

ISSUE 58

The logo for Robert College Alumni Magazine features the letters 'RCQ' in a large, white, serif font. The 'R' and 'C' are set against a red background, while the 'Q' is set against a blue background. Below the letters, the text 'ROBERT COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

the environmental
sustainability issue

Elbet tekrar...
Reunion'lar,
Homecoming'ler,
Mezuniyetler olacak.
Sevdiklerimize kavuşacağız,
Kucaklaşacağız,
Yeni yerler keşfedeceğiz,
Maceralar yaşayacağız.
Yavaş yavaş, belki biraz farklı
Ama şüphesiz herşeyi daha hissederek,
Keyfini çıkartarak...

35 seneyi aşkın tecrübesi, profesyonel alt yapısı, global anlayışı ve en önemlisi yolcularına verdiği değer ile Viking Turizm, yeni dünyamızda 7/24 yanınızdaki bilgili, güvenilir seyahat danışmanınız.

Viking  **Turizm**

www.vikingturizm.com.tr

0212 334 26 00



iGuzzini



Palco Framar'ı incelemek için
QR kodu okutunuz.

TEPTA
AYDINLATMA

The cover for this issue celebrates the vast biodiversity of our campus. All photos were taken on RC grounds by faculty and students, as part of an effort to catalog the flora and fauna found at RC.



Alumni Journal published periodically by the RC Institutional Advancement Office for approximately 10,000 members of the RC community: graduates, students, faculty, administration, parents and friends.

In this issue

The trees, flowers, birds, koi fish, Bosphorus beetle, and new beehives of the RC campus all bestow on the RC community a deep appreciation of and respect for nature. In this issue we delve into environmental sustainability, an urgent matter for humanity and now a strategic focus for RC. The RCQ chronicles the latest developments at school and traces the school's history for the seeds that were sown for today. Many RC alumni are active as leaders, teachers, activists, and professionals in environmental sustainability-related areas. There is much news and inspiration to share from them as well.

The pandemic did not slow down the RC community: RC students continue to display many accomplishments, and RC alumni have published books and received prestigious awards. These achievements lift the RC spirit, as the Class of 2021 begins their post-RC journey.

As always, we would love to hear from you. If you have any comments or would like to share news, please write us at rcq@robcol.k12.tr

Happy reading!
The RCQ Team

Özel Amerikan Robert Lisesi
Kuruçeşme Caddesi 87
Arnavutköy - Beşiktaş / İstanbul
Tel: (0212) 359 22 22/289
e-mail: alumni@robcol.k12.tr
www.robcol.k12.tr

Editor-in-Chief
Monika Mraz, Director of Institutional Advancement

Editors
Zeynep Karaarslan Başaran RC 88
Lisa Johnson
Betigül Onay Özman RC 02
Burcu Berent RC 96
Mehveş Dramur RC 96

Editorial Board
Nuri Çolakoğlu RA 62
Deniz Alphan ACG 67
Vicky Habif ACG 71 Jr.
Nükhet Sirman RC 72
Elçin Yahşi RC 79
Nil Sarrafoğlu RC 89

Advertising Manager
Betigül Onay Özman RC 02
bonayozman@robcol.k12.tr
Tel: (0212) 359 22 89

Design & Production
Topprint
Merkez Mah. Seçkin Sokak DAP Vadi
İ Blok No: 3/1 Kağıthane / İstanbul
Tel: (0212) 264 33 11
www.topprint.com.tr

Printing
Umut Doğa Matbaacılık
Mas-sit Matbaacılar Sitesi 1. Cadde
No: 160 Yüzyıl-Bağcılar, İstanbul
Tel: (0212) 438 02 05



Your feedback on the RCQ matters! Did you enjoy this issue? Write us at: rcq@robcol.k12.tr

RC NEWS

- 4 Message from the Head of School
- 5 Rethinking the Way We Publish
- 6 Class of '21 Flies From Home
- 9 School Year Ends on a Creative Note
Young Alumni Are Mentors for the Next Generation
- 10 RC SEIC: Flattening Learning Hierarchies
- 11 Award Honors Female Science Student
Student Artists Honored at 20th
Demirkan Aşetey RC 76 Art Competition
- 12 Back in RC Project Kicks Off with Cemal Kafadar RC 73
RC Launches Core Value Awards
- 13 Global Initiatives Connect Students

GIFTS

- 14 Class of '96 Establishes a New Endowed Scholarship
- 15 Derin Uras Environmental Fund
Charlie Hoppin Memorial Fund
- 16 Endowed Scholarship Established in
Memory of Mehmet İsvan RC 46
Classroom Named in Memory of Giray Ertaş RC 88
- 17 Cookbook's Third Edition Continues to Support Scholarships

CIP

- 18 CIPs Focus on Sustainability

GRADS IN THE NEWS

- 20 Serap Aksoy RC 74 Elected to the
National Academy of Sciences
İzak Benbasat Honored with Order of Canada Medal
- 21 Canan Atılğan RC 87 Heads Up Science Academy
Ayşe Buğra ACG 70 Receives PEN Turkey Award
- 22 V&A Acquires Sculpture by Elif Uras RC 90
Herkül Millas RA 61 Presented with 50th
Orhan Kemal Novel Award
- 23 Esra Yalçınalp RC 00 Recognized for Journalism Excellence
Ali Günvar RC 72 Wins Italian Poetry Award
- 24 Film by Buket Yıldız RC 06 Gains International Accolades

RC IN AMERICA

- 24 RCAA Hosts First Fireside Chat

COVER STORY

RC Focuses on Environmental Sustainability **26**
RC Alumni in Environmental Sustainability: Illuminating the Way Forward **41**

ONES TO WATCH

Y. Berk Manav RC 14 Breaks Fresh Ground in
Sustainable Investment **58**
Begüm Muştı L9 Soars at the International Young Researchers'
Conference **59**
L10 Student Defne Duru Arat Wins
International Poetry Contest

AROUND THE WORLD

Raising Awareness of the World's Endangered Species **60**

RC REACHES OUT

A Sustainable Future in Bünyan **63**

BOOKS

Nuri Çolakoglu RA 62 Invites Readers to
Follow the Footsteps of Atatürk **64**
Metin Ar RA 69 Curates World's Best Restaurants in New Book
Özdemir Nutku RC 50 Remembered
Through Posthumous Memoir **65**
Doğan Gürpınar RC 97 Explores the History of Names in Turkey
Photography Book by Cem Yılmaz RC 07
Takes Readers Around the World **66**
Seda Aksoy Evren RC 95 Writes Children's Book
Buğra Giritlioğlu RC 89 Publishes New Poetry Collection **67**
The Latest Book from Orhan Pamuk RA 70 Has a Pandemic as
Backdrop

MEMORIES

The Legend of the Maze **68**

ALUMNI NEWS **70**

FACULTY AND FRIENDS NEWS **75**

OBITUARIES **76**

An Education That Doesn't Cost the Planet



Head of School Adam Oliver on the summit of Mt. Uludag

Dear Friends,

Every edition of the RCQ resonates in different ways. It was a great pleasure for me to read the last edition, for example, which was such an inspiring showcase for artistic creativity. This edition focuses on another area that is particularly dear to my heart – and is arguably the most important challenge of our time.

I should like to begin with a well-known quotation from Winston Churchill: “We shape our buildings; thereafter, they shape us.” Churchill’s reflection on architecture might, with gentle modification, be extended to help us consider the current state of our planet: We shape our world; thereafter, it shapes us.

And what does that world resemble, in 2021? Our beaches are littered with plastic, and the current generation do not remember a time when this was not normal. More than a million species are at immediate risk of extinction; there are species that today’s young people will never see. The air in our cities is noxious. Water is growing scarcer every day as global temperatures rocket. A new pandemic has claimed millions of lives. Each generation passes on the gift of the future to its children. Yet we are close to passing on not a gift, but a curse.

We might well enquire: How did we come to this? But it is more important to ask: How do we come out of it?

It is easy to attribute blame to individuals controlling corporations, institutions, banks and governments. Easy, but wrong. All those people shared one common experience: an education. We must accept and understand that, if we are to redress the world’s current challenges, education henceforth needs to be redefined, renewed, and repositioned. Leading schools around the world are embracing this challenge. Turkey must not lag behind.

Education has been a preparation for the workplace. Education has been an immersion in specialized academic areas. Now, an education must be something different. The education of the future must retain the best of previous models whilst also being about connection.

We must connect young people to themselves.
We must connect them to each other. We must connect them to nature.
And we must share this journey with them.

The work is urgent and precious. The bonds that have been broken must be renewed. Young people who can no longer name trees or fish or plants or birds will never be invested in their protection. How could they? The natural world is sometimes described as being voiceless. This is incorrect. We are its voices. If we choose to be. If we are educated to be.

As is often the case, visionaries among the rising generation are already ahead of us. They have started to realize that there is limited value in graduating from RC and the Ivy League only to inherit a dust-bowl.

They have, as a consequence, begun to drive their own agendas through the work of individuals such as Greta Thunberg, and youth-led movements such as Fridays for Future.

We owe it to them to catch up.

Article 56 of the Turkish Constitution states that protecting nature is the duty of all citizens. If we are to honor the spirit of this wise decree, we must renew every part of what an education means: our curriculum, our teaching, our welfare and co-curricular programs, our infrastructure, our partners, mission and social responsibility.

RC has always led. Now, we must lead again. We must create a new paradigm for schools in Istanbul, and ultimately the nation. An education mustn't

cost the planet: it must be delivered sustainably. This is our great challenge – and our opportunity. Childhood is the formative period in our lives. We learn from what we see and experience as much as what we are told. Therefore we must create wiser spaces, ones that model sustainable modes of living until they become our norm; until current, wasteful models are intolerable for the rising generations. We need to give them the educational tools to address the issues that will affect their nation and their world, and instill in them the belief that engaged, positive action, coupled with practical, scientific solutions, can make a real difference.

It is a bold vision but an essential one. I share it unashamedly with you as the Head of this great school in the belief

that change is still possible, hope is still valid, and because education remains our greatest tool.

I hope you enjoy this edition of RCQ. In the pages hereafter you will have the opportunity to read about the great work we already have planned or in progress, and I actively encourage you to reach out to us to share your stories and support regarding any and all ideas you have to help us in this vital work.

Adam Oliver
Head of School

Rethinking the Way We Publish

Robert College is making sustainability a key component in everything we do. This issue on environmental sustainability was an opportunity for us to review the paper we use for the magazine, and make sure we are printing in a way that has a minimal impact on the environment. This edition of the RCQ is, therefore, printed on paper that is manufactured from responsibly sourced wood fiber. Responsible sourcing entails responsible forestry practices such as protecting water quality, woodlands, the rights of indigenous people, forest ecology and wildlife habitat, as well as preventing loss of natural forest cover.

We'd like to know what you think. Please send your feedback to Lisa Johnson at ljohnson@robcol.k12.tr

Class of '21 Flies From Home

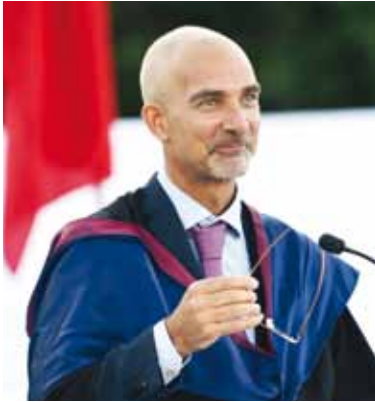
The Class of '21 embarked on their new journey on a beautiful sunny day, June 29, having spent their senior year mostly in lockdown due to the pandemic. The commencement ceremony took place on the Dave Phillips Field, with 201 members of the Class of 2021, as well as their loved ones.

Turkish Director Nilhan Çetinyamaç opened the ceremony with welcoming remarks, telling the class, "My wish is for each of you to write your own success story, to create your own formulas for happiness and to discover the life that will make you happy." She also shared three life principles which she said are very

simple yet very valuable: "Be original, be brave and be responsible."

Head of School Adam Oliver continued with his speech which challenged the class: "We have the knowledge to restore shattered populations of fish, birds and animals. We have the skill to re-forest the Amazon. We have the





Head of School Adam Oliver



Turkish Director Nilhan Çetinyamaç



Commencement speaker Arwa Damon RC 94

technology to remove the plastic dead zones in our oceans and restore clean water to our lost rivers. We have the knowledge, skills, and technology. But do we – or rather, I must say, do you – have the heart, and the will?”

The commencement address was delivered by CNN International Senior Correspondent Arwa Damon RC 94. In her inspiring speech, Damon saluted the students: “Take that emotional rollercoaster that Covid threw you on and turn it into your power engine – take all that and own it, because at the end of the day YOU did it, YOU made



The graduating class entering the Dave Phillips Field





Faculty speaker Koray Demirkapı



Student speaker Cem Küpeli RC 21



Student speaker Öykü Türkoğlu RC 21



Teachers who attended Graduation posed on the steps of Gould Hall before the ceremony

it!" Providing examples from the many twists and turns that enabled Damon to become a war correspondent, she urged the students not to be afraid of making mistakes: "Do not let yourself get locked in, whether it's by society and what it dictates you should do, your parents and their expectations of you, or peer pressure. When your gut tells you to change course or do something even if it's terrifying, or uncomfortable, or unsure – DO IT."

This year's faculty speaker was Koray Demirkapı, head level dean and music teacher, who underlined how dynamic and special the Class of 2021 is. He gave endearing examples of the moments he shared with them, most notably the many conversations he had with the students who dropped by his office. He concluded his speech by mentioning the importance of voicing one's opinion and standing for the values one cares about deeply:

"Stand tall, so this country rises on your shoulders. Stand tall, just like Mustafa Kemal who built a nation."

In his touching speech, student speaker Cem Küpeli reminded the class of the importance of love: "I want to ask you to keep doing what you love and to give as much love as you can to those around you, just as I have seen you do in the past five years, because the world needs both." Student speaker Öykü Türkoğlu made a passionate address: "We are leaving our school where we learned to think freely and democratically and are setting on a path to change the world and Turkey. At a time when there is a lot of hopelessness in our country, we still continue to dream of a better future, we are still determined to make a difference in the world, and we will continue to voice what we think is right, as we walk our path."

The ceremony closed with the tradition of caps being thrown in the air, followed by the singing of the school song. The new graduates lingered on the stage after the ceremony, excited to be among their friends again.



Graduating seniors were thrilled to be with classmates after a year of mostly distance learning due to the pandemic

School Year Ends on a Creative Note

The academic year finished off with a series of over 70 creative workshops offered by RC students and faculty from June 21-30. The intention was to end a difficult year by celebrating and centering on what we all love: learning and being curious. When the Ministry of Education announced that schools should remain active until July 2, RC administration decided to shake matters up; to have an “intellectual interruption” of sorts. The hope was that teachers would have a chance to be students again and students could become the teachers.

An invitation was opened to all students, staff, and faculty to either present a workshop or to be a participant. Workshops were offered on a wide range of topics: beekeeping, creative writing, flower pressing,

theater, tennis, golf, chess, the RC rare book collection, composting, and more. According to LP-3 student, Ece Önel, “We were able to choose according to our interests and according to the topics we wanted to discover, so it was enjoyable.” Students were invited onto campus for four of the eight workshop days making the school and grounds full of animated discussions once again. Additionally, remote sessions were offered to accommodate those who could not make it physically.

English and film teacher Jameson Vierling expressed, “What impressed me the most was seeing teachers and students in a different light, sharing their passions, and allowing the teachers to be students and the students to be teachers because we all can and do learn from each other.”



Apis mellifera Initiative advisors Stuart Arey and Maria Sezer lead a beekeeping workshop, one of over 70 creative workshops offered at the end of the school year

RC hopes to continue this end-of-year approach of exploring and sharing our experience and knowledge. The Creative Workshop approach enabled RC to end the year in a positive, and affirming way, reminding everyone of what makes our school special.

Young Alumni are Mentors for the Next Generation

What began with one RC graduate helping out with a math class has blossomed into a chance for RC students to learn and be inspired by recent alumni through the RC Graduate Mentorship Program. Alumni from the past five years have been supporting classes as guest speakers, activity facilitators and even helping groups of students with their homework. “As we started the 2020-21 school year with distance learning, students were frustrated at the lack of interaction with the school community,” says English teacher and program coordinator Mia Pamuk. “In faculty and department meetings we discussed what this lack of contact meant for their motivation,” she adds.

The program began when Emin Berker RC 18 assisted with Berna Tüfekçioğlu’s math classes, attending classes and fielding questions about assignments, including homework questions. This partnership was so successful that

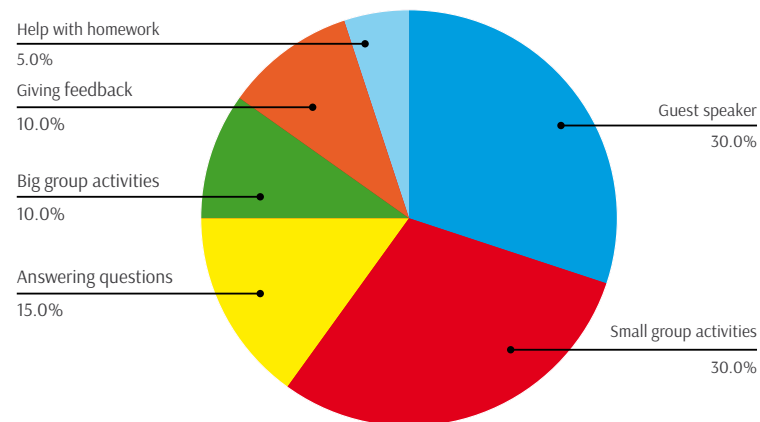
it inspired other teachers in the community to have young alumni work with their classes.

Art teacher Maria Sezer shares her experience: “It was wonderful to see my former student Aslı Munzur (RC 17). She especially dwelled on what was useful in ceramics classes to her as a scientist, but also spoke about continuing her ceramics interest at her

current university. One of my students was thinking of applying to that university and was very happy to hear first-hand about this school.”

Over the two semesters 28 RC teachers had 40 young alumni work with their classes. The response was very positive and Pamuk is planning to continue the program next year.

Alumni mentor activities



RC SEIC: Flattening Learning Hierarchies

Robert College Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Creativity Office (RC SEIC) has had a very busy year! A student-facilitated innovation platform to design, experience and develop transdisciplinary, collaborative, diverse learning, and creative responses to local and global issues, RC SEIC achieves these goals via initiatives that focus on well-being, community building, capacity building, and sharing individual and organizational learning with the local and global ecosystem. Here is a selection of their activities.

On Wednesdays We Wonder is a weekly community building gathering that focuses on learning how to learn in a student-facilitated environment. The founding students aimed to design a learning experience where everyone holds space to create a learning circle together: “We can learn from peers, teachers, the cook at our school, the security guard we say hi to every morning and they can learn from us.” Women in sports, black holes, and toxic positivity were among the topics this year.



Innovation Alumni Talks connects RC student changemakers with RC alumni changemakers from diverse disciplines and backgrounds. This coming together allows participants to gain exposure to diverse ideas and to challenge those very ideas in the

same sharing circle. The first meeting of the series was with Can Yeşildere RC 18 who took a gap year and discussed the benefits of this choice with attending student and faculty.



Innovation Sense Making Den is an initiative that aims to flatten learning hierarchies, postulating that viewing the learning process within the student-teacher dynamic creates missed learning opportunities. To that end, this initiative gathers students, faculty, and staff together to consume a content around social innovation and to hold a discussion about it. The first discussion of the series was on Dr. Otto Scharmer's Theory U with a particular focus on “Turning the Camera Around: Who is My Self? What is My Work?”

Ecosystem Talks is a platform that allows inspiring exchanges of ideas with leaders in social innovation. Zeynep Bodur Okyay, an activist, entrepreneur, head of Kale Group, and daughter of İbrahim Bodur RC 51, was invited to an Ecosystem Talk in March. This event's main goal was to challenge typical learning hierarchies and prove everyone has something to teach and learn. Before the event, RC SEIC gathered together to prepare questions for Zeynep Bodur. They practiced collective thinking and reflected on important sources such as the Harvard Business Review. During the event, students were able to ask questions and pose challenges to Bodur. One of the discussion points was the concept of conscious ecosystems, something Kale Group practices, although it is a fairly new concept in the business world.



Annual Award Honors Female Science Students



L11 student Doğa Ece Tanaydın is the recipient of this year's Excellence in Science Award

The recipient of the 12th Annual Prof. Seyhan Ege ACG 49 Excellence in Science Award for Girls was announced during an online event on April 16, 2021. Lise 11 student Doğa Ece Tanaydın, who was surprised with the news during the ceremony, said, "Thank you for this award, which

makes us encouraged to pursue and keep on working for our dreams."

This year's ceremony included speeches and messages from Seyhan Ege's family and close friends, who all underlined what a pioneer she was as a woman in science in the mid-20th century. Seyhan Ege's sister Güneş Ege Akter ACG 52, who established the award in 2009, said, "With the Prof. Seyhan Ege Excellence in Science Award we have set a joyful precedent of acknowledging the ability, motivation and talents of young women to excel in the sciences, once considered a taboo subject for the fairer sex who were assumed to be too fragile to deal with such rigorous demanding matters."

Seyhan Ege's classmate Ayfer Doğan Neyzi ACG 49, her former student Prof.

Dr. Güniz Büyüktür ACG 60 and her cousins Prof. Dr. Emine Beyhan Yeğen ACG 70 and Hümeysra Gücük all offered their congratulations to Doğa Ece.

Also joining the ceremony was the 2020 Excellence in Science recipient, Yaprak Önder L12, who said, "The award was an encouragement to pursue science at a higher level and ensure I was on the right track. I want you to know that your hard work and passion is being recognized through this award, and I hope that this inspires you to further explore your interest in science."

Each year, the award is presented to a Lise 11 girl student who is chosen by the science faculty as showing outstanding dedication to the sciences.

Student Artists Honored at 20th Demirkan Aşetey RC 76 Art Competition

For two decades the Demirkan Aşetey RC 76 Art Competition has been recognizing talented RC students. Established by the Class of 76 in memory of their classmate who was an art enthusiast, the event has come to be the highlight of the year for art students.

The winners of this year's competition were announced during an online ceremony on April 30, 2021, attended by students, faculty and members of RC 76. The panel of judges were all RC graduates who found inspiration on the RC campus and ended up pursuing careers in the arts: İrem Kaneli RC 89, Hale Güngör Oppenheimer RC 00, and Gülşah Mürsaloğlu RC 08.

The first prize went to Lise 10 student Defne Duru Arat for her multimedia booklet "On God Complex and His Diet". Second prize was awarded to



"On God Complex and His Diet" by Defne Duru Arat L10

Lise 12 student Bengi Ada Tüfekçi for her untitled work. Third prize was given to Lise 10 student Zeynep Ögütçü for her piece called "Emotions All Over the Place".

Marking the occasion, RC 76 class agent Nedim Ölçer said, "It is difficult to believe that it has been twenty years since we have lost our beloved classmate and friend Demirkan. We are happy that we were able to



"Untitled" by Bengi Ada Tüfekçi L12

keep his memory alive through this art competition in his name. We are thankful to our dear classmate Coşkun Arkun for coming up with the idea, to the faculty and staff for their strong support and organization, to the students who participated in this competition with their valuable art works, and last but not least to our beloved classmates who have been supporting this project for the past twenty years."

Back in RC Project Kicks Off with Cemal Kafadar RC 73

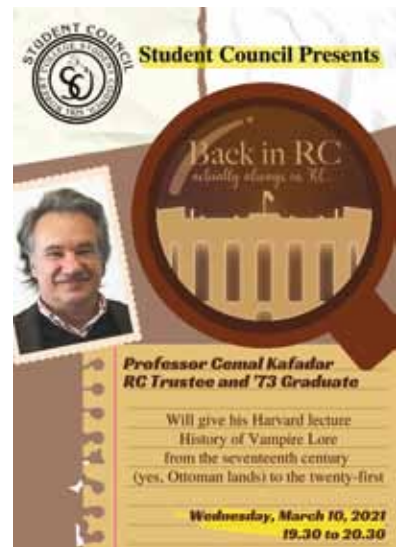
By Student Council member Kaan Hotan L10

Cemal Kafadar, Vehbi Koç Professor of Turkish Studies at Harvard University and a member of the RC Board of Trustees, was back at RC to give a lecture, 48 years after his graduation. Prof. Kafadar has a wide range of professions and has taught courses from history and cinema to Ottoman history, and many more.

His lecture was a brief introduction to one of his works, "How Dark is the History of the Night, How Black the Story of Coffee, How Bitter the Tale of Love: the Changing Measure of Leisure and Pleasure in Early Modern Istanbul." We embarked on a journey from the spread of coffeehouses to the new definition of leisure in

Istanbul during the 16th century. Following, we discovered the surge of night socialization's effects on entertainment forms and the rise of new performative arts like Karagöz and Meddah.

Prof. Kafadar was the first guest of the Alumni Project that is led by the Student Council with support from the Institutional Advancement Office. The project aims to bring students and alumni from different areas and different classes together to form a closer community in which students have the opportunity to benefit from the wisdom of alumni. We're hoping to host many more alumni in the future.



RC Launches Core Value Awards

This year, the Core Value Awards were established to recognize students in Lise Prep through Lise 11 who exemplify the values of RC: balance, excellence, leadership, multiculturalism and responsibility. For each core value, two students from each level, therefore forty students, are honored. They are recognized for living the particular core value and being an example of its attributes. Award recipients are decided by an awards committee comprising the five level deans, the Dean of Student Affairs, Dean of Student Activities and the Turkish Director, after consultation with teachers, staff and counselors,

and then approved by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). The awards for this year were announced at level assemblies on May 24-28.

Head level dean Koray Demirkapı states that the awards were established to create awareness about the RC Core Values within the student body and to increase student recognition: "We think that this award system will help students to learn and understand the RC Core Values better in the following years and will allow more of our students to be recognized by the community."

Lise 9 student Evrim Sude Con, who received the Excellence award for her level, shows just how motivational the awards are: "Winning the excellence award made me understand that the effort that I was putting into my work in any part of my life was worth it. I believe this value is a quality that every RC student should embody in their journey. Excellence is not about being perfect but doing your best despite any obstacle. I will always try to pass this value on to others because it will eventually bring success and esteem."

Global Initiatives Connect Students

Despite the pandemic, global educators continue to innovate, creating opportunities that connect students to a greater wealth of knowledge, people, and resources, of which education has never experienced before. The International Project Development Office, headed by Rima Berro-Oliver leads RC's contribution to this work, offering our students opportunities to engage in dialogue, exchange stories, experience different perspectives, and deepen their understanding of global issues with peers from an international and cosmopolitan background, all around the world. Our goal is that every student leaves RC with a store of positive memories, connections and friendships with young people abroad, and an education that transcends borders. Taken together, we believe this will help our students to move onto the next stage of their lives with confidence in themselves as future global leaders.

In their own words, here are students' descriptions of recent work carried out through the International Project Development Office.

Student Dialogue Series

A forum for international discussion of complex issues such as media, sustainability, and social justice.

"The most interesting part was seeing so many different perspectives of others on a specific topic, and nearly every conversation broadened my view. Also, I have made many friends with many different backgrounds, which made me grow as a person." - Elvan Ece Satıcı L10

"It was so eye-opening to learn about global opinions. Discussing international issues with a broader experience set, helped me see different sides of the problem. The more sides you see, more elaborate solutions you see." - Ceyda Yeşillik L9

E-pal Program with the Bishop Strachan School, Ontario

A cultural exchange program that gives RC students the chance to cultivate relationship with global peers. "The e-pal project showed me that even with such restrictions, we can still find ways to connect with people around the globe and make new friends. I have never been to Canada, so it was very interesting to hear all about the country and culture from the perspective of friends my age. Even though meeting in person doesn't seem like a realistic goal for the near future, I am excited to see where these friendships will take me." - Yasemin Şukal L11

Global Studies Programs with Felsted School, UK

"Interacting with people from so many different countries all around the world made me feel so happy. I loved the keynote speakers. It was inspiring for me to listen to successful people who achieved so much. I believe that someday in the future I can achieve these things as well." - Nil Safir Bağcı L9

Without Borders/Without Fear International Art Exhibit

This art project provided a creative outlet for students from across three schools in the US, Canada, and Turkey to express how they are dealing with the pandemic and isolation. The project was organized by Street Art Club advisor Narciso Argüelles who explained, "Without Borders speaks to breaking down barriers and finding solidarity with people around the world. Without Fear speaks to the idea that the students are bravely carrying on with life and making art." Lise 12 participant Berre Kahraman said, "I see art to be an essential part of my life, so Street Art Club is a way for me to express myself freely and truly, whenever, wherever."



Street Art Club member Berre Kahraman L12

French Creative Writing Contest

A creative writing contest was one in a series of competitions organized by the Association of French Teachers of Istanbul in May 2021. It was divided into categories of language levels and age. Lise 10 student İsmihan Uğurlu won 2nd prize in the high-school B1/B2 competition. Her poem "Je Parle, Trois Fois" expresses her feelings about being trilingual. "I think this is the closest I've felt to my third language," she said.

Story Telling Across Cultures- GEBG

The RC school community connected with the wider world by participating in a live virtual event with New York Times bestselling author and UNICEF Advocate for Children Affected by War, Ishmael Beah. English teacher Ana Shaw said, "It was profoundly moving, uplifting, and humbling."



Ishmael Beah, NY Times bestselling author

Class of '96 Establishes a New Endowed Scholarship

The 96ers came together in 2016, to establish their first scholarship ever: the RC 96 Endowed Scholarship. Their aim was to support a residential female student having an interest in co-curricular activities and arts. They were able to collect over \$150,000 which was the minimum amount required to set up an endowed fund. When the 20th Reunion of the class was crowned with a successful campaign, younger classes followed suit with significant gifts on their respective twentieths.

The assigned student of the Class of '96's scholarship fund happened to pursue an interest in arts, and the yearly student reports about her progress were always delightful to read. When her graduation finally approached in 2021, the class got quite excited and motivated upon learning of her decision to enroll at Dartmouth in pursuit of an arts degree on full scholarship.

Following this sensational news, it took the class only a week to regroup and decide to embark on a second endowment, coinciding with the 25th Reunion of RC 96. The new fund is established once again to support a

female student, and it is named the RC 96 Empowering Girls Scholarship Fund. However this time the goal is to collect \$200,000, which has been reached through the pledges so far.

RC 96 has been known for their mutual love towards their sports teachers, as well as the instructors of clubs and activities. Quite a few alumni from this class had previously joined the campaign for the Dave Phillips Field, as a result of this affection. Loyalty, commitment, and passion have always mattered more to them than academic excellence. When asked, a member of RC 96 stated: "It was always a given to be intellectuals, or to be academically successful at RC, so we purposefully focused on other areas, such as sports, arts, theater and camaraderie. The school spirit has always been very strong among us. We therefore consciously wanted to underline our preference for these values when underwriting the new endowed fund."

Although RC 96 is not the first class to create a second endowed fund, they certainly are the youngest to attempt such a substantial challenge. "The second one happened faster," says class agent Orhan Ayanlar. "As we had

recently done it, our friends were still in the zone. I only asked eight friends for large gifts and once they said they were in, we asked our classmates and everybody immediately rose up to the challenge." Other classmates agree, adding they were very used to giving in installments, and they felt like they were forgetting to do something once the payments for the first endowment were finished. They wanted to continue, as monthly payments had become a routine. When the first scholarship was decided, they had 30 months to give, whereas this time they have 36 months. Many people in the class pledged monthly gifts for the next three years which will enable them to donate larger sums as opposed to making a single payment in a year.

They take pride in setting an outstanding example of the monthly payment plan for the younger classes. "We are so proud of our class," say classmates Burcu Berent and Mehveş Dramur, both of whom work in the RC Institutional Advancement Office. "We are working to raise funds for our school, and by supporting RC in such a generous way twice in a row, our classmates show how responsible and committed RC 96 feels."



RC 96 at their 20th Reunion, the year the class raised their first endowed scholarship. They have raised a second endowed scholarship for their 25th Reunion

Derin Uras Environmental Fund

To support Robert College students in their vital work on environmental issues, and to help RC deliver an education that does not cost the planet, the Derin Uras Environmental Fund has been established in his memory by his mother Ümran Üngün ACG 70 and wife Duygu Uras RC 02.

Derin, who passed away in January 2019, had the rare distinction of being born while his family lived on Robert College's beautiful campus. Spending his happy childhood playing in its woods and green spaces and later in high school preparing a project about rare trees on campus, he grew up taking real delight in nature and the natural world, and his family is determined to preserve this legacy. Helped by Ümran and Duygu, Derin's young son, Can, has already planted 15 olive trees on campus in memory of his father.

Each year the fund will support two students who have done the most to promote environmental causes, and to foster awareness in others, as well as provide support to the school's current environmental initiative projects lead by students.

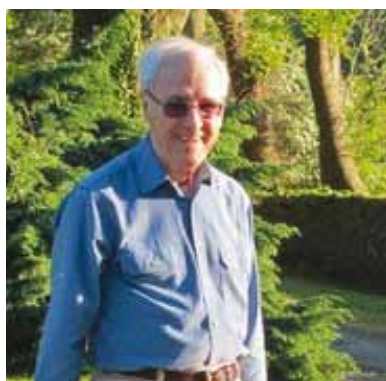
The first award from the fund was given this year to two teams from the SDG 13 Climate Action Challenge. One team will use the award to develop an app called Your Drop which will make people aware of how much water they consume and show them how they can reduce usage. The second team is developing an app called Naturavis that will help consumers make more environmentally sound choices. In addition, an award will be given at future graduations to a Lise 12 student who has done the most to promote environmental causes, and to foster environmental awareness in others.



Derin Uras with his son Can

The goal of Derin's family is to raise \$200,000 for the fund by 2023, invested with the Robert College Foundation, to support these environmental initiatives in perpetuity.

Charlie Hoppin Memorial Fund



Trustee Emeritus Charlie Hoppin

Charlie Hoppin was a dedicated member of the Robert College Board of Trustees, serving in many capacities for over four decades. To honor his service to the school, the Charlie Hoppin Memorial Fund has

been established by his family and friends to support students in their pursuit of outdoor education and environmental care and understanding, areas that were very dear to Charlie's heart. He first visited Turkey in 1978 as lead lawyer for the Turkish debt restructuring, and was invited to the Board a year later by then-Board Chair Rodney Wagner. "Charlie was a natural teacher himself and Robert College, all aspects of it, aligned perfectly with his interests. For over 30 years he visited the campus at least once a year," says his wife Nancy Hoppin.

Charlie's legal work required intense focus and long hours. "It was often exhausting," explains Nancy. "He knew that, for him, time in the natural world was key to his happiness and well-

being. Throughout his life he sought it out." Charlie had polio in his teens. There were many forms of exercise he could not do but his favorites - hiking, sailing, skiing - were all still possible. He did them, especially sailing, until close to the end of his life.

"His family knows that it would have given Charlie great pleasure to know that RC students are starting an Environmental Club," adds Nancy. "Had this existed when he was a younger Board member he would have loved to have joined you!"

The first award from the fund was presented to two teams from the SDG 13 Climate Challenge who will develop a permaculture garden and a food forest on the RC campus.

If you would like to be part of these important funds, please contact Monika Mraz, Director of Institutional Advancement, at mmraz@robcok.k12.tr or +90 212 263 4239.

Endowed Scholarship Established in Memory of Mehmet İsvan RC 46

A desire to set up an endowed scholarship at RC was also an opportunity to commemorate a loved one for RC 72 alumni Nilüfer İsvan and İrvin Cemil Schick. The Mehmet İsvan RC 46 Endowed Scholarship was established in the fall of 2020, in memory of Nilüfer's father.

The İsvan family has long ties to Robert College. Nilüfer İsvan's parents (Mehmet İsvan RC 46 and Nuran Ünel ACG 46) and grandparents (Aziz İsvan RC 15 and Ulviye Bedi ACG 22), as well as her uncle and aunt (Ahmet İsvan



Mehmet İsvan RC 46

RC 44 and Reha Doğan ACG 44) and cousin (Nurhan İsvan RC 76) are all graduates of the school. Known then as Aziz Vamık, Nilüfer's grandfather also served as instructor of Turkish at RC between 1915 and 1918.

The passion for education runs deep in the family, and Nilüfer İsvan and İrvin Schick are both professors. "We feel that our real intellectual debt is to RC, without which we would not have achieved any of that," says Schick.

Classroom Named in Memory of Giray Ertaş RC 88



Woods 308 was dedicated in memory of Giray Ertaş RC 88 in the presence of his family (center) and a few of his classmates.

Giray Ertaş was a much-loved member of the Class of 88. He had strong ties to RC that began when he started as an Orta school boarder in 1980. Later when he was no longer staying in the dorms, he would remain on campus for so long that he was pronounced an honorary boarder. The strong friendships that were forged continued well beyond his years at RC.

When Giray passed away in a car accident in December 2019, his family wanted to commemorate him at Robert College, and it was only fitting that they chose to have his name appear in one of the halls where he fostered so many friendships. On July 8, 2021, Woods 308 was dedicated in memory of Giray Ertaş, in the presence of his family and a few of his classmates.

"Our son, our brother Giray was proud of his alma mater. We want his legacy to have some impact for education and for him to be always remembered in the hallways that shaped his life," said his family.

Robert College is deeply appreciative to the Ertaş family for commemorating Giray in such a meaningful way.



Giray Ertaş RC 88

Cookbook's Third Edition Continues to Support Scholarships

A contributor to the RC Scholarship Fund for many years, Melahat Kınöğlu ACG 44 shared the proceeds from her book filled with life-long recipes from family and friends, *Bir Ömür Bin Tutam Lezzet*



in 2012. The book went on to receive first place in the Community and Charity for Europe category at the 2013 Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, one of the most prestigious cookbook awards in the world

With the third edition of the book, Melahat Kınöğlu's family has pledged to continue sharing the proceeds in support of the RC Scholarship Fund in memory of their mother, to donate to the education of young girls.

In Melahat Kınöğlu's own words, "The story of this book first began around the ages of 12-13 when I was exchanging recipes with my friends at Robert College." Her family wishes that her story goes on through those who continue to cook, savor and share the joys of her dishes.

The book is available through booksellers in Turkey as well as through the Alumni Association at Bizim Tepe.



Melahat Kınöğlu ACG 44

2020-21 Annual Giving Campaign Finishes on a High Note

Alumni and friends of Robert College came together to support the school and help make the 2020-21 Annual Giving Campaign one of the strongest ever. Robert College is grateful to our donors, who help us provide life changing experiences to young people each year. Here are the results at a glance*.


2600 Participants



\$1,800,000
Total Funds Raised


745
People who have given
consecutively for at least
10 years


23 Annual Scholarships
5 NEW Endowed Scholarships

*Results at the time of print. Final results will be announced in the 2020-21 Honor Roll.

CIPs Focus on Sustainability

During the spring semester, several Community Involvement Projects focused on sustainability. From climate crisis to marine ecology, from social cohesion to environmental and social issues, RC students organized events and workshops that helped children and peers at high schools around Turkey become more aware of the issues and understand that they have the power to make positive changes in their communities.

Green Academy CIP Raises Environmental Awareness

By project leaders Ayseli Karabekmez L10 & Buse Yilmaz-Paksoy L10

Green Academy aimed to enhance the knowledge about environmental issues and encourage children to learn and be more active about the climate crisis. In this project, we also learned how to find information and research together with kids.

At the end, everyone had learned so many new things, that we thought it would be best to document all the research, discussions and idea exchanges that happened throughout this journey. We created a publication that included research about different topics we discussed as well as the paintings the kids did to express their feelings and insights they gained.

We believe that the two months we spent together was an enriching learning experience for all the participants, because Green Academy was a place where everyone got the chance to offer their own perspectives and share their ideas. Throughout the process everyone learned more about the urgency of environmental issues and got the chance to discuss with others.

As the leaders, we have gained a lot of skills throughout the process. Many things did not go as planned, so we had to adapt. In online projects and these uncertain times, it is important to be flexible. We also learned how to communicate with an outside organization to support our project. On top of these skills, we gained a lot of useful information

about the climate crisis and other environmental issues.

The advisor for the Green Academy CIP was Dünya Önen RC L3 O3, RC biology teacher and co-head of the Environmental Education Initiative. We truly appreciate her support!

We enjoyed Green Academy so much and we would like to continue with this project.

Now, we also have the necessary experience for this project and we know exactly what we want to improve upon. Next time, we are sure that we will put together a more conscientiously planned project that the participants will enjoy even more!



Green Academy team members produced a publication with research about the topics they discussed and drawings from participants

Kids Learn to Care for the Seas



CIP members are using a book they created to teach children about marine ecology

Children around Turkey are learning about the importance of protecting our seas thanks to the Evde Deniz Var (There Is Sea at Home) CIP run by the RC Marine Biology Club.

"We saw that one of the biggest problems among people in Turkey was the lack of information and interest in marine life. In order to make a difference we decided to start by informing children," says Lise 10 student Ece Beren Ertekin.

CIP members created an illustrated children's book about life under the seas and the adventure of Feti, the sea turtle. They are now using this book in their CIP to teach children about the world under the seas and basic marine biology topics, as well as to create awareness about pollution in the seas and oceans. The CIP members not only teach them about marine life but also encourage them to research information by themselves.

Doğa Buse Kurt L10 says, "We learned how to get to the core of information and simplify really big topics to explain them to 3rd grade students. As a next step, we aim to do this project again with different students to reach and inform a wider audience."

CIP Spring Seminar on Social Cohesion

On April 28 and 29, 2021, CIP hosted two online seminars on Social Cohesion presented by the Human Resource Development Foundation (İnsan Kaynağını Geliştirme Vakfı). Sixty-two students, one teacher and two staff members joined the seminar, gaining a deeper understanding and awareness of the challenges faced by migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in Turkey and the region. An engaging discussion ensued on the difference between tolerance and acceptance and social cohesion as a force for inclusion rather than marginalization or assimilation of socio-cultural difference.



The 10th Social Responsibility at High Schools Symposium

By Aras Karlıdağ L11, 2020-2021 CIP Advisory Board member



With the motto of “Saving Life, Protecting the Living” in our minds and cooperating with high school students and teachers from six schools, the 10th Social Responsibility in High Schools Symposium was held on May 2, 2021. Although it was the tenth time this symposium took place, this was the first time it was held virtually. However, this was not the only reason why this symposium was different from the other nine symposiums. Unlike most of the previous years’ symposiums in which teachers took the organizational role,

teacher and student groups from six different schools successfully formed the organizational team despite all the challenges this year: Robert College, Terakki Foundation Schools, Alev Schools, İTÜ Development Foundation Schools, Üsküdar American Academy and Arnavutköy Korkmaz Yiğit High School. Eleven students from the Robert College Student Tech Crew formed the IT (Tech) crew for the symposium, holding a big responsibility on their shoulders. They prepared the website for the symposium, made interviews and published them on the website, handled the symposium preparation and registration process, produced videos introducing participating NGOs, created certificates and provided technical support for approximately 500 participants.

With the aim of expanding engagement in social responsibility to as many people as possible, we hosted 482 students and teachers from 42 high schools around Turkey, including İstanbul, Eskişehir, Nusaybin, Gaziantep, Ankara, Bursa, İzmir, Tarsus, and Sivas. In order to achieve this, 14 NGOs that are directly involved with volunteering in areas such as animal rights, education, environment

and disability rights were invited to facilitate workshops and presentations: Deniztemiz TURMEPA, Yeryüzü Derneği, Yeşil Yama, Servas Barış Okulu, Atlas Derneği, Fenerbahçe Vakfı Topluluk Bahçesi ve Permakültür Uygulamaları, Okul Destek Derneği, Gönüllü Hizmetler Derneği, Fridays for Future Türkiye, Türkiye Down Sendromu Derneği, Kurtaran Ev, İhtiyaç Haritası, İZEV and Şişli Belediyesi Mahalle Evleri. During the workshops, participants learned about volunteering and how to start by listening to presentations, asking questions and engaging in activities. They also gained different perspectives on social responsibility by listening to our guest speakers: Prof. Dr. Levent Kurnaz, from Boğaziçi University; and Ahmet Harmancı, Sadık Ünlü, Asude Altıntaş and Ömer Görgülü from the Young Guru Academy. At the end of the event, a closing video that included footage from the workshops was shared. Our focus on the importance of volunteering and the need to support it was reinforced as the symposium came to an end. We received very positive feedback from each participating school which showed us that our symposium could be a source of passion, happiness and hope for each participant. Hence, we were extremely happy with our success.

Serap Aksoy RC 74 Elected to the National Academy of Sciences

Serap Aksoy, a professor of epidemiology (microbial diseases) at the Yale School of Public Health and acting chair of the Department of Epidemiology, was among 120 new members elected to the National Academy of Sciences in the United States, which is one of the highest honors that can be bestowed on a scientist or engineer. Aksoy states that she hopes to contribute to the Academy by providing leadership in the area of insect transmitted diseases, microbial pandemics, climate change effects on infectious disease and in global health diplomacy.



Serap Aksoy RC 74

Aksoy's laboratory focuses on tsetse flies and the pathogenic parasites they transmit that cause fatal diseases in Africa. Aksoy was instrumental in sequencing the genomes of six tsetse fly

species: "The genome discovery enabled us to launch various molecular studies on many aspects of this fly that can lead to its control. Some examples are

constituents in saliva which is injected into the human bite site (vaccines against these are being investigated to prevent their blood feeding ability), components of the smell apparatus (olfaction) which allowed us to develop more effective traps to reduce their numbers, and their gut microbiota in which we can now produce molecules that target the pathogenic parasites that cause disease."

Aksoy views RC as a game changer in her life: "I loved my science classes. I remember various science fairs that I attended on campus, as well as my trip to Ankara where our project was among the finalists. The strong inquiry-based education, our hands-on biology laboratory classes and love for natural sciences my teachers instilled in me were very influential in my career path."

İzak Benbasat Honored with Order of Canada Medal

İzak Benbasat, RA 65 and RC YÜK 69, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and Sauder Distinguished Professor of Information Systems Emeritus at the Sauder School of Business, University of British Columbia, is the second Turkish individual to receive the Order of Canada Medal, given for exemplary service of Canadians who make a significant difference to Canada through their lifetime contributions.



İzak Benbasat, RA 65 and RC YÜK 69

Benbasat was ranked third in the world among management information systems (MIS) scholars in 2020 based on h-index rankings which measures the quality of scientific output and the diversity of scientific research. Benbasat's research focus is in the areas of human-computer interaction, computer-based managerial support

systems, and social networks. Benbasat states: "I am honored and delighted to have been recognized for my contributions to the development of the field of management information systems (MIS), which involves the study of information and

communication technologies for the benefit of individuals, organizations, and society, and for my mentorship of over 40 doctoral and 25 master of science students in MIS."

Benbasat remembers his years at RC with great affection: "My 12-year educational journey on the RC Bebek campus started in 1957 with two years of English prep, three years of Robert Academy Orta Okul and three years of Lise, followed by four years of Robert College Yüksek Okul, a period that spanned my adolescence to adulthood years. It was a privilege to be a part of the RC community which imparted in its students expansive and independent thinking skills within a congenial and engaging learning environment on one of the most beautiful campuses in the world!"

Canan Atilgan RC 87

Heads Up Science Academy

Prof. Canan Atilgan was elected President of Turkey's Science Academy (Bilim Akademisi), taking over from Founding President Prof. M. Ali Alpar RA 68. As a professor of materials science and nano engineering at Sabancı University, where she has also served as the Dean of Engineering and Natural Sciences, Atilgan's work focuses on polymer and protein dynamics, as well as theoretical and computational investigation of complex molecular systems. She has received numerous accolades for her work, including the TÜBİTAK Encouragement Award in 2002, and the L'Oreal Young Women Scientist Fellowship in 2005.

Science Academy was established in 2011 as an independent non-governmental organization to promote, practice and uphold the

principles of scientific merit, freedom and integrity. It brings together prominent scientists in Turkey, many of which are RC graduates, in order to promote and preserve scientific excellence, scientific methods, traditions and procedures, as well as scientific freedom and integrity; in brief, to represent and sustain the spirit of science.

During her tenure, Atilgan hopes to focus attention on the changing role of academia and on inclusiveness: "We hope to ensure Science Academy becomes an independent point of reference, taking on advisory roles for decision-making and action-taking institutions in Turkey."

Atilgan credits RC with instilling an interdisciplinary outlook in her: "Being among the first of the faculty



Canan Atilgan RC 87

members at a university that was being established with a true liberal arts soul woke up the beast in me. I grew interested in diversifying my understanding of the world through fields outside of the sciences. And when I look back, I believe the foundations built at RC contributed to my metamorphosis."

Atilgan is also currently the Biophysical Society Ambassador to Turkey and invites RC students and graduates interested in this field to contact her.

Ayşe Buğra ACG 70

Receives PEN Turkey Award

Ayşe Buğra is the latest recipient of the PEN Turkey Writers Association Duygu Asena Award, given in memory of Duygu Asena, one of the most prominent writers in the women's movement in Turkey. In its declaration, the association explained that the award was given to Ayşe Buğra as a role model, as an educator and a scientist, because of her work, her books and her determination. Upon accepting her award, Buğra said, "We know we have to fight for women's equality in society in all our diversity." She underlined that her maternal grandmother and mother, both teachers, believed in gender equality and were aware that it was something that needed to be fought for. Buğra also stated she would like to draw attention to all the smart, hard-working women who not

only defended the equality rights of other literate women but all women.

When asked how her years at ACG influenced her career, Buğra says, "As students at ACG, we were very lucky to study in an environment where we did not only have an excellent education but were also encouraged to make our own life choices and develop our capabilities to pursue the ends we find meaningful. Unfortunately, there are still too many young women who do not have this opportunity."

Ayşe Buğra is a professor emeritus of political economy at the Ataturk Institute of Modern Turkish History at Boğaziçi University and is the co-founder and the current director of the Social Policy Forum research center



Ayşe Buğra ACG 70

there. She is the author of numerous books and has also received the Social Sciences Award from the World Academy of Sciences in 2015 - an award given to scientists from developing countries for their contribution to scientific knowledge and/or to the application of science and technology to sustainable development.

V&A Acquires Sculpture by Elif Uras RC 90

Prominent contemporary artist Elif Uras adds to her many accolades with the recent acquisition of her ceramic piece “Pregnant Spiral” by the Victoria & Albert Museum for their permanent collection. The piece is a part of the exhibition Contemporary Ceramic Art from the Middle East at the V&A alongside Uras’s “Ottoman Belly”. Uras states that having her work included in this collection is one of the greatest achievements she can imagine as an artist: “The V&A Museum is encyclopedic when it comes to ceramics. I remember visiting it more than a decade ago with my parents after I had started working with ceramics in Iznik and was so moved to see historical Iznik works represented along with other masterpieces from China, Japan, the Islamic World and Europe.”



Elif Uras RC 90

Uras explains that the patterns painted on both “Ottoman Belly” and “Pregnant Spiral” are inspired by the Haliç pattern created in Iznik in the 15th century: “In Iznik I was struck by how women dominated the workforce as entrepreneurs, as well as craftspeople and artists. This represented a gender reversal from the 16th century Iznik, when the artists and craftspeople

were men, and the works were meant for gendered spaces like the male quarters of mosques and palaces. In my ceramic works I wanted to subvert the tradition and to emphasize what has been missing from its earlier incarnation.”

Both pieces fit in Uras’s artistic stance quite specifically: “The abstract patterns I appropriate from art historical references allude to lace or beadwork covering certain parts of the body or its entirety. I see these works as questioning or upending the orientalist image of the eastern female as well as a rejoinder to our society’s patriarchal attitudes towards the female body. The pregnant vessels were a reaction to the politicization of the female body and its reproductivity.”

Herkül Millas RA 61 Presented with 50th Orhan Kemal Novel Award



Herkül Millas RA 61

Herkül Millas was presented the 50th Orhan Kemal Novel Award for his work *Aile Mezarı* (*The Family Grave*, Doğan Kitap). RCQ asked Millas where this novel fits within his oeuvre:

“According to neuroscientists special parts of our brain process the received data differently: some work on a base

of critical thinking (logic) and others emotionally. On the other hand, we know that human beings are emotional to a great extent. I learned these by simply reading about these issues, but I always suspected that there are things that cannot be communicated by simply expressing facts and that there are feelings that can be presented only by arts and literature.

“Literary texts create images, mostly imaginary, that are directly addressed to our emotional world. At a certain stage of my life I felt the need to express these feelings that academic and scientific articles cannot. *The Family Grave* is the result, and I am happy that I managed to communicate with my readers. I perceive the Orhan Kemal Novel Award as a sign of a

fruitful communication. The novel is about my world, naturally the way I experienced and I felt it.”

Millas views the role of RC in his life as determinant: “I joined this school as a young boy and left it when I graduated as an engineer and a married man. These are the most critical years of the formation of one’s character. RC is a heritage; beyond of a recognition or a negation of it. It is there, like the feelings that dominate us beyond our critical thinking. The greater influence of RC on me was my teachers, but even more importantly, my friends of that schooling period. They helped my integration to the wider community, keeping me safe as a member of a closed community, like the one I describe in *The Family Grave*.”

Esra Yalçınalp RC 00 Recognized for Journalism Excellence

The Progressive Journalists Association has presented two awards to BBC Türkçe video journalist Esra Yalçınalp for her coverage of two devastating events in 2020, during which she conveyed the human stories behind the crises.



Esra Yalçınalp RC 00

The Mustafa Ekmekçi Award was given to her and Mahmut Hamsici for their documentation of the refugees in Turkey trying to cross the Edirne border. In March 2020, the Turkish government opened its borders to Europe. Tens of thousands of refugees attempted to cross it – only to be sent back by Greek officials.

Yalçınalp says “Lack of information marked the beginning of the crisis. Then came an abyss of misinformation. It was through BBC Türkçe’s trustworthy and immediate coverage from the field that the actual

human tragedy was conveyed. For instance, the story of a 12-year-old Afghan girl who lost her family when trying to cross the border helped shed light on the plight of refugee children.”

The Behzat Miser City Award tackled yet another difficult subject: The Izmir earthquake of October 30, 2020. Confirming the popular saying that it is not the earthquake but the buildings that kill, the Izmir earthquake

displayed how one building could be standing firm, whereas the building next to it could be totally collapsed.

Yalçınalp rushed to Izmir and reported the breaking news for a week. A few weeks later, with colleagues Mesut Ersöz and Osman Kaytazoglu, they created a video investigating the possible reasons of a specific building’s collapse through expert interviews, animations and archival material. Their work was awarded for being informative, cautionary and memorable.

Yalçınalp values RC as the place where the seeds of her journalist mindset were planted: “RC education creates a questioning mind: the default trait of a journalist. We question what we hear/see. We ask questions to understand. Then we tell the story in the simplest way possible.”

Ali Günvar RC 72

Wins Italian Poetry Award



Ali Günvar RC 72

Though Ali Günvar does not believe that art needs awards, two young poets insisted that he submit

his book *Soneler* (*Sonnets*, Ötügen Neşriyat) to the Tulliola Renato Filippelli Poetry Award, and he received an award for the best Turkish poetry book. *Soneler* was conceived to be out of the ordinary, and this approach contributed to the win. “Sonnet as a form was seen in Italian right before Petrarch, and as a form is inspired by divan literature,” says Günvar. “It transforms the seven couplet ghazal format. Aruz prosody, on the other hand, is an adaptation of the Greek hexameter, the high literary language of the ancient times, by the Arabs. In my sonnets, I used this cross-pollination as an emphasis on how East and West cannot be separated and how human civilization is whole. I wrote the sonnets to demonstrate how

artificial and meaningless it is to divide human culture into East and West.”

Günvar states that though some of his views have veered away from the RC point-of-view, the influence of RC on his life and career are undeniable: “I no longer evaluate whether this influence is negative or positive. Any positive or negative effect occurs only after one distills them. It is RC who taught me Pound and Elliot. I started learning about how to find the roots of modernity in the traditional at RC. This learning did not lead to simply reproducing an orientalist approach; instead it showed how to go deeper. I am not a typical RC alumnus, but I have learned a lot at RC.”

Film by **Buket Yıldız RC 06** Gains International Accolades

After finishing her MA in Film and Television at Bilgi University, Buket Yıldız co-wrote a short film called *Tuesday*, which was an official selection at Cannes and Sundance film festivals. She followed it up with *Wave*, a short film she wrote and directed about a one-day getaway of a white-collar city woman to a village by the Aegean. This single day tells the viewer of a yearning for liberation, away from all attachments and in the flow of the moment, but the day also leads to confrontations stemming from norms and boundaries of morality. The film has so far been recognized at several international festivals including Stockholm City Film Festival, Rome Independent Prisma



Buket Yıldız RC 06

Awards, Vancouver Independent Film Festival, Anatolian Short Film Festival,

Barcelona Indie Filmmakers Festival and Boden International Film Festival.

Yıldız says she is currently focused on her marketing career, though she also has new script ideas: "My husband is an actor and a playwright, so he has been inspirational lately. We might end up doing a film together in the next few years." Yıldız remembers her years at RC fondly: "At RC, I learnt how to think, and how to look beyond the obvious. RC also gave me the resources to try out my talents such as singing. The better I discovered my talents, the more confidence I gained, so I became willing to take risks to explore myself and the world around me in depth."

RC in America

RCAAA Hosts First Fireside Chat

The first Fireside Chat of the year was held on March 22, 2021. Hosted by RCAAA President Alpdoğan Kantarcı RC 86, it featured current Head of School, Adam Oliver. In this virtual event attended by over 60 alumni and friends of RC, Kantarcı began the conversation with how his friendship with Oliver developed in Boston and Istanbul when the President of RCAAA and Head of School visited each other, discovering their mutual passion for biking.

They then discussed a variety of topics, ranging from how school activities have changed during the

pandemic and how technology is being used in education to the recently established environmental and social entrepreneurship initiatives which have drawn the participation of many students.

Among the guests were also Christopher Wadsworth, one of RC's former headmasters, as the event bridged classes of different generations. The conversation ended with a teaser for future fireside chats with Robert College and alumni. This event marked the first event hosted jointly by the RC Institutional Advancement Office and RCAAA.



Arçelik Koza Serisi'nin yeni üyesi Telve

Çevre dostu Telve'yi, biyo-kompozit teknolojiyle dönüştürülen
4 fincan kahve posasından ürettik, karbon ayak izini %10 azalttık.



Biyo-kompozit parçanın karbon ayak izini %10 azalttık.

RC Focuses on Environmental Sustainability

The Robert College campus is the very heart and soul of RC, as well as being one of the world's most beautiful campuses. This issue focuses on a subject that is, therefore, especially close to home: environmental sustainability. As RC embarks on developing its first long-term sustainability plan, Project Hummingbird, there is indeed a lot of news to share from campus, as well as food for thought offered by our alumni.



Students enjoy a music lesson on the grass in front of the Forum

Studying nature both through the curriculum and through extracurricular activities was in the fabric of RC education from the earliest years of the school. The 1925-26 Report of the President and Faculty of the College states that the school at the time had a physiological laboratory, and sea specimens and fauna from the Marmara Sea were investigated in it as part of Biological Science classes. Courses were introduced to study modern methods in agriculture and were met with great interest from the students, as Turkey at the time was “eminently an agricultural country.” The courses incorporated elements of botany, soils, and poultry. The report also mentions that the College took over “the dairy and the farm from the Russian caterer to use as a practical demonstration tool.”

The 1930-31 Report of the President and Faculty of the College is full of interesting facts about this farm, which apparently rendered the campus self-sufficient in certain areas and turned a profit in others. There were orchards and grapevines producing fruit for the school kitchen. The need for milk for the whole school was met by the farm and “better quality not found in this part of the country”. There was surplus milk especially during the summer, which was sold and became a source of revenue. Interestingly, the RC farm animals were of such good breeding that the farm cooperated with the government and gave a Holstein bull, White Rook chickens, and Duroc pigs to various authorities for breeding.



Students under the Cedar of Lebanon in the 1920s (left) and today (right). The tree is estimated to be over 291 years old.

Apart from meeting the needs of the school, the farm continued to serve as a laboratory for students interested in agriculture. There were Gardening, Farming, and Nature Study Hobby Clubs. All in all, it is apparent that the RC community was very much involved with nature and took pains to be self-sufficient in areas where it could. It is remarkable to note that the College planted 1500 small trees in 1930-31 alone.

On the ACG campus, as early as 1919, there was an agriculture teacher, Prof.

Lester H. Briggles. According to the Trustees Minutes of April 1922, he was a very popular teacher, attracting more and more students every year. He helped cultivate the College's 1.75-acre garden and also helped get a barn erected. By 1926, farm supplies were part of the ACG budget, and the Agriculture Auxiliary is listed as an expense and a revenue in the Trustees Minutes of November 1927.

In the 1920s the hillside behind Gould Hall and the slope descending from Gould Hall were apparently quite



Working in the garden, 1920s



Robert College Farm, 1920s



ACG agriculture class, 1920s



A page in the 1929 Record gives details about that year's Arbor Day



Planting the Senior Tree on Arbor Day 1925, with President Caleb Gates present (third from right)

bare. According to May N. Fincanci's book *The Story of Robert College Old and New*, President Kathryn Adams, herself a keen gardener, started a tree-planting project, and "the Arnavutköy campus was much embellished during her presidency. Various sources contributed trees and shrubs for the project, and the American University of Beirut sent cedars of Lebanon." It is thanks to these efforts from a hundred years ago that the RC campus now boasts such stunning greenery.

The appreciation of nature embedded in RC culture is also apparent in the Arbor Day tradition. The first Arbor Day held at RC was on December 8, 1913. The tradition continued on both campuses for several years, then was revived again in the 1950s. It was a half-day at school, with teachers and senior class students planting a tree together during the ceremony. There were also speeches, musical and choral concerts and tea. The Arbor Day song was sung at the end. While this tradition did not continue over the years, planting trees on campus certainly did. For example, members of the Class of '86 planted trees at the end of the Plateau, as part of a program led by Ayfer Yeniçağ and Doğan Kantarcı, a professor of forestry. Also trees are planted in loving memory of deceased young alumni.



A rich variety of plants and flowers can be found on the RC campus, including crocus (left) and chicory (right)



RC's Natural History Museum was considered the finest in the region

The Natural History Museum constitutes another interesting facet of RC environmental education. The museum came into being sometime in the 1800s with a rocks and minerals collection. By the turn of the century, the collection included reptiles, birds, insects, mammals, plants, fish, and skeletons. According to the British Natural History Museum, Robert College Natural History Museum was “the finest in the Far East.” Over time, the interest and funds for the museum diminished until the 1960s when the collection was revitalized and a zoo was added. Yet this resurgence also waned when American College for Girls and Robert Academy merged in 1971. Around 1978, largely due to the efforts of teachers Ayfer Yeniçağ and Eşref Sakarya, some space on the top floor of Bingham Hall was set aside to gather together what remained of the collections, and this space was named the Armine Şükür Natural History Museum after the legendary science teacher and ACG 34 graduate. In 1992, the collection was moved to Feyyaz Berker Hall and distributed over several floors. Students have continued to show interest in and care for the collection over the years. The taxidermy bird collection is now on loan to St. Joseph High School Natural Sciences Center.

Throughout the years, particularly in extracurricular activities, nature figured greatly, as evidenced by clubs like Birdwatching and Nature Walking, though issues of sustainability came to the fore relatively recently. The Permaculture Club was a pioneering activity in that sense. It started out as a

CIP in 2014. Under the guidance of Taner Aksel RC 87 (see p. 44), RC students worked with other Istanbul high school students to learn about permaculture and help them start permaculture gardens on their own campuses. RC started a permaculture garden at this time as well. As part of the CIP, students from the different high schools worked with the locals of Alpagut village in Bolu to transform it into an example of sustainable living (see RCQ 47, p. 15). In 2015 the Permaculture Club created a community garden in Ulus Park (see RCQ 49, p. 5).

Nature permeated the RC experience in many ways historically and features prominently in the memories of all alumni. Unfortunately it is now impossible to think of nature without thinking of the climate crisis and sustainability. RC has taken many inspiring and groundbreaking steps around environmental sustainability, and it is important that the RC community is informed about them, so that it is a process of continuous development and collaboration.

Environmental Sustainability at RC Today

Sustainability has become a crucial framework in all areas of life. In 2015,



Miss Angele Yemenidjian, assistant to Natural History Museum curator Dr. Bertram V.D. Post, in front of the once famous butterfly collection in 1922

the United Nations General Assembly set up 17 interlinked global Sustainable Development Goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.” These goals are meant to be achieved by 2030, and environmental sustainability figures greatly among them.

Within this context, it was imperative for RC to embrace environmental sustainability both as an educational policy and also in terms of taking care of and giving back to the wonderful piece of nature it occupies and shares with many animals, birds, insects, plants, and trees. Interest around these issues turned into the Environmental Initiative in 2017, with the leadership of English teachers and environment advocates Tim Koehn and Aninne Schneider. “As with many things at RC, my involvement with the initiative started when a student, Eyüp Eren Yürek RC 18, came to me looking for an advisor for a new club he wanted to start in 2017. I’ve always spent a lot of time outdoors, camping and backpacking both with my family and as an adult leader in scouting, so caring about the environment always seemed like a given,” Schneider recalls. “I was happy to help Eren, and the first two years it ran as the



These butterflies and beetles from the Natural History Museum are now in Feyyaz Berker Hall
(Photo: Gizem Yılmaz)

RC Environmental Initiative. It slowly gained momentum until it really took off last year as the RC Environmental Movement, an umbrella organization bringing together students interested in a variety of issues related to the environment, ranging from reducing plastic waste to permaculture to campus biodiversity.” Many RCEM members helped get multiple projects underway since 2017, such as a campus-wide initiative for composting, a collaboration with Taner Aksel RC 87 on composting and the establishment of community gardens, a ban of single-use plastic bottles from on-campus sales, and the installation of four beehives.



English teacher Aninne Schneider helped start the RC Environmental Movement in 2017. She will take over from Dünya Önen as Environmental Initiatives co-head in the fall of 2021.

Now under the leadership of Head of School Adam Oliver, RC has taken major organizational steps. An Environmental Education Initiative has been established, with biology teacher Dünya Önen RC L3 03 and physics teacher Stephen Holz as its co-heads during the 2020-21 school year. Aninne Schneider will take over from Önen as co-head in the fall of 2021.

The school is set to formulate its first long-term sustainability plan. On Earth Day 2021 (April 22), RC signed a contract with Brika Sustainability, a consultancy led by Gülin Yücel RC 88, for this purpose. Initially, a

This work is the first of its kind at the high school level in Turkey and will potentially be a role model for other schools.

strategic roadmap will be developed by a steering committee made up of faculty and staff to identify priorities and impacts, set long-term targets, and create a sustainability management system. This work is the first of its kind at the high school level in Turkey and will potentially be a role model for other schools. It will also hopefully have a positive impact on the Turkish national discussion regarding environmental education, as well as moving into a more regional and international discussion.

Önen and Holz have also drafted a policy for the sustainable stewardship of the habitats of the RC Campus. This important document highlights critical issues. It recognizes that the RC campus is a de facto wildlife refuge in the middle of a megacity and postulates that the RC community should be “committed to preserving and enhancing it as such, by implementing sustainable stewardship practices which maximize biodiversity and result in the safety and harmonious coexistence of all residents and visitors, both human and non-human.”

Robert College’s primary function is, of course, education, and many



The blue ground beetle is a rare and exciting sight to see on campus

initiatives are well under way in environmental education. The English Department is exploring how more environmental topics can be reviewed, particularly in Lise Prep. They have also introduced a unit on Nature and Environmental Writing to the Lise 10 curriculum. The Geography and History Departments are liaising with the Environmental Education co-heads to develop their curricula. A library guide is being prepared to support all students and faculty. There is also work towards offering AP Environmental Science, a trailblazing initiative. Another focus point is having more student projects oriented towards environmental concerns.

The habitats on campus are an educational resource in and of



Less manicuring leads to more biodiversity! Select lawn areas are being allowed to flourish, which supports pollinators and other species.



The Faralyali Trail winds through a variety of environments on campus

themselves. The sustainable stewardship policy sets the goal that all RC students should graduate having learned to love specific species, specific habitats, and the biosphere as a whole. It also lays out best practices in such wide-ranging areas as mowing and trimming, tree stewardship, mulching, composting, cats and other domestic animals, identification and recording of wildlife species, insecticides, herbicides, rodenticides, fertilizers, Plateau maintenance, community gardens, ivy, bees, hedges and decorative shrub maintenance, and noise pollution. These best practices will guide the actions that will be shaped by the RC long-term sustainability plan. The Plant Department has many plans underway as well, a few of which are: feasibility studies concerning renewable energy,



Judas trees blossoming in spring are always a favorite sight

setting up additional compost areas, waste segregation, alternating lighting of outdoor lamps, reminders to turn off electrical appliances and lights when a space is vacated and signs to ensure that people operate the air-conditioners using energy-efficient settings.

Another important undertaking is the Residential Life Enrichment Plan which will be in place for Lise 9s once students return to campus and subsequently rolled out to all classes. The plan will bring extended learning opportunities to residential students, support their social and emotional well-being, strengthen the sense of community, and provide respite from a challenging academic program. The principal outcomes are creating a better awareness of the diverse environment (flora and fauna) on campus and in and around Istanbul, as well as outdoor education. Insight sessions with academics, experts from NGOs, and RC faculty are also being developed.

Beyond the classroom, the vibrant environmental interest among RC students manifests itself in ever-developing extracurricular activities such as the Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation Club, Nature Walking Club, Upcycling Initiative, and the Apis mellifera Initiative which works with the beehives on campus. Among all this tremendous work, spirit of

Birds That Can Be Spotted on the RC Campus

Middle-spotted woodpecker, pied wagtail, tawny owl, Eurasian jay, great tit, Eurasian wren, chiffchaff, swift, yellow-legged gull, hoopoe, chaffinch, blackbird, European robin, laughing dove, hooded crow, blue tit, song thrush, common buzzard, magpie, house sparrow, starling, Eurasian nuthatch, willow warbler, green woodpecker, ring-necked parakeet.



Ring-necked Parakeet



Great Tit



Laughing Dove



European Roller

collaboration with other schools' environmental groups, as well as with a wider community, is paramount. RC already cooperates with TÜRÇEV (Environmental Education Foundation of Turkey), World Wide Fund for Nature Turkey, Fridays for Future Turkey and Permatürk Foundation. As designated in the sustainable stewardship policy, RC is also planning to collaborate with researchers in the field of forestry, botany and ecology to survey the biodiversity on campus. Inviting experts for workshops, identifying field methods for research and overseeing the involvement of students in research and analysis are also in the works. There is no doubt that the ongoing work around environmental sustainability at RC is of critical importance, challenging, and exciting.

Pioneering Environmental Education

"Environmental Education at Robert College is bursting with ideas we want to develop and implement on campus and beyond."

RCQ asked the co-heads of Environmental Education - biology teacher Dünya Önen RC L3 03 and physics teacher Stephen Holz who set to work on this critical topic in August 2020 - to update the RC community on the philosophy behind Environmental Education and what is being done.



Co-heads of Environmental Education Dünya Önen RC L3 03 and Stephen Holz

What are your objectives in order to make RC an environmentally friendly school?

The approach to RC Environmental Education is based on four pillars:

I. Education - We want to incorporate environmental concerns and topics into all relevant subjects and include the study of the environment in all classes whenever possible. LP and L10 English have already started this process. In the future, we hope that RC will offer independent study classes to L11 and L12 students based on in-depth analysis of concrete problems and potential solutions. In addition, the RC Social Entrepreneurship Innovation and Creativity initiative at RC is focusing on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 13 to examine and offer solutions to climate change.

II. Outreach - Students need to find their voice in the climate crisis which will always be present in their lives. The changing climate, more extreme weather, rising waters and environmental degradation are all topics that students need to be educated about, active with and engaged in. It is their future. Living purposefully is a must. Good ideas need to become effective actions, and then they must be shared with a wider community.

III. Zero Waste - Our goal is to bring the RC campus as close to zero-waste, zero-energy as possible. To that end we are exploring solar energy production, energy conservation and more efficient use of water resources. We are also collecting food waste from the Murat Karamancı Student Center



Japanese cherry blossom



Laurustinus



Small copper butterfly



Shelf fungus



Tortoise



Bladder campion



Hedgehog



Green beetle



Garden clippings and other organic waste is being composted at a remote site on campus

and composting as much of this as possible. We expect students with engineering interests to take an active part in these endeavors.

IV. Biodiversity Study and Expansion

- The RC campus is an amazing 65-acre oasis in urban Istanbul. Did you know that we have four California Redwood trees on campus? In fact it is estimated that there are over 70 different species of trees, well over 100 different flowers and uncounted types of insects, birds and mammals living with us here. Our goal is to both bring this amazing biodiversity into our awareness, and to enhance this biodiversity through carefully studied actions.

What steps are crucial to achieve these goals? What is needed to achieve these steps? What is the timeline?

A large part of this effort is making people more aware of our current environmental degradation and the true cost of our actions regarding consumption of plastics and fossil fuels, the loss of biodiversity, how much waste we generate and what impact could be made with any conservation. The price we are paying is reflected in climate change and diminished opportunities in the entire biosphere.

Closer to home, we need to get RC leadership, faculty, the Business Office and the entire grounds and custodial crew moving in the same direction. To achieve this coordination, we are forming a 5–10-year Environmental Education and Sustainability Plan and a method to implement it effectively, together with our consultants Gülin Yücel RC 88 (see p. 45) and Dr. Levent Kurnaz, the director of the Climate Change and Policies Research Center at Boğaziçi University. Dr. Kurnaz is also the co-founder of the Turkish chapter of the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network (UN SDSN).

What is RC's plan for becoming a zero-carbon school?

To be a zero-carbon school, a few things must happen. The first is that we need to have a clear picture of our current carbon footprint and then aggressively work toward reducing it to the maximum extent possible. Since actually going to zero is nearly impossible within reasonable budgetary constraints, carbon offsets could be purchased to bring the number to zero. RC has begun to look at our current carbon footprint, but we still have quite a long way to getting a clear picture of our use of

electrical and gas energy or ways to reduce it. Solar and wind energy have been on the agenda before and will be looked at again once we have a comprehensive plan for the school.

You started working on this program in August 2020. What are the steps taken so far? What are the initiatives?

Environmental Education at Robert College is bursting with ideas we want to develop and implement on campus and beyond. The pandemic has kept the students and most of the faculty off campus, and that limits how much we can accomplish. One area that we are able to work on is the separation of waste food in the cafeteria and the infrastructure to deal with it. We hope to be ready with a working system when the students come back and we have over 1400 people on campus every school day. We are preparing an instructional video and signs to explain that we will be separating organic from inorganic waste in the kitchen, and the waste in the cafeteria into 4 categories: Organic, Dairy, Meat/Fish, Paper/Plastic. The paper and plastic will be recycled; the meat and fish will be packaged, cooled and fed to the campus cats. We are looking for other organizations that will benefit

from any excess we produce. For the dairy products, we are experimenting with Bokashi composting which will ferment this waste without any odor. The largest category will be the organic waste from the cafeteria and kitchen. We have created an area near Music House to compost all of the leaves, grass and organic food waste. The resultant soil will then be used to create new permaculture garden beds throughout the campus, both as student projects and for interested campus residents. This is a small step toward making the RC campus as near to zero waste as possible.

Teaching For Environmental Sustainability Awareness

Incorporating environmental sustainability awareness into the curriculum, as well as into extracurricular activities, is one of the building blocks of the Environmental Education initiative. RCQ asked RC teachers from different departments about their views on sustainability, how they are transforming their lessons and what they are doing outside of class.

Esin Pulathaneli, Social Studies Department Head and History Teacher

"The transformation of how we view history impacts how we teach history."

Fernand Braudel stated that history is nothing but the continuous questioning of the past for today's problems and worries. The school of history that Braudel spearheaded in the beginning of the 20th century influences the study of history from the perspective of population increases, pandemics, migrations and climate change.

Braudel and his friends, in their work *The Mediterranean* asked whether ancient civilizations were ruined due to drought, desertification, and famine. Some climate scientists and archeologists now claim that the first empire in the world, the Akkadian Empire, was destroyed due to climate conditions and drought. These postulations necessitate that historians change the lenses with which they view the past. This transformation of how we view history impacts how we teach history. It is important to note that the youth are already engaged and committed to change. Therefore, how RC students are learning history is changing as well.

Beginning in 9th grade, we start exploring how environmental conditions and climate change shape historical events. The transition to settled life, the move from being a part of nature to a master of nature are areas that capture student interest strongly every year. We give our students time and space for them to explore the ever-increasing studies in this area and to put their thoughts into writing. They look into pre-historic and historic climate changes, natural disasters and pandemics.

In later years, we continue to underline climate's effect on historical events. For example, they study the Celali Rebellion in Anatolia as a corollary of drought, climate imbalance and diminishing fertile soils that, in turn, cause increasing taxes and political pressure. When they realize that events that look political or military-related on the surface are in fact life-and-death matters that are linked to climate change, they get closer to today's issues. Imperialism and



Ladybug on a daisy stem

Photo: Elizabeth Molton

crises related to industrialization are also reviewed through these types of lenses.

Understanding these past crises can raise awareness about how we can find solutions to the current, more violent ones. It is clear what humanity did to the earth over 10,000 years. We cannot ignore the devastation, and we cannot explain it away by saying



Esin Pulathaneli

Photos: Ipek Tingleff



Yellow salsify tuft



Jointed charlock fruit



Mallow

it came out of necessity. Generation Z is aware that we are running out of solutions and that we need to use the knowledge and technology of the 21st century for sustainability. It is our job as Boomer, Gen X, and Millennial history teachers to create the awareness that we are living in an age of reason and that decreasing carbon emission, changing energy sources and slowing down global warming are possible.

Max Foxall, English Teacher

"The environmental crisis is as much a crisis of culture as it is a scientific crisis."

Within the environmental movement, there are different political positions. Environmentalism is generally seen as a shallow response to the climate crisis: it is a position that essentially involves protecting human interests and quality of life. So the term itself is problematic as it is anthropocentric; it sees nature as only having value in terms of its use to humans, and views humans as superior to nature. Many green activists instead define themselves as deep ecologists and demand recognition of the intrinsic value of nature and urge a radical change in human self-understanding: that we should see ourselves not as individuals separate from (and



Max Foxall

superior to) nature but as part of a greater living identity.

It is crucial for everyone because we live in a time of environmental crisis. And it is as much a crisis of culture as it is a scientific crisis. The shift that I described above from a human-centered to a nature-centered system of values brings ecological thinking into opposition with almost the entirety of Western philosophy and religion. Therefore, it requires analysis in cultural as well as scientific terms. Teachers of the arts and humanities have a responsibility to equip students with the knowledge that will enable them to understand the environmental crisis from a cultural perspective because significant cultural change is needed if we are to solve this global issue.



A tortoise walking through the forest near the Faralyali Trail

Research Support

RCQ asked RC Head Librarian Cara Murphy Keyman about how the beloved Ibrahim Bodur Library contributes to the environmental movement.

"In order to support environmental education on campus the library has begun curating resources to support the various initiatives and curriculum by creating a webpage devoted to environmental issues. Our main focus this year has been on two issues: climate change resources and supporting the work of the students and faculty working on the biodiversity of the Robert College campus. We also provide reference help/guidance to students working on environmental topics. The library actively searches for and purchases both print and electronic resources to support environmental education."



From an academic point of view, students need to understand that nature is always culturally constructed, and that its construction always has political implications, if not an outright political agenda. Students also need to understand that contributions to the environmental debate can be seen as examples of rhetoric, and therefore an understanding of rhetoric will enable them to participate in these debates. We have to challenge students to reflect on their own relationship to

nature and the extent to which it is anthropocentric. The unit on Nature and Environmental Writing that we introduced in Lise 10 exposes students to key concepts from ecocriticism, a branch of cultural/literary theory, and then uses those concepts to explore nature poetry and environmental nonfiction, including, for example, Rachel Carson's seminal environmental text, *Silent Spring*. The students then have to write a research-informed environmental essay that addresses the RC community and either challenges the community to make changes in our daily lives and/or advocate for environmental justice and sustainability in the wider world. This is the first year we've taught a unit like this, so there's still a lot for us to learn in terms of best practice.

Ferdağ Sezer, Geography Teacher

"Through our projects, RC students experience firsthand that natural resources can be preserved and renewed through smart designs."

The natural resources of the earth are not unlimited. We have to be aware and accept that we need to rehabilitate the earth. We are responsible for the future generation, and we need to teach them about the problems the environment faces, so that they can design a lifestyle and culture that is sustainable. Preservation of resources and values is possible only if we understand and design the system and its parts in an integrated manner. Geography as a discipline examines climate, landscape, economic activities, settlements, socio-cultural structures over the entire earth, as well as regionally and vis-à-vis humans. Sustainability is inherent in the geography discipline, as the preservation of natural resources and humans is one of its basic principles.

In geography classes at RC, students develop awareness around their immediate and far environments, through methods that incorporate research, observation, and acquisition of skills. The permaculture projects that we conduct are a great example. These projects bring together natural



RC teachers Ferdağ Sezer (left) and Erol Şahin (center) with Taner Aksel RC 87 (right) during a student permaculture project in 2015

processes that involve soil, air, water, energy and flora, so that students can experience firsthand that all of these natural resources can be preserved and renewed through smart designs. In past projects, we established a vegetable garden, food and forest waste center, and composting area. Students were able to manage the projects by interacting with plants, soil, microorganisms, water, sun and wind,

and see how they are all interlinked. Thinking about maximizing fertility in a small space, using water and energy carefully and in a renewable way, and fighting erosion are among many other things they learned. This multi-factor environment enables them to think in an integrated manner and find solutions addressing global warming and climate change.

Face-to-Face with Turtles: The İztuzu Dalyan Trip

One of the pivotal points in the RC curriculum in relation to environmental sustainability issues is the trip Lise 11 students take to İztuzu Dalyan every year. The trip was started in 2019 by biology teachers İpek Tingleff and Sibel Almas in conjunction with DEKAMER (The Association for the Research, Rescue and Rehabilitation of Sea Turtles). The students study the basic anatomy and physiology of sea turtles, their life cycle and all aspects of conservation of their nesting area. They do fieldwork on the beach, observing turtles in their natural habitat and setting up grids for the protection of their nests. They also clean sea turtle tanks and feed them.



Photo: İpek Tingleff



Ferdağ Sezer

Our students also collaborate with other schools' students, exemplifying how to join forces for a sustainable future. They are ecology-literate, able to look at issues with awareness and wholistically and are able to generate multi-dimensional solutions. They are advocates for the right of other beings. RC students are well on their way to becoming responsible individuals with regards to sustainability.

Aybike Oğuz, English Teacher and Head of Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Creativity

"Social entrepreneurial skills can help young people design solutions for ecological sustainability."

How did social entrepreneurship, which is about developing and implementing solutions to social, environmental or cultural issues, develop at RC?

I started the Social Entrepreneurship Club at RC in 2013 with five students. There were no other models at the high school level. We took on the big task of exploring the question: How can we teach social entrepreneurship at the high school level? Theory U by Dr. Otto Scharmer from MIT and design thinking framework by Stanford Design School proved to be the most useful tools. With the insights we gained, I co-authored a guidebook with Ashoka Turkey entitled *Üniversiteli Sosyal Girişimciler İçin Yol Haritası* (A Roadmap for Social Entrepreneurs at University).

Having social entrepreneurship, innovation, and creativity become a strategic focus at RC was a critical step. The social entrepreneurship ecosystem works on UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). SDG 13 Climate Action is the most urgent for a sustainable, eco-centric future. As the Social Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Creativity Office (RCSEIC), we designed the SDG 13 Climate Action Challenge Program. It aims to equip

our students with the design thinking mind and skill sets to develop a solution to this local and global crisis.

Four teams worked on this challenge this year and shared their projects with the RC Community initially to get feedback. In May, they presented their projects to a jury of academics, educators and social entrepreneurs. Impressed by the proposals, the school and jury members decided to invest in all four projects, together with support from the Derin Uras Environmental Fund and the Charlie Hoppin Memorial Fund (see p. 15). These projects, which will be implemented next year, include a permaculture garden and a food forest – both on campus, an app to



Aybike Oğuz

Some of the Beautiful Plants on Campus

Cretan rock rose, sage leaf rock rose, common field speedwell, snowdrop, hawthorn, maple tree, star of Bethlehem, field marigold, common daisy, tassel grape hyacinth, meadow buttercups, little leaf linden tree, common medlar, oleaster leaf-pear, field clover, red clover, black locust, yellow Spanish broom, cedar of Lebanon, purple dead-nettle, lyrata bellflower, bladder campion, sweet scabious, little robin, greengage plum, common chicory, Judas tree, giant fennel, umbrella pine, broomrape, silver wattle, purple viper's bugloss, narrow leafed rupin, shepherd's purse, common mallow, oak, European ivy, turpentine tree, perforate St. John's wort, hemlock, periwinkle, red horse chestnut, bay laurel, pink-butterfly orchid, hairy crocus

Source: Campus Field Guide

Photos: First column Ipek Tingleff; second column

A. Seha Karabacak RC 20; third column top

Tim Koehn; third column middle and bottom Abudullah Keleş RC 19



Bladder Campion



Hawthorn



Cedar of Lebanon



Star of Bethlehem



Field Marigold



Common Mallow



Cretan Rock Rose



Common Daisy



Common Field Speedwell

track water usage, and an app to help consumers choose environmentally-friendly products.

What do social entrepreneurship and environmentalism have to offer to each other, and how do they complement one another?

When our students graduate, regardless of the discipline they choose to study, they will have to respond to multi-disciplinary, complex problems, which require an understanding of systems thinking.

Social entrepreneurial skills can help young people design solutions for ecological sustainability. In return, environmentalism teaches us that we are all a part of an ecosystem. Once a changemaker internalizes this understanding, social impact, ethical fiber and sustainability become guidelines in anything they design in any field.

What should the students equip themselves with in this area when they graduate?

Connection with self, connection with the perceived other, and connection with nature. These will require them to develop skills such as empathy, teamwork, problem solving, and creativity.



RC 20 alum A. Seha Karabacak (right) prepared the RC Field Guides with biology teacher İpek Tingleff (left) while he was a student

İpek Tingleff, Biology Teacher

"My goal as a biology teacher is to create citizens who love spending time outdoors, who love and appreciate nature."

Could you tell us about your environmental work at RC?

Living on campus, I went around for years with books in my hand to identify the plants and the birds. I tried to help my students appreciate nature walks and observations.

I incorporated teacher-guided walks into the RC biology curriculum, to identify the trees around campus. I also developed a project assignment in the Plants unit where students prepared

reports/posters on plants they chose. I started hanging "The Bird of the Week" posters - informative signs about birds on campus. I discussed them in my classes every Monday. I received interesting comments from students such as, "Do we have enough kinds of birds to introduce one every week?" Of course we do! Another student said, "I thought every little bird I saw was a sparrow," which is obviously not the case. At the same time, I started the Nature Walking Club which aims to foster interest in nature among students and introduce them to nature walking and birdwatching as a healthy lifelong hobby.

Exciting Partnership with Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanical Garden

An exciting project in the works is RC's collaboration with the Nezahat Gökyiğit Botanical Garden (NGBG). RCQ asked Environmental Education co-head and biology teacher Dünya Önen to provide some details:

"Our connection with NGBG has been established through Burçin Çingay, Head of Science at NGBG. Biology teacher İpek Tingleff, geography teacher Ferdağ Sezer, geography teacher Güneyi Vural, and I are involved from the RC side. We are working together to draft a project proposal which will in the next three years aim to educate our students as citizen scientists, catalog our biodiversity with herbarium samples, and revive our past and current Natural History collection. Important components of this project include the digitization of data, and creation of a website and a mobile app to locate biodiversity on our campus.

This project perfectly exemplifies the spirit of collaboration needed for environmental sustainability. It will hopefully be a long-term partnership with great potential for scientific publications and student involvement."

We also created the RC Field Guide with my Nature Walking Club students, a project that lasted two years under the leadership of club president A. Seha Karabacak RC 20. We referred to books specialized on the flora of the Belgrade Forest and of Istanbul to identify the species that are closely related. We tried to use original photos as much as possible. We keep adding new species of plants and birds to the guide as we observe and identify them. While this Field Guide is only about plants and birds for the moment, we started adding fungi as well. There is also a rich fauna that should be included in the guide, ranging from tortoises to weasels, from lizards to hedgehogs. I started an Instagram account - @rcnaturewalkingclub - during the pandemic for the students who cannot come to campus.



Apis mellifera Initiative co-advisor Maria Sezer checks the beehives on campus. The bees moved to RC in 2020.



This is just a start, a spark to instill a love of nature in the students who always rush from one building to another, from one class to another.

What are the takeaways of the students in these clubs and initiatives?

My goal as a biology teacher is to create citizens that love spending time outdoors, love and appreciate nature. You preserve and cherish something you love. As I always say to my students, you probably won't be a biologist, botanist, ornithologist or entomologist, but at least you should be able to answer the questions of your future children as you go for a walk in the woods. Students who participate in the club and the Dalyan Ecological (see box on p. 36) trip hopefully will become influential citizens who will make an effort in environmental conservation.

Maria Sezer, Art Teacher and Co-advisor of AMI - Apis mellifera Initiative with Stuart Arey, Science Department Head and Physics Teacher

"Bees are a great starting point for seeing the world as an interlocking system."

The beehives brought a lot of excitement to the RC community. Why did you want to have them in the first place?

I am a hobbyist apiarian and also work with some bee-made materials in my practice as an artist. When I came back to RC after 20 years and met Stuart Arey, I learned he had been a commercial beekeeper before becoming a teacher. Of course we started dreaming about having bees on campus as soon as we met!

Adam Oliver was a great force behind the plans, since he is passionate about making RC a green school. We obtained the bees from a befriended beekeeper and the beehives from near Marmaris. We had several walks around campus to look for an ideal location and finally decided on an isolated spot far away from the school buildings, which is also a safe space for the bees.

As Stuart states, 'Bees are part of the cycle of life. They are an important pollinator that helps maintain a diverse population of plants. Diversity leads to a healthy environment. If that diversity gets disrupted, it can lead to the decline

or even collapse of plants and animals in a location.' I am hopeful there will be more awareness about the biodiversity of the campus, starting with the AMI members. They should be able to distinguish between the different types of bees. I also hope to create more awareness of the diversity of the flora, especially the nectar-bearing flora.

Bees are a great starting point for seeing the world as an interlocking system, where we all depend on each other. I believe in seeing beauty and sharing it as a powerful educational tool. Love for a subject will create a wish for protection. Robert College has a campus with enough space and vegetation to have a few hives, so the students can work with them and experience them.

We know you extracted 8 kilos of honey last year. How do the bees like the campus?

The bees are doing fine, and there is quite a lot of flora for the needed nectar and pollen. The honey is a mixture of the many nectar sources on campus. A large source of the honey this year came from a number of gigantic linden trees which flutter at the time they flower

Photo: İpek Tingleff



Bee collecting dandelion pollen

with the movement of the bees in them! These trees are treasures, as they may be more than 100 years old! I hope we can plant more nectar-rich plants that make for very tasty honey, like lavender and sage. Another hope I have is to propagate the lavender I have seen on campus as a part of the AMI activities.

What are the plans going forward?

Going forward we plan to make the bees thrive and share our love for them with as many RC students and residents as possible. Ultimately this will lead to more ecological awareness and activism. I also hope for students to be able to film inside the hives, extract propolis and make tinctures with this, maybe make candles or creams. There is a lot to discover and do still.

Upcycling Initiative Mentors Sude Işıl Baştuğ RC 20 and Nüket Ergelen, Academic Deans' Office Assistant

"In the process of upcycling an object, the students learn to change their points of view about an object."

What is upcycling? What is the Upcycling Initiative at RC?

Upcycling is re-using a product in such a way that the new product is more valuable than the original one. It is giving a second chance

to an item that seems like waste. As the Upcycling Initiative, we started by upcycling items in the CIP depot to contribute to CIP annual fundraising. We held workshops on how to make beeswax wraps and paper wallets. Due to the pandemic, we had to adapt our work to online platforms. We created an Instagram account where we introduce upcycling, share our projects and inform people about our events. We also organized two Upcycling Challenges where the RC community was invited to participate with their upcycled projects. Currently, we are hosting guest speakers who are knowledgeable in this area to share their experiences with us.

What is the aim of your students? Why do they want to get involved?

The aim of our students is to learn what upcycling is and how they can apply it to their daily lives outside of school. They would like to learn how to reduce their waste and when it is possible, utilize it as effectively as possible. As they gain more insight about the subject, they intend to share it with people around them to make upcycling more common.

What kind of skill sets do the students get when they experience upcycling?

In the process of upcycling an object, the students learn to change their point of views about an object. Instead of seeing it as waste, they see the opportunity for it to become a whole different thing. They become more aware of the objects and the environment around them, thus, more sensitive towards them. They enhance their creativity and go beyond the limits of their imagination. In addition to these soft skills, they learn how to safely use a drill, choose an appropriate paint for a material, search for environmentally friendly products and many more. These are skills that they can apply to their everyday lives.

What are your future plans?

We are an initiative under the Robert College Environmental Movement,



Sude Işıl Baştuğ RC 20

and our aim is to make the Robert College community more aware of upcycling so that it can become a part of our everyday lives. Our goal is to use upcycling as a tool to create awareness about concepts such as the environment and sustainability. With this purpose in mind, we would like to work on projects where everyone can get involved, have an active social media presence and interact with other people who are experienced in this area to learn from them.



During Upcycling Challenges students and teachers are invited to share their projects

RC Alumni in Environmental Sustainability: Illuminating the Way Forward

RC alumni are at the forefront of both raising awareness for and actively managing projects around environmental sustainability. They offer experience, direction and inspiration!

Nergis Yazgan ACG 67 Put Preservation on the Agenda

I “I am grateful to RC for showing how to seek wisdom and help all on your own.”



Nergis Yazgan worked at the forefront of the environmental movement as the director of both Doğal Hayatı Koruma Derneği and WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) Türkiye for many years.

What is the story behind the founding of WWF in Turkey?

How and why I became obsessed with nature protection has its roots in three things: My family, where I lived, and ACG - today's Robert College.

My father loved nature, but he was a relentless hunter, so ever since I was a toddler, I was outdoors, and I had an innate love for animals. From the age of 12, I was allowed to carry a loaded gun and shoot. Over time, I started questioning the killing part of our

outings. I was intoxicated in nature, but depressed during hunting.

We lived in Bebek (a small town then) in a big garden between the Bosphorus in the front and the İpar Grove in the hinterland. This setup gave me all the unique tastes of nature – collecting mulberries and walnuts in the gardens, making wigwams and going swimming.

When I was accepted to ACG in 1958, I was ready to relish every bit of this extraordinary school –this beautiful woodland with all its diverse botanical treasures, birds and squirrels.

With the above in my “backpack”, I was ready to plunge into nature conservation, when I became President of DHKD (Doğal Hayatı Koruma Derneği; Wildlife Protection Association) in 1985. The reason Belkis Balpınar, then Founding President of DHKD, wanted to hand me the presidency of this fledgling society was that she knew I had a deep love for nature and could give the association a new life.

I did not even know the difference between a society (association) and a foundation or a board meeting and a trustee meeting. In fact, I had no clue what working as an NGO meant. I learned everything during the many years I worked as president and CEO for DHKD and later WWF.

Over the course of 1985-1998, DHKD merged with WWF. The modest association founded in 1975 mainly to save the bald ibis from extinction in the Birecik region now became the National Organization (NO) for Turkey within the big network of WWF International. The main reason for being invited on board was the extraordinary hard work and success DHKD had in saving the İztuzu Beach in Köyceğiz, Dalyan from becoming a huge tourism development, thus securing the breeding grounds for the loggerhead sea turtles (Caretta caretta) for the future.

What are the positive changes you observe in this field?

I am very saddened that along with species and habitats becoming vulnerable or extinct, we now have even more major planetary problems like climate change.

On the other hand, more and more people living in villages or townships are putting up a fight to protect their forests or to battle against big multinational mining companies.

How did your education help shape your future?

I am eternally grateful to Robert College for giving us an incredible education – in all directions education can take you and showing how to seek wisdom and help all on your own.

Ali Nihat Gökyiğit RC ENG 46 Defends Nature Through the Decades

“We have started understanding nature better.”



Ali Nihat Gökyiğit is one of the leaders in the fight to protect Turkey's biodiversity through two organizations he founded, the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation and the Protection of Natural Habitats (TEMA) and the Ali Nihat Gökyiğit Education, Health, Culture, Art and Preservation of Natural Resources Foundation (ANG).

Why did you found TEMA?

In the 1970s, Hayrettin Karaca and I used to chat about nature all the time. He had become aware that erosion was rampant, during his travels to collect specimens for his Arboretum. I had grown up in Artvin, known for its biodiversity, and was aware of the damage done to nature during my travels as a young engineer. Over time, we felt it was inadequate to just talk about these problems. We decided to establish a foundation to educate and convince the public through projects that showed that solutions were possible. TEMA was launched in 1992, and with almost one million volunteers, it is one of the most embraced NGOs in Turkey.

What types of impact has TEMA had since its inception?

As of 2020, our activities extend to 81 cities, 404 districts, 123 neighborhoods and 56 universities,

amounting to 664 locations. We have almost 900,000 volunteers. Together we fought against water erosion. We took up the Konya Karapınar and Iğdır wind erosion problems. Our “10 billion oak seeds meet the earth in 25 years” project created a lot of excitement. Our sapling donation efforts are going on full force. We can say that Turkish people have cultivated a passion for trees, friendship towards nature and a passion for nature preservation through our efforts.

Why did you establish the ANG Foundation?

Over time, the idea of establishing a foundation to generate funds and continuity for biodiversity issues took hold of me. That is how the ANG Foundation came into being.

One of our important activities is creating botanic gardens that showcase the plant world. The memorial park I built for my wife Nezahat is now part of the Foundation and is the first and only botanic garden that is located in a highway interchange. The Illustrated Flora of Turkey project that aims to record our valuable biodiversity started in this garden! There are also projects around endangered endemic and rare plants of Turkey, tree farming focusing on fast growing trees and bees.

Can you tell us about the Maçahel Project?

When TEMA first started, we took into account that some damage to nature was due to poverty. Therefore, we included rural development projects in our program and focused on Maçahel (see RCQ 24, p. 26).

After a nine-month search, we discovered that the pure Caucasian bee, once thought extinct, was alive. This was a fertile species, able to draw nectar out of every type of flower with their long tongues, and resistant to tough weather conditions. We started by educating and organizing, and bee production is now in full force. The second phase was the creation of organic farming. The third phase was nature tourism. We developed travel routes. I also built a guest house which I donated to TEMA, and we renovated village houses to create motels.

What gives you hope for the future?

Our dependence on an ecosystem whose balance is enabled by biological richness is now recognized. We have started understanding nature better, now that natural disasters, climate change and drought have entered our lives. NGOs and governmental organizations are working hard to educate people. I hope that the public's interest will only increase.

How did RC influence your love of nature?

I attended walks in nature at RC which reminded me of my childhood in Artvin. Connection to nature was highlighted in our classes. During geology class, different natural stones would be passed around for us to specify the type through observation. Our geography teacher Ziya Bey would go to a different part of Turkey every summer and come back and tell us his observations. I want to underline how our teachers loved teaching.

Rahmi Koç RC 51

Keeps Clean Waters on Turkey's Ecological Agenda

“We all have to face the sea and not turn our back to it. Sea is life, sea is bread, sea is tourism.”

A giant in the Turkish business world, Rahmi Koç is also a role model in philanthropy and social responsibility. DenizTemiz Derneği/TURMEPA is an NGO he founded which continues to be at the forefront for the fight for clean bodies of water.

How did you create DenizTemiz?

In 1992, I became the president of the Turkish-Greek Business Council to facilitate economic cooperation between Turkey and Greece. My Greek counterpart was not an active businessman. Though I proposed many projects, I couldn't get them off the ground. At a meeting I was approached by Mr. George Livanos, the biggest Greek shipping magnate at the time. He said “I founded HELMEPA (The Hellenic Marine Environment Protection Association) in 1982. You should start TURMEPA (Turkish Marine Environment Protection Association), and let's cooperate.” When I got back to Istanbul, I brought together 80 of my friends, all devoted to the sea. They agreed to be founding members. We established DenizTemiz on April 8, 1994.

Where have you made the most impact?

Our main objective was to keep our seas clean, our lakes uncontaminated, and to take care of our rivers. Soon we realized that the subject was vast, education was needed, and discipline around this issue had to start from an early age. Twenty-seven years ago no one really cared about the



environment. Public awareness was low. We started by educating primary school teachers; then we moved onto students.

Both our studies and the work of the International Maritime Organization showed that water transport contributed to sea contamination only by 20%. The real culprits were household waste and untreated industrial and agricultural waste. That is why we later moved our focus there.

How are you educating youth and the general public?

We produced countless films, posters, organized conferences. We contacted municipalities, restaurants, hotels and many other organizations. Over time we realized the scale of the problem. No one NGO can solve this problem alone.

We started collecting waste with our boats in some regions. Many of our friends sponsored our efforts. We collected waste on the coasts with the public. Some artists even created works of art from this waste!

How has DenizTemiz evolved over the years?

At first the attitude of many towards DenizTemiz was “so what?” Our second president Eşref Cerrahoğlu built more awareness around these problems and especially gave momentum to education. Our third president Tezcan Yaramancı institutionalized our NGO, something we vastly needed. Our current president got more people to adopt the idea that our seas, lakes, and rivers need to be kept clean. Our governments and bureaucrats realized the severity of the situation, appreciated our efforts and helped us.

I remember a story: Forty years ago, my friend Ayşegül Nadir saw that trash was being thrown in the sea and that the municipality was not collecting trash. Some of us got together and hired a truck to collect the trash. We thought the truck was taking the trash to the waste area. We soon realized that the driver was collecting the trash, passing our neighborhood and just throwing the trash in the sea further down the coast at Üsküdar! It took us 40 years to transform that mentality.

We all have to face the sea and not turn our back to it. Sea is life, sea is bread, sea is tourism.

Taner Aksel RC 87 Spearheads Permaculture in Turkey

“We need a design process to quickly regenerate nature that we have polluted and destroyed.”

Taner Aksel is the founder of Belentepe Permaculture Farm. He has also founded the Permatürk Foundation, along with some of his classmates.

What is permaculture?

Permaculture is the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. We need a design process to quickly regenerate nature that we have polluted and destroyed.

In permaculture design we initially observe natural patterns and processes and collect local information. These become our guides. We define all components of our design, and then we try to establish multi-benefit relationships among these components – which eventually would increase the resilience of the whole system.

How did you get involved in permaculture? How did you found Belentepe, and what are your activities there?

In 1998 my wife Ece Tümer Aksel RC 86 and I bought a 1.5-hectare piece of land on the outskirts of Uludağ. It was a fallow wheat field. We planted 700 grape vines and about 80 fruit tree saplings. It took years for the grapes and fruit trees to establish. Yet once they started fruiting, we could not obtain much produce. We lost much of the harvest to disease or drought most years. By 2010 I had come to a crossroads; either I would quit this dream or I would learn natural farming and then practice it on my land.

I started looking for courses on natural farming and living. Fortunately a permaculture design certificate course was being given in Istanbul

in November 2010. The teachers of this course were two Australians: Bill Mollison, the founder of permaculture, and Geoff Lawton, a world-renowned permaculture consultant and designer. The first day they showed that I was totally illiterate on how life and nature works. I started with composting, mulching, natural gardening, and I did the permaculture design of my land. Then I started living on the land and implementing the design. In 2013 Belentepe Permaculture Farm was established.



From 2013 onwards, we started accepting volunteers. Word got around and more people wanted to visit and learn what we were doing there. I started giving permaculture courses. Until Covid, we organized many such courses and sustainability workshops at the farm.

What is the RC connection in all of these activities?

In spring of 2014, two RC geography teachers, Necla Sönmezay and Ferdağ Sezer, visited Belentepe. When they got back to RC, they started small gardening projects and asked me to speak at a seminar. We held an introduction to permaculture course at RC and about 120 students and teachers from various schools attended it (see RCQ 47, p. 15). Following the course, sustainability and permaculture clubs were founded at the attending schools, and many gardening projects sprouted. We started working with and hosting schools at Belentepe, including RC.

Word got around and a group of my friends from RC 87 spent a weekend at Belentepe. Some of my friends from this group asked me how they could be involved. I told them that the only way we can make a bigger impact is if we worked together and helped each other. We started meeting, discussing numerous issues and finally founded Permatürk Foundation. Among the 29 founders are some of the teachers we worked together over the years, my wife and I, and five of my RC friends.

We would love to host our RC family at our foundation and discuss how we can support each other and grow this movement further, together.

For more details visit permaturk.org

Gülin Yücel RC 88

Pours a Decade of Experience into New Book

I “We need to realize our impact and take responsibility.”

Gülin Yücel worked at IBM for many years before she turned to sustainability consulting. She recently published a book with Prof. Levent Kurnaz, *Yeni Gerçeğimiz: Sürdürülebilirlik* (Our New Reality: Sustainability; Yeni İnsan Yayınevi), edited by Zeynep Karaarslan Başaran RC 88.

Why did you decide to publish this book?

We have been active in the field of sustainability for over a decade. We write regularly for “green media” and in our blogs. We decided that our ideas needed to be documented and shared with greater audiences. That’s how the idea to publish a book came about.

What are some of the practical actions we can take today for a more sustainable future, particularly in terms of the environment?



We are transgressing planetary boundaries –using a lot more of earth’s resources than we should. We need to realize our impact and take responsibility. We cannot put the blame on governments or businesses – no government or business can risk popularity by losing votes or

consumers, respectively. If we use bridges and roads, there will be more of them. If we buy overpackaged goods that come from the other side of the world, there will be businesses and intermediaries who will serve us.

How did your experience at RC prepare you for a career in sustainability consulting?

I was strolling around Gould Hall one weekend. My mind was busy with whether I should pursue my shining career in global environments or dare to start all over again, to do something more impactful, for society and the planet. I noticed a message on the wall: “Our teachers strive to develop the skills and talents of each student and to instill in them a passion for lifelong learning.” It was a turning point. I took a different route and dared to dwell in the unknown.

Raşit Bilgin RC 94 Teaches Ecology and Conservation

I “We should work together to learn about the impacts of our lifestyles on nature.”

Raşit Bilgin is an Associate Professor of Biology at Boğaziçi University’s Institute of Environmental Sciences, focusing specifically on ecology and conservation.

What does your work at the Institute of Environmental Sciences entail?

My work focuses on wildlife research. I use genetic methods to gain a better understanding of biodiversity and to help with species conservation. I focus on bats (my personal favorites since when I was an undergraduate), dolphins, corals, and marine invertebrates. My research group has been using a relatively new approach, called environmental DNA (eDNA) metabarcoding, to help characterize marine biodiversity in Turkey and Antarctica. We capture traces of DNA from sea water samples and analyze them to learn what species live in these regions.



The effect of climate change varies among different individual species; some species will be able to adapt to changing climate conditions or modify their ranges, while others will go extinct, and some may even benefit. The eDNA work we do will help to create baseline assessments

of species diversity in marine regions. This is important, as without these baseline data, we cannot properly study how species’ compositions are altered by climate change.

How has RC impacted the path you have chosen?

I was always interested in nature and conservation, and probably my first actions in this regard were taken at RC, through recycling. I was part of the Explorers Club, and our camping trips were my first steps towards appreciation and excitement for doing fieldwork in nature. In a more general sense, one of the most important tools for a scientist in doing their work is critical thinking, and RC’s integration of critical thinking into both our education and our world view has helped me significantly in the path I have chosen.

Çağan H. Şekercioğlu RC 93 Draws Attention to Biodiversity

“RC nature was my inspiration.”



Prof. Dr. Çağan H. Şekercioğlu is a biology professor at the University of Utah, a visiting professor at Koç University, the founder of KuzeyDoğa Society, and a conservationist, focusing on the preservation and appreciation of the unique plants and animals of Anatolia.

What does being a conservationist mean?

Biodiversity and ecosystems are threatened by climate change, habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, invasive species like feral cats, exploitation of wildlife, pollution and emerging diseases.

Being a conservationist means becoming aware of these issues, understanding how ecology works, realizing the complexity of the problems threatening biodiversity, studying and publishing about those problems, educating the public through interviews, articles and documentaries and taking action to actively protect biodiversity and habitats, including

lobbying the government and working with all stakeholders to get new areas effectively protected.

How did RC support your interest in the environment?

Studying in the most beautiful high school campus in Turkey was crucial for me. RC nature was my inspiration. Our amazing library where I checked out and read 54 books in Lise 3 alone was instrumental in my becoming a scientist. I had amazing, passionate, fun teachers. I am especially grateful to Mr. Altuğ and other biology teachers, our ECIS math team teachers, my photography teacher Aydın Ugan, Mrs. Watrous who helped me write my college essays, and Mrs. Göksel who told me that I should apply to US colleges. I was lucky to get into Harvard.

What do you recommend to those who want to go into environmental studies?

In college, studying biology,

environmental sciences or related fields are probably the best, followed by a graduate degree in ecology, environmental sciences or conservation biology. You also need a good education in social sciences and preferably volunteering experience in working with local communities. If you are passionate and good at what you do, you can also find a job with an environmental organization without any scientific training.

Can you tell us about your non-profit organization KuzeyDoğa?

I first came to Kars in 2001 while leading a butterfly expedition from Trabzon to Hakkari. I fell in love with eastern Turkey and decided to establish eastern Turkey's first ornithological (bird) research station here. That expanded to mammals and other organisms and led me to found KuzeyDoğa, a research-based, non-profit, civil society organization. Its mission is the conservation and promotion of the rich biocultural diversity of northeastern Turkey where the Caucasus and Iran-Anatolian global biodiversity hotspots meet. We created a community-based research, education, and capacity building framework that emphasizes the creation of sustainable livelihoods, while focusing on preservation and appreciation of the unique plants and animals of Anatolia.

Since its establishment in 2007, KuzeyDoğa became the only locally-based and research-based environmental NGO in northeastern Turkey, one of the best-known conservation NGOs in Turkey, and a member of various committees on sustainable development, nature and cultural conservation in the region. It was selected as an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Member with the nomination of BirdLife International, National Geographic Society and Wildlife Conservation Society in 2016.

Orhan Yenigün RC 72

Witnesses Decades of Change in Environmental Sciences

“We need academics especially in international affairs that require defending our nation’s rights.”

Prof. Dr. Orhan Yenigün was the manager of the Institute of Environmental Sciences at Boğaziçi University between 1999-2021.

In the many years you spent at the Institute of Environmental Sciences, what kind of changes in the interest of the students in this subject matter have you observed?

In the 70s and 80s sustainability was linked to development, and the main subject was sustainable development. Recently we started to talk about sustainable use of resources and sustainability in areas like energy, agriculture, and tourism. Our students at the Institute of Environmental Sciences found these challenging issues more interesting in comparison to other environmental topics, and we started to offer more courses focusing on them. Eventually, thesis topics at the master’s level were offered in this

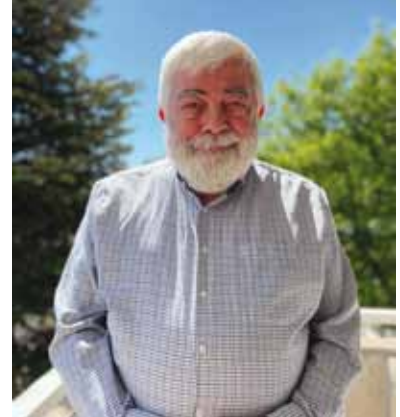
area due to students’ preferences.

What are the qualities necessary for an academic career in this field?

The student, preferably but not necessarily, should have a master’s degree in environmental sciences and have studied related subjects before enrolling in a PhD program. We need academics especially in international affairs that require defending our nation’s rights. We need more experts with a good command of English and who have specialized in environmental sustainability and related subjects.

How has RC impacted the path you have chosen?

During my RC years, all we knew about our environment was limited to Rachel Carson’s book *Silent Spring*, which was a summer reading assignment. During those years the population of metropolitan Istanbul was less than 3



million. The waters of the Bosphorus and the Sea of Marmara were not yet polluted. We had no notion about “sustainable management of resources,” since it seemed that Nature was resilient to incorporate environmental pressures. RC education was effective in gaining freedom of expression in all aspects of life.

Ferit Arsan RA 62 Knows the Ins-and-Outs of Wind Energy

“I would recommend to those interested in wind energy to join the multinational companies based in Turkey.”

Ferit Arsan is one of the first wind energy professionals in Turkey and has been consulting various companies for nearly a quarter century.

What does your work entail?

I have developed a lot of wind projects. I am currently involved in developing a wind farm on the Aegean coast. The most rewarding aspect of this work is to develop feasible projects and sell them to interested parties at suitable prices. Development is a long process; locating a good windy location for the project, choosing the most suitable turbine and obtaining the required government permissions all take time. Completing the erection of the first turbine and starting to generate electrical energy according to the expectations are also very rewarding.

Where is wind energy headed?

Up to this year, incentives for renewable energy generation were very good in Turkey in order to promote local manufacturing. However, the renewable energy incentive has ended this year, so the increase of wind farms will probably slow down.

A lot of other countries around Turkey have just started building wind farms. I think most of them will switch to renewable energy in the coming years. The cost of wind turbines are now about half the price they were 20 years ago, and developing even less windy locations now seems feasible.

I would recommend to those interested in wind energy to join multinational companies based in Turkey so that



they have the flexibility to work beyond Turkey. The wind turbines in Turkey have a capacity of about ten thousand megawatts, and they all need maintenance. Joining one of the companies who take care of periodical maintenance on behalf of turbine manufacturers, or even forming one, are other interesting options.

Ömer Madra RA 64 Inspires Climate Activism

“In climate activism the role of youth – and that of children – unfortunately seems to be essential and indispensable.”



A former academic, writer and founder of Açık Radyo, Ömer Madra is one of the earliest and most vocal climate activists in Turkey.

Why do you think it has been so difficult for people to grasp that there is a climate crisis?

In order to grasp this almost unconceivable failure in acknowledging the greatest threat humanity – and the planet – ever faced, we have to turn our gaze some ten thousand years back. As the cultural historian Jeremy Lent states, the ancient Mesopotamian myth, the Epic of Gilgamesh, contains deep insights into the most profound transition in human history. “For millions of years, foraging was the only way our ancestors could satisfy their hunger from one day to the next. Then, about ten thousand years ago, a radically different way of relating to the natural World emerged and set humankind on a course we’ve

been following ever since. We crossed a Rubicon from which there was no turning back.” (The Patterning Instinct, Prometheus)

According to writer and activist George Monbiot, “In a world that is supposed to lack inherent value, but in which many of us have lost our belief in either the immortal soul or the sanctity of pure reason, we face a void of meaning. We seek to fill it with a frenzy of consumerism. [...] Lent has explained why, despite our knowledge and even our intentions, we continue to follow our path to the precipice. To solve a problem, we need first to understand it... We cannot change the destination until we change the path.” (The Guardian, “Stepping Back from the Brink”, January 2018)

What is the role of youth in climate activism? How do you work with youth, regarding climate activism?

In climate activism the role of youth – and that of children as well – unfortunately seems to be essential and indispensable under the present circumstances. When 14-year-old climate activist Atlas Sarrafoğlu (a volunteer broadcaster at Açık Radyo) asks his 9-year-old counterpart from India, Licypriya Kangujam, if she thinks the responsibility of leading the fight against climate change should be on children, she replies briefly and eloquently:

“Not exactly. If children have to fight, then we have to give up many things like school, dropouts, etc., which is really not a good idea. One important question is why children came out on the streets instead of going to school. This is mainly due to the inaction of our leaders. They are responsible for it. Children are smarter and more concerned for our planet and the future than our leaders.” (Yeşil Gazete, February 4, 2020)

How has your RC education influenced you in your path?

My RC education has had a significant influence on my world outlook to this day. My schoolmates and I were influenced and/or “raised” by the likes of James Baldwin, Charlie Klopp, Floyd Couch, Asa Barber and other public intellectuals of the time. They taught us the huge significance of critical thinking, freedom of expression, of peace-loving, of “the importance of being earnest,” and the rest. We had the opportunity of studying Dante, Cervantes, Shakespeare, Dostoyevsky, Proust, Fikret, Salinger, Orhan Veli, Nazım Hikmet, and the other greats in the span of three short years!

Selin Gören RC 20 Shows That Youth Are Leading the Way

“Climate education doesn’t end in the classroom, and it was really important to me that RC recognized that.”



Selin Gören became a climate activist during her time at RC, and started the Fridays for Future movement in Turkey for high school students. She is now studying at Yale University and recently received the Diana Award for her humanitarian and social work.

What are you studying at Yale, and why have you chosen this path?

I plan to major in biology to

understand all the intricacies of the climate crisis. I’m interested in working on novel carbon-capturing technologies, sustainable energy plans and solutions to biodiversity loss. Whatever I end up doing after graduation, environmentalism and climate activism will be at the core of my work.

What are some of your recommendations to RC students interested in the environmental movement?

The environmental movement is open to all talents and backgrounds. Being creative is a lot more beneficial for the movement than following the herd. My other recommendation would be exposure to opposing views regarding the climate crisis. Try to meet people where they are at, not where you are at. Small actions make all the difference if millions do them. Following ongoing

initiatives and activist groups around the world is a perfect way to discover which aspect of climate justice interests you the most.

Who supported you in this path in RC?

I started practicing permaculture at RC, an important catalyst of my climate journey. My geography teacher Necla Sönmezay made me realize how crucial learning earth sciences is at this moment in time. Mr. Oliver’s support enabled me to balance my schoolwork with my activism. Climate education doesn’t end in the classroom, and it was really important to me that RC recognized that. Ms. Oğuz introduced me to Ashoka Turkey, connecting me to social entrepreneurs. Ömer Madra RC 64 became an important mentor in my life. Nil Sarrafoğlu RC 89 is a big inspiration and one of my greatest supporters.

Kerim Baran RC 89 Facilitates Learning on Solar Energy

“Solar plus batteries will be a major piece of power infrastructure in the world in a decade.”

Kerim Baran has been working in the solar energy field for the last decade. He sold his company CivicSolar in 2019 and is now working on his new passion project.

What is SolarAcademy?

It is a social learning platform for the solar energy industry to create more efficient flows of information, solutions, and capital. Its goal is to increase human consciousness about solar energy and to elicit change.

What are the challenges with solar energy? What is the outlook?

Solar panels have gotten 200 times cheaper in the last 40 years. Batteries are the last frontier to enable mainstream solar use, and they are



also following a similar cost trend. My expectation is that by 2030 solar and batteries will be cheaper than the cost of maintaining the grid. We will still use the grid for baseload and backup,

as well as to exchange energy with neighbors. Solar plus batteries will be a major piece of power infrastructure in the world in a decade or so.

What aspects of your experience at RC influenced where you are now?

Being around people most of whom were much smarter and more competitive than me, I learned pretty fast not to compete on terms that others defined for me, but to create my own unique lane and follow my own path. That usually meant listening to my heart as much as my mind. I invite the RC community to have a look at the content on SolarAcademy.com. If you cannot find answers to your questions, reach out to us at team@solaracademy.com.

Emre Turanlı RC 97

Leads the Transformation of a Global Energy Player

I “Robert College always provides a vision ahead of the times.”

Emre Turanlı has been working at Shell in various leadership roles and countries since 2003. As of June 2020, he is the CEO of Shell&Turas.

How is Shell involved in environmental sustainability? What are your plans going forward?

The world is going through an intense energy transformation, and the key issue at this point is to dramatically reduce carbon emissions worldwide for a better future. Shell supports the most ambitious goal of the Paris Agreement on climate change to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5° Celsius. Shell's target is to become a net-zero emissions energy business by 2050.

Becoming a net-zero emissions energy business means that we are reducing emissions from our operations, and from the fuels and other energy products we sell to our customers. It also means capturing and storing any remaining emissions using technology or balancing them with offsets. We are transforming our business to meet our target, providing more low-carbon energy such as charging for electric vehicles, hydrogen and electricity generated by solar and wind power. We are also working with our customers as they make changes too, including in sectors that are difficult to decarbonize such as aviation, shipping, road freight and industry.

What is Shell's approach to renewable energy? Are you taking steps to diversify away from fossil fuels?

We are an energy provider and a key partner of our stakeholders for



change. In Great Britain, we provide hundreds of thousands of homes with 100% certified renewable electricity. We are meeting the growing needs of electric vehicle drivers – offering drivers access to more than 185,000 public electric vehicle charging facilities in more than 35 countries and plan to increase the number of charge points to around 500,000 by 2025. We also acquired the company named ubitricity, a European provider of on-street charging for electric vehicles.

Additionally, we are exploring ways to produce hydrogen using offshore wind power. Solar is key in our portfolio. Our first solar project in the Middle East is helping to power a smelting company in Oman and cutting its carbon emissions in the process. We are also testing 100% sustainable aviation fuel.

In Turkey, we have solar-powered sites which will increase. We opened

Turkey's first liquefied natural gas (LNG) filling station. Currently, we have 3 EV charging facilities on the Istanbul - Ankara and Istanbul - Izmir highways and continue investment in this area.

What is Shell doing to protect the environment in Turkey?

In Turkey, we have our first Shell Turkey Forest with 3,100 trees. With this forest, we aim to neutralize approximately 105 tons of carbon dioxide, equal to the amount emitted from more than 1,300 cars every year.

Shell is a founding member of the Alliance to End Plastic Waste and we manage our waste with an approach to “consume less, reuse and recycle”. For instance; Our Derince Lubricant and Grease Production Facility, exporting to 65 countries, established the Zero Waste Management System and received the Zero Waste Certificate.

How did RC influence you? How should education change in term of environmental issues?

Robert College always provides a vision ahead of the times. My years in RC have a massive impact on my personality. I think there should definitely be lectures around environment at school. However, this boils down to leadership more than environment knowledge. Most Turkish people think that they should have the convenience of energy usage at its extreme but expect someone else to save the world. Unfortunately it does not work that way, and at the end it is governments and societies who can make a big change.

Jan Nahum RA 67 Believes Electric Vehicles Are the Future

I “Nobody involved in the industry can be immune to the EV revolution.”

Over the past five decades, Jan Nahum has been at the forefront of automotive design and production. As the co-founder of Hexagon Studio, an R&D, design, engineering and consultancy company specialized in the automotive field, he and his company are pioneering electric vehicles in Turkey. Nahum offers RCQ readers a glimpse into the future:



“Electric Vehicles (EV) have been around for decades with controversial reviews particularly as to their impact on the environment. Instead of hydrocarbon fuel tanks, these vehicles rely on batteries which need recharging. The power recharging draws from the grid needs to be supplied to the grid and transported (energy consumption itself) to charging outlets. The source of this energy needs to be clean and renewable in order to maximize the

positive contribution of EVs. If the increase in the need for power were to increase production of plants burning dirty coal as opposed to clean coal or clean energy alternatives, then the overall impact would be harmful. Now, finally these issues have been overcome through advances in battery, motor and control technologies and

an overall systems approach to the supply of power. EVs are the future, and major auto brands have ambitious deadlines for switching completely to EV production by 2030-2035.

“Turkey is a major global auto producer and an important EU supplier. Turkey will profit through this global industry transformation and can catch up with worldwide competition by introducing its local brand. While the technology level of vehicles produced will be at par with worldwide competition, the challenge will be building a recognized brand which will take time and necessitate a Blue Ocean strategy.

“Nobody involved in the industry can disregard, or be immune to the EV revolution. Having spent half a century in it neither could we; we are fully involved in our research center.”

Ersagun Elaçmaz RC 10 Works on Clean Energy Systems

I “Clean energy systems will be an integral part of our future.”

Having studied mechanical engineering, Ersagun Elaçmaz is now a product development engineer at fuel cell producer Ballard.

Why are clean energy systems so important for environmental sustainability?

All our activities require energy in one form or another: We travel, we get items delivered to our door, we watch a video on our phones. Anything we buy requires extraction of raw materials, and that process has an impact on the environment. Clean energy systems can reduce and mitigate the negative impact of our activities on the climate and environment. They are becoming increasingly competitive in terms of efficiency and cost; therefore clean energy systems will be an integral part of our future and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

What does your work as a product development engineer on the design of zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell modules entail?

These fuel cells generate electrical current where the hydrogen is used as fuel and the only by-product that comes out is water vapor. My job entails designing new fuel cell modules that generate more power while they are getting smaller in size to be used mainly on trucks, buses, and trains.

What has been RC's impact on your career?

Continuous learning is key in engineering, especially working on a technology that is novel, but immature like hydrogen fuel cells. I have to be open and alert to new information. RC offers so many tools, curricular or co-curricular, assisted or self-directed, to students to develop lifelong learning habits. I am also going to single out



the Destination Imagination club for being a great program that enhances creative problem solving skills.

Zeynep Yalim-Uzun RC 86

Demonstrates Purpose-Led Marketing

“Consumers are now looking for companies that not only create products and services, but also add value to their communities, as well as to our world.”

As Chief Marketing Officer, Zeynep Yalim-Uzun leads a global marketing team and 14 brands at Arçelik, which spans the globe in 150 countries. In 2020, she was among the 20 women AdAge selected in Europe as Women to Watch for being a catalyst for change within the marketing industry by shaping attitudes and culture.

What role do brands play in encouraging consumers to support climate action?

The key transformation always comes from consumers. Consumers are now looking for companies that not only create products and services, but also add value to their communities, as well as to our world. In order to respond to the shift in demand, we are actively developing products to transform every household into a more sustainable one.

What has been your personal contribution to reaching Arçelik's milestones, particularly in terms of sustainability?

I always believed and advocated that marketing needs to serve a higher purpose than just selling more. My work at Arçelik centers around transforming our brands on their purpose journeys as well as ensuring that our sustainability agenda is translated into products that contribute in a positive way.

As a global first, we created washing machines with built-in microfiber filtration systems. With fast fashion continuously rising, we knew we had



to do something to preserve our water resources. The filter captures up to 90% of microfibers that would otherwise end up in the oceans. We used recycled PET bottles in the production of washing machines, washer-dryer tubs, and air conditioners. We incorporated recycled fishing nets and synthetic yarns into our ovens, washing machines, and dishwashers. Our solar hybrid fridge is designed to curb energy use in Africa where resources are diminishing every day.

After joining the Arçelik team, I initiated the work to align all of our brands on their purpose journeys. For example, on Beko, our largest global brand, we defined “healthy living” as our overarching purpose. With the aim to change the conversation around this concept, we created our global “Live Like a Pro” campaign. With this campaign, we strive to improve public health, especially the health of children and young people, as well as the health of the world we live in.

In line with our “Respecting the World, Respected Worldwide” vision, we set our sustainability goals and are currently following through. For the second time in a row, we have been selected as the leader of our industry in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. We were also named one of the Corporate Knights Global 100 World’s Most Sustainable Companies. Our commitment to doing sustainable business leads us to initiatives such as being carbon neutral in all our operations.

How did your experience at RC influence your life?

Being exposed to cross cultural experiences and languages at such an early age made me very comfortable working across cultures and geographies later on in life. Robert College also helped me evolve as an individual with a strong point of view, who can influence others. Through extracurricular activities such as the Debate Club and MUN, I learned to be sharp with my views and to express them in a convincing way. I especially want to thank Mrs. Akgök who helped me to overcome my fear of public speaking, as well as Mrs. Işıl who showed me how to motivate a team. I also would like to recognize all my teachers who instilled in me intellectual curiosity, which I carried throughout my life. The most common attribute for marketers is our curiosity, so my education in Robert College influenced even my career choice.

Ebru Güvenir RC 91

Promotes the Sustainability Perspective in Banking

“Sustainability is now a driver behind innovation, evolution of new business, and risk management.”



Ebru Güvenir is Senior Vice President of Investor Relations and Sustainability at Akbank.

Why is sustainability such a strategic area of focus for companies?

Sustainability is not a new concept,

but its focus has evolved. The drivers behind this evolution are increasing awareness of climate change and inequality, regulatory requirements and the transfer of capital to the millennial generation, who are “consciously invested” in the concept of sustainability. This changing narrative promotes a much longer-term view of how sustainability is becoming ingrained into business and, as an extension, into corporate culture.

Do you have specific goals related to environment in your company?

We are aware of the critical role of the banking sector in creating a sustainable future and have set specific goals to create meaningful positive change for the environment, such as providing sustainable loan

financing, increasing sustainable investment funds, and becoming a carbon-neutral bank by 2025.

We are proactively working on becoming a more “sustainable company” through measures such as “reskilling” our employees, reducing the negative impact on the environment and investing in communities. We also report our ESG (environmental, social and governance) performance.

Do you have any memories from RC that have impacted what you do today?

RC imparted a sense of community and responsibility. This is a major building block behind my commitment towards sustainability and its inherent benefits for my firm and for greater society.

Onur Göker RC 93

Directs Sustainable Investments to Create Change

“Our environmental problems require a lot of innovative and cross disciplinary solutions.”

Having worked in the finance sector for many years, Onur Göker is now Managing Director at Cowen Sustainable Investments.

Why sustainable investment?

We are now seeing a once-in-a-century type of disruption happening in the technologies available, as well as in the demand from younger generations for change. We may have a window to reverse some severe damage we have done, and I wanted to be part of that momentum.

What type of areas are of particular interest to you?

I focus on businesses that are disrupting the energy, transportation, industrial efficiency, food and



agriculture sectors. We live in a world of hyper-specialty and we can create so much value by simply bringing in a cross-disciplinary approach. At different times in my life, I studied to be a doctor, an engineer, a linguist and

a finance professional, and I failed at all of them! However, the journey gave me an appreciation for how different specialties can be used to innovate and solve problems in different situations. Our environmental problems require a lot of innovative and cross-disciplinary solutions.

How has RC influenced you in your career path?

RC's science education opened my eyes to connections across different fields and the challenges humanity faces. I am grateful to my RC teachers who unearthed my enthusiasm, which fueled me to explore unknown worlds with less fear. That fearless sense of exploration has shaped my career to date.

Ebru Debbağ RC 87 Leads Change in Textile Sector

“Our clothes are a part of the climate crisis, and we have to reverse the narrative to make them part of the solution.”

A veteran of the textile industry, Ebru Debbağ also has her own platform Indigofriends that advocates for a healthier planet.

How have you seen the textile sector move towards environmental sustainability over the years?

The textile industry exemplifies how we succumbed to capitalism, depleted limited resources and discounted human labor to satisfy our desire for more. When fast fashion began to rise, the number of clothing manufacturers increased twofold, while the use-time decreased by half. Annually, 70 million barrels of petroleum go into the production of synthetic fibers, which end up as microfibers in the depths of the oceans, in human placenta or in our lungs. The current recycling rate



from textile to textile is only 1%, and the rest is down-cycled (12%) or left to landfills. Cotton fields, soil health, ecosystems at work, the investment of manufacturers, design work, human labor ...it is never just a pair of jeans; so

much more is integrated. Our clothes are a part of the climate crisis, and we have to reverse the narrative to make them part of the solution. Turkey will need to accelerate its transformation to a circular business system, as one of the biggest suppliers to the EU.

How can RC alumni and students be changemakers in this field?

Get to business on the field! We have an enriched educational and vocational background, and this is where we can work together. Some of us from RC 87 recently set up Permatürk Foundation - the first foundation to have permaculture systems at its core and that shares best practices on sustainability. The RC community is a great resource, and we have to look for like-minded change-makers.

Seray Cengiz Sezer RC 00 Creates a Forward-Looking Brand

“I placed sustainability and eco-friendliness at the heart of my brand.”



her own brand Little Yucca, a baby and kids clothing label designed in collaboration with illustrators, and produced with Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) certified 100% organic cotton. The collections are also mostly gender-neutral.

How does Little Yucca relate to environmental sustainability issues?

I was well-aware of the harm of textile production to the environment. Therefore, I placed sustainability and eco-friendliness at the heart of my brand. This is a necessity rather than a choice. Sourcing certified organic cotton fabrics is our priority. A brand has to do a lot more for environmental sustainability. As an independent label, we aim to shape our whole process with sustainability in mind. We turn our scrap fabrics into baby accessories. We minimize the usage of plastic polybags that are necessary for long distance transport and re-use

them. We ship our online orders with re-usable cotton bags.

How has RC impacted where you are today?

RC taught me two very important things: to question and to not settle. There were times when questioning and not settling were a little painful, but I found what I want to do with my life with these characteristics I developed in my high school years. I am really thankful that they got me to create my own brand and produce garments that I'm proud of. I should also mention the alumni network who were always there for me in my journey. Creating a brand is a multi-stage process, and I had the privilege of consulting a variety of alumni friends in different professions during each step.

Seray Cengiz Sezer worked in the corporate world for 10 years before finally finding the courage to build

For more information visit www.little-yucca.com

Gökçe Günel RC 00

Explores How Climate Change Impacts Inequalities

“Our questions should stretch beyond technological discovery.”

Gökçe Günel is an assistant professor of Anthropology at Rice University and director of Undergraduate Studies.

You focus on renewable energy and clean technology infrastructures in cities. Why are these issues so important for the future?

Cities are spaces of inequality. My academic research focuses on how climate change impacts these existing inequalities. Optimistic scenarios that imagine green cities for the future are perhaps helpful and inspiring in demonstrating that humans can overcome the medical, political and economic crises that define our lives today, but we should also keep in mind that innovation in renewable energy and clean technology does not necessarily result in positive

social transformation for everyone. Renewable energy and clean technology also further demarcate the boundaries between the haves and the have-nots upon whom the formers' lives are predicated. What are some ways of reversing these trends?

What would you recommend to RC students who want to study and work in these areas?

Climate change adaptation and mitigation might appear as an engineering challenge, but it is also a social, political and ethical problem. Our questions should stretch beyond technological discovery.

Has your RC experience influenced your work?

I learned how to focus, how to read



extensively and how to observe the world closely. My life at RC also gave me the confidence to be persistent and daring, and allowed me to follow a trajectory guided by my curiosities.

Özlem Ayalp Ercolini RC 01

Designs with Circular Economy Principles

“I cannot imagine designing a project without thinking about its impact on the world we live in.”



Since 2011, architect Özlem Ayalp Ercolini has been working at the independent consulting firm Arup Italy, as part of the project and program management team. Her expertise is retail projects.

What are circular economy principles, and how do they affect your work?

As defined by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, circular economy aims to create a system that is restorative and regenerative by design. The design of materials, products or business models implements at least one of the three main principles of circular economy, while remaining neutral towards the other two.

- **Principle 1:** Design out waste and pollution. A mental shift is required to consider waste as a design fault.
- **Principle 2:** Keep products and materials in use. It means extending their lifespan through reuse, repair and remanufacture.

- **Principle 3:** Regenerate natural systems, favoring renewable energy and materials, preserving and enhancing natural resources.

I cannot imagine designing or managing a project without thinking about its impact on the world we live in and where my children will live in the future.

What do you recommend to RC students who are interested in architecture and sustainable design?

When studying architecture, interest in sustainable design is a natural consequence in this century. My recommendation would be to be curious and continue looking in the ways RC teaches.

Sargun Tont RC 59 ex

Advocates a Multi-Disciplinary Approach to Sustainability

I “We have to let go of greed.”

An esteemed academic and marine ecology expert, Sargun Tont has also authored many books, penned magazine articles, and worked on documentaries and popular science series for TV.

Why are oceans critical in environmental sustainability?

Oceans constitute 75% of planet earth and affect the planet's climate. Also phytoplankton, a form of microalgae in the oceans, feed on carbon and produce oxygen, in fact, more than even the Amazon forest.

You have been involved in environmental sustainability issues for a long time. Has anything changed along the way?

The father of ecology Alexander von Humboldt said in nature everything affects everything else. Indeed sustainability has many different facets. Previously environmental sustainability seemed to revolve

around matters like endangered species. The focus now is making do with less. If we do not overconsume in all areas of life, sustainability naturally follows.

Everything in nature is a gift to us. Science alone cannot address the complexities of sustainability. It has to be handled in a multidisciplinary manner. That is why art and ethics have also entered this field.

How do you view the future?

Turkey still ranks low in the amount of academic research in ecology/environmental studies. Yet I am hopeful. We have to let go of greed. The upcoming generation is very promising.

How did RC impact your life and career?

I published six books, and they are 80% about nature. The beginning of this love is definitely RC. I remember



my teacher Mr. Gilchrist particularly fondly. He loved Wordsworth and recited his poetry with tears in his eyes. I learned to love nature in literature first, and the library is of course unforgettable.

Sargun Tont's latest book, *Odunluk Günlükleri, Darwin ve Doğa Üzerine Yeni Denemeler (Odunluk Chronicles, Darwin and New Essays on Nature, Ginko Press)*, will be published soon.

Murat Tapik RC 07 Farms Responsibly

I “RC has instilled self-responsibility in me to respect nature, farmers, and the consumers.”

Murat Tapik left the corporate life in 2012 to found a family farm, Datça Murat Çiftliği, which espouses local production and conscious consumption.

Why is it important to consume locally grown food?

It is important to support local farmers. Also getting food from far distances creates additional carbon emissions. Moving edible goods is sensitive, so that its logistics are both expensive and not good for the environment. Fuel consumption for logistics and cooler needs are two of the highest carbon producers. Requirement of fertilizers and pesticides is also not good for nature and the people who consume those foods.



As an owner of a farm, what are the environmental sustainability issues that you face daily?

Water consumption and fuel use constitute the most important daily sustainability issues for a farmer. Since fields in Turkey and particularly those of small farmers are divided

multiple times through the decades, infrastructure for these farm fields is not very effective. Water consumption is usually very high for a small area. Fuel use for the farmers for their own needs and for the logistics for their goods to be delivered to big cities is also a big sustainability issue.

How has your experience at RC affected you?

I remember vividly our biology classes and the time we spent outside. RC has instilled self-responsibility in me to respect nature, farmers, and the consumers all at the same time. Creating healthy food for people with the smallest carbon footprint is one of the most important targets of Datça Murat Çiftliği.

ZEN
diamond
www.zenpirlanta.com



En özel olmak uzun bir serüvendir.

Mükemmeli bulmak için çıktığımız arayışta,
her Forevermark pırlantası özenle seçildiği bir
serüvenden geçer:
İşte bu yüzden dünyadaki pırlantaların sadece %1'i
güzellik, nadirlik ve sorumlu tedarik vaadimizin
simgesi olan Forevermark mührünü taşıyabilecek
kadar değerlidir.



FOREVERMARK

A DIAMOND IS FOREVER

Y. Berk Manav RC 14 Breaks Fresh Ground in Sustainable Investment

Berk Manav studied mechanical engineering and economics, along with energy sciences at Yale University. He just received his master's from Stanford University, where he received a scholarship to research the effects of climate change on energy investment projects. He became interested in this field because it provides an opportunity to make an impact on climate change by affecting capital deployment decisions: "If we are able to demonstrate that certain types of energy projects are not only better for the environment but are also the more attractive and resilient financial investment, that mindset shift will truly catalyze investment into sustainable infrastructure projects."



Y. Berk Manav RC 14

Manav underlines the interdisciplinary nature of assessing climate risks for energy infrastructure: "It involves bridging the gap between engineering, policy, and finance, since it requires an understanding of which physical climate risks pose a risk to a project because of its engineering design, which transition and regulatory risks may have an impact on energy infrastructure in the coming years, and how we can perform financial modeling to simulate the impacts of these risks on financial metrics that are meaningful and actionable for investors."

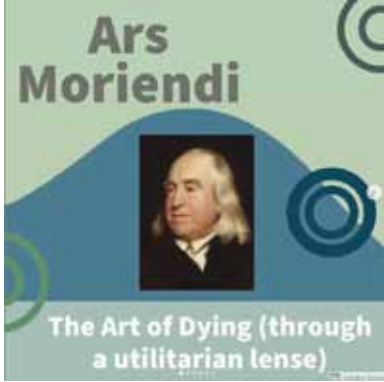
His team's research findings indicate that solar power plants are more resilient to climate risks than natural gas power plants and coal-fired power plants: "We've found that the level of carbon emissions associated with each type of energy project is directly aligned with how vulnerable

they are to climate risks, with coal plants being the least sustainable and also the least resilient. This finding indicates that not only do coal plants affect climate change, but climate change affects coal plants as well. Therefore, solar and other renewable energy investments are not only environmentally sustainable, but are also more resilient to climate risks, so they are also financially sustainable."

Following his graduation this summer, Manav started working full-time at Generate Capital, a sustainable infrastructure investment company: "I'm excited to be joining a team that furthers the mission I'm very passionate about: providing large scale investment into renewables and other sustainable infrastructure projects, and demonstrating to the business world that one can do well by doing good."

Manav's recommendation to RC students interested in this field is to reach out to the people who excite them: "I got involved with my research by going up to the person who is now my research advisor, Dr. In, and introducing myself after an information session. I had read about her research and was very excited by her work and asked if I could help. We met later that week and I joined this project at the very beginning of my master's, which has been one of the most rewarding experiences during my time here." Manav also recommends to develop a multidisciplinary skillset and perspective, since there are many ways to tackle the problem of climate change, and an understanding of how these approaches overlap and complement one another may provide an even better opportunity to make a positive impact.

Begüm Muştu L9 Soars at the International Young Researchers' Conference



Begüm Muştu was one of over 300 students to participate in this year's International Young Researchers' Conference (IYRC) and in the IYRC's case study competition in March 2021. This year's case was built on Dr. Lydia Dugdale's book *The Art of Dying*. Students from around the world worked in international teams

to analyze the case, write a report, and deliver a presentation during the conference as part of this competition. They also created a video for their project, posted it on Instagram and tried to get votes for it.

Begüm's team came in first place for the video and in second place for the social media post categories. The team explored how one can ensure to live well so that one dies well. They researched this question under the guidance of utilitarianism.

At the conference, Begüm worked with team members from the US and Hong Kong. This diversity meant many late night Zoom calls. She also made an important discovery: "My teammates were a lot more familiar with researching and writing a paper. I have learned to be okay with being

the one who is not the most skilled and have realized that people don't find it something to look down at. I have gotten used to being one of the good ones in the room so much that needing the help had started to make me feel bad, and the help that I got from my four international teammates made me look at this attitude from a different perspective."

Begüm was chosen to be a Vision Scholar, which means she will both start on a new project and get mentorship. Her participation in the conference came about when she attended the Harvard Global Health and Leadership Conference last year where she met one of the IYRC founders who invited her to be a case study participant in the IYRC. She plans to study psychology after RC.

Lise 10 Student Defne Duru Arat Wins International Poetry Contest

On the heels of the first place she received at the Demirkan Aşetey Art Competition, Lise 10 student Defne Duru Arat also won the Columbia Granger's World of Poetry 2021 Student Poetry Contest with her poem, "The Lost Supper".

"I read Mehmet Tüfek RC 19's winning poem 'Hamburger' last year and I wanted to reach his eloquence and the way he was able to create a powerful aura with simple sentences. There was only one way to know if I have achieved that, so I took the opportunity and sent my poem when Mr. Foxall shared the link."

Defne Duru says writing has been an essential part of who she is since she learned to write her name. She defines

herself as a writer first, and even in her art she tries to incorporate writing.

In her winning poem she wanted to write about something that provided profound thoughts and feelings: "Silence" by Marianne Moore didn't inspire the form but rather the foundation of the idea behind the poem. The quote I use in my poem is actually a quote from my father as she uses one from hers. I could definitely name Sy Hoahwah as another inspiration."

Defne Duru wants to study comparative literature abroad and would also love to publish a book. Her winning poem can be viewed at www.columbiagrangers.org/static/poetrycontestwinners2021



Defne Duru Arat L10

Raising Awareness of the World's Endangered Species

Burak Doğansoyсал RC 96 started taking photos in 1995 during his RC years and went professional in 2007. He began filming wildlife and nature documentaries in 2009. His work has taken him around the world and has been published and shown in 68 countries. Through his vast body of work which revolves around documenting wildlife, Doğansoyсал aims to raise awareness of the world's endangered species so they may be protected and preserved. The RCQ asked him about his impressions from his travels.



Burak Doğansoyсал RC 96

Elephants in Masai Mara, Kenya. There are only 400,000 elephants left in the wild.

Why did you decide to be a wildlife documentary filmmaker?

It was actually a process, rather than a decision. I've always loved taking photos and being in nature. In time, my passion for photography in general has evolved into wildlife photography in particular. In 2008, full HD video was introduced to DSLR cameras, and I started filming as well. Adding motion and sound to my wildlife images was very captivating, and I learned editing to make promotional videos for my business. The rest is history; I found myself chasing jaguars and leopards, making wildlife films for TV channels all around the world.

Which parts of the world has your work taken you?

My work has taken me everywhere but Australia and Antarctica. I filmed my first documentary in Pantanal about jaguars, so Brazil holds a very special place in my heart. And of course, sub-Saharan African countries! I keep going back to Africa and I can't get enough. While on assignment, I spend several months on end in Africa, but the dream is to move there for good. I would love to live in Rwanda, Namibia or South Africa someday.

How does your work help raise awareness about environmental sustainability issues?

We cannot protect something of which we are not aware. The primary objective of conservation documentaries is to make people know about the species, habitats and problems they face. Once the problem is defined, then we can successfully find solutions and protect the ecosystem. I mainly highlight habitat protection in my documentaries. Like it or not, there are some animals people don't or can't sympathize with such as snakes, scorpions, spiders, hyenas, vultures or sharks. It's hard to make people care about animals that they are afraid of, so a broader sense of awareness and protection is necessary. That is only possible through protection of the habitats, ecosystems the animals or plants live in. I am currently filming a nature documentary in Turkey, produced by Firat İşbecer RC 98, highlighting the effects of climate change and habitat loss, while showing the amazing biodiversity of our precious geography.

What brought you to Pantanal in Brazil for your first documentary, and what role do the jaguars play in that ecosystem?

Pantanal was always on top of my "must visit" destinations, but 13 years ago there were a lot of logistical issues. I've always been fascinated by big

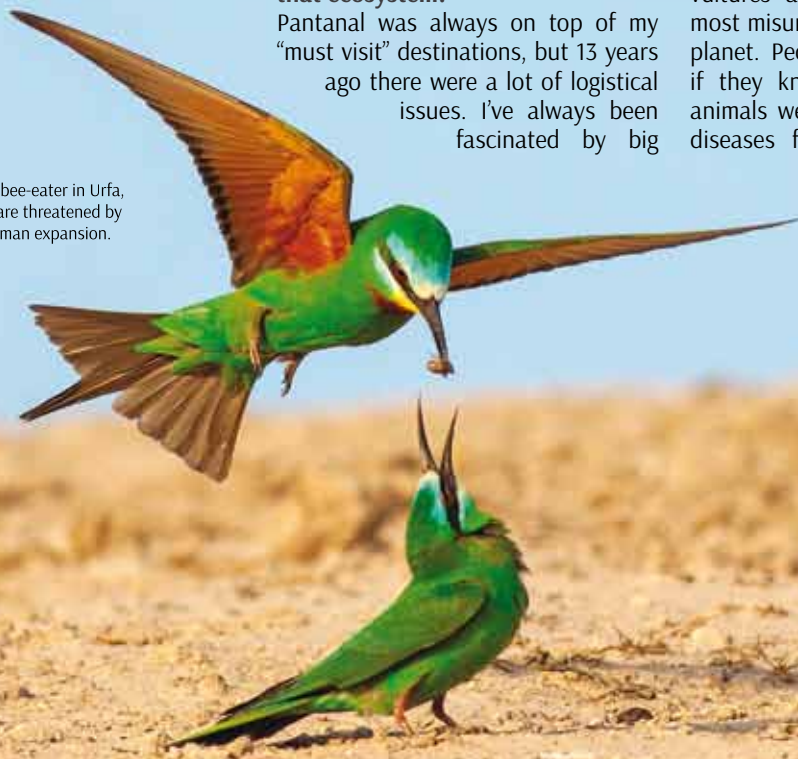
cats, and the jaguar is a very unique one, basically living in a swamp and obtaining most of its food from water. As with all apex predators, jaguars are important to keep the prey populations at a certain level, providing ecological stability. When the balance shifts and one species thrives in numbers, the entire system is affected, so a healthy predator population means a healthy ecosystem.

I've been to Pantanal three more times since my first visit, and I have plans for a bigger and better documentary in the future. I've seen and filmed a lot of jaguars, but I still haven't seen a large enough green anaconda, which is another trademark species of the Pantanal. Some individuals are known to grow more than 6 meters, weighing almost 200 kg!

Are there any other species that are of particular interest to you?

I have a special interest in scavengers. I filmed a couple of documentaries in East Africa where the scavenger numbers are declining due to poisoning and habitat loss. Although their role in the ecosystem is very important, they are not loved by many people. Spotted hyenas and vultures are probably some of the most misunderstood creatures on the planet. People would feel differently if they knew how important these animals were to prevent some nasty diseases from spreading. They are nature's cleanup crew.

Blue-cheeked bee-eater in Urfa, Turkey. They are threatened by constant human expansion.





Red fox photographed in Montana, USA. The red fox has the widest geographical range of any of the carnivores.

Most people are probably unaware, but we have four species of vultures and a hyena species (striped hyena) living and breeding in Turkey as well.

You said you want to live in Africa. What is the pull there, particularly of Rwanda or Namibia?

When I first stepped foot on Africa 17 years ago, I suddenly felt different. It's hard to explain but I felt like I'd already been there. Since then, it is calling me to go back non-stop, and I happily oblige. It feels like home, my happy place, my comfort zone. Africa has its problems, conflicts and difficulties for sure, but those are part of the experience.

Rwanda is still frowned upon by many people due to the civil unrest that led to a genocide 27 years ago, which shook the entire world. However, the country has long paid its dues, learned its lessons, and now is a magical and peaceful place to visit. It was one of the first countries in the world to ban the use of plastic products, and they do incredible work to protect their wildlife. Another fun fact: with nearly two thirds of its seats held by women, Rwanda by far holds the record for most numbers of female representatives in a parliament. For me, it's the rainforests, mountain gorillas, and the friendly people in Rwanda. It's probably also one of the safest countries on the

planet. Rwanda is a very small country packed with a lot of people. Namibia, however, is a vast country, larger than Turkey, with a population of only around 2.5 million people. It's a place of contrasts. Namibia has a coast, but the Namib Desert starts immediately where the waves hit the beach. It has many rivers, but most of them have been dry for thousands of years. It has a forest which died 900 years ago, yet still erect but mummified due to intense heat and lack of moisture. Most of the country is covered by the Namib desert, yet it boasts an amazing wildlife. Despite the harsh desert conditions, it has rich water sources hidden underground and out of reach for many living creatures. Within these contrasts lies the perfect harmony of life, which I love.

How has RC influenced your path? Are there any particular teachers, clubs or events that spring to mind?

Film & Literature and Photography classes helped to lay the foundations of my filmmaking for sure. More importantly, RC has taught me that anything is possible once you set your mind to it. Teachers, advisors and the school culture in general made me believe that I can achieve whatever I dream of. Classes, clubs and events gave me the necessary tools to pave my path going to that dream.



Leopard photographed in in Masai Mara, Kenya. Due to their secretive nature and adaptable lifestyle, leopards still thrive in Africa and Asia.

A Sustainable Future in Bünyan

By Candan Turhan RC 87

Ever since I graduated in 1987, RC has never left me, especially our lovely campus. It was one of the most influential features of the school for me, and my classmates can definitely remember me running to the Plateau on every break or flying between the trees on a swing. So it wouldn't be surprising for anyone to see that I ended up a naturalist, working for a greener and more sustainable future.

I'll admit that the medium-sized family business in Kayseri, manufacturing steel shots from iron scrap, essentially up-cycling scrap, was not my idea and that I came into it by chance. My father had started the business in the 1990s, and in 2010s it was my turn to step up. However, the rest is all me and my earth-friendly ways: Zero-waste grounds, regular recycling and composting, responsible consumption policies, food production for self-sustainability, conservation of rural lifestyles, and ultimately a foundation based on sustainability.



Candan Turhan RC 87

Turhan Anadolu Kültür ve Kalkınma Vakfı (Turhan Anatolian Culture and Development Foundation) - Anka Foundation - was founded in Bünyan, Kayseri, in 2017 by the Turhan family and is headed by me. Its aim is to make Bünyan, its hometown and mine, a better place to live, through cultural and economic development and a sustainable way of life. The foundation reflects my belief that the greatest vice of today's development policies is centralization, urbanization

and migration; and that sustainability can only be achieved by people living happy, productive, progressive local rural or non-urban lives.

In addition to regularly conducting a myriad of cultural activities geared to enhance the lives of local children and young girls, Anka Foundation focuses on agriculture as a means of sustainable production and development. Naturalist, traditional, regenerative, permacultural ways of farming are researched, re-discovered, experimented and shared with locals, a majority of whom essentially make their living as farmers.

In this aspect, my friend and classmate Taner Aksel, founder of Belentepe Farm in Uludağ, Bursa, is a great support and inspiration to us as one of the first and few permaculture experts in Turkey. Following his teachings and examples, the 46,000 square meters of land owned by the foundation will be host to sustainable food forests and community gardens serving the Bünyan area, as well as a culture village designed by the world famous Emre Arolat Architects.

Until the 4,000 square-meter, multi-functional culture village is built, our foundation's and company's facilities are more than enough to host an annual national open air sculpture competition (third is happening this year), de-centralizing the arts and installing it in Bünyan's daily life. We are also excited to have designed full-day workshops on nature and agriculture to benefit young and old urbanites who want to master the language of nature - this of course as soon as pandemic conditions allow.



One area of focus for the Anka Foundation is agriculture as a means of sustainable production and development

For more details visit www.anka.org

Nuri Çolakoğlu RA 62

Invites Readers to Follow the Footsteps of Atatürk

Prolific writer Nuri Çolakoğlu has co-authored a book with Zeki Saruhan: *Paşa'nın Rotası* (*On the Footsteps of Atatürk*, Kırmızı Kedi Yayınları). The book was designed as a travel guide for those who would like to follow the footsteps of Mustafa Kemal Paşa as he sets out to launch the War of Liberation and founding of the modern Turkish Republic. The book starts on Sirkeci quay on May 16, 1919, as Mustafa Kemal Paşa boards a small boat which will take him to the old, dilapidated steamboat Bandırma set to sail to Samsun where he will arrive on May 19 to start the incredible march to liberty. Historical maps, pictures, and chronology of events that took place between May 16, 1919,

and September 29, 1922, are dispersed throughout the book. September 29 is the date Mustafa Kemal Paşa finally returns from the battlefields to his new capitol Ankara, where he goes into the second phase of liberation, with pen and paper to work on lasting peace treaties and a new constitution to replace the 600-year old imperial sultanate with a modern democracy fit for the twentieth century. *Paşa'nın Rotası* is based on the four-volume history of this period by Zeki Saruhan and was planned as an easy-to-read coffee table book. The writers are now working on a pocket-sized travel book which readers can take along on their trips following the footsteps of Mustafa Kemal Paşa.



Metin Ar RA 69

Curates World's Best Restaurants in New Book



Alongside his illustrious career, Metin Ar has been reviewing restaurants from around the world for the magazine CEOLife for more than 10 years and also posting his reviews to his blog www.metinar.com. He first published his collection of reviews in 2019, but has now updated it with new reviews: *World's Best Restaurants 2021* (Cosmo Publishing Company). The book boasts more than 200 restaurant recommendations in over 30 cities, spread over five continents.

Until the pandemic, Ar spent 170 days out of a year traveling and was thus able to cover so many different places. Ar states, "Every single one of these restaurants was an establishment

I liked and enjoyed. There were no places with negative reviews; if I did not like a restaurant I did not include or mention it in the article." The book offers a wide range of establishments from street food to pizza shops to three-star Michelin fine dining spots.

Ar explains the reasons behind his recommendations and also gives tips. He views food as a component of culture and also of leisure travel. That is why he opts for a spectrum of venues from casual to fine dining. As such, the culture of the city and country of the venue also seeps into the book. Ar hopes to get back to traveling after the pandemic and continue to expand his coverage.

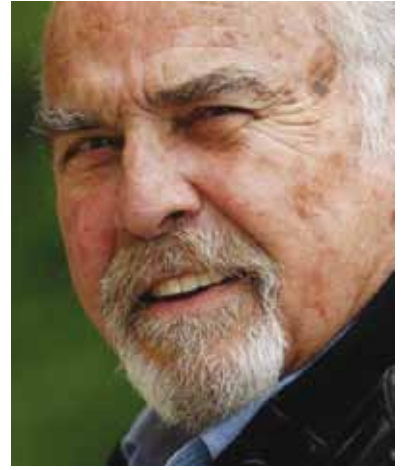
Özdemir Nutku RC 50

Remembered Through Posthumous Memoir

Özdemir Nutku's two-volume memoir *Suda Ayak İzleri; Anılar ve İzdüşümleri* (*Footprints in the Water; Memories and Projections*; İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları) is an illuminating book about the life and works of a true Turkish intellectual. First and foremost a theater academic, throughout his long life, Nutku wrote and translated seminal books on theater, founded magazines, established a fine arts university with a theater department in İzmir and was working on Ben Jonson and Shakespeare translations before he passed away in 2019. The book, therefore, offers a panorama

of Turkish art and theater, as well as Turkish art academia through the recollections of Nutku.

Nutku credits RC for letting him discover his own personality and self-confidence at an early age and teaching him to speak out and articulate his opinions freely. And he does precisely that in the memoir: "Unless society recognizes that theater is a necessity, the sacrifices and well-intentioned efforts will be like writing on sand. This indifference can only be overcome by one thing: education."



Doğan Gürpınar RC 97

Explores the History of Names in Turkey

A professor of Ottoman history at Istanbul Technical University and author of several books on Turkey's social and political history, Doğan Gürpınar explores the meaning of personal names in his latest book, *Türkiye'de Özel İsimlerin Tarihi* (*History of Personal Names in Turkey*, Telemak).

From the Tanzimat to today, the book sheds light on the historical events and personalities that inspired everyday people to name their children, thereby displaying the zeitgeist of different periods. Looking at names from this perspective demonstrates the desires and dreams of Turkish people over the span of 150 years.

Gürpınar states that he used personal names as a good marker of social, cultural and political change through



the one and a half centuries of modern Turkey: "These names not only perfectly reflect and reveal the intriguing dimensions of these transformations but also allow us to see niceties which otherwise would not be visible to us. Every year thousands of parents give the very same name to their precious children showing the appeal of certain names. Yet these fashionable names rise and decline in less than a decade and inevitably vanish. Our names have their own lives. Why do thousands of parents change their minds in less than a decade? I delved into these reasons and pursued the stories of certain cohorts of names as well as their inevitable decline." Gürpınar also traced the stories of certain names since their birth at a very specific conjecture and rise as well as eventually decline.

Photography Book by Cem Yilmaz RC 07 Takes Readers Around the World

Memleket, Travels Through Seemingly Unconnected Places is a photographic journey around the world and brings together Cem Yilmaz's three interests: travel, photography and reading. Yilmaz got the travel bug in his junior year in college: "My close friend Sinem RC 07 suggested going to Singapore for an exchange term. It all began with that move. Now that I look back, that was one of the best decisions I have ever made."

Yilmaz kept traveling over the years, and the book is a record of these various journeys: "The adventures that I have been on after that point serve as the base of the book, from a theme and visual/written content standpoint. The more I traveled, the more I realized that there was simply an unlimited amount of experiences to be had, places to be seen."



RC has been influential in Yilmaz's path: "Both my passion for reading

and photography started in RC. My passion for photography started when I was introduced to the Photography Club. We learned about the nuts-and-bolts of cameras, black-and-white printing, went on photography tours around the city. That toolkit served as the foundation of my photography practice. I am glad to have picked up this universal medium so early in my life. As for reading, the sheer volume and quality of the literature we were exposed to early on and consistently, along with the discourse we had in class, created a mindpath for me, and embedded reading as an important part of my learning process."

Yilmaz has been living in Seoul for the past five years and continues to be fascinated by Asia. The book is available on gumroad.com

Seda Aksoy Evren RC 95 Writes Children's Book



Seda Aksoy Evren has her first book out for pre-schoolers: *Kırmızı Balon Uçuyor* (*The Red Balloon Flies*, Uçan Fil Yayınları). Evren always had a passion for writing and was enticed by children's books through her children: "I have always carried a small notebook and a pen in my bag since I was four years old. My passion for writing has never faded away. When my first daughter Derin was born, I discovered the magical world of picture books which I admired. Then, I decided to tell stories not only for my girls but for all children."

Aksoy explains that *Kırmızı Balon Uçuyor* is a book about a standard red balloon who will be happy if he is purchased by a child: "However, things don't go the way he wants, and the wind separates him from his friends. That is when the red balloon starts to rise and have a big adventure along the way. There is a nice surprise at the end of the book not only for the red balloon but also for the readers."

Buğra Giritlioğlu RC 89 Publishes New Poetry Collection

Buğra Giritlioğlu's latest poetry collection, *ben seni kolye gibi var ya* (oh come on you damn necklace, Obiçim Yayınlar), continues the eclecticism of his previous book, *iki göz sıvı* (two eyefuls of liquid, Pan Yayıncılık). Photographs and QR codes to audio/video recordings accompany a number of poems in both volumes.

Giritlioğlu explains there is no real common thread between the poems: "They mainly represent my reactions to recent encounters and situations, drawing, of course, on past experiences in the process. One notable exception—in the sense that the inspiration for it is firmly rooted in the past—is "Muhabbet Kızım," a poem I wrote for my beloved parakeet, who

died some thirty years ago. There are four poems inspired by time spent in and around mountains. There is a five-page section of unrelated couplets, organized in alphabetical order by the first letter of the first line. There is one "meaningless" poem I wrote by simply combining words that occurred to me at random, in a stream of consciousness. (I promised two free books to the 50th reader who could identify this poem.)"

Giritlioğlu maintains that anything can count as a poem if the poet feels excited enough about it: "Poetry is short enough a form that a sufficiently witty title is all it takes, even if the body of the poem comprises, say, merely URL links, as is the case with one poem



in my latest collection." The poems are dedicated to various people, including RC classmates and teachers, while the book itself is dedicated to Bilgi Haner, Giritlioğlu's Turkish language and literature teacher at RC for two years.

The Latest Book from Orhan Pamuk RA 70 Has a Pandemic as Backdrop

Contributed by Pınar Gönen RC 88

The 2006 Nobel Prize laureate Orhan Pamuk's latest book *Veba Geceleri* (Plague Nights, Yapı Kredi Yayınları) was published in March 2021, after five years of meticulous hard work and research. The novel caused quite a stir after Pamuk's introductory videos on the social media, especially for being released during an actual pandemic.

The book is set in 1901, in the East Mediterranean on the Ottoman Minger Island and tells the story of a plague outbreak based on the letters of Pakize Sultan who arrives at the island with her doctor husband. It elaborately portrays the political tensions between the island and the motherland, quarantine management,

conflicts within the community, and political power struggles, as well as marriages, affairs, and friendships. Territorial losses and political turmoil during the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire is also an essential part of the setting. The merging of historical facts with fictional events through the unique narrative of Pamuk blurs the line between the imagined and the real, while the book cover and the detailed map of the island, both drawn by Pamuk, create a vivid picture. Reading the internationally acclaimed *Veba Geceleri*, you will feel like you have actually strolled around the winding streets of Minger Island and witnessed the dramatic events.



The Legend of the Maze



Basketball in the Maze in the 1920s

One of the main gathering points on campus, the Maze has been used for performances, sports activities, graduation and other key school assemblies over the years.

But did you ever wonder how it got its name? In her book *The History of Robert College Old and New*, former RC librarian May Fincancı revealed one version of the legend.

“We heard of a large property for sale at Arnavutkeui, on the European shore of the upper Bosphorus, extending from the heights, down to the water’s edge, with shady walks, and planted with rare trees and shrubs. This estate had belonged to a distinguished family for about a century. At the Bosphorus entrance to the property was a small ‘konak’ or lodge. A winding road led to the park above, where a second dwelling was occupied, at the time of our purchase, by the British consul general. Built over the gate, as one entered the upper park, was a tiny circular room with a lounge around the wall, where guests were taken for cups of Turkish coffee after climbing the hill, before undertaking a further few steps to the second lodge, on the hill. Among other groups of trees on the estate was a large chestnut grove; farther on was a labyrinth of trees called ‘the Maze’ planted in the form of a Sultan’s cypher around a circular spot of green. Beyond was a plateau



Graduation Ceremony in 2008



Opening Day in 2018



A group of students in the Maze, 1920-21

directly overlooking the Bosphorus and furnishing one of the finest views of Constantinople.” *

There are several versions of the legend connected with the Maze, which has lost its original labyrinth appearance and is now used for school-wide gatherings and outdoor performances.

One of the more colorful versions is as follows:

The sultan had chosen as his bride a young Circassian girl of singular beauty but proud, defiant, and unhappy despite the grandeur and the riches of the Palace. One night, the Sultan had a fantastic dream; he dreamed of a beautifully fashioned ring which he was convinced could make his bride happy if only he could find a jeweler who could visualize the design. The Sultan had the best jewelers in the land summoned to undertake the task of making this ring. Finally, when they

had all failed, a certain jeweler was summoned to the Palace who was reputed to have a telepathic gift as well as being a skillful jeweler.

Legend has it that this jeweler did indeed fashion a ring like the one that had been haunting the Sultan for so long. The splendid ring pleased the Circassian girl and made her so happy that it finally brought a smile to her lips. As his reward, the jeweler was rowed up and down the Bosphorus in the royal boat to select property on which to have a palace built for himself. The estate which the jeweler chose was many years later to be purchased for the campus of the American College for Girls.

In “The Maze”, shrubs and trees were cleverly planted and trimmed to resemble the ring that the jeweler Düz had designed like the Sultan’s cipher. It has since lost its original appearance and was used for outdoor performances such as the graduation exercises for a long time.

* *Mary Mills Patrick*, *Under Five Sultans*, pp. 196-197

Book by Muallâ Mezhepoğlu ACG 61 Sparks Interest in Family Histories

Six years since Muallâ Mezhepoğlu's *Dün Takvimde Biter - Bir Cumhuriyet Ailesinin Tarihçesi* (Yesterday Ends on a Calendar, *The History of a Republic Family*, İş Bankası Yayınları) was published, the book continues to draw attention due to the many interesting details of Istanbul life revealed in it.

Muallâ Mezhepoğlu was aware that people were interested in the book but she was not expecting it to draw attention from different areas like TV programs, film producers and invitations to share family memorabilia in exhibitions by the Vehbi Koç Vakfı. For example, she

mentioned the photos taken by her grandmother H. Şahiye Hanım around 1890, which place her as one of the first few Muslim Ottoman women to take photos.

"This book opened many windows for me," says Mezhepoğlu. "Writing family histories is very rare in our culture. If a single book like mine can reverberate like this, just imagine what various, colorful details can come to life if others share their family histories." She hopes her book and her experiences will encourage others to share their families' stories.



Elçin Yahşi RC 79 Discusses Streaming Media in Weekly Newspaper

Elçin Yahşi has been appointed to be in charge of the screen and cinema pages of the new independent weekly newspaper Oxygen. Launched in January, Oxygen Weekly is prepared by a team that believes in weekend journalism, all of whom are experienced journalists and have long been away from the current media.

Aiming to be the voice in print media of the digital world, which resembles a big forest and where people get lost,



the publication had primarily set as one of its goals to be the newspaper of streaming platforms, which are an indispensable part of our lives.

Elçin Yahşi, the founder of Ekranella - the first television commentary site in Turkey - is responsible for these pages of the newspaper, which cover the content of popular platforms such as Netflix, BluTV, Digitürk and Apple TV, in an unprecedented way.

Alparslan Sukan RC 83 Launches Food e-Commerce Site



Alparslan Sukan is a veteran in the culinary business, which he entered 38 years ago at Bizim Tepe. His latest addition to his successful catering company is an e-commerce site that focuses exclusively on natural, mostly organic, food and drinks: dogalolanhersey.com.

There are over 400 products on the site, including freshly-made, all natural cakes, quiches, and tarts. Special flour mixes are also in the works.

Sukan says, "My work on this site allowed me to understand different health benefits of products." Sukan's vision is to turn the site into a platform, where small producers can sell their own products.

Sukan states he would not have been able to do most of what he has done, if he hadn't obtained the RC philosophy, based on analytical thinking, resilience and creativity: "RC infused me with the courage to articulate and act on what I imagined."

Pekin Bayar Mizrahi Celebrates 75th Year

Şefika Pekin (RC Board of Trustees 1995-2016) and Selin Bayar RC 86 celebrate the 75th year of their law firm this year. Ergin Mizrahi RC L12 04 joined them as a name partner in January 2021 and the firm's name became Pekin Bayar Mizrahi. Mizrahi had previously worked as a partner on the dispute resolution practice team of the firm. The firm is now being co-managed by Bayar and Mizrahi.



Selin Bayar RC 86



Ergin Mizrahi RC L12 04

After graduating from RC, Bayar studied finance and investments at Babson College and subsequently received a law degree from the Université de Genève. Mizrahi holds a law degree from Koç University (valedictorian) and a master's degree

from the University of Cambridge (First Class).

Pekin Bayar Mizrahi is a full-service law firm, with core practice areas in M&A, capital markets, banking & finance, energy and dispute resolution. Bayar

welcomed Mizrahi's promotion to name partnership: "We are confident that, with his experience, energy, eagerness and resolve, Ergin will continue to contribute very positively to our culture and success".

Yeşim Özsoy RC 90 Opens Digital Performance Space

Despite the detrimental effects of the pandemic on theaters, Yeşim Özsoy has been very busy. Her theater group GalataPerform said good-bye to their space of 17 years in Galata due to the pandemic. They applied to the Goethe Institute Covid Relief Fund and were chosen over 400 projects to launch YeniPerform. YeniPerform is now live and boasts workshops, plays, and even a bookshop, all available in a digital space. Özsoy is also on the Executive Board of Tiyatro Kooperatifi

as Vice President. Tiyatro Kooperatifi works to enrich the artistic production of private theaters in Turkey, to strengthen them economically, legally, and socially, with the vision of rendering them sustainable. The theater groups represented in the cooperative increased from 24 to 64 during the pandemic.

In addition, a TV series Özsoy wrote was the winner in the NEM TV Writing Contest, and talks are in place for



production. Finally, Özsoy's latest play *Kum Zambakları ve Mümkün Dünyalar* is being prepared for the 2021-2022 theater season.

Emine Noyan RC 93 and Moris Abravaya RC 94 Join Forces in Juno London



Moris Abravaya RC 94 and Emine Noyan RC 93

Emine Noyan worked for international advertising agencies and big brands in Istanbul, until she moved to London in 2016 to found her own small studio. Meanwhile, one of her best friends from RC, Moris Abravaya, had moved to Barcelona in 2013 and started MACS which designs and produces merchandise for various sectors. They merged their expertise in Juno London: "Juno London was founded on the idea that each project deserves a bespoke team because each client's creative needs are unique. We only have a core team of people and work with a pool of freelancers, pulling in the best people for outstanding results. Juno mostly focuses on branding, web build, digital marketing, advertising, and with MACS' expertise, merchandise/product and packaging design." Both Noyan and Abravaya underline that the most important impact of RC, apart from the first-class education, is the great friendships forged there: "RC is like one big extended family with members all over the world."

Melis Öngün RC 98 Launches Digital Marketing Solutions Company



Melis Öngün started her career at the communications conglomerate WPP, spending nine years across NYC and London. She led the WPP global digital advertising business for Microsoft. She established the digital marketing team at Avon focusing on digital transformation, launching augmented reality and multiple digital platforms.

MOU was established in 2020 when personal and professional contacts approached Öngün for digital marketing solutions. Having worked on

the corporate side for so long, she was ready to kick start her own business. MOU Digital Marketing partners with a broad network of specialists to solve clients' digital marketing problems. This method ensures that the right skillset is matched to the clients' business needs.

Öngün is passionately committed to making a difference in the world. She is a founding member of MarketingKind and an animal rescue advocate. Learn more @fortheloveofhd

Aslı Südor RC 98 Appointed as Şölen Marketing Director

Aslı Südor has been appointed as marketing director of Şölen, a Turkish snack company. In her role, Südor manages Şölen's marketing activities for Turkey.

After graduating from Boğaziçi University in mechanical engineering, Aslı Südor started her career at P&G in 2004 as assistant brand manager of the Prima brand. She has served in leading marketing roles at Atasun Optik, Koton and Gilan, and for the Joker and Soobe brands. Aslı Südor is married and has one child.



Yasemin Hacıkura RC 00 Owns Blooming Business

Five years ago, Yasemin Hacıkura founded A! Ne Hoş Paper Flowers with a fellow architect: "We collected leftover materials from interior construction projects and pondered how to upcycle them. In time our focus shifted towards paper, a familiar medium with architects. We started with paper flower bouquets in wooden vases, bringing a new approach to office and special day gifts. The name "A! Ne Hoş" just popped in our minds. That's how we want people to react to our work, by saying "A! Ne Hoş!"

Featuring unique designs that are non-allergenic and environmentally friendly, the business has gone beyond bouquets to garlands, wreaths, cake toppers, backdrops, mom-daughter hair bands, hair accessories, brooches, wedding bouquets. Hacıkura credits RC with her sensitivity to the environment and emphasis on gender equality: "We were urged to take personal responsibility. We were encouraged as women to aim high and refuse bias against women, which led me to my entrepreneurial journey."



Can Kağıtçıbaşı RC 02 Brings Fresh Produce to Your Doorstep

Can Kağıtçıbaşı launched Mevsimi, after observing that the food supply chain is a problem in Turkey, with producers having a hard time making a profit, and consumers paying high prices for fresh fruits and vegetables. Removing middlemen in the chain and improving inefficiencies along the way, Mevsimi aims to redesign the way people purchase fresh produce, offering high quality seasonal fruits and veggies in standardized boxes that change weekly. Kağıtçıbaşı

underlines that with the Mevsimi system, customers don't have to think about what to purchase every week.

Kağıtçıbaşı credits RC with the social responsibility dimension of his business: "Entrepreneurship means solving problems. Social responsibility is a core value we learn at RC. This desire to touch people's lives has triggered me to concentrate on solving what really matters for our society."



Oya Nuzumlalı Schooley RC 02 Founds Education Consultancy

Oya Nuzumlalı Schooley works as a college counselor at an independent high school in the US, the Pembroke Hill School, and founded the company Yelkovan Eğitim where she provides college counseling to students in Turkey who are interested in applying to international universities. Harkening back to her experience as an RC student and later as an undergraduate at Dartmouth College, she confesses that she didn't know much about different types of institutions and didn't seek out her college counselor



as often as as often as she should have (RC College Counseling Office has since grown with an office of five college counselors today.) Her hope now is that the students and families she works with are much better informed about the admission process. Oya regularly visits colleges, is fascinated by the changing trends in admission, reads extensively and writes about recent developments in US college admissions on her website yelkovanegitim.com.

Ceylan Kolat RC L3 04 Founder of Colorful Lifestyle Brand

Illustrator and designer Ceylan Kolat launched her brand Fonfique in 2015: "It was my dream to build a colorful and fun lifestyle brand. I studied fashion design and illustration in Milan. After having enough experience in the field, I launched Fonfique. Miss Fonfique (Fonfik Hanım) was the family nickname given to me by my mother when I was born. I decided to use it as it felt harmonious to the general style of my prints."



The brand is now in over 20 countries. Fonfique has many functional products such as clutches, keychains, organizers, and phone bags. The common thread is the lively prints. Kolat says they add several new prints to the collections each season, with some prints being part of the permanent collection. Kolat credits RC as a source of inspiration: "I believe being surrounded by the most beautiful environment for seven years has made a great impact on my work."

Aysu Farbiarz RC 05 Flourishes in the NYC Technology World



Aysu recently started working as the Head of Analytics, Customer Operations at Squarespace, a technology company helping individuals build beautiful websites. As a member of the senior leadership team, Aysu is building a data team that will uncover opportunities for the growth of the business. Aysu says that RC taught her the importance of a curious culture that brings out the true potential of individuals. She uses the lessons she learned to build productive and happy teams. (She frequently reminisces about the magical days of RC.) In her free time, Aysu enjoys spending time with her husband and two daughters (Alev Bella, 6 and Asya Stella, 3). She has also developed a serious baking hobby. You can connect with her and also view her cakes at aysufarbiarz.squarespace.com. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, so if you're in the New York City area, she'd love to hear from you!

Pelin Lemons RC 09 Welcomes Baby

Pelin and David welcomed their son, Robin Sinan Lemons on April 30, 2021. Robin entered the world at the end of a stormy night on a sunny morning, and he has been his family's sunshine ever since. Robin is currently enjoying snuggles with mom and walks with dad. His favorite pastime activity is cooing followed by tummy time.

Pelin has received her BS and MS in Materials Science and Engineering from Drexel University, and MBA from Temple University. Pelin now works as a portfolio manager at DSM Biomedical, a biomedical device and materials company, and lives with her family in the Pennsylvania suburbs.



Burcu Yeşil RC 11 Translates Book on Food Waste



Thanks to Burcu Yeşil, David Evans' book *Food Waste: Home Consumption, Material Culture and Everyday Life* is now available in Turkish as *Sıfır Atık: Tüketim Kültürü ve Gıda İsrafı* (Yeni İnsan Yayınları). While studying Political Science and International Relations at Boğaziçi University, Yeşil attended a panel on "de-growth," and thus began her journey into sustainability issues. She found Evans' book particularly interesting because "it is cross-cutting the issue

across hunger, environment, climate, business, household and consumer culture, economics, inequalities." Yeşil is currently working on her second MSc degree at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, on integrated natural resources management, while working part-time at a non-profit research institute called Climate Analytics, helping policy makers and organizations make smart and sustainable decisions for climate adaptation.

Dilşad Sağlam RC 11 Heads to Stanford Law on a Fulbright

Dilşad Sağlam got involved with technology right from the start of her career. After receiving her law degree from Istanbul Bilgi University, she joined the Information Technology and Communications department of Baker McKenzie Istanbul. She grew a particular interest in the field of law and technology when she started to advise global technology companies. In February 2020, she joined the regional legal team of Google, which she describes as, "A unique chance



to acquire deeper insights as well as first-hand experience on the key legal challenges in the information technology sector." After several years of professional experience, Sağlam applied and got accepted to Stanford Law School with a Fulbright Scholarship for an LLM degree in Law, Science and Technology: "I am incredibly thrilled to start this new exciting chapter in my career and looking forward to the new opportunities that lie ahead."

Esra Demirhan RC 14

Works as Ecologist for Large Infrastructure Projects

Esra Demirhan's skills and knowledge as an ecologist are put to good use in large infrastructure projects such as airports, highways and energy power plants, ensuring they meet sustainability criteria and comply with the highest international standards for protecting biodiversity. Recently her work has focused on wind energy power plants:

"Sourcing energy from wind could have adverse impact on the environment if the projects are not managed properly

at each phase. For birds and bats the impact can come in the forms of degraded habitat, disturbance, displacement and collision mortality. With the rising demand, it is critical to guide wind energy projects towards net positive outcomes for nature. The consultancy I provide for 'active turbine management' is the first in Turkey and involves detecting migratory birds at risk of colliding with wind turbines and shutting the turbines down on demand, through establishing a protocol for this process."



Do you have news to share with the
RC Community?
Send a short write-up along with a photo to
rcq@robcoll.k12.tr

faculty & friends news

Prolific Writer Adil İzci Recipient of the First Oktay Akbal Literary Award

Adil İzci, who taught Turkish literature at RC from 1980-2010, received the very first Oktay Akbal Literary Award for his book *Canım Ada (My Beloved Island, Oğlak Yayınları)*. İzci states, "I have a passion for the islands. With my RC students we used to go to Burgaz. I lived in in Heybeliada in 2013-2016. Out of these years this book was born, and it has 32 island stories. Oktay Akbal wrote in different genres, but first and foremost among them was the short story. He is widely accepted as the successor of Sait Faik in Turkish literary history. Receiving this award, therefore, made me very happy. It strengthened my belief in my own writing. I have also perceived Akbal as one of Atatürk's spiritual

sons. His final years were dedicated to this area. This award is precious from this perspective as well."

İzci also recently published *Sabahattin Kudret Aksal'a Armağan (A Gift to Sabahattin Kudret Aksal, Ve Yayınları)*, *Edebi Bahisler (Literary Subjects, Anima Yayınları)*, a collection of the writings of Dr. Rıfki Tercanlı, a children's book *Mine ile Efe'nin Defteri (The Notebook of Mine and Efe, İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları)*, and most recently *Anılarda Sait Faik (Sait Faik in Memories, Varlık Yayınları)*, a collection of essays on Sait Faik from 42 writers and three poems from Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca.



Fatma Gülseren Ülken ACG 46

Fatma Gülseren Ülken, born September 8, 1928, was the daughter of philosopher and sociologist Ord. Prof. Hilmi Ziya Ülken and science teacher Hatice Ülken. She graduated from Istanbul University's Department of English Literature in 1950 and received her masters' degree in 1951. She won a Fulbright scholarship that same year. Her research papers were published in *Şadırvan* journal in 1949, and in *Sosyoloji Konferansları Yıllığı* in 1979.

She founded Ülken Yayınevi publishing house in 1977, editing and publishing Hilmi Ziya Ülken's major works and

compiling his articles on Anatolia and arts. She edited and published *Türkiye'de Çağdaş Düşünce Tarihi* by Ülken on modern thought throughout late Ottoman and Republican eras.

After teaching English at a private college, she married in 1953 and had three children. She is survived by her children Tuğrul and Fatma Artunkal RC 77. She is predeceased by her son Murat Artunkal.

Contributed by her daughter Fatma Artunkal RC 77



Yıldız Dağdelen ACG 48

Yıldız Dağdelen was born on March 1, 1929. When she passed away on March 14, 2020, İsmail Hakkı Aksu wrote in *Milliyet* "The Turkish Opera sent off her Carmen on her last journey." She was my sister, my best friend and my mentor.

Yıldız Dağdelen started her music studies with Alice Rosenthal at Istanbul Conservatory of Music, and continued with Prof. Paul Lohmann at Frankfurt/Main Hochschule Musik in Germany. She made her opera debut in 1955 at Theater Lübeck as Dorabella, in Mozart's



Così fan tutte, and sang many leading roles in Germany as well as in Ankara and Istanbul. She was an outstanding interpreter of German Art Songs. Her repertoire ranged from seventeenth century through the contemporary period. She performed extensively in Germany, Turkey and throughout Europe. She was a retired professor of voice from the Istanbul Conservatory of Music and the State Conservatory at Mimar Sinan University.

Contributed by Gündüz Dağdelen ACG 56

İnci Başkurt ACG 48



İnci Başkurt grew up in Nişantaşı and graduated from the American College for Girls in Istanbul in 1948. She attended the École de Science Politique in Geneva and received her MA from the University of Florida. She prepared herself for public service by working at the United Nations in New York. On her return to Turkey she held some key positions in government service as press attaché in Washington and Paris, and as chief of staff to government leaders. She retired from a successful career with Shell Oil and passed away in early April, a few days after her younger brother, Savcı.

İnci Abla was 93 years old when she passed away; she was survived by her brother Savcı's family.

Contributed by Ahmet N. Taşpınar RC ENG 56

İskender Meriçli RC 49

Born in Beyoğlu in 1928, İskender Meriçli passed away in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on December 6, 2020. Called Alex by his wife, Dad by his six children, and Poppo by his nine grandchildren, İskender was proud to have built a strong family with the same care and dedication that he brought to his long career in civil engineering. After graduating from RC, İskender completed his MS at the University of Michigan before moving to Pittsburgh, where he fell in love with Mary Jane McDonald, his wife of 67

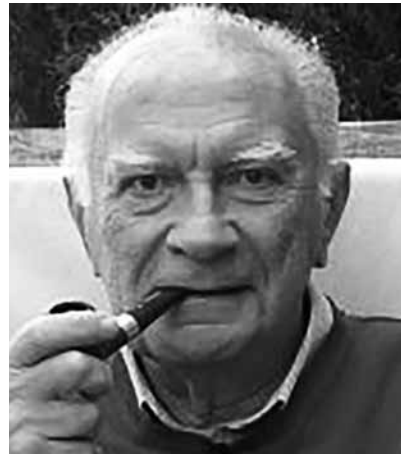
years. He returned to Turkey in 1955 for two formative years of military service, then settled permanently in Pittsburgh, where he helped found an active Turkish American Association. Among many avocations, İskender was an avid gardener and numismatist. For his devotion, enthusiasm, and above all his sense of humor, İskender is already greatly missed. As he said about anything he liked: "Not enough!"

Contributed by his grandson Benjamin Meriçli



Engin Asal RC 52

Engin Asal passed away on June 20, 2021, following a bypass operation. He was 88, and the pride of his family and friends for his volunteer work and youthful looks. The son of our beloved teacher, İhsan Asal, He retired as CEO of Ergo Insurance company after 50 years as an insurance expert and executive. Engin graduated from the Wharton School of Business in Philadelphia and returned to Turkey after working in the insurance sector for two years. He excelled in pursuing interests in winemaking, olive oil and photography. His knowledge



of technology and his social skills enabled him to be a successful businessman and a loyal son to his alma mater, who kept his classmates together by organizing events. Engin will be remembered as a gentleman with a volunteer spirit. He is survived by his wife, Esin and daughters Zeynep, Mine, son-in-law Murat Sarper and granddaughter Elif.

Contributed by Ahmet Taşpınar RC ENG 56, Fikret Semin RC ENG 55, Emin Veral RC ENG 54 and Haluk Emiroğlu RC ENG 56

Savcı Başkurt RC ENG 56



Savcı Başkurt entered Robert Academy in September 1945. He graduated from RC Engineering School with a BS in civil engineering, and from the University of Michigan with an MS in 1958. Following two years with the Wisconsin State Highway Department he returned to Istanbul. While in the US he married his childhood sweetheart, Ayla Denker. Savcı passed away in early April, 2021.

Savcı had a successful career in engineering and project management, working for various companies in

Istanbul and in Saudi Arabia. He retired in 2018 to devote his time to his family and friends. He was admired by his colleagues and respected by all who knew him for his honesty and loyalty to his family, to his friends and to his profession.

Savcı is survived by his wife Ayla, his daughters Gulun and Banu and his grandchildren, Sina, Sinan and Roksan.

Contributed by Ahmet N. Taşpınar RC ENG 56

Ertan Başar Saner ACG 56



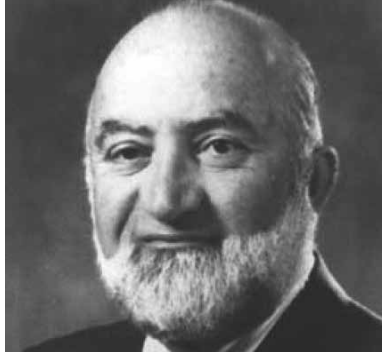
Ertan Başar Saner departed from us on March 28, 2021, at the age of 86. The multifaceted education she received at RC led her to pursue her career at various international companies such as Pfizer, Caltex and Shell, where she worked without pause, and finally at Kongresist until her late seventies. She always remained independent and self-sufficient. As a person of serenity, she accepted and enjoyed life on life's terms. We had fun; we laughed a lot together. We are very

proud to be her children and her grandson, and we believe she felt our great admiration and devotion. She was the light of our family, shining as brightly and 'blond' as the sun. In the RC Record of 1956, her friends wished that "her serious face may never lose the happy glistening light of mischief in her eyes". It remained there until the very last minute.

Contributed by Turgut, Murat, Sevil and Can Saner

Tuncer Cebeci RC ENG 58

Tuncer Cebeci entered Robert Academy in September 1947. He graduated from Robert College Engineering School with high honors and a BS in electrical and mechanical engineering in 1958, and from North Carolina State University with an PhD in ...Tuncer passed away in April, 2021. Tuncer had a successful career in engineering with Boing, becoming a key manager leading high level research projects in aeronautics.



He also held academic positions with California State University in Long Beach, and received numerous awards for his work in cutting edge technology.

Tuncer is survived by his wife Silvia.

Contributed by Mete Soyoğuz RC ENG 58

Gülen Ramazanoğlu Soysal ACG 60



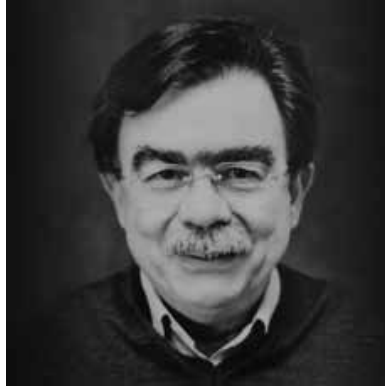
Our beloved Gülen passed away on January 29, 2021, mother of Gülin Soysal, Sıdika Soysal, Tayyibe Soysal, and her granddaughter Selin. She is survived by her husband Erdoğan Soysal.

She was much loved by her friends with her modest and gentle attitude. She will always be remembered by her family and friends as an angel. Being her roommate for years, I will miss her sincere and gentle personality.

Contributed by Ender Panahzat ACG 60

M. Hamit Fişek RA 60, RC 64

Hamit Fişek passed away on June 29, 2020. After graduating from Robert College as an electrical engineer, Hamit went to Stanford University, where he received his MS and PhD in Sociology, accumulating an MS in Computer Science along the way. Returning to Turkey, he taught at Hacettepe and Middle East Technical Universities from 1970 to 1977. In 1978, he joined the Psychology Department at Boğaziçi University, where he later served as Provost from 1992-1996



and 1998-2000. He retired as BU's first Emeritus Professor in 2008. He is remembered by family, friends and students alike for his unpretentious and even-tempered nature, and his "büyük altından" sense of humor and warmth. He is survived by his wife Güler Okman Fişek ACG 65, daughter Emine Fişek Türem RC 99, and son Mehmet Fişek RC 04.

Contributed by Güler Fişek ACG 65

Özkan Incesulu ACG 60



Özkan Incesulu passed away on February 25, 2021, in İstanbul. After a heart surgery in her last year in prep school she had to stay home in Adana for two years. Following her recovery she had to convince her parents to come back to ACG, not an easy job! She came back, graduated, got married and gave birth to three children. She was the symbol of determination. We were roommates all along our college years. The lovely, blissful atmosphere of ACG nurtured long lasting, uninterrupted friendships for which we all are very grateful.

Özkan widened our horizon; through her and her large family we got to know Adana, her hometown, and the sumptuous style of life in Anatolia. She is survived by her husband Alaeddin, her sons Aydın and Adıl, a most devoted daughter Nazlı, and four grandchildren.

We shall greatly miss our dear friend.

Contributed by Yüksel Rızvani Kılıçturgay ACG 60

Emel Kınacı Yolaçar ACG 63

We gather as freshmen at Gould Hall with the new students from various other schools. Among them, I notice a new girl with a British accent from English High School. With her politesse, grace, and sensitivity, she compels me immediately. Her name is Emel Kınacı. Emel manifests an exceptional memory and a real gift for languages-even Japanese. Later, she would become the honorary director of the Turkish-Japanese cultural center. I can't forget the lunches we had at the Büyük Kulüp

with Tomris, Günsel and Emel. She always preferred sitting at the big round table with purple velour seats. In her own words, she loved all that glitters. Now, our angel-faced, angel-hearted friend has gone to join the other angels. We'll miss her a lot. We send our condolences and wish her children Yasemin and Muammer and her husband Yalçın Yolaçar a lot of patience.

Contributed by Banu Engez Yılmazcan ACG 63



Osman Göksu RC YÜK 66



Osman passed away on November 6, 2020. An unexpected sudden death, a heart attack.

In 1966 he received his BA, and the following year his MA, both from RC Yüksek. He later went on to be a Trustee of Boğaziçi University.

Osman was a perfect example of a perfect being with his kind heart, pleasant personality, deep intellect, and concern for his surroundings, his friends and family. With his life partner Ferihan, they shared wonderful

memories with Darlings Trips around the world, shows at Bizim Tepe and memorable events with friends that gave positive feelings of joy to their circles. May he rest in peace.

Contributed by his loving wife Ferihan Göksu

Şükrü Taner RC 78

Dear Şükrü, you were the symbol of humanity, peace and friendship with the expression on your face. We shared a lot of things together with you, Tanju (Akçagüner), Haluk, Turgay, Selim (Vidin) and İlknur during the years. With your math intelligence, analytical way of thinking and calm behavior, you became a successful surgeon. At the same time, you were a good husband and a caring father. I believe that we will meet again somewhere. Our dear friend Şükrü Taner (known as Ahmet



within his family) passed away on October 25, 2020, due to a heart attack. We will always remember his magnificent smile for the rest of our lives. Rest in peace our friend.

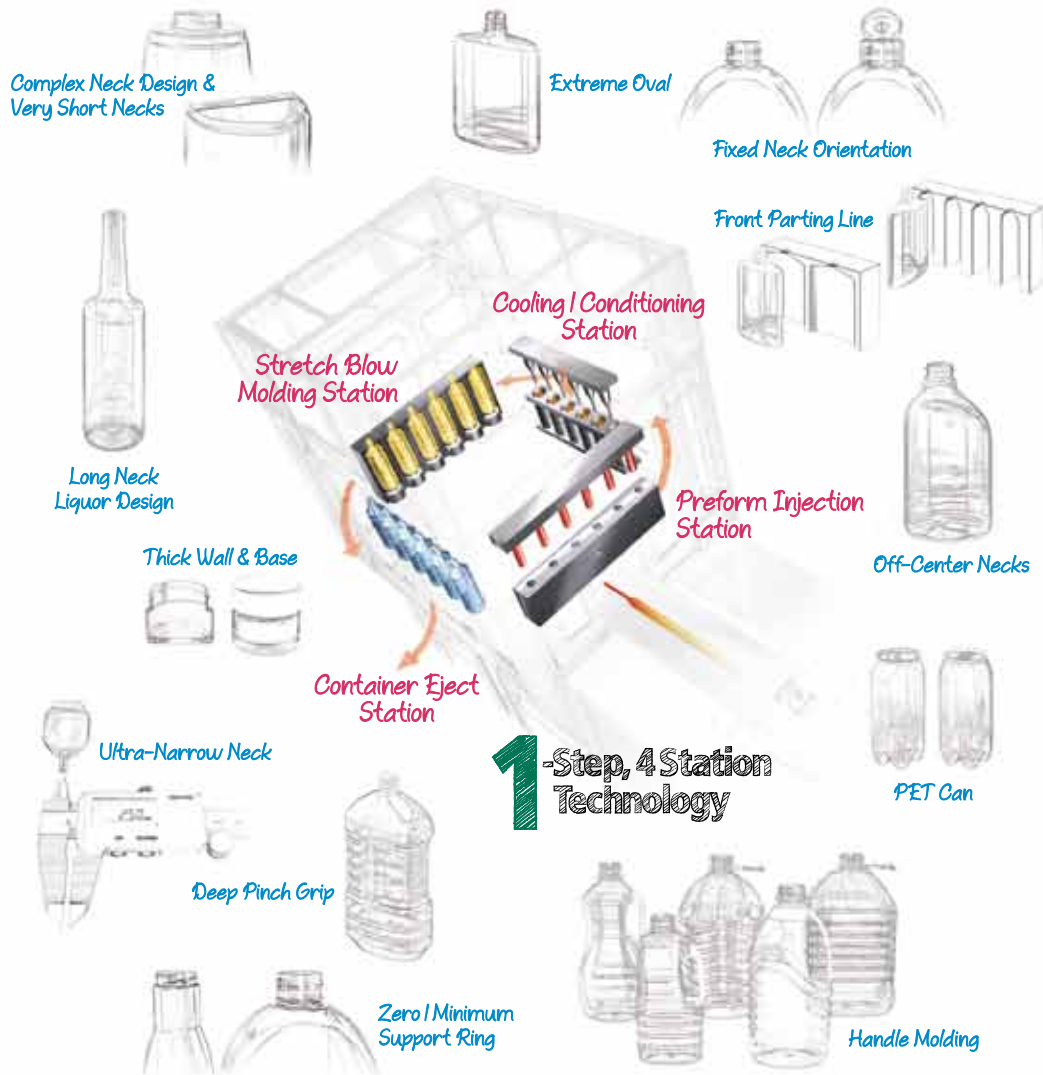
Contributed by Nur Birgen RC 78

To share news of a deceased RC community member please send a notice in English of no more than 150 words to bonayozman@robcol.k12.tr

Longer notices will be edited due to space restrictions.

Please include a high resolution (minimum 700 x 700 pixels) photo of the deceased.

Develop Your Concepts



ASB's 4-Station Molding:
Optimized solutions for any container needs +
Versatile special molding technologies

ASB

Form Your Vision

NISSEI ASB MACHINE CO., LTD.

TEL: +81 (0)267 23 1565

E-Mail: sales@nisseiasb.co.jp www.nisseiasb.co.jp

www.youtube.com/user/NisseiASBMachine



Erensoy 
İstanbul 1926

Erensoy Gıda ve Ambalaj Makinaları San. ve Tic. Ltd. Şti.

Tel: +90 (216) ERENZOY

+90 (216) 373 67 69

+90 (549) 373 67 69

Fax: +90 (216) 302 99 98

info@erensoy.com

www.erensoy.com

Erensoy is the sole agent and distributor of ASB in

Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Turkey and Turkmenistan



Evin Senin Dünyan

#İyiBak Dünyana

Dünya Senin Evin

Dünyanın sanat ve tasarımla daha iyi bir yer olacağına inanıyor; sürdürülebilir bir dünya için var gücümüzle çalışıyoruz.



KTSM, Kale Grubu tarafından desteklenen, disiplinlerarası paylaşımlara imkan veren üretim ve buluşma noktasıdır.

kaletasarimsanatmerkezi.org



/ [kaletasarimvesanatmerkezi](https://www.facebook.com/kaletasarimvesanatmerkezi)



/ [ktsm_org](https://twitter.com/ktsm_org)

**Kale Tasarım ve
Sanat Merkezi**