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Partners in Progress

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About GLUCO-Junior Leaders Conference

The Junior Leaders Conference (JLC) is a 3-day, intense and thought-provoking leadership training program, designed for young minds between the ages of 10 to 16. Over the last 7 years it has transformed into a platform where teenage energy is channelized to lead to positive change. JLC does a lot more than just develop participants’ skills. It equips participants with the tools to set goals, plan their career, manage time and make their own decisions. JLC aims to unleash these youngsters’ potential, improve their communication skills and enable them to enrich their relationships at home and with society. Here, participants initiate the process of continuous personal grooming and demonstrate flexibility to adapt to different cultures and environments. The experience enables them to reassess their values, expand their imagination, alter their views and transform their lives. They become deeply aware of the larger context, stretch their capabilities and learn to practice new skills.

Gluco has been a founding partner of the Junior Leaders Conference. With the tagline ‘Strong Bano, Smart Raho’, Gluco’s mission is to give each child the opportunity to dream big, the mental capacity to achieve those dreams and the physical strength to turn the dreams into reality. The Gluco-JLC partnership is the premier platform for these young minds to broaden their perspectives by interacting with well-known leaders and role-models. In addition, they participate in activities such as panel discussions, thematic intervention sessions, simulations, field trips and sporting activities that ensure their development.

GLUCO-JLC 2015 – Theme and Context

This year, the conference revolved around the theme “Art of Life”. Pablo Picasso once expressed the idea that although everyone is born an artist, the problem is retaining those qualities once you grow up. Gluco-JLC focused on allowing the participants to channel their creativity and imagination through various activities over three days. Challenging the experimental and adventurous nature of the participants, the theme intended to provide an outlet and direction for their imagination to take form. Various exercises were designed to enrich their self-appreciation as well as engender respect for others and their culture. By de-formalizing learning patterns, the young minds were immersed in out-of-the-classroom learning that developed their social skills and helped them to achieve a higher level of self-awareness.
Day One

Theme: Inspire

Initiating the three day journey for the participants, the first phase focused on instilling some important realizations and commencing the process of inspiring the youngsters. With the sun dawning on the beautiful venue, the registration desk was set up and the JLC team, donned in matching black T-shirts, was all set to welcome the participants.

Lining up to register in an organized fashion, each participant was assigned to a team led by a Youth Facilitator (YF) and also allocated a t-shirt in his/her team’s color. Keeping the participants’ energy levels high, the YFs conducted some ice breakers and energizers with their teams as they waited for the rest of the group to arrive.
Dareecha Hall at Arena was where the conference was set to take place. Adorned with EBM themed balloons, colorful backdrops and the almost palpable promise of exciting times ahead, the hall would be the participants’ second home for the following three days.
Welcome and Inauguration

Upon cue from the Youth Facilitators, the participants flooded the hall with their energy and enthusiasm, rushing into the room in a sea of bright colors. Shireen Naqvi, Founding Director of School of Leadership, took the stage speaking to the spirited youngsters about becoming “artists of life” at the conference.

She then invited the Jonson group on to the stage for a performance to kick off the Inauguration Ceremony.

With some brilliant break-dancing moves and a skit about bullying, the Jonson Group had the audience enraptured and entertained. The person behind JLC 2015, the Project Manager for the Conference, Salma Khan was called onto stage and introduced the entire team of Gluco-JLC 2015.
Shireen Naqvi then spoke about Gluco’s support for JLC and the long standing support and partnership with English Biscuit Manufacturers in a number of ventures led by School of Leadership. She also introduced all the other conference sponsors who had made the event possible with their generosity and support in one form or another. These included Coca Cola, Falcon-I, Jang Group, FNF, Dubai Islamic, USEFP, Savers.pk, TPL Takaful, TCS and Apna Karachi 107.

The EBM team, represented by Mr. Zulfiqar Ansari, Ms. Neha Iqbal and Mr. Sherzaman, talked about their support for Gluco-JLC 2015 and what the participants should expect over the next three days. Mr. Zulfiqar Ansari, the Head of Marketing at EBM also spoke about the importance of events like JLC and the kind of transformation they could bring about in individuals’ lives. He highlighted the fact that this was the age to explore opportunities and that an experience like JLC was the way to get the most return on such an investment.
This was followed by a cake cutting ceremony with sponsor representatives and the conference officially commenced with the national anthem.

The Inauguration Ceremony was also graced by the presence of Mr. Shoaib Siddiqui, Commissioner Karachi and Shaniera Akram. Shaniera Akram got a chance to bond with the participants and related the story of the ant and the grasshopper to emphasize the importance of working hard at an early age.

Mr. Shoaib Siddiqui also addressed the participants referring to them as the “future heroes” and encouraging them to work hard to make their parents and country proud.
The Inauguration Ceremony was followed by some bonding time for the teams with a chance to get to know each other and their Youth Facilitators a little bit better.

**Rules of the Game**

The Champ of the Day, Uzair Ausaf – a leading corporate trainer introduced the theme of the day to participants. He laid out the Rules of the Game for the three days, giving participants a quick run-through of important conference norms. He also gave them an introduction to the concept of social action projects, emphasizing that their journey would not end after the three days but rather, it would only be the beginning of their transformation to initiate social action within their spheres of influence. Acknowledging their high level of energy, he told them that when it came to learning, age was just a number and no matter how old, we should be open to learning from others.
Graffiti Your Fears

In this segment, participants used the medium of art to express their fears and insecurities. This was an opportunity for them to confront their innermost anxiety by manifesting their imaginations onto the canvas. The feedback and comments from the youngsters were full of realizations. Though many were able to speak about what scared them, some had difficulty pinpointing what caused feelings of fright within them. Still others claimed that there was nothing that scared them. It was refreshing to hear the bright young minds speak out about their feelings and pen them down onto paper.
Shireen Naqvi took the stage to talk about stereotypes and the qualities that make each individual distinct in his/her own way. She stressed that each one of us is born with a unique set of talents to offer the world. Showing them a set of pictures, she asked participants to share their impressions addressing the concept of stereotypes in terms of the associations people create with regard to physical appearances. She opened up their minds to questioning why we all look different, pointing out that physical differences should only be used as a basis of recognition rather than the foundation for prejudices. For the participants, this session was equivalent to embarking on a journey of self-discovery as Shireen Naqvi encouraged them to ask themselves “Who am I?”
Right Your Story

A chance for them to tell the story of their own rights, in this segment teams were given 15 minutes to prepare 3 minute skits on various child right issues. The intelligent, young participants demonstrated maturity beyond their years by addressing some extremely relevant and crucial themes. Education for all, the implications of child labour, the importance of health awareness, child abuse, corporal punishment, child marriage and the right to speak were just some of the themes dramatized and performed. Immersing themselves in issues that affect their mental development was a fantastic way for the children to gather a better understanding of these prevalent problems.

The skits were followed by a speech from Ms. Shumaila representing SPARC – Society for Protection of Rights of Child. She spoke about the laws protecting children’s right and the importance of young people being aware of their rights so they would be able to stand up for them.
Tea with Teen Bahadur Team

Tea was made into an exciting affair as young stars from the recent hit movie, Teen Bahadur, joined the participants for a meet and greet. Muneeba Yaseen, Hanzala Shahid and Zuhab Khan who are all between the age group of 10-16 themselves were a huge inspiration for the youngsters. Many went up to them for pictures and asked them to share their stories to success at such a young age.

Syndicate Sessions

With themes like Think Out of the Box, Don’t Chase the Flock, Say the Unsaid and Break the Cliché the participants were broken up into smaller groups to attend sessions that interested them the most. Well known speakers and trainers conducted the sessions including Abdullah Ali who is studying Robotics in Malaysia, Waqar Ali – an increasingly prominent name in the world of youth training, Urooj Mazhar – speaker equipped with years of experience in the arena and Uzair Ausaf. Each speaker addressed his/her topic using video, pictures and charts to emphasize the points they were making. Participants were given various messages including the importance of originality, honing their own personalities and developing their unique talents and creating their own path instead of trying to fit into a mould provided by the world.
Think Out of the Box

Speaking about the topic, Abdullah Ali highlighted that a popular and enduring cliché that is often misunderstood, “think outside the box” requires a lot more thought than is usually associated with it. Whether it’s defining the box itself or what qualifies as thinking outside of it, there are concepts that are never completely clear when it comes to this phrase. He emphasized that what needs to be understood is that the box itself can be poorly-defined, imposing restrictions that are unnecessary and that this imaginary box must differ from person to person. In this session, young people learnt to come up with creative solutions that are able to reach beyond the restrictions imposed by their own ‘box’.

Don’t Chase the Flock

Waqar Ali talked about the fact that a significant aspect of growing up involves learning to recognize one’s individuality. With the abundance of external influences available in today’s age, it can become next to impossible to hone originality and develop thinking that is unique to an individual. He spoke about the importance of discovering the qualities and characteristics that are exclusively theirs and understanding how to use these to pave their own path in the world, getting rid of the “follower” mentality.
Say the Unsaid

Addressing the idea that our culture tends to suppress the instincts in children to speak out and express what they feel as they are conditioned to “only speak when spoken to” was what Urooj Mazhar started out with. She stressed that with a pre-determined set of rules that they’re given to follow, they are not given much of an opportunity to convey their thoughts and opinions. In order to break away from the shackles of silence, she gave participants various techniques and tools through which they can communicate their views without coming across as rude or disrespectful.

Break the Cliché

Uzair Ausaf talked to the group about how we all grow up listening to certain phrases that eventually become a part of our own vocabulary without a conscious effort on our part. Such expressions on their own might seem harmless but the associations that accompany them also tend to become incorporated into the human psyche. He addressed the dangers of letting clichés becoming a part of us and waging a war on such clichés to overcome a state of intellectual laziness.
Meet the Super Stars

Participants learnt from children their own age as Gluco Champions shared their inspiring success stories. Iman Basrai is a national junior swimming passion who developed an affinity for water since the age of 2. Hasham Hadi is about to become a part of the Guinness Book of World records for making the highest scrabble score of all time. Zaid Umer is a football aficionado and currently the captain of the Pakistan under-12 team. Each one had a series of events to share that led up to their eventual success. At the end of their talks, the participants were full of questions about the Gluco Champions’ future plans, their habits and many other thoughts they had on their minds.
Day one closed with some reflections and instructions on how to prepare for the second day.
Day Two

Theme: Create

Revolving around the theme of ‘Create’, renowned trainer and Chief Executive Officer of SoL, Umair Jaliawala led the second day and was like the pied piper for the young children. Starting out on a high note the day started out with the Youth Facilitators getting the participants all pumped up.

Creator, Creation & Creativity

Starting out with a video, Umair Jaliawala talked about the existence of endless possibilities and asked the youngsters to imagine all the things they could do. He addressed the profound nature of the relationship between the Creator (a Supreme Being we believe in as humans), the creation (everything
that exists in the universe including mankind) and creativity (thought processes that produce tangible or intangible works through expression).

Emphasizing to the participants that they were different and distinct he stressed that they were responsible for their own choices and conducted a number of activities to drive the point home and instill realizations.
Discover the Spark in You

After this the participants experienced a unique element of the conference. This segment was a real-life simulation of the multiple intelligence model.

With eleven different options ranging from graffiti, 3D game development, digital animation, photography, painting, creative writing, robotics, choreography and music the participants were given a chance to experience the one of their choosing for two hours under the skillful guidance of an expert. Some of the famed names included Abdullah Ahmed aka Sanki, Arsalan Zafar, Hammad Ahmed, Mashal Azmi and the MAD School.
Lunch with EBM Mentors

Lunch was an inspiring affair with EBM mentors who shared their wisdom and insights with the participants. Each one of the mentors sat down with the participants and struck up conversations of their interest, answering all their questions and giving them clarity on doubts about professional life, personal problems, academic issues etc.
From Interest to Passion

Zulfia Nazeer who represents Pakistan in the world of football on an international level spoke to the participants about transforming interests into passions. Hailing from Gilgit-Baltistan she pointed out that often, our truest passions emerge in childhood, only to be squelched by real life pressures.

The challenge is identifying these interests—whether you have a way with animals, make a killer lemon tart, or are crazy for origami—and ensuring that you pick the path towards converting them into passions.

She emphasized that after identifying what it is that sets you apart from the crowd you need to be determined enough put it on your list to be used as a jumping-off point when you’re plotting your career move.
Junior Masterchefs

The youngsters brought their creativity to the forefront once again during the Junior MasterChefs segment where they were given Gluco biscuits, fresh cream, sprinkles and some other ingredients to prepare high-tea for each other. The twist was creating a product with a brand and a tagline and attracting the maximum number of people to the stall. Each team managed to create mouth watering recipes that not only tasted scrumptious but also looked delicious as well.
Adventurous Expeditions

A highlight of the day was expeditions to some interesting places including Maritime Museum, Generations School, the English Biscuit factory and Patients Welfare Association. Participants had diverse experiences and gathered a lot of exposure varying on the venue of the expedition. Upon returning, they were eager to share their learnings and insights from their trips.
Crazy Mania

To wrap up the day the youngsters were given tokens to enjoy a number of games at Arena. These included bowling, paintballing, rodeo bull, ice skating, rock climbing and had the time of their lives with their excitement levels off the charts.
Day Three

Theme: Exhibit

The third and last day of Gluco-Junior Leaders Conference was one of overwhelming emotions. The day was moderated by Waqar Ali, a lead trainer at School of Leadership, and revolved around the participants sharing and showcasing all they had learned and created over the past two days of the conference.

Flaunt Your Creativity

Participants started by creating innovative models out of every day, low-cost or no cost items which they had been asked to bring from home or found at the venue. As teams, they managed to create some out-of-the-box displays which they then spoke about to the other participants.

The ones who had been involved in the robotics session the previous day shared on stage the mini-bots they had created. Those who had been part of the choreography session put up an impromptu dance performance and each one exhibited his/her own special talent or ability discovered during the course of the event.
Humans of JLC

Conducted by Khaula Jamil of Humans of Karachi fame this segment allowed the participants to get to know each other even better. Starting out by showing some of her most compelling photographs and sharing the story behind each one, Khaula shared her process for gathering such inspiring stories. The participants were spellbound and completely engaged as they got caught up in the details of each story. Ms. Jamil then asked the participants to put the techniques in action themselves and find out the story of the person sitting next to them—an entertaining anecdote, an incident that changed their lives or just an experience they would like to talk about.
Bridge the Gap

Moderated by Abid Naseem, a distinguished trainer and consultant, the panel featured a parent, a teacher and a counselor allowing for constructive discourse about their expectations, problems and the roles they play in children’s lives. Naheed Zahid, a panelist and principal of one of Karachi’s leading schools, spoke about the importance of bridging the communication gap between the concerned parties and how that would create better relationships.

The psychological and emotional gap between parents and children has been the subject of debate for years. What’s lacking is a platform that allows for constructive discourse about their expectations, problems and the roles they play in each other’s lives. This panel discussion encouraged dialogue between parents and the youth with the input of a psychologist – Sumrah Ahmed having expertise and knowledge about the mental development of children. The panel discussed the fact that bridging this communication gap would create better relationships with a more supportive and understanding underlying feeling between the concerned parties.
Robotics Presentation

One of the sessions in the multiple intelligence model was Robotics. All the participants involved in the session had created mini-bots and utilized this time to set up a mini-presentation on stage. After showing a video that showed exactly how the robots were assembled, they programmed them to do certain movements and demonstrated their tech suave to the rest of the participants.

Caring Lunch

“Being selfless in a world that gives you so many opportunities to be selfish is the true test of being a good human being” said Waqar Ali as he told the participants that lunch would be an opportunity to care for others. Rather than focusing on ladling out food for themselves they should try to care about their neighbors and ensure that they ate well, Waqar told them. With a huge perspective shift, the participants demonstrated the true spirit of camaraderie as they took care of each other, taking out food for others and making sure that no food got wasted. Their understanding of profound themes at such a young age showed some real maturity.
Social Action Projects

Waqar Ali then conducted a session encapsulating the purpose of the myriad of activities, sessions, simulations, field visits, panel discussions and exercises held throughout the conference. He explained the concept of social action projects that all participants were expected to complete before being awarded certificates. Participants shared their ideas for the kind of social action they wanted to take after the conference. From conducting mini-JLCs to donating books and helping out the underprivileged they had many ideas for what they wanted to do to bring about change in their spheres of influence.

Closing Ceremony

To kick off the closing ceremony, Waqar Ali invited Salma Khan on stage. The first order of business was acknowledging all the partners who had made the conference possible. Participants then witnessed some highlights in the form of a video featuring snippets from the last three days.
With emotions running high, the participants thanked the Youth Facilitators and Management Team of the conference.

The final day wrapped up with a dinner and ‘Crazy Mania’ – another chance for participants to enjoy the facilities at Arena. It was then time for the participants to bid farewell to each other and to JLC’15. However, in the words of the JLC team, it was only the hello to a new beginning.