

LAU magazine

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& ALUMNI BULLETIN





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Calling on the AJCW, BCW, BUC and LAU community!

To celebrate close to 200 years of its extraordinary heritage, a **commemorative book** on LAU's unique legacy and continued promise is underway. The book will showcase both this institution's venerable past and promising future through a combination of rich visuals (historic and contemporary photographs) and a people-centered story-telling approach.

We count on you to send us any **photographs**, **documents** or **stories** pertaining to this institution's past and present and to share **your memory of LAU** and its revered forebears – the American Junior College for Women (AJCW), the Beirut College for Women (BCW), and the Beirut University College (BUC).

You can contact us at LAUbook@lau.edu.lb or call 03 791314, extensions 1273, 1937 and 1917.

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In Lebanon, children whose families are unable to take care of them go to orphanages, which are, for the most part, run by non-profit organizations and religious charities. If a child is chosen for adoption, the process is long and complicated – and in some cases impossible. But there is hope for a better system.



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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**

Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of the LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin.

For us here in Lebanon, summer is a time of welcoming, as during this season we receive thousands of tourists, returning emigrants and curious wanderers on our shores. We open our homes, restaurants, streets and beaches to those who come to experience the unique energy and dynamism Lebanon offers.

We welcome refugees, foreign workers, visiting students and professors, and global professionals. We welcome the inflow of new ideas, new business models, and new ways of living. And we welcome each other, as residents of the same land, to come together and help Lebanon live up to its reputation of kindness, acceptance and generosity.

In this issue of the magazine, we explore how Welcome applies in Lebanon in general, and at LAU in particular.

One of the ways we at LAU embrace the idea of Welcome is with our extensive financial aid packages, among the most generous of any in the region. As one of the top universities in the Middle East, we want to make sure anyone with intelligence, ambition and creativity can study with us. And we welcome those with different needs, for example, ensuring access to all that our campuses have to offer for our students and faculty members with disabilities.

We also take our mission of Welcome beyond our gates. Across the university, our schools, departments and institutes are researching ways to accommodate and include others, whether they are the tourists who boost our economy, the migrants Lebanon has hosted despite its limited resources, and the international personnel who use our country as a base for the important work they do across the region.

And we welcome new programs, ideas and concepts, in line with our embrace of innovation as a driving force of positive change.

All of this is to say that welcoming others comes not just from the heart, but also from the mind. And its importance goes beyond making our guests and our friends feel comfortable: Welcoming others is the first step in forming new relations, which leads to new partnerships, new ideas and new advantages.

So I welcome you, our loyal readers, to learn more about the ways welcoming others increases the kind of inclusivity, creativity and innovation that are part of our mission at LAU.



Joseph G. Jabbara
President



A Most Thorough Education

By Louisa Ajami

The School of Pharmacy adopts a leading assessment method to ensure students have the most rounded education possible

Healthcare professionals have more than just their daily tasks to think about when they go to work, as they carry people's lives in their hands. That is why it is critical to test budding pharmacists across a wide range of medical-professional skills before sending them off into their careers.

In an effort to modernize its pedagogical approaches and prepare practice-ready graduating students, LAU's School of Pharmacy (SOP) is integrating the use of Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) into its curriculum. In essence, OSCEs are a form of performance-based assessment that measure health-science students' ability to apply clinical skills and knowledge previously learned from a unit of study while performing in a simulated clinical environment.

Unlike other evaluation methods within the pharmacy profession, OSCEs measure high-order thinking, non-verbal and verbal communication, teamwork, and other soft skills following pre-established performance criteria. Major global health science schools have been increasingly

adopting OSCEs in their curricula, citing the examinations as the best way of assessing students' competency in areas of their work that cannot be measured by standard oral or written exams.

"A slow, well-thought-out implementation with simulation, followed by low-stakes assessment that evolves to high-stakes testing builds a culture of faculty commitment and student satisfaction with the learning process," says Lamis Karaoui, clinical associate professor and director of Experiential Education at the SOP.

Implementing OSCEs is a lengthy process that requires substantial resources, according to Karaoui. As such, the SOP is currently piloting OSCEs in the newly launched Special Topics in Emergency Medicine elective course for 22 third-year pharmacy (P3) students, "the results of which will pave the way for a broader OSCE inclusion in the curriculum."

During an OSCE, examinees rotate through a series of time-based stations, at which they interview, examine and treat



standardized patients who present with some type of medical or medication-related problem. The students are evaluated by one or more examiners at each station using predetermined tools to ensure objectivity. The student, evaluator and standardized patient provide feedback, which is the heart and soul of OSCEs and aims to improve student learning.

The impact of OSCEs on students' skillset is noteworthy, says Clinical Assistant Professor Yara Kuyumjian. "Stations during testing include obtaining the best possible medication history, developing a pharmacist-care plan for a medical emergency, assisting in medication preparation and administration, and providing patient education."

Students who pass the test, she said, "are able to apply their interpersonal and communication skills by interacting with trained standardized patients."

"We are very much looking forward to having OSCEs as part of our curriculum," says Clinical Associate Professor Aline Saad. "We offer to our students the best

of learning and testing, so they will be the most qualified and competent graduates in the field."

LAU's SOP is a leader of pharmacy education in the region. It is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy, and its Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) program is the only one outside the United States accredited by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE).

Adding OSCEs to its roster further increases the SOP's standing.

LAU's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing, and the Nutrition and Dietetics Coordinated Program also use OSCEs as part of their curricula. Moreover, Clinical Simulation Center Associate Director Nadia Asmar delivered educational sessions to SOP faculty and helped secure standardized patients for the OSCEs. A number of faculty have also completed a diploma in clinical simulation in collaboration with the School of Medicine.

By adopting such state-of-the-art examinations in its health science schools, LAU ensures students receive a robust and well-rounded education that keeps patients' safety and comfort in mind.

"LAU's School of Pharmacy is a leader of pharmacy education in the region. Implementing OSCEs in its curriculum further increases its academic standing."



Cracking the Case

By Farah Taha

The first case competition in Lebanon puts spotlight on students' business savvy



Over two intense days on April 21 and 22, 41 teams from universities across Lebanon participated in the LAU Case Competition, a student-led initiative that has succeeded in creating a space for students to meet, network and collaborate with professionals from different industries while competing to solve real-life business cases. The experience trains competitors to think critically about business problems and to come up with innovative solutions – skills they will need in the professional world.

Zakaria Jouni and Badih Salha, lead consultants and founders of the LAU Case Competition, which promises to become a yearly event, decided to create their own version of the competition at LAU after struggling to find opportunities abroad.

"As we were trying to apply for case competitions around the world," said Jouni, "We decided to stay here, at LAU, our home, and do things our way. Thus the LAU Case Competition was born."

"This is a student-led competition. This is us: Students trying to bridge the gap between theoretical learning and the corporate world, the market and the skills we need to enhance in order to be ready for the industry."

The competition's organizers invited

students from universities across Lebanon to participate. Each team was comprised of four undergraduate students, and each was presented with four case studies from the participating firms – Ernst & Young (EY), Cisco, Leo Burnett, and Careem – that demanded focus, quick thinking and innovation in order to find the best solutions.

"We decided to stay here at LAU, our home, and do things our way."

Winners were awarded their prizes at the closing ceremony on Sunday in front of a crowd of excited student participants, representatives of the partner companies, faculty, staff, and LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara.

In his address to the students, Jabbara affirmed that "We have a motto at the university: The 21st century belongs to the innovators... Education is absolutely essential, but no longer sufficient. In order to stay ahead of the curve, over and above education, we need to be innovators."

The company representatives all said it was difficult to choose the winners of their cases.



The representative of EY, a professional services and accounting firm, applauded the teams and organizers for their professionalism and announced LAU students Julie Assaad, Wendy Hajj, Fares Ghoul and Charbel Saade as the winners of the case, giving them each the opportunity to undertake an internship at EY at the time of their choosing.

"As a first-year student, I learned today what I will be learning in the coming years," said Assaad. "So this experience kind of

"This competition gave us the opportunity to show what we're capable of."

summed up everything that my major encompasses: networking, meeting teams – and the stress."

According to Hani Raad, general manager at technology company Cisco Middle East, "The engagement was very inspirational. The work that the teams have done on the Cisco case is at the core of innovation and disruption." He announced that the winning team, comprised of LAU

students Rayan Audi, Elie Fatteh, Joey Feghali and Chadi Osseiran, would receive a wireless networking hardware device worth \$1,000 to help them bring their product to life. Raad also recognized three other teams for their excellent work and offered them, along with the case winners, the opportunity for mentorship and engagement with the Cisco team.

"This competition gave us the opportunity to show what we're capable of," said Fatteh.

For Audi, the competition was "a chance to work under pressure, and we found out that, under pressure, we were really able to give good results."

Diego de Aristegui, communication director at Leo Burnett MENA, emphasized that, "It was refreshing to see the high quality of thinking and entrepreneurial minds of students. The point here is not to get it right on the first go, but to understand the value of the learning process and to never stop learning. And I really admire LAU for carrying these sorts of initiatives." The winning team received internships at Leo Burnett, an advertising company.

The representative for Careem – a transportation network business – awarded

winners credits for the company's services, certificates, an opportunity to spend the day at their offices, a chance to meet a Careem executive, and, for first-place winners, an internship.

The biggest surprise of the night came with one team's triple win. Karam Aawar, Lara Al Bashouti, Mira Al Kamand and Maysaa Shehadeh, all from Rafic Hariri University, won the Leo Burnett Case Award, the Careem Case Award, and the LAU Case Competition Award, a special monetary prize given to "the team that showed the utmost dedication, professionalism, innovation and creativeness in the competition," according to Salha.

Literally jumping for joy, Shehadeh said, "This was an amazing opportunity. This is a pivotal moment for us. We believed in ourselves and our ability."

Al Kamand added, "You give up for a little time, and then, because of the team and their encouragement, you keep on going. It was great."

After the competition wrapped up and the guests filtered off campus, Salha stated, "What we're aiming for is much bigger than this; this is only the beginning."

Welcome to Lebanon: The New Face of Tourism

By Brooke Anderson

It is no longer 2010, when Lebanon beat all previous tourist-arrival records with more than two million visitors. Nor is it 2013, when a war raging next door in Syria and sporadic explosions in Lebanon brought tourism to a discouraging slump, causing it to drop by nearly half the 2010 level, with governments in the Gulf and the West issuing travel warnings to their citizens.

Lebanon has finally largely recovered in the aftermath of an unrealistic and over-optimistic tourism surge that relied on wealthy visitors, luxury travel packages, and expensive excursions, which quickly dried up in the face of challenges to the country's political stability.

Paradoxically, this most recent period of political and economic instability laid the foundation for a much more sophisticated and sustainable tourism industry. High-end hotels, nightclubs and bars, though still popular, have been joined by more environmental and cultural tourism. Also, more Europeans – 35 percent in 2017 compared to 29 percent in 2011 – are coming relative to Gulf residents, who made up 30 percent of visitors last year compared to 35 percent previously. Five-star suites are out; guesthouses are in.

"I think there's more and more pride in tourism," says Rania Haddad, associate professor of hospitality management and marketing at LAU's Adnan Kassab School

of Business. "This wasn't always the case. We have nice places in Lebanon – not just traditional tourist places."

For the past several years, Haddad has not only been teaching about tourism,

but also living it in her home country. She often spends weekends at guesthouses in rural parts of Lebanon, something that is now widely available due to renovations of old homes to serve the growing trend of sustainable tourism.

"People are leaving the city to discover nature. It's not just about being in a playground or at the pool. People are going back to their roots, back to the villages, eating local food from the local farm. It allows people to be proud of what they have," she says, noting that regardless of changes in tourism habits, the sector still accounts for around 20 percent of Lebanon's GDP.

Even in Beirut she sees the trend moving toward budget and medium-priced hotels, along with growing low-cost airline options, and simple walking tours by local guides.

This has developed as much out of necessity – with visitors in the midst of a recession saving money by living the simple life for the weekend – as out of a passion for authenticity, rediscovering a way of

life that might have otherwise remained separate from their urban lifestyles.

Just over a decade ago, the Lebanon Mountain Trail, inspired by America's Appalachian Trail, was established, incorporating 75 towns and villages into 440 kilometers of scenic paths from north to south. As the trail was developed, so were guesthouses along the route, renovated to accommodate hikers while



"Beirut was indeed the lively city we hoped for. It was a fascinating mixture of Eastern and Western cultures."

boosting the incomes of villagers. Around the same time, outdoor excursion groups for fruit picking, biking, caving and wine tasting began proliferating, offering weekend getaways to scenic rural areas both for Lebanese who wanted to discover their own backyards and foreigners who were looking for a more authentic travel experience at different times of the year – not just summer vacation.

One of the early entrepreneurs to open guesthouses was Orphée Haddad, a Paris-based lawyer who started his business in 2001 and has since seen it grow in popularity.

"When we started out in 2001, the concept of guesthouses was novel to Lebanon," recalls Haddad, who has been spending more time in his native Lebanon as his business, L'Hôte Libanais, a travel website for Lebanese guesthouses, has grown. What started as an attractive option mainly for European visitors has now become popular with Lebanese eager to explore their own backyards through authentic travel experiences.

"The tourism and hospitality sectors have long been pillars of the Lebanese economy, but essentially, if not exclusively, based on the classic hotel and resort concept," says Haddad. More recently, however, he has found that "things like interacting with locals, taking part in the country's everyday life practices and habits, feeling that a trip is bringing something positive to the host communities and the local environment" are all ideas that are gaining ground.

Indeed, less than two decades ago, a great number of travelers would choose a hotel by relying on its star rating

"People are going back to their roots, back to the villages, eating local food from the local farm. It allows people to be proud of what they have."



and location. This is not true anymore. "Discerning travelers do their best to avoid long corridors and large breakfast rooms, looking instead for an experience that reflects the country's essence," notes Haddad.

One such guesthouse is that of Jamil Azar, in Beirut's Tabaris district. The three-bedroom flat, which Azar shares with his guests, dates back to the beginning of the last century. It is where the retiree and

hotelier welcomes guests from all over the world, mainly young Europeans on short vacations.

"I didn't expect people to come – they have warnings from their governments. They say they're surprised that when they go down to Gemmayze they feel safe," says Azar, who opened his home to tourists in 2005. "Most people are coming for the first time. They have this idea about the war in Beirut, because the media says it's dangerous."

In the end, he says, they're always won over by the food, hospitality and scenery, and most of his first-time visitors say they want to return.

He emphasizes that his guests are there for culture – not high-end shopping.

"They love the ruins; they love Tripoli. They don't like some of the malls – they say they're too modern," he says.

Two such visitors are Zeta Georgiadou and Hielke Hijmans, a Greek and Dutch couple living in Belgium. They say they came to Beirut for a short getaway off the beaten track.

"Beirut was indeed the lively city we hoped for," says Hijmans. "It was a fascinating mixture of Eastern and Western cultures."

During their one-week stay, they explored the capital and other areas of Lebanon, with their favorite aspects being the guesthouse hospitality and the local walking tours.

Haddad, the LAU professor, says that if Lebanon's popularity as an authentic travel destination continues to grow, this year could see another record turnout.

"If the stability remains, we might have a better year this year," she says.

Go, Team, Go!

By Ceem Haidar



On or off the court,
LAUers cheer
their commitment
to sports

*"LAU's athletic teams
have been gathering
victories in Lebanon
and abroad."*

Strength, endurance, dedication and hard work – this mix of qualities has led LAU's sports teams to nearly 100 wins this year alone. And cheering them on is a university wholeheartedly committed to "the education of the whole person," as the LAU mission states.

Guiding progress on the field is Director of Athletics Sami Garabedian, who oversees LAU's 20 varsity teams, 11 extracurricular sports activities and the Youth Sports Academy, as well as participation in external events, such as the USC Leagues, FSUL Championships, international tournaments, the Beirut Marathon, and more.

Garabedian credits the support of LAU's administration – specifically Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Elise Salem and Dean of Students Raed Mohsen – for putting LAU on the course to national leadership in the sports arena. "They believe in the true value of sports within the framework of

education," he says. "Our many successes over the years, locally and internationally, are testament to our dedication to LAU athletics and commitment to our student athletes who are themselves, undoubtedly, the success story."

These successes have been adding up over the years, with each victory boosting interest from the larger LAU community. More and more female LAUers are taking part in sports, with the newly formed women's handball team already winning first place at the 2018 USC Women's Handball League. In addition, the men's and women's swimming teams brought home a considerable number of gold, silver and bronze medals in various competitions over the spring semester. Track and field didn't disappoint either, with gold and silver medals awarded to both male and female runners. LAU's women's badminton team, the JV football team, and the men's handball and basketball teams have all made impressive showings



this year, as did the kickboxing team, which snagged four gold, five silver and six bronze medals at the second Asian Kickboxing Championships All-Styles. Off campus, LAU runner Tamara Zein came in second place at the Beirut Marathon Women's 10k Race this April.

LAU's teams have been gathering up wins outside the country, too. In Greece and Spain, the volleyball and football teams, and rugby league competed with the world's top student athletes. They brought back returns on their hard work: The men's rugby league came in second place and women's futsal in third place at the ACG Sports Festival in Athens in March, while the women's basketball and volleyball teams, and the men's futsal team, brought home second- and third-place trophies from the EUROESADE International Universities Sports Tournament held in Barcelona. Most recently, at the 11th annual Belgrade Sports Tournament, the swimming and

track and field teams did particularly well against competitors from Europe and the Middle East.

Now, even as the season has come to an end for the academic year, the Athletics Department continues to prepare for the next round. "We continually assess our programs, events and coaches, and look for ways not only to raise the bar of intercollegiate athletics but also for other academic institutions to emulate us, which has been the case in many instances," Garabedian says. "Of course, introducing new activities and maintaining our facilities are always top priorities."

Athletics Coordinator Mohamad Mawas says that LAU's strong focus on athletics as a part of general education makes the program special. "LAU is the first Lebanese university to offer athletic scholarships to students," he notes, "and that is a huge motive for students" to choose the university as their educational home.

Mawas points to some noticeable

achievements, particularly from the track and field team, which is the only university team in Lebanon that has had at least one win in every race they have competed in since 2014. The team has just completed in one of the world's most grueling competitions: the 242-kilometer Dead to Red Road Race between the two major seas in Jordan. LAU won second place, just behind the Jordanian national team.

Whether on or off the court, LAU's commitment to shaping its students both intellectually and physically continues to bring major returns.

Looking to the future, "LAU is working on the blueprints for expanding the Byblos fitness center," said Director of Athletics on Byblos campus Joe Moujaes, explaining that this expansion will add 270 square meters to the facility to accommodate more students and classes.

Evidence-Based Solutions to “Lifestyle Diseases”

By Hanan Nasser

Nutrition Program studies the need for public health policies in Lebanon and the region

More and more people in Lebanon are suffering from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) linked to lifestyle, such as diabetes, hypertension and metabolic syndrome. On the upside, these “lifestyle” diseases are completely preventable. However, there is a great lack of awareness among the general population on how to prevent them, fueled partially by an absence of government policy on the issues of public health and nutrition.

LAU wants to be part of the solution. To that end, the LAU Nutrition Program organized a panel discussion called Evidence-Informed Nutrition and Food Policies in Lebanon and in the Region. The forum took place as part of the Third Nutrition and Food Science Research Conference in April, on LAU's Beirut campus.

Juana Willumsen, senior officer at the Department for the Prevention of Non-Communicable Diseases at the World Health Organization, spoke on the panel alongside Dr. Mohammad Sandid, president of the International Diabetes Federation in Lebanon; Engineer Joyce Haddad, director of Disease Prevention at the Ministry of Public Health; and Chaza Akik of the American University of Beirut's (AUB) Center for Research on Population and Health Advocacy. Evidence Lead Specialist at AUB's Knowledge to Policy (K2P) Center Rana Saleh acted as the panel facilitator.



Principal organizer and LAU Assistant Professor of Nutrition Lama Mattar said the topic of the discussion was inspired by the many challenges related to nutrition in Lebanon, but primarily by the absence of nutrition and food public policies and the mechanisms for implementation.

The point of the panel, she added, was to veer the discourse toward evidence-informed policy-making rather than haphazard regulations.

Saleh concurred. “Given the increased burden of non-communicable diseases in Lebanon and the region, effective and sustainable interventions and policies become highly necessary,” she said. “Evidence-informed nutrition and food policies ensure that policies developed at the national level are effective, inclusive and sustainable.”

The toll this health crisis is taking on Lebanon is staggering. According to Mattar, in Lebanon, “85 percent of deaths are caused by non-communicable diseases, which are highly related to diet and lifestyle.” Forty-five percent of those deaths are from cardiovascular diseases, 19 percent from cancer, and two percent from diabetes.

What is behind this rise in deaths from NCDs? “Lebanon, like other countries in the region, is witnessing a nutrition transition from a traditional Lebanese and Mediterranean diet pattern to a Western diet pattern characterized by higher saturated fats, meats, sugars, processed foods,” Mattar said. “This nutrition transition is associated with an increased risk for obesity, metabolic syndrome and cardiovascular diseases.”

One of the strengths of the panel was its interdisciplinary approach, with K2P acting as the research broker, the WHO and Lebanese Ministry of Public Health

representing official and governmental powers, and university professors representing academia.

At the end of the discussion, the panelists offered a list of recommendations, including governments “integrating and institutionalizing the use of evidence in the process of developing their policies and legislations,” and generating the political will to “support putting nutrition and food policies high on the political agenda.” In addition, researchers should “invest in conducting policy-relevant research and ensuring its proper use to impact the public’s health,” and the UN and other international agencies must “invest in building the capacity and funding local initiatives to promote evidence-informed nutrition and food policies.”

The panelists underlined the need for international guidelines “to be contextualized before being adopted by countries.”

“In Lebanon, 85 percent of deaths are caused by non-communicable diseases, which are highly related to diet and lifestyle.”

Mattar said that LAU holding the panel is a step toward having the university move off the sidelines and become involved in policy-making. “Here at LAU, we are producing research that will benefit the policy-makers, so we can be the organizers and leaders of such forums and discussions.”

A Dual Welcome

By Raissa Batakji

Exciting exchanges for LAU students form part of their MEPI-TL program

When Safea Altef first landed in Beirut from Libya, she was looking forward to embracing every experience that the Middle East Partnership Initiative-Tomorrow's Leaders (MEPI-TL) had in store for her. Little did she know that in a couple of years she would be playing the drums alongside street musicians in Jackson Square, all the way in New Orleans. If there is a recurring commonality in all study abroad experiences, it is that students find themselves in the most unexpected of

places, meeting new people and feeding their sense of curiosity at every turn.

The MEPI-TL program partners with LAU to provide scholarships and enriching experiences, such as study abroad and seminars, to deserving students from Lebanon and nine other Arab countries. Last spring, 12 LAU MEPI-TL scholars spent the semester at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and Stockton University in New Jersey, taking their already-unique experience at LAU to a whole new level.

VCU, in turn, sent a group of students to LAU for the summer. "The partnership with VCU and LAU has been incredibly rewarding so far. This is particularly significant because it is the first time we have had a faculty-led study abroad to Lebanon, and the potential for that is very important," explained Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Elise Salem as she welcomed the VCU students to Beirut.

Mayda Topoushian, assistant professor at VCU's School of World Studies and key to the success of the exchange, agreed

entirely. "When students and faculty who have long been hearing and teaching about the Middle East actually come here and experience it themselves, this creates a ripple effect and enriches their classroom discussions for years to come," she said.

For International Services Associate Program Manager Dina Abdulrahman, the exchange doesn't just help visiting American students experience Lebanon: "It also extends their perspective to the entire region, because MEPI-TL students actually come from all over the Arab world to LAU, and they offer strong insights about their own countries."

As part of the exchange program this summer, the chair of VCU's Political Science Department and six other professors also visited LAU. They reconnected with some of the LAU students who had spent the spring semester at VCU, met some new ones who will be attending their classes back in VCU in the fall, and engaged with LAU faculty to discuss academic-exchange topics.

“



"Students who fear studying abroad are commonly worried about integrating within the community and making friends, but in reality they are missing out on a lifetime opportunity to make friends from the world over!"

Heba Alsaidi

*English literature major,
Gaza Strip, Palestine*



"Every semester takes a new twist when you are a MEPI-TL student, and every year I'm a new and different person. I feel like I'm on the fast track of change for the better."

Ikram Hamizi

*computer science major,
Algeria*



"When professors at VCU found out I wasn't American, they constantly invited me to share insights about how things worked in my country with the rest of the class, which only gave me more voice and made my experience more enriching."

Marwa Ben Khalifa

*political science and
international affairs major,
Tunisia*



"Compared to other places where everything seems to be sterile and orderly, I walk into a basic store in Beirut and instantly feel that the place looks so alive."

Anna Yalcinoglu

*VCU exchange student,
international studies major,
United States*

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The Trireme Rides the Tides

By Raissa Batakji

LAU's – and the world's
first – upcycled ship
sets sail to renew hope
for the environment and
revive our heritage

The historic Phoenician sea route got a highly anticipated revival on Sunday, April 20. Sailing across the coastline from the ancient port of Byblos to Beirut's Zaitounay Bay was the world's first upcycled replica of a Phoenician trade ship, called a trireme, built mostly out of plastic bottles by LAU and high-school students in partnership with Lebanese environmental NGO Chreek, and with the support of municipalities, businesses, NGOs, communities and schools.

"Upcycling is the only hope for Lebanon's garbage problem," shouted Chreek CEO George Ghafari from on board the trireme as it neared its docking spot in Zaitounay Bay. Dozens of people cheered the ship's arrival, including LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, Dean of Students on Byblos campus Makram Ouais, Assistant Dean of the School of Engineering Barbar Akle, environmental activists, members of the Lebanese press, as well as passersby, young and old, who gathered to witness the extraordinary sight.

With no access to clean tap water in Lebanon, more than 500,000 plastic bottles are disposed of every day – most of which end up in landfills in the absence of government-run recycling plants. While it took months of joint efforts from municipalities, schools, NGOs, businesses and the LAU community to collect 100,000 plastic bottles for the initiative, the project proved achievable.

"When we join hands to get something done, we can do the impossible," said Byblos Campus Activities Associate Manager Alan Kairouz, who managed the project. He thanked all the different entities that took part, and pointed out that the project's success is proof that the Lebanese can work together to save the environment, adding that "it is our duty to work for future generations."

The ship, which stretched to 13 meters in length and four meters in width, took five months to build, with over 350 volunteers – including LAU students, faculty and staff, school students and scouts – working during weekends and holidays. LAU's School of Engineering worked on the design, ensured buoyancy and conducted safety tests, while the Communication Arts Department filmed construction from start to finish.

Jabbara declared LAU the "innovation institution par excellence," encouraging Lebanese leaders to pay attention to the hard work that young people have put into achieving the impossible. He went on to salute the students who saw a problem, thought of a creative solution, and put it into action. He also thanked those who helped along the way, from the Lebanese Civil Defense to the Red Cross and Chreek, as well as every institution and person who took part in the project.

Akle offered a behind-the-scenes look at how the trireme was created. "A group of mechanical engineering students, led by fresh graduate Rifaat Sarout, carefully designed and built the ship, making sure that it could handle rough waves through a series of tests." He added that the students were careful not to let any bottle go to waste in the process.

Six hours before the ship's arrival in Beirut, its launch was celebrated

at the historic port of Byblos, where people gathered to witness the event, including Ali Samad, a delegate from the Ministry of Culture, Byblos Mayor Wissam Zaarour, Head of the Marine Rescue Unit at the Lebanese Civil Defense Samir Yazbeck, as well as Ghafari, Jabbara and a group of LAU faculty, staff and students.

LAU's own recently inaugurated Louis Cardahi Foundation offered information about the ancient route that the Phoenicians' triremes traveled along the coast, one of many examples of how the different supporting entities came together to truly revive our heritage while protecting our environment.

"When we join hands to get something done, we can do the impossible."



100,000
bottles
collected



28
LAU entities
involved



350
student
and volunteer
builders



5
months of
assembly and
testing



Finding “Home” in a Brand

By Louisa Ajami

Brand addiction: When an attachment to a specific brand becomes less of a preference and more of a lifestyle



Many consumers prefer certain brands over others when they do their shopping. Marketers know this and work to build “brand identity” for their products, which drives loyalty and, thus, sales. But what happens when a consumer’s attachment to a specific brand becomes less of a preference and more of a lifestyle?

LAU’s own Mona Mrad, assistant professor of marketing at the Adnan Kassir School of Business (AKSOB), has studied this phenomenon with Charles Cui of the University of Manchester. They call it “brand addiction” and provide insights for marketers to create products that appeal so much to individuals that they become more than just customers.

Mrad began researching the concept while studying for her PhD in marketing under Cui, her supervisor at the University of Manchester. A former fashion design student, Mrad wanted to understand what happens “when the consumer-brand relationship reaches its highest level.”

Since there was little on the topic, she began her work from the bottom. Mrad and Cui held focus groups and conducted interviews and surveys with shoppers across the UK and US, the places with the highest rates of shopping per capita. They found that those with the condition experience an emotional attachment to a brand that is similar to emotions one feels toward their loved ones. For these addicts, Mrad says, “brands represent their actual, authentic self.”

Mrad presented several research papers on brand addiction at prestigious international conferences, and has recently published two articles in the *European Journal of Marketing* and *Journal of Business Research* identifying brand addiction and exploring its attributes. She has become one of the leading scholars in the field thanks to her and her colleagues’ continuous research on the topic.

She wants to make it clear that brand addicts differ from other addicts in that they do not experience the pathological symptoms of more negative addictions, such as a loss of control, that can harm relationships. On the contrary, many have told Mrad they feel good about their lifestyle and believe it has had a positive impact on them.

“For most people, it may not be a negative thing at all,” Mrad says. “By aligning themselves with a particular brand, brand addicts feel positive emotions, such as comfort and joy – it’s like being home.”

Brand addiction does not have to be an expensive habit, either. While some brand addicts obsess over haute couture, on the other end of the spectrum there are people who have less lavish addictions, for example, to certain food or sports-equipment brands. “It is about an emotional attachment,” she says, “not a price tag.”

They also do not tend to get into trouble because of their addiction, personally or financially, she points out. “Brand addicts make it part of their lifestyle. They don’t usually feel guilty after their purchases or go into debt because of them, like shopping addicts do. They plan to purchase from their brand of choice and put money aside to pay for it.”

Still, Mrad cautions, “There is a thin line between healthy and non-healthy addictions.” For this reason, she is conducting a new study on how brand addiction can help people pull themselves out of similar, though negative, dependencies, such as shopping addiction.

“By aligning themselves with a particular brand, brand addicts feel positive emotions, such as comfort and joy – it’s like being home.”

As for what her research can teach marketing students, Mrad points to the techniques successful brands use to create the type of loyalty that drives brand addiction. “Brands that are successful research their customers’ tastes, market conditions and the economy. That way they can make forecasts and evolve in a careful way so that they don’t lose touch with their core customer base. But they must keep very close contact with their customers all the time.”



LAU's Welcome

By Hoda Hilal

Graduating senior Hoda Hilal reflects on the ways LAU makes its students feel welcome

"LAU welcomed me – and thousands of other students – to its world of endless growth, and it kept doing so every day."

Confused faces and nervous smiles usually characterize a student's first day of university. However, I remember mine differently. My first day at LAU was full of excitement, joy and gratitude. All I could think of was that the three years ahead of me were mine to conquer, so I had to make the best out of the experience. On that day and with open arms, LAU welcomed me – and thousands of other students – to its world of endless growth, and it kept doing so every day for the next three years.

As a soon-to-be graduate of the translation program with an emphasis in French, my journey at LAU has been nothing less than a roller-coaster ride. From bouncing between courses (and skipping some of them) to staying up all night to meet deadlines; from savoring a cup of coffee between classes to stargazing in Faraya with the Astronomy Club; and from working on my own personal growth to working as a student employee – all those memories have contributed in one way or another to the person I am today and will forever remain dear to my heart.

LAU never failed to make my educational experience enriching and rewarding. And it went beyond the classroom, with

lectures, extracurricular activities, and on- and off-campus events. Moreover, I can never forget my dear professors, who selflessly and tirelessly offered support and guidance whenever needed, as well as my fellow students, who have made this journey a memorable one. Finally, I cannot but mention my fondness for LAU's Beirut campus, to which I will always return, and it will feel the same as it did that first day – like home.

This emphasis on making students feel welcome – from campus facilities to endless learning opportunities – helped me explore my academic and extracurricular interests. I learned more than just the necessities for a degree. I learned about leadership, about communication, how to master the "soft skills" that are so important in a career, and how to be a responsible citizen who gives back to the community that has given me so much.

As much as it's sad to leave LAU, I know that it's inevitable. For myself and my fellow graduating seniors, it is our time to leave the nest and build the future we've always dreamed of. It was LAU's warm welcome and exceptional care that empowered us to spread our wings, and I can only hope the world welcomes us in the same way.

In Memoriam



Emily Nasrallah 1931 – 2018

Author, activist and LAU alumna Emily Nasrallah passed away this March. She was 86 years old.

Nasrallah first became famous for her 1962 novel *Birds of September*, though she had been writing since college, mostly as a journalist, to support herself while at Beirut College for Women (BCW). She graduated with an associate's degree in 1956 from the school, which would become LAU 40 years later. She became a prolific writer, publishing novels, children's books, poetry and short story collections, most of which touched on her bucolic yet poor upbringing in the village of el-Kfeir in Mount Hermon.

During college she married a chemist named Philip Nasrallah and started a family, never moving far from Beirut, even during the worst years of the Lebanese civil war. Indeed, the war was a theme in much of her writing from that period. Her award-winning book, *A Cat's Diary* depicts the horrors of that conflict from the eyes of a cat.

Aside from her writing, she was known as an activist for women's rights, a cause she championed tirelessly throughout her life. "I wanted women to be equal

to men," she once said. "I lived, I grew from a peasant woman in the fields to elite schools, and I saw that women can advance when they have opportunities."

"Emily Nasrallah was one of Lebanon's great gifts to the world," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra. "She used her talent to paint a picture of the energy, complexity and spirit of Lebanon."

"In her writings, she highlighted issues related to education, gender rights, the war, the feminist movement, and more. She was an asset, and we are all indebted to her."

Throughout her life, she was widely recognized for her work, including making the International Board on Books for Young People's Honor List for *A Cat's Diary*; winning the Goethe Medal, which honors non-Germans for contributions in the spirit of the Goethe Institute; and receiving the Lebanese Cedar Medal of Honor, which was presented to her on what she said was one of the happiest days of her life.

Nasrallah showed her gratitude to LAU. "She had always expressed readiness to

be of any assistance to her alma mater," said Lana Abou Teen, associate director of development. "She was a generous donor to LAU, yet she always wanted her contributions to be anonymous and to target needy and deserving students."

Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations Abdallah Al Khal, who helped present Nasrallah with the Alumni Recognition Award in 2010, said of her passing, "The alumni of LAU lost one of their major pillars, but her legacy will live on and will inspire generations to come."

Her life and work spoke to generations of women in Lebanon and abroad. For Lina Abirafeh, director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, Nasrallah was an inspiration. "Emily Nasrallah was a renowned writer who strove to document the history of pioneering women in Lebanon," she said. "In her writings, she highlighted issues related to education, gender rights, the war, the feminist movement, and more. She was an asset, and we are all indebted to her."

"We are proud to call her one of our community," said Jabbra, "and will always honor her writing, her activism and her strength of spirit."

By the time of her passing, she had made her mark with her personal mission: "To value every person, irrespective of who they are, where they come from, and the work that they do."





Jacques Saadé 1937 – 2018

Founder of shipping giant CMA CGM Group and generous donor to LAU Jacques Saadé passed away this June in Marseille, France. He was 81.

"With the passing of Dr. Jacques Saadé, the world has lost a great man, France has lost a shipping magnate, Lebanon has lost a beloved son, and LAU has lost a caring benefactor."

Originally from Tripoli, Lebanon, Saadé left for France in the 1970s, due to the Lebanese civil war. Equipped with a degree from the London School of Economics, one ship, and a handful of employees, he launched in 1978 Compagnie Maritime d'Affrètement (CMA) in Marseille.

Today, with Saadé's visionary leadership and many acquisitions, CMA CGM Group is the third-largest container transport and shipping company in the world. The group, still based out of Marseille and headed by his son, Rodolphe Saadé, is present in more than 160 countries through its network of over 755 agencies, with no fewer than 30,000 employees globally.

Aside from his tenacity in business, he and his wife Naila were staunch believers in giving back to the community, and established the CMA CGM Corporate Foundation in 2005. Run by his wife and financed by the Saadé family, the foundation has so far supported approximately 200 social and humanitarian associations with a special focus on France and Lebanon.

"With the passing of Dr. Jacques Saadé, the world has lost a great man, France has lost a shipping magnate, Lebanon has lost a beloved son, and LAU has lost a caring benefactor," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra.

The generosity of Saadé and his family also touched many at LAU, where he

donated \$500,000 toward the restoration of LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital's blood bank lobby, which bears the donor's name.

In his address to students at LAU's 2014 commencement ceremonies, Saadé said, "Be demanding – first of yourself and then of others, and create solid relationships with your partners based on trust." During the commencement, he was honored with a doctorate in humane letters for his contributions to the shipping industry.

President Jabbra, who first met Saadé in June 2013, was deeply impressed by his drive and passion to serve humanity. "While he physically is no longer with us, his ships that roam the oceans of the world day and night will continue to pay homage to his blessed soul and remind us constantly of the incredibly active life that he had on this earth," President Jabbra said.

The Home of Leaders in Neurovascular Care

By Raissa Batakji

Neurovascular Week cements the School of Medicine as a center of expertise for vascular diseases



Since the establishment this year of the first and only comprehensive stroke center in the region, the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM) has been hard at work "educating the patient population and referring physicians on how to recognize a stroke and how to treat it," according to the school's Dean Dr. Michel Mawad.

In this spirit, the idea to organize an academic and scientific teaching venue came to be with Neurovascular Week, which took place at the Grand Hills Hotel in Broumana from July 22 to 27. Neurovascular Week featured two distinct events: a course on functional neurovascular anatomy by the World Federation of Interventional and Therapeutic Neuroradiology (WFITN), and the SOM's inaugural International Symposium of Neurovascular Disease (ISND), which is set to become an annual event.

With Mawad as a past president of the WFITN, the SOM was successful in building a case for hosting the course for the first time in the region, and specifically in Lebanon, because "It's a country that is considered young in neuro-interventions – a selection criterion by the executive committee," said Dr. Sirintara Pongpech, former WFITN president, co-director of the WFITN course and professor at Mahidol University in Thailand.

The WFITN course drew large attendance compared to previous courses. It featured highly sophisticated

lectures for the first time in the region, including many that used three-dimensional renditions for cranial arteries by Dr. Philippe Mercier, consultant at Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) in Angers, France, and Dr. Karel terBrugge, professor at the University of Toronto, Canada. Both of these faculty members are pioneers in the analysis of blood vessel anomalies and variations.

The course shed light on hot topics in the field, such as the importance of studying the anatomy of blood vessels and the indications for treating blood vessel anomalies.

"Although these meetings tend to emphasize technology and the many treatment options we have, it's also important to highlight the traps and how in some cases a treatment might not be needed in the first place," said terBrugge. Pongpech agreed: "If you are an expert in anatomy, you will use the instruments more efficiently or may not need to use them at all."

Equally as insightful was the ISND, which featured lectures, roundtable discussions and symposia on acute stroke, aneurysm treatment, arteriovenous malformations, and vascular malformations of the spinal axis. Hosting close to 30 world-renowned speakers, the symposium was held under the high patronage of Lebanese President Michel Aoun, sponsored by several



multinational companies, and endorsed by the European Society of Minimally Invasive Neurological Therapy, the Lebanese Society of Neurology, the Lebanese Society of Neurosurgery, the Lebanese Society of Radiology and the Pan-Arab Interventional Radiology Society.

"The upcoming generations have a responsibility to advance what they are learning today."

Dr. Ali Al Khathaami, stroke and neurology consultant at King AbdulAziz Medical City in Riyadh, was among the speakers at the acute stroke module. He stressed the urgency of treating stroke patients within the first "golden

hours" and offered advice on building a nationwide plan that necessitates collaboration between key stakeholders to make specialized centers – such as the one in LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital – accessible to more stroke patients.

Building on Al Khathaami's call for collaboration was Dr. Charbel Mounayer, head of neuroradiology and radiology at the Dupuytren University Medical Center in Limoges, France and Dr. Elisa Ciceri, director of neuroradiology at the University Hospital of Verona, Italy. They stressed that the "stroke is a time-sensitive pathology that demands good collaboration between the Ministry of Health, physicians, nurses and hospitals."

Considering the caliber of speakers across the WFITN and ISND, attendees were granted 37 Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits by the European

Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME). LAU's Assistant Dean for Continuing Medical Education Dr. Vanda Abi Raad spoke about the significance of CME. "Medicine is rapidly evolving, and that is why physicians at most institutions are required to accumulate a certain number of CME credits every year, so they can continue to hold privileges in their practice."

Indeed, physicians are lifelong learners, according to Mercier, who had a final message to young and talented practitioners: "In 10 years, there will be new breakthroughs, so the upcoming generations have a responsibility to continuously advance what they are learning today."

Passing the Torch

By Dana K. Haffar



An interview with outgoing Provost George Najjar

George Khalil Najjar was appointed provost of LAU in October 2012. Now, he is handing over the reins to George Nasr, former dean of the School of Engineering, as of September 2018. Najjar is assuming the role of vice president for advancement at LAU.

Before beginning his successful tenure at LAU, Najjar spent many years at LAU's sister school, the American University of Beirut (AUB). There, in addition to being a professor, Najjar was vice president for regional external programs and a founding dean of AUB's school of business, which later became the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business. He has also published widely and is known for his successes in research management, fundraising, institution-building, institutional and professional accreditation, and international networking.

"Dr. Najjar's impact on the Provost's Office was evident in its academic growth and strategic planning rigor," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara. "He will undoubtedly continue the path of dynamic advancement in his new role."

Here, Najjar speaks about his achievements as provost and his hopes for the division he's turning over to his esteemed colleague.

How would you describe the challenges and key traits of the provostship, a role unfamiliar to many?

The provost is the custodian of academic integrity, currency, rigor and impact of the academic division, representing what the university is primarily there to offer.

The office of the provost is really an amalgam of several important components: engaging schools for innovation, overseeing academic quality and sound management, and being part of the academic content of the university in terms of each of its seven schools and Office of Graduate Studies and Research (GSR); working to build bridges between schools, breaking silos and creating conditions under which they can work together; and keeping a window to the future for the academic division by staying current, being at the forefront and measuring up to the expectations of LAU's multiple constituencies, to prepare our young men and women for a rapidly changing world moving "at the speed of thought," as stated by Bill Gates.

To achieve the above, the provost has to work closely with deans and facilitate their role in terms of maintaining a balance between the fact that we are talking about one university with one mission, one set of challenges, but with multiple schools with their own academic and professional ecosystems. That balance is one of the primary value-added components of the office of the provost, which I am confident will be considerably reinforced by Dr. Nasr.

Looking back at your provostship, what are you most proud of?

Firstly, it would be working with the deans to maintain one unifying LAU culture but leaving ample room within that for the kind of diversity needed for each school to thrive on its own.

I'm also proud of the effective implementation of the Second Strategic Plan (SPII) and of the development and beginning of implementation of the Third Strategic Plan (SPIII). SPIII is a very

ambitious roadmap to the future, involving three pillars: Intellectual Capital and Knowledge Management, Pedagogical Innovation and Integrated Delivery, and LAU Without Borders.

My third source of pride, during the time of office, is doubling the number of graduate programs, increasing the number of graduate students by 50 to 60 percent, almost quadrupling the research output of the university, building interschool programs like actuarial studies, and creating conditions under which SPIII became possible. Especially since SPIII called on us to do something very difficult for any university: to cross school boundaries without undercutting the schools' identities.

And lastly, creating with my colleagues and the President's Cabinet a culture where we are very mindful of the importance of strategic positioning, competitive profiling, and the fact that LAU is not only about a proud past but also about a challenging future that we must be prepared to deal with.

How would you distinguish LAU's global positioning today?

LAU today is at the very forefront of institutions of higher learning in Lebanon. It has solidified its regional position considerably and will continue to do so.

So our position today is: local leadership, regional visibility and global presence. I would hope that our local lead will become even more visible, our regional presence will evolve into regional leadership, and our global visibility will develop into a very distinct global footprint.





An interview with incoming Provost George Nasr

George Nasr took over the provostship in September 2018. Nasr spent almost 12 years as dean of the School of Engineering, steering it through a tremendous expansion in terms of student enrollment, faculty and facilities, and helping ensure the accreditation of its undergraduate programs by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET).

In his academic capacity, Nasr has produced extensive research on a number of engineering topics and was instrumental in forming the Multidisciplinary Energy Research Group at LAU, which has pioneered research on energy modeling and forecasting in Lebanon.

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara said of Nasr's appointment, "We are very pleased to welcome Dr. Nasr to the Provost's Office and are sure that he will apply the same strategic mindset there as he did at the School of Engineering."

As he assumes the role of provost at LAU, he shares his vision.

What are your aspirations for this university?

My vision as provost is to provide effective leadership and a collegial environment that will strengthen the reputation and stature of the university

through excellence in teaching, learning, research and engagement with the wider community.

This vision encompasses three main areas: teaching and liberal arts education; faculty recruitment, retention, promotion and renewal; and research.

Regarding the first, LAU is currently a regional leader in emphasizing the Liberal Arts Curriculum (LAC), but the depth and breadth of the courses we offer can reflect this commitment more tangibly. We need to increase the number of courses, establish an effective administrative structure for the LAC, and integrate the curriculum with the major course requirements. Ultimately, we want to build a global liberal arts-based education to enhance universal citizenship.

My second objective is faculty recruitment, retention, promotion and tenure, and renewal. Faculty are the lifeblood of LAU, and investing in our faculty is a cornerstone of our strategic plan and critical to our continued academic growth as a university. In this regard, my short-term plan is to implement an aggressive faculty recruitment campaign in order to better the faculty-student ratios, ensure high academic standards, and stimulate a high level of scholarly productivity.

For LAU to better engage its faculty in meaningful research, we need to provide more resources. LAU needs to attract, retain and develop the faculty responsible for achieving this goal. We need to put in place various measures to encourage faculty to publish and apply for grants. The discussion of possible incentives will include financial and/or in-kind inducements, teaching load, and promotion and tenure policies.

What do you see as the immediate payoff of more research opportunities and more funding for our faculty?

Research is not an option. It is an integral part of what we do as a faculty. Investing in resources will lead to a more dynamic classroom, as the teacher will be able to provide cutting-edge information. It will also ensure better visibility and ranking. A solid research foundation will enhance our positioning and allow us to attract not just more, but better students. We should aim to integrate our

distinguished liberal arts education with the rigor of research within our context, without imitating any other university.

I would point out, however, that research should not be understood as a singular project, but comprising themes and niches. We don't necessarily see ourselves as researchers in every field, but in niches of excellence, which we would boost with resources and faculty. This has already been discussed in the Council of Deans, and each school has identified at least one niche that will be supported by the university.

How will we position ourselves in this global village, Lebanon and the Arab world, where universities have mushroomed?

President Jabbara has recently addressed this issue very forthrightly, by calling for LAU to "become the innovator-university, leading other institutions in the Arab region through establishing a new higher education paradigm inspired by creativity, cross-functionality and entrepreneurship." In order to reach our aspirations, we must all work together and do our part to differentiate ourselves from the rest. This can and will be done with the help of our committed faculty and staff who genuinely want to advance LAU to the next level.

What is your level of confidence given the conditions in the country?

There is no question that we have to operate within constraints, but while there's little we can do to change the situation in the country, we are doing our best to adapt to it. In spite of the critical challenges facing the region today, we continue to invest in the university's intellectual and physical capital, and to make remarkable institutional progress.

Remember also that the university has always demonstrated resilience and a sustained level of excellence during periods of uncertainty for more than a century. Every day is different with its own challenges, but I am confident that together we will forge ahead to greater heights with passion, tenacity and clarity of vision.



Graduating Our Own

By Hoda Hilal

Members of the LAU Community and their children receive a stellar education

"LAU graciously supported my education and proved that employee development is at the heart of the university's employment philosophy."

As LAU bid farewell to the Class of 2018, among those who took the stage to accept their diplomas were people who have been an integral part of the LAU family for years – university employees and their children. Thanks to LAU's policy of educating its community, staff, their children and faculty members' children get a free higher education at the university.

Staff member Intizar Zgheib beamed at the Beirut commencement exercises in June as she watched her daughter accept her undergraduate diploma. "Seeing my daughter graduate was one of the happiest moments in my life," said Zgheib, who has been working as a custodian at LAU for 11 years. She said she feels supported and empowered at the university, adding, "I owe my children's education to LAU."

As for Security guard Walid Abdallah, his joy in seeing his daughter Anna-Christina graduate as a civil engineer after his 15 years of service at LAU was tremendous. "I had been to 14 graduation ceremonies before I finally saw my daughter graduate on the 15th one. I am forever indebted to LAU for providing her with such an excellent education," he said, adding, "LAU is not my second home; it is my first."

Meanwhile, Ruba Nassar Tohme watched her daughter receive a BA in

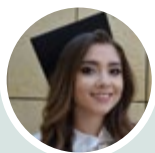
psychology with a minor in performing arts. Nassar Tohme, director of compensation and benefits on Byblos campus, says she is confident for her daughter as she moves on to the next phase of her life. "This fact gives me, as her mother, peace of mind that she is equipped to face whatever may come," she said.

Among the graduates were also staff members themselves, who took up the chance to further their own education at LAU. Lead Career Guidance Officer Dania Makki Saad was inspired to earn her MBA, graduating this summer 20 years after completing her bachelor's degree. "Education has no age limit," she said. "LAU graciously supported my education and proved that employee development is at the heart of the university's employment philosophy."

Accounting Supervisor Ramsey Baz decided to join the MBA program after earning his bachelor's degree at LAU as well. "This experience has allowed me to enrich my knowledge and develop my academic skills," he said. He noted how diverse the student body is, including older students and those from different backgrounds. "I am confident that the MBA degree will help me achieve my goals, both in career growth and personal development."



HATS Off Class of 2018



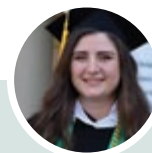
Amar Kreidly, *Nutrition*

“ I made great friends at LAU and met the best professors who truly guided me to be the best graduate I could be. ”



Jeny Dagher, *Finance*

“ I will miss the energy on campus and the experience. But I feel happy to be entering the world right now! ”



Maria Nakhoul, *Bioinformatics*

“ I am heading to Harvard for my master's. I'm very happy and a bit scared, but I feel LAU really prepared me for this. ”



Abdelrahman Ghalab
Computer Science

“ The diversity on campus and the fact that you could meet students from all walks of life truly opened up my horizons, being a non-Lebanese myself. The MEPI experience in particular took me up a notch, with my most cherished experience being when my Capstone Project won first prize! ”



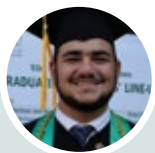
Dina Ibrahim
Education

“ One of my most memorable experiences was going as an observer at a public school and connecting with students. Everyone was amazed by our teaching strategies, and that gave me a strong sense of achievement – being able to put to work what we learned in class. ”



Rayad Assi
Interior Architecture

“ My most memorable experience was our international studio class trip to Tokyo and Kyoto, where not only did we learn volumes to be added to our already-rich curriculum, but we also got the chance to bond with each other as one team. ”



Johnny Ayoub, *Biology*

“ It was a lot of work. I'll be continuing here as a medical student. I'll need even more focus and dedication, but I'm definitely ready. ”



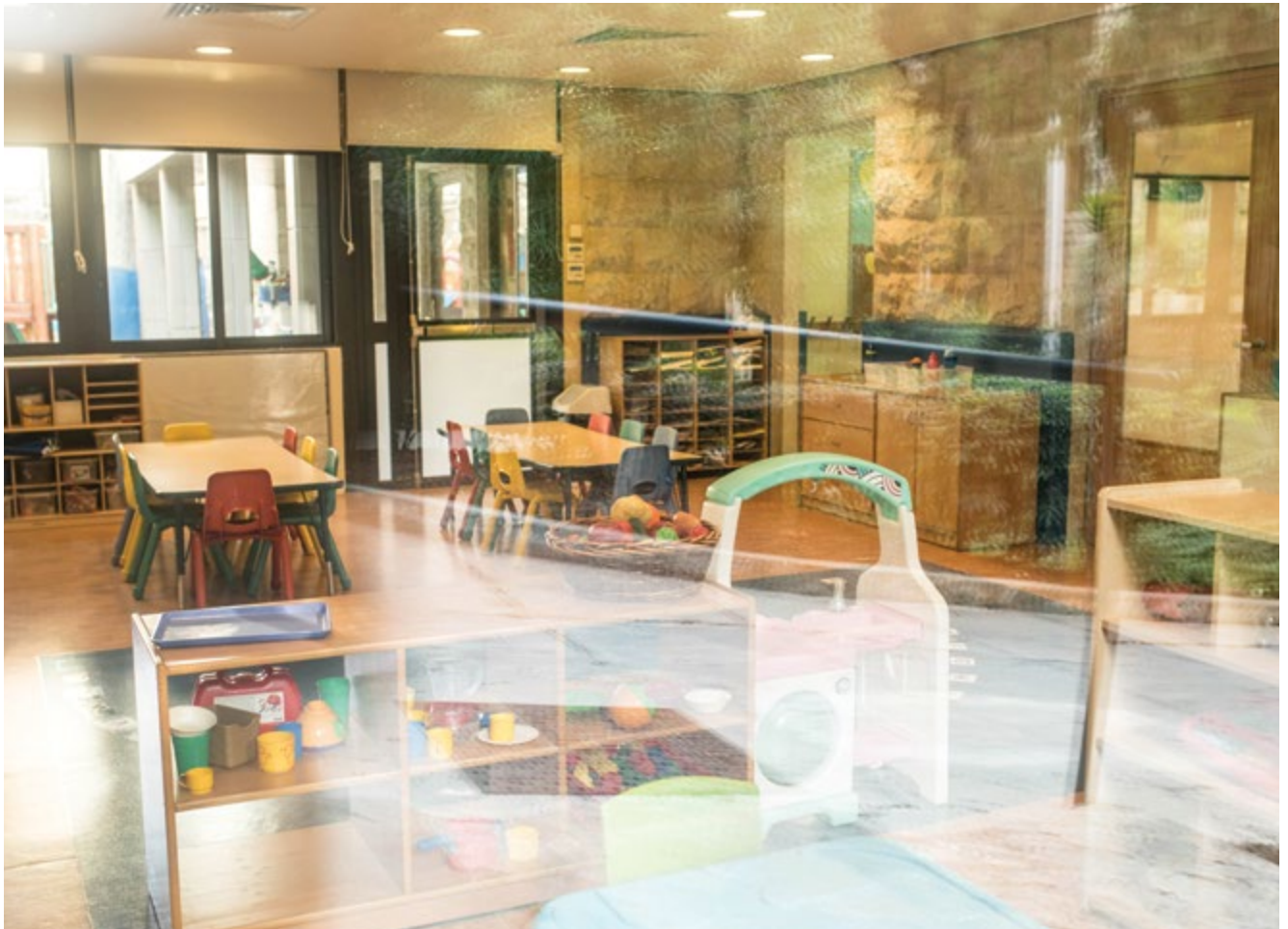
Yves Abi Aad, *Civil Engineering*

“ I loved my time at LAU, for the academic part but mostly for the extracurricular activities I was given the opportunity to be involved in. Those activities shaped me socially as well as academically. ”



Andrew Kassis
Business Management

“ I'm happy to be graduating, but I will be coming back for my master's. So it's not 'goodbye'; it's 'see you soon.' ”



Education Starts Early

By Hanan Nasser

LAU's Early Childhood Center is the only such facility in the region affiliated with an academic institution

Researchers have known for decades that the earlier a child's planned education starts, the better they do throughout their years of schooling, and later in life too.

That is why LAU makes sure its youngest learners get the best start.

LAU's Early Childhood Center (ECC), which is nestled in the middle of LAU's Beirut campus, is the only such facility in the region affiliated with an academic institution. In addition to being run by certified instructors and child-care experts, the center invites LAU students from different disciplines to observe the ECC children as they learn and play, to track innovative teaching methods, and to explore what it means to be a young learner.

The ECC has come a long way since the 1950s, when it was first established as an on-campus nursery, mostly used by faculty and staff at Beirut Women's

College (as LAU was then known). After a brief hiatus in the early 2000s, it reopened in 2014 as a fully equipped research-based center for children aged one-and-a-half to three-and-a-half.

According to Acting Chair of the Department of Education Iman Osta, education undergraduates are placed in the ECC to conduct their practicum from the spring of their junior year to the spring of their senior year. Students observe the interaction between the ECC children and their teachers and document their behavior under the supervision of their professor. "Then they start gradually taking responsibilities and interacting with the children, acting as assistant teachers," Osta said.

Senior education major Razan Helou has been working as assistant teacher at the ECC for the past two years, an experience, she says, that has helped her



develop as an educator through a hands-on approach.

"Through many observations, I learned how important it is to expect anything from children and to be ready to adapt on the spot," said Helou, who is specializing in early-childhood education. During her time at the ECC, Helou has been assigned to the Little Scientists and Explorers sections, where she has facilitated learning through themed activities and helped the children develop a sense of independence and curiosity. "It is a real child-centered environment. We observe what the children are interested in and how they behave, and we build on that."

To ensure it provides the most well-rounded education for its little learners, the ECC encourages LAU students from other disciplines to become involved in its work. Assistant Professor of Education Garene Kaloustian and Assistant Professor of Architecture Roula el-Khoury invited students from both disciplines to combine their skills to reimagine, redesign and develop plans for the ECC playground "in order to make it more responsive to children's needs, development and safety," Osta said.

"We also welcome engineering and medical students for internships," said ECC Supervisor Maya el-Hoss, as well as those majoring in fine arts, English and Arabic, who examine children's drawings and help develop children's books.

All of this attention and care has ensured strong developmental and educational growth for the ECC children. "Not a single child has been rejected by an elementary school, including high-caliber schools," Osta said. And thanks to their early advantage, they go on to steadily achieve well throughout their educational paths.

"It is a real child-centered environment. We observe what the children are interested in and how they behave, and we build on that."





All on Board

By Louisa Ajami

LAU's Board of Trustees
meets and welcomes
new members

Though based all over the world, members of LAU's Board of Trustees meet twice every year. This spring they convened on the university's Beirut and Byblos campuses to discuss LAU's strategy, advancements and challenges.

Over two days of meetings, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra and trustees reviewed achievements of note from the past year that align with the university's Third Strategic Plan. In line with the strategy's first pillar – Intellectual Capital – this year LAU hired 40 new faculty members, all of them leaders in their fields. In addition, 21 faculty proposals to the National Center for Scientific Research were accepted.

In terms of the second pillar – Pedagogical Innovation and Integrated

Delivery – board members learned about the newly established LAU Fouad Makhzoumi Innovation Center's role in promoting dynamism and entrepreneurship, as well as the university's efforts to train students for success in a changing job market. Finally, regarding the third pillar – LAU Without Borders – trustees were briefed about the ways the New York Office promotes LAU in the US, how the university is cultivating international partnerships and sending faculty to conferences across the world, and how it is planning to engage with more international students.

Also discussed was LAU's continuing expansion, with the construction of a major new library on Byblos campus, the availability of scholarships and financial



aid for any student in need, and the approval of the integrated plan with the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital and the different schools at the university. A revised branding and communication strategy falls in line with the three pillars, in articulating the positioning and strengths of the university.

In his address to the board members, President Jabbra asserted that "LAU is accompanying the changes brought by the global Fourth Industrial Revolution, and is continuing to enrich and modernize all its curricula and methods."

The university is "attracting the best professors, providing students with opportunities for creativity and innovation," he said, "making classrooms interactive learning spaces, and striving to establish the institution's financial sustainability."

Trustees were welcomed by Chairman of the Board Philip Stoltzfus, who is co-founder of QuantBridge Capital Management, and CEO and partner at investment management company Thayer Brook Partners LLP. "Everything we do on the board is oriented toward the students, to make their experiences

here and opportunities later as great as possible," he said after a round of meetings in March. "We believe that LAU is a university for life."

The trustees are all distinguished leaders in their fields, which range from finance to diplomacy, education to healthcare, and beyond.

Peter Tanous, chairman and founder of Lynx Investment Advisory, rejoined the board this year after a hiatus. Being on the Board of Trustees, he says, has given him the opportunity to get to know the students, whom he called "remarkable." "The students I've met are so inspiring, so bright. Whatever problems this country may have, these students are the solution," he said.

New board members include former US Ambassador to Morocco Edward Gabriel, who also works in finance but with an eye on international policy, and Fouad Zmokhol, president of the Association of Lebanese Business People in the World (RDCL World) and CEO of the Zimco Group, which has integrated holdings in different industries.

"I'm so impressed with the university

and its leadership," Gabriel said after a morning meeting. "And the students I've met are among the best I've ever talked to. They're very aware of how they fit into the world and how they can change it."

Zmokhol, who graduated from LAU in 1999 with a degree in business, says that as part of the Board of Trustees, he hopes to "build bridges between businesses and universities, and between businesspeople

"The students I've met are so inspiring, so bright. Whatever problems this country may have, these students are the solution."

and students."

As Chairman Stoltzfus said following a meeting with students from different disciplines, "LAU is and has always been a university with a mission, which is to invest in our greatest strength: our students."



A New Wave Hits Lebanon

By Raissa Batakji

LAU's annual Fashion Design graduates' show wowed fashion fanatics across Lebanon

Lights flashed and music thumped as models strutted down the runway in a restored 18th-century silk factory just outside Beirut. Hundreds of audience members – including EU Ambassador to Lebanon HE Christina Lassen, local and international designers, and fashion journalists, bloggers and influencers – watched excitedly as the models filed by, with a change in tone and music accompanying each new collection.

The production was intensely stylized, the looks bold, exciting and unique. But it was not your traditional fashion show.

It was the result of months and months of work by LAU's second cohort of 14 students graduating from the Fashion Design program, a unique BA offered in collaboration with global mega designer Elie Saab and London College of Fashion.

The theme of the show this year was New Wave, a reference to "the music, art and fashion scenes that emerged around the time of punk in the mid- to late-1970s and subsequently changed perceptions of design," according to the program's coordinator, Jason Steel.



The show has become an eagerly awaited event and acts as a launch pad for the emerging designers who completed the degree, which was modeled on programs offered at leading universities in the US and UK.

After the défilé, three of the designers were recognized for their collections:

Yasmine Hassouna, who received a Certificate of Excellence in Craftsmanship for her collection, *Last Train to Nowhere*; Genny Haddad, who took home the Certificate of Excellence in Concept Development for *De-Code-The Boy*; and Tatyana Antoun, who won the Prix du Jury for *Vamata*. The winners each received a

valuable prize from Joaillerie Moukarzel, one of the event's sponsors.

"Today was incredibly hectic that it feels surreal," said Antoun, who was proud to have been able to "see my vision come to life after four years of a very unique journey."

A More Inclusive Lebanon

By Brooke Anderson

Lebanon can seem like an exclusive club for many women of all backgrounds, migrant workers, the general LGBTQ community, the disabled and the poor – people who don't enjoy access to many of the basic legal and social protections of their more privileged counterparts. These include passing on the Lebanese nationality to one's children, fair and safe working conditions, and the right to have decent public services regardless of income or geographic location.

To the casual observer, Lebanon's exclusive society might not be apparent at first glance. With its towering skyscrapers, trendy bars, an international assortment of restaurants and an openly gay club scene, Lebanon – particularly the shiny coastal capital of Beirut – appears to much of the world as a cosmopolitan oasis in an otherwise highly conservative region. But scratch the surface just a little, and the oasis becomes a mirage of a freewheeling society that parties by night and neglects its most vulnerable by day.

"Beirut is a fun place with a massive curtain," says writer Priya Guns, a Canadian of Sri Lankan origin who moved to Beirut with her husband, a UN worker, earlier this year. "It's not what it appears. There are massive contradictions."

Though Guns was raised in Canada, she is often able to relate to migrant workers from South Asia because of the way she is treated on the streets of Beirut, including harassment from taxi drivers, soldiers, passersby and even hospital staff – until they learn she is Western.

"For me, the experience here is interesting. I feel the backlash, but at the same time I feel the privilege. My husband works for the UN, and he's white. I find it very conflicting as a Sri Lankan, and the guilt I have from being brought up in the West," she says.

While her appearance has led to unpleasant encounters, it has also led to her involvement in helping migrant workers



in Lebanon at a community center, and sometimes intervening when seeing them in distress in public places, where they are often harassed without consequence.

"Beirut is a fun place with a massive curtain. It's not what it appears."

An even larger group of alienated foreigners are the approximately 1.5 million refugees, the vast majority of whom fled the war in Syria next door. Unlike the domestic workers, Syrians share with Lebanese the same language and have a similar culture; however, they face many of the same issues of discrimination, harassment and, in many cases, violence. While the war in Syria, which began seven years ago, has elicited sympathy from many Lebanese, it has also reignited old tensions with Lebanon's neighbor.

Lebanon ranked number two on a recent survey of 25 countries on racial intolerance, and countries in the Middle East and Asia – Lebanon included – were found to be



the most prejudiced against outsiders, according to the 2016 World Value Survey's Map of Worldwide Racial Intolerance.

But while advocates say there is much to do in order to increase diversity and inclusion in Lebanon, there is a bright spot: the rise in activism among Lebanese, particularly from among the younger generations. Over the past two decades, a number of NGOs have been established with the active involvement by young Lebanese.

"More activists are taking a stand," says Farah Salka, co-founder of the Migrant Community Center in Beirut. "There are more people coming in, volunteering."

Thanks to the work of volunteers and activists, there have been a few small but inspiring victories for inclusion in recent years.

In 2013, following an undercover video that went viral of an African woman being denied access to a beach club in Beirut, the Ministry of Tourism issued a ban on such discrimination. In 2015, the first domestic workers' union was established in Lebanon. Later that same year, during the outbreak of the garbage crisis, demonstrators from across the

socioeconomic spectrum campaigned together against government corruption in waste management. Then, in 2017, Lebanon amended its notorious "marry your rapist" law, which exempted rapists from punishment if they agreed to marry their victim. Spousal rape, however, has still not been outlawed, and Lebanese women continue to fight for the right to pass on their citizenship to their children.

Activists themselves have grown more inclusive in recent years. Some Lebanese women's groups are increasingly collaborating with and supporting migrant worker activists, an important step toward intersectionality and being allies for those with even less of a voice.

"There is a bright spot: the rise in activism among Lebanese."

In addition to some small steps toward greater civil rights in Lebanon, there are also examples individual actions that have given hope to those who don't necessarily fit in. The lead singer of the popular Lebanese band Mashrou' Leila is openly gay, which has been a part of the band's appeal for young fans looking for inclusive role models. Other Lebanese artists – such as singer Zeid Hamdan, the band Meen and director Lucien Bourjeily – have used their celebrity status and art to speak out against injustice and corruption.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese movie Capharnaum has started a public conversation on poverty, immigration, race and child labor – and received an extended standing ovation at the Cannes Film Festival.

For visiting LAU Assistant Professor of Social Work Michele Kelly, it is her young students, generally more open to others than their parents, who foretell Lebanon's progress.

"I'm amazed at how much traveling they have done," she says of her students' excursions to other countries with more tolerant cultures. "They come back and they want to see improvement, and they have a very strong desire to see improvement."

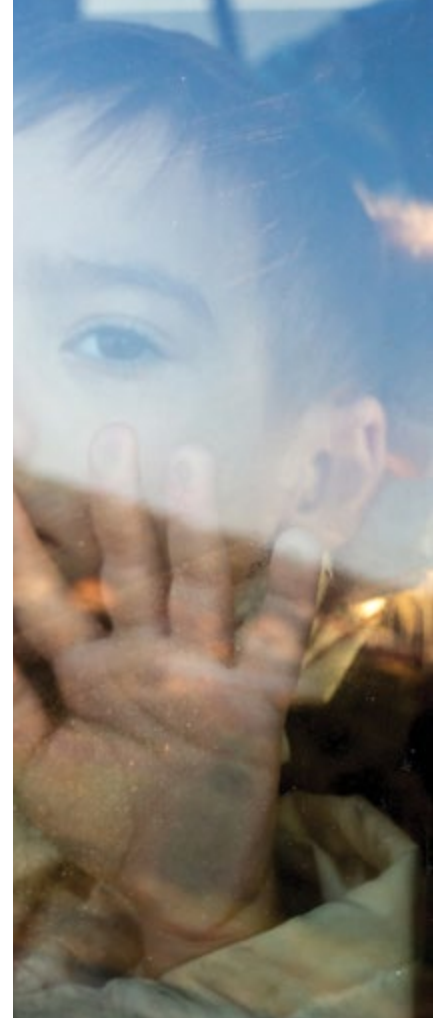


There is increasing tolerance of others nowadays in Lebanon on a number of fronts, agrees Genwa Samhat, executive director of gay-rights organization Helem, which works on the legal and social levels to increase acceptance of homosexuality.

"I think we can observe change. We can sense it in people's behavior, the terms they use. People are more aware. They are less rejecting, but not necessarily accepting," she says.

Perhaps the greatest work is being done on the university level, where Lebanon's future leaders are being formed. LAU has blazed many inclusion trails. One example is the university holding the first-ever autism-friendly concert in Lebanon for people on the spectrum. "In our autism-friendly concerts, the audience members are free to interact in any way that makes them enjoy the performance and express themselves," says Adjunct Assistant Professor of Music Seba Ali, who organized the concert. "It is an opportunity for everyone to celebrate neurodiversity, sharing and acceptance."

The university has also taken action to improve accessibility across both campuses for those with disabilities, to provide access to mental health services for members of the LAU family, and to



make it part of its mission to prohibit prejudice, harassment and favoritism. In addition, LAU's institutes produce research and conduct outreach on women's issues, migration, labor law and social work, among others.

"LAU is creating an opportunity for everyone to celebrate diversity, sharing and acceptance."

While personal and institutional initiatives don't take the place of strong national legislation to protect Lebanon's most vulnerable residents, they are part of the groundwork that makes a more inclusive society possible for future generations.

"It's all important. It all accelerates process, which is long," says Salka.

A New Hope for Stroke Victims

By Louisa Ajami



The first and only
comprehensive stroke
center in the country
will help people from
all backgrounds

*"The brain is the most
precious organ God
has given us ... The best
stroke you can have
is the stroke you have
never had."*



The LAU Gilbert & Rose-Marie School of Medicine (SOM) and LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital are proud to announce the latest addition to their roster of leading centers: the Comprehensive Stroke Center, located at the hospital's campus in the heart of Beirut.

The center opened March 17 under the auspices of Dr. Michel Mawad, dean of the SOM and himself a world-renowned specialist in neurology and cerebrovascular disease. It is the only comprehensive stroke center in the entire Middle East.

Stroke is one of the leading causes of preventable death in Lebanon and the leading cause of disability. Based on his research, Mawad projects that around 6,000 people in Lebanon will suffer a stroke per year over the next decade.

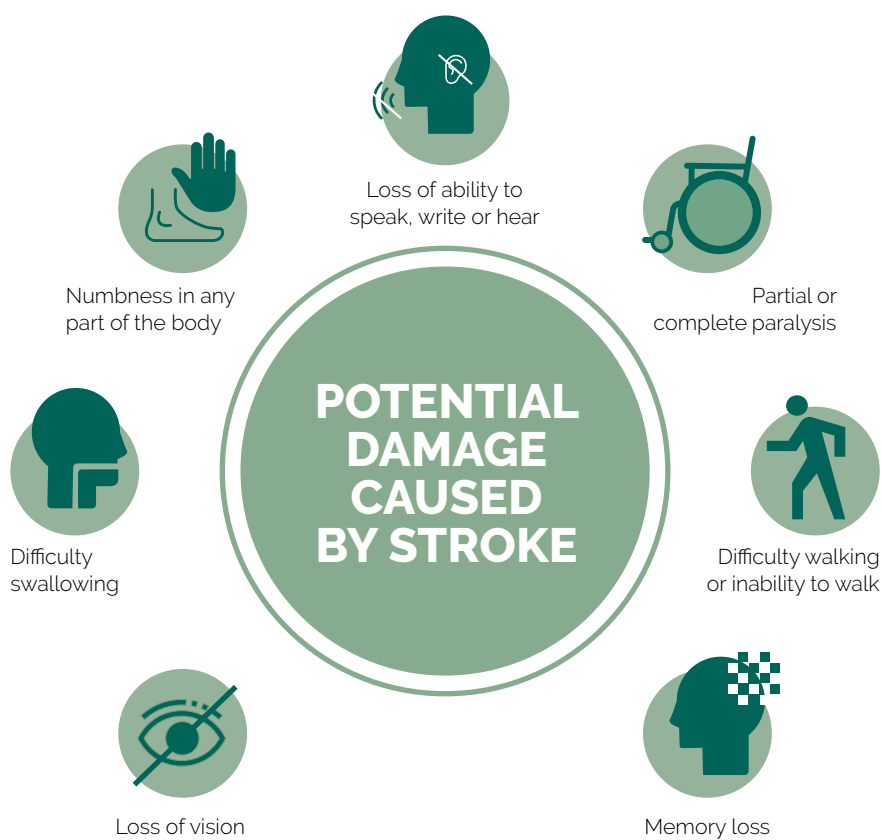
A stroke occurs when blood supply to the brain is interrupted, either because of a blocked artery or a ruptured blood vessel, depriving the organ of oxygen and nutrients. If blood flow is cut off for more than a few seconds, brain cells begin to

die. The longer a stroke episode lasts, the more likely it will lead to permanent disability or death.

The risk of stroke increases with age, poor diet and lifestyle, or the presence of certain congenital diseases. While strokes are more common in men, they tend to be more fatal in women.

"Time is of the essence when treating a stroke," Mawad told the crowd gathered at the center. "And the best way to treat patients is within stroke centers, with stroke teams. And that is what we have here."

Indeed, the center is staffed by a comprehensive, integrated team of neurologists, interventional surgeons, critical care specialists, anesthesiologists, neurosurgeons and physiotherapists, available to ensure that stroke patients receive the best possible multidisciplinary care 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It also boasts specialized medical equipment unavailable elsewhere in the region, including a state-of-the-art Biplane Interventional & Angiography suite manufactured by Siemens Healthineers



and designed specifically for the prompt diagnosis and treatment of acute stroke.

"Innovation drives everything we do – it is ingrained in our DNA," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra. "Everything we do revolves around the long path of ongoing innovation. This is absolutely crucial for the education and training of our medical students." It is the duty of the university and LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital to use innovation to give back, Jabbra added. "Saving lives is at the top of the scale when it comes to serving our community."

In attendance was a large group that included Lebanese Armed Forces Commander General Joseph Aoun, President of the Lebanese Order of Physicians Dr. Raymond Sayegh, President of the Lebanese Red Cross Dr. Antoine Zoghbi, CEO of LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital Sami Rizk, a representative of the Minister of Health, and members of the LAU Board of Trustees.

Rizk took the podium to speak about how the Comprehensive Stroke Center

is the latest in a long line of firsts from the medical center over the decades, including the first blood transfusion and kidney transplant in Lebanon. "This stroke center is part of a master plan toward innovation and treatment with passion and care," he said.

Mawad thanked the Lebanese Armed Forces for its collaboration in helping stroke victims from across Lebanon reach the center with army helicopters, and the Ministry of Health for ensuring victims have access to treatment. "We are able to guarantee the highest quality and most efficient care to ensure successful treatment and recovery, for people of all backgrounds."

In conclusion, Mawad said, "The brain is the most precious organ God has given us. It is the organ that makes us think, that makes us love, that makes us compassionate, that makes us intelligent, that makes us productive. So do everything you can to protect your brain. The best stroke you can have is the stroke you have never had."

ACT

F



FACIAL DROOPING

When a section of the victim's face droops, usually only on one side, making it hard for them to smile

A



ARM WEAKNESS

When the victim is unable to raise one of their arms fully

S



SPEECH DIFFICULTIES

When the victim has trouble speaking or understanding

T



TIME

If any of the above symptoms are evident, it is essential to call for help immediately



Shining On

By Hanan Nasser

A look at students who are moving on to other leading academic institutions after graduating from LAU

While many students jump straight into the job market after graduation, some choose to further their studies immediately. So it is no surprise that budding scholars from each of LAU's seven schools will be heading to major international universities this fall to continue their education.

The School of Arts and Sciences has a lot to celebrate this year, with dozens of students moving on to prestigious institutions across the globe. The Department of Natural Sciences in particular has seven graduating students who were accepted into PhD programs with full scholarships at top universities in the United States and Canada.

Jose Zgheib, who graduated this year with a BS in biology and a BS in chemistry, was accepted into the chemistry PhD program at McGill University in Canada, where he will be studying chemical biology. He was exempted from the GRE chemistry exam, which means he was accepted because of his academic work and the recommendation of his professors alone, and he is the first LAU chemistry student to be admitted to the pre-eminent


Montreal-based university without a master's degree.

Zgheib, who is also a student in LAU's Honors Program, wants to pursue "a research career by studying biological systems from the chemical perspective."

He described the variety of programs and inter-disciplinary approach at LAU as "crucial" to getting him where he is now. "Because of this, I developed critical thinking instead of memorization capacities and was able to choose the areas I want to continue in," he said, adding, "But by far the best thing LAU has offered me is the faculty."

At the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON), Grace Derboghossian was accepted into the BS-PhD program at the prestigious University of Massachusetts in Boston with a full scholarship. Over the past two years, three students were accepted into the program, aided by the academic efforts of ARCSON Dean Anahid Kulwicki, who was instrumental in putting the students in contact with the school.

Derboghossian highlighted two main



components that made her undergrad degree at LAU unique: "The research experience that I acquired through participating in the Health Care Research and Evidence-Based Practice course, and the experience that I gained in my community course during my undergraduate study, both helped me to apply for a PhD in population health, as they taught me the significance of underlying factors that contribute to morbidity and mortality."

Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) graduate Darine Yassine matched with the leading Houston Methodist Hospital for a one-year PGY-1 pharmacy residency program.

Yassine credits her professors at the School of Pharmacy (SOP) for being "highly knowledgeable, professional and extremely committed to teaching."

"SOP faculty members familiarize PharmD candidates with our future career opportunities, one of which is residency training. As such, I was well informed about residency programs and research opportunities."

Meanwhile, Sara Jaafar – who is graduating with an MD – will be conducting research at the University of Michigan School of Medicine in Ann Arbor. Her research will focus on scleroderma – a connective tissue disease that causes chronic scarring of the tissue of the skin and other vital organs.

"My research will focus on clinical trials involving the treatment of scleroderma, as well as pulmonary assessment of these patients to better understand the extensive distribution of the disease," she noted.

"Fortunately, with the medical program at LAU and the excellent faculty members, we are always introduced to new methods of learning and are taught to question

every aspect in order to find a solution to problems and diseases."

Students at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine have the opportunity to take their medical electives in the United States. That experience, Jaafar said, allowed her to meet a huge number of doctors interested in research, and "I was fortunate to find a medical team ready to welcome me to work together."

At the School of Engineering (SOE), civil engineering graduate Mohammad Sam Hakam was accepted to the Engineering Project Management program at the University of California, Berkeley, consistently ranked one of the top schools in the United States.

Civil engineering was a childhood dream for Hakam. "The level of education at LAU helped me a lot in forming my knowledge in the field. Moreover, the experience of our faculty in the Civil Engineering Department helped a lot in my learning experience and gave me guidance and all the help I needed to reach my goals, determine my career path and find the best graduate school for me."

He cites the research opportunities he received at the SOE as an essential part of his success. "Full-time faculty members always offer research opportunities for students who have good academic records, and they give the students the opportunity to do experiments in the university labs. I personally worked on research with one of the professors and enjoyed the experience a lot."

Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB) graduate Christina Lawandos has been accepted into the Master of Management program at the Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi in Milan. She will be specializing in green management and sustainability. During her studies at AKSOB, Lawandos founded the Animal Rights Club on Byblos campus, thus learning to "create and implement

awareness campaigns, manage and coordinate fundraising events and educational seminars, and lead the march on critical rescue operations." Such efforts, she said, had a positive impact on her university applications.

Budding scholars from each of LAU's seven schools will be heading to major international universities this fall.

Certain of her goals, Lawandos is planning to pursue a career in nonprofit management, but her long-term ambition is to "found a large-scale NGO concerned with the causes I believe in the most, notably animal welfare and sustainable development in Lebanon."

Another Italy-bound graduate is Genny Haddad of the School of Architecture and Design. Haddad is heading to Florence for an MA in fashion brand management at Polimoda, which was ranked the best fashion institute in Italy and among the top ten in the world.

At LAU, Haddad found the tools to turn her ideas into reality. "Our program has exceeded my expectations, as I reached a point in fashion design I didn't know possible. Combining creativity and practice, I was able to find my own identity," Haddad is leaving with many fond memories, her favorite being late nights in the studios to meet deadlines: "In between moments of stress, we found the time to laugh and create special bonds."

As LAU sends off another cohort into the world, the new graduates will always remember their alma mater as the institute that gave them the solid academic foundations upon which to build successful and consequential careers.

Summer Fun – and Learning Too

By Louisa Ajami



The CEP's summer camp keeps kids active and learning with "edutainment"



Many parents think that learning ends when summer starts for school students. But with LAU, that is never the case.

With the Continuing Education Program's (CEP) annual summer camp, children aged five to 12 get the carefree physical play kids love summer for, but also educational activities such as theater, astronomy, business, social skills and music. This "edutainment" aspect is more than just a perk – campers feel its benefits even after they return to school in the fall.

According to Kathleen Lynch of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, "On average, students lose approximately 2.6 months of learning over the summer," and the effects go beyond individual regression,

as "teachers have to give up weeks of class time to make up for that loss." In addition, by the end of grade six, "students who experienced summer learning loss over the years are an average of two grades behind their peers in learning."

The CEP's summer camp addresses that issue head on. While the program is not straightforwardly academic, it complements children's learning with instructional and experiential activities that keep their bodies active and their minds sharp over the long vacation.

"The summer camp acts to enhance children's interest in school," says CEP Director Charbel Azar. "We embrace the spirit of education via experiences, which



"By the end of grade six, students who experienced summer learning loss over the years are an average of two grades behind their peers in learning. CEP's summer camp addresses that head on."

keeps kids' minds and imaginations active over the summer months."

Camp sessions are taught by instructors who have experience in education and leadership. Instructors keep the children active and interested in classes that range from the physical (basketball and dancing) and educational (robotics and health), to character-focused (leadership and responsibility), to name a few.

Campers enjoy the experience. "I get so many emails from parents," says CEP Program Coordinator Bushra Badran, who organizes and runs the camp every year. "They are so happy to see how their children develop and grow in ways they never had seen in previous summers, or

even during the school year." She pointed to a testimonial from a happy mother saying her son "came out of his shell" while at the camp and that he'd expressed interest in subjects she never thought he would, such as cooking and astronomy.

"The kids have a great time every day," says Badran, "and they don't even look at it as educational. It's just fun for them."

Each summer, the camp modifies some of its activities based on current trends in education and extracurriculars. "Recently we are focusing on STEM education at camp," says Azar, "as well as character education, so the kids learn soft skills that will help them throughout life."

"Program offerings such as the CEP's

summer camp address summer learning loss and introduce young minds to new knowledge, experiences and dispositions," says LAU Professor of Education Mona Majdalani. "Parents can be sure their children are fully engaged and don't experience a mental slump over the summer the way they would if they were staying home."

"Ultimately, we're entertaining the kids while providing guidance at the educational and social levels," says Azar. "It's a comprehensive experience."

The Gift of Education for All

By Louisa Ajami

USAID pledges
\$24 million toward
scholarships



"Ensuring a fantastic education to all deserving students means that we impact them, their families, and the future of our country."

LAU has been awarded the largest grant in its history – nearly \$24 million for the Higher Education Scholarships Program (HES).

The grant was awarded on a competitive basis by USAID, the United States Agency for International Development, an independent branch of the American federal government that works toward international development.

The grant is intended to support four cohorts of Lebanese students from public schools across Lebanon, and also includes a new refugee scholarship component with a bachelor's degree track and a professional certification track that offers learning in a number of areas through LAU's Continuing Education Program (CEP).

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra congratulated the "formidable team" from Student Development and Enrollment Management (SDEM) and Finance, who "rose to the challenge of writing a great grant proposal that was guided by our passionate commitment to offer a university education to those qualified men and women who may not otherwise have the opportunity to join LAU for financial reasons," he wrote in a letter to the LAU community.

"At LAU, we firmly believe that the answer to the ills that afflict society in Lebanon and the Arab world is education, education, and still education," Jabbra said. "This belief goes to the heart of our mission that our founders and predecessors worked so hard to keep aglow in our hearts."

"We are very happy USAID has granted us this large amount of money for our Higher Education Scholarships Program," said SDEM Vice President Elise Salem. "With this grant, they confirm their belief in LAU's mission to spread education to those from all backgrounds and means – whether Lebanese or those who came here in search of a better life."

Already, LAU has some of the most generous financial aid programs of all universities in Lebanon. The USAID grant increases the size of LAU's funding to a great extent, and will allow deserving students an affordable education they might not have otherwise had access to. The grant also showcases USAID's commitment to the university and its mission of providing an education to aspiring scholars regardless of their background or ability to pay for tuition.

"LAU honors every letter of its mission statement when it bestows academic excellence, civic-mindedness and job readiness on a highly deserving student population coming from the public, private and refugee segments across Lebanon," said Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Civic Engagement Elie Samia after the grant was announced. "This is the spirit of LAU manifesting itself at its best."

As Salem summed up, "Our role is education, and ensuring a fantastic education to all deserving students means that we impact them, their families and the future of our country."

Student Success Profile: Christelle Barakat

By Naseem Ferdowsi

This rising third-year scholar fits academics, clubs and outreach into each 24 hours



Distinguished List student Christelle Barakat is not your typical high achiever. Having just completed her second year at LAU pursuing a BA in political science/international affairs, she has managed to not only maintain stellar grades, but also be passionately involved in a number of activities, clubs and initiatives that take up a massive slice of her already hectic schedule.

From founding and running LAU's Book Club and serving as treasurer of the International Affairs Club, to training middle school students participating in the Model Arab League and playing active roles in the Model UN, Barakat is no stranger to burning the midnight oil.

"I have 24 hours in a day. So it's a matter of maximizing those 24 hours," she says. However, her efficiency is the result of more than just time management, she explains. "It's always about giving back to the society that has believed in me, to friends, to family, to LAU for its support."

"It's not about time; it's about passion and willingness to work hard and good management of that time," says Barakat, who is energetic and cheerful on a busy spring day during final exams period, showing no signs of exhaustion despite her rigorous schedule.

That is because she truly enjoys giving back, and even plans to make that part of her career.

"I would like to work at an embassy, serve my country as a diplomat, or be a staff member at the United Nations, with the ultimate goal of being able to make a change no matter where I end up being," says Barakat, who also has her eye on getting a master's degree and a PhD.

If her work ethic is any indication of her future, she is off to a great start with her long-term goals, which she attributes to the lessons she's learned at LAU.

"I will always live by something that I learned at LAU: If I am passionate about something and really want it, then I should go after it, even if I feel like I am short on time, because at the end of the day, deep down I know that I will re-manage my schedule to fit everything into it," she says.

In addition to instilling determination in her, LAU has afforded Barakat self-growth and practical life skills she says,

highlighting the efforts of Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Civic Engagement Elie Samia.

"I am forever grateful to Professor Samia because of all the wonderful simulation programs that would have not been there if it weren't for his belief in the youth, in empowering them, and in their transformative leadership," she explains.

In spite of a busy schedule, Barakat also makes time to attend MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) given by the US Embassy, and international universities and organizations, and she takes up internships such as her role last summer at the Media Association for Peace, which helped her later secure a training trip to Portugal for an Erasmus+ program.

Barakat's impressive achievements on and off campus largely stem from LAU's emphasis on shaping well-rounded leaders, but she also thanks her access to the university environment, which was initially outside her reach. "Scholarships and financial aid were the reason I was able to consider attending LAU in the first place," says Barakat, who values these opportunities, and especially the work-study dimension of financial aid, which she says has sharpened her skillset.

"It's always about giving back to the society that has believed in me, to friends, to family, to LAU for its support."

Barakat is one of thousands of students who receive merit and/or need-based financial support from LAU. The university strives to ensure that all academically deserving students have a chance to pursue their education here and continues to raise funds for scholarships so that more students like Barakat can achieve their long-term goals.



Lebanese and Proud

By Hanan Nasser

The Imagine Workshop and Concert Series celebrates the cultural richness and diversity in Lebanon

LAU's IMAGINE Workshop and Concert Series (IWCS) concluded its second season with a bang. Its multidisciplinary finale, called Lebanese and Proud, included an all-day food and crafts market, and an evening of music, theater and dance.

IWCS is a platform that aims to connect the LAU community with the outside world through collaborations and outreach activities. Each IMAGINE season contains four residencies, organized with a socially relevant theme in mind. The first, Reflections, sought to promote gender equality and human rights, while the second, Tell Your Tale, celebrated Arab culture through the art of storytelling. The third residency, Salaam, was about music as a tool for peace.

Lebanese and Proud, the last residency of the season, included workshops on both Beirut and Byblos campuses, and outreach visits to two local refugee camps. "This residency celebrates the cultural richness and diversity in Lebanon," said IWCS Artistic Director and

Adjunct Professor of Music Seba Ali.

"Our projects are original," she added. "We create them depending on the people we work with and the kind of discipline we are focusing on."

What distinguished Lebanese and Proud from other IWCS residencies is that it relied heavily on collaboration with younger people – 50 high schoolers – and that all the performances were created from scratch.

The final evening opened with a short experimental play based on real stories from the Lebanese civil war, which lasted from 1975 to 1990. As part of a school project, students from Beirut's Wellspring Learning Community interviewed their relatives about their experiences in the war. The director, LAU theater major Rahaf Jammal, worked with three students on developing those narratives into a play. "The play aimed to raise awareness and to emphasize the privilege of having a safe and culturally diverse country that was built on the hardship that their parents and grandparents had to endure," Ali said.



The play was followed by a musical performance from a choir made up of LAU and Wellspring students. The conductor, Music Instructor Lara Moulaeb, worked with the singers for the entire previous semester on the song *Shu Hal Iyyam* (*What Days*).

Next was a concert by an ensemble performing Lebanese folk tunes from the 1920s and 40s, a genre known as *mkhammass*. The tracks, reminiscent of Lebanon's Golden Age, were reworked and rearranged by violinist and IWCS resident Layal Chaker as part of her doctoral research.

"I play classical music, so it was interesting for me to go through the journey of rediscovering music from our heritage and rearranging it in my technique," she said.

Chaker worked with an ensemble of student and faculty musicians from LAU and the National Conservatory. Over five intensive workshops, they developed improvisation and folk-tune techniques.

The musicians, she said, had to go through the same process of reconnecting with "this part of their culture." The ensemble included musicians who played purely oriental instruments, such as oud and buzuq, and others who played Western instruments such as the violin and the piano.

"We are a post-war generation; we do not know that part of our history, but we can know it now through music," Chaker said.

The evening concluded with performances by members of the Al Sarab Alternative Dance School and Al Sarab Dance Company. The routines aimed to send a message of pride in heritage, equality and diversity.

As outreach has always been a main pillar of IWCS's program, Ali organized two events at Lebanon's Shatila and Katermaya refugee camps in the spring. In the first, at Shatila camp, Assistant Professor of Dance Nadra Assaf and Instructor of Dance Jimmy Bechara worked with children on expressing themselves through their

bodies. In Katermaya, Chaker played the violin while children conveyed their ideas in drawings based on what they heard.

"We didn't have a group of guest artists who came with a ready program. This was something that was 100 percent original."

"The outreach program was amazing," Chaker said. "The common thing is always the enthusiasm and the gratitude expressed by the kids. They are just so happy you are there and they are so engaged. It is very empowering to them to have access to arts and culture," she added.

IWCS will resume in October 2018 with its third season.

Where is Home for Lebanon's Orphans?

By Raissa Batakji

A look into the options available for orphaned children in Lebanon



What is the best environment for children to grow up in?

For orphans – a term referring not only to children whose parents are deceased but also to those whose parents cannot care for them – the answer has not always been clear. In fact, it took years of research and debate before social workers came to a definitive verdict.

"Children are best served in families," said Michele Kelly, a visiting assistant professor of social work at LAU. For children without biological parents, that means authorities should reach out to relatives and foster families before sending them to an institution. After all, Kelly explained, for children to grow and prosper, they need to be "held, hugged and cared for" by someone who has the time, resources and desire to take care of them.

That is why in developed countries, orphanages are no longer very common. In many places, orphaned children are placed in foster homes overseen by skilled and licensed social workers who ensure care for children who cannot otherwise stay with their own families. Though the process of building a functioning foster-care system can be lengthy, involving psychological, financial and educational evaluations and then training potential foster families, it creates a safer, more child-centered process. Foster parents can often adopt the children they are charged with, and the process is relatively straightforward.

In Lebanon, where there is no foster-care system, children who have nowhere else to go are sent to orphanages, which are, for the most part, run by non-profit organizations and religious charities.

SOS Children's Village is one of them. It has been around since the late 1960s and has since expanded to house 196 children across four youth homes in the North, South, Beqaa and Mount Lebanon governorates.

On the ground, the SOS Children's Villages recreate a model of the nuclear family and take in children from all religious sects and nationalities – mostly

those whose parents are alive but cannot take care of them. In-house social service workers are called "mother," and the children are encouraged to refer to each other as brothers and sisters, according to Amal Dakik, head of communications at SOS.

"In Lebanon, family affairs such as marriage, divorce and inheritance are all governed in religious courts."

A similarly progressive institution in the South, the Sidon Orphan Welfare Society, houses 1,300 to 1,500 children and welcomes orphans, underprivileged youth, as well as children with special needs. The institution provides them with food and lodging, a primary education as well as vocational schooling so that they can be "productive members in the community," according to its website.

This model of progressive foster housing seems to be the best hope for children to have a stable and supportive childhood in the face of very strict national laws that complicate and even block adoption, depending on which religious sect the families in question fall under. This is because in Lebanon, family affairs such as marriage, divorce and inheritance are all governed by religious courts.

According to LAU Associate Professor Khodr Fakh, "Christian courts permit adoption in very specific cases, while Islamic courts prohibit it and promote the kafala – or sponsorship – system instead." This stems from the Islamic belief that bloodlines are holy and cannot be mixed with outsiders, as would be the case with adoption. In Islamic households, Fakh said, families can financially provide for an orphaned child's basic needs, without passing on the family name or inheritance.

This is the strategy of Lebanon's Orphan Welfare Society, which recruits donors to



become long-term sponsors for orphaned children in line with Islamic sharia.

"Currently, there are around 200 sponsors who are committed to providing for a large portion of the children's needs on a yearly basis," according to Bahia Naamani, their head of communications.

Meanwhile, adoption is legal in Christian family courts, but the law is convoluted and strict. The petitioning adults need to prove that they are unable to bear children of their own and that they do not have other children. The child up for adoption should belong to the same sect as the adoptive parents and be Lebanese.

Michael, who works for an organization that provides for orphaned children in Lebanon, is currently in the process of filing for the adoption of a non-Lebanese 10-year-old who ended up at his institution with no papers. Michael asked that his real name not be used so as not to jeopardize the adoption process.

Neither Michael nor his wife is Lebanese and nor is the child they hope to adopt, creating a gray legal area for them to

navigate. "After a year and a half of starting this process, we are currently very close to getting a judge to look at our case, and we are rather hopeful," he said. He has watched as other children in the orphanage go "home" to stay with family members on weekends while the child he's looking to adopt – the only one in the orphanage whose parents are dead – had nowhere else to go.

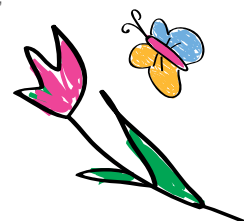
"There are many doors to knock on – you just have to try."

Though the process has been long and difficult, for Michael and his wife it is worth it. "I think that there are many means to influence a child's upbringing, but if you have the chance to go the extra mile and take in the child as your own, within a formal structure, that would be even better," he said. "In Lebanon, there are many doors to knock on – you just have to try. If it doesn't

work, you can always hook up with one of the many organizations to help in other ways," he advised.

For her part, Kelly hopes that Lebanon can move its system toward a more formal and consistent structure that makes adoption more of an option for orphans and would-be adoptive parents. "There is massive, systematic social work that needs to be done," she said. However, she noted that activists have had great success changing laws in other areas with small victories made over time.

"Ultimately," Kelly concludes, "the way you were parented will be reflected in how you will parent. Children are like vessels. If they don't receive the love and care they need, they probably won't be giving any love back."



A Great Influence

By Louisa Ajami

IWSAW's Lina Abirafeh was named one of the world's most influential people in gender policy



"I knew that remedying inequalities was what I would do for the rest of my life."

LAU's own Lina Abirafeh, director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), made waves when she was included on the 100 Most Influential People in Gender Policy in 2018 list, the first-annual compilation by Apolitical, an international platform for governments that gathers and produces research on topics relevant to civil servants. According to Apolitical, "Drawing on nominations from dozens of gender equality experts and leading organizations in the field, we aim to celebrate the people making our societies fairer and better to live in."

The list, released on May 23, honors those fighting for gender equality through policymaking, research, advocacy or other means. Also named were UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed, Pakistani education-rights activist Malala Yousafzai, Swedish Deputy Prime Minister Margot Wallström, and Canadian PM Justin Trudeau. Abirafeh was one of two Arabs to make the list.

Abirafeh joined IWSAW in 2015 after having spent much of her previous career working on gender issues in development and humanitarian settings. With various UN agencies, she has traveled extensively to work on combatting gender-based violence and formulating solutions to issues facing women and girls in challenging world settings.

She completed a master's in international economics and development at Johns Hopkins University and a PhD at the London School of Economics, publishing her 2009 book *Gender and International Aid in Afghanistan: The Politics and Effects of Intervention* based on her research. She also gave a widely viewed TEDx talk in 2015 that drew on her experience working on gender-based violence in emergency situations.

Abirafeh said of her life's focus on gender-based and development work: "I began to see the world through a gendered lens as a teenager and knew that remedying those inequalities was what I would do for the rest of my life."

When she first joined IWSAW, Abirafeh became the third generation of women in her family to work with LAU.

IWSAW was founded in 1973, the first such institute in the Arab world. The institute

works at the intersection of academia and activism by advancing women's empowerment and gender equality through education, research, development programs and outreach at the national, regional and international levels.

Recent IWSAW projects include supporting exploration of gender issues through art and music, training local social workers to better help at-risk women and girls, and lobbying to fix problematic laws in Lebanon's Penal Code. The institute also publishes a regular interdisciplinary journal on gender issues called *Al-Raida*, which "amplifies the voices and sheds light on the lived experiences of women in the Arab region by promoting scholarship on and by Arab women."

"Achieving equality for women is the greatest human-rights challenge of our time – and the issue to which I've dedicated my life," 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."

Upon receiving news of her inclusion on the 100 Most Influential People in Gender Policy list, Abirafeh said, "Today, we have the benefit of global momentum and grassroots movements all speaking to the universality of our cause. There is no possibility of peace, stability or prosperity in our region without the full engagement of women. This is a call to action for us all. And it presents an opportunity for IWSAW to scale in order to position itself as a global leader in the fight for women's rights. Our time is now!"

Upon the release of Apolitical's list, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara said, "We are extremely proud of Dr. Lina Abirafeh and IWSAW for this major achievement. From its beginning as the first school for girls in the entire Ottoman Empire, LAU has always taken gender and inclusion as among its guiding principles. It's a proud day for LAU and the institute to see Lina recognized at a global level."

The entire LAU family extends the warmest congratulations to Abirafeh and her colleagues at IWSAW.

The Revolution of Body Confidence

By Louisa Ajami

Event highlights the danger of disordered eating among young people and emphasizes the benefits of body positivity

"Fat" is not a bad word. This seemingly simple assertion is actually a radical notion in our image-obsessed world.

With millions of people across the world struggling with eating disorders, members of the LAU family have decided to change some minds about body image.

Assistant Professor of Nursing Rita Doumit and Associate Professor of Nutrition Nadine Zeeni have studied the impact of eating disorders on Lebanese students. They found that anorexia, bulimia and binge-eating disorder are among the most severe mental-health struggles in adolescents and young adults in Lebanon. Furthermore, these disorders usually coexist with depression, substance abuse and anxiety.

Doumit says that spreading awareness is crucial, as "early detection through college-based screening can help adolescents get treatment early and prevent worsening psychological harm."

So, with the help of the Nutrition, Nursing and Psychology clubs, as well as the Middle Eastern Eating Disorders Association (MEEDA), Doumit and Zeeni hosted Love Your Imperfections, an awareness-raising event on Byblos campus.

"Through the event, we want to inform students how to be resilient and healthy in today's challenging world," said Zeeni. "We would like them to be able to challenge social pressure, stereotypes and media

messages about dieting, body weight and shape. We want to encourage students to stop appearance-based talk and body shaming and replace it with the celebration of body confidence."

The messaging used for the event included "Don't value your body over your being," "Happiness isn't size specific," "Fat is not an emotion," and, "Loving yourself is the greatest revolution."

For Stephanie Farah, the messaging hit home. "I feel that it is impossible to be shielded from the unrealistic beauty standards portrayed by media and advertisements nowadays," said Farah, second-year psychology student and president of the Psychology Club. "I hear many beautiful and strong women and men complain about their bodies. This is not the message that children should grow up with. I hope that this event will help people see their bodies as sources of strength and support, rather than insecurity."

The day started with MEEDA's Huguette Abou Khalil, a clinical nutritionist and eating disorder specialist, leading a workshop on the dangers of disordered eating and extreme dieting. "Eating disorders are very common all over the world," Abou Khalil told the audience. "In fact, I'd say our whole society has an eating disorder." She stressed the importance of embracing positive messages about bodies and avoiding discussing people's weight or eating habits. "You never know who is already struggling with an eating disorder," she cautioned, "and who may just need a trigger to develop one."

After the talk, attendees gathered near the campus fountain for a lively Zumba session led by Zumba instructor and third-year nutrition major Marwa Sobh. Then, students of all different body types and sizes strutted down a runway wearing body-positivity slogans on their clothes. At the end of the event, participants released balloons they had painted with their messages about body image.

The involvement of students in organizing Love Your Imperfections was a key strength of the event, as they are of the age group most vulnerable to disordered eating and poor body image.

Farah Bou Said, third-year nursing student and president of the Nursing Club, said the



event could have an immeasurable impact on those suffering in silence. "I believe that Love Your Imperfections will serve as a rescue for LAU students, faculty and staff by raising awareness about eating disorders," she said. "Just be yourself and love your perfect imperfections because that is what makes you different, unique and beautiful."

Lara Assadourian, a fifth-year nutrition major who is also president of the Nutrition Club, said that she hoped Love Your Imperfections will help young people "raise their confidence and show them the importance of loving not only one's own body, but embracing our imperfections as well."

At the end of the event – which attracted students from LAU, as well as Saint Joseph University and Lebanese University – Doumit felt positive. "I hope that young men and women who identify as having problems with body image and eating disorders will be encouraged to seek help," she said.



Welcome Additions to the School of Engineering

By Alyce Abi Shdid

LAU's School of Engineering is poised at the cutting edge of research with new lab facilities

"It is truly an exciting time to be a student at LAU's School of Engineering."

As the practice of engineering evolves with changing technologies, there is a growing need for students to "hit the ground running" in their careers upon graduation. LAU's School of Engineering (SOE) is making that possible with new, state-of-the-art laboratory equipment and facilities that are, in many cases, the first of their kind in Lebanon.

Completed in 2007, the over 9,000m² Engineering Laboratories and Research Center houses more than 30 lab and workshop spaces designed to expose students to the practical applications of the theory they receive in the classroom. The facilities employ top-notch technology, including supercomputers and high-performance computational resources with a capacity of about 18 teraFLOPS.

Former Dean of the SOE and current Provost George Nasr says the new facilities offer unique experiences for students and faculty. "Today's industry climate requires that students be able to contribute in their field upon starting their careers, and LAU's SOE is offering students that opportunity. In addition, the new laboratories provide our faculty with cutting-edge resources to pursue their own research and explore new frontiers in engineering."

Johnny Estephan, a master's student in civil and environmental engineering, agrees. "Conducting experiments in the lab has helped me develop scientific reasoning abilities and critical thinking skills to judge the results and formulate conclusions," he said. "There is no doubt that these facilities, with their state-of-



the-art laboratories and high-end testing equipment, give credibility to the research I conduct and pave the way for more advanced research projects in the future."

One of the newest labs in the center is the Drilling Simulation Lab. The growing possibility of local oil extraction has led to increased student interest in the Petroleum Engineering program, and the new lab facilities offer students a virtual experience that is unique to LAU. With a full-rig floor drilling and a well-control simulator, the facility is designed to instruct students in advanced equipment operation techniques. The lab is also outfitted with a giant high-resolution wall screen that provides real-life graphics to mimic the environment of a drill site, allowing students to gain invaluable experience before they even graduate.

A second petroleum engineering facility is the Reservoir Simulation Lab, which hosts a Core Flooding System – an advanced, computer-controlled environment that simulates oil reservoir conditions and can help determine the permeability of rock samples as well as their interactions with various fluids. The equipment is used for both undergraduate classes and research purposes.

Salim Jamal-Eddine, one of the lab supervisors, is proud of its benefits to students: "With LAU's petroleum engineering labs, students gain more than theory – they gain practice. So when they go to the field,

they have already had the actual experience on an exact replica of an oil drill."

Another jewel in SOE's crown is the Experimental Fluid Dynamics Lab, featuring the impressive Hydraulic Water Channel – one of the largest of its kind in Lebanon. This lab is designed as a teaching and research tool to aid students in their understanding of how particles move in air and water.

The channel, fabricated and installed by engineers from the United Kingdom, is constructed with toughened glass flanks and a glass-bottom panel, allowing students to observe from three sides. Using a 3D stereoscopic Particle Image Velocimetry system, the channel allows students to watch the movement of particles and gain a deeper understanding of the hydraulic and aerodynamic flow structures. This equipment allows undergraduate and graduate students to experiment in research areas related to low-speed flows including submarines, airplanes and vehicles.

On the electrical engineering side of the building is the newly installed Smart Grid Lab. Via a connection to a SCADA computer system, students are able to measure power data, analyze it, and manipulate the system's decision-making component in order to observe the effects on the power system as a whole. With renewable energy such a hot-button topic these days, students are able to use the

Smart Grid to understand the challenges of integrating alternative energy sources and work toward efficient power solutions.

Aside from the newest labs, the Driving Simulation Lab, installed in January, is aiding faculty and students in groundbreaking research geared toward improving the traffic situation plaguing Lebanon's roads. This summer, the SOE will also inaugurate the High-Bay Structures Lab, which will feature testing capabilities of full-scale structural elements of buildings, bridges and other critical infrastructure. Undergraduate and graduate students will be able to use high-capacity hydraulic actuators to witness firsthand the response and behavior of critical infrastructure facilities under real-life environmental and man-made loads, such as wind events, earthquakes and vehicular traffic.

These lab facilities are serving to provide students with a well-rounded education that "connects the dots" between classroom learning and that which can only be achieved in the field.

For Chair of the Department of Industrial and Mechanical Engineering Michel Khoury, the labs are just part of the school's mission. "At LAU, we are committed to staying at the forefront of engineering technologies, and our lab facilities are achieving that goal. It is truly an exciting time to be a student at LAU's School of Engineering."

Postcard from New York

By Elida Jbeili

The LAU New York Academic Center sprang to life with cultural events, classes, conferences and a gala during the spring semester of 2018.

Thousands of middle- and high-school students descended upon New York City during the months of March and April to participate in the LAU-led Global Classroom International Model UN conferences. The students, hailing from dozens of countries and hundreds of schools worldwide, participated in activities dedicated to instilling crucial leadership skills in the aspiring diplomats.

The experience enhanced students' knowledge of international diplomacy, improved their public speaking and debate skills, helped them navigate the UN's rules and procedures, and, ultimately, put them on the path to global citizenship. As LAU student leader Ameer Alsamman said, "When we become the leaders that we want, we can then implement the change in the world that we want."

In late April, more than 150 benefactors attended LAU New York's annual Gala Dinner to celebrate and support the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW). The LAU NY Gala has become a significant gathering for friends and supporters of the university; it provides an opportunity to honor special individuals and showcase their achievements. Ed Shiner, director of alumni and special projects at LAU NY, remarked, "The gala is not only a fundraiser but a wonderful time to bring the extended LAU family together to celebrate the university's growth and development and to reinforce its mission."

During the dinner, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra presented the prestigious Sarah Huntington Smith Award to both Aida Sharabati Shawwaf, a humanitarian focusing on women's education in the Middle East and Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and to Majdi Ramadan, consul general for Lebanon in New York.



Two cultural events took place in May, beginning with a film screening of the award-winning movie *Nour*, which sheds light on the issue of child marriage in Lebanon, at the CUNY Graduate Center. The screening was followed by a discussion with the film's director and LAU alumnus Khalil Dreyfus Zaarour. The discussion was moderated by Beth Baron, director of the Middle East and Middle Eastern American Center (MEMEAC) at the CUNY Graduate Center.

On May 24, LAU's Center for Lebanese Heritage (CLH), in collaboration with the Lebanese Consulate General in New York, hosted a panel discussion on Kahlil Gibran at LAU's NY Academic Center to celebrate the centennial commemoration of Gibran's first English-language book, *The Madman*.

The event featured Henri Zoghaib, acclaimed Lebanese poet and CLH director; Dr. Philip Salem, president of the Salem Oncology Center; University of Pennsylvania Professor Emeritus Roger Allen; and Helen Samhan of the Arab American Institute and Arab American National Museum.

The speakers agreed that Gibran's legacy is as relevant today as it has ever been, touching the hearts and minds of many generations across political, religious and national boundaries. Ideas such as his withstand the test of time, the speakers noted, resonating in particular during periods of strife and conflict. As Zoghaib

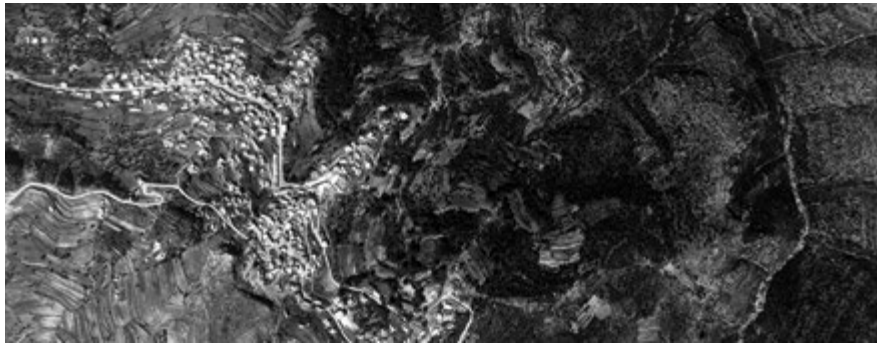
said during the discussion, "The intellectual resistance is much more resilient than the military resistance."

Aligned with this ideology, SINARC NY's spring enrollment grew to an all-time high, with students from diverse backgrounds being offered all levels of Arabic-language courses. As one student reported back, "Learning Arabic at LAU NY is a testament to the commitment of LAU to expand its legacy both in New York and the Middle East. The academic center provides an array of complimentary programming and resources to its students and patrons, all of which serves to keep the spirit of Lebanese culture alive."



Designing the Place That Remains

By Brooke Anderson



Hala Younes curates
Lebanese Pavilion at
the Venice Biennale



"We're highlighting the way this territory is being transformed. Within this span of time, we've seen the tremendous evolution of territories."

It started out capriciously. Last year, Hala Younes and her friends were chatting about how it would be nice to one day participate in La Biennale di Venezia, a world-renowned exhibition in Venice, Italy that highlights the arts and culture of countries around the world.

Younes, an assistant professor at LAU's School of Architecture and Design (SArD), wanted to build upon the previous Biennale, in which students from LAU participated in Lebanese artist Zad Mourtaka's exhibit. Younes got the idea to propose the official participation of all of Lebanon in this year's event.

Now she – along with 10 other faculty and students from LAU and other Lebanese universities – is curating the exhibition Lebanese Pavilion 2018. This is the first time a Lebanese project at the Biennale has been officially endorsed by the Lebanese Ministry of Culture and backed by the Order of Engineers and Architects.

This year's Biennale theme is The Place That Remains. In advance of the exhibition, in March, SArD hosted a conference on the same topic to prepare for the event. The conference highlighted "the places that remain in Lebanese territory, un-built spaces, their qualities, their histories and their potential," said SArD Dean Elie Haddad.

Now on exhibit in Venice, Lebanese Pavilion 2018 includes a 3D model of the Beirut River Valley, featuring a small replica of a 200 square kilometer area. It also includes audiovisual mapping, different aerial maps, and surveys from 1956 and 2015, showing vast differences in land and water use, and urban sprawl and development.

"We're highlighting the way this territory is being transformed," Younes said. "Within this span of time, we've seen the

tremendous evolution of territories."

In drawing attention to these spaces, and their stunning transformations over 60 years, Younes hopes to show people how to better use land in the future, in terms of architecture, people's relationship with nature, as well as open spaces and agriculture.

"If we can reuse those public networks and the road network, and if we take care of them, then we'll have a constellation of open spaces," said Younes, noting that Lebanon graduates 700 architects every year, all of whom could benefit from a better understanding of their surrounding environments.

Dean Haddad agrees. "This crucial aspect is unfortunately missing in the way architecture is considered as a financial development, without relating it to the wider dimension in which it exists," he said. "This idea is better developed in other places and contexts, where the symbiotic relationship between the built and the un-built is carefully crafted and maintained."

Lebanese Minister of Culture Ghattas al-Khoury is hopeful about the exhibition's impact in Lebanon. "We ought to applaud this project, which is the result of the joint efforts of a number of institutions," he said at a press conference announcing Lebanese Pavilion 2018. "I hope that this cooperation will serve as an example to all of us – politicians, businessmen and researchers – proving that constructive support always pays off."

In the end, Haddad said, "We hope that this exhibition will play a role in raising awareness of this important dimension in architecture, in Lebanon specifically and the region at large. This will be an important first step also in the process of future interventions."



Welcome Back Home

By Raissa Batakji

From Beirut to Byblos, homecoming week reunited nearly 1,000 LAUers

"I'm coming back home" was an announcement made by nearly every one of the alumni who reunited across a number of events lined up by the Alumni Relations Office in early July. The gatherings featured reminiscing, special tributes, two marriage proposals and countless selfies.

Homecoming week began on a high note with the annual Alumni Dinner at Beirut's Skybar rooftop club. More than 450 graduates, friends of LAU, faculty and staff gathered at the sky-high venue. That evening, the 11th Annual Alumni Award winners were announced, paying tribute to two prominent alumnae: artist, singer and songwriter Tania Saleh (BA '90), who was awarded the Alumni Achievement Award, and Doha El Zein Halawi (BA '81), who took home the Alumni Recognition Award.

Later the same week, the Byblos Reunion was a casual affair, with guests enjoying the sunset from the terrace in front of the Frem Civic Center. A guitar

player serenaded alumni from all the classes since Byblos graduated its first cohort in the 1990s.

At the Beirut Reunion the next day, more than 350 alumni reminisced over their days on Beirut campus, some from when it was still known as Beirut College for Women (until 1973) and Beirut University College (until 1994).

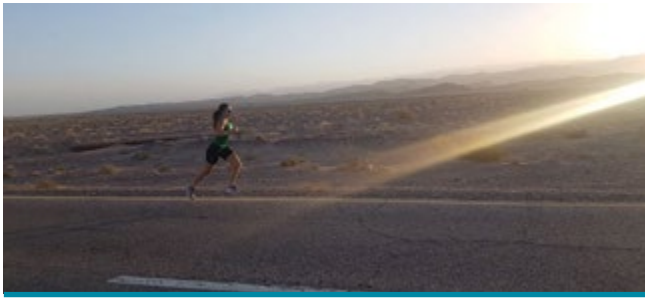
The week wrapped up with a casual Saturday brunch at Beirut's scenic Zaytounay Bay during which over 100 alumni had a chance to engage with LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, Board of Trustees Chairman Philip Stoltzfus, trustee Cheryl G. Murer, and LAUers young and old.

"A university without its alumni has no value, because at the end of the day they have a genuine, permanent interest in the university," said Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations Abdallah Al Khal.

Addressing all LAU graduates, he added: "Come back to campus and enjoy it – it's your home."



Campus Notes



From Dead to Red

Between March 7 and 10, 2018, the LAU Track and Field Varsity Team headed to Jordan to compete in one of the world's toughest desert challenges: The Dead to Red Road Race. The two-day race stretched over 242 kilometers, starting below sea level at the Dead Sea (Amman) and ending at the Red Sea (Aqaba) on the border of Saudi Arabia. Led by Coach Mohamad Mawas, the team of 10 student runners and one alumnus scored second place in the semi-marathon relay.



Editing Women into History

On March 10, LAU translation students participated in an Edit-a-Thon by translating Wikipedia articles from English into Arabic. In so doing, they helped increase the content related to women and gender equality on Wikipedia Arabic, narrowing the gender knowledge gap and raising awareness on women who have made a difference. The event was organized by Fe-Male as part of the global project Her Story, supported by UN Women, the Wikipedia community, and the UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth.

Connecting Students with Employers

Excited students buzzed around the lower Beirut campus on March 12 and 13 at the annual Career and Internship Fair. A large tent near the tennis court hosted dozens of booths from companies eager to attract Lebanon's next generation of talent. Students spoke with representatives of both local and international organizations about what they could offer each other. A large number of students walked away with new opportunities and connections.



Recognition for a Lifetime of Achievement

LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra gave an impassioned speech after receiving the Ray R. Irani Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL) in Washington, DC, in April. He thanked the ATFL and dedicated the award to the memory of his parents, who, he said, "gave me one piece of advice: Serve people, no matter who you are and what you become in the future."

In his address to the audience, Jabbra noted how LAU "grew out of a true love story" between a preacher and his wife, who went on to create the first school for women in the Ottoman Empire, which eventually became LAU. "Now LAU is a thriving institution – a powerhouse in higher education, not only in Lebanon, not only in the Middle East, but beyond."

Audience members – who included delegates from USAID, American Schools and Hospitals Abroad, US-Middle East Partnership Initiative and more – were uplifted by Jabbra's invocation of the importance of education in pushing Lebanon and the region forward.

"Our passionate commitment to higher education, to the democratic value it proclaims, to the rule of law that it advocates, to the pursuit of truth that it supports, and to the commitment to human dignity that is so essential to any thriving society – this is something that we feel very strongly about. And as a result of that, we have become agents of change in the entire region," he proclaimed to cheers from the audience.

In closing, Jabbra told the crowd, "The best gift in life is to give without expecting anything in return."



Take a Flower

On March 21, Mother's Day, LAU handed out flowers on its campuses for students, faculty and staff alike to give to mothers they know and love. The HR Department also sent small potted plants to women on campus as part of LAU's month-long celebration of International Women's Day. The plants featured a quote by Kahlil Gibran: "Women open the windows of my eyes and the doors of my spirit."

Lunch and Learn

From mid-March through mid-April, the English Department hosted a series of six lunchtime lectures on different topics in literature, linguistics and related areas. The purpose of the lecture series was "to provide an informal forum for various speakers – including faculty members, guests and alumni – to present to the LAU community an idea, topic or project that they have been working on," said Rula Diab, chair of the English Department.

Lights Off

Between 8:30 and 9:30 the night of March 24, LAU's Beirut and Byblos campuses turned off their lights and closed down non-essential equipment. It was the university's way of marking Earth Hour, when people across the globe shut down their electric devices for one hour to mark their commitment to protecting the environment. "Earth Hour is just a moment, but this is meant to influence human lives and act responsibly toward Mother Nature, the source of life," said Roger Haddad, director of the Physical Plant in Beirut. "In this sense, LAU's participation in Earth Hour reflects LAU's commitment to educate the whole person and assure a better tomorrow."

Fair Days

The LAU Arts & Sciences Fair drew hundreds of high school students to both campuses on April 12, 13 and 27, coinciding with the 20th anniversary of the event on the Byblos campus and the fifth anniversary on Beirut's campus. Students were invited to take part in academic and intellectual competitions, with scholarships awarded as prizes. The final ceremony took place in Byblos' Selina Korban Auditorium to celebrate the winners.

YOU@LAU Career Exploration Day

Prospective students were given a look at what it takes to be an LAUer on April 14 and 21 on the Beirut and Byblos campuses, respectively. High schoolers from across Lebanon were invited to explore the university's majors, services and career opportunities. Students attended speeches, took tours of the facilities, and spoke to current students and faculty about LAU. You@LAU has been successfully spreading the word on the advantages of an LAU education since 2009.



Welcome to Casino El-Ons

Casino el-Ons, a large and eclectic musical play directed by Assistant Professor of Music Amr Selim and LAU alumnus Awad Awad, burst onto the theater scene April 10. The satirical show – which boasted a 39-member cast that included musicians, actors, singers and dancers – was a collaborative work tackling a number of themes relevant to today's times, such as corruption, the dissemination of information, and the influence of social media. The play featured dialogue spoken mostly in the Egyptian dialect and a score made up of reworked songs and originals by Selim and other cast and crewmembers.



Artificial Intelligence vs. the Human Mind

Audience members at the AI Rivals Human Music Composers event on Byblos campus were given a chance to hear songs and guess whether they were composed by humans or an Artificial Intelligence system designed by Ralph Abboud, an LAU computer engineering alumnus (BE '17) and current graduate student in computer science at Oxford University, along with LAU Assistant Professor of Engineering Joe Tekli. In some cases, the AI pieces were so moving, the audience thought they were human-written songs. While many people are wary of the increasing sophistication of AI, Tekli stresses that it allows for "a better understanding of the very nature of the human mind and psyche, unraveling the mysteries of human intelligence."

Celebrating Heritage

LAU's International Heritage Day was held on April 11 on Beirut campus. The event, which has become a highly anticipated LAU tradition, was organized by student clubs so that members could celebrate their heritage and learn about others'. Of the 78 different nationalities on campus, seven were spotlighted at the event, which also featured traditional costumes, music, dances and cultural activities.

Students from the Indian, Palestinian, Armenian, Japanese, Syrian, Saudi and Lebanese clubs worked together for months to make sure their booths represented their heritage and aspects of their country that they cherished.

"Heritage Day is one of the major events that we have been holding for more than 10 years now, to introduce students to a variety of cultures and to promote diversity," said Raed Mohsen, dean of students on Beirut campus.



BMW MOU

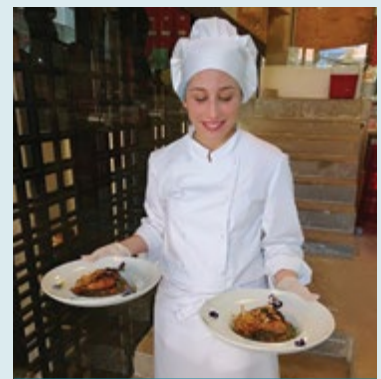
The Bavarian Motor Works (BMW) Group sent representatives to LAU on April 17 to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will offer undergraduate and graduate students at the School of Engineering internships at the company's seat in Munich, Germany. The five-year agreement allows students to conduct six-to-12-month internships in all branches of engineering.

The BMW representatives toured the new Engineering Lab and Research Center on the Byblos campus, viewing the extensive, state-of-the-art equipment the School of Engineering uses for both faculty research and student instruction. What makes LAU students a good fit for the company's internships, BMW IT Manager Markus Boenisch said during the tour, is that "they are very well educated, and they are very well equipped to work in a diverse, innovative company like BMW."



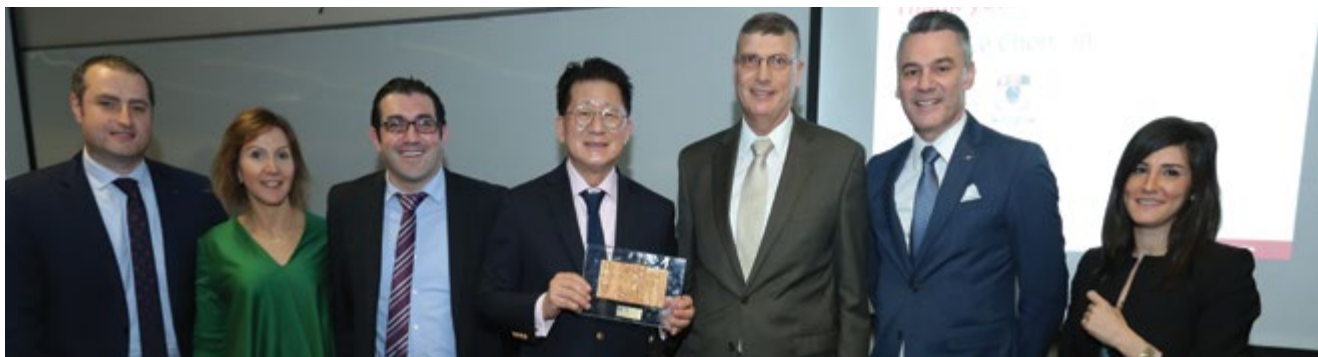
Andalus in Beirut

In mid-April, the School of Architecture and Design (SARd) hosted an exhibition of photographs from the Andalusian Legacy Foundation (Legado Andalusi) at the Sheikh Zayed Gallery on Beirut campus. The photographs featured stunning images of sites and monuments in the Spanish region of al-Andalus, which was under Moorish influence for centuries. The exhibition was part of a continuous cultural and academic collaboration between Legado Andalusi and SARd's Institute of Islamic Art and Architecture.



First-Prize Cooking

AKSOB hospitality management student Lina Abadi won first prize in an inter-university competition held by l'Académie Libanaise de la Gastronomie. The competition took place Saturday April 14 at the Kitchen Lab in Achrafieh. Abadi took home an \$800 prize and won an internship at an eatery owned by famed restaurateur Alain Ducasse.



The Future of Hospitality

The future of hospitality is in Asia, said Kaye Chon, professor and dean at the School of Hotel and Tourism Management at Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He was speaking to students and faculty at Adnan Kassar School of Business about the East Asian perspective on hospitality and tourism, and how it is shaping the industry. In addition to his lecture, Chon reviewed AKSOB's BS in Hospitality and Tourism

Management program, the only such program in the country accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Also in attendance were distinguished outside guests, including resort, restaurant and hotel managers, as well as Chair of the American University of Science and Technology's Hospitality Department Wael Zaraket.



Bike to Work (and School)

LAU's Cycling Club decided to combine their passion for bicycling with the need to reduce traffic congestion around the university. On April 25, they participated in Bike to Work Day, an annual activity organized by Chain Effect, a pro-cycling group. LAU is Lebanon's top university taking part in Bike to Work Day, with 106 registered participants, including faculty, staff and students. Jana el-Hajj, second-year civil engineering student and president of the Cycling Club, said, "Cyclists came from Sadd el-Bouchrieh, some came from Hazmieh, and I cycled from Baabda. I am definitely doing this again next year."

An Outstanding Delegation

LAU's Model Arab League delegation won the Outstanding Delegation Award at the National High School Conference organized by the National Council on US-Arab Relations at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. The delegation was made up of six high school students from five different schools in Lebanon, headed by this year's secretary general, Sandrine Frem. In addition, each of the six students won the Outstanding Delegate Award. The event took place on April 21 and 22. This is the third consecutive year the LAU team has won Outstanding Delegation.



Ask DAAD

How do norms around research differ by country? On April 19, the Graduate Studies and Research Office organized a workshop to introduce LAU faculty to the "German research landscape." The workshop was delivered with the help of DAAD — the German Academic Exchange Service. DAAD Director Bahar Sayyas spoke about the specificities of German research infrastructure within different types of institutions. She noted that research opportunities funded by German institutions do not impose eligibility constraints on nationality, and explained different types of funding opportunities. Faculty from both Byblos and Beirut attended. Chairperson of the Department of Communication Arts Jad Melki briefed the audience on his experience with research funded by various German foundations and state institutions. Associate Chair of the Department of Computer Science and Mathematics Rony Touma noted the professionalism of German scholars during his speech. The relationship between LAU and DAAD goes back to October 2017, when Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Elise Salem represented the university as part of an "information delegation" in Germany and invited Sayyas to LAU. Having a DAAD office in Beirut with a dynamic director is a major resource for LAU researchers, she said.



Being a Good Sport

For the fifth year in a row, teams of representatives from LAU departments competed in informal basketball and football tournaments for bragging rights on campus. Participating teams came from the Business Office, IT, Protection, the Supply Office, and Auxiliary Services. Three-time champions the Protection team won the final football game on May 14, beating IT two to one. Director of Protection Ahmad Hassouna trained the players on the winning team. "We have won against IT three years in a row. Everybody was waiting to see us lose, but it didn't happen," he joked.

In the basketball tournament, the Business Office came back against expectations after losing a couple of matches in the round-robin phase and defeated the Business School 11 to five in the title game.



Best Buddies

On Saturday, May 19, nine LAU students gathered at the Jeita Country Club for a party with people who have intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). The party was thrown by international non-profit Best Buddies, whose Friendship Program gives those with IDD a chance to interact and socialize, building their self-esteem and creating an environment of inclusion. Best Buddies Lebanon President and Executive Director Pascale Khalil said, "We chose LAU students to be part of the event for the awareness, understanding, respect and love they showed for disabled people." For LAU student volunteer Sarah Hallaj, "Joining Best Buddies was about reaching out to children with disabilities and offering them the human bond that all people deserve. The goal is to show those kids that they are part of our society, that they matter, and that they have someone who cares about them."

LAU Hosts Registrars from Across Lebanon

Earlier in 2018, registrar heads and staff from different universities in Lebanon joined efforts to form a first-of-its-kind professional entity, the Forum of Registrars in Lebanon, which will meet twice a year to share best practices, discuss common challenges, and learn from its regional and international counterparts. LAU hosted the organization's second meeting in May on Byblos campus. It was attended by more than 20 university registrars and staff from the American University of Beirut, Antonine University, Beirut Arab University, Haigazian University, Holy Spirit University of Kaslik, Islamic University in Lebanon, Lebanese University, Middle East University, Notre Dame University, Sagesse University, Saint Joseph University, Université de la Sainte Famille Batroun, University of Balamand, and LAU.

"As the forum is still in the process of establishing itself as a formal professional entity, the attendees discussed the draft bylaws of the forum and some key challenges facing all universities," explained Annie Lajinian-Magarian, LAU's university registrar, who is hopeful that the forum will provide a platform of partnership with other universities. "We are excited to have formed this community of learning and aim to raise the bar for academic excellence," she added.

An Embrace of Continuing Medical Education

The Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology, in collaboration with Collège National des Gynécologues Obstétriciens Français, held a day of training hosted by the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the LAU Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine and the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital on May 26. The occasion drew OBGYNs, students and resident doctors, who learned about the latest advances from leaders in the field. Attendees were also granted Continuing Medical Education credits for the event. LAU is a leader in continuing education, ensuring that its students, faculty and staff are able to learn of new advances and keep up to date with innovations in their disciplines.

Walking for Peace

The Palestinian Cultural Club invited Swedish-Algerian activist Benjamin Ladraa to talk about his trip from Sweden to Palestine on foot. Having left Sweden in August 2017, he journeyed south through Europe, taking his first means of transport – in the form of a boat – from Silifke in Turkey to Tripoli in North Lebanon, only because safety concerns prevented him from crossing Syria. He then continued his journey to the southern tip of the Lebanese-Israeli border to make a symbolic statement before leaving Lebanon.

A Bit of Italy on Campus

A representative from the Italian Embassy in Lebanon sat in on an early-July class where LAU students were enjoying an opportunity to learn Italian from a native instructor. Offered during the summer and fall 2018 semesters, Beginning Italian and Italian II courses are a contribution from the Italian Embassy and Italian Cultural Institute, which have funded an instructor to teach full time for two semesters. "Our goal is to expand the number of Lebanese university students developing an interest in the Italian language, with funding coming from a special plan called Vivere all'Italiana, which is the brainchild of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and international co-operation," explained Edoardo Crisafulli, director of the Italian Cultural Institute and continuous supporter of LAU. So far, there has been strong interest among LAU students for the summer-semester courses, which are offered on both campuses, with 25 students in the Beirut class and 17 in the Byblos one.

Loving Solutions

On June 25, the Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB) inaugurated the Nabil Bustros and Family Distinguished Lecture Series, following a generous personal donation to LAU, by hosting Stephen Gillett, CEO and co-founder of Alphabet's Chronicle. The inaugural workshop drew more than 150 students, alumni, faculty, and leaders of the LAU and business community – including Nabil Bustros – for the dynamic discussion and reception that followed. Gillett told those in the audience not to be too caught up with the solutions that they create but instead to "fall in love with the problems" and focus on how to fix them.



GRADUATIONS

Honors Program Graduation

In early April, LAU's Honors Program – the only one of its kind in the Middle East – celebrated its first two cohorts of graduating students from the classes of 2017 and 2018 at a ceremony held on Byblos campus and attended by the Advisor to the Minister of Education and Higher Education Jinane Chaaban, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, Provost George K. Najjar, and deans of schools, faculty and proud parents.

University Scholarship Program Class of 2018 Celebrated

The Outreach and Civic Engagement Unit held a celebration recognizing members of the University Scholarship Program's Class of 2018 on May 21. Graduates were honored in the presence of their parents, members of the LAU community, representatives from USAID and the US Embassy, as well as partners from the American University of Beirut.

MEPI-TL Scholars Graduate

Students, faculty members, LAU officials and the US ambassador to Lebanon convened on May 31 to celebrate graduates of the LAU-Middle East Partnership Initiative-Tomorrow's Leaders (MEPI-TL) program. With pride and excitement, the young leaders received certificates and rings and recalled some unforgettable memories from their journeys. Highlighting the diversity of the TL community, with students coming from 10 different Arab countries, MEPI-TL Program Director Dina Abdul Rahman told the graduates, "I commend you all for learning the big lesson of acceptance, tolerance and communication. This is the biggest strength of any leader, and leaders you are!"

ARCSON Recognition and Pinning Ceremony

The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON) held its annual Recognition and Pinning Ceremony May 29 on Byblos campus, where the school is located. Keynote speaker Naeema Al-Gasseer of the World Health Organization joined ARCSON's dean, faculty and generous award sponsors at the ceremony. "The School of Nursing has a very unique spirit," said President Jabbra. "A spirit to serve each other, to serve society, and to do whatever we can to help our young people in the nursing profession."

School of Medicine's Annual Hooding Ceremony

Lebanon's newest doctors were celebrated at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine's annual Hooding Ceremony on Byblos campus the evening of June 2. Keynote speaker Reverend Malek Boutanos told the crowd, "Every person resembles his pain, and this pain can turn into darkness and isolation, but doctors are the ones who can break the isolation and darkness they face."

Medical White Coat Ceremony

A week after the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine's annual Hooding Ceremony, new doctors received their white coats at the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital in Beirut. Dean of the School of Medicine Dr. Michel Mawad told the graduates, "All lives are of equal worth. Your conscience and your heart must be as clean as this white coat."

SOP Hooding Ceremony

New graduates of the School of Pharmacy were honored at the SOP's Hooding Ceremony July 19 at Byblos campus' Selina Korban Auditorium.

Alumni Update

JANUARY 2018



Happy Hour in DC

On January 25, the Washington, DC Alumni Chapter of LAU gathered for Happy Hour at Myron Mixon's Pitmaster BBQ in Old Town Alexandria.

FEBRUARY 2018



Mini Studio

Dozens of children gathered on Beirut campus February 24 for an afternoon with characters from the Lebanese show Mini Studio, who had the kids dancing, singing and playing on stage.

Nour

In collaboration with the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, the Alumni Relations Office hosted a screening of the film *Nour*, which deals with child marriage, on February 26 in Beirut. Also present at the screening were LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra and the film's director, LAU alumnus Khalil Dreyfus Zaarour, who was presented with the Alumni Award of Excellence.

MARCH 2018



25th on the 1st

The first day of March, the Abu Dhabi Chapter held its 25th annual dinner at the Rotana Beach Hotel. Guests partied the night away at one of the biggest gatherings of the year.

Open Day in Kuwait

On March 2, the Kuwait Chapter organized its 11th annual Open Day. Attending from Beirut were Associate Director of Alumni Relations Ghada Majed, representing the Alumni Office, in addition to former president of the Kuwait Chapter Youmna Salame and former president of the Alumni Association Board Leila Dagher. More than 400 alumni with their families and friends enjoyed the party!



One Emirate Over...

A day after the Abu Dhabi Chapter's big gala was the Dubai Chapter's. Hundreds gathered at the Roda Al Bustan Hotel in Dubai for its 40th annual gala on March 2. Like every year, the event was a great success!

What's New Down Under

In line with its initiative to start and support new alumni chapters, LAU welcomed its newest one, just about as far from Lebanon as possible – in Sydney, Australia! Graduates living Down Under celebrated the launch on March 6 in the presence of President Jabbra, Senior Advisor to the President for Public Affairs Christian Oussi, and Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations Abdallah Al Khal.



Finding Your Feet

Alumnae of Beirut College for Women – the name of LAU until it integrated men in 1973 – gathered for a screening of *Finding Your Feet*, a British romantic comedy, on March 7.



Networking

The Washington, DC Alumni Chapter partnered with JBC Events for a networking gathering on March 14, held at Wilson Hardware restaurant and pub in Arlington, VA.

MARCH 2018



The Art of Behavior

On March 15, alumnus and leadership coach Ihab Badawi gave a lecture called Mastering the Art of Behavior to a packed house on Beirut campus. The event was part of the Keep Learning Alumni Lecture Series.



Good Times at Finicia

The FINICIA Modern Lebanese Kitchen was the location of the Toronto Chapter's annual dinner, held on March 23. With over 70 alumni and friends in attendance, the dinner provided excellent food, live Middle Eastern music and a fun raffle.



In Honor of Dr. Jabbra

President Jabbra was the guest of honor at the Michigan Chapter's dinner at the Andiamo Livonia restaurant on March 23.

APRIL 2018

Pearl in Manama

Global strategic planning and implementation expert Mona Pearl was the guest of honor at a lecture on managing cross-cultural differences in business hosted by the Bahrain Chapter in Manama on April 11. The entrepreneur, author and consultant spoke to guests about driving intercultural teams toward success in a dynamic and diverse working environment.



A Blast from the Past

Members of the Oman Chapter convened at the exclusive Kempinski Hotel in Muscat for its 10th annual ball on April 20. The theme was A Blast from the Past Gatsby Night, and the attendees certainly had a blast!



Good for Your Health

On April 23, dozens of former Nutrition Program students gathered at their alma mater to reconnect, network and muse over good times spent together as students. Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences Nashat Mansour told alumni, "No matter when you graduated or where you end up, we want to make sure you feel you are still part of the LAU family."



Future Alumni

Final-year LAU students were treated to the Senior Student Orientation Event over two days on each campus in April. The Alumni Relations Office introduced the future graduates to the Alumni Association and taught them about the benefits of keeping up with their alma mater after commencement. The attendees – nearly 600 across the two campuses – enjoyed refreshments, and each received a leather business card holder with a brass plaque reading "LAU Alumni Association Class of 2018" as a souvenir.



Spring into Spring

The Byblos Chapter organized their spring gathering at Memory Lane in the Beirut neighborhood of Mar Mikhael on April 28. More than 80 alumni and friends enjoyed the gathering.

MAY 2018



Welcome to DC

President Jabbara was the guest of honor at the DC Chapter's dinner on May 3.

Back to Business

Back in Beirut on May 3, the Alumni Relations Office hosted its 12th annual Business Networking Reception in collaboration with the Offices of the Deans of Students. Around 300 people attended a lively panel discussion among HR representatives from leading local and international companies, moderated by Vice President of Human Resources and University Services Roy Majdalani.

Nour in New England

The New England Alumni Chapter hosted a screening of *Nour* by LAU alumnus Khalil Dreyfus Zaarour at the Belmont Studio Cinema in Belmont, Massachusetts. Chapter members also enjoyed dinner together and wrapped up the night by celebrating Zaarour's birthday.

Honoring Alumna Rima Maktabi

Topping off a colorful week of workshops, performances, screenings, competitions and more, the closing ceremony of Festival Next brought into the spotlight renowned journalist, public figure and LAU alumna Rima Maktabi (BA '00, MA '03) at Gulbenkian Theatre on May 11. Maktabi was honored by the Communication Arts Department in collaboration with the Alumni Relations Office.

Beirut Brunch

The Beirut Chapter organized its annual brunch at Boulevard Beirut with a special appearance from actor and LAU alumnus Tala Jurdi on May 12. More than 120 alumni and friends attended.



Take a Hike

The DC Alumni Chapter joined American Friends of the Lebanon Mountain Trail and the House of Steep for a special Mother's Day hike through Gulf Branch Park on May 13.

One More Match

Also on May 13 was Alumni Athletics Day, organized jointly by the Alumni Relations Office and the Athletics Department. The event, which occurred on Beirut campus, included games of basketball, football, futsal, handball, tennis, table tennis and volleyball. It was a chance for former varsity athletes to come back to campus and play against their past classmates as well as with current student athletes.

Lebanese Hospitality in Texas

Visiting LAU pharmacy students got a taste of Lebanese hospitality in the US when they and members of the Houston Chapter were invited to the home of alumna Tania Shaheen and her husband Wissam Tayssoun on May 22. The annual dinner is an opportunity to share memories, network and build lifelong connections.

Bahrain Ghabga

The Bahrain Chapter organized a Ramadan ghabga – a local term for celebratory gathering – on May 24 at the Gulf Hotel's Ramadan tent. Ghada Majed of the Alumni Office in Beirut joined for this year's highly anticipated event.

Art and BBQ

Members of the Ottawa Chapter brought their family and friends to the newly renovated Ottawa Art Gallery on May 27.

Kuwait Ghabga

Kuwait-based alumni gathered at the Symphony Style Hotel for their chapter's Ramadan ghabga on May 29. The event gathered more than 180 alumni and friends.

Iftar in DC

The DC Chapter commemorated the holy month of Ramadan with an Iftar dinner on May 31.

Joint Suhour

Alumni from a group of private Lebanese universities – including LAU – gathered in Doha, Qatar for the first-ever joint Ramadan suhour there on May 31.

JUNE 2018



Family Fun in Seattle

Over on the US West Coast, the Seattle Alumni Chapter spent the day searching for the perfect game at the TechCity Bowl and Family Fun Center on June 2.

Former LAU President Granted Highest Honor in Lebanon

By Louisa Ajami

Riyad Nassar was presented with the prestigious National Order of the Cedar award



"Dr. Nassar's leadership helped lay the groundwork for the amazing success of LAU."

Lebanese President General Michel Aoun inducted former LAU President Riyad Nassar into the National Order of the Cedar on March 28. It is the highest military and civilian honor in Lebanon, given for dedication to the country, acts of courage and years of public service. Among his many accomplishments, Nassar stood at the helm of the Lebanese American University for 22 years. The award is a testament to his achievements and the lives he touched.

Nassar was born in the village of Monsef in 1934 to parents who valued education but had not had the opportunity to get much schooling themselves. He excelled in school and received a BS and MS from the American University of Beirut in chemistry before moving to America to complete his PhD at Georgia Tech University in Atlanta.

Nassar spent his entire career at LAU, beginning when it was the Beirut College for Women (BCW) in 1965. He started as an assistant professor of chemistry before working his way up to become dean of the college in 1971. He was extremely active during his tenure as dean, expanding courses, infusing the college with grant money, bringing in top faculty, launching institutes, and starting the financial aid program, among many other accomplishments.

Throughout his time at the college, his open mind and willingness to cooperate in getting things done helped him advance the institution's goals and his own career. As a male professor at a women's college, he was sometimes asked about working under female superiors. (BCW became co-educational in 1973, renaming itself Beirut University College, or BUC for short.) "I have always felt comfortable about working with men and women alike," he wrote in his autobiography *My Life Story with the Lebanese American University*. "My teaching at a women's college gave me a special opportunity to observe the development of the role of women in Middle Eastern society over a span of 40 years."

He cites the tumultuous years between the beginning of his tenure and the outbreak of the Lebanese civil war in 1975 as an important time for women in the



region, during which they were a major part of the social and political movements that changed the Middle East and the world.

He became president of BUC in 1982 and navigated not only the academic, administrative and student-related aspects of the job, but also the deteriorating security situation outside the gates, which sometimes seeped onto campus.

After the war ended, Nassar oversaw BUC's expansion into Byblos with a large, new campus, and the inauguration of LAU as a university in 1994. He arranged international partnerships, launched new programs, organized collaborative events, and steered the university toward a culture of inclusivity, dynamism and innovation, values still enshrined in LAU's mission today.

Part of his legacy can be appreciated daily at LAU, in the Riyad Nassar Library on Beirut campus, inaugurated a year after his retirement in 2005.

"Dr. Nassar's leadership helped lay the groundwork for the amazing success of LAU, and BCW and BUC before it," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra. "Thanks to his dedication and vision, we can proudly call ourselves a leading university that embraces progress, hard work and diversity for the good of our students, our community and our country."

At the Order of the Cedar ceremony, Nassar thanked President Aoun and the government for their support. "I am honored for the opportunity to contribute to the continuing efforts to build up this country, because culture and higher education in Lebanon are extremely important," he said.

Staying Connected



Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi

Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi has done a lot since graduating from LAU with a BA in fine arts in 1976. After receiving an MA in Arabic literature from the American University of Beirut and a PhD in the history of Islamic art and architecture from Harvard, she held a number of prominent positions, including being a researcher at the Kuwaiti Department of Antiquities and the Kuwait National Museum; director of publications at the National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters (NCCAL) in Kuwait; and the founder and director of the Department of Research and Cultural Studies at NCCAL. Hijjawi-Qaddumi is currently president of the World Crafts Council-Asia Pacific Region (WCC-APR). She is the proud mother of two sons and grandmother of four, two of whom are LAU graduates. In addition, she has three great-grandchildren, the youngest of whom is almost a year old.

Now a resident of Doha, Qatar, **Ghassan Kreidie** graduated with a BS in 1984. He was head of information security for Group Qatar National Bank for 25 years and is currently partner and director of technology and information security at InteSol Lebanon.

Samia Abouzeid Khoury lives in Plainsboro, New Jersey and works as a financial sales consultant. She graduated from LAU with a BA in interior design in 1984. Three of her four kids have graduated from college, and the youngest is starting next year.

Sawsan Mujahed Darwaza received her BA in communication arts in 1985. She has had an extensive career, as president and co-founder of Ma3mal 612 Think Factory, president of the Jordan Center of ITI-International Theater Institute, theater and film director at Mir'at Media Production Company, and CEO and owner of Pioneers Production Company. She is currently the festival director and co-founder of Karama Human. She lives in Amman, Jordan. Following in her footsteps, Darwaza's oldest daughter graduated from LAU with a BA in communication arts. Her youngest graduated from AUB this spring.

Nabil Iskandarani is a general manager at Naser Mohamed AL-Sayer Communication Co. and lives in Kuwait with his wife and three daughters. He graduated from LAU with a BS in business management in 1985.

Dima Dabbous graduated with a BA in communication arts in 1987 and went on to receive an MA in media studies in Canada and a PhD in media law in the UK. She is now assistant dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Phoenicia University and a gender specialist with USAID. She is a former director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World at LAU (2005 – 2013) and was a visiting researcher at Stanford University in California in 2014.

Now a resident of Qatar, **Mohamad Ahmad Jarrah** works as a director of finance. He graduated from LAU with a BS in business management in 1992. He has a young daughter named Layan.

English Language Teacher and Instructor **Toufic Hasan Shoucair** graduated with a BA and TD in teaching English as a foreign language in 1992. He has been teaching since graduation and has experience in education management. He also has a certificate in the Teaching Knowledge Test from University of Cambridge. He lives in Beirut and is the father of an LAU biology major.

Lina Abdel Rahman Fakhoury graduated from LAU with a BA in communication arts

and journalism in 1994. She lives in Beirut, where she works as director of information and promotion at the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon. Her 18-year-old son is studying mechanical engineering at AUB, and her 16-year-old daughter is looking forward to studying communication arts at LAU.

After finishing her BS in business marketing in 1994, **Diana Khalil** attended Newport University in Wales, where she received a master's degree with distinction. She is currently the operations and country sales manager for a Turkish industrial company in Lebanon. She lives in Badaro with her three children, Rayan (13 years), Adam (11 years) and Kaya (5 years).

Maher Hammoud earned his MBA in 1997 before attending the London Business School. He holds a master's in finance. He now lives in Riyadh, where he is vice president and head of Private Equity and Corporate Development at Olayan Financing Company. He was previously managing director at Shuaa Capital and a senior associate at Booz & Co. He is married with three children.

After spending a decade in Qatar, **Loucia Yousef**, who graduated from LAU with a BA in 1999, made a major life change: She went vegan and moved herself and her family to the Dvin area of Armenia to open the country's first plant-based vegan kitchen run by her organization Elle & Vie, opening this September.

Sandra Abrass received her BA communication arts in 2000. She is a filmmaker, editor and producer who lives in Beirut and is currently pursuing a master's degree in filmmaking at l'École Supérieure d'Audiovisuel in Toulouse, France.

Dohat Aramoun resident **Nancy Jundi** graduated from LAU with a BS in hospitality management in 2000 and now works as the head of customer service at Bankmed. She is married with three kids.

Ihab Omeich earned his MBA in 2001 and now works as a purchasing manager for

Sodexo, an international catering company with an office in Kuwait. With Sodexo, he recently conducted a two-week training session in Amman, Jordan as part of the Healthy Kitchen project, which helps schools supported by the World Food Programme improve their fresh food supply chain.

After receiving her BS in business marketing in 2002, **Zeina Baaklini** worked as a marketing director at Unilever Dubai and then as a marketing manager for Emaar Properties. She is now the owner and general manager of Live Organic s.a.l., a distributor of organic and healthy products for the Middle East. She also owns the two largest specialty organic stores in Lebanon, in New Naccache and Achrafieh.

Rabee Cheikh Mohammed Shams

received his BS in management in 2003 and his MBA from LAU as well. He has worked in management, operations and insurance and lives in Lebanon with his wife and two kids.

Mahmoud Natout graduated from LAU with a BA in psychology in 2004. He attended the University of Oxford for his master's and PhD. He has worked as a visiting assistant professor in education at LAU, and as a consultant, researcher and trainer. He is now the co-founder of L3b Consultancy and Training.

Now living in Qatar, **Samer Tay Bou Dargham** graduated with a BS in computer science in 2006. He then moved to the Netherlands to attend Maastricht University for a degree in general and strategic management. He also received an executive MBA in business management from HEC Paris. He now works at Alfardan Premier Motors as the general manager.

Celine Mohamad Atwi received her BS in graphic design in 2007 before heading off to Grenoble Graduate School of Business in France, where she earned an MS in fashion, design and luxury management. Now a resident of Houston, Texas, Atwi is an entrepreneur and co-founder of

the site theprettyandsimple.com for the Middle East and Gulf regions. She previously taught graphic design and visual communication at the Lebanese University, Hadath campus. She is married and has a young daughter.

Wissam Abil Mouna earned his BS in business economics in 2009 and his MBA in 2011. He received a diploma from the Digital Marketing Institute in Ireland. Now living in Dubai, he is a digital marketing manager and conducts business development and market research. He has been married since 2015.

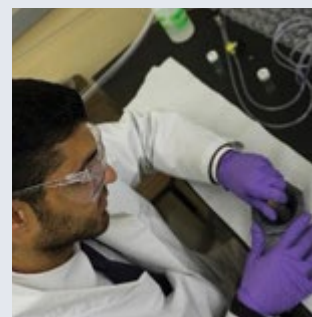
Makram Rasamny is a business development manager at Rymco and lives in Beirut. He graduated from LAU in 2009 with a degree in business management.

Elie Hanna Massoud received his BS in computer science in 2010. He was the lead application developer at CCC for eight years before founding Lebtron s.a.l. He lives in Jdeideh and is getting married this year.

After receiving his BArch from LAU in 2011, **Tarek Ibrahim** went back to obtain his MA in Islamic art and architecture, graduating in 2017. He currently works at Paseo Architecture in Lebanon's Chouf region.

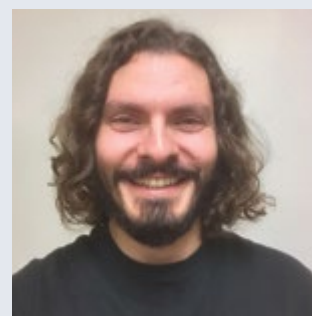
Majd Touza lives in New York, where he works as a project engineer. After receiving his BE from LAU in civil engineering in 2011, he moved to New York City to attend Cooper Union School of Engineering for his master's degree. He is getting married this year.

Ghada Merhi Bleik graduated in 2013 with an MA in education. While working on her master's at LAU, she had a son, and defended her thesis while eight months pregnant with her daughter, who is now almost five. She says her MA helped her get a job at City International School, where she currently works. Bleik is now working on another MA in educational psychology with a focus on school guidance and counseling, and should be graduating next year.



Mohamad Kabbani

Mohamad Kabbani graduated from LAU with a BS in chemistry in 2012 before pursuing his PhD at Rice University in Texas and postdoctoral fellowships at University of California, Berkeley. He was part of a team of researchers in the US that found a simple and economical way to turn functionalized graphene into pellets of graphite for use in a number of industrial products and applications. Kabbani co-authored the team's research paper, published in the journal *Carbon*, together with his father Ahmad Kabbani, a professor of chemistry at LAU's School of Arts and Sciences. The younger Kabbani now works for Shell Corporation in Texas.



Rabih Younes

Rabih Halim Younes obtained his MSE in computer engineering in 2013. He completed his PhD at Virginia Tech in the US and now lives in Durham, North Carolina, where he is assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Duke University. He was recently married.

Serge Kajaer Koujanian is a resident physician, PGY2 in general pathology at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. He graduated from LAU's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine in 2014.

Hanaa Hussein moved to Sweden after finishing her BS in nutrition in 2014. She studied international health at Uppsala University and is now a health officer at a Swedish governmental institute. She is also studying for her master's in food technology at Lund University. She is married and has a baby daughter.

Now living in Hadath, Lebanon, **Mohamad Hasan Sweidan** is the owner of a trading company that sells shaving supplies to wholesalers. After graduating from LAU with a BS in business in 2014, he received an executive MBA from Lebanese Canadian University. He is now married and the father of a baby girl.

Jack Kassab received his EMBA in 2014 and went on to receive his doctorate in business administration from Balamand University. He is now co-owner and manager of three companies: Société Kassab s.a.r.l., which sells stationary and office supplies; Trade Plus, which makes toys, gifts and decorations; and Wizard Solutions, a software provider. One of his daughters graduated from LAU in 2017 with a bachelor's in business marketing, and another is currently in her first year studying pharmacy. A third daughter graduated this year from Lebanese Academy of Fine Arts as an architect. Kassab lives in Jal el Dib.

Upon graduating with an EMBA in 2015, **Hiba Farhat** took a job at Blom Bank, s.a.l., where she focuses on customer service.

After **Nizar Akram Mezher** received his bachelor's in interior architecture from LAU in 2015, he moved to Milan, Italy to study at Nuova Accademia di Belle Arti, where he is working toward his MA in interior design and is in line to graduate cum laude.

Mohamad Ali El-Yafi graduated with a BS in business in 2015. He then headed

to Barcelona, where he currently lives, to work toward his master's in sports management and legal skills with Futbol Club Barcelona at Instituto Superior de Derecho y Economia. He is now head of the International Department at the Catalan Tennis Federation.

Psychology major **Nada Abdel Jalil Arabi** moved to Dubai after graduating with a BA in 2016. She now works as the general manager at KidCare Pediatric Clinic, Dubai Health Care City.

Mohamad Elmordaa received his BE in computer engineering in 2016 and is currently looking for work in his field.

Biology major **Hussam Ayman Fatayri** got his BS in biology in 2016. He now lives in Lancashire, UK, where he received his MSc in criminal investigation. He is currently looking for work in the UK and abroad.

After obtaining his BS in business in 2016, **Anthony Elie Simon** moved to Paris to work toward his MSc in financial markets and investments at Skema Business School. He recently joined Wavestone Luxembourg for an end-of-study internship in asset management. He passed the Chartered Financial Analyst Level 1 exam and will soon sit for the Financial Risk Manager Level 1 exam.

Robert Abed received his MD in general medicine from the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine in 2017. He moved on to Columbia University, where he received his master's in public health. He now works in New York City at Mount Sinai St. Luke's Hospital as an internal medicine resident. He is engaged to be married.

Fawzi Nabil Aidi has spent almost his entire education at LAU, having obtained his BS in 2013, his MBA in 2017, and a diploma from the Continuing Education Program in HR the same year. After working as an accountant at Beirut Insurance Consultants, he moved to Dubai to work at Dubai Studio City. He has just begun a position as production coordinator at Nemer Saade s.a.l. back in Beirut.

Zobida Tadj graduated with a BA in psychology in 2017. She now lives in Algeria, where she is a grants officer at World Learning Algeria. She works on the Youth Employment Project helping young job seekers get free soft-skills training, career advising and technical training in various fields.



After receiving his BE in civil engineering in 2017, **Yorguo El Hachem** moved to Austin, Texas, where he is currently pursuing a master's in civil engineering-transportation engineering. He is working as a graduate research assistant until his expected graduation in spring 2019. He presented a Lectern Session during the Transportation Research Board's 97th Annual Meeting on behalf of the research team at University of Texas-Austin on the "Evaluation of Using Line Laser Scanner to Improve the Measurement of ALD in Chip Seal Design."

Thanks To LAU's Donor Community

By Naseem Ferdowsi

Generous donations help dreams come true for thousands of students



"Receiving a scholarship was everything I needed to accept my place at LAU."



LAU's successes can be accredited in large part to the generous support it receives from alumni, friends, corporations, foundations and organizations, which grows stronger each year. In fact, the latest *LAU Contributors Report* published this spring revealed that the university raised an impressive \$16.5 million during the 2017 fiscal year, up \$3.5 million from the previous year.

These contributions are going where they are needed most: student scholarships and financial aid. An incredible 62.8 percent of the funds raised in the 2017 fiscal year – which covers the period from September 1, 2016 to August 31, 2017 – went to thousands of students facing financial challenges.

The remaining 37.2 percent of donations are being directed toward capital projects to expand and improve the institution's campuses (31.34 percent); grants, research and school activities (8.50 percent); as well as the endowment fund (7.29 percent).

Donor generosity touches all aspects of the university, essentially making every person using its campuses a beneficiary. From named buildings and spaces to donated medical equipment and sponsored conferences and events, LAU's benefactors touch countless lives every day.

However, 4,015 students were directly impacted by donor contributions during

the 2017 fiscal year. This is an increase of 14 percent from the previous fiscal year's recipients of student financial support.

For so many of these students, financial support was the critical factor that enabled them to study at LAU and pursue their dreams. Medical student Hussein Noureldine is one of them.

"Receiving a scholarship was everything I needed to accept my place at LAU, otherwise I would have had to take a loan or travel abroad for my education," said Noureldine. He looks forward to becoming a practicing clinician, scholar and educator, as he believes that science coupled with education is the key to making change in society.

Commenting on the generous donor contributions, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra said, "What we achieved could not be possible without our invaluable supporters, and we are so grateful to them for helping us make an incredible impact on thousands of students."

LAU's *Contributors Report*, which highlighted the findings mentioned in this article, is produced annually to recognize donors' generosity and the difference it makes to the university and its students. It is put together by the university's Office of Development in coordination with several other departments.

Why I Give Back



Tania Shaheen (BA '98)

Since graduating with high distinction in interior design from LAU's School of Engineering and Architecture in 1998, Tania Shaheen has been working and living in the United States.

Recognizing Shaheen's immense potential as a student, the university presented her with the Best Designer Award her final year. The interior designer lives with her husband Wissam Tayssoun and their two teenage children in Houston, Texas, where she is heavily involved with the Lebanese community, chairing committees for fundraisers benefiting Lebanese causes.

“ I gained a sense of civic duty, which is something that I continue to choose to lead my life with. ”

Shaheen explains her passion for giving back to her alma mater.

How do you give back to LAU?

Every six months, I host a dinner at my home for the LAU Houston Alumni Chapter. The gatherings often include PharmD students completing their four required advanced pharmacy practices at Houston Methodist Hospital and Walgreens pharmacies. I know how it feels to be away from home at such a young age – it's probably their first time away from their parents. I make them homemade Lebanese food and make sure they are connected to the Lebanese community here. It symbolizes the sense of kinship that I enjoyed as an LAU student.

How did LAU shape you? What traits and qualities did you gain from your time at LAU?

When I was a student, the civil war had just ended, but the campus had a very positive and supportive environment. We had a sense that we were all in this together, trying to rebuild Lebanon from the rubble. We didn't have limitations imposed on us while we were students. This helped shape my character and spurred my creativity. It also made me very ambitious; I'm always aiming to reach higher levels in my career. Most importantly, I gained a sense of civic duty, which is something that I continue to choose to lead my life with.

How did your time at LAU encourage you to give back?

My love for LAU and continuous support of its students stems from the fact that the university engages its alumni community long after graduation. Such attention should be reciprocated. LAU looks out for her alumni, so we have to look out for LAU.

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

I am honestly stunned by the exponential growth of LAU. Every time I think LAU has reached its maximum potential, it surprises me and does something else. I am so proud of the institution and that I am part of it. I would like it to continue to grow and achieve more than my wildest expectations.

Creating a **Lasting Legacy**



Alexis & Anne-Marie Habib Foundation

With a mission to identify bright, academically talented and disadvantaged high school and university students in Lebanon and to provide them with financial support to pursue their studies, the Alexis & Anne-Marie Habib Foundation is helping dozens of future leaders at the Lebanese American University.

Since 2011, the foundation has generously donated to LAU with the aim of providing scholarships that have so far benefitted more than 140 students. During the 2017-18 academic year alone, 31 students received the foundation's substantial gift set out for that time period, with 32 students having benefitted the previous academic year.

Managed by a board of trustees that include Alexis Habib, Anne-Marie Habib and Jamil Baz – who are all based in the UK – the foundation is located in Beirut and is funded by Alexis Habib and his family. In addition to supporting deserving students at LAU, the foundation established a scholarship at INSEAD – Alexis Habib's alma mater – to benefit Lebanese nationals pursuing MBAs.



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