It's Thanksgiving, and we all say in one voice,

Thanks to the giver of life for his gift of life.

Happy Thanksgiving Day!

Isikalu Temitope.O
MA Anthropology

PHOTO FROM: PINTEREST

ABOUT CASE CLUB

As freshmen, we were part of the AUCA Case Club led by AUCA alumni and interned to organize Case Cups. As former presidents graduated, we decided to lead Case Club in the new academic year. On October 24, we held our first online meeting and recruited new members to join the club.

At the first meeting, we invited former presidents and a club co-founder to give a speech to new members about their experience and the way this experience helped them in their careers. Our first speaker was Nizami Teimurov, auditor at Deloitte. He shared the history of the club, his case experience, and how it helped him in his work at Deloitte. Our second speaker was former vice president Farzona Haydarova. She shared her experience with Coca-Cola and Kyrgyz Concept annual Case Cups and answered questions about how this experience helped her to succeed in the IT industry. Our next speaker was former president Sevara Tadjibaeva. She talked about the Hong Kong Case Competition and conducted case-

solving exercises with new members. We practiced with students and introduced them to the basics of case solving; how the process of case solving goes step by step and how to finally crack a case.

For now, 22 freshmen and sophomore students are part of our club. It is really exciting that even online we are able to conduct club activities and recruit new members. For further meetings we are planning to practice more and help club members to improve all the needed skills to succeed in case solving. And for sure this will help them in their future careers!

Zebo Rasulova, Eco
Muhammad Boymatov, BA

BACKGROUND PHOTOS FROM:
PINTEREST



WHAT IS THANKSGIVING AND WHY PEOPLE CELEBRATE IT?

Thanksgiving is a holiday in several countries where people get to meet their families and enjoy their dinners with a turkey. Although as it was mentioned in the britannica website the origins of Thanksgiving go back to the 1621 harvest fest shared by English colonists and Wampanoag people, the original dinner had nothing to do with turkey. The first Thanksgiving started with colonists going 'fowling'; while it is unknown what they were hunting for, it is assumed that it was for easier prey such as ducks and geese rather than turkey. Despite this, turkey has found its place on most dinner tables for Thanksgiving, not just because it was a big meal for all the family but also because to most of them that is delicious food. According to the britannica website Thanksgiving officially became a holiday when Sarah Josepha Hale in the mid-19th century campaigned for a national Thanksgiving Day to promote unity and President Abraham Lincoln on October 3, 1863 announced it as a national holiday to be celebrated. In America this holiday is celebrated on the last Thursday of November. Now that we have covered the historical perspective of this holiday the question still remains why should we celebrate it?

The holiday originated as a non-secular holiday where it was celebrated to give tribute and be grateful to god for a good harvest year but during

the period of history this changed as migrants from different regions of the world immigrated to both USA and Canada and now it is rather being celebrated as a form of secular holiday where despite the origins of the believe different people around the world celebrate it to be grateful for their brotherhood and sisterhood in their communities. I'm a Muslim and I like to celebrate this holiday. I believe there is no such restriction in any religion to celebrate a secular holiday which symbolizes peace, prosperity and unity. In Islam we also have such holidays where we celebrate by family gatherings and enjoy a meal with each other. These holidays are called Eid, the big and small Eid. The only difference is that normally in one Eid Muslims fast for a month and in the second Eid there is a sacrifice for god but generally given that the sacrifice is later distributed to poor people, I believe the whole idea is the same. If you love each other and are grateful for that and want to celebrate peace, prosperity and unity with your family and friends, enjoy Thanksgiving. Now no matter where you are and who you are, I wholeheartedly wish you a happy Thanksgiving with your family and loved ones.

Ferdaws Dastgeer
ICP

TO BE THANKFUL

Thanksgiving is an annual American and Canadian holiday where families gather in one house and celebrate. The celebration is often acknowledged as commemorating an event that took place when English colonists held a feast to thank Native Americans for helping them to start new lives in America. On this day special attention is usually paid to cooking. Some families also invite friends to celebrate, and popular dishes are turkey, vegetables, and bread. Thus this day marks the beginning of the end of the year: after this is Christmas and lastly the New Year, when everyone is rested and can celebrate.

Thanksgiving fills the hearts of all people with warmth and fills their mouths with a prayer that is still addressed to all the dear people around you through the clouds with a cold light, you are a bright example for all of us to come up together in one cozy place.

Giving joy and fun to all those gathered, showing last year's harvest, giving us a warm beautiful day and evening, loud laughter of autumn, and conversations at one big table

Laughing and talking with a warm heart and soul in this dirty and cold November, a Thanksgiving treat all truly blessed again.

Thankful for all gifts from God,
Thankful for friends and alluring ones
Thankful for all things, huge and small
Thankful for the past that made the future bright.

Our amiable relationship to each other makes us stronger for further development - we give joy to keep smiling on faces, and our life will be sweet as a dream as a caramel gift for a child, and our sky will turn Golden again, hope for the best will float up forever.

Kurmanbek uulu Daniyar
LAS

WHAT ARE PERSONALITY TESTS?

If you seek an understanding of your inner demons, childhood traumas, or insecurities, you might consider queuing up for AUCA psychological counseling. But if you want to be more aware of your weaknesses and strengths, gain a better understanding of other people, and know how to improve your relationships, you might give personality tests a try.

Personality tests put one’s personality into one of several categories in order to provide insights into the person’s identity, perception of the world, and cognitive functions. Different personality tests focus on different aspects of personality. Below are some fields you can improve upon with the aid of personality assessments:

Career development

Personality assessments can help you become a better team player and a leader. According to the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 13% of US employers use the well-known Myers-Briggs test to assess their potential or current employees. Such tests help people to realize and appreciate diversity of personalities. Being familiar with as many personality categories as possible will enable you to develop the right approach to your colleagues, team members, or employers. The tests lead to an understanding that the methods of communication and work that fit you might not be applicable to others. For instance, you might be the type of person who falls under the Myers-Briggs category of thinkers, while your coworker might be in the category of feelers. This means, roughly, that you prefer to rationalize everything and maximize efficiency above anything else. Your colleague, however, prioritizes emotional connection and empathetic approach to the workplace. Understanding that you both belong to different personality types will help to create a better work environment for everybody.

Personal development

Personality tests can push you towards realization of your strengths and weaknesses. For example, you might not even be aware that you are most efficient in a free-flow work environment, meaning that you experience bursts of energy and creativity instead of working systematically. Personality assessment can show you that it is better not to push yourself too hard by demanding systematic productivity. Another positive effect of the test is that it might make you less judgmental by increasing your awareness of the diversity around you.

Relationship development

Another way to use the tests is to seek out people you are compatible with. There are many theories about what type of people match the best and are more likely to build healthy romantic relationships based on mutual understanding. For example, the Myers-Briggs test divides people into 16 personalities and indicates which personalities match with each other.

Personality tests can be applied to any relationships: friendship, family relationships, romantic relationships, even relationships with people you dislike. They are also helpful with conflict resolution: through assessment you gain knowledge about what reasoning and motives other people might be using in an argument or conflict.

My personal favorites

Finally, here is the list of my favorite personality tests.

- 1) Myers-Briggs Type Indicator—If you are not really into personality tests, it is the only one I suggest giving a shot. It is totally worth it.
- 2) Holland Code Career Test—This test is not limited to career choice despite the name. Be careful, as there are many simplified versions of the Holland test which asks you to choose between two activities. Choose the one which asks you to indicate if you agree, disagree, slightly agree, slightly disagree, etc.

Elida Kydyrova
SOC

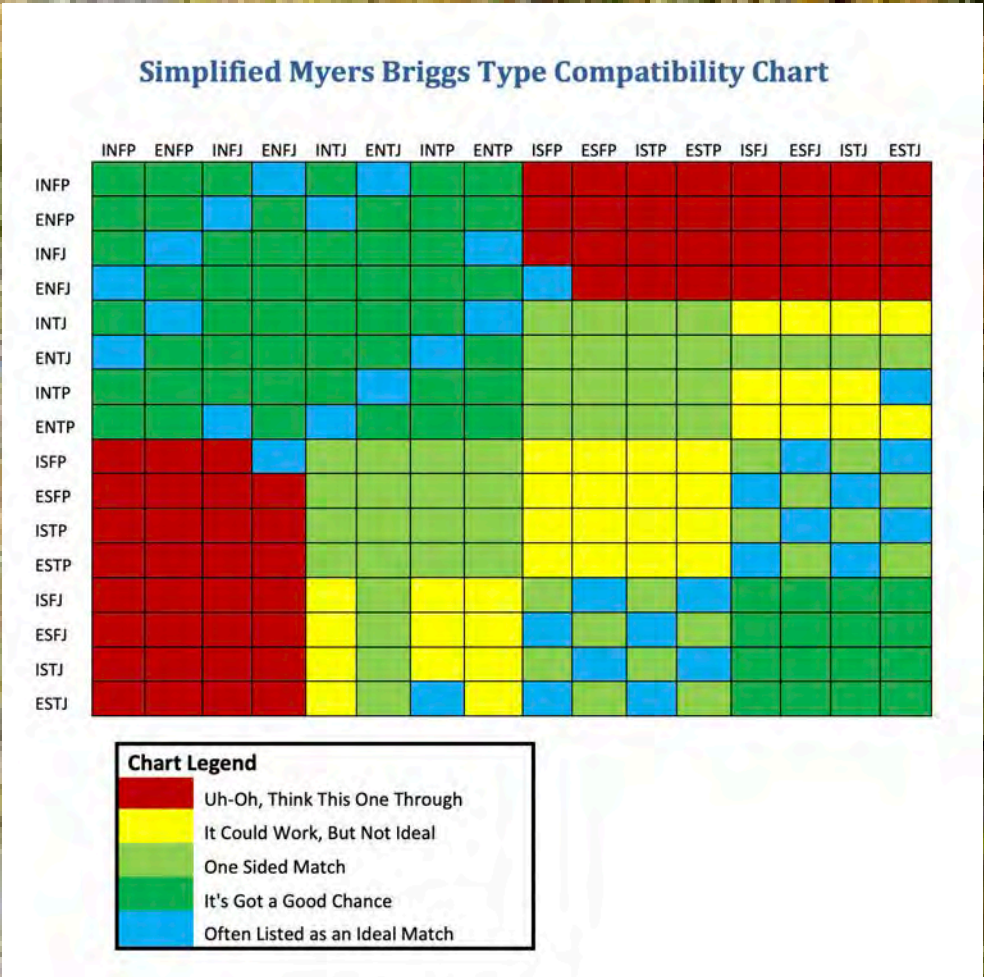


PHOTO FROM: DREAMSAROUNFTGEWORLD.COM



BACKGROUND PHOTO FROM: PINTEREST

ONLINE EXCHANGE SEMESTER

Fall 2020 was full of surprises, starting with the fact that I was accepted into Bard College in New York by the Bard Globalization and International Affairs Program. The program is popular with its competitiveness among AUCA students, partly because accepted students have the opportunity to spend a semester in New York City. The other inimitable part of the exchange semester is that the program combines international relations courses with an internship with well-known organizations such as Oxford Analytical, Amnesty International, Asia Society, CNN, UNICEF USA, and many others.

I was perplexed about how to react to my acceptance: the experience would be virtual, not in New York. But my Orientation Week gave me a hint that this online semester was the best decision I could make. All these surprised me with their positivity and knowledge. What made it more interesting was the process of clustering CV/Cover Letters where I learned good techniques and being detail oriented in any goals set. Each interview with different organizations was exceptional, and led me to consider more deeply where I wanted to intern for the whole semester. I chose "Mission: Cure" where now I am a Mass Communications Intern.

Mission: Cure is a new nonprofit organization in New York City that is small but has a tremendous impact on those with pancreatitis, a disease in which a pancreas becomes inflamed and causes severe pain. Because of COVID-19, I became interested in health development and finding a cure to help society. As Mission: Cure is an organization that uses innovative financing and impact investing to cure pancreatitis, I found it a great opportunity to learn more about the disease itself as well as to develop personally in the mass communications sphere. Since September, I have learned many skills remotely, including skills related to organization, communication, analysis, critical thinking, and writing. As part of my job involves tracking Mission: Cure's social media platforms, with each written post, I can observe the growth of our company. Our staff at Mission: Cure organized a massive virtual event, Moments of Hope, and raised more than \$200,000. As the communications intern, I was responsible for event promotion, creating designs, gathering data analysis, and writing pieces for social media as well as web

development.

In class, each professor helps to raise awareness about our society and makes students work on their personal growth. Discussions are inspirational and make you want to learn more about your future career. One of the most exciting parts of the classes is guest speakers who share their wonderful experience of both personal and career achievements. When it comes to international students, one of the appealing parts of any class is hearing the opinions of people from different cultures and nations. Palestine, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, the US, Ukraine, India, Portugal, Georgia, and many more countries are represented. Various opinions are discussed, and the hours of class always spark so much energy and make you look forward to the readings. The most exciting discussions are those that could not be found at AUCA. Because of multiculturalism, so many more viewpoints are presented.

Additionally, I really enjoy our Social Calendar Events, where BGIA students can play interactive games and develop creativity skills. Events such as tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, tours of the Statue of Liberty, visits to the opera, yoga, and other events helps us get the maximum benefit from our virtual semester. The BGIA Program prepares students to be more organized for our future learning, providing opportunities to both study and intern. Personally, fall 2020 is the most structured and productive semester I have ever had. Despite studies and interning, I also work as a Writing Tutor at the WARC (Writing Academic Resource Center) which is also an amazing position to have. Surely, the focus on intensive studies leaves all students mentally exhausted. Therefore, I try to walk as much as possible, get some fresh air, and not forget to interact with people. Unquestionably, I miss offline studies, where it was easier to interact with professors and group mates. I do not for even a second regret spending my exchange semester online, as I am setting new goals, gaining new "digitized" skills, and spending my time with wonderful people from whom I am learning so much.

Azorabekova, Zuhro

JMC



ZOOM, WEBEX, OR GOOGLE MEET?

We have all encountered these platforms when having online classes and department or club meetings this semester. But which one is the best? I decided to have a talk with several club leaders to ask them how they feel about the platforms they have been using for club meetings this semester.

Zebo Rasulova is the leader of AUCA Case Club. Her first experience managing the club took place online education period this fall. Nevertheless, she has been doing her best to meet new club participants with a wide variety of ideas.

“We’ve practiced using Zoom and Google Meet. These platforms made it easy for me to track attendance and share the screen. However, Google Meet does not allow for organizing work in small groups: we have a significant number of participants, and this feature is crucial for the case solving process and developing critical thinking. Moreover, Google meet was not convenient for everyone: some of our students could not join the meeting. Zoom is still the best platform for us to use. As a club leader, I would like to request the American University of Central Asia to provide us with a premium account, as we need breakout rooms for the club’s better efficiency.”

Aiana Rysbekova is the head of AUCA Accounting Club. At the beginning of the academic year, she contacted the Student Life Office to get to know more about aid that club leaders could get through the American University of Central Asia. When faced with the same inconveniences, she found quite a creative, albeit embarrassing, way out.

“The Student Life Offices could provide us with access to WebEx, but it was extremely inconvenient to use. Zoom seemed the best platform to conduct club meetings, though it is limited to 40 minutes. At first, I began hosting the meeting twice: as soon as the session was over, we would rejoin. However, we often have guest speakers and rejoining bothered our live discussions. That is why every time we have guest lecturers, I ask professors to host the meeting, appoint me an organizer and then leave. The overall effectiveness of the club stays unaffected – upon the necessity, we get the help of staff with premium accounts. However, it is embarrassing to bother professors by asking them to follow these steps.”

Erkebulan Askarbekov, who represents Inno Lab Club, let his creativity go further. Zoom, Google Meet, WebEx – his club members don’t use any of these. They have their meetings on Discord, a free app intended for gaming that allows a maximum of 25 people within a channel to participate in meetings with both sound and video. Here is what he says about the platform.

“Discord allows me to create some kind of roles to easily manage the work of my club. Its additional advantage is the channels section, where it is possible to publish announcements and posts with the ability to stream. Since the start of the semester we have not faced any technical problems—everything is easy to keep up to date. I am extremely satisfied with the facilities provided by this app”.

Begimai Ismailova, the leader of Enactus AUCA, proposed using short Zoom calls and Slack as a platform for communication among the members of the club.

“Unfortunately, we don’t have a premium account on Zoom, but we use its short 40-minute meetings. Among the main features of the platform there is the ability to use video cameras, share, and comment on the screen. Most obviously, for better networking we

need a premium account or an Enactus AUCA office in the university, which is preferred. Now I can rate the effectiveness of the platform’s features as three out of five”.

One of Enactus AUCA’s activists, Bilaliddin Tadzhimatov, suggested that the quality of the club during online education did not necessarily depend on the platform used.

“The significance of the club also depends on its members’ activeness. I feel comfortable in a mild working atmosphere during the sessions. We are really active and positive guys capable of doing meetings. Even more, we also conduct offline meetings, which are a little bit more interesting because it allows you to talk to teammates in real life. Our first offline meeting was in DODO pizza café—we all got acquainted and started telling interesting stories. Our event department arranged games (mafia, guess the famous person). The only problem here is location: we have club members from all around Central Asia, and not everyone is able to join offline. In spite of all the difficulties, this problem cannot stop us: nowadays we are working on our new project, Challengers’ Map. We organize breathtaking challenges in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Azerbaijan.”

Student Life Officer Bermet Ismailova commented on some of the inconveniences caused to club leaders and shared a piece of motivational advice: “All the club leaders were informed that AUCA cannot extend Zoom license to students. Instead, we suggested extending the WebEx license—you just need to request it. Actually, we do not have any limitations on what platform to use for club sessions, so you are free to use any.

I could have never imagined that we would live through this kind of circumstances. This is a very difficult period for us all, especially for students who are young and supposed to live a life full of joy and happiness at their university. I think that the best motivation is to pray, make our best to win [against] the virus, and come back to normal life! Therefore, I encourage all to stay safe. Do not forget that everything depends on each of us—be careful, and follow recommendations on how to protect [yourselves] from the virus. Hopefully, the best is yet to come!”

BONUS: EXTRA OPINION

Assistant Professor Syrgak Kydyraliev agreed to share his online teaching experience this semester as regards the platform he has been using.

“I use WebEx for classes. Its main feature is sharing the screen, and I am capable of commenting in the shared document during my classes. I feel satisfied with the platform, as neither my students nor I have faced significant technical problems so far. In the future I would prefer to use WebEx.”

Most obviously, opinions on the most convenient platforms vary. Nevertheless, thanks to our qualified professors and creative club leaders the effectiveness of classes stays at a high level. We hope that students appreciate the conducted work and will share their platform encountering experience in the upcoming issues of The New Star independent student newspaper!

Dina Mamadjanova,
ECO



Как быть эко-сознательным студентом

Общим местом в современном мире стало представление о том, что сохранение планеты – это дело, в том числе, индивидуальных поведенческих изменений. Корректируя наши привычки в сторону бережного отношения к окружающей среде, мы можем значительно снизить нагрузку на природу, частью которой являемся. Нагрузка эта состоит, в первую очередь, в неаккуратном и неосознанном использовании ресурсов, и в чрезмерном производстве отходов.

Есть много подходов к тому, как стать более эко-френдли. Важнее всего выделить две главные составляющие экологичности на уровне индивида: отношение и поведение. Экологичное отношение – это осознание того, что человечество в целом сегодня развивается неустойчиво, то есть ресурсы расходуются слишком быстро, а различного мусора получается слишком много. Переходу к устойчивому развитию может поспособствовать каждый. Более того – если человек это понимает, то он или она может повлиять на взгляды своих друзей и близких, распространяя тем самым экологическую сознательность. Экологичное поведение – это практическое выражение экологичного отношения. Распространённая модель экологичного поведения называется 5R:

Rethink, или Repurpose – переосмыслить потребление. Задаться вопросами: кто и как производит то, что я потребляю? Заботятся ли они о природе или используют вредные производства, наносящие природе вред? Как по-новому можно использовать то, что я использую? (Например, коробки из-под того, что мы покупаем, можно использовать как контейнеры для чего-нибудь, вместо того чтобы сразу их выбрасывать.)

Refuse – отказаться от лишнего. Планировать свои покупки и потребление в целом так, чтобы не приходилось выкидывать избыточные вещи. (Например, не покупать каждый день напитки в одноразовых стаканчиках.)

Reuse – использовать заново вместо того, чтобы сразу выкидывать. (Например, бутылку из-под воды можно наполнить водой ещё несколько раз, продлевая ей тем самым жизнь и сокращая объём использованных бутылок как отходов.)

Reduce – сокращать потребление. Если проанализировать, что и как мы покупаем и чем и как пользуемся, то может оказаться, что без многого из этого можно обойтись. (Например, планировать закупки еды так, чтобы ничто не успевало портиться.)

Recycle – перерабатывать отходы. На индивидуальном уровне это достижимо посредством сортировки отходов. (В АУЦА, например, есть возможность выбрасывать мусор отдельно, и ею не стоит пренебрегать.)

Помимо этих общих советов, существует множество, казалось бы, мелочей, делая которые, человек может стать более эко-френдли. Например:

Вместо одноразовых пластиковых пакетов использовать многоразовые сумки для покупок;

если же пакет всё же нужен, отдавать предпочтение биodeградируемым пакетам;

Вместо одноразовой посуды использовать многоразовую;

Вместо пищевой плёнки использовать многоразовые контейнеры для еды;

Не использовать пластиковые трубочки; они бесполезны, а вред окружающей среде наносят;

Планировать покупки с тем, чтобы не покупать импульсивно лишнего;

Предпочитать упакованным продуктам те, что можно купить на развес, используя многоразовую тару;

Обращать внимание на маркировку товаров и делать выбор в пользу экологичных продуктов;

Избегать использования средств бытовой химии, содержащих аммиак и хлор;

Экономить воду; не давать ей бежать из крана непрерывно, когда вы чистите зубы, моете посуду или тщательно моете руки;

Экономить прочие ресурсы – например, электроэнергию; не оставлять свет включенным в комнате, в которой никого нет; загружать стиральную машину полностью, чтобы электричество тратилось только на одну стирку вместо нескольких маленьких стирок;

Использовать энергосберегающие приборы и оборудование – например, светодиодные лампы вместо ламп накаливания;

Не сжигать мусор и листья; от их горения образуются вредные вещества;

В вылазках на природу привозить с собой еду в многоразовых контейнерах, а мусор увозить с собой в город, где его можно утилизировать правильно;

Чаще пользоваться общественным транспортом или передвигаться на велосипеде; людям, у которых есть машина, можно посоветовать реже передвигаться в одиночестве; они могут поинтересоваться расписанием и маршрутами друзей и подвозить их, тем самым используя топливо более эффективно.

Эти советы, разумеется, обращены не только к студентам, но важно, чтобы именно студенты к ним прислушивались. Причина в том, что формировать бережное отношение к окружающей среде и дружественные по отношению к ней привычки правильнее всего в юности, когда человек молод и наиболее готов к переменам. Если молодые сегодня люди постараются быть эко-френдли, то решать проблемы окружающей среды и устойчивого развития в будущем будет проще.

Данный материал был подготовлен в рамках деятельности кыргызско-германского проекта GIZ «Зеленая экономика и устойчивое развитие частного сектора в КР».



ISSUE PREPARED BY:

позиция авторов статей не всегда совпадает с позицией ред.коллегии в целом

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF:
NILOUFAR RAFAT

SUPERVISOR:
BERMET ISMAILOVA

CO-EDITOR:
ERICA EISEN

DESIGN ADVISOR:
NILOUFAR RAFAT

DESIGN & LAYOUT:
AZIZA KANIMETOVA