



Several founding members of the Center of Arabic Culture (CAC) wanted to see a school that teaches Arabic language and culture through a non-sectarian curriculum, a school that ties the community together regardless of religion, dialect, or place of origin, and one that prides itself in building bridges to other local cultures in Boston. Thus, once CAC was established as a non-governmental and non-for-profit organization in 2006, the next logical step was to start an Arabic school. That day arrived on Sunday, March 18, 2007, when the first 5 classes were held on the grounds of Mt. Ida College with only 4 teachers on staff, teaching Arabic to Americans and Arabic Americans as a second language. From the very start, we were faced with the difficult task of accommodating and nurturing a very diverse student body of different dialects and with different linguistic abilities in the same class. We had to cater to those students who could speak the language in varying degrees without reading or writing and those who had some formal instruction in the language, but did not practice it at home, or students that just arrived here from the Arab World and hence were more fluent in the language than Arab-American students born here who are less directly acquainted with the language. The teachers are meeting this challenge with great dedication and creativity by using different learning methods. They teach Modern Standard Arabic with a sensitivity to the variation in dialect, and they weave together an age appropriate curriculum that is both challenging and interesting to all, using song, multimedia, short stories, games, translation, articles, film, theater and text books targeting teaching Arabic as a second language.

Since its founding, the CAC Arabic School has come a long way. We continue to provide small class sizes, taught by qualified and experienced teachers, with a curriculum that is colorful, stimulating and secular. Currently, we offer 12 classes for youth and adults with 8 teachers on staff. This year, the School introduced extracurricular cultural activities such as a trip to view the Ancient Egyptian collection at the Museum of Fine Arts as well as a trip to the Museum of Science to view a movie on the City of Jerusalem. The CAC Arabic School is also expanding by adding a Children's Arabic Chorus.

We are proud to call it a school for everyone, for youth and adults alike, one that builds ties across cultures and one that builds relationships across generations.

Respectfully,
Randa Shedid
CAC Arabic School Director and Founding Board Member