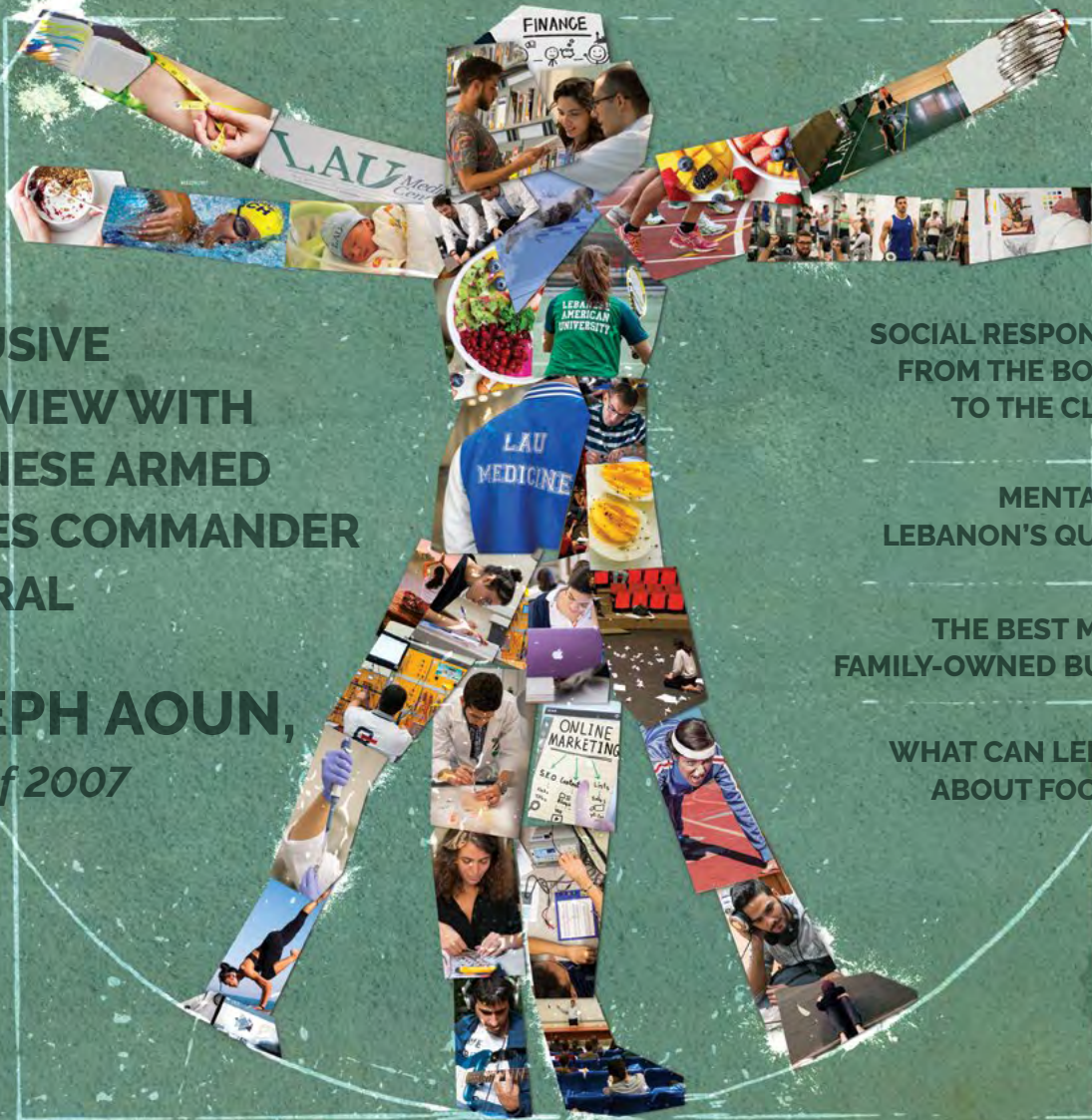


LAU magazine

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& ALUMNI BULLETIN

Leonardo Da Vinci's iconic "Vitruvian Man" combined art and math to create a representative image of good health; a testament to proportion and balance. A belief that we strongly share, here at Lau. We proudly present to you, "Lau's Vitruvian Man".



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH LEBANESE ARMED FORCES COMMANDER GENERAL

JOSEPH AOUN,
Class of 2007

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – FROM THE BOARDROOM TO THE CLASSROOM

MENTAL HEALTH: LEBANON'S QUIET CRISIS

THE BEST MODEL FOR FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES

WHAT CAN LEBANON DO ABOUT FOOD WASTE?

A cultured individual created from the university's exceptional work and ambitions. Improving the lives of people through tackling issues such as health; whether in its physical, mental, social or financial forms. Starting from Lau's inner circle and expanding to the outermost edges of the world.

LAU'S VITRUVIAN MAN

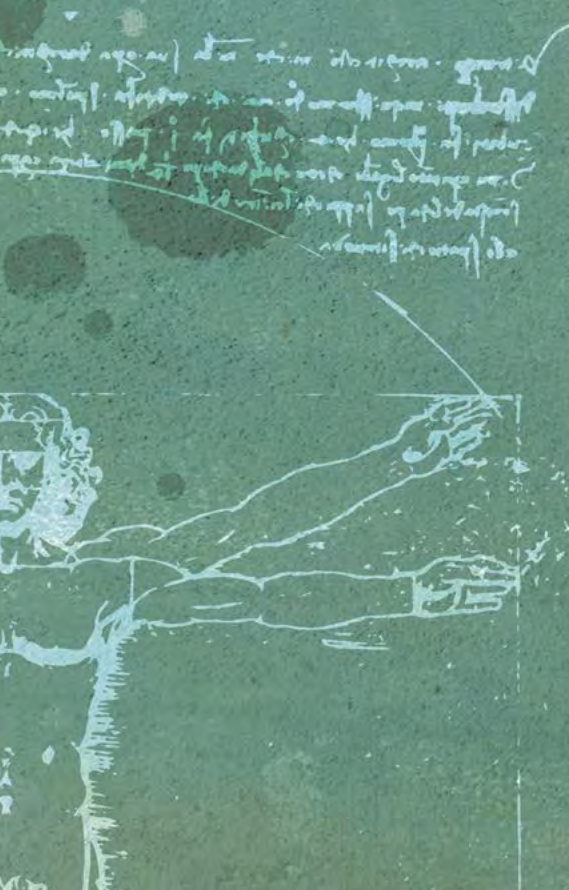
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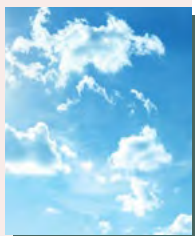
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Wherever You Go

LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin is your platform for sharing photos and news about yourself, your family and your friends. We encourage you to update us on your professional and personal activities and achievements – from wherever you are!



Help Tell Our History

We welcome news from alumni, friends, supporters and current and former faculty and staff members representing all of the university's current and former schools and colleges. Submit your stories and photos for inclusion in LAU's online and print publications.

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From the **President's Desk**

Dear friends,

Welcome to the Winter 2019 edition of the LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin. This issue's highlights are twofold. Firstly, it includes a contribution by one of our own, an alumnus who has done so much for his country and continues to do so every day, Lebanese Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief General Joseph Aoun. His letter to our graduates resonates with leadership mantras which I invite you to read very carefully.

Secondly, this issue's theme is To Our Health. Health is a major issue on almost everyone's mind. Across LAU, our faculty and students are working hard to explore these topics, and we are excited to share with you a broad and nuanced view of health by exploring how it applies in Lebanon in general, and at LAU in particular.

There's our physical health, of course, but we can point to other kinds of health that impact the comfort and quality of our lives. Financial health, for example, is tied strongly to people's levels of satisfaction and feelings of self-determination. Meanwhile, mental health, though a taboo subject in many places, is happily becoming a topic publicly explored and researched, so that we can find ways to make people's minds healthy as well as their bodies. And then there is social health, a phenomenon that can be achieved by creating spaces where people feel included, engaged and empowered – similar to what we strive to create on our campuses.

Here at LAU, we take all types of health seriously. Most obviously, our health sciences schools – the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing, and the School of Pharmacy – pour their energy and resources into producing groundbreaking research that will not only advance the health sciences fields, but also help countless patients gain better prognoses. This is aside from the work of the Nutrition Program, whose faculty research the role of our diets in disease and wellness.

In our other schools, we have faculty immersed in the study of mental health and the impact of diseases such as depression on different segments of the population, and others working to understand the best forms of outreach to vulnerable groups that are more at risk of psychological trauma.

And all of us have worked hard to make our university and all its constituent schools, institutions and offices socially healthy spaces in which our students, faculty, staff, guests and friends feel enlightened and inspired. One of the ways we do this is by embracing our role as a strong, independent institution with a great sense of social responsibility to the members of our family and the communities outside our gates.

All of this is to say that health comes in many forms and achieving it has benefits beyond one person.

So to members of our community and others across this country, I wish you good health – in every way.



Joseph G. Jabbra
President



FEATURE

From Academia to Army, an Interview with **General Joseph Aoun**



The commander-in-chief of the Lebanese army looks back at his education and how it helped him become the leader he is today

LAU alumnus General Joseph Aoun (BA '07) speaks about how his alma mater impacted his life and career, and how the university prepares its students for leadership and giving back.

On his time at LAU

It's been 11 years since I graduated from the Lebanese American University with a degree in political science/international affairs.

The university had a productive impact on my career in the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF). It was evident that my education at LAU added to my scientific knowledge, enabling me to represent Lebanon in the best way possible, and it was a threshold to pursue my master's in strategic studies in the United States.

"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield" is the university's motto. I am still carrying it while on my military journey. Ever since its establishment in 1835, LAU has been serving the nation by spreading education for generations. It is a personal honor to serve in Lebanon's 73-year-old armed forces, which has made sacrifices at the altar of the nation, and to have graduated from a 183-year-old institution that has the ability to change the world.

Education isn't simply about achieving a "higher state of knowledge"; it's about equipping students with the tools they need to go out into the world and shape it for themselves.

"It is a personal honor to serve in Lebanon's 73-year-old armed forces, which has made sacrifices at the altar of the nation, and to have graduated from a 183-year-old institution that has the ability to change the world."

Education can stimulate economic growth by increasing innovation, productivity and human capital.

On being a leader vs. a manager

Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* – the "holy" book for military commanders written about two millennia ago – is still applicable nowadays, not only in military institutions, but in business management as well.

Some of its teachings include: The manager thinks in logic, but the leader thinks in solutions. The manager abides by laws, but the leader relies on creativity. The manager implements, but the leader excels. The manager sticks to the reachable steps, but the leader pursues larger objectives. The manager supervises the work of people and makes sure they execute their duties, but the leader motivates people to do what they have to do. Courage and sacrifice are considered the virtues of a leader.

The military officer is trained to be a leader, while the individual in civil society is trained to become a manager.

Lebanon is in need of both the manager and the leader because they complement each other. They are able to rebuild our beloved country and restore it to its previous status in history. Many wartime leadership lessons learned could be broadly applied to the world of management, and many findings have real value for managers everywhere.

On managing losses

Life is filled with challenges. You will experience failures.

Failure motivates a person to work hard to succeed; it is the most important drive for achieving success, although it can be painful and discouraging. It tests your resolve to lose one of your comrades in arms, even though you have to continue the mission to save other soldiers' lives.

In difficult times you have to motivate your troops, keep their morale high, push them to overcome challenges and recover properly afterward. One should stay firm and dignified in this experience while keeping his authority undisputed.

Life taught me that with determination powered by courage, motivation and passion, one can overcome difficulties.

On learning from mistakes

In the darkest moments, the military leader should use his tactical skills, physical ability and inner strength to execute his mission. Lessons learned are the byproduct of mistakes committed over the course of a military career. Therefore, the military leader should benefit from those mistakes to improve his performance.

On fostering a positive culture

The LAF's mission is no longer limited to military training. Currently, the LAF is focusing on developing human capital. The army should be able to interact with the local people. Education plays a vital role in enhancing critical thinking, decision-making and the problem-solving skills needed to add value to our know-how.

An officer is a combination of physical ability and education. Officers need to equip themselves with a proper education that enables them to interact with the locals and enhance their mental capabilities to make the right military decisions. Therefore, the LAF High Command constantly encourages officers to achieve a higher education. Recently, bilateral agreements were signed with the best universities in Lebanon to provide soldiers with a higher education.

On fighting corruption and building trust

During my meeting with the cadet officers who passed their military academy entrance exam, the message was clear: Be proud of yourselves, because you have succeeded with your personal capabilities and competence. We want to bestow upon the following generations a strong army because those who enroll in the military academy are the country's future leaders, including the incoming commander in chief of the Lebanese Armed Forces. It is also a message to every young

Lebanese person that the only tool needed to enroll in the military academy is their personal skills.

On his military journey

My military journey started in combat units that were deployed all over the country, enabling me to improve my military skills and leading to my assignment at the helm of the LAF. A real example is my service as the Ninth Brigade commander in the south, followed by my appointment as the commander of the Ersal Front, which helped me gain knowledge of the battlefield and thus led to the planning of Operation *Fajr el Jouroud* [Operation Dawn on the Outskirts] and making decisions to eradicate terrorism.

On strategy

Strategy is the bridge connecting capabilities to desired objectives. Sun Tzu developed six specific principles that capture his strategic philosophy and that apply to competitive intelligence and business strategy as well.



The principles are:

1. Win all without fighting
2. Avoid strength, attack weakness
3. Deception and foreknowledge
4. Speed and preparation
5. Shaping the opponent
6. Character-based leadership

Basically, these six principles are the same for business, military and daily missions, though they need to be tweaked a little for each realm.

Here is a proposal on how they would appear if applied to warfare:

1. Win all without fighting: achieve the objective without destroying it



2. Avoid strength, attack weakness: strike where the enemy is most vulnerable
3. Deception and foreknowledge: win the information war
4. Speed and preparation: move swiftly to overcome resistance
5. Shaping the opponent: prepare the battlefield
6. Character-based leadership: lead by example

And another proposal on how they would appear if applied to business:

1. Win all without fighting: capture your market without destroying it
2. Avoid strength, attack weakness: strike where they least expect it
3. Deception and foreknowledge: maximize the power for market information
4. Speed and preparation: move swiftly to overcome competitors
5. Shaping the opponent: employ strategy to master the competition
6. Character-based leadership: provide effective leadership in turbulent times



On the lessons he's learned

Life is filled with challenges and is therefore determined by how you face them. It doesn't matter if you fall down, as long as you have the will to stand up again.

Experience is an accumulation of mistakes committed throughout life – each and every one should be learned from.

Failure is not about not succeeding; it is about not trying.

You are the future generation – the leaders and the managers of tomorrow, who will build the world and the ones who can affect the lives of people in the next century. It will not be easy. Start each day with the will to achieve your task.

Be honest, compassionate, loyal and transparent, respect your colleagues and have a sense of selfless service.

Arm yourself with courage and kindness. Know that life is not fair, and that you will fail often. However, never give up – overcome your fear by facing it. Equip yourself with the will to encounter the challenges of life.

Serve with integrity, lead with courage and act with love in your heart. Have the wisdom to master your life intelligently by having without possessing, acting with no expectations, leading and not trying to control. These are supreme virtues.

The renowned Lebanese writer and philosopher Gebran Kahlil Gebran once wrote: "Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country."





A Confirmation of Excellence

By Louisa Ajami

Following an intensive review, the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing has been reaccredited by a major US nursing education body



LAU's Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON) has been reaccredited by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), a body that establishes quality standards for nursing education. It also works to improve healthcare and "promotes public support for professional nursing education, research, and practice," according to the CCNE.

ARCSON has achieved a lot since its launch in 2010. Already one of the top nursing schools in the region, it is a leader in interprofessional, clinical and blended learning, and boasts state-of-the-art resources, including its faculty.

Accreditations from internationally-recognized commissions raise universities' profiles and let potential students and their future employers know of the caliber of the institutions that were accredited. LAU as a university has been accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE, previously known as NEASC) since 2009. In addition to the institutional-level accreditation, many of LAU's schools and programs are accredited, including ARCSON, which has been accredited by CCNE since November 2013.

ARCSON Dean Anahid Kulwicki and her colleagues at the school have been working toward reaccreditation for much of 2018. Nursing schools must

demonstrate to CCNE that their faculty, equipment, curricula, faculty-to-student ratio, research, and mission meet exacting criteria. This spring, a delegation from the CCNE traveled to Byblos campus, where ARCSON sits, to do the reaccreditation.

While touring the ARCSON facilities, the CCNE evaluation team interviewed school and university officials, faculty, students, alumni, and community representatives. It also reviewed materials submitted by ARCSON and observed classroom and clinical activities.

In its report published after the tour, the CCNE presented a positive review of ARCSON's mission and governance, institutional commitment and resources, curriculum and teaching-learning practices, and assessment and achievement of program outcomes.

"We are very proud to have been reaccredited by the CCNE," said Dean Kulwicki. "We have always put maximum effort into our faculty, facilities and programs, and the reaccreditation confirms that our work has been successful."

In a statement, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara said, "AKSOB's reaccreditation is recognition of the standards we hold ourselves to. We are constantly being acknowledged for our excellence in teaching, innovation and community outreach. These together form the three pillars of our Third Strategic Plan, which acts as a guide on our constant development and enhancement as a leading institution of higher education."

"There are no words that can explain my appreciation to our president, our family of academics, our community partners and to our students, who make us shine in every way imaginable by adhering to the highest standards of professional nursing performance," concluded Dean Kulwicki. "I am so proud to lead such a great program and thankful for our president, provost, my colleagues in administration and our partners, who continue to support us in achieving higher levels of success."

"The reaccreditation confirms that our work has been successful."

In Memoriam



Nihad I. Basha (1924 – 2018)

In late July, Dr. Nihad I. Basha, former head of the business school, passed away at the age of 94. He left behind a rich legacy in the fields of banking, finance, diplomacy and business.

Born in Aleppo, Syria in 1924, Dr. Basha first studied in Beirut, earning a law degree from St. Joseph University before moving to New York City, where he received both a master's degree and a PhD in economics and finance from Columbia University.

He represented Syria on the global scale as a member of the Syrian delegation to the UN as well as the UK, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

During the 1960s, he was elected into the Syrian parliament and was appointed minister of planning. Shortly thereafter, he resigned from politics to manage the Trans-Orient Bank before becoming the chairman of Middle East Finance.

In the late 1980s he was appointed Interim Director of the LAU School of Business (now the Adnan Kassar School of Business), where he "was an early pioneer of business education in Lebanon

and the region," as remembered by LAU's Vice President for University Advancement Dr. George Najjar. "Dr. Basha was a firm believer that our future will be bright in direct proportion to our success in preparing young leaders for a rapidly changing world," Dr. Najjar added.

According to Dr. Basha's son, Nazem, "He loved teaching and was known for his vast knowledge, soft diplomacy, kindness and modesty."

This sentiment is echoed by Dr. Najjar, who remembered how "his scholarly temperament, inquisitive mind and broad knowledge," came across effortlessly. "His educational contributions were part of the broader persona of a multi-talented business leader who left his mark in the world of practice as well," Dr. Najjar said.

Dr. Basha is survived by his wife Najla, his son Nazem and his daughter Nayla.



Ziad Abou Absi (1956 – 2018)

The LAU community lost a dear member on November 18 with the death of alumnus and former Theater Instructor Ziad Abou Absi.

Raised in Sidon, Abou Absi discovered acting as a student at LAU, then known as Beirut University College (BUC). He studied business management and accounting and received an Associate in Applied Sciences in 1979. He continued at BUC, enrolling in the drama program and taking part in a number of university productions.

During his student years, he met legendary artist Ziad Rahbani, who cast

him in the role of Harold in the 1978 modern classic *Bennesbeh Labokra Shou? (As for Tomorrow, What?)*. It was the beginning of a decades-long collaboration with Rahbani that saw Abou Absi appear in some of the director's most memorable productions, including playing the role of Edward in *Film Ameriki Taweel (American Feature Film)* in 1980 and Aboul Zelof in 1983's *Shi Fashel (A Fiasco)*.

In 1984, he obtained his BA in drama before heading off to the University of Houston in Texas for an MFA in the same subject, for which he received a competitive scholarship. He returned to BUC in 1986 and was named an assistant professor of drama and communication arts.

In 1992, he won a Fulbright and used it to research Shakespeare. Shortly thereafter, he launched a Shakespeare company at the university, which put on some of the Bard's most challenging plays, such as *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Richard III*.

Throughout his career, he wrote, produced and directed a number of pieces, in addition to collaborating with other major theater directors. More recently, he appeared in the 2009 documentary *The Lebanon I Dream Of*

and the 2011 Nadine Labaki film *W Hala' La Wein (Where Do We Go Now?)*, which premiered at the Cannes Film Festival and won the People's Choice Award at the 2011 Toronto International Film Festival.

Abou Absi was also a regular contributor to the Lebanese press on matters of art and philosophy and appeared occasionally in television series.

Despite his broader success, he is being remembered at LAU as a mentor who transformed his students' thinking about theater and inspired a generation of performers. One of them is Associate Professor of Theater Lina Abyad, who was a classmate and, later, colleague of Abou Absi. "Ziad had a very solid relationship with his students. There was a sparkle about him that distinguished him," Dr. Abyad said, adding, "He had a real attachment to theater, and it was a way of living. He loved life."

"We have lost an icon of theater," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara. "Ziad Abou Absi blazed trails for Lebanese theater with his versatility and sense of humanity. He guided a generation of students at LAU, and we will miss him."

Extraordinary Alumnae: Doha Halawi and Tania Saleh

By Louisa Ajami

The LAU graduates speak about how their alma mater set them up for success



Doha Halawi has been an LAUer for decades. After she graduated in 1981 from what was then called Beirut University College (BUC), she used her degree in communication arts to forge a successful career. She has worked across the region and has held leadership positions in companies and non-profit organizations such as the Beirut Metropolitan Rotary Club, where she acted as president.

Halawi, whose three children also studied at LAU, has led two alumni chapters and has sat on a number of boards at her alma mater.

What are some of your career highlights?

I have played a lot of roles in my life. I was an elementary school teacher in Dubai, I worked at Publi-Graphics, and later I began my volunteer work. I have also worked with LAU alumni since the mid-1990s. I was on the Alumni Executive Committee and the Alumni Association Board, first as the vice president, then as president. I am also the executive director of the El Zein Family Alliance, which has thousands of members. But the best times for me were when I was working as a journalist while studying at BUC in the late 1970s. What a time!

How do you believe the university has helped you reach where you are today?

I took a lot from BUC. I had good relationships with the other students and with heads of departments and directors, and I learned so much from them. The courses that I took for sure helped me a lot, especially during my days as a journalist. And of course, the social work. We were active on campus, which taught me about civil engagement. One year, my friends and I reached out to wealthy Beirut residents for donations and established a fund whose interest would go toward tuition aid for poorer students.

How has the university changed since your days?

It has always been a great university, as BUC and as LAU. It is a great place to study and has a great community. In my days, though, we used to spend a lot more time on campus, which created a very strong community. The student body wasn't as large back then, either, so everybody knew everybody – it was like a family.

The only time of the day I wasn't on campus was when I was with the scouts. I later became the first woman to be named president of the Lebanese Scout Association.

What do you hope for the future of the university?

LAU is doing so well now, and the rankings really reflect its standing as an institution. I feel that President [Joseph G.] Jabbra and his team and everybody working here are doing a great job. It will be difficult, but I hope they can find a president to match what Dr. Jabbra has done for LAU.

"It has always been a great university, as BUC and as LAU. It is a great place to study and has a great community."



Independent musician and visual artist **Tania Saleh** is one of the strongest voices of her generation. Her songs, which have gained her international acclaim, go beyond old tropes about love and heartbreak that so much Arabic-language pop music relies on. The Class of '90 graduate has also become a cultural reference in Lebanon and has spoken on a number of panels and news programs about topics of interest for regular people in the region, such as politics, religion and freedom.

How do you feel your education at LAU set you up for your success?

LAU gave me the chance to be in the presence of great professors and some of the best students of the era. I met a lot of people who became lifelong inspirations and friends.

Keep in mind that at the time, there weren't really good art schools in Lebanon besides LAU, which had the best teachers and what I needed to pursue my dreams. I still go to campus to see exhibits, and I am still impressed by the great quality and creativity on display.

Are you feeling optimistic about the future for young artists in Lebanon and the region?

Definitely. When I started studying art, I used to worry that I was making a bad decision, but that was not the case. There are many possibilities to pursue. You don't have to be only a painter if you study painting; people who go into one art often go into lots of other types and become very multifaceted. I worked as an illustrator, calligrapher, graphic designer, art director, creative director, and most recently street artist. There are so many applications. It's about being able to create something that wasn't there before and to appreciate aesthetics and harmony.

"LAU gave me the chance to be in the presence of great professors and some of the best students of the era."

How has the music scene changed since your days starting out?

It has transformed completely. When we started, we were so few, the bands doing something not mainstream, not commercialized. During that time in Lebanon and the Arab world, not much was going on musically. But we were the war generation, and we had to convey our experiences.

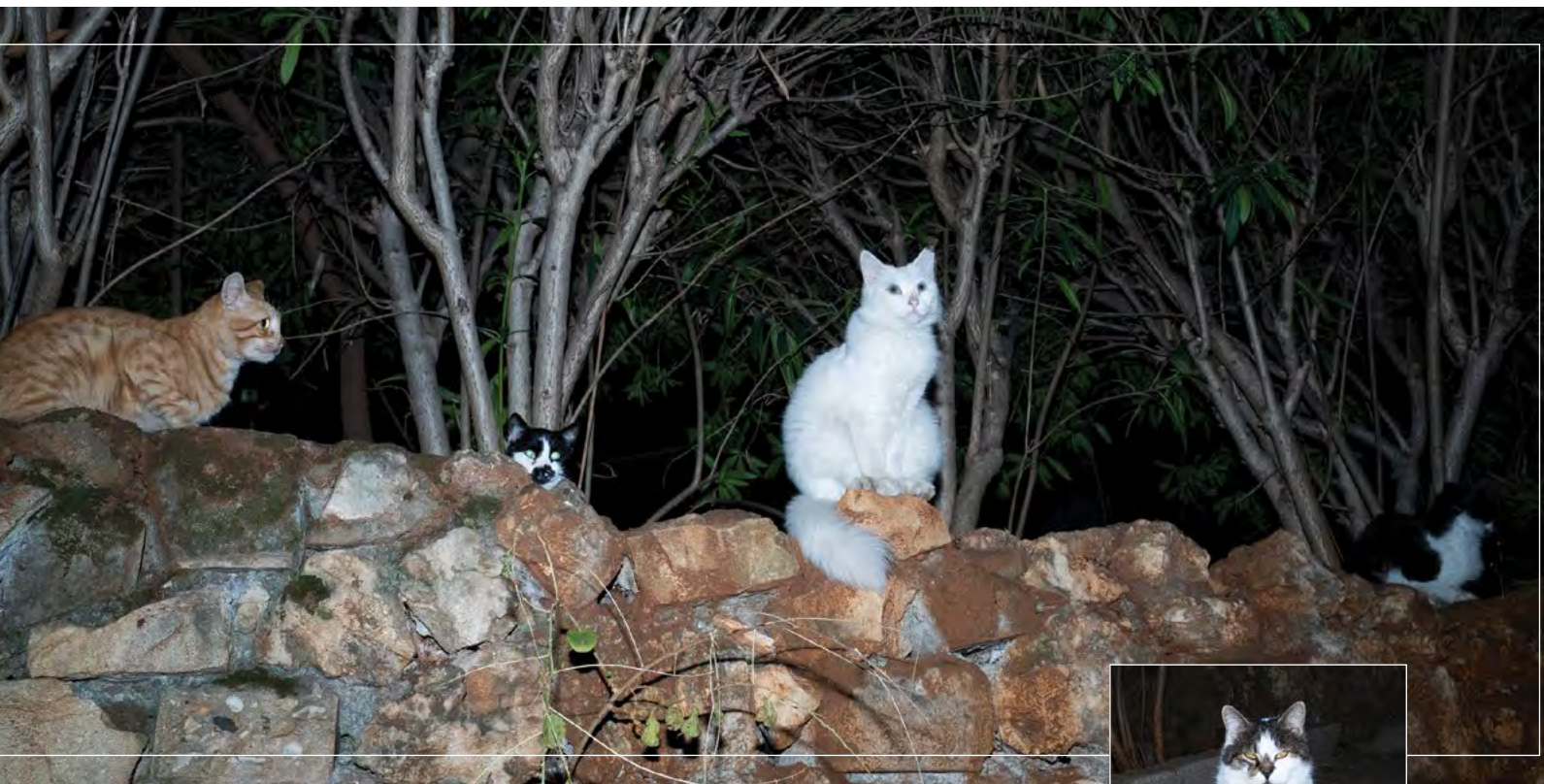
Now, there are so many things happening artistically in Lebanon and the Arab world. I don't see any of the new generation listening to that over-produced, commercialized type of music.

Now, when I see all the great new artists all over the Arab world emerging, it's fantastic. It's so worth it. The mainstream style is changing.

What advice would you give to young LAU students interested in forging a career in the arts?

Explore and experiment. These days, the internet has opened up people's capabilities. The world has become a platform for all to express themselves artistically. Anyone can learn and experiment.

Do what you want to do and be stubborn enough to keep going, even if your parents and friends tell you it's not worth it. If you are a passionate artist, nothing can stop you, and you can manage to live from it.



Caring for Our Feline Friends

Mads Joakim Rimer Rasmussen is a final-year photojournalism major from Denmark who spent a semester at LAU as an exchange student.

By Mads Joakim Rimer Rasmussen

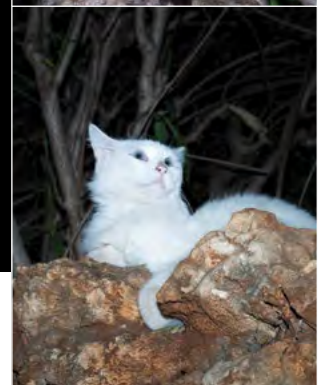
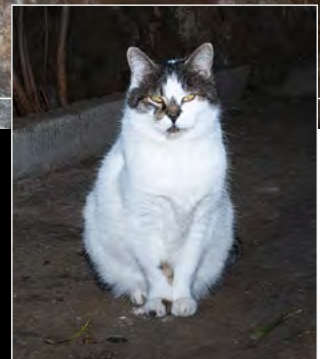
The Beirut campus glows golden in the setting sun, and dark shadows glide across the landscape. White, orange, brown and black figures lurk in the bushes, eyeing trash cans stuffed with leftovers. LAU's smallest – and furriest – citizens are about to come out by the dozens to make the campus theirs for a few hours until the area fills up with humans again.

Until about four years ago, there was no control over the cats on Beirut campus. However, as some faculty members started donating money to feed them,

an initiative to have a cat committee with a small budget became a reality. The goal is to keep the cats healthy, take them to the vet if needed, and ensure they are fed – but not too much, as they are still wild, and committee members want them to practice hunting for their food.

Cats are highly territorial animals, which helps ensure that the campus doesn't get overrun by every feline in the city. As of right now, there are an estimated 40 cats who consider LAU their home.

Here are loving portraits of a few of them.



Emerging Leaders

By Fatima Abdul Rassool

LAUers attended an international program run by Harvard University on entrepreneurialism and leadership

"The best part about this program is that it opened up my eyes to new perspectives. It helped me explore new horizons and meet incredible peers from around the world."



A group of LAUers started the academic year on a successful note by earning spots in the Crossroads Emerging Leaders Program (CELP) funded by the Harvard Business School Club of the GCC.

The program selects top regional students to fly to Dubai for a week of training from Harvard professors in topics such as politics, tech, humanities, history and more.

Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB) student Rawan Ftouni and alumna Yara Issa – who graduated with distinction last spring – were among 71 young scholars chosen from a pool of 1,721 applicants from 23 countries. Also on the trip was marketing student Ali Tourba, who was invited to join a related two-day workshop with the Dubai Future Accelerators program.

CELP is geared toward students from the Middle East, Asia and Africa who are the first in their families to attend college. The fully-funded program took place over one week at the Dubai International Financial Centre.

Harvard professors and Dubai Future Accelerators members trained the participants in developing entrepreneurial skills that can help them excel in the business world, and gave them complicated real-life business cases to study and solve. The young scholars also met with CEOs from top companies and toured important business landmarks such as Nasdaq Dubai and the Air Arabi Headquarters.

"The best part about this program is that it opened up my eyes to new perspectives," said Issa upon her return. "It helped me explore new horizons and meet incredible peers from around the world."

"It definitely exceeded my expectations," added Ftouni. "I absolutely loved being

part of a multicultural environment of students from 24 different countries."

CELP is just one example of how LAU enables the most well-rounded education for its students. Each of the university's seven schools actively encourages its students to engage with the outside community and other educational institutions, and students receive help from faculty and staff finding and applying to programs that fit their academic and career goals.

"As an LAU student, I've always aspired to attend international summits that will help me gain experience and establish social and global networks," Tourba said. "The knowledge that I've cultivated from these summits has helped me tremendously."

In addition, the University Scholarship Program, of which Issa and Tourba are members, supports community outreach while providing ambitious young scholars with a chance to study at LAU. "The academic excellence of USP students is the pride of our program and proves that LAU has nurtured the talents of these scholars," said Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Civic Engagement Elie Samia.

Issa credits USP with preparing her for CELP. "We showed high level of community engagement, leadership skills and academic excellence," she said of her acceptance.

She also stressed the importance of all students applying to take part in international summits, where they can learn, gain experience and network with experts and students from around the world. "After CELP, I truly understood the meaning of 'the sky is the limit,' and I encourage other students to apply to this program because honestly, it has been the best experience of my life so far."



Our Environmental Health: **Waste Not**

By Hanan Nassar

New study assesses attitudes and behaviors in Lebanese households that impact food waste

Discarded food makes up a large portion of the waste that ends up in Lebanon's overflowing landfills each year. The frustrating part about that for scientists, policy figures and residents of the country is that the problem is almost totally preventable.

A new study by Department of Natural Sciences faculty aims to shine a light on the causes of the issue so that experts can find a way to combat it.

The paper, "Attitudes and Behaviors Shaping Household Food Waste Generation: Lessons from Lebanon," is the result of a collaboration between Assistant Professor of Nutrition Lama Mattar, Associate Professor of Food Science and

Technology Hussein Hassan, and faculty from the American University of Beirut. It was published in the *Journal of Cleaner Production*.

The main objective of the study was to assess household attitudes and behaviors that shape food waste in Lebanon in order to tailor community-based interventions, said Dr. Mattar, who specializes in community nutrition at LAU.

The study, launched in 2016, collected samples from 1,264 households across Lebanon's five governorates. Undergraduate nutrition students were involved in data collection.

The results of the team's research showed that variables such as employment status, educational attainment, the number of people in a household, and income level impacted the amount of food wasted per family.

"Our study showed a positive relation between the number of people in a house and the food waste volume," Dr. Hassan said. "It may be that the more house occupants, the more food is prepared and the more likely to be left after cooking."

Social behavior also affects the amount of food wasted, Dr. Mattar said, noting that dining out frequently leads to more food

waste, as restaurants have to toss out anything uneaten at the end of a meal, and because when people eat out, food they already have at home is more likely left to spoil.

Similarly, the study found a correlation between a higher education level and food waste. "Because those with more education have a higher income, they go out more, tend to buy more, throw out more. They do not perceive wasting food as losing money," she explained.

One of the more positive findings was that, compared to people in Lebanon's urban areas, those in the rural areas tend to waste less, which the authors attribute to a resourceful culture of reusing leftovers.

Among the behavioral impacts on the amount of food individuals waste, the study found that those "who report a feeling of guilt when throwing away food are more likely to eat everything prepared, which reflects a reduced wasteful behavior," Dr. Hassan said.

Aside from assessing the collected data, the study offers a set of recommendations that households can follow in order to limit food waste, such as launching community-based interventions. "At the beginning, such an intervention can take place at the



level of restaurants and big supermarkets," Dr. Mattar said. In addition, the government needs to implement a system to empower food banks and non-governmental organizations to collect clean, uneaten food for those in need.

The government also has a crucial role to play at the household level, Dr. Mattar noted, and suggested launching nation-wide awareness

campaigns, which have proven effective in countries such as Egypt. These can include classes to teach people simple recipes for leftovers and how to properly portion their meals.

On the popular level, Dr. Hassan called for strategies that would raise awareness about food waste "coupled with motivating individuals to decrease it" through education related to household routines.

"We need to instill a sense of responsibility in the population, including making it culturally acceptable to ask for a doggy bag in restaurants," Dr. Mattar added.

The researchers are now in the process of disseminating the results of the study, so that policymakers can start building on the findings.

But in the end, saving food is up to us.



Finding a Doctor in Lebanon Is About to Become Much Easier

By Zina Hemady

AKSOB student Andy Kazandjian and his partners design an app to improve patient experience

When LAU student Andy Kazandjian's older brother Anthony broke his nose playing basketball, the family scrambled to find a qualified doctor to perform surgery. The boys' mother spent hours on the phone to locate the best nearby specialist in nasal cosmetic procedures. When they finally decided on a surgeon, based on a friend's recommendation, they were appalled to learn that something had gone wrong during the operation due to the surgeon's negligence. This stressful experience was the spark that drove Andy to create an app that instantly matches patients with doctors and rates physicians.

"We want to change the way people search for doctors in Lebanon," said Kazandjian, a second-year Adnan Kassar School of Business student majoring in banking and finance. "We want this relationship to be built on trust. We hear of horror stories happening to patients, but there are currently no solutions."

Kazandjian teamed up with four other LAU students to found the startup FindMyDoc. While similar apps are available in Lebanon, this initiative offers additional advantage: The platform takes into consideration patient satisfaction according to three distinct criteria.



The search process is straightforward. The app asks users to select the specialty, location and hospital of their choice, and they are immediately matched with a list of doctors who fit these specifications. Users also have the option to rate practitioners based on three criteria. The first is "wait time," a problem in Lebanon, where patients can spend hours to see a doctor. The second is "friendliness," which offers patients the opportunity to rate the doctor's communication skills and bedside manners. The third criterion is "quality of service," which allows users to rate the physician's qualifications. The app then calculates an average rating ranging from one to five while giving more weight to the category that matters most to the patient.

"Currently there is very little information about doctors in Lebanon online. Our objective is to make searching for a doctor as easy as finding a cab or a place to stay for the weekend," said Kazandjian.

Kazandjian recognizes the advantage that LAU has given him and the university's role in catapulting him to his first big success. First, he did not have to go very far to find a team of highly qualified and motivated experts with whom to collaborate. The team members are Chief Operations Officer Ghadi Elias, an economics major; Chief Investment Officer Myriam Aoun, also majoring in economics; Marketing Director Sarah el Hachem, who completed her MBA a year ago; Sales Director Oussama Younes, who has a BS in economics; and Sales Representative Robert Khairalla, an international business major.

"LAU is a place where you find motivated students with strong skills. If you have a project or idea, you just have to search for people who can assist you. Each individual who joined the team is doing great in their domain," Kazandjian said.

Kazandjian added that the most significant skills he learned at LAU are public speaking and negotiations, which he developed through his membership in the university's Model United Nations (MUN) program. As a high-school student at the Beirut Evangelical School for Girls and Boys, Kazandjian was selected from among thousands of students to enroll in the program. He then made it all the way to New York to take part in sessions that simulate UN meetings. Kazandjian, who is now a trainer for the program, says that his experience at MUN has equipped him with motivation and confidence. These skills, in addition to the knowledge that he has acquired from his finance classes, have proved invaluable to the budding entrepreneur.

After presenting FindMyDoc to investors at Smart ESA, an incubator and accelerator at Beirut's École supérieure des affaires, Kazandjian and his team attracted eight potential investors. In addition, in November's Inas Abou Ayyash Foundation awards held at LAU, the FindMyDoc team won a \$10,000 award for best project.

After a trial period in Lebanon, the plan is to expand to the Gulf region, starting with Dubai and Qatar, which will be facilitated by a recently signed partnership with Syncwise, an enterprise that offers mobility solutions to businesses.

LAU Alumna Becomes a Pioneer in Her Field

By Rana Tabbara

Weam Al Dakheel is the first woman to anchor the news on Saudi state TV

Weam Al Dakheel has become a pioneer. In September 2018, the Saudi Arabian national appeared on Saudi TV's Channel 1 as the first woman to anchor the evening broadcast news in the nation. Her appointment made news across the world and was celebrated as a new beginning for women in her field and in the region.

Al Dakheel's journey to this position brought her to Lebanon for her education, and she graduated from LAU with a BA in Communication Arts in 2011. She also received a diploma in Gender in Development and Humanitarian Assistance from the Arab Institute for Women. From there, she scaled the ranks of the regional news industry, breaking a new glass ceiling and opening up opportunities for other aspiring female journalists.

Reflecting on her educational experience, her stay in Lebanon and her professional life, the LAU alumna spoke to final-year multimedia journalism student Rana Tabbara.

Why do you believe you have been so successful in your field?

I am aware of my passion, and with awareness comes responsibility. I just feel my passion, guide it and work hard to fulfill it with great responsibility. This is my purpose in life; this is who I am.



How did you climb the ladder in the media industry?

My journey in the media industry started in Beirut between 2010 and 2011 with an internship I landed at the newspaper *Dar Al-Hayat*.

Later in 2012 I worked as a TV reporter for CNBC Arabia in Jeddah, where I was the first Saudi holding the title. After that, I worked as a news presenter at AL-Arab News Channel, based in Bahrain, from 2014 to 2017.

Lately, I've been working as an operations manager for Saudi TV at the Saudi Broadcasting Authority.

"My educational experience at LAU has impacted my life in so many ways, and absolutely LAU is a piece of me, the person I am today."

As an undergraduate, did you ever consider pursuing another major?

Honestly, no. I never thought of it, because when you dream of something, you have

to believe in it and know that what you are seeking in life is also seeking you.

How did coming to Lebanon for university change your life?

Living in Lebanon gave me the chance to access the world, since I was exposed to a rich culture and a diverse community. Through it, I learned to respect others' differences, and by respecting and understanding people from different ethnicities and backgrounds, my perception in life took a different dimension. I approached life with an open mind and the belief that this experience has changed my life.

Why study at LAU?

Because it's LAU, and because it's Lebanon. God bless this country!

How did LAU shape who you are today?

My educational experience at LAU has impacted my life in so many ways, and absolutely LAU is a piece of me, the person I am today.

How do you feel about the new rule that permits women to appear on Saudi TV?

I see [Saudi] Vision 2030... I feel our future is bright.

Why do you believe you were chosen to be the first woman to broadcast prime news on Saudi's Channel 1 TV?

God planned this for me. He closed a lot of doors to set me on this path, to be the first woman to anchor the evening news on Saudi TV. I'm thankful, grateful and very humble to reach where I'm today.

This interview has been condensed and edited.

How Big of a Problem Is Obesity in Lebanon?

By Fatima Abdul Rassool

The conference
Advances in the
Management of Obesity
Disease brought
together professionals
from across disciplines
to discuss the growing
phenomenon
of obesity in Lebanon

According to one recent study, around a third of adults in Lebanon are obese, which doctors define as a person who is 20 percent over their ideal weight.

Obesity has been tied to a slew of health problems such as type 2 diabetes and hypertension and can carry negative economic and social consequences for people who suffer from it. It is a widespread disease affecting large populations in almost every country, though its prevalence and impact vary considerably. Worldwide, over 500 million adults are estimated to be obese. Here in Lebanon, men are slightly more likely to be obese than women, and young people are more likely to experience it than their elders. In Lebanon it tends to affect wealthier people, whereas in countries like the US and UK, poorer residents see higher rates of obesity.

The complicated nature of the disease is why a group of leading experts gathered in late October for a major event on the subject.

The Division of Endocrinology within the Department of Internal Medicine at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine joined the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital in organizing the conference Advances in the Management of Obesity Disease on October 27.

Endocrinologists, cardiologists, internists, surgeons, nutritionists, pharmacists, psychologists, residents and professors from hospitals, clinics and universities around the country attended and were eligible to receive

Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits for their participation.

The purpose of the event, said Dr. Kamal Hirbli,

an LAU endocrinologist and chair of the conference, is to bring awareness of the rise of obesity to medical professionals and increase their collaboration across disciplines to treat the disease in a holistic way. While Lebanon's rate of obesity is not as high as other countries', Dr. Hirbli noted that "obesity is an under-diagnosed chronic disease that is increasing in both prevalence and severity."

Several speakers covered the associated risks of being obese and the treatment options. Endocrinologist Dr. Zelia Francis pointed out that a five percent reduction of body mass index among the general population could reduce 3 million cases of hypertension per year, and LAU Assistant Clinical Professor Dr. Jocelyne Fares spoke of future cardiovascular risks for obese children.

But treating obesity also has to do with the mind and the emotional reasons some people overeat to the point of serious weight gain. LAU Assistant Professor of Psychology Myriam Malhame spoke about emotional eating and the toll of stress on the waistline, urging medical professionals to "teach people how to manage their emotions rather than eat them." Associate Professor of Nutrition at LAU Nadine Zeeni added that, "It is very important not to stigmatize people by their food choices."

For the day's moderator, Dr. Charles Saab, it was the conference's multi-disciplinary aspect that made it so significant. "Interprofessionalism is the future of treatment," he said. "The study of obesity involves multiple disciplines that must work together in a collaborative effort to help the patient overcome this chronic disease."

Dr. Bassem Safadi, chair of LAU's Department of Surgery and himself a world-leading bariatric surgeon, agrees. Because he usually only sees patients once their obesity becomes so severe it requires surgery, he believes the answer lies in prevention, necessitating interprofessional work. "The most critical step that we can take is to tackle preventative treatment," said Dr. Saab, who is the coordinator of the Lebanese Obesity Task Force. "Ultimately, it's a disease that has emerged due to societal changes. So we have to focus on activities





and proper nutrition, which can be done by a multidisciplinary approach."

The conference also gave attendees the chance to learn more about Lebanon's specific situation from other Lebanese physicians and professionals. "It's important to do more research about obesity in a Lebanese context rather than just have guidelines from other international countries," noted family medicine specialist Dr. Khairat Al Habbal. "We should create campaigns and lobby politicians for better healthcare policies."

Along those lines, Dr. Zeeni suggested using the Lebanese Cedar Food Guide to steer patients toward healthy choices. The guide promotes a return to traditional

Lebanese cuisine, which has been hailed worldwide as one of the healthiest diets.

Attendees left the conference with CME credits. Dr. Vanda Abi Raad, an anesthesiologist and assistant dean of Continuing Medical Education at LAU, noted the role the university and medical center are playing in bolstering the study of preventable diseases such as obesity in

Lebanon. "When we provide this sort of knowledge by a multidisciplinary team to our students, residents and doctors, and we educate by using solid facts and proper teaching methods, we can most definitely increase awareness about this issue."

She added: "This is the sort of impact that we want to have on society."

"Multiple disciplines must work together in a collaborative effort to help the patient overcome this chronic disease."



Our Financial Health: Business Runs in the Family

By Raissa Batakji

On keeping family-owned businesses healthy and the unique prospects they bring

The family business model is the bedrock of economies across the world, in developing and developed countries alike. But while they have provided essential goods and services to local populations since the dawn of civilization, with globalization and the rise of multinational corporations, it can be hard for some family businesses to keep up. One way to do so is to innovate and expand like larger enterprises do. And many are.

According to a study by management consulting firm McKinsey, family-owned businesses will make up 40 percent of the world's largest enterprises by 2025, up from roughly 15 percent in 2010. In Lebanon, they are dubbed “the

cornerstone of the Lebanese economy,” as they form the majority of small-to-medium enterprises, which, in turn, make up more than 95 percent of the Lebanese economy, according to Director of LAU's Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business (IFEB) Josiane Fahed-Sreih.

To get to the bottom of what makes the family business model so prevalent, Dr. Fahed-Sreih looked at a couple of overarching indicators. “For one, family businesses do not have agency problems, and there is no information asymmetry because the owner is also the decision maker and the manager of the business,” she said. They also tend to be managed with longevity in mind, as owners typically make calculated moves that will live on for generations to come. “This is what makes sustainability a top feature of family-owned businesses,” she said.

Indeed, it can be argued that sustainability has helped steer many family businesses to safety in the midst of corporate collapses during recent financial crises. However, they are not immune to modern-day challenges.

“Historically, the most typical problems that hit the core of a family business used to be conflicts of succession. Today, innovation, and how to go about it, can make or break a business,” explained Dr. Fahed-Sreih. “Sustaining innovation while maintaining competitive edge in the face of agile corporations has become a key source of threat.”

Another threat comes from the inside, as employees across business types often suffer from lack of motivation. Nowadays, the nature of management has changed to embrace empowering staff to innovate on their own. But in family-run businesses, balancing tradition and maintaining a legacy are more difficult to keep up with while modernizing.

Since 2000, the IFEB has played a pioneering role in bringing family





businesses across Lebanon and the region up to speed. Offering annual conferences and a host of seminars on topics related to family business, entrepreneurship and governance, it has provided a forum for developing and sharing knowledge. "LAU is a committed supporter of the study and growth of family-owned businesses," said Dr. Fahed-Sreih, noting that it is also the only university in Lebanon that offers an emphasis in Family and Entrepreneurial Business, at the Adnan Kassar School of Business.

Over the years, both the institute and the school have offered consultation to these enterprises and graduated dozens of second- and third-generation business managers who were inspired to start, take on or breathe new life into their own families' companies.

One such example is Joumana Dammous Salamé (BS'92), who, upon graduating from LAU (then Beirut University College) noticed how underserved the hospitality industry was in Lebanon. Her father was then the dean of the Hotel Management Institute of Dekwaneh, and was, according to Dammous, the key contact point for people in the industry who were seeking advice and referrals within the hospitality sector. Talking about how the first Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés (HORECA) Conference came to be, Dammous cites "a passion to better the industry and provide a business meeting place for trade professionals to come together and network, learn, plan the future of their businesses and celebrate the achievements of the industry players."

Since 2000, LAU's Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business has played a pioneering role in bringing family-owned companies across Lebanon and the region up to speed.

She added that, quite simply, "this did not exist 26 years ago."

Dammous did not originally plan to make a career out of reshaping the hospitality industry in Lebanon, but she did. "I cofounded the business with my father and late mother, so I did not take on the family enterprise in the traditional sense," she said. With HORECA's 26th event due to take place in April 2019, it has grown into an essential gathering for the hospitality, foodservice and beverage industries in Lebanon and the region. The brand has also been franchised to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan.

"Corporate governance is definitely a key recommendation I would give to those who are looking to take on a family business," said Dammous, adding that another key is to balance the interests of all stakeholders. Her company handles an array of influential happenings, including HORECA, The Garden Show & Spring Festival, the Beirut Cooking Festival, Salon Du Chocolat and the Whisky Live event, as well as several magazines and online platforms such as *Taste & Flavors*, *Lebanon Traveler* and *Hospitality News ME*.

Another LAU alumnus, Joe Abi Ghosn (BS '01), followed a more linear path. When he took charge of his father's Byblos gas station shortly after graduating with



a degree in business management, he transformed it into a company, ENJM, a portmanteau of his family members' initials.

Since then, he has developed ENJM into a company that owns and runs three gas stations and 43 ventures in oil and gas. Its employee count grew from four to 43, providing services to key companies and institutions in North Lebanon.

"I believe in developing a business that is built on a necessity," said Abi Ghosn. He has diversified his business model from relying on one service to encompassing major industries such as water supply and construction. For example, he recently took on a real estate endeavor called CRONUS, an innovative student housing project comprised of five buildings close to LAU's Byblos campus. Another is a five-star luxury hotel, Maximus, located nearby.

Then, in the summer of 2017, Abi Ghosn left a lasting legacy on the Byblos campus, where he pledged \$160,000 toward the Edward Abi Ghosn Internal Combustion Engines Lab, which bears his father's name and signifies his deep commitment to his alma mater.

"I am very proud to give back to a university that has provided me with so much culture and experience," said Abi Ghosn.

With the right education and planning, it is easy to see why, according to Dr. Fahed-Sreih, the average life expectancy of a family-owned business has risen significantly in recent years. For Dammous, Abi Ghosn and dozens of other business graduates, the combination of excellence in education and years-worth of business acumen has contributed to this rise.

Bringing Gender Equality to the Forefront in Lebanon

By Hoda Hilal

Throughout the semester, AiW has held a number of events to bring members of the LAU family and the wider community together to explore gender equality

"We've seen today that poetry, music, fashion, photography, and film are all avenues for expressing our experiences and distaste for gender discrimination."

Every year, women and their allies around the world make great strides in advancing the cause of gender equality. And every year, it becomes clearer just how far these activists have come – and how far they still have to go.

According to the UN, one in three women across the globe has experienced physical or sexual violence. In Lebanon, an estimated one out of four women has been subject to some form of sexual assault, according to a study conducted in 2017 by women's rights group ABAAD.



LAU has been at the forefront of gender equality since its founding as the first school for girls in the Ottoman Empire in 1835. More recently, the university appointed a new Title IX coordinator, responsible for ensuring there is no discrimination on the basis of gender at any level in LAU, in line with the US Justice Department's regulations for federally funded educational institutions.

In addition, the university's Arab Institute for Women (AiW) has been empowering women with research, education, development programs and outreach since 1973.

Throughout the fall 2018 semester, AiW has held a number of events aimed at bringing members of the LAU family and the wider community together to explore gender equality. One such session was Breaking Down Barriers, a panel discussion in November that featured Member of Parliament Paula Yacoubian,

activist Joumana Haddad, and Director of the Arab Institute for Human Rights Joumana Merhi.

AiW was also active in this year's Miss Lebanon competition, training the young contestants in topics that many would not necessarily associate with the pageant world, such as gender equality, redefining beauty standards and more.

Most recently, in early December, the institute hosted a discussion on Fighting Gender-Based Discrimination with Arts. The roundtable was part of the international 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, during which activists around the world mobilize efforts to shed light on the issue.

The event also served as a platform to announce the winners of AiW's third-annual arts competition. Contestants were asked to speak up against violence by submitting pieces in the medium of their choosing.



"The competition is a way to bring creativity into activism," said AiW Director Lina Abirafeh, who has spent over 20 years working on gender-based violence prevention and response in countries around the world. "Art as activism has a farther reach and lasts beyond 16 days," she added.

Dr. Abirafeh is also a champion of the global movement SheDecides, which calls for the right of every woman and girl to assume control over their bodies and their lives. She was recently named one of the Top 100 Most Influential People in Gender Policy by the global public policy network Apolitical.

This year, the competition attracted around 200 submissions by both children and adults. "Our aim is to raise awareness and increase momentum toward preventing violence against women and girls," said Mehrinaz Elawady, director of the ESCWA Centre for Women, which

collaborated with AiW on the contest.

The roundtable discussion was moderated by researcher and writer Reem Maghribi, who is the managing director of NGO Sharq and former staff member at LAU's Strategic Communications Office. Speakers from different artistic disciplines underscored the role of arts in activism and advocacy against gender discrimination.

Musicians and activists Michelle and Noel Keserwany discussed how they use their skills in advertising, animation, illustration, and songwriting to express opinions on sociopolitical issues.

"We team up with experts to spread certain messages because we believe in the importance of expression and activism," said Noel, who with Michelle has collaborated with AiW to produce a song on gender equality called *In My Hand*.

For her part, Michelle believes that advocating for gender equality has a greater impact when done through actions, not words. "Instead of saying women can do this and that, women should go out and do it," she said.

As for actress Natasha Choufani – who has performed in shows on domestic violence, including a play by LAU Associate Professor of Communication Arts Lina Abyad called *Hayda Mesh Film Masri (This Is Not an Egyptian Movie)* – she described the cycle of abuse that underlies the dangerous effects of the patriarchal system on women's lives.

Choufani believes that advocating against discrimination should involve both men and women. "We need men with us," she said. "It's their fight as much as it is ours."

Another guest speaker, Coordinator of the Fashion Design Program at LAU and Assistant Professor Jason Steel, described fashion as a reflection of societal issues and a medium for activism.

He encouraged his students to design clothing that sends messages against gender-based violence. "I wanted to make sure the students have the opportunity to speak for those who don't have a voice," he said.

Reinforcing the message, fashion students present at the event wore some of their original creations, with more of their

lines displayed on the walls along with the shortlisted submissions.

At the end of the event, the winners of the arts competition were announced. For the children's category, 14-year-old Inass Amer from Syria won first place, while activist Ali Awada won first place among adult contestants for his rap song *Haqqik (Your Right)*.

Awada, who works at the Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training in Baalbeck, said he has always wanted to write a song on women's rights. "Winning this competition is the first step that would allow me to speak up more on issues related to women," he said.

Concluding the event, Maghribi summed up for the crowd what AiW and LAU have made their mission from the beginning: "We've seen today that poetry, music, fashion, photography, and film are all avenues for expressing our experiences and distaste for gender discrimination."



What Can We Do to Fight Noncommunicable Diseases?

By Bassem Safadi, MD, FACS

Noncommunicable diseases have become the number-one cause of mortality worldwide



Dr. Safadi is the new Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery at the Lebanese American University. He specializes in the surgical treatment of metabolic disease and obesity. His clinical and research interests focus on obesity management and prevention.

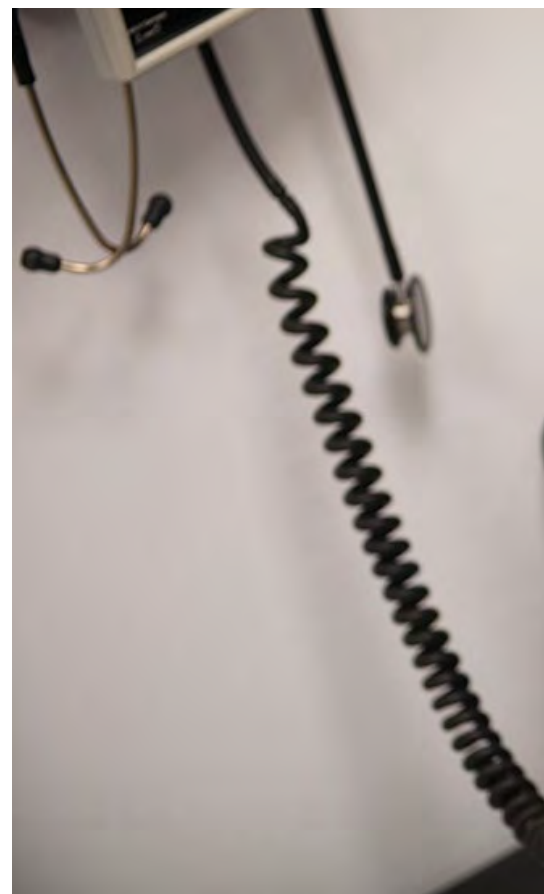
Across the world, life expectancy has increased significantly over the last two centuries, mainly due to prevention and treatment of infectious diseases. Improvements in sanitation, housing and education have been key factors in reducing infection rates, in addition to the development of vaccines and antibiotics.

Over the past 50 years, life expectancy has continued to increase, though at a much slower pace, namely due to a decline in late-life mortality. Despite that, the percentage of "healthy life years" remained around 80, according to European Union statistics.

In the meantime, however, a new kind of threat has emerged: noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), which have become the number-one cause of mortality worldwide, accounting for 71 percent of all deaths globally. NCDs are chronic, typically of long duration and do not transmit from one person to another. Examples include type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, cancer and depression. Each year, 15 million people between the ages of 30 and 69 die from an NCD, and over 85 percent of these "premature" deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries. These diseases also cause significant disability and lower productivity and are expensive and difficult to treat. NCDs are spreading globally because of rapid unplanned urbanization, widespread adoption of unhealthy lifestyles and ageing. Sadly, poverty is closely linked to NCDs, as low-income communities are more likely to be exposed to pollution and unhealthy food and have less access to proper healthcare.

The most common NCDs, which, combined, cause more than 80 percent of premature deaths, are cardiovascular diseases, cancers, respiratory diseases and diabetes. There are many factors that lead to these diseases, and some are modifiable, such as tobacco use,

"Prevention and management interventions are essential for achieving the global target of a 25 percent relative reduction in the risk of premature mortality from such diseases by 2025."



excessive use of alcohol, unhealthy diet and inactivity. The latter two raise the risk of obesity, high blood pressure, increased blood glucose and elevated blood lipids. These metabolic risk factors can lead to cardiovascular disease, the principal NCD in terms of premature deaths. The latest World Health Organization (WHO) projections indicate that at least one in three of the world's adult population is overweight, and almost one in 10 is obese. In addition, over 40 million children under the age of five are overweight.

At the turn of this century, world leaders, through the United Nations General Assembly, formally recognized NCDs as a major threat to health, economies and societies, and placed them high on the development agenda. The WHO has taken the lead to establish an action plan to halt the progression of these diseases. Efforts are being made at multiple levels, including economic, infrastructural, educational, and in healthcare delivery. NCD prevention and management interventions are essential for achieving

the global target of a 25 percent relative reduction in the risk of premature mortality from such diseases by 2025. The WHO developed a global action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs between 2013 and 2020 to support countries in their efforts. The plan includes nine global targets that have the greatest impact on global NCD mortality.

It is important for us working in the healthcare sector to increase patient

awareness of the long-term, deleterious effects of NCDs. We should work with governmental and non-governmental agencies to screen, detect and treat these diseases early, and we should raise awareness in society about the harmful effects of smoking, unhealthy eating and physical inactivity. It is much easier and cheaper to prevent NCDs than to treat them.



WHO Global Action Plan Targets for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013 – 2020*

A **25%** relative reduction in the **overall mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes, chronic respiratory diseases**

At least **10%** relative reduction in the **harmful use of alcohol**, as appropriate, within the national context

A **10%** relative reduction in prevalence of **insufficient physical activity**

A **30%** relative reduction in mean population **intake of salt/sodium**

A **30%** relative reduction in prevalence of **current tobacco use in persons aged 15+ years**

A **25%** relative reduction in the **prevalence of raised blood pressure** or contain the prevalence of raised blood pressure, according to national circumstances

Halt the rise in **diabetes and obesity**

At least **50%** of eligible people receive **drug therapy and counselling** (including glycaemic control) **to prevent heart attacks and strokes**

An **80%** availability of the affordable **basic technologies and essential medicines**, including generics, **required to treat major noncommunicable diseases** in both public and private facilities

* Table courtesy of the WHO



Lessons Learned?

By Raissa Batakji and Dana K. Haffar

The School of Architecture and Design holds a symposium on how Europe handled post-war reconstruction, and how the Middle East can build off its success

In the wake of World War II, Europe faced the monumental task of rebuilding its cities from rubble. For certain countries, the damage done to historical landmarks and urban areas was compounded by a change in demographics and redrawn borders, threatening their very identity.

Post-War Reconstruction: Lessons from Europe, a one-day symposium held on October 18 by LAU's School of Architecture of Design (SARd) in collaboration with the Cracow University of Technology – and sponsored by Samir Khairallah and Partners – sought to explore which

overarching themes from Europe's reconstruction, if any, can be applied to the MENA region.

In his welcome address, Dean Elie Haddad spoke about the timeliness of the symposium, as "the Arab world is slowly recovering from devastating wars that have leveled entire cities, destroyed historical landmarks, and most dramatically uprooted entire communities that have fled to other countries around the world." Its purpose, he told an audience of architecture and planning professionals from Lebanon and the region, is "to bring these lessons

to life, hoping that some of the mistakes that were made in the past would not be repeated in our present condition."

Scholars from various countries that were ravaged during World War II – England, France, Italy, Hungary and Poland – were invited to expound on the difficulties their countries encountered in the reconstruction process, from planning to execution, and the measures taken to surmount them.

The keynote speaker, Professor of Architectural and Planning History at Cambridge University, Nicholas Bullock, set the tone for the day's discussions. Juxtaposing an image of Berlin in 1945 and one of Aleppo in 2016, he pointed out the "harrowing similarities" between post-WWII Europe and present-day Syria, adding, however, that the former was able to benefit from prior experience. While the role of the state in reconstruction was much reduced after the First World War, he continued, after WWII, the "sense of shared suffering laid the basis for the state to rebalance the rights of individuals and those of the collective," thereby taking on the reconstruction. Financially bankrupt, European states opened their economies internationally in return for receiving aid via the Marshall Plan, which "helped the European economy bloom in the 1950s and 1960s."

In Western Europe, post-war reconstruction was largely marked by a compromise between modernization and tradition, thus ensuring continuity. When it came to urban planning, the French state, said Patrice Gourbin of the École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Normandie, took the opportunity to upgrade its larger cities according to the imperatives of modernity, while observing French aesthetics.

In Milan, on the other hand, a newly formed group of architects, intellectuals and artists encouraged an understanding of the historical, not for the sake of imitation but for the preservation of identity, explained Raffaella Neri of Politecnico di Milano. Nevertheless, the rebuilding process in Italy was not without its ambiguities, remarked Giovanni Corbellini, professor at the Polytechnic of Turin. Central to architectural reflections

"The participation of all stakeholders – from local communities to the state – in the reconstruction process is a key element in post-trauma recovery."

on reconstruction was the dual wish to create continuity and, at the same time, to erase all reminders of a dictatorship that had plunged the country into war.

During the session on The Polish Condition, Małgorzata Popiotek gave particular insights into the reconstruction of Warsaw, which some considered "a blessing in disguise," or an opportunity for urban renewal. Rather than a reproduction of the pre-war era, the restoration of Old Town Warsaw, for example, represented a "combination of a romantic vision of history and 20th-century pragmatism."

Kinga Racoń-Leja, professor at Cracow University of Technology, added that time, shifting borders and demographic movements posed unique challenges for post-war Poland.

In her talk, Utopian Visions, Dr. Virág Molnár from Princeton University, spoke of the collective participation in the reconstruction of Budapest. "Some of the best architecture plans often came from open public competitions and not from state-commissioned private architects," she explained, showing examples of competition entries, many of which never saw the light. Nevertheless, the people were "provoked to think about what might be possible for a happier future," commented Dr. Bullock during the discussion.

The President of the Lebanese Order of Engineers and Architects Jad Tabet summed up the recurrent themes across the sessions in his concluding presentation, Reconstruction in the Age of Globalization. From Warsaw to Beirut, at the core of every reconstruction process is the difficult choice between continuity and mutations, the urgency to respond to people's needs and long-term projections, given that most reconstruction initiated by generations will outlive them, Tabet argued. Most importantly is the participation of all stakeholders, from local communities to the state, in the reconstruction process, which Tabet defined as "a key element in post-trauma recovery."



Our Mental Health: Of Sound Mind

By Hanan Nasser

How can Lebanon and its people move on from decades of trauma?

Mental wellbeing is a serious – but often overlooked – concern in Lebanese society. Daily stressors, political and financial instability, and, for much of the population, lingering trauma from the civil war, are some of the underlying causes of mental health disorders in this country.

Experts estimate that for every person Lebanon loses to suicide, there are around 10 to 20 who have attempted unsuccessfully to end their lives.

"In Lebanon one person dies of suicide every two and a half days, and one attempts suicide every six hours," says Clinical Instructor at LAU's Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing Zeina El-Jordi, who is also a board member of mental-health NGO Embrace.

"Twenty-five percent of the population is currently suffering from a mental illness, has either had or is at high risk of mental illness," says El-Jordi, adding, "We are talking about all kinds of mental illnesses."

Worse still, she says, only one out of 10 with mental illness will ever seek professional help. These numbers are reflective of the taboo surrounding the issue in Lebanon, despite some recent initiatives to encourage openness and raise awareness.

Taking into consideration gender and socioeconomic status, "The number-one mental health issues in Lebanon are anxiety disorders, followed by mood disorders, with depression at the top, then bipolar," notes Associate Professor of Psychology Huda Ayyash-Abdo.

Any of these can lead to mental anguish for sufferers, and negatively affects those around them as well.

"If we consider gender, being a female is a risk factor at large, not just among the college-educated population." However, she adds, "educated individuals have more resources at their disposal to seek treatment."

In his academic and private career, Khaled Nasser has seen firsthand the toll of untreated mental illness on families in Lebanon. Dr. Nasser, who is a part-time lecturer of communications at LAU as well as a family communication

consultant and therapist, says that one of the most common afflictions in Lebanon is lingering trauma-related stress.

"One reason why I studied trauma is that I noticed the Lebanese are still traumatized by the civil war," Dr. Nasser says. "So many of the mental health disorders seen today are not just triggered by daily stressors; they are remnants of that damage."

According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is characterized by "persistent mental and emotional stress" occurring as a result of experiencing or witnessing a traumatic event. Some sufferers have difficulty letting go of the memories and feel as if they are repeatedly reliving the episode. They can experience physical symptoms such as nausea and insomnia and are vulnerable to "triggers" that cause them to feel intense anxiety.

Families suffer too, as "those with PTSD are prone to hypervigilance," says Dr. Ayyash-Abdo. "The person cannot relax and can be irritable and have angry outbursts."

What makes matters worse is that, "In Lebanon, we deal with many uncertainties. There is a general sense of not being in control of your life, which triggers high levels of anxiety and worsens trauma-related symptoms," says Dr. Nasser. The level of trauma in Lebanon is so severe, he adds, that Lebanese society, as a whole, continues to suffer to this day, nearly three decades after the war ended.

Indeed, studies have shown that trauma trickles down through generations. "We are transmitting trauma, either through genetics or through how parents deal with their children, by being less patient with them."

Aside from war-related trauma, people in Lebanon "suffer many traumas with a small 't'." Issues of domestic violence, substance abuse, alcoholism, sexual harassment are not adequately addressed in society," says Dr. Ayyash-Abdo.

To illustrate how the effect of trauma lingers in Lebanon, experts point to a daily scene: people losing their temper in Lebanon's epic traffic jams. "Road rage is the perfect example of how much we are enduring," Dr. Nasser says. "We went through so much during the civil war, and we have this anger inside us."

The good news about PTSD – as with other mental health issues – is that it can be helped through therapy. "Once a patient opens up in an atmosphere of safety, trust and compassion, this is beginning of treatment," says Dr. Ayyash-Abdo.

In her quest to conquer ghosts of the war, or at least neutralize them, Theater Lecturer Aliya Khalidi wrote and directed LAU's 2017 production *Abou Warde el-Santa*, an immersive play that took attendees on a haunting trip through the war's roadblocks, morgues and kidnappings. "Abou Warde el Santa was all about post-traumatic stress," she says. "I was trying to cope with what it was,

and what it meant to be in a war situation and to put myself back in that frame of mind and try to cope with it."

The journey, painful as it was, proved therapeutic for Dr. Khalidi, who says that while going through her journals she started having flashbacks that revived long-forgotten memories. "Why have I forgotten them? Because I naturally blocked them from my conscious mind, so that I could move forward without them acting as ghosts in my head," she says.

But for Dr. Khalidi, like many war survivors, there will never be full healing. "The war marked me for life. I moved on, but the war has moved on with me, and it has grown and matured with me."

Still, all three specialists agree on the pivotal role of resilience in healing from any mental illness – and how raising children to be resilient can help them survive trauma in their lives.

"Give your children more responsibilities. Make sure that when they start something

they finish it, whatever happens," Dr. Nasser advises. "Most importantly, let them make mistakes and learn from them. It is also very important for the parent not to put a lot of guilt or pressure on the child. Learn to let go," he adds.

"This is why students should be taught how to improve their mental health by learning to solve their problems, have a healthy lifestyle, connect with people and develop ways to help others – all of which goes toward building character, forming healthy relationships, and addressing peer pressure," notes EL-Jordi.

Just as important are physical activity and, of course, mindfulness. "Do spiritual activities, yoga, meditation," Dr. Nasser advises.

In the end, experts agree that no matter what mental illness a person suffers from, they should not feel ashamed or scared of judgment: "Just ask for help."

"I have suffered from anxiety, pretty much my whole life. I chose to fight it silently. It wouldn't have been as emotionally, physically and mentally draining had I not kept it to myself all these years.

I wrote this play in the hope of helping people suffering from anxiety know that what they feel is valid, and to help them realize that they are not alone.

Lebanon's suicide hotline (1564) isn't shared among the Lebanese, and especially not among the youth. So many don't even know it exists.

Awareness is the first step in tackling anxiety. With this, I hope to be reaching out to a lot more people." Dana El Sammak, senior English major in Dr. Aliya Khalidi's playwriting course.

Crying Anxiety.

By Dana El Sammak

THE SETTING:

Cold winter day. AMANI's room.

THE CHARACTERS:

- Amani: Girl in her 20s.
- Anxiety: Amani's anxiety personified.

(Lights are off. The faint voice of Amani, as well as a running episode of The Office, bleeds through the darkness.)

AMANI: *(muttering repeatedly)* You're not real, you're not real, you're not real. *She opens her eyes to find 'Anxiety' standing before her.)*

AMANI: God damn it! Leave me alone already!

ANXIETY: So is this why you've taken the semester off? To binge watch *The Office* for the eleventh time this year and eat your weight in Cheetos? You could be out there getting your diploma and making something out of yourself, but instead, you're in here. Doing nothing. Again. And because of what? Anxiety. Anxiety, anxiety, anxiety. It must be nice to have that easy way out, huh. To cry 'Anxiety' whenever you feel like it. Whenever you see fit. When in reality all you are is a lazy, good for nothing disgusting pig.

AMANI: I'm tired of this. I'm tired of you.

ANXIETY: Oh, cry me a river! Some people have actual problems to deal with. Some are abused, neglected, raped. And you're over here tired because of "anxiety". You privileged little brat.

(AMANI picks up the phone.)



The Truth in Numbers: LAU Ranks Among the Top Universities Worldwide

By Alyce Abi Shdid

LAU ranks ahead of other regional universities in terms of employer-student connections and career placement of students

Data powerhouse Times Higher Education (THE) revealed its latest rankings of top universities worldwide for 2019, and LAU is on the list. Placed in the 601-800 bracket out of over 1,258 universities, LAU is among the elite higher education institutions in the world, and one of only two universities in Lebanon to be ranked, thanks to a host of factors such as teaching quality.

This is the first time LAU has made it on THE's World University Rankings. Its appearance comes following an extended push by LAU's senior leadership, its seven schools, its office of Graduate Studies and Research, its Department of Institutional Research & Assessment, and its Student Development and Enrollment Management to advance the university's position as an international educational powerhouse in line with the pillars of the Third Strategic Plan: Intellectual Capital and Knowledge Management, Pedagogical Innovation and Integrated Delivery, and LAU without Borders.

A closer look at LAU's THE results reveals exceptional performance in the area of teaching, where LAU leads the local higher education scene in Lebanon. Another criterion that boosted LAU in the rankings was its citation impact. The fact that LAU faculty are well-published is not new, but the quality and relevance of their scholarship is noteworthy.

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara praised the increased quantity and quality of the faculty's scholarship in an address to the community. "Compared to five years ago, our research output has improved by 60 percent," he said, adding that LAU's faculty published around 400 articles in refereed journals over the past two years, 70 peer-reviewed conference papers, and six refereed books published by renowned academic publishers. In addition, 21 applications for research projects were granted by the National Council for Scientific Research, one research project was granted by Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement

in Research and another by the National Institutes of Health, a primary agency of the United States government responsible for biomedical and public-health research.

"Our faculty's citations are on par with the faculty of the top universities worldwide," agreed Dr. Samer Saab, Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research. "But the bigger story is the quality of the LAU research – publications in prestigious journals, the grants, and partnerships, are some of the metrics that indicate that LAU faculty are doing research that matters while driven by student centeredness."

The type of data presented in THE's report is not isolated. The 2019 Graduate Employability Rankings survey released this year by QS, another renowned organization that collects and analyzes data on the world's top universities, has also ranked LAU among the leading academic institutions worldwide, coming in at the 301-500 bracket. In addition, QS places LAU as the number-two university in Lebanon and number 16 in the Arab World.

For students, these rankings quantify the benefits of studying at LAU. Those seeking summer internships or full-time employment post-graduation are a step ahead of their peers from other regional universities as a result of the support they receive before graduation to prepare them for the job market, which is especially important in tough economic periods like the one Lebanon is facing now.

In the category of employer-student connections, for example, QS ranks LAU at 89, ahead of other world-renowned institutions such as Carnegie Mellon (96), Harvard (97), Yale (98), and the American University of Beirut (110).

"LAU faculty are doing research that matters while driven by student centeredness."

"LAU devotes a lot of effort to fostering longstanding relationships with local companies," said Byblos campus' Lead Career Guidance Officer Hassan Baalbaki. "We are open to the way they want to recruit, and we provide personalized services to cater to their needs."

The university has also signed a number of memoranda of agreement – 26 in the past two years – with employers. These agreements not only formalize employers' relationships with LAU, but also cement their commitment to hire from the pool of elite LAU students.

And, of course, there is the high quality of LAU's teaching and curricula standards, notes Assistant to the President for Institutional Research and Assessment Diane Nauffal. "As part of our institutional effectiveness efforts, we systematically review our academic programs to enhance their quality and ensure their relevance to the job market involving our stakeholders in the process," she said.

For prospective university students trying to choose where to pursue their degrees, so many indicators can be overwhelming. But for most students, the most important metric is employability. A recent internal survey indicated that a full 82 percent of LAU graduates secure full-time employment within 12 months of graduation. For students interested in internships, LAU has promoted and placed upward of 1,300 students, including about 130 in internships abroad.

In an ever-changing academic climate and competitive job market, LAU stands among the world's top universities. Through its commitment to excellence in education, top-notch research faculty, and successful placement of its graduates in employment opportunities around the world, the expectation is that LAU will continue to rise in the rankings year after year.



Student Op-Ed: Endless Opportunities at LAU

By Christelle Barakat

Christelle Barakat is a third-year political science / international affairs student.



Opportunities that allow students to grow, develop and hone their talent can sometimes be hard to come by. Yet at LAU, students like myself have more opportunities available to them than they have time for.

These opportunities, which range from on-campus extracurricular activities and clubs to off-campus volunteer experiences and internships, remind me how privileged I am to be at an institution that values these life-changing experiences. Sure, times can be tough when I feel there are not enough hours in a day to do everything I have set out to achieve. However, despite that, I would not have it any other way because each day I see myself develop into a better version of myself as a result of my intense involvement on campus.

From running LAU's Book Club to taking on trainer and committee director roles in the Model Arab League, from being school relations coordinator for the Model UN to serving as a committee director for Global Classrooms International Model United Nations in New York, no day is ever boring. Everything I do has improved me professionally and morally, including gaining new skills that I will take to the workplace and building up a network of like-minded peers.

Some students might put off university involvement to devote more time to their studies. What they might not realize is that when you have limited time, you become a master planner and begin using your time more wisely. In fact, I find that when I am the busiest, I am also the most productive. I have even managed to keep my grades up and maintain my place in LAU's Honors Program, which has been a far easier feat than I imagined owing to discipline and a very organized schedule.

In addition to my course load and extracurricular activities, I have made sure to take on experiences and internships that have proved

life-changing. One such experience was this past summer in America participating in the Study of the United States Institute for Student Leaders-Religious Pluralism program, a five-week academic exchange program run by the Department of State. Getting accepted into the program alone was an achievement that I owe to LAU for the strong sense of leadership that it has nurtured in me, being one of only five university students from Lebanon to take part in it.

Through this fully funded exchange program, I had the chance to learn about so many religions, visit religious sites, volunteer, engage in intellectual discussions with program participants, and, most of all, enjoy an unforgettable experience I will cherish for a lifetime. This is all thanks to LAU and its dedicated faculty and staff, who made me aware of this exchange program and encouraged me to apply.

Students, new or otherwise, should make sure to check for similar opportunities, as they are available for all, and LAUers are the perfect candidates for such opportunities because our institution instills in us the skills and knowledge required.

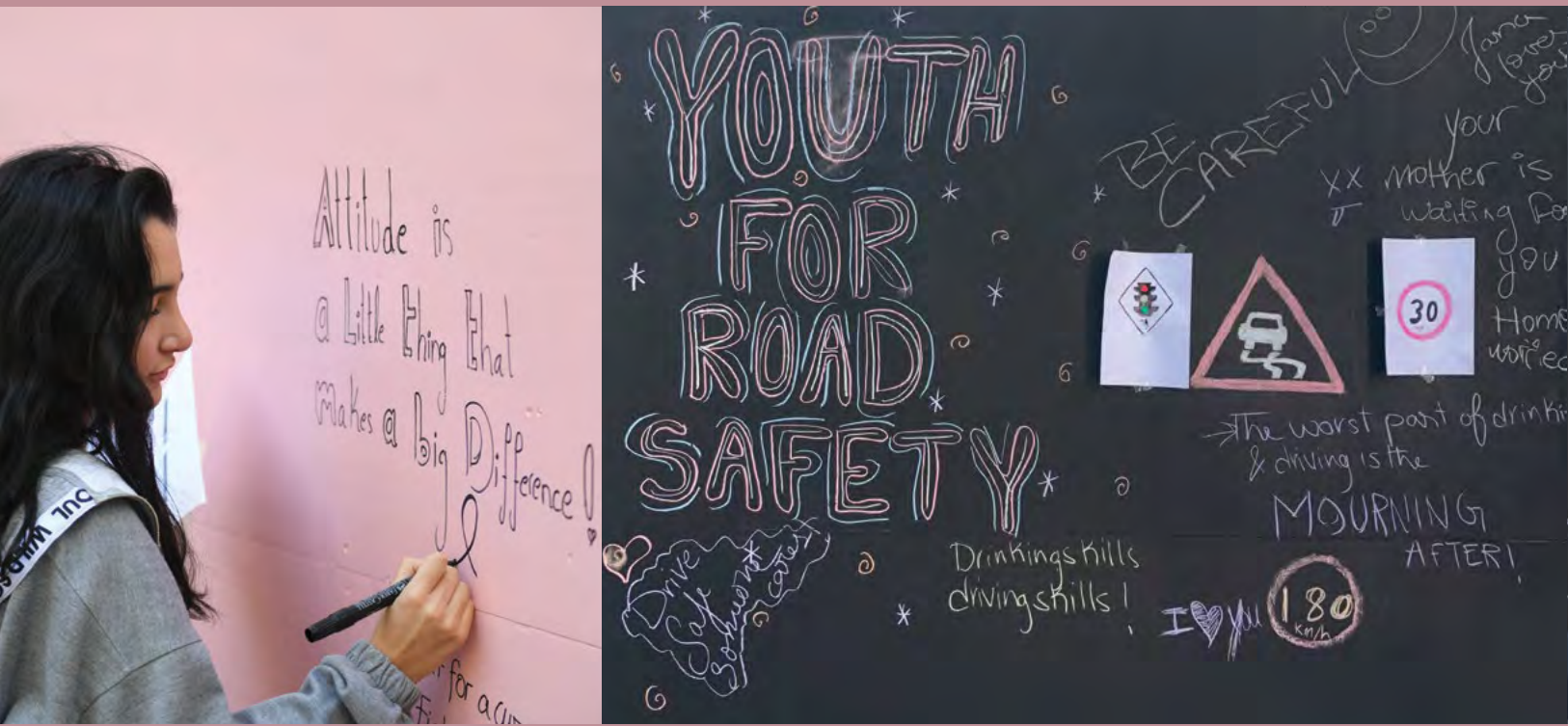
Being an active student has given me so much, including a deeply held appreciation for my university. LAU is not just an academic institution. It is a place I call home and a microcosm of the world that we aspire to create. More than that, it is an institution that attempts to shape the future leaders of the world.



"LAU is not just a university. It is a place I call home and a microcosm of the world that we aspire to create."



Students can join any of LAU's **89** clubs, **43** of which are based on the Beirut campus and **46** on Byblos.



Our Society's Health: Wired to Serve

By Raissa Batakji

The lesser-known deeds of social responsibility at LAU and their long-term impact

According to a study by LAU's Department of Institutional Research and Assessment (DIRA), the university contributed \$897 million to the Lebanese economy in Academic Year 2015-2016.

Its regular contributions to society, however, are a little more difficult to put a figure on.

Similar to corporate social responsibility – the form of self-regulation increasingly popular among businesses – university social responsibility (USR) involves responding to social, economic and environmental issues to reflect an ethically-driven philosophy at the institution.

While sifting through literature on social responsibility last year for her MBA thesis, Dania Saad came to two distinct conclusions: Whereas corporate social responsibility is relatively commonplace in Lebanon, USR – in a formalized sense – is not. In fact, "USR globally – not just

in Lebanon – is understudied, with very limited literature on the topic," wrote Saad, who is also LAU's lead career guidance counselor.

Saad's second insight was that LAU, through its faculty, students, staff and alumni, is already undertaking so many USR efforts that it is difficult to keep track. Financial aid, for one example, reflects the university's commitment to equal learning opportunities in that it covers more than 45 percent of the student body with at least one form of assistance, amounting to over \$35 million a year. In addition, there is the work of the Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) unit, student clubs and departmental events, and a host of courses that teach community building. "At LAU, we do it all innately, without any formal framework," Saad says.

One such example is a recent book published by LAU Professor of Arabic



Literature Latif Zeitouni, who decided to focus "on the responsibility of the writer toward his readers," and subsequently the society at large, when it comes to publishing literature reviews. The result was a book that serves as a guide on methodology and ethical standards. "You can write to entertain people or you can choose to write in a different manner," Zeitouni explains. "You're not living in a vacuum. You have an emotional and intellectual responsibility toward the society to which you belong."

In another initiative, a group of LAU translation majors focused on the dearth of easily accessible literature on feminism

"Students, faculty and staff have become wired to integrate helping society into what they do."

in Arabic. The students translated dozens of online articles from English to Arabic to narrow the gender knowledge gap and shed light on noteworthy women. The Edit-A-Thon, which took place last spring,

was organized by UN Women, among other international and local bodies.

"Our faculty at LAU are widely involved with civil society outside the university gates – which presents us, as students, with infinite possibilities for activism," says Hoda Hilal, one of the translation students who took part. Now an alumna working at LAU's Strategic Communications Department, she says that the project helped her gain real-life translation experience, while benefitting a larger cause.

Wider-known initiatives have become a staple of university life at LAU, such as building close ties with nonprofit organizations, conducting food and clothing drives for those in need, adhering to sustainable and accessible designs across campuses, and advocating for women's rights in Lebanon and the region.

In fact, LAU's emphasis on USR goes all the way back to the university's founding as the first school for girls in the Ottoman Empire – well before the concept of institutional responsibility was born. Saad notes that whereas universities typically influence the society and the economy they are in through their inherent

daily operations, LAU has opted to embed civic engagement into its current mission statement and practices – even in its academic offerings, where her study lists 40 courses with content related to social responsibility, ethics and sustainability across all seven schools.

Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Elise Salem agrees. "Social responsibility is in our DNA. Faculty members embed it in their lectures every day, while students stand for causes they feel most strongly for through activism and research, and some alumni have turned those into a career," she says.

"Students, faculty and staff have become wired to integrate helping society into what they do," notes Saad, adding a major research finding: "Students tend to better associate, identify with and grow loyalty toward their university based on their perception of the socially responsible programs available."

That is why, she argues, if these "considerable... social responsibility efforts get formalized into one entity, they would place LAU at the forefront of socially-responsible institutions in Lebanon and the region."



Shared Governance

By Raissa Batakji

Students take a seat at the table for lessons on leadership, representation and responsibility

Every year at the beginning of the fall semester, the LAU student body elects a group of 30 of their peers to make up the student council and, subsequently, the sub-councils that are assigned to address academic or campus-related issues and inform university-wide policies.

"LAU is a microcosm of our larger country – with all its colors and diversity," said Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Dr. Elise Salem. "Our aim is to have our students learn about and practice their civil rights before they graduate."

Dean of Students on Byblos campus Dr. Makram Ouaiis agreed. "Our students play a central role in the shared governance process that LAU has had for decades now. We value and cherish their input because at every level of the university's work, students' input enriches decision making and makes it more relevant to changing student needs," he said.

This year, more than 82 percent of students from both campuses cast

their votes in early October. The high participation rate is largely attributed to the electronic voting process, which allows students to vote from home, away from any pressure.

This move to online, which has been in place since 2016, has also helped expedite the announcement of the results and contributed to making the process more "transparent, accurate and seamless," according to Assistant Vice President for Information Technology Camille Abou-Nasr.

With over 7,000 eligible student voters, Abou-Nasr admits that online elections are a "tough challenge," but one that his department was equipped to undertake very seriously. He explained how IT professionals were stationed at helpdesks on both campuses during elections should any voter face issues with their login. Throughout the day, multi-level security measures were in place to secure both the web and the network.

With transparency in mind, representatives from the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections (LADE) were invited to both campuses to train candidates on the importance of the democratic process and guide them through what governance entails. Observers from LADE were also present on both campuses throughout the election day to monitor the transparency of the process and file a report, as they have done in past years.

Another highlight of the elections is the students' forums. "Many candidates look forward to this opportunity since it is the only public chance they get to address their voter base and share their views on a number of university issues," said Dean of Students on Beirut campus Dr. Raed

"At every level of the university's work, students' input enriches the decision making and makes it more relevant to changing student needs."

Mohsen. To make the best use of this opportunity, candidates got creative in appealing to their peers at some of the campuses' busiest sites. In that regard, political insinuations were not allowed, since "sloganeering and cheering for political or religious figures is out of place, as these do not relate to LAU elections" and could potentially cause an unnecessary divide on campus, said Dr. Mohsen.

As soon as the voting closed, all candidates were invited to a private meeting to receive the results before they were shared with the wider community. The two campuses were connected via video conference, and present were LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, Dr. Salem, Vice President for Human Resources and University Services Roy Majdalani, the deans of students, Abou-Nasr, IT and SDEM staff, as well as representatives from LADE.

Following the announcement of the results, Dr. Jabbara told the students who participated: "We are so proud of you. You behaved in a way that is exemplary to everyone. Everyone here is a winner."

The council's first meeting took place a week after the elections. Campus Activities Associate Manager in Byblos Alan Kairouz said that "newly-elected members always put their differences aside and work together as a team."

"They quickly learn that they have much more in common," concurred Riman Jurdak, campus activities associate manager in Beirut. "And they turn their attention to the shared goal of enhancing the university experience for themselves and the students they've been elected to represent."

Success in the Pipeline

By Alyce Abi Shdid

The School of Engineering's Petroleum and Drilling Simulation Lab recreates the experience of working on an offshore drilling platform

A high-tech, fully-equipped, state-of-the-art teaching and research laboratory facility is certainly high on the wish list of any engineering faculty, researcher, or student – and for those who are part of the growing field of petroleum engineering, having the tools to be at the forefront of ground-breaking research is critical.

LAU's School of Engineering (SOE) has made that wish a reality for its faculty, researchers and students with its own newly completed Engineering Laboratories and Research Center, a major center that includes the Petroleum and Drilling Simulation Laboratory. Outfitted with the latest advancements in engineering lab technology, the facility is creating a better teaching and research environment, forging stronger collaboration among educators and with the industry, and fostering more realistic learning experiences than ever before.

simulator, which gives students the opportunity to practice advanced equipment operation. It consists of a range of simulated consoles, equipment, and manifolds identical to what are found on a modern drilling rig. Students have the ability to work with controls and instruments that are found on rigs, giving them real-life practice before they enter the industry. A giant wall of high-resolution screens create a "Driller's Window" that uses graphics as well as electronically-generated sound effects that mimic the ambient environment of a drill site. These features, unique to LAU's facility, allow students to explore petroleum engineering as a field of experience rather than simply a field of study.

Engineering Lab Lead Supervisor Nicole Wehbe noted the benefits of having facilities of this caliber. "The simulation equipment is capable of providing students with appropriate levels of training necessary to drill to a depth of 30,000 feet, and it also allows the instructor to fully monitor and control the simulation exercises, making the experience authentic."

The Reservoir Simulation Lab also includes the Core Flooding System, an advanced, computer-controlled environment that simulates oil reservoir conditions. The newest technologies are used to determine the permeability of rock samples as well as their interaction in various fluids so that students can evaluate different rock properties, among other research opportunities.

The SOE's Petroleum Engineering Program offers a major advantage over those that focus on a traditional, theoretically-based education. Hands-on experience during the undergraduate program produces industry-ready professionals who have developed real-life problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

Indeed, as SOE Associate Dean Michel Khoury says, "Our petroleum engineering students are graduating with a deeper level of technical knowledge, unparalleled equipment experience, and a degree of professionalism that can only be achieved in a state-of-the-art learning environment like the one we provide at LAU."



"LAU's Petroleum Engineering Lab facilities are creating a better teaching and research environment, forging stronger collaboration among educators and with the industry, and fostering more realistic learning experiences than ever before."

With the growing possibility of oil extraction off Lebanon's coasts, interest has been building in LAU's Petroleum Engineering Program, which was launched in 2014. This new market has created the need for students to graduate and "hit the ground running" in terms of understanding engineering processes, economic impacts, and industry regulations in the field. The SOE's new facilities include the Drilling Simulation and Reservoir Simulation laboratories, which are both designed to provide a virtual environment for students to gain exposure to the field in a tangible way.

The Drilling Simulation Lab boasts a full-rig floor drilling and well-control

The Blueprint for the White Coat

By Raissa Batakji

SOM experts get students up to speed on landing the right residency, choosing a specialty and thorough financial planning

Committed to providing its students with a high-quality American medical education, the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM) has offered for years a thorough career guidance program in which students, after going into their residency, choose a specialty based on a comprehensive understanding of the career that they are about to launch.

In this spirit, professors share their own experiences, walk students through the steps required for local and international residency, and help some undecided students gain an in-depth understanding of what each specialty entails.

According to OBGYN Residency Program Director Ziad Hubayter, it is critical that students get a head start – as early as the Med I year. "To help," he added, "SOM faculty have compiled thousands of pages of scientific matching data from the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates and the National Residency Matching Program, to guide students on credentials, skills and personality traits that are best matched with a specialty or residency."

While sessions cover tips for the interview and application processes for US and local residency programs – including

the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital – career planning does not stop there.

For example, dermatology residents at LAU sat for the Basic Exam administered by the American Board of Dermatology in order to benchmark against their peers in the US. They scored well above the average there. "These results demonstrate that the LAU dermatology program is among the best international programs outside the US," said Dermatology Department Chair Dr. Zeina Tannous, adding that the students' scores matched those of the prestigious US programs.

"Our students are our pride," declared Dr. Rajaa Chatila, assistant dean for Graduate Medical Education at LAU, adding that she feels an obligation to help excellent and qualified students learn about as many residency opportunities as possible. "Through LAU's continuous work expanding its network of partners across medical centers, we hope to open more opportunities for our students to acquire residency experience."

Dr. Chatila also hopes to identify areas of specialty that are much-needed but underserved in Lebanon. "This is a thorough study that should happen in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health, which could enable us to fill the gaps and guide our students in the right direction," she added.

To this extent, SOM program directors and department chairs give overviews of the 17 specialties and their required credentials. They discuss at length important markers such as job-market saturation, the need for certain specialties, potential income and the lifestyle associated with each.

For students aspiring to pursue clinical research or looking to enhance their chances of matching with a residency program, a session is set up to help them get an idea of the options available to them. "Instead of curing one patient at a time, our graduates have the potential to diagnose and cure thousands through research," said Dr. Najil Riachi, assistant





dean for clinical research, who explained that similar to residency training, to get into clinical research, students have to apply for a fellowship and go through a rigorous matching process. He hopes that with a new wave of fellows, "We will be able to spread a culture of much-needed clinical research in Lebanon and the region."

Faculty also invite alumni for interactive Q&A sessions to help students draw a more accurate illustration of what awaits them post-graduation. At a recent event, Drs. Remie Chrabieh and Rana Asmar shared firsthand accounts of their applications to residency both in Lebanon and the US and the challenges they faced,

providing students with additional tips on what to expect.

Apart from acquiring medical knowledge and putting it into practice, Dr. Hubayter also deemed it necessary to draw students' attention to financial and business management, which helps equip the future doctors with the knowledge needed to succeed in any field. "From saving accounts to retirement funds and insurance plans, these are basic skills that anybody should know," pointed out Dr. Hubayter, drawing from his personal experience of earning an MBA to help him in his medical career.

Thanks to thorough career guidance, students are able to take a step back

and paint a comprehensive picture of what becoming a doctor truly entails. "Much like in any other profession, we want to teach our students to become good fishermen rather than provide them with the fish," concluded SOM Dean Michel Mawad.

"We will be able to spread a culture of much-needed clinical research in Lebanon and the region."

SOP Student Community Outreach: Fighting Red with Pink

By Alyce Abi Shdid

School of Pharmacy students' participation in the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health's Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign yields rewards on many levels

Awareness, prevention, cure. LAU's School of Pharmacy (SOP) believes those three words can only exist in that order. That is why SOP Professional Year 1 students participated in the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health's (MoPH) Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign Contest at a public event over a weekend this fall.

Eight SOP students promoted the campaign Fight Red with Pink, aimed at educating the public on the possible link between a diet high in red meat and breast cancer.

"Our job was to share information on why eating red meat may possibly increase the risk of cancer, how to cook it in a proper way, and what to use as a substitute in order to get the same amount of protein required for our diet," explained Maria-Rita Lteif, one of the SOP student participants.

As one of six Lebanese universities participating in the MoPH's health fair, the LAU team was awarded the prize for best booth, based on their interactive and creative material, evidence-based content, and engagement with the public.

"We made sure that every visitor left with a smile on their face," said Lteif. "The games that they played helped them enjoy their time while gaining knowledge, and we made sure that each person felt loved and cared for before they left."

"Our message was not just to eat healthy, but also to encourage people to take care of themselves," she added.

Through the health fair, students were able to realize the personal impact that they can have on their communities as future healthcare professionals.

"When I participated in the event, the main objective I had in mind was that I wanted to share what I know with people because I might be saving a life," said SOP student Ahmad Mohsen. "Through this event, I realized one of the duties of healthcare professionals: Patient education leads to the wellbeing of people."

According to the MoPH, breast cancer constitutes 35 percent of all cancers among women in Lebanon. With approximately 2,000 new cases diagnosed each year – 49 percent



“The ministry decided to count on the mobilization of youth to carry the campaign message for better outreach. The students felt empowered and motivated, and they realized how they can play a major role in people’s lives.”



of which are in patients under the age of 50 – awareness is essential to the health of the community. After all, there is relief in early detection, as cure rates can reach over 90 percent in cases caught early.

For this reason, the MoPH provides programs that bring the medical community together with Lebanese women to raise awareness of early-detection methods, such as annual mammograms after the age of 40.

Dr. Rasha Hamra, director of the Public Relations and Health Education Departments at the MoPH and an alumna of LAU’s SOP, noted the importance of empowering students to raise cancer awareness in the local community: “The ministry decided to count on the mobilization of youth to carry the campaign message for better outreach. The students felt empowered and motivated, and they realized how they can play a major role in people’s lives when it comes to advising people about healthy lifestyles.”

And the students themselves felt that they achieved their goal for the event. “Spending an entire weekend talking to people, educating them, helping them, answering their questions, giving them advice, and putting a smile on their face made all the hard work worth it,” said Lteif.

Rosy Issa, another SOP student participant, concurred: “As a student, I felt

that it’s important to participate in such an event in order to serve the community we live in by spreading awareness. I also feel that the Lebanese population needs to know a lot about the causes of cancer and how it can be prevented, since Lebanon has high cancer rates.”

SOP Dean Imad Btaiche believes outreach is an important part of the education process of future pharmacists, as developing soft skills is just as critical to patient care as the treatment itself.

“Empathy and sensitivity in treating patients, rather than their disease, is one of the pillars of being a successful

healthcare professional. It is events like this that help our students hone their non-technical skills in order to make a difference in their community,” said Dr. Btaiche.

“Being a healthcare major, I learned that it is necessary for us to reach out to as many people as possible and try to help them and advise them,” said SOP student Omar Al Mahayni. “The event was the experience of a lifetime for me.”

One event, and one patient at a time, SOP students reaffirm their call as healthcare professionals committed to educating the Lebanese public.





A Night of Fun for a Serious Goal

By Naseem Ferdowsi

At the Annual Fundraising Gala Dinner, LAU reaffirms its commitment to providing opportunities for deserving students

LAU's biggest fundraising event of the year – the Annual Fundraising Gala Dinner – was held on December 6, 2018 to raise money for the university's scholarship and financial aid program. Drawing in more than 700 attendees, the special event was themed LAU is Here for You, a reference to the institution's commitment to providing opportunities for the most deserving students, regardless of their background.

"All of Lebanon is represented here tonight and we thank you for your support, and extend to each and every one of you our gratitude for your generosity and presence at this important event," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra in his opening speech. "Most importantly, we thank you for believing in LAU and our students."

The décor at the Beirut New Waterfront's Seaside Pavilion evoked Lebanon's unique charms: lights glowed warmly, inspiring images of the country floated across wall-to-wall LED screens, and table centerpieces portrayed rustic Lebanese homes. The evening's entertainment – provided by chanteuse Carole Samaha – also added to the atmosphere, as the singer performed some of Lebanon's most widely known songs.

Guests were treated to a short film showcasing eight students from across the country – Baakline, Batroun, Beirut, Kfarchouba, Nabatieh, West Bekaa, Zahle, and Zgharta – all of whom benefit from financial support. The journey of these young scholars from their hometowns to LAU paints an inspirational picture of how critical financial support is to students,

LAU Gala 2018

Partnered for Excellence *dinner*

LAU IS HERE FOR YOU



many of whom consider it a lifeline for their studies.

"Coming from the West Bekaa, I had to work very hard to get good grades in order to get the scholarship I needed, and eventually, the job I want, which will give me security when I grow up," said Nour Al Nahas, a third-year civil engineering student featured in the short film. The daughter of a bus driver and a tailor, she received a full scholarship to attend LAU and hopes to land a job that will give her and her family greater financial stability.

Al Nahas is not alone. There are thousands of LAU students in similar situations, as Assistant Vice President for Development Nassib N. Nasr explained.

"With our donors' incredible support and generosity, LAU has helped

4,600 students this year alone by dispersing \$34 million in scholarships and financial aid," said Nasr, who is also chair of the Gala Dinner Steering Committee. "These students come from all over the country and region, and – thanks to our supporters – they are currently making their dreams a reality by attending our university," he added.

President Jabbra echoed Nasr's sentiment, and extended it to the entire country needing support, saying, "Lebanon is here for all of us. We all do our best – institutions, people, and supporters of LAU – to keep this country together. And with your help, we will!"

LAU first began holding its annual Fundraising Gala Dinner in Beirut in 2012. The inaugural event raised an impressive \$75 million, and successive ones have

had similarly grand results, all in support of the Gala Dinner Endowed Scholarship Fund, which supports academically qualified yet economically disadvantaged students so they can benefit from an LAU education.

"With our donors' incredible support and generosity, LAU has helped 4,600 students this year alone by dispersing \$34 million in scholarships and financial aid."

Postcard from New York

By Elida Jbeili

The LAU New York Headquarters and Academic Center (LAU NY) curated a new cultural event series titled Thursdays at LAU NY for the fall 2018 semester. The public events are offered free of charge to the New York City community and beyond, and are intentionally wide in their scope in order to represent the variety of focuses and interests that the Lebanese American University serves with its mission in North America.

Opening the series was a collaboration with el-Yafta – a literary circle/band of poets founded in Beirut in 2011– titled An Ode to New York City: Poetry and Prose from Beirut to Brooklyn. The evening featured two LAU alumni: Class of 2012's Mohamad J. Hodeib (el Walad), 2016 graduate Assem Bazzi, as well as AUB alumna Tina Fish. The trio filled the room with free-flowing poetry in both Arabic and English about journeys, identity, and belonging. Director of Alumni and Special Projects at LAU NY Ed Shiner remarked that the center ultimately serves as a bridge connecting New York with Lebanon and the broader region through these cultural offerings. "We want our alumni to feel that the academic center is their 'home away from home,'" he said, "therefore we are always trying to highlight them and their achievements."

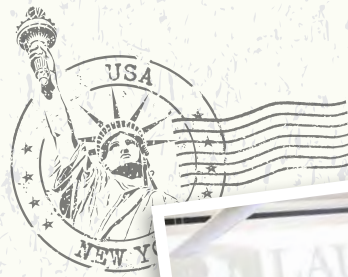
Psychiatrist, philosopher, revolutionary and author Frantz Fanon is an instrumental figure in post-colonial theory and Middle East studies. On the occasion of the publication of the English-language translation of Fanon's previously uncollected and untranslated writings in *Alienation and Freedom*, LAU NY hosted a panel discussion with professors Anthony Alessandrini, Bhakti Shringarpure and Muriam Haleh Davis about the significance of Fanon's work today, with a particular focus on how his writings might speak – or not – to contemporary politics in the MENA region. Fanon helps people

understand, Dr. Alessandrini said, that the goal is to create a critical consciousness, "freed from colonialism and forewarned against any attempt at mystification or glorification." Understanding Fanon also means understanding today's struggles as they relate to the historical forces that condition them. Dr. Alessandrini added that "this is especially important if we are to acknowledge that just as history has not yet ended, neither have the legacy and practices of colonialism."

Dabkeh, an Arabic folk dance native to the Levant that is widely performed at parties, weddings, and other celebratory occasions is something that most Lebanese have been familiar with since childhood. LAU NY and Circle World Arts co-presented a dabkeh dance workshop with artists Hadi and Mohamad Eldebek to introduce New Yorkers to this traditional communal dance. To Hadi Eldebek, a native Lebanese, the dance represents home, community and celebration. He was very happy to share the art of dabkeh with the participants, explaining that "the dance is simple in essence, but dancers can ornament and express more with their moves, and make it quite intricate, especially if they are at the lead of the line. It is very rare to dance dabkeh and not be consumed by the tremendous joy that it brings to people."

Lastly, guests at LAU NY were treated to a very special performance of the 1776 Syrian classical musical composition, *Isqi Al-'Itash (Quench the Thirsty)*, with

A Season To Remember



New York-based Arab ensemble Takht Al-Naghham. The ensemble performs Arabic chamber music and is committed to playing a classical Syrian repertoire with traditional acoustic instruments.

In order to familiarize audiences in the US with the original structure of Arab musical traditions, Takht al-Naghham presented the sets (called wasla in Arabic) in the same manner that they were originally performed centuries ago: without reading from sheet music and relying heavily on improvisation. "In tracing a chronology of Aleppan music, we aim to share a rich tradition with a US audience who know Syria only as a site of a violent and destructive conflict," said Takht Al-Naghham founder Samer Ali. "We want our music, as it so often does, to soothe and brighten, to help heal and reconcile."

As the fall season witnessed an influx of public events, LAU NY looks forward to strengthening and expanding the connection in the new year between LAU and its community in the US, showcasing the very best of the university beyond its borders.

Good Nutrition, From the Lab to Your Home

By Naseem Ferdowsi

The New Fouad El-Abd Food Innovation Lab will take student learning to the next level

Fouad El-Abd, the founder and president of leading canned food company California Gardens, and LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara cut the ribbon of the university's Fouad El-Abd Food Innovation Lab on Byblos campus in October. Marking the official inauguration of the campus' newest facility, the special event in October drew dozens of supporters, faculty, staff and students to celebrate and tour the nearly 100-square-meter functional space, which is comprised of a core kitchen lab, a support lab service room and meeting room.

The cutting-edge lab, located on the ground floor of the Science Building, was made possible by EL-Abd's substantial donation to LAU two years ago. Thanking the donor for his generosity, Dr. Jabbara said during the inauguration's signing ceremony, "On behalf of the LAU family, including faculty and Nutrition Program students, I would like to thank you from the depths of our hearts for your generous gift and what you have done for our community."

EL-Abd shared with attendees his vision for his namesake lab. "The tahini and hummus business in the United States is a billion-dollar business, which is incredible. And with Lebanese and Arab cuisine having a vast menu of food that is becoming very popular around the world, there is so much potential for students



who can use the lab to innovate and keep all our dreams and traditions alive," he said. He later presented Dr. Jabbara with a can of hummus that had been taken to outer space and back as part of California Gardens' partnership with NASA to supply the food to the International Space Station.

"This lab will greatly enrich our experience at LAU as nutritionists or food scientists," said LAU Nutrition student Romy Louis, who is in her senior year. "Whether we are planning to end up in the food industry, community sector, or clinical setting, this lab will definitely be a plus in reaching our future goals," explained Louis, who had a chance to take part in inauguration activities and meet EL-Abd.

After the signing ceremony, the donor and attendees visited the lab to see the facility firsthand. Associate Professor Nadine Zeeni, who is also the coordinator of LAU's Nutrition Program, was on hand to discuss specifications of the lab with attendees.

"The lab will enhance LAU's positioning in the nutrition field, giving an edge to the program in terms of hands-on practice to relate culinary, nutritional and food-safety theory to practical applications," said Dr. Zeeni.

In addition to being a huge asset for the Nutrition Department, the multifunctional lab will be used by students in the Department of Hospitality Management and Marketing, as well as by external entities at a cost, enabling the university to generate profit from the space.

"From time to time, we get approached by local food industries to help them carry out research and development projects.

This will be a paid service, and as such it is a win-win collaboration for the industry and LAU," said Dr. Hussein F. Hassan, associate professor of food science and technology and associate chairperson of the Department of Natural Sciences.

The university's Facilities Management team was also present to provide attendees with an overview of the new lab and the great effort it took to develop the high-tech space.

"Because the original premises did not have the adequate logistical requirements for housing a state-of-the-art food lab intended for academic and research activities, design and execution were extremely challenging. But we were able to find special solutions to address functional, architectural and safety-related challenges," explained Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management Georges Hamouche, who thanked his team, consultants, contractor and suppliers for the project's successful outcome.

"With Lebanese and Arab cuisine becoming very popular around the world, there is so much potential for students who can use the lab to innovate and keep all our dreams and traditions alive."

LAU Welcomes **New Faculty**

Every year, LAU's roster of exceptional faculty expands, with new full-time and visiting professors joining the community. LAU is proud to welcome its new additions to the faculty.

ADNAN KASSAR SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



Moustafa Haj Youssef, *Assistant Professor*

Moustafa Haj Youssef joined the Adnan Kassar School of Business as an assistant professor in the Department of Management Studies in fall 2018.

He earned his BSc in computer science and business administration from the University of Balamand, and then an MSc in international business management from the University of West London. He went on to obtain his PhD in strategic management from the University of Westminster in the UK.



Hiba Koussaifi, *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Hiba Koussaifi is a visiting assistant professor of marketing. She joined LAU in fall 2018.

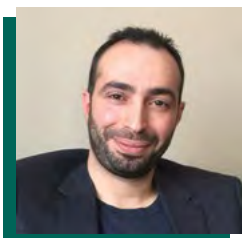
She holds a PhD in marketing from Northumbria University-Newcastle in the UK, an MSc in economic and consumer psychology from the University of Exeter in the UK and a BS in graphic design from LAU. She was the recipient of the LAU President's Award in 2001.

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN



David Aouad, *Professor of Practice*

David Aouad holds a master's degree in urban planning and a bachelor's in architecture from the University of Montreal. He started an independent practice in 1999 and has since teamed up with partner Juliana El-Haddad to establish the firm DAJH Architects. Besides his practice, Aouad was appointed in fall 2018 as a practice lecturer at LAU, where he teaches the Senior Design and Architecture studios at the School of Architecture and Design.

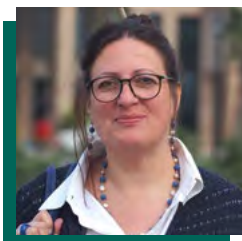


Mohamad Araji, *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Mohamad Araji joined LAU as a visiting professor for the academic year 2018–2019.

He is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Manitoba in Canada.

Dr. Araji received his master's degree in architecture from the University of Arizona and a PhD from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.



Paola Ardizzola, *Assistant Professor*

Paola Ardizzola joined LAU as an assistant professor at the School of Architecture and Design in fall 2018. She holds a doctorate in history of architecture and urbanism from Gabriele D'Annunzio University in Italy.

She is the founder of the Department of Architecture at the School of Fine Arts and Architecture, Antalya International University in Turkey, where she served as executive dean and department chairperson.



Maria Bahous, *Practice Lecturer*

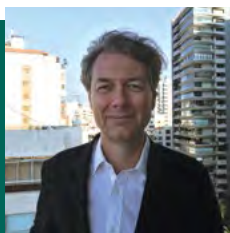
Maria Bahous holds an MFA from the Academy of the Arts in San Francisco and an MA in graphic design from the London College of Communication, University of the Arts, London. She received her BS in the same subject from LAU.

Bahous started teaching at LAU in 2007 as a part timer, was appointed as an adjunct lecturer in 2012, and joined as a practice lecturer in fall 2018.



Marwan Basmaji, *Assistant Professor*

Marwan Basmaji joined LAU in spring 2016 as a part-time faculty member at the School of Architecture and Design. After completing his architectural studies at Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK), he received the Japanese Government Scholarship to pursue his master's and doctoral studies as a member of Tadao Ando Laboratory at the University of Tokyo in Japan.



Per-Johan Dahl, *Visiting Professor*

Per-Johan Dahl is an architect and researcher. He joined LAU as a visiting professor in fall 2018.

Dr. Dahl holds a PhD in architecture from the University of California Los Angeles' Department for Architecture and Urban Design, an MArch from Lund University, and a University Certificate in civil engineering from Blekinge Institute of Technology. He pursued his post-doctoral research as a visiting scholar at Columbia University.



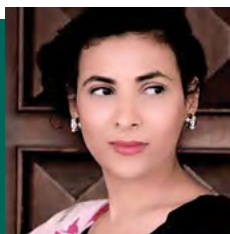
Mohamad Hamouie, *Professor of Practice*

Mohamad Hamouie is a professor of practice at the School of Architecture and Design and director of the Institute of Islamic Art & Architecture.

He graduated from the American University of Beirut and started his private practice in Saudi Arabia shortly thereafter.

Hamouie previously taught at the American University of Beirut. He joined LAU in fall 2018.

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

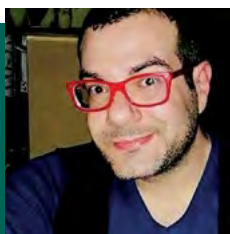


Seba Ali, *Assistant Professor*

Pianist Seba Ali joined LAU as an assistant professor at the School of Arts and Sciences in 2018.

Dr. Ali holds a bachelor's of music from Cairo Conservatory, a professional performance certificate from Lynn University's Conservatory of Music, a master's in music in piano performance, and a doctorate of musical arts from Stony Brook University in New York.

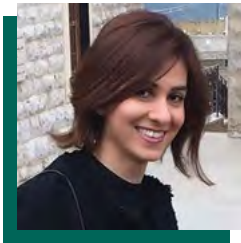
Dr. Ali has been associated with LAU for years and is the founder and artistic director of Imagine Workshop and Concert Series (IWCS).



Sleiman El Hajj, *Assistant Professor*

Sleiman El Hajj joined LAU as an assistant professor of creative and journalistic writing in fall 2018. He is also an associate fellow of the UK's Higher Education Academy.

He received a BS and a BA from the American University of Beirut in biology and English literature before obtaining his MA in American literature from the same university. He then attended the University of Gloucestershire in England and earned a PhD in creative writing.



Berna El Rahi, *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Berna El Rahi joined LAU as a visiting assistant professor of nutrition at the Department of Natural Sciences in fall 2018.

Dr. Rahi received her PhD in clinical nutrition with an emphasis on geriatrics and epidemiology from the University of Montreal, Canada. She then completed a postdoctoral fellowship in nutritional epidemiology at the National Institute of Health and Medical Research in Bordeaux, France. Dr. Rahi then completed a second postdoctoral fellowship at the University of California, Los Angeles in geriatric psychiatry.



Jeffrey G. Karam, *Assistant Professor*

Jeffrey G. Karam joined LAU as an assistant professor of political science and international affairs in fall 2018. He is also a non-resident associate at the Middle East Initiative at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs. Dr. Karam holds a PhD in politics from Brandeis University, an MA in politics from the American University of Beirut, and a dual BA in international affairs and diplomacy from Notre Dame University, Louaize.



Gretchen King, *Assistant Professor*

Gretchen King is assistant professor of communication and multimedia journalism at LAU's School of Arts and Sciences.

She completed her PhD in communication studies at McGill University. Afterward, Dr. King was a post-doctoral research fellow at the University of Ottawa, where she facilitated several projects related to community radio newsrooms and communication policy processes.

During 2018, Dr. King served as a post-doctoral research fellow for the Canada Research Chair in Media Education and Human Rights at Université TÉLUQ in Montreal.



Hagop A. Yacoubian, *Associate Professor*

Hagop A. Yacoubian joined the Education Department of the Lebanese American University in fall 2018 as associate professor of education. He holds a PhD in secondary education from the University of Alberta in Canada. Prior to his appointment at LAU, he was an associate professor of education and the chair of the Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences at Haigazian University.

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING



Volkan Cakir, *Visiting Assistant Professor*

Volkan Cakir worked as a logistics officer at the Fifth Air Base in Merzifon, Turkey, before obtaining his master's in industrial engineering at the Middle East Technical University.

He then began as an instructor at the Turkish Airforce Academy before pursuing his PhD in engineering management at Old Dominion University in the US state of Virginia. He completed his degree in 2011 and continued at the Turkish Air Force as a lieutenant colonel until 2012.

In fall 2018, he joined LAU's Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Department.



Zahi Chehaitli, *Senior Practice Instructor*

Zahi Chehaitli received his BS in industrial engineering and management systems from the University of Central Florida before obtaining his master's in business administration from Webster University in Missouri.

He is certified as a Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt by Brunswick Corporation and George Group. He is also a certified project manager in the Project Management Leadership Group and is a Six Sigma Black Belt with General Electric-Industrial Systems.



Jawad El Khoury, *Assistant Professor*

Jawad el Khoury is assistant professor of mechatronics engineering in the Industrial and Mechanical Engineering Department at LAU's School of Engineering.

Dr. Khoury received his BS in electrical and electronic engineering from the Lebanese University before heading to France, where he obtained his MS in electrical engineering at Université de Technologie de Compiègne. He then earned his PhD in electrical and electronic engineering from l'Université de Cergy-Pontoise, also in France.



Wassim Ghannoum, *Visiting Associate Professor*

Wassim Ghannoum joined LAU as a visiting associate professor in 2018. He holds a PhD in civil engineering, specializing in structural engineering, from the University of California at Berkeley and a master's and bachelor's in civil engineering from McGill University in Canada. Dr. Ghannoum was an assistant professor at the University of Texas at Austin before joining the University of Texas at San Antonio and then coming to LAU.

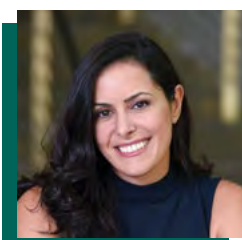


Zisis Vryzas, *Assistant Professor*

Zisis Vryzas joined LAU as assistant professor in the Industrial and Mechanical Engineering Department's Petroleum Engineering Program in fall 2018.

He received his PhD in chemical/petroleum engineering from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He also holds an executive doctorate of business administration from the Paris School of Business, and an MSc in petroleum engineering from the UK's Heriot-Watt University. He received his BSc and MSc in environmental engineering from the Technical University of Crete, Greece.

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



Rafah Aboulhosn, *Clinical Assistant Professor*

Rafah Aboulhosn joined the Lebanese American University School of Pharmacy as a clinical assistant professor in September 2018.

She received a bachelor's degree in nutrition and dietetics at the American University of Beirut and obtained her PharmD from LAU. She completed a PGY1 residency at Penn State Health St. Joseph in Reading, Pennsylvania, and a PGY2 residency in geriatric pharmacy at the University of Maryland in Baltimore. She is currently in the process of completing an MS in clinical hospice and palliative care at the University of Maryland.

Campus Notes



Honoring a Mother's Memory

The children of a Class of 1959 graduate have honored their mother in a big way. Rania, Fadi, Rim and Rani – children of late alumna Lamia Sabbah Ali-Ahmed – have established a scholarship in her memory with a generous donation to LAU.

The Lamia Sabbah Ali-Ahmed Designated Scholarship has given one student the opportunity to follow the legacy of the late alumna, who graduated with a degree in psychology from Beirut College for Women (BCW), which is now LAU. The recipient must be a female student from Nabatieh facing financial hardship and who is enrolled in the university's psychology BA program. The scholarship will fund the selected student from fall 2018 until her graduation. "Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our beloved mother's legacy from the very place that she held so dear," said Rani Aliahmad of his mother, who passed away earlier this year. "It warms our heart to know that her spirit will live on in this institution and accompany like-minded students through their own journey," added Aliahmad, who is a partner at California-based VenVest Capital.



Beauty Gets a Boost

For the first time in the history of the annual Miss Lebanon contest, participants received training in topics that many would not necessarily associate with the pageant world, such as gender equality, redefining beauty standards, negotiation, conflict resolution, public speaking, effective communication, and more.

The training took place on both LAU's campuses in August and early September, and was carried out in cooperation with the university's Arab Institute for Women. Thirty Miss Lebanon hopefuls took part.

The eventual winner of the pageant was Maya Reaidy, a student at LAU's School of Pharmacy, who thanked the university for the training she received ahead of the pageant, which she said would help her throughout her future career.

High-Tech Training

A new high-tech simulator was installed at the Comprehensive Stroke Center located at the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital in late August, allowing physicians to receive pre-clinical training in a simulated clinical environment.

"We are very proud to be the pioneers, not only in treating patients but in training the younger generations of physicians to minimize errors," said Dr. Michel Mawad, dean of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine.

The machine, called a replicator, is the first of its kind to be used anywhere in the Middle East, Europe or Africa.

Nadine Hans, senior director of medical affairs at Medtronic, the company that built the replicator, said, "LAU is the very first center in which Medtronic has installed this simulation because we both share the ultimate goal of improving clinical outcomes through training," adding that the progress LAU has made in stroke treatment has positioned it as the region's center of expertise in the field.



Excellence in Research and Teaching

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara and Provost George E. Nasr presented awards to two outstanding faculty members in September after the first University Faculty Meeting of the academic year.

The Faculty Research Excellence Award went to Dr. Rony Khnayzer, who has over 1,000 citations, was the co-author of 25 peer-reviewed articles, has appeared in a number of top-tier international journals, and who is an active member of the American Chemical Society. "As educators and researchers, we are all fortunate to have the opportunity to make a difference in our society," said Dr. Khnayzer as he accepted the award.

Next to be honored was Associate Professor of Biology Sandra Rizk, who won the Faculty Teaching Excellence Award. Dr. Rizk is the founding director of the Honors and Freshman program – the first honors program established in the Middle East. "I would like to thank my students for always inspiring me to move forward," she said, adding, "Teaching is an art; when used skillfully, it blossoms in the hearts of learners."



A Leader in Cancer Research

The International Society of Nurses in Cancer Care recognized Associate Professor and Assistant Dean of the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON) Myrna Doumit with the Past President's Award, showcasing how ARCSON is advancing the profession of nursing in Lebanon and beyond. Dr. Doumit received the award at the society's 2018 International Conference on Cancer Nursing in Auckland, New Zealand on September 26. Dr. Doumit was given the award this year for her work on breast cancer, specifically the Courage to Fight Breast Cancer initiative at LAU.

"I know that breast cancer is something that can be detected early," Dr. Doumit said, "and with early detection we have better prognosis."

History in the Making

The Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS) at LAU and the Lebanese Association for History (LAH) are on a mission to transform how students in Lebanon learn history.

According to CLS Director Maha Shuayb, the teaching of history in Lebanon has been "hijacked by politicians," and the textbooks used by students across the country have not been updated since the 1960s.

CLS and LAH, who have collaborated since 2013 on a number of projects, took the first step toward much-needed change. On September 5, they celebrated the closing of the capacity-building project, *How Do We Make Our Students Young Historians?*

The initiative, explained Dr. Shuayb, "puts the agency back in the history teachers' hands and sets it on a development track, so that they can lead, experiment and engage their students in critical thinking and open debate."

Praise for Morine

LAU Senior TV & Film Instructor Tony Farjallah won Best Director for his movie *Morine* – which was also nominated for the Best Feature Film category – at the 2018 Marbella International Film Festival in Spain.

Morine, the first historical movie set in Lebanon, has also won Best Foreign Feature at the Christian Family Film Festival, and Best Spiritual Feature at the 2018 Great Lakes International Film Festival.

"These awards mean recognition. We are happy when our work is recognized worldwide. We are competing with big production houses," Farjallah said in an interview.

15 Years of Giving

To celebrate the Alwaleed Bin Talal Humanitarian Foundation's generous contributions to LAU over the past 15 years, the university hosted the foundation's vice president, Leila El Solh Hamadé, at a ceremony on September 27. Students, faculty, staff, and a number of university leaders gathered at Irwin Auditorium to celebrate Hamadé's spirit of giving.

"We are keen on cooperating with LAU for the future of the Lebanese youth," explained Hamadé in her address, reaffirming her foundation's commitment to the university and its students.

President Jabbra took the stage, telling Hamadé, "Through the gifts that you have made to Lebanon, you are a role model, showing everybody that you are a true Lebanese, embracing all the regions, denominations, and socioeconomic strata of Lebanon."

Following the celebration were a reception and dinner hosted by Dr. Jabbra, who said he remains deeply touched by Hamadé's "indefatigable commitment to Lebanon."



How Safe Is the Food We're Eating?

Lebanon may be the breadbasket of the Middle East, but the safety of our crops and food products is being called into question because of pollution and poor national monitoring programs and policies.

This was a major topic at the second-annual Lebanese Association for Food Scientists and Technologists conference on Beirut campus hosted by LAU's Nutrition Program. The two-day conference, which took place in late September, was attended by representatives of public- and private-sector organizations as well as academic and non-profit institutions.

Luckily, LAU's Nutrition Program acts as "a niche for food science and food safety research in the country," said Associate Chair of the Natural Sciences Department Hussein Hassan. Among its ongoing projects, the Nutrition Program is helping the Batloun Municipality in the Chouf to reduce waste and upgrade their food-safety practices at a food-manufacturing plant in the town.

LAU is a "pioneer in the field of nutrition and food science research," added Dr. Hassan, "and we are always available to help food industries."

Are Robots Coming for our Jobs?

On October 9, the Beta Gamma Sigma honor society of the Adnan Kassar School of Business hosted a talk by alumnus Ali Rebaie (BS '11) on the future of artificial intelligence and its potential impact on jobs, society and culture. Rebaie spoke of the many future applications of AI and how aspiring students can get in the business while still at university. Though there are perennial concerns about robots taking over people's jobs, Assistant Professor of Information Technology Abbas Tarhini, who organized the lecture, told the crowd, "Robots are only a tool that helps us live in a better way. The main difference between humans and robots is that we can dream, and dreaming is what takes us to where robots can't go."



LAU Gets Down to Fitness

The fountain area on the Byblos campus was busier than usual as the Athletics Department hosted the second annual LAU Fit Fair on Wednesday, October 10. Students took part in group fitness classes, learned about healthy lifestyles, and got to sample free goodies from local gyms and other businesses who had set up stands on campus. "We believe that our role in athletics is not bound to the gym and courts," said Athletics Coordinator on Byblos campus Karen Chammas.

"We have always encouraged the LAU community to lead a healthy lifestyle and engage in sports and other healthy habits."



Foundation Supporting Students from Douma

Students from Douma now have access to more scholarship support thanks to the Hanna and Nina Ayoub Foundation's recent contribution of \$10,000 to establish five scholarships designated for students from the north-Lebanon village. A gift signing ceremony took place at Hanna and Nina Ayoub's residence in Yarze in fall 2018 and was attended by President Jabbara and Director of Development Lana Abou Teen, who facilitated the donation to the university. Hanna and Nina, along with their niece, ZeenaLee Ayoub, proudly took part in the signing ceremony, which was followed by a discussion about LAU's achievements and the foundation's aim to potentially support even more students from Douma. While it is the first time the foundation has contributed to LAU, Ayoub has a long history of giving to the institution through personal donations as well as gifts from his company, Al Hamra Kuwait Company, dating back to 1986 and totaling more than \$285,000. These donations have been earmarked toward a construction fund to name a 210-square meter space on the Byblos campus, which is expected to be officially inaugurated in 2019. In addition to his giving to LAU, Ayoub served as a board member of the university.



AI at BMW

On October 17, the conference hall at Byblos campus' Science Building was packed with LAU students, faculty and staff who were eager to learn about how artificial intelligence (AI) serves the Logistics Robotics team at BMW.

Hosted by the School of Engineering (SOE), and in collaboration with the AI club, four speakers came from Germany to present on their latest work in logistics planning and to highlight their increasing reliance on AI.

Much to the excitement of computer engineering students, SOE Interim Assistant Dean Joe Tekli announced that BMW is looking to fill summer internship positions with LAU students. After all, noted BMW Computer Vision team member Norman Mueller, "We are always looking for new, innovative ways to teach robots how to see the world like we see it."



From Grassroots to Governments

Although Lebanon's parliament has many more women this session than in previous ones, why are there still only six female MPs out of 128 seats? This question – along with many others – was addressed during Breaking Down Barriers, a panel discussion that brought together Minister of Parliament Paula Yacoubian; activist Joumana Haddad, who ran as an independent in the parliamentary elections in spring 2018; and Director of the Arab Institute for Human Rights Joumana Merhi. The event was hosted by the Arab Institute for Women in partnership with LAU Human Rights Club on November 2 and was part of a larger lecture series, Equality for Everyone- Gender Reform from Grassroots to Governments, funded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative.



LAU Runs Beirut

LAU has been participating in the annual Beirut Marathon since its launch more than a decade ago. Since then, LAUers have taken home medals every year. This year, a team of 30 Varsity Track and Field members ran. Cheering them on were over 70 volunteers made up of students, faculty, staff, friends and supporters. By the end of the day, LAU had gathered plenty of prizes: The Varsity Track and Field Team won first place in the 42k university relay and 8k fitness group

race, and scored top three in the women's 42k relay race. Student runner Tamara Zein also took first place in the 21k race for her age group.

"This is just the start," said Track and Field Coach Mohamad Mawas. "This team will do wonders. In the next three or four years they will be the best in the region. Just wait and see."

How to Save a Life

A group of students from LAU's health sciences schools gathered in the Beirut neighborhood of Ain Mraisseh on November 3 to educate the public on hands-only Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

Over 100 people gathered to watch demonstrations on how to respond if they witness a person go into cardiac arrest. "This activity aims to raise awareness of the importance of this simple, yet lifesaving two-step approach to help save a life," said Maha Habre, Clinical Assistant Professor at the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing and the Interprofessional Education Program Coordinator. "If bystanders know how to perform CPR, they can keep someone alive while help is on its way."

According to the American Heart Association, performing hands-only CPR increases the survival rate of cardiac arrest victims by two to three times, especially if performed immediately.

The students had conducted a previous such session in April at ABC Achrafieh mall.



Letting Mentors Shine

Pharmacy faculty and practitioners gathered at Le Royal Hotel November 7 for the annual Preceptor Appreciation Event in celebration of those who mentor students at the School of Pharmacy (SOP).

The event also served as the launch of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) Continuing Pharmacy Education Program, which fulfills the SOP's Preceptor Development Plan designed to meet ACPE standards.

"It is an honor to take in LAU SOP students," said Ramzi Azzam, who was named one of the preceptors of the year and who has owned and operated Plaza Pharmacy in Ras Beirut since 1980. "I teach them and guide them, but of course, they teach me too! We both learn from each other."

For the Love of Literature

The English Department organized its third-annual Literature Day on November 16 on Beirut campus, with games, a dramatic performance and a competition.

Braving the rain, students huddled around booths near the Upper Gate to answer questions about recent novels, match titles to authors, and identify quotes by famous Arab figures in return for prizes.

"In literature, though it is fiction, there is also the truth," said Associate Professor of English Studies Luma Balaa, who helped organize the event.

The day ended with a poetry slam in which 12 contestants from different majors recited their own works to a crowd of their peers and jury members.

Hack Your Marketing Strategy with Big Data

How can organizations best market to a digital audience? What strategies increase a company's profile in a crowded market? And what on earth is growth hacking?

All these questions – and more – were addressed at a November 19 seminar hosted by the Hospitality Management and Marketing Department with special guest speaker Wissam Sammouri, data mining specialist, consultant, university lecturer and co-founder of company Pixis.

Dr. Sammouri spoke about data-driven digital marketing and how to leverage information gleaned from data mining to make strategic choices. He used case studies to "demystify the role of data in driving business and marketing decisions" and taught techniques in growth hacking, which is, incidentally, a process of experimentation across segments to pinpoint the most efficient ways to grow a business.



An LAU Global Influencer

President Jabbra invited members of the LAU community to celebrate Lina Abirafeh, director of the Arab Institute for Women, who made waves when she was included on the world's 100 Most Influential People in Gender Policy in 2018. The event took place at Riyad Nassar Library on November 27.

"Achieving equality for women is the greatest human-rights challenge of our time – and the issue to which I've dedicated my life," Dr. Abirafeh said. "And in the Arab region, our challenge is greater than ever! That's why the institute is so critical – it combines both academic and activist approaches to build a foundation for equality and human rights."



An Alumnus' Generous Donation

LAU alumnus and Forbes Middle East Top-100 Executive Wissam Moukahal (BS '95) has made a generous first-time donation to the university that is helping four students pursue their academic dreams. Moukahal made a visit to his alma mater's Beirut campus in November 2018 for a gift-signing ceremony, and to meet with students benefitting from his donation. "It took me 22 years, but – I kid you not – every day LAU has been in the back of my mind until the time was right," explained Moukahal, who graduated with a business degree and is now MENA Executive Chairman at Macquarie Group, a Sydney-based financial group.

Contributing through the Z. Moukahal Foundation, a charitable organization he founded, Moukahal has established the Rafeek Program Scholarship at LAU, which will

cover 25 percent of the tuition of deserving students who are pursuing degrees at the Adnan Kassar School of Business. Student beneficiaries of the new scholarship program attended the signing ceremony and had a chance to show their appreciation for Moukahal's generosity. They also gained valuable mentorship from the alumnus after the event, something that will continue with other students, as the donor is part of the university's Mentoring Program. LAU's Mentoring Program aims to foster meaningful relationships between alumni and current students. The connections forged in the program help prepare students for a bright future and leave a lasting impact on the campus community.



A Day for Orphans

Hundreds of orphans from across the country gathered in Byblos for LAU's annual Orphan Fair – a day of food, games, music and dancing. Around 170 volunteers from LAU teamed up with Byblos Campus Activities Associate Manager Alan Kairouz and main organizer Rebecca Saab to give the young visitors the best day possible.



Star Comes to Campus

Celebrity musician, playwright, actor and producer Ziad Rahbani visited LAU's Beirut campus on December 5. The legendary artist was invited by the International Affairs Club to speak about the influence of the arts on major social, political and economic issues.

Alumni Update

JUNE 2018



Breakfast in the Park

Members of the LAU Alumni-Toronto Chapter and their families gathered on Sunday, June 24 for their annual Breakfast in the Park, held at Adams Park in Scarborough. Despite rain in the forecast, the event was a huge success, complete with delicious saj and games of tawla, or backgammon.

AUGUST 2018



A Welcome for Future Alumni

As part of a student orientation event, the Alumni Relations Office welcomed the newest LAUers on Beirut and Byblos campuses on August 20 and 24. New students received bracelets engraved with "Welcome to LAU 2018-2019" in addition to handouts explaining the role of the Alumni Relations Office and chapters worldwide.

JULY 2018



Kayaking on the Hudson

Also on July 1, members of the LAU Alumni-New York & New Jersey Chapter and friends spent the afternoon kayaking on the Hudson River followed by socializing with refreshing food and drink.



Saj Picnic

Members of the LAU Alumni-Washington, DC Chapter headed out to Lake Accotink Park for their 4th Annual Saj Picnic on Sunday, July 1.



Picnic in the Park

The LAU Alumni-Montreal Chapter – along with alumni chapters from the American University of Beirut, Notre Dame University and Saint Joseph University – got together at Angrignon Park on Sunday, July 8, for their annual Picnic in the Park.

Pop-In Visit

When Ahmad Zaarouri (MS '09), an active member of the LAU Alumni-Dubai & Northern Emirates Chapter, was in New York for business, he visited Director of Alumni and Special Projects Edward Shiner, who gave him a tour of LAU's NY Headquarters and Academic Center before going to lunch together. LAU alumni are always welcome to visit their "New York home" when they're in town.

SEPTEMBER 2018



A Lakefront Promenade

The LAU Alumni-Toronto Chapter held their annual picnic at Lakefront Promenade Park on September 9 in Mississauga, Ontario. This family event was complete with food, games and a raffle.

Golf and Friends

On September 23, the DC Chapter gathered members and friends for a day of fun and networking at the driving range Topgolf.



Meet and Greet in Sydney

The Sydney Alumni Chapter held a meet and greet at Sydney Olympic Park on September 23. The event drew a crowd of around 50 alumni and friends.

OCTOBER 2018



Fall Gathering

The School of Engineering Alumni Chapter organized its annual Fall Gathering at Rikkyz Restaurant in Faraya on Sunday, October 7. The yearly event was a great opportunity for engineering graduates to gather and enjoy a great time with the school's dean and alumni officials.



Keep Learning with Hady Safa

Dr. Hady Safa, an author and motivational speaker, presented to more than 120 alumni and friends a lecture entitled The Power of the Mind on October 11 on Beirut campus as part of the Keep Learning Alumni Lecture Series.

An Athens Welcome

The LAU Alumni–Athens Chapter held a gathering on October 19 at the home of its head, Sana Cherfan, to welcome LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara to the city. Around 35 alumni and friends attended. The previous evening, AVP of Alumni Relations Abdallah Al Khal held a meeting with the committee to discuss the chapter's plans for the coming year and ways to support the university.



Nour

On October 21, the DC Chapter gathered at the Ernst Community Cultural Center in Annandale, VA for the screening of *Nour*. The film was directed by LAU alumnus Khalil Dreyfus Zaarour, who came from Lebanon for the event. A Q&A followed the screening and a reception allowed for more time to chat with Zaarour.



Welcome to Chicago

The LAU Alumni–Chicago Chapter held a welcome dinner for Al Khal and Ed Shiner at the La Sorella Di Francesca restaurant in Naperville, Ill on October 25.



Alumni in Seattle

On October 26, Al Khal and Shiner were on the West Coast and met with the LAU Alumni–Seattle Chapter for dinner and networking at Earl's restaurant.



Tannourine in California

The LAU Alumni–Northern California Chapter in conjunction with World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU) San Francisco Chapter held a lively dinner at Tannourine's on October 27.



LAU in LA

On October 28, Al Khal and Shiner joined the LAU Alumni–Southern California Chapter for a beautiful Sunday afternoon boat cruise in Los Angeles.



A Special Connection

The next day, Al Khal and Shiner met with the Honorable Consul General of Lebanon in Los Angeles Mirna Khawly and offered her the support of the alumni community and NY HQ and Academic Center. She, in turn, offered her assistance to the LAU community in all 15 of the western states that she represents.

NOVEMBER 2018



Happy Hour

On the other coast, the LAU Alumni–New York & New Jersey Chapter gathered alumni and friends for a happy hour at Castell Rooftop Lounge, the Theatre District's newest hotel, on November 1.



Wine Tasting

More than 50 alumni and friends enjoyed the wine, company and ambiance at the LAU Alumni–Byblos Chapter's November 4 wine tasting event at Château Sainte Andrée in Keserwen.



Fixing Life with Johnny el Ghoul

The lecture hall on Beirut campus was packed for a presentation by trainer and coach Johnny el Ghoul on November 15 called Fixing Life. It was part of the Keep Learning Alumni Lecture Series.



Lebanon's World Heritage

On Sunday, November 4, DC Chapter gathered at Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Seminary for a presentation on the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Lebanon.



November Elections

On November 14, seven new members were elected to the Beirut Alumni Chapter Committee. The elections took place on Beirut campus and involved a large number of alumni. The new cabinet members are Hayat Maalouf Chedid, Roland Haddad, Samar Aad Makhoul, Michel Choueiry, Mahmoud Mansour, Noura Ibrahim and Noha Yamout El Khatib.



EMBA Reunion

The Adnan Kassar School of Business hosted its first all-class reunion for graduates of the Executive MBA, launched in 2000 as the first program of its kind in Lebanon and the Middle East. Dozens of successful alumni spent the evening catching up at the event, held on Beirut campus November 30.

DECEMBER 2018



Christmas in Bahrain

The Bahrain Chapter held its annual Christmas dinner at Camelot restaurant in the presence of over 80 alumni, Lebanese Ambassador to Bahrain Milad Nammour and President of Promoseven Holdings Akram Miknas.



Family Day

The Oman Chapter organized a Christmas gathering on December 15 at the InterContinental Palm Gardens for more than 150 guests, including the Alumni Relations Office's Ghada Majed.



School of Engineering Chapter Winter Gathering

The School of Engineering Alumni Chapter held its annual Winter Gathering on December 21 at Santana restaurant. The event drew a crowd of more than 100 alumni and friends.

On a Mission to Change the World, One Student at a Time

By Naseem Ferdowsi

Future educator Tala Lakiss has big dreams, including helping students reach their full potential and ultimately contributing to the development of Lebanon



"My long-term goal is to give back to LAU as a professor."

Unlike so many students who lack a clear plan for their future, Tala Lakiss, a second-year education major at LAU, knows exactly where she wants to be in the next few years.

"In five years, I will be writing my master's thesis, and in parallel, preparing my classroom decorations for Halloween to make sure it is a safe place for children," said Lakiss with unwavering determination. "In 10 years, I will be standing in an Ivy League auditorium, my heart bursting with joy, because I made it: I will finally be a PhD graduate! It will be the best day of my life," she added confidently.

More noteworthy is Lakiss' ultimate goal: to teach at LAU.

"My long-term goal is to give back to LAU as a professor. After getting my PhD in education, researching and exploring my field. I will be ready to use my knowledge to help my community and contribute to the development of my country and of LAU in the field of education," she explained.

Lakiss has chosen to pursue a career in education because she is passionate about empowering people, which she says will help students reach their true full potential. While she has been at LAU only a short time, she is certain that it is taking her closer to her career goals.

Speaking about the life skills LAU has instilled in her, Lakiss said, "It has been only a year, and I have already learned so much – understanding people and controlling my emotions, financing myself, managing my time, setting goals and achieving them and many more." Her coursework and extracurricular activities have also helped with her self-development, including public-speaking skills, and preparing her for her journey ahead in academia.

Lakiss says she is fortunate to have learned so many life lessons early on in life that will stay with her indefinitely. She attributes them to the well-rounded experience at the university, which includes rich student activities on and off campus, such as the Model United

Nations and Model Arab League, as well as community initiatives she volunteers for.

"LAU and all my community involvement have taught me many values that are now a part of me and essential to my identity. To name a few, I have learned the importance of integrity, patience, teamwork, and to be responsible for my actions and my words, among so many others," she said.

Her path to becoming an educator would not be possible without her fully funded educational experience at LAU. Lakiss is an award recipient of the USAID-funded University Scholarship Program (USP), which aims to give public school students an opportunity to access a university education. She has worked hard for the award – starting in middle school, when she set her sights on securing the scholarship.

"In the eighth grade I started getting involved in community service at school, as well as volunteering, scouting, and reading as much as I could to grow and to be competent enough to get the scholarship. I worked on myself way before I applied for USP, and I have been working on myself ever since," explained Lakiss.

Not winning a prestigious USP scholarship was not an option, as Lakiss had no other means to secure her way to LAU and get the solid education she is now being afforded. "Without my scholarship, I do not know where I would be in my life, who I would be or what I would be doing."

Fortunately, Lakiss, and thousands of other students like her are pursuing their dreams at LAU thanks to scholarships and financial aid. This year alone, LAU dispersed \$34 million in financial support to 4,600 students in need.

The university strives to ensure that all academically deserving students have a chance to pursue their education at LAU and continues to raise funds for scholarships so that more students like Lakiss can experience the institution and achieve their long-term goals.

Staying Connected



Ginane Makki Bacho

Artist **Ginane Makki Bacho** majored in fine arts at what was then called Beirut University College, graduating in 1982. Her work has been exhibited internationally and most recently appeared at the Brooklyn Museum.

After graduating with a BA in interior design from Beirut University College in 1986,

Balsam Elias Raffoul Moufarj went into education. She was an English teacher for 20 years and a preschool teacher at the International School in Koura. She received a Montessori degree and attended the Montessori Congress in Europe. She is currently living in Oman and will become a grandmother in 2019.

Class of 1988 alumna **Muriel Kettaneh Arrigoni** received her BS in business and marketing. Recently, she graduated from Heriot Watt University's Edinburgh Business School with an MBA.

Class of 1993 graduate **May Nabih Bondak** received a BA in communication arts. She got a second BA in English literature at the Lebanese University in 2012. She is currently an employee at the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, having worked as a journalist and English teacher.

Rania Fakhoury started in interior design, obtaining a BA in the subject in 1993. In 2006, she attended Lebanon's École supérieure des affaires, received an MBA and began working as a financial analyst.

Alumna **Mary Therese Kassab** is currently working at her alma mater as the lead academic assistant at the Department of Art & Design. The mother of Mikel (18) and

Yara (13) received her BA in communication arts in 1993. She is happy to report that her son started at LAU this fall.

After receiving his BS in biology in 1993, **Harout Semerjian** obtained dual MBA degrees from Cornell University in the US and Queens University in Canada.

The executive vice president and chief commercial officer at Ipsen Pharma was voted one of *Pharma Executive Magazine's* top 10 emerging pharma leaders. He lives in London with his wife Sirine and two daughters, Suzanna (14) and Else (12).

Eduardo Fakhoury has nearly 24 years of experience in the banking industry. The CEO of Credit Financier Invest graduated from LAU with a BS in banking and finance in 1997 before obtaining his MS in the same subject at AUB. He has two children, Elie and Kim.

Rita Abdel Baki received her BS in business management and a Teaching Diploma in 1996 and 2000, respectively. She then attended the University of Wollongong in Dubai for a master's in quality management. She is the managing partner, neuro-linguistic programming coach, and master trainer at The Change Associates, based in Dubai. She recently moved to Bali. She is happy to announce that her son Nadim just began his bachelor's at LAU in computer science.

Beirut-based class of 1998 alumnus **Hassane Mostafa Ghalayini** followed up his BS with an MBA two years later. The current chief financial officer at North Africa Commercial Bank is also a certified public accountant in the US state of Alaska, and a certified internal auditor. He has two boys: Adam, eight, and Malek, six.

Tala Khabbaz, who got her BA in political science in 2002, works at the Protocol and PR Department at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. She is also certified by the Enneagram Institute in Paris. Her family owns pastry and catering firm Noura and have opened a new branch in downtown Beirut.

Lena Fouad Kurban obtained her MBA in 2002. She now lives in Dubai and is the managing director of MENA Calibers. She is working on her doctorate in business administration from Grenoble École de Management in France. She is married with three sons.

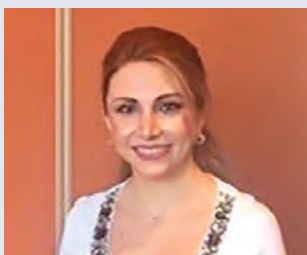
After **Carol Jahed Allam** graduated with a BA in early childhood education in 2003, she established a school for low-income children, acting as the principal, coordinator, accountant, supervisor, and HR director with the mission of providing an affordable education to families in need. The Beirut-based educator is currently the preschool central supervisor at the Al Mabarrat Association of schools.

After receiving his BS in computer science in 2003, **Maher Faissal** went on to obtain an MS in computer and information sciences at the University of South Alabama. The current Bankmed IT officer has worked in IT infrastructure and software development. After returning to Lebanon, he married and had daughters Lutwa (born in 2015) and Hend (born in 2018).

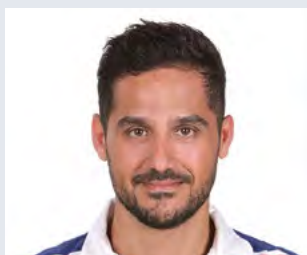
Current resident of Bahrain **Rana Sawaya** obtained her MS in business administration in 2003. She then moved to France to attend l'Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 for her doctorate in business administration. She is now the admissions director at University College of Bahrain and is the co-author of two academic papers published this year. She lives with her husband and five-year-old son Tony.

Now living in Sydney, Australia, **Maya Kanj** received her BS in banking and finance in 2004. She is married with two kids: Mia, seven, and Julia, two.

Celine Mohamad Rachad Atwi moved to France to complete her MS in fashion and luxury management from Grenoble École de Management after obtaining her BS in graphic design from LAU in 2007. She now lives in Houston, Texas and is the co-founder of theprettyandsimple.com and does visual and creative work at Saks Fifth Avenue. She is the mom of two-year-old Chloé.



Diana Fidaoui



Youssef Chatila



Rita Saliba



Bechir Hasbani



Chris Jor



Mohamad Al Mawas

Eli El Helou obtained his computer engineering degree in 2007. He went on to open his own company, called Shelvz, where he is the sales director. He is happily married with two sons, Maroon, three, and Marc, one.

After graduating in 2007 with a BS in computer science, **Antoine Kalaos Ibrahim** went on to work in admin and IT support in Lebanon's CNAM University.

Mohammad Chafic Walid Badran – who received degrees from LAU in 2004 and 2008 – put his studies in computer science to good use, previously working as an IT administrator and currently acting as the senior IT systems engineer at Dar Al-Handasah. He lives in Beirut.

Samer Farid Eid graduated with an MS in computer science in 2000 and an MBA in 2008. He currently lives in Dubai and is the regional operations officer at Finastra. He was previously the head of account management at Thomson Reuters in Dubai. He is married with two kids, Tatiana and Alex.

Diana Fidaoui received her MA in education from LAU in 2008. She moved to Syracuse University in New York, where she received a Certificate of University

Teaching and is working on her PhD at the Department of Teaching and Leadership. She taught courses in education to undergraduate, master's and doctoral students at Syracuse's School of Education, and recently received the Outstanding University Teaching Assistant Award.

After completing a BE in electrical engineering in 2008, **Bechir Elias Hasbani** worked as an electrical engineer. He is now the senior electro-mechanical engineer and project manager at Apave Liban. He is married and is the father of six-month-old Chris.

After graduating with a BS in business management in 2010, **Youssef Chatila** moved to Dubai, where he is a senior acquisition specialist at MBC Group. He's also recently been involved in production and is currently working on a series for A+.

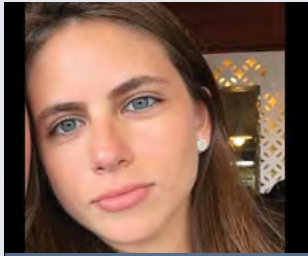
Artist **Chris Jor** graduated with a BA in fine arts and theater in 2010. She also received a Teaching Diploma for the elementary-school level. She is a member of 8e Art Entertainment and lives between Paris and Lebanon. The singer/songwriter/performer reached the quarter finals of The Voice Arabia 2012

and won the Quincy Jones Talent Search at Dubai Music Week in 2013, leading her to sign with Quincy Jones Productions to release her first album. She also signed to the Youth label and produced a new EP.

Entrepreneur **Georges Rahayel** graduated with a degree in industrial engineering in 2011. He then moved to Canada, where he studied at Polytechnique Montréal, and then to Spain, to join IE Business School. He received a master's in energy and sustainable development and an MBA. He co-founded a consulting firm, moved back to Lebanon and got married recently.

Montreal-based design consultant **Rita Saliba** received her BA from LAU in 1995 and an MS in 2011. She was previously in project management and contributed to two major construction projects in North America. She is currently treasurer at the LAU Alumni Association-Montreal Chapter.

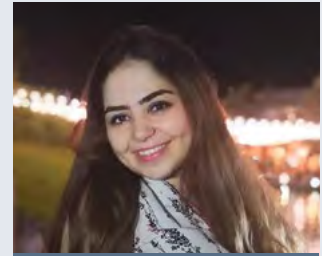
Class of 2012 graduate **Mohamad Al Mawas** studied mechanical engineering and is now a consultant engineer at LAU. He has two daughters: Reine, three, and Yara, three months.



Melissa Debs



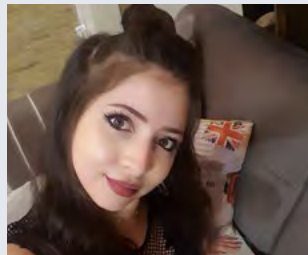
Mira Wehbe



Lubna Al Majthoub



Yasmine Abbas



Sara Iskandarani



Tamara Doumit

Class of 2012 alumna **Nelly Wakim Awad** followed her LAU degree in political science/international affairs by pursuing an MA in global citizenship, identities and human rights at the University of Nottingham. She also received an Open Society Foundation Leadership Award. Currently a resident of Amman, Jordan, she is a research analyst and humanitarian specialist. She is soon moving to the US to start her second MA at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy with the Obama Foundation.

After receiving his BS in business management in 2013, **Mohamad Ali Hassan Abdallah** went on to obtain a master's in international management and marketing from Antonine University. He is now director of PR at the Islamic Congregate Organization and is working on his PhD. He is married with two kids.

English as a Second Language teacher **Ghada Merhi Bleik** received her MA in educational leadership and management in 2013. She now teaches ESL at City International School and is earning a second MA in educational psychology. She has a son, 10, and daughter, five.

PharmD graduate **Melissa Debs**, Class of 2013, moved to Spain to earn a post-graduate degree in management from Instituto de Empresa. She now works in regulatory affairs in the Gulf for Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical Company.

After graduating with a bachelor's in communication arts in 2013, **Serena Shaar** worked as the social media manager for Ashi Studio, and as a freelance art director and prop manager in theater and film. She recently decided to continue her education in France and is now working toward her master's in digital business strategy at Grenoble École de Management. The Paris-based alumna is getting married in 2019.

Rany Tannouri graduated from LAU in 2013 with a degree in business management and now owns a South American restaurant in Hamra, Beirut, called Tucano.

Corporate Communications Manager **Yasmine Abbas** lives in Dubai and works at Bosch, where she heads the Middle East division and develops internal and external communication strategies. She graduated with distinction from LAU with a BS in business in 2014.

Beirut-based **Dina Arakji** is the nonresident research assistant for the Civil Military Relations in the Arab States (CMRAS) project at Carnegie Middle East Center. After graduating from LAU in 2014 with a degree in political science and international relations, she went to Sciences Po in Paris for her master's.

EMBA graduate **Hiba Trad Farhat** earned her degree in 2014. She is currently living in Beirut and is an assistant branch manager at Blom Bank.

Class of 2014 graduate **Vernon Nassar** took his BE in civil engineering with him to Hamburg, Germany, where he is currently a project manager.

Mira Shaheed Wehbe used her 2014 BS in digital graphic design to work at LBCI, Mediapak and Indevco. She went on to enroll at Notre Dame University-Louaize to pursue her MA. She is also the assistant CEO at Neiman Azzi and is a freelance animator and digital graphic designer.

Seema Sbei, who graduated with a degree in nutrition in 2015, currently works in Syria for the UN Development Programme.

Sarah Succar graduated in 2015 with a BS in nutrition and dietetics, and obtained her master's in athletics development and peak performance at Solent University in the UK. She is starting her own sports nutrition and performance clinic. She got married recently and is expecting her first child.

Mazen Zayat has done a lot since graduating from LAU in 2015. The current business development executive at Alta Light has also worked at Bankers, Hugo Boss, SAP, and Crown Concepts Dubai. He is launching his own business, a grooming salon called Aim and Cut.

After **Ali EL Amine** received a BE in electrical engineering in 2013 and an MS in computer engineering in 2016, he moved to France to work toward his PhD at École nationale supérieure des télécommunications de Bretagne in telecommunications engineering.

Sara Khodor Iskandarani graduated with a degree in interior architecture in 2016 and lives in Beirut.

Lubna Al Majthoub is a caseworker and teacher in the West Beqaa with the non-profit INTERSOS. After graduating with a degree in biology in 2016, she was chosen to participate in an international fellowship in Mexico with Teach For All and the Oak Foundation. She is considering pursuing a master's degree.

Class of 2016 graduate **Elise Mansour** put her civil and environmental engineering degree to good use, traveling to the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) to complete her MS in civil engineering.

She has worked as a research assistant at UNR, and as a pavement engineer trainee with the Federal Aviation Administration. She is currently back in Lebanon working as pavement and materials laboratory supervisor at Engineering & Research International.

Both **Dana Alwan** and **Tamara Moubarak** graduated with degrees in business marketing in 2017, and both are marketing directors at Akram App.

Tamara Georges Doumit is a math teacher at International College. After receiving her BS in mathematics in 2017, she also obtained a teaching diploma from LAU.

Since graduating from LAU with a BA in political science/international affairs in 2017, **Maher EL Ghadban** joined Worms University in Germany for his MBA. He is currently a project coordinator and team leader, and was previously a media consultant to the European Union and the spokesperson for a political awareness campaign.

Yassmin EL Masri began working for NGOs when she started her MA courses at LAU in 2013. Since graduating in 2017, she has focused her efforts on responsible governance, women's issues and more. She is now Lebanon Program Director at the NGO Search for Common Ground.

Alumna **Paola Younes** now lives in Paris and works as the client engagement assistant EMEA at Saint Laurent. The LAU banking and finance alumna went to France for her master's in fashion design and luxury management at Grenoble École de Management after receiving her BS in 2017.

After graduating with a degree in interior architecture in 2018, **Rayad Assi** began work as a manager at an art gallery and operates his own business, The Art Studio.

After graduating in 2018 with an LLM degree in business law, **Nazek Khaled Jannoun** began work as an internal auditor at iConnect, which trades in computers, software, and cellphones. Last June she became a Sworn Financial Expert in Lebanon and is a candidate to join the Institute of Internal Auditors. She is mom to two little girls.

Chief Operations Officer and Co-founder at Imperium Code and Chief Technical Officer of Fleetserve, **Georges Bendaly Rattel** is a fresh graduate, having earned his BS in computer science in 2018. The Beirut-based alumnus is also the former project lead at the startup Sqwirl Lab and project lead and network engineer at serVme.

Habib Mohamad Safa graduated from LAU in 2018 with a degree in civil engineering, and stayed on to pursue a master's in infrastructure and construction management.

After completing a BA in civil engineering in 2018, **Izzat Shkeir** moved to Turin, Italy to obtain his MA in the same subject from Politecnico di Torino.

Why I Give Back



Jalal I. Abdallah (MBA '11)

“ Work hard and strive for the best, because everything is possible! ”

Equipped with an MBA from LAU, 2011 graduate Jalal I. Abdallah is pursuing his professional dreams in Doha, Qatar, where he is a personal banker at the Commercial Bank of Qatar. He attributes his graduate degree to helping him land the job in 2012 and setting him on a career path marked with high-quality, on-the-job learning that has bolstered his professional development.

Abdallah demonstrates his gratitude to his alma mater through consistent giving in response to LAU's Fall Appeal, starting in 2013. He has given toward this important campaign for several years, including four consecutive ones, in an effort to contribute to an institution that has given him the tools to succeed in life.

LAU's Fall Appeal is an important part of the university's Annual Fund Program, which raises money from alumni and friends and channels it to the areas of greatest need. Most donors to this fund choose to make unrestricted contributions, allowing the university to respond to its most urgent funding needs, whether it is upgrading a lab, supporting research projects, or assisting students with financial hardship.

Why do you give back to LAU, and in particular, why do you give continuously to the university's annual Fall Appeal?

I can recall the first time I received an invitation to participate in the Fall Appeal in 2013. I thought it was a brilliant initiative and a great way to help new and current students pursue their majors. I was especially interested in assisting those with the greatest financial need and felt it was a way to indirectly say, "You are not alone," to all those LAU students who are striving for opportunities by completing their studies.

What is your fondest memory of LAU?

My graduation ceremony, when I got my degree. I was filled with joy!

What message would you like to convey to your fellow alumni and to current students?

Work hard and strive for the best, because everything is possible!

What would you like to see LAU achieve in the near future?

I would like to see it start international branches.

Why are you interested in supporting education, especially in Lebanon?

I'm especially interested in supporting those who are in need. Moreover, it's a way to express my gratitude for being afforded the opportunity to graduate from such a renowned university as LAU.

Creating a **Lasting Legacy**

Dr. Ray Hachem



Ray Hachem, MD, FIDSA is deeply involved with serving the Lebanese community, whether those in Lebanon or members of the diaspora in North America.

The Lebanese-American doctor is a professor of medicine and director of the Extramural Education Program in the Department of Infectious Diseases, Infection Control and Employee Health at the University of Texas' MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

In addition, he was part of the leadership in establishing the International Lebanese Medical Association (ILMA), which connects Lebanese medical associations that share the same mission worldwide, and is the head of the American Lebanese Medical Association (ALMA) Houston Chapter, having previously acted as the national president of that organization.

ALMA promotes healthcare in Lebanon by organizing medical symposia, providing scholarships to Lebanese medical students and assisting them in pursuing their training in the US through elective rotations, postdoctoral fellowship, as well as residency and fellowship programs. It also serves disadvantaged people in Lebanon with various humanitarian projects.

In 2008, ALMA began organizing conferences in Lebanon with different medical schools each year. LAU was the first to host an ALMA conference, and, according to Dr. Hachem, "It was the most successful one, with more than 300 medical professionals in attendance."

That same year, ALMA began to offer annual scholarships to students from each medical school in Lebanon based on merit and financial need. Most of the scholarship recipients use the funds to travel to the United States for elective or postdoctoral research, which provide increased opportunities to enter residency programs in competitive institutions.

ALMA also works with pharmacy students, specifically those at LAU's School of Pharmacy, whose PharmD Program is the only one outside the US accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. These students are eligible for scholarships from the organization based on excellence.

Indeed, on many of his trips to Lebanon, Dr. Hachem has worked with LAU pharmacists at a mobile clinic that targets vulnerable populations. He says that the team impressed him with their passion and commitment to serve the underprivileged.

"I hope most of them will carry on with a caring heart and help those suffering," said Dr. Hachem. "There is no greater joy, nor greater reward, than to make a fundamental difference in someone's life, especially those in need. I believe the highest of all callings is the call to service and giving out of the goodness of your heart."



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