

MIHAI VITEAZUL

National College



MM

EDITURA CASA CORPULUI DIDACTIC PRAHOVA

PLOIEȘTI 2024



EDITURA CASA CORPULUI DIDACTIC PRAHOVA
PLOIEȘTI 2024

Descrierea CIP a Bibliotecii Naționale a României

Mihai Viteazul National College : 150. - Ploiești : Editura Casei Corpului

Didactic Prahova, 2024

ISBN 978-606-047-256-8

37

Prezentul volum a fost coordonat de Prof. Janin Pințea
Colegiul Național "Mihai Viteazul" Ploiești

One century and a half of training champions

Ten years after one of the most important educational reforms in Romanian history (the law of A. I. Cuza which, for the first time, made attending primary schools free and compulsory), 1874 was embraced with great enthusiasm by the city of Ploiesti: the "Secondary School for girls" was then established. We might sometimes forget about the impact of such apparently small changes throughout the cultural evolution of a country or a city. However, positive things oftentimes have a shy, yet awaited beginning. The educational process was a strenuous one, but it was through the ambition of some devoted people (personalities such as Spiru Haret or Gheorghe Lazăr, along many other unknown ones) that the Romanian school flourished, blooming the idea of a better future.

As we are creating an arch over time, remembering our school's ability to thrive through difficult challenges, we must also carry on and protect the precious values promoted by dedicated teachers and the learning fervour of the first classes of girl students. Luckily, what "Mihai Viteazul" National College has become, still keeps the fire of knowledge burning - the reason for its recognition gained over the years. Though not stuck in the old teaching styles of the XIXth century, our College (such a proudly-uttered syntagma!) combines the motivation of the past, the success of the present and the dreams for the future, all because of the unity, compassion and ardor everyone proves while transforming a typical institution into a not only intellectual, but also moral literacy spring.

Aiming at the target of an even better society, we are willing to follow the crumbs of courage, determination and kindness left behind by those who continue to inspire us. From dedicated teachers, alumni who had the courage to take action and make their former school proud or zealous students with bright achievements to even those late figures whom we used to learn about (for instance, our Michael, whom we would like to be equally brave), they should all be considered heroes of our country and examples for our own paths. Students should be delighted to have the ability of just looking around and listening in order to discover encouragement, the power to continue and make a difference in the world. This anniversary is a chance to contemplate on the importance of education in today's world and, additionally, to take a moment and appreciate this treasured right.

A moment of gratitude of this kind is actually absolutely necessary since, without learning, none of the lives of the people mentioned above would have been so inspirational, but dull. Therefore, everyone who has been contributing in enhancing the enlightenment of multiple generations, shall receive our warm thanks and admiration for their perseverance and power to shine!

You know that divisions are full of satisfaction when
You measure the future with us!

Ligia Toader

EDUCATION THROUGH *INNOVATION*

Located in Ploiesti, "Mihai Viteazul" National High School is one of the most prestigious educational institutions in the area. Established in the 19th century, the school has a long history of academic excellence, named in honor of Mihai Viteazul, a national hero known for uniting the Romanian principalities in 1600. Over the years, the school has become renowned for its commitment to education and student development.

The school offers a diverse curriculum, focusing on science, mathematics, humanities, and foreign languages. It prepares students for national and international competitions and they achieve outstanding results in Olympiads and various other contests. The high school's staff includes 105 experienced and dedicated teachers who focus their lessons on critical thinking and developing creativity.

The school is also well-equipped with modern facilities, including science laboratories, a well-stocked library, computer labs and 52 classrooms, ensuring that students have access to the necessary resources for their education.

In addition to its rigorous academic programs, "Mihai Viteazul" National High School encourages extracurricular involvement, offering students opportunities in sports, arts and cultural activities. These foster teamwork, leadership and personal growth, contributing to the well-rounded development of 1394 students.

Beyond academics, the students are known for their leadership abilities and active involvement in community service projects, showing a strong sense of civic responsibility. Many students engage in extracurricular activities, where they cultivate creativity, collaboration and adaptability, preparing themselves to succeed in diverse fields. Their well-rounded character positions them as future leaders and innovators, capable of making meaningful contributions. Their ability to think critically allows them to excel at complex tasks, approach problems analytically, evaluate information from multiple perspectives and face challenges with confidence and creativity.

Students at "Mihai Viteazul" National High School are encouraged to pursue their interests, whether in academic subjects or extracurricular activities, allowing them to explore and develop their abilities. The school offers a friendly environment where students can express their opinions, engage in discussions and take initiative in both class and community projects. This freedom not only nurtures their individuality, but also empowers them to take responsibility for their own learning and personal growth.



BRIEF HISTORY

The National College "Mihai Viteazul" (CNMV) stands out as a symbol of academic excellence in Romania. With a rich history spanning over a century, the institution has undergone numerous transformations, shaped by social, political and educational changes. Its legacy, built upon tradition and resilience, makes this college one of the most respected educational establishments in Prahova County.

"Mihai Viteazul" National College's roots can be traced back to 1874, when it was initially founded as a girls' school, Liceul de Fete "Despina Doamna." This marked a significant moment in the history of education, as it was the first major educational institution devoted to the formal education of girls. Named after Despina Doamna, wife of the Wallachian ruler Neagoe Basarab, the school quickly gained a reputation for excellence, attracting students from all over the region.

Known for its oil refineries, Ploiești became a strategic target during World War II, leading to devastating bombings by American forces. In April 1944, the school building, like many others in the city, was severely damaged during the air raids. The destruction of the school's physical infrastructure marked the end of an era, but not of the institution's legacy. Fifteen years later, the school was attached to the current location, which belonged to "Saints Peter and Paul" high school. The northern wing had been rebuilt and the high school re-entered its normal academic rhythm, distinct from the high school "Saints Peter and Paul".



The building that housed the school was monumental, showcasing the architectural ambition of the time. Its imposing structure revealed the growing importance of education in the city and the role of women in society. However, the original building and much of the city's infrastructure would suffer a tragic fate during World War II.

In the aftermath of World War II, Romania underwent significant political changes as the country fell under communist rule. The new regime sought to restructure the educational system so as to fit the socialist model, leading to several renamings and reclassifications of schools across the country. Consequently, the girls' school, "Despina Doamna", was renamed and eventually merged with other educational institutions in Ploiești. This was a common trend during the early years of communist governance, as the state sought to centralize and standardize education. By 1948, many traditional school names were removed in favour of neutral, ideological titles.

The post-war restructuring reached a turning point in 1974, when the institution occupying the historical "Despina Doamna" premises was officially named Liceul "Mihai Viteazul", after the famous Romanian ruler Mihai Viteazul, who unified the three historical provinces of Wallachia, Moldavia, and Transylvania. This marked the beginning of its modern era, during which it emerged as a leading institution for secondary education in Ploiești. The school embodied the spirit of national pride and unity that was emphasized during the communist period.

Following the school's renaming, there came rapid growth and consolidation. Liceul „Mihai Viteazul” became a beacon of academic performance, attracting some of the brightest students and most talented educators from across the country. Its reputation as a leading educational institution in Prahova County was further solidified in 1997, when it was granted the prestigious status of a National College, a title reserved for schools that consistently demonstrated high academic standards and contributed to national education.

As a National College, “Mihai Viteazul” has upheld a strong tradition in various academic fields, including mathematics, sciences, humanities and extracurricular activities. The school consistently ranks among the top institutions in Romania, with its students regularly achieving outstanding results in national and international competitions.



Throughout its long history, “Mihai Viteazul” National College has demonstrated remarkable resilience. From its early days as Liceul de Fete ”Despina Doamna” to its rebirth after the destruction of World War II and its growth during the communist era, it has adapted to the changing educational and political landscape of the country. Today, Colegiul Național ”Mihai Viteazul” continues to honor its heritage while embracing innovation, providing a nurturing environment for students to thrive academically, socially and even personally.

GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS USUALLY COME OUT OF GREAT SACRIFICE

A prestigious college like CNMV should have great achievements, too. Our school is well-known for its academic excellence and the remarkable achievements of its students. Over the years, CNMV has recorded a tradition of success in various fields, from national and international competitions to extracurricular activities.

One of the most notable areas where CNMV students excel is academic competitions and Olympiads. The school has a strong reputation in the fields of informatics, natural sciences, and linguistics. Students regularly participate in national and international contests, bringing home numerous medals and accolades. For instance, students have consistently performed well in the International Mathematics Olympiad and the International Physics Olympiad, showcasing their exceptional problem-solving skills and deep understanding of complex concepts.

The first international contestant in the history of CNMV was Bădescu Alexandru Ștefan (Johnny). Over the years, many students have continued this trend, securing various medals. In 1986, at the International Mathematics Olympiad, Dabua Marius won a gold medal, contributing to Romania's overall success in the competition. The International Biology Olympiad is another area where students of CNMV have shone. In 2012, Ciurea Ioana Miruna won a silver medal, showcasing thorough knowledge of biology concepts. CNMV students have also excelled in the National Linguistics Olympiad, with Banu Matei Costin winning, in 2017, a gold medal and qualifying for the International Linguistics Olympiad.



Beyond academics, CNMV students are also active in various extracurricular activities. The school hosts and participates in numerous debates, with two prominent debate clubs: AES and ARGO. These clubs, founded by teachers of the college, have helped students develop critical thinking, public speaking and argumentation skills. CNMV also lies a strong emphasis on cultural development. Students participate in various cultural events, including theater, music and art competitions.



In 2023 and 2024, the students of the National College "Mihai Viteazul" continued to excel. Notably, they achieved remarkable success in the National Mathematics Olympiad, with Andrei Calin Vasile securing the gold medal in the 10th grade category, and at the International Natural Sciences Olympiad, where Bodor Darius Andrei won the silver medal. Additionally, the school also celebrated the outstanding performance of 22 students who graduated with perfect scores. These accomplishments reflect the school's ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of excellence and holistic development among its students.

The achievements of CNMV students are a testament to the school's commitment to high-standard education. Through their success in academic competitions, extracurricular activities, cultural events and community service, pupils here exemplify the values of hard work, dedication and social responsibility. These accomplishments not only make us proud of our school, but they also prepare the students to become well-rounded and responsible citizens.

"LEADING WITH *PURPOSE*": WRITING *HER* *OWN* STORY



Bianca Mirica, Head of CNMV Student Council

Coming across the famous Oscar Wilde quote: *To live is the rarest thing in the world. Most people exist, that is all.*, I couldn't help but wonder—what does it mean to truly live, rather than simply exist? For Bianca Mirica, head of CNMV's student council and founder of Romania's largest book club, "The Rory Gilmore Bookshelf", this means turning passion into action and leading with purpose.

When talking with her, it quickly became obvious that leadership is more than a role—it's a way of life. *I've realized that planning events and creating opportunities for CNMV students is my top priority*, she shares. Her proudest accomplishment, after taking on the role in Grade 10, was the rapid growth of the Student Council, ensuring that the student council is one of the most active in the county: *I am fortunate to partner with teachers and students and make that happen*, she adds confidently.

Since her journey as head of the student council is about to end, she thought about the growth she had seen. *Students are becoming aware of their impact*, she said proudly. Her upcoming graduation means stepping away from this role. But she hopes her successors will carry on the torch and encourage students to continue being their best version.

Looking ahead, Bianca is committed to studying in the United States. With a dream to pursue a career as an entrepreneur, journalist, and communications expert, her experience in leading has been an invaluable stepping stone. *These roles have prepared me for the future*, she says.

However, it is not only her council leadership that sets her apart. Inspired by her love of literature, she founded “The Rory Gilmore Bookshelf”, which started as a small passion project and later became a sensation nationally. It reunites about 120 members and a community of 4,500 people. Bianca’s eyes light up when asked about her favourite books. She reveals “The Picture of Dorian Gray” and Oscar Wilde’s complicated storytelling have changed her outlook on life. *Reading changes lives*, she says earnestly. For her, literature is a window to the world that promotes creativity and self-awareness. Balancing duties as student council president and club founder while maintaining school work and a social life is not an easy task. *I always miss social gatherings*, she admits, but she has learnt the importance of balance. *Having fun with friends is important. But meaningful activities have their share too*. Her secret to managing it all? A clear vision and a well-organized schedule.

As Bianca Mirica is about to pass the baton, it’s clear her journey is far from over. In fact, it is only the beginning. For her, life isn’t about sitting on the sidelines—it is about leading with purpose. In a world where young women are often told to slow down, Bianca Mirica is proof that passion can pave the way to greatness—one event, one book and one ambitious goal at a time.



MEET AN *INSPIRING* YOUNG TEACHER

Mr Dobre Razvan has already made a name for himself in our school. As a passionate young teacher, he is transforming his classroom into a space where critical thinking thrives. Mr Dobre, who teaches the History of Jews and the Holocaust, has quickly gained the admiration of his students for his fresh approach to learning. In this interview, we will dive into his teaching perspective, his experience as a student at our high school, and reveal how he sees the student-teacher relationship. With his energy, Mr Dobre is truly a teacher to listen to.

How do you feel as a teacher in the high school you graduated from?

If I were to be honest, I am at a loss for words. Since I was a child, I have always known I wanted to be a history teacher, but I have never fathomed that it would happen at the high school I graduated from. For this matter I'd have to be thankful because of the recently introduced subject: "The Jews and the Holocaust History".

How was your experience as a student in our high school?

Personally, I had a beautiful experience at this school. I'd like to think that I was a Jack-of-all-trades, a student every teacher dreams of, well-behaved and hard-working.

What motivated you to choose to be a teacher and work at our high school?

I have always dreamt of being a part of the educational system, even if all my old teachers pushed me away from this job. Why did I choose to join this high school? Because of the fact that I knew for sure that here I would find the best students I could dream of and it would be easier for me to teach this subject.

How do you perceive the teacher-student relationship at the beginning of your career?

I think that the relationship between a student and a teacher should resemble that between a master and a disciple, as I have an old-school type of thinking. What kind of master would I like to be in relation to my students? For those who watched the famous movie "Ani de liceu", I aspire to be an alloy between "Isoscel" and "Socrate", basically that kind of teacher who knows how to combine professionalism with love for his pupils.

What kind of expectations do you have from your students?

I am profoundly impressed by the seriousness of the students that I met at "Mihai Viteazul". I have a low set of expectations: I only want them to be respectful towards me.



“TRY AGAIN, FAIL BETTER.”

CNMV is the hub of many brilliant minds in the country. Bearing this in mind, we are delighted to introduce Miruna Constantin.

Miruna Constantin prides herself on passing the Romanian Baccalaureate with flying colours, as she scored 10's in all of the subjects of the exam. She is a Bentley graduate with a degree in Finance & Entrepreneurship, an ed-tech entrepreneur, public speaker, education and youth democracy activist. She is the co-founder of **Vreau Să Studiez În America & Europa**, a breakthrough online university prep school reinventing education through the power of quality mentorship.

Asked how she would describe CNMV in three words, she mentioned: *excellence, academics and prestige.*

Most of my teachers were very supportive of my decision to study in the US. While the school hasn't played an important role in my decision, my desire to study in a more practical, easy to follow, and personalized curriculum was emphasized by the Romanian system.

Miruna goes on to praise CNMV as one of the best schools in the country, fostering a sense of unquenchable drive for success in its students:

However, now, working in the education sector in Romania, having collaborated with and visiting these institutions, I can sincerely say that “Mihai Viteazul” Ploiești still tops the public high schools I would recommend.

Asked what piece of advice she would give to her freshman self, knowing what she knows now, Miruna has decided to keep it short and concise:

The people you surround yourself with draw the trajectory you will follow.



Our astonishing bright graduate also reveals that she used to look forward to some classes with great excitement:

My specialities were Mathematics, Computer Science and the English Language. As a result, my favourite class was Ms Preda's English classes - we studied not only grammar and exam prep materials, but we learned about "taste". She used to say: "You are not born with taste. Taste is something you learn". Thus, she immersed us into the universe of literature, theater, and music, but to me she was a mentor and an amazing teacher - she prepared me for the Olympiad, and also took time to guide me into my career. However, Ms Lambru was also a teacher who inspired me - she was my Mathematics teacher for four years, and in hindsight, I picked up many interpersonal skills from her.



It seems that high school may be bitter sweet sometimes. People bond with others; people play truant; some smoke, others keep watch; some talk, while others listen...Miruna has seen it too:

I believe the volunteering activities and entrepreneurship projects I participated in with my deskmate and friend, Iulia Marin, were the most valuable takeaway from high school. We've stayed in touch all these years, worked together and inspired each other to be better.

At the end of the day, Miruna conveys the idea that CNMV is not all about envy-worthy prizes that could make even the most cynical one turn their head in awe; it is about people. This is a value that CNMV can vouch for: friendship. Miruna has come to realize this too:

Follow your passion, and excel at what you do while building connections and not burning bridges. In fewer words: ***Make friends & do your homework!***



THE FUTURE IS *ROBOTS!*

In today's world, when technology appears to have taken over our daily lives, youngsters are more likely to engage in activities such as programming robots and designing new prototypes. Our school features two active robotics clubs, both bringing home a myriad of prizes every year.

LET'S MEET THE TEAMS!

One of our school's Romanian First Tech Challenge robotics teams was founded in 2016. BraveBots now has around 10 members who work alongside 3 mentors, one of which is also a physics teacher in our school, Mrs Camelia Băran.

The other team, which is also a certified First Tech Challenge team, RO2D2, was founded two years later. RO2D2 reunites 14 members, enjoying the support of 6 volunteers and 3 mentors, one of which is a history teacher in CNMV, Mr Aris Zisopol.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The First Tech Challenge has been around for almost 20 years, and it takes place yearly in the United States. Every participating team must build a highly powerful robot.

Out of the 10,000 teams which qualify every year, RO2D2 managed to make it to the grand final this year, becoming world vice-champions! In the school year 2023-2024, our students brought home 3 awards from the international stage: **Control Award Winner - Ochoa Division, Winning Alliance Captain - Ochoa Division & Finalist Alliance Captain.**

Although BraveBots did not qualify for the international contest they did secure important victories in the national one. They won the **Inspire 1 Award** in regionals, and the **Connect 3 Award** in nationals.

INTERVIEW SECTION WITH SOME MEMBERS OF TEAM RO2D2

What is the latest project you have worked on?

The latest project we have worked on as a team was for the Maryland Tech Invitational contest, which took place in June this year and we won with no defeats.

(Vlad Pătrașcu, 10M3, Programming department)

Are you a team beyond the club limits?

Yes, we are friends outside of school. When we have time, we go out to see a movie together or on a field trip. We consider ourselves more than a team, we feel more like a family.

(Andrei Burlacu, 10M3)

How has being part of this team changed you?

Being part of the robotics team has really changed me both academically and personally. I have learnt how to use new programs, like Solidworks, a projecting tool, and Indesign, a layout software. I'm proud to be on this team, as it is where I've learnt how to develop useful, essential abilities for my success in the future,

such as leadership skills and how to quickly adapt to unpredictable situations.

(Alexandru Dragu, 10M3, Construction and 3D printing)

What has been the most memorable moment you recall since being on the team?

The most memorable moment has definitely been qualifying for the grand final of the Robotics World Championship in Houston, where we secured our title as world vice-champions and won first prize in the Control Award section.

(Ilinca Popescu, 10M3, PR and marketing)

What are your plans for the future as a team?

In the future, we would like to maintain our reputation in the robotics community and the academic and professional field as well as raising our standards and goals for the next seasons.

(Sara Alexandrescu, 10M3, Volunteer)



Bravebots team



RO2D2 team

THE *ART OF DEBATE* AT CNMV

Collaboration. Critical thinking. Passion. Curiosity. These are only some aspects of what debate actually stands for. At “Mihai Viteazul” National College, debate is more than an extracurricular activity; it is a journey of self-discovery and self-expression. In a world where the ability to communicate effectively and think critically is more important than ever, our debate clubs serve as a platform for students to challenge their own beliefs and build the confidence to stand up for what we believe in.



A Portrait of ARGO Debate Club

ARGO is a non-profit organization that promotes education through debate. Founded in 2009, it builds on the 20-year tradition of the ARGO club at “Mihai Viteazul” National College, Ploiești. Since 2012, ARGO has been a voting member of the World Schools Debating Championships with members excelling at regional, national and international level. Currently, the ARGO CNMV club has around 40 debaters, ranging from 9th to 12th grade.



A Snapshot of AES Legacy

AES is one of the longest-standing debate organization in the country, with nearly 30 years of history and over 80 students involved. In the past two years, AES debaters have reached at least the quarterfinals in every competition and their most recent achievement was at “Câmpina Impromptu Open”, wherefrom AES brought home the silver medal. One of their teams succeeded in making it to the semifinals of Bucharest Open twice and reached the finals once. Also, Roberta Varghileanu, ex-student of CNMV, ended up being the second best debater of the year, an extraordinary performance we could say!

Who is Amalia Stanciu?

I think I've always been a very talkative girl, but I fully started to understand who I was after my first year of debating. Topics started to get more difficult, pressure was building up, but somehow I was still doing well. It was because I was finally given a purpose to pour all of that “talking energy” into. I was shown how to make use of my emotions in a constructive way and how to piece together knowledge that I had about things.



How would you describe the most intense competition you have participated in?

It's very much winner takes it all. It was all about the titles. I also put a lot of pressure on myself because it was my final competition with my original team. In hindsight it was one of the moments that forced me to change my perspective on winning and academics but also what I prioritize in my life.

All in all, debate is a tool for personal growth, having the opportunity to enlarge your general knowledge and improve your communication skills significantly. If you are interested in becoming a better version of yourself, why wouldn't you give it a try?

CHAMPIONS *ON AND OFF* THE ARENA



With every dribble, every sprint, and every cheer from the stands, our college's heartbeat reverberates through the athletic field. Here, sports are more than simply games – they are a cornerstone of our identity, fueling resilience and a relentless drive for excellence. From the thunderous applause at volleyball games to the teamwork on the basketball court, our sports teams embody the values that make our college outstanding.

At CNMV, the athletic programme is as diverse as it is dynamic, offering students the chance to excel in a range of events. Our volleyball teams are known for their agility and precision, while our handball teams display remarkable strength and coordination. On the basketball court, our players show unparalleled teamwork and strategy, on the soccer field, our team's passion for the game is unmatched. Thus, at the national competitions, in 2024, the girls' basketball team managed to win second place, the boys' and the girls' handball teams placed fourth and the girls' volleyball team earned their second consecutive fourth-place finish.



Nonetheless, the volleyball teams are truly unrivalled, standing out as the most successful sports programme on campus. Over the years, not only have they set a high standard of excellence, but they have also managed to make history, winning numerous titles and accolades. With the guidance of our dedicated and experienced coaches, these athletes have consistently pushed boundaries, elevating the sport to new heights. The passion, discipline and teamwork they exhibit have made volleyball a hallmark of our school's athletic legacy.

What is more, CNMV also proudly offers a special class to student-athletes, a heterogeneous group of champions. Home to top performers not only in volleyball and handball but also in disciplines like martial arts, cycling and athletics, they bring a wealth of flair and dedication, having achieved remarkable triumphs regionally, nationally and internationally. The sports class fosters an environment where students are able to maintain a delicate balance between academic and athletic aspirations.



In addition to these, many other students have achieved astonishing distinctions in the sports field. Not only do they shine in their career, but they also manage to excel academically in challenging fields like Maths and Informatics. Balancing the demands of intense training with rigorous coursework is no easy task and their ability to thrive in such competitive environments showcases their determination and phenomenal effort.

On a final note, sports play an essential role in shaping the vibrant culture of our college. From our standout teams to the diverse talents of our student-athletes, we are proud of the dedication and excellence they bring to both sports and academics. These students embody the values of perseverance, teamwork and dedication, reflecting the spirit of CNMV, where every accomplishment is celebrated and every effort is appreciated.



MAI APROAPE DE STELE – AN AMBITIOUS AND EXCITING CLUB

Astronomy has become a popular topic in today's world. As a result, our college has taken measures to provide its pupils with a place to express their passion. Mrs. Băran Camelia, a physics teacher at CNMV Ploiești, will now enlighten us giving some details about the astronomy club.

Give us some general information about the club.

The club started on October 24 2023, as part of the educational project “Mai aproape de stele”, coordinated by me. It has 16 members, all students from CNMV. Currently, up until October 14 2024, we are recruiting pupils interested in astronomy. Last year, the members of the club were involved in two activities: spectroscopy and symposium. Each activity gathered over 150 pupils, including teachers and parents. At the symposium, pupils participated with important scientific research, models, paintings, drawings and astro-poems.

At the Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad, there were 5 club members who got important awards at the county stage, 3 pupils qualified for the nationals, where they obtained a MEN mention, bronze and silver medals, and one pupil qualified for the extended lot, who will attend this October in the International Astronomy and Astrophysics Olympiad for Juniors in Nepal (Mincă Andrada).

What or who inspired you to start this project?

Since my childhood, my grandmother, a good connoisseur of celestial vaults, would gather all her grandchildren at night, especially during the holidays, and she would teach us how to get oriented by looking at the sky. Observation is the most interesting and challenging way to knowledge.

What are the goals of the club?

The club's main aims are: promoting astronomy amongst students, popularizing astronomy and science and preparing passionate students for performance in this field.

What kind of activities does it offer?

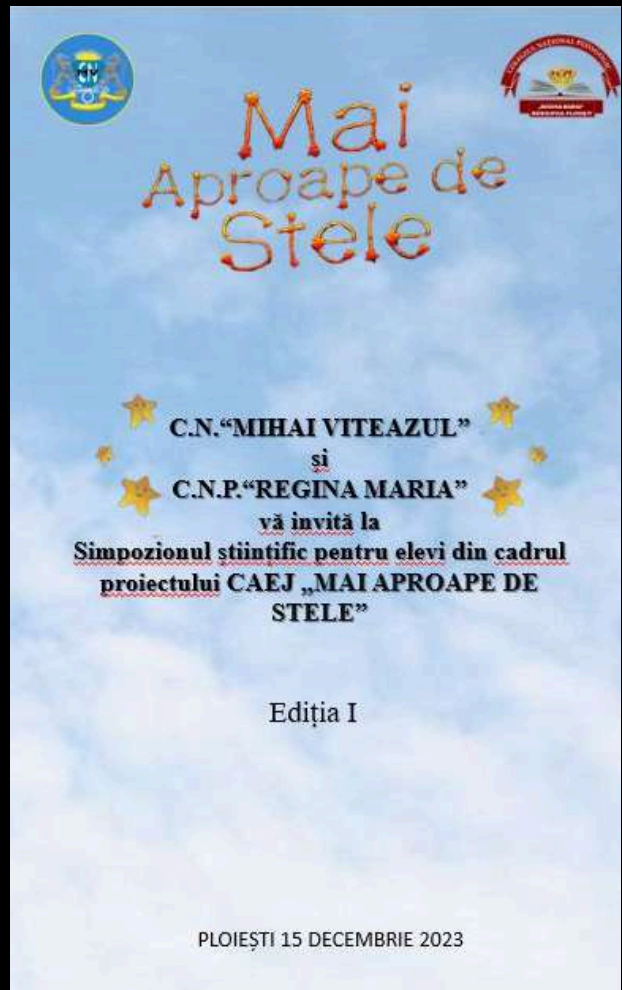
There are various activities at the club, including: theoretical lessons, usage of available resources, creation of models, experiments, astronomic observations through the telescope, orientation on the celestial vault, scientific presentations, organization and events attendance.

How does a meeting unfold?

Meetings are usually organized in the evening, in the school's physics laboratory for theoretical lessons, and on the sportgrounds for astronomical observations. All lessons are interactive and focused on learning and investigating.

What features do you believe recommend the club?

At the club, pupils can learn astronomy in an organized environment, taking into account the fact that it is not studied in the school curriculum. The activities are voluntary, members receive certificates, diplomas and prizes. Through attending olympiads and competitions, students can obtain important prizes, which will help them on their educational journey. Through the Thoth Association for Mathematics and Sciences Ploiești, whose president I am, sponsorships can be obtained for materials and for organizing club events.



How do you think the club could be improved in the future?

To improve it, I would like to organize 3 departments: performance, PR and learning & astronomical observations. Other ideas include: conceiving a site for the club, using advertising materials (including t-shirts with the club logo), attracting sponsorships for the purchase of specific equipment and materials, creating publications in the field of Astronomy and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics).

What message would you leave for those interested?

My message is: Knowledge began through looking at the sky. If you are passionate about astronomy or you do not know yet if you like such a field, we will be waiting for you at the club, where together we can unravel the secrets of the universe!

KALIMERA!

One of the most active and sought after clubs in our school is the Modern Greek Club founded by Mr. Aris Zisopol, a history teacher of Greek origins. He is not only a history teacher but also a traditional Greek dance instructor and an active member of the Hellenic Union.

What inspired you to found the club?

A hundred years ago, my great-grandfather and my father moved to Romania, a rich country, with a lot of potential and very welcoming for Christian people. After the fall of the communist regime, several democratic institutions were created along with the organisations representing national minorities. Among these, I want to draw attention to the Hellenic Union of Romania, which includes twenty branches located in different regions of Romania that hold dense Hellenic populations. Ever since the age of five, I have spent part of my childhood at the headquarters of the Prahovean Hellenic Community where, at my father's advice, I began studying Modern Greek, as well as traditional Greek dances.



These activities have played a fundamental role in my formation. Today, as a member of the community, I have taken on several responsibilities as I consider it my duty to offer the same chance to other young people willing to participate in the fascinating projects organised by the Hellenic Union of Romania. Bringing the Modern Greek course to "Mihai Viteazul" National College is simply my own desire, as an alumnus of this school, to bring my contribution to the high level of education our high school offers to its students. Therefore, by doing so, I try to gather students around me by providing them with a unique space of self-discovery and development.

What are the activities related to your club?

The activities dedicated to Hellenism that I have initiated in this school, are based on two fundamental pillars: the Greek language and culture. As far as language goes, I will mention the celebration of the International Day of the Greek language (9th February) and the organisation of the Modern Greek Olympiad. When it comes to the cultural element, I will highlight the importance of the "Dialogue with Time and the World" School Contest, of the Interethnic "The alphabet of cohabitation" Festival, of the Hellenic Festival, as well as of the free-for-all Greek dance courses dedicated to all ages. Introducing these activities in the school curriculum represents a step forward towards modernising the educational system, youngsters having the opportunity to enrich their cultural portfolio and open their eyes to new horizons.



How can one become a member and how many members are currently involved?

The participants are quite numerous. We can estimate that, all through the county, we have gathered several hundred members. We, as an organisation, take pride in the fact that we hold our activities in a professional manner and buoy promising students to reach the goals promoted by the Olympic Games: "Faster, Taller, Stronger". Every year we welcome new students at the free Greek language and Greek traditional dance courses organised by the Hellenic Community in Prahova, taught by young volunteers and teachers. More information on this topic can be found online, on our website and social media platform.



MEET THE *EDITING* TEAM!

The Authors:

Muşescu Ilinca	Răducanu Aurelian	Ştir Mihai Eduard
Pîtiu Andrei	Rădulescu Anastasia	Toader Ligia
Pîtiu Constantin	Seceanu Alexia Miruna	Tocitu Alexandra Lavinia
Popa Corina Maria	Stanciu Paula Alexandra	Vlad Adelin Cristian
Precupeţu Andreea Casiana	Stancu Daria Cristi-Ana	

Coordinating Teacher:

Pinţea Janin



EDITURA CASA CORPULUI DIDACTIC PRAHOVA



PLOIEȘTI 2024