

LAU magazine

VOLUME 11 | issue n° 3 | Summer 2009

& ALUMNI BULLETIN



When Do Children Leave Home These Days?

Exodus, return, repeat?

Family in the Middle East: Oriental or Western?

Traditional mores vs. media & other imports

Nationality for Women

Citizenship and family wholeness

Live from the Middle East:

Family Taboos on Air



Plus

Opinion: The Disenfranchised Families Among Us

Where Are You Now?
Alumni Family Snapshots

LAU Rugby Team Sets National Record

the FAMILY ISSUE

Only at LAU



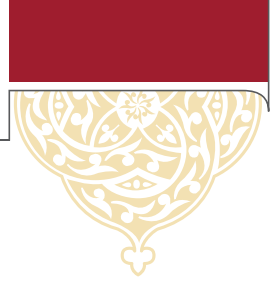
For four consecutive years, the LAU-Al Walid Model United Nations has been shaping Lebanese and regional high-school students into tolerant leaders and enlightened thinkers, with a program unique to the Arab world.



This year, a five-person delegation from LAU's program competed against over 200 other groups from around the world in the 10th Annual High School Conference organized by the U.N. Association of the United States and held at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York on May 14-16, 2009.

The LAU delegation won three diplomacy awards and ranked in the top 5 percent of delegations worldwide.





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LAU students participated again this year in the Harvard World Model United Nations, held in The Hague (page 40)



This season LAU's Rugby team, *The Immortals*, set the record for most games won in a row (page 31)



Wherever You Go

LAU Magazine is your platform to share 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 representing all 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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Mr. Samir Kadi serves as Assistant Vice President for Development, not Vice President for Development ("Friends, Alumni Welcome LAU Visitors and Their Message," page 29).

Mr. Ed Shiner serves as Manager of Alumni Programs, not Director of Alumni Relations ("Detroit" and "Boston," page 50).

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From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

Family has always been one of the cornerstones of society. For many of us, our family is our most cherished asset. Yet family can have different meanings for different people. Indeed, as our world becomes more interconnected, the traditional perceptions of family begin to blur; the way we think about what family is and what it means continues to evolve. The topic is worthy of extensive discussion, and I think you will enjoy seeing how we have engaged the theme in this issue of LAU Magazine.

The world is home to many kinds of family structures, whether they are small or large, nuclear or multigenerational. But there are other kinds of family as well. And in its own way, LAU provides an important sense of family by linking people together through the bonds that only a university can offer. Here at the university, it is our fervent hope that students who have internalized the values of the LAU family will, after graduation, continue to live these values in their own professions, families, and communities.

The values of the close-knit LAU community were compelling in our decision to dedicate this issue of LAU Magazine to a variety of family-related topics that are pivotal to this region of the Middle East and to the world. In addressing those subjects, we decided not to shy away from offering thoughtful perspectives on the central—and often controversial—issues of the day, including the role of the media in modern society and its impact on families. I am confident that you will find our wide-ranging discussion of family topics in this issue of LAU Magazine both enjoyable and valuable.

I respect your support for your families, and I appreciate your commitment to LAU—the extended family that we all have the privilege to belong to, to love, and to so deeply cherish.

Thank you,



Joseph G. Jabbra
President



President Joseph Jabbra with members of his "LAU Family" at a photography exhibition this year



Students at the LAU Byblos dorms

When Do Children Leave Home These Days—If Ever?

By Dalila Mahdawi

A controlling patriarch, a submissive mother, obedient sons, cloistered daughters: Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz captured the very essence of the 20th-century Arab family in his series of masterpiece novels, *The Cairo Trilogy*.

But a century later, family dynamics in the Middle East are changing. Because of its history of migration to the West and its perceived role as a bridge between East and West, Lebanon has probably seen more change in familial behavior than any other nation in the Middle East. LAU's Ketty Sarouphim, an associate professor of psychology and education who specializes in family studies, believes a mass exodus sparked by the civil war of 1975–90 expedited a transformation in social values.

“Now it's very common among our students to live alone or in the dorms.”

Those who returned introduced new family practices to Lebanese society, she said. For example, “now it's very common among our students to live alone or in the dorms,” even if their parents are not far away, she said.

The trend of university students living outside the family home represents a major shift in a culture that, according to Rima Bahous—LAU associate professor of education—is often described as “collectivist,” in contrast to the more “individualist” Western countries. In collectivist societies, parents and extended family members have a big say in the education, marriage, finances, and day-to-day lives of their children.

In the Middle East, children have traditionally been regarded as a form of security for parents and extended family—especially in rural areas and financially challenged socioeconomic communities. Deep religious feeling also perpetuates the authoritative role of the parents.

Such traditionally based family relations have meant “there is no complete independence for any individual in the Arab family away from the family of birth,” according to an article by the scholar Khawla Abu Baker in *Arab Studies Quarterly*. Until very recently, the concept of a young adult moving out of the family home was alien to Arab societies.

Sarouphim graduated from LAU (formerly BUC) in the 1980s. “No one would have even had the idea of living alone,” she said of that period: It would have been perceived as a rejection of the family.

The concept of leaving the family home is still “not as clear-cut as in the U.S., where it marks a major transition” of a child into an adult, Sarouphim said, explaining that financial matters play a major role.

“In the United States, for example, you pay for your independence, and this facilitates leaving home,” she said. In Lebanon, where there are few opportunities to get a student loan for university, it is much harder to become financially independent. Indeed, socioeconomics play a vital role in defining familial relationships.

Even though education and career-driven migration have typically been seen as “legitimate” reasons to leave home, according to psychologist Mona Charabaty, the family-related

LAU Professor
Rima Bahous





obstacles to independence have taken a toll. The close involvement of parents in the lives of their children has resulted in the “infantilization” of the Middle East, said Charabaty, who is also a founding member of the Lebanese Association for the Development of Psychoanalysis.

The concept of leaving the family home is still “not as clear-cut as in the U.S., where it marks a major transition” of a child into an adult, Sarouphim said.

“Oriental society doesn’t let people become individuals,” Charabaty said flatly. She added that Arab states don’t give their citizens the opportunity to be autonomous. “These governments are dependent on family power,” she noted, and this holds enormous sway in the realm of politics, particularly in countries such as Lebanon.

The difficult economic situation in the region has compounded the institutionalization of family behavior.

Razan Zananiri, a Jordanian student at LAU, agreed that parents offer children crucial support. “It’s much harder to live on your own,” she said. “When I go back [after graduation], I’m not going to be able to support myself even if I’m working, so I’m going to need to stay with my parents.”

Sarouphim noted that financial dependence only serves to reinforce the power of parents over their children. “The person in control of your money is also in control of your life,” she said.

Still, living with parents does not necessarily prevent young people from practicing their individualism, said Paul Tabar, director of LAU’s Institute for Migration Studies and an associate professor of sociology at the university. “You are maintaining the traditional form of staying together, but at the same time, you assert your individualism while living under the same roof as your parents.”

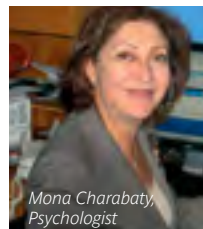
In Tabar’s view, the Middle East is renegotiating family bonds and individualism, and “getting rid of some old values and replacing them with new concepts of family relations.” For Charabaty, this process is positive. “The family has lost its traditional power,” she said, “but it has gained in richer relations between its members, who respect one another’s sense of liberty.”

“The family has lost its traditional power, but it has gained in richer relations between its members, who respect one another’s sense of liberty.” —Mona Charabaty

The pull of tradition is still strong, however, especially for women. Yasmine Nsouli, a 25-year-old strategic analyst who currently lives with her family, said that after living alone in Lebanon and abroad, she found it difficult to return to the family home. “I think the concept of privacy is nonexistent in the family

home” in the Arab world, she added. She is now looking for an apartment of her own.

“When I first moved out, people were very confused and wanted to know why I left,” Nsouli said. “[The concept of] a woman living on her own is not accepted at all. Living on your own reflects a sort of permissiveness in a woman, and suggests she has the potential to also be sexually promiscuous.”



Mona Charabaty,
Psychologist

**“Oriental society doesn’t let people become individuals.”
— Mona Charabaty**

Sarouphim said she is noticing that more and more of her women students are leaving home despite considerable difficulty. She mentioned one Kuwaiti student who is strong academically but began failing toward the end of her degree because she was nervous about going back to live with her family.

“I think it creates a crisis: When you’ve lived on your own, it’s hard to go back,” Sarouphim said.

After obtaining a university degree, most young Arabs still do return to their family home, said Raed Mohsen, a family and mental therapist and chair of communication arts at LAU. But the desire to break free of the family grasp drives many students, especially women, to seek further education or work abroad. “This has nothing to do with their love for their families,” he remarked.

“I stay here [in the LAU dorms] during the week and spend the weekends with my grandmother and [extended] family in Tripoli,” said Hayat Zock, an LAU student whose parents live in Saudi Arabia. Although she admitted that she finds it awkward to have somebody to answer to when she returns home for holidays, Zock said she has struck a balance between a sense of independence and a close family bond.

“As Arabs we were brought up to know the importance of family, to stick together. ... Freedom doesn’t always mean being happy and being on your own,” Zock said. “In times of trouble, you need a family member.”

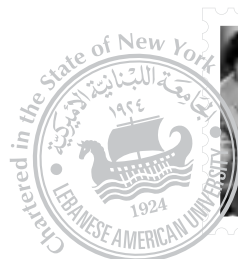
For Sarouphim, it is vital that the region find a middle ground between Arab and Western ideas of family.

“In the U.S., people have their privacy, but it often means isolation,” she said. “In Lebanon, you don’t have privacy at all. If we could find a middle ground, it would be great.” ☐

LAU held a family studies colloquium in June 2008, uniting leading international scholars around the challenges of the Arab family in the face of globalization. The colloquium was the first of its kind in Lebanon.



LAU Professor
Ketty Sarouphim





“Lebanon East and West and neither of them/Lebanon Christian and Muslim and both of them.” —Fouad Ajami



Family in the Middle East: Oriental or Western?

By Josie Ensor

One doesn't have to look far to see the imprint the West has made on the East. The continuing influence of Western modernity can be found particularly in Lebanon—with its MTV pop videos, its internet cafes, and its Francophone, Anglophone people, a true testament to the country's legacy.

Lebanon has long lived with a hybrid identity based on the dual influences of the Middle East and the West, as Fouad Ajami writes: “Lebanon East and West and neither of them/Lebanon Christian and Muslim and both of them.”

Certain aspects of Western individualism, however, continue to seep into the value system of the Middle East.

Mo Chabel, a 21-year-old student at LAU who wished not to give his real name, grew up in Lebanon, with a four-year hiatus in the U.S. between ages 12 and 16. He said his family became stricter when they were abroad, in an attempt to counteract the overwhelming Western influence. When he returned to Beirut, he experienced what he considered a restricted Western lifestyle.

“I thought [my family] would be more lenient, more understanding, and I would be able to rely on them if I made mistakes,” he said. “I didn't think I was being rebellious; I just enjoyed having a good time. I can see now that I was behaving in a way that was disrespectful to my parents.” Chabel said he found reintegrating difficult and was surprised that living in the West had actually made his family more protective of Lebanese family traditions.

“Maybe it is because when you are here in Beirut, you aren't threatened with any loss of cultural identity from Western influence,” he said. “But once you leave and become the minority, you fight really hard to keep that identity.”

Adolescents in Lebanon are increasingly informed by the forces of modern technology and popular culture. Adolescent rebellion and autonomy, typically observed in the West, are becoming more prevalent features in Lebanese society as imported rites of passage.

“Now 13- and 14-year-olds are doing things that I couldn't do.” —LAU student

Imad Salamey, assistant professor in LAU's political science department, observed that “the youth of today are being empowered. They are looking at peers elsewhere in the world and are influenced on a deep level by what they see.”

There is a strong power hierarchy in the traditional Middle Eastern family, and children are supposed to respect their parents, Salamey said. But some hold the belief that media, technology, pop culture, and exposure to other youths' lives are breaking down family relationships and loosening the authoritative structure.

LAU Professor
Imad Salamey



Hicham Nasir, a 20-year-old studying at LAU Byblos who also chose not to use his real name, agreed: "Now 13- and 14-year-olds are doing things that I couldn't do," he said. He attributes the shift to more "extensive Western media exposure."

Walid Moubarak, associate professor and assistant dean of the School of Arts & Sciences in Byblos, has noticed this change in the family structure as well. "Things parents accept now—they wouldn't have [accepted] before," he said. "My grandfather, and his, would not accept what we do now."

But while it is easy to view technology as a destroyer of the traditional family, it can also be "a uniting power," Salamey argued. Technology can expand the traditional notions of the family. The whole world is becoming familiar, and we are all becoming more similar, Salamey suggested. "Therefore," he said, "it is necessary for a traditional way of life, in one way or another, to adapt to this new globalism."

Many parents are learning to accept changes in adolescent behavior and yet recognizing the power of technology to change or distort traditional ethics. This begs the question, Moubarak suggested: "We live in a world of technology—how can you afford to stick to your values?"

"You see youth communicating via means of technology like the internet and phones," Salamey added, "and we are seeing people of the same family coming together all over the world through Facebook. So technology in a sense is helping rediscover the family on new terms." Yet as the younger generation establishes its own subculture, it often finds the older generation adapting more slowly.

Nasir, who grew up in a family heavily influenced by Western culture and whose parents traveled extensively, has found that they have adapted their definition of a "modern" Lebanese family. "In Lebanon the father can demand things, tell you to do this or do that, but I am allowed to think more as an individual apart from my father," he said.

His experience may have once been considered unusual, given that the traditional Lebanese family has a patriarchal structure. "There is a Lebanese idea of the father being the king of the family, and his wife and children must obey his orders," Moubarak said.

Nasir said that "it is common to find the father as ruler of the house, but mine does not give us orders. We are more of a democratic family, and when there is a decision to make, we make it together."

The role and rights of women is another area which some say is changing as a result of increased Western influence. Divorce is still frowned upon in Lebanon and, much like marriage, death, and birth, falls under the restriction of religious authorities. In Maronite communities where Catholic values dominate, divorce is still virtually impossible.

Yet Salamey acknowledged the growing acceptance of divorce in the region. "Today there is no doubt that divorce rates have increased," he said, "and this could be attributed to



"Technology in a sense is helping rediscover the family on new terms." —Imad Salamey

the breakdown of what is called 'familism.' Women are becoming more independent, they are now filing for divorce, and this is a more acceptable notion than it used to be."

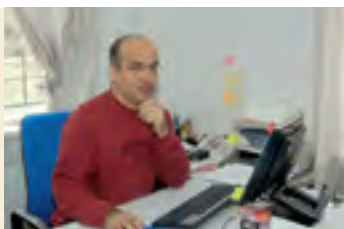
Paul Tabar, associate professor of sociology at LAU, suggested the trend may stem from the fast-evolving ideas of dating and partner selection. "Decisions to marry and select your partner are becoming more and more based on the concepts of individualism, romantic love, freedom of choice," he said.

Moubarak had his own personal experience of this. "What you find now in Lebanon is that the dating system is quite open," he said. "In my time, when we wished to date a girl, it was all done in secret, but I don't mind if my children bring their dates home. We are more permissive than before."

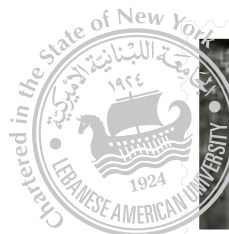
The pervasive legacy of colonialism in the Middle East has also left a strong imprint on its society, and, in Lebanon's attempt to liberate itself from this, it has become very suspicious of everything Western.

But Tabar purported that Lebanon is not a closed society; rather the country exists in flux, taking what it can from imported Western culture while maintaining a strong grasp on its own.

"The very nature of our society here means that what it is to be Lebanese is continually being reconsidered and reinvented," he said. ☐



LAU Professor
Paul Tabar





Childhood in Turmoil

By Anna Louie Sussman

In an ideal world, childhood should be the happiest time of one's life: carefree, and full of love, play, and affection. In these early years, one develops the sense of security and comfort that makes for healthy interactions with the outside world.

But what if these years are marred by political conflict, economic insecurity, or domestic violence? How do children cope with problems that have the capacity to damage the lives and mental health of adults? These questions are particularly relevant to the Lebanese context, where a large number of people have experienced war or instability in their lifetimes, including in their childhood.

Lebanese children and teenagers seem to be able to adapt remarkably to their circumstances, preserving their mental health despite the odds stacked against them. Others, such as Palestinians and Iraqis who lack the resources of Lebanese citizens, often have a more difficult time.

Lebanese who grew up during the Civil War, or who lived through repeated Israeli attacks; Palestinians who grew up in camps where professional opportunities are few and financial situations are precarious; Iraqis who left behind violence and threats, only to find themselves outside of any legal framework—all of these populations are resident on Lebanese soil, and all of them include innocent, vulnerable children.

Fortunately, despite the hardships and instability that can plague their lives, Lebanese children and teenagers seem to be able to adapt remarkably to their circumstances, preserving their mental health despite the odds stacked against them. Others, such as Palestinians and Iraqis who lack the resources of Lebanese citizens, often have a more difficult time.

At the AMEL Center in Chiah, a large Iraqi flag greets the visitor arriving at its second-floor center. Around 50 Iraqi children ages seven to 14 are being served here on a daily basis. With activities ranging from puppet theater to painting, the center aims to provide a safe, calm atmosphere for children who are often living in cramped and unstable conditions.

"It gives them a space," said Nibal Sayyad, the project manager, as he gestured around the main room, where handwritten signs delineate study rules the kids came up with themselves. The walls are painted with murals that depict lessons learned from workshops on topics like children's rights. "At home, they often don't have a room this big," she added. "You have whole families living in a two-room house."

According to Sayyad, who has a background in psychology and sociology, Iraqi children are at a disadvantage when they do not have the family and social support network that Lebanese children have.

Mohammed Saidi, 14, came to Lebanon with his family from Najaf. Although his parents told him that they were moving to Lebanon for "a change" and "a visit," Sayyad believes it was because their father was receiving



“Kids come to us to spend time and feel they’re being treated well and taken care of.”
—Zeina Abdallah

Burj el Barajneh refugee camp

threats. They went to Syria, and were then smuggled to Lebanon. Although he has been enrolled in a semi-private school here since last September, Saidi said that he still does not have any friends, and it’s because he is Iraqi.

“I have the usual chats with people at school, but no one wants to walk with me or hang out because I’m Iraqi,” he said quietly. “After school, I come here, then I go home and stay up thinking until I fall asleep.” Saidi misses Iraq, and wants to go back.

“At home, they often don’t have a room this big. You have whole families living in a two-room house.” —Nibal Sayyad

Saidi’s brother Ali, 12, stays at the center every night until it closes at 8 p.m. Sayyad said he will even pick up a broom and clean (something he shyly admitted he doesn’t do at home), so he can stick around even later. Because their father has no legal papers, he can neither find decent employment nor circulate freely around Lebanon, and the boys are stuck in their neighborhood, with no opportunity to explore.

Rita Kevorkian, a community services assistant with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), estimates that 50 to 70 Iraqi men are currently in Roumieh prison for entering Lebanon illegally, a function of Lebanon’s not being party to the 1951 Convention on Refugees. While UNHCR has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lebanese government so that children can attend Lebanese schools, home life is often very difficult.

“They see how their father hits their mother, or that the mother is aggressive,” said Sayyad. The children’s drawings often feature the color red, indicating blood or violence; big hands, which she said also symbolize violence; and very aggressive coloring, where the children bear down hard on the page to release their tension as they draw.

Zeina Abdallah, a staff member with the marketing and

communications department at LAU, has worked with the Volunteer Outreach Clinic in Shatila camp since she was a student, beginning in 2001. According to her, Palestinian refugee children in Lebanon can face similar problems, such as a lack of play areas and a tense home life aggravated by economic difficulties.

“Kids come to us to spend time and feel they’re being treated well and taken care of,” she said.

Another hardship these children face is improper nutrition, something Amel tackles by hiring Iraqi refugee women at the center’s sister branch in Tayyouneh to cook traditional Iraqi meals, which are delivered to the kids at Chiah.

“The mothers are not aware they have to cook at home, and the kids come to us eating chips and chocolate and juice with chemicals,” Abdallah said.

Even more seriously, the cramped living situations can sometimes provide the opportunity for inappropriate contact between family members.

“You have whole families living in one or two rooms—not just the nuclear family but uncles, cousins, etc., seven to eight to 10 people. We saw cases of sexual abuse of children, but then when the mother thought we knew, she stopped coming,” Abdallah said. The VOC volunteers observed these situations but were not in a position to intervene.

Rima Nakkash, assistant professor of research in the health behavior and education department of the Faculty of Health Science at the American University of Beirut, saw opportunities to improve the mental health of Palestinian children on a wide-scale basis, after an informal survey in 2005 indicated that many of the NGOs working in Burj el Barajneh refugee camp noticed an unmet need for psychological services.

Nakkash and her colleagues at AUB’s health behavior and education department brought together young people, NGOs, and other residents of the camp, and used a community-based participatory research approach to create an intervention package focused on building self-esteem and coping with stress. 🧘



Children of Iraqi refugees at Amel Association's community center



"We were not looking at treatment but rather prevention," she said of the package. Five hundred and ninety students met with her and her colleagues 45 times over the course of nearly a year, gathering every Friday from August 2008 to May 2009. Of those students, half received treatment while the other half served as a control group.

Nakkash based the program on best practices tested and evaluated in the West, but adapted the techniques to the local context. For example, a problem-solving exercise used to teach children to restrain themselves and think before acting uses a stoplight metaphor: The colors red, yellow, and green symbolize stop, think, and then go. But children who live in camps, she pointed out, have little experience with stoplights. After some debate, it was decided that introducing this concept would kill two birds with one stone, teaching about traffic safety as well as decision-making tactics.

In contrast to their Palestinian and Iraqi peers, Lebanese children who have been observed in the studies have shown that they stand a remarkably good chance of resuming ordinary development if certain precautions are taken.

For example, the Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy, and Applied Care (IDRAAC) conducted a sample study in 1996 representing 45,000 children across South Lebanon after Israel's extensive Grapes of Wrath operation. The study showed that 39 percent of the children were suffering from either depression or anxiety disorders one month after the event. However, when the same group was surveyed a year later, only 9 percent of them were still affected.

According to one of the researchers, Dr. John Fayyad of IDRAAC, the persistence of mental illness was due to three main factors: the direct witnessing of violent events and family risk factors, in particular the fear of being beaten; the witnessing of parental quarrels; and the presence of prewar disorders. For children affected by one or more of these factors, recovery was particularly challenging.

These findings were confirmed in a second study conducted after the 2006 War with Israel. After conducting a psychosocial assessment of a sample of youth from 20 schools representing students in South Lebanon and the southern suburbs of Beirut,

Fayyad and his colleagues found that 14.5 percent of adolescents were at risk for mental disorders six months after the war.

"The majority of the kids did very well, and the time factor was very significant," Fayyad said. "Again, family factors and witnessing violent events were still two main predictors," he added.

"The 1996 and the 2006 research confirmed that a lot of kids who experience war do not need a specific psychological intervention. It's better to wait several months, and then look for kids who are still having problems, and target them with specific interventions," Fayyad said. He pointed out that due to the politics of international aid, blanket interventions are often promoted by NGOs eager to lend a hand.

"These international NGOs want to jump in and want to do something, and this psychosocial support concept is in vogue," Fayyad said. "After the 2006 war, we saw a lot of play activities, theater, drama, which got kids engaged, but none of it has been proven to have any long-lasting effects." Furthermore, if they are not done correctly, these activities can actually cause children more harm than good, Fayyad said.

What is most critical in Lebanon, Fayyad asserted, is to train primary care physicians—family doctors, general practitioners, those who see many children and families—to recognize early signs of psychological distress.

"Many of these children don't come to psychologists, so we need to give these primary care physicians tools they can use locally. We need to sensitize primary care providers, since they're on the front lines of medical care, particularly in rural or underserved communities," he said.

The signs of trauma-related mental distress vary with age. According to Fayyad, younger children usually react by regressing,

Dr. John Fayyad, Institute for Development, Research, Advocacy, and Applied Care (IDRAAC)





**"I have the usual chats with people at school, but no one wants to walk with me or hang out because I'm Iraqi."
—Mohammed Saidi, 14**

Children from Qaderoon, the program started by Professor Rima Nakkash and her colleagues at the health behavior and education department at AUB

"losing some developmental milestone she or he had already achieved." For example, he said, "a three- or four-year-old who is already toilet-trained will begin wetting the bed." Other signs include separation anxiety, somatization (experiencing different pains in parts of the body), and sleep disturbances. Parents should be aware that younger children are very sensitive to adults' reactions to conflict.

Older children, by contrast, "are more able to express themselves directly," Fayyad added. To best help them, Fayyad said he advocated "keeping them busy. Enlist them as helpers to supervise younger siblings, for example, or with other families, or as volunteers, to make them feel useful."

The children's drawings often feature the color red, indicating blood or violence.

This advice corroborates findings by Dr. Huda Ayyash Abdo, chairperson of the Department of Social Sciences at LAU, who has done research in child psychology. Abdo also attributed the high rates of resilience to the fact that Lebanon is a faith-based country.

"Faith provides values to hold on to in times of stress," she said. The idea is borne out by Fayyad's findings that a large majority of adolescents, approximately 75 percent, turned to prayer as a coping mechanism during the Israeli bombings in 2006. "The other angle of this religiosity is the fatalism," Abdo pointed out. "Do we see this as resilience or resignation?"

"In spite of challenges, instability, violence," Abdo asked, "why not look at people who go through it with such dignity, versus people who crack because of internal factors?" Abdo gave an

example of a student of hers who, during the July 2006 war, would stay down in his basement and play chess.

"Through chess, he told me, 'I created my own reality.' He was creating 'flow,' when you're doing something and you forget about the time," said Abdo.

"Look at the challenges of living in Lebanon," she continued. "You have the Arab-Israeli conflict, inter-Arab conflict, Arab-Iran conflict. We are surrounded by conflict. What are the protective factors or influences?"

Dr. Ketty Sarouphim, an associate professor at LAU whose work specializes in gifted children, mostly ages five to 12, agreed.

"My experience is that Lebanese children are very resilient," she said. "I truly believe that. Those who are affected are usually so because of their parents' reactions." She described a childhood developmental phenomenon called "social referencing," which generally begins at 18 months. In a new situation, a child will immediately look at his or her guardian for clues, or references, on how to react.

"The same happens with war or trauma-related events," Sarouphim said. "Children are instinctively born with two fears: loud sounds and darkness. In the case of shelling, for example, children will look at their parents if they're scared—and it can be a double whammy, because you have the inborn fear of noise, and then parents who are supporting the hypothesis that it's a threatening situation," she warned.

But she also gave the example of a friend of hers with a four-year-old child, who during the 2006 war would look repeatedly at the father every time he heard loud noises. The father would smile and shrug, as if everything was OK—and to date, the child has not shown any signs of trauma. ■



LAU professor and chairperson of arts and communications division (Beirut) Huda Abdo



What causes family businesses to sell out and fade away after the third generation is the absence of family governance, trust, and a shared vision among relatives.



The Ups and Downs of Family Businesses:

New Research on the Role of Succession and Leadership

By Dana Halawi

Family businesses, like all enterprises, face the unique challenges of the 21st century: maneuvering in a global market economy, competing for the best employees, managing information in real time, and innovating to stay ahead of the competition. However, a family business, unlike a publicly owned company, is typically passed down through the generations—and that tradition is especially dominant in the Middle East, where great importance is placed on the family as a unified entity.

In an effort to understand how family-run enterprises can maximize their chances of survival in a changing economy, scholars at LAU and their colleagues are undertaking studies that are shedding light on the dynamics that can lead to the success or failure of these businesses.

"There is a contradiction between the logic of running a family business if the business is to develop and progress, and the logic of family unity," said Paul Tabar, associate professor of sociology at LAU. "Business is based on individual profit, while the logic of the family is based on its interest as a single entity, which is primary over the interests of individuals within the family. Private property requires individualistic thinking to be able to run it smoothly and make a profit," he added.

"Sometimes perceptions are based on a bad dealing that has happened in the past, and the problem is that family members take it and capitalize on it." —Josiane Sreih

Tabar differentiates between small and large businesses, saying that if the business is small, then the family becomes an asset, at least at a time when the company has to be established and looked after. "When the first generation passes away and the business is transferred to the second generation, then problems are very likely to happen, because some might want to keep it running jointly while others may prefer to divide it," he said.

LAU Professor
Josiane Sreih



When it comes to a corporation with shareholders, Tabar added, the capital is divided between a number of owners, and this may not pose a problem for the family since the owners are not all family members. However, he said, if the company is confined to members of the family, then it can be a time bomb.

Another challenge facing family businesses is that the company might not be lucrative enough to feed all the grandchildren, Tabar said. Therefore, he added, when succession is transferred between generations, each member should sell his share, walk out, and establish his own business. "In general, you cannot maintain the unity of the family business for more than two generations, whether it is a large business or a small one, because it is bound to split when the family grows," he added.

A study by Ernst & Young, aimed at examining the current conditions of family businesses in the Middle East, stated that smaller family enterprises, with fewer members, tend to be in better overall condition than larger ones. The study added that second-generation family businesses tend to fare the best, while third-generation companies are the least stable.



Rami Nazer,
Ernst & Young

"A strong family is one that is proud, supports other family members, has strong but fair values, and handles conflict well."

—Rami Nazer

According to Rami Nazer, partner and head of Ernst & Young's Middle East Family Business Center of Excellence, most of the issues faced by family businesses have nothing to do with the specific characteristics of such enterprises. Rather, the companies must grapple with typical business challenges: "Issues like strategy, planning, organization structure, operational excellence, and H.R. alignment were the top four challenges—not succession planning or leadership development," Nazer said.

Nazer added that what causes family businesses to sell out and fade away after the third generation is the absence of family governance, trust, and a shared vision among relatives.

Josiane Sreih, associate professor and director of the Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business at LAU, believes that the secret to longevity in family businesses is to create channels of communication that will facilitate relationships and avoid internal conflicts. Most of the problems that take place are usually caused by miscommunication between family members and perceptions that do not necessarily reflect reality, she added: "Sometimes perceptions are based on a bad dealing that has happened in the past, and the problem is that family members take it and capitalize on it."



Michele Jabra,
Jabra Societe

Moreover, Sreih said, the business leader must show a high level of competency in order to maintain trust in the family, and must be objective and fair in his dealings with each member.

According to Huda Rizk, sociologist and consultant at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the leader should also hold family members accountable for their actions. It is the role of the leader, she added, to encourage people to work together no matter how different their competency levels, as this will increase their awareness of working toward the same objectives for the overall success of the family.

Nazer noted that a strong family and a strong business can reinforce each other in crucial ways. "A strong family is one that is proud, supports other family members, has strong but fair values, and handles conflict well," he said. "A strong business is one with good governance, efficient succession planning, good managerial development, sound business strategy, efficient business processes, and skilled employees."

But families and businesses can often work at cross-purposes. For instance, when it comes to business ownership, simpler is often better. That can leave family businesses in a pinch, as an ownership structure that worked well for one generation can quickly turn dysfunctional in the next. A company owned by three siblings may operate effectively, but if all three siblings have children working in the business, the next generation may find that joint ownership by seven cousins does not work as well. Successful family businesses often compete on speed and agility, so finding a suitable corporate and governance structure is of paramount importance.

According to the same study by Ernst & Young, family businesses must have an effective family governance structure—a family council and a board of directors—to direct and control the company, and to sustain and enhance value for shareholders and other stakeholders. The study showed that 68 percent of the family businesses that responded to the survey believed that their present organizational structure must be updated in order for them to succeed in the future.

Separating family issues from business issues without ignoring either is crucial to the sustainability and prosperity of the business, Nazer said. "Family conflicts should be handled and resolved through the family constitution and the family council, while the business conflicts are usually handled through the business corporate governance structure."

The issue of succession can play a pivotal role in family enterprises. Handing a company to the next generation can involve a unique set of problems, which can in turn affect the longevity and performance of a business. While succession need not lead to a crisis, it often does.

A well-structured plan for transitioning leadership of a family business is paramount to the continued success of the company. Families must think not only of developing the next generation into strong, competent leaders, but also of when the transition will take place and what role the existing leadership will continue to play in both the family and the business.

"Leadership transfer can take place at an agreed-upon time that could be designated in the family constitution, but in the Middle East it usually takes place upon the loss of a key player in the family business," said Nazer. He added that in the transition from the first to the second generation, the tradition is that the eldest son assumes the leading role after his father. However, he noted, this may not be applicable when the business is passed on to the third and fourth generations. 🌿



“This is why in many cases succession fails: It is based on culture and not on merit. It is also often restricted to family members. Moreover, succession in the Middle East is biased against women.”
— Michele Jabra

“The observation is that the tribal mentality is still strong; however, families are becoming more pragmatic in selecting their leadership regardless of age and gender,” he said.

Michele Jabra, LAU alumna and marketing manager for distribution at Jabra Societe, said that it is still very common in the Middle East for the successor to be the eldest male in the family. “This is why in many cases succession fails: It is based on culture and not on merit. It is also often restricted to family members,” she said. “Moreover, succession in the Middle East is biased against women.”

Mona Bawarshi, LAU alumna and CEO and chairwoman of Gezairi Transport, a family business founded in 1945, pointed out that there is no standard time frame for transfer of leadership. “This depends on many factors, some of which can be the willingness of the older generation to give the reins, and the speed at which the new generation is showing professionalism and maturity,” she said.

Whatever the timing of the succession, Bawarshi added that the way in which leadership is passed on is of great importance for the future success of the business. “The generation giving the power should do it slowly and try to be fair in granting the power,” she said. She explained that the family members taking over the succession should be able to prove—to themselves and to others around them—that they have earned that power and that it was not just handed to them as a gift.

A study prepared by Sreih and Salpie Djoundourian, an associate professor of economics and chairperson of the Economics and Management Division at LAU, showed that effective succession planning is considered a determinant of longevity. The study, published in the *Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship*, cited the German sociologist Max Weber, who noted that succession planning should take place in the presence of the founder of the business in order to ensure the continuity of the enterprise.

According to a commonly cited statistic included in the study, 30 percent of family firms worldwide pass leadership on to the second generation, and this percentage drops to 15 percent from the second generation to the third; only 3 percent of family firms go beyond the third generation. The Ernst & Young research stated that only 16 percent of the family businesses surveyed have a proper succession plan—a potential reason why family businesses rarely go beyond the third generation.

Jabra mentioned a famous saying about family-owned businesses in Mexico: “Father, founder of the company; son, rich; and grandson, poor.” She explained it by saying that the founder works and builds a business; the son takes it over and is poorly prepared to manage it and make it grow but enjoys the wealth; and the grandson inherits a dead business and an empty bank account.

A family business with a great product but poor management does not last, she added, while a family business with a poor product but great management may have a chance. 🍀



Mona Bawarshi,
Gezairi Transport



webfeatures



American Business Icon Restored and Renewed by LAU Alumna Amini Audi

The L. & J.G. Stickley Company was founded by brothers Gustav, Leopold, and John George Stickley in 1900. The firm became famous for its distinctly American, Arts and Crafts style of furniture; but by the 1970s, with only 27 employees and flagging sales, the Stickley Company was at the brink of bankruptcy.

How did LAU alumna Amini Audi and her husband Alfred save this American institution and turn it into one of the most respected businesses in the United States?

Read more online:
www.lau.edu.lb/news/stickley



Knowledge is Power: Family and Education

The good news is that illiteracy is on the wane, according to Nimat Kanaan, LAU alumnus and former Director-General of the Ministry of Social Affairs. But there's still a long way to go. Even with improved library access and outside assistance, it all comes back to the family's dedication to their children's school experience.

Read more online: www.lau.edu.lb/news/familyandeducation



Live from the Middle East: Radio and Television Hosts Confront Family Taboos

By Matthew Mosley

All over the Middle East, the airwaves are humming with taboo-busting talk shows that deal with the problems and pressures of contemporary life. LAU alumnus Zaven Kouyoumjian's show, "Sire Wenfatahet," for instance, is now in its 10th year and is famous for a variety of firsts: from the first AIDS patient to be interviewed live on air in the region, to the first on-air interview with a prostitute.

"Since the late 1990s, Beirut has dominated the talk show and entertainment sector," said Kouyoumjian, whose show is broadcast on Future TV over the entire Middle East region. But Beirut is not the only place where controversial topics are being discussed. LAU alumna Honey Al Sayed hosts and produces "Good Morning Syria" on Al-Madina FM, Syria's first private radio station.

"Our show tackles daring topics," said Al Sayed, who hosted "Quizzy Dizzies" on the now-defunct Beirut station Hot FM during her undergraduate days at LAU. "We know how to package them."

"The source of our behavior is the home." —Honey Al Sayed

For all of these shows, family life is a prime concern. "The source of our behavior is the home," said Al Sayed, whose program is heard by teenagers as well as their parents. "There are many outside influences, of course, but the home is the basis from which we are formed."

So what have the talk show hosts and producers learned about modern families? Most identify three main issues that come up again and again in their on-air dealings with family issues: Oppositional adolescents are a common source of tension. Questions of honesty receive a great deal of airtime. And intergenerational misunderstandings rear their heads whenever the media throws its spotlight on the family.

Raed Mohsen, associate professor and chairperson of the communications department, appears on television frequently to answer questions related to adolescents and family dynamics. "Adolescents become oppositional when there is a power balance within the family," he explained, addressing one of the most typical issues. "It is important that there is a power imbalance. The parents should have the authority."

For the past three years, Mohsen has been on Future TV three times a week. He dispenses advice on Monday and Wednesday mornings, and is featured on an hour-long program called "Personal Matters," broadcast every Saturday morning. 🌟

Once an undergraduate student of communication at LAU, Mohsen did a master's in social work at Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., before earning a Ph.D. in interpersonal communication from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Since 1996, Mohsen has been a professor at LAU, alongside his practice as family therapist and psychotherapist at his Beirut clinic. Future TV tried to convince Mohsen to appear on air for a number of years before Mohsen felt comfortable enough to take up the challenge.

"When you are dealing with problems live on air, you have to be very sure of the advice you are giving," Mohsen explained. "It took me a long time to build up to this stage. Even now, there are some calls where I don't have enough information to give advice. There is perhaps one phone call every three days where I tell them to call back when the show has finished."

Many callers to the show are parents who are concerned about the behavior of their teenagers. "In some families, when the child is in a bad mood, this negatively affects the mood of everyone else," Mohsen said. "This is not good either for the child or for the family unit."

Al Sayed too has experienced children who exert a tyrannical influence over their parents. "If you give your 4-year-old \$200 per month pocket money, what do you expect?" she asked, referring to some of the overindulgent behavior she has come across when taking calls on "Good Morning Syria."

The issue is a tricky one because children often come to occupy an overly elevated position in the household as a result of parental love. "We all want what's best for our children," Al Sayed said, "but sometimes it is necessary to cut back on the indulgence for their own well-being."

Adolescents, many of whom still have things to learn about dealing with others, can become tyrannical if they are given too much power in the family unit. But there are other reasons why adolescents might battle against their parents.

"Sometimes, children disobey their parents in order to unite them," Mohsen noted. "If their parents are divided, disobedience might be the only way the child knows of bringing them together. It is cases like these where I might request that the parent speak to me off air, so that I can get more information about the situation."

Mohsen's co-presenter and producer on "Personal Matters" is Rima Karaki, herself an LAU graduate. She was also recently seen on "And We Grew Up," a Future TV series about families of celebrities, which explored the fallout of fame on the family.

"We found a huge variety of responses," Karaki said. "Some people, for example, found their famous sibling or parent a source of strength and pride. Others weren't so lucky. Their famous relative was a source of jealousy and bitterness."

"If their parents are divided, disobedience might be the only way the child knows of bringing them together." —Raed Mohsen



Professor and chairperson of the arts and communications division (Beirut) Raed Mohsen

What was the cause of these different responses? "It all depends on the individual's response to fame," Karaki explained.

"Some people remained embedded in their family, so that the success and good fortune was felt by everyone. Other people cut their families off, which is not sustainable. What will they do when they are older?"

"If you give your 4-year-old \$200 per month pocket money, what do you expect?"

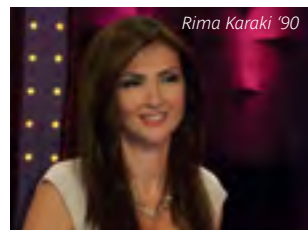
—Honey Al Sayed

Karaki's route into producing and hosting television programs was an unconventional one. After studying business and computing at LAU, Karaki earned a master's in educational management and leadership at the American University of Beirut (AUB). "I didn't get on very well with either of the subjects," she said, "but my studies taught me so many things which I now use all the time in my shows: a logical way of thinking, for example, and the questions you should ask to get the answers you want."

In Karaki's opinion, honesty—one of the most popular topics on the call-in shows—is the biggest issue facing families. "In order to please others, we end up wearing masks," she said.

"In the Arab world, we have this myth about the family," she added. "People say, 'We live in a family unit that no one can break.' But often this is just a front. People behave one way within the family and then have secret lives outside."

Compared with their counterparts in the West, Arab families are often praised for their cohesion. Karaki, however, thinks that this can lead to unhealthy relationships.



Rima Karaki '90

"In the Arab world, we have this myth about the family. People say, 'We live in a family unit that no one can break.' But often this is just a front."

—Rima Karaki

"When we wear our masks to keep up the illusion of a harmonious family, we are prevented from getting to know each other," she said. "Can we say that a daughter really knows her father if he is secretly having relationships with other women? At least with all these broken families in the West, they really know each other."

Karaki does add, however, that there are values of kinship and community which Western societies have in far lower supply than Arab cultures. "In the West, human spirit is often lacking," she said.

"Families tell me that they all sit down together to watch my show," said Malek Maktabi, an LAU alumnus whose weekly LBC talk show, "A Bold Red Line," airs throughout the Arab world and features guests from Iraq to Oman.

"We tackle subjects that families would often avoid discussing amongst themselves," Maktabi said. "We had a lesbian from Saudi Arabia speaking about her experiences. A couple of weeks ago, we featured a kleptomaniac who shared with us what it was like to deal with his illness."

One danger with a show such as Maktabi's is that it could be exploitative of vulnerable people who already experience discrimination and persecution. According to Maktabi, however, there is a culture of trust between himself and his guests that gives the show journalistic integrity.



Malek Maktabi '02



Honey Al Sayed '97

"None of my guests are children," Maktabi said. "They are all capable of weighing up the pros and cons for themselves. Those who appear on the show trust me not to humiliate them. They appear because the show provides a serious forum to discuss issues which they might not feel able to raise even within their own families."

Presenters and producers such as Kouyoumjian, Karaki, Maktabi, and Al Sayed are all motivated by this desire to create a culture of greater openness and freedom of speech. They hope that their shows might help families to become more open and honest with one another. "Everything should be discussable," Karaki said. "I teach my children to tell me everything. I also encourage them to ask me any questions. Questioning stops people from having masks."

Another issue that the presenters often come across is intergenerational misunderstanding. "This is something which occurs across all social classes," Al Sayed said. "It happens in both directions: Parents say that children don't understand that they are acting in the child's best interests, while children often say that parents are out of touch."

Frequently this conflict manifests itself in the different ambitions that parents have for their children and the ambitions that the children have for themselves. "Parents often want to live through their children," Mohsen said. "A father who wants to be a successful accountant might try to push their child into accountancy. This is natural to a certain extent, but it's not good for family relations if excess pressure is used."

Maktabi has experienced these differing ambitions himself. His family operates a highly successful business selling carpets and rugs. Maktabi studied business and finance at LAU before deciding that a job in the family business was not a career he wanted to pursue.

"I am the oldest son, so my decision was especially important for the family," he said. "But I decided this life was not for me. My parents were not happy, but they never tried to force me into anything I didn't want to do."

Maktabi traveled to London for a year of further studies. This turned into a journey of self-discovery. "London was all about discovering me, discovering what I wanted to do," he said. "That's why I love London so much!"

After working in television news journalism for several years, Maktabi hit upon the winning formula for "A Bold Red Line." "My family is extremely happy for me now," he said. "They always wanted what is best for me."

Self-discovery is something that Al Sayed repeatedly advocates on her show as a solution to the intergenerational misunderstandings that cause difficulties within families.

"How can you get on with other people without first being comfortable with who you are?" she asked. "Being part of a community begins with accepting, respecting, and loving yourself."

She also noted that families must be able to accept differences of opinion without feeling that they are damaging their sense of cohesion. "We need to learn to agree to disagree," she said.

Karaki expressed the same sentiment. In her extended family, various religious groups and schools of thought are represented. "This doesn't mean that we are less close," she said. "Rather, it raises the level of the debate."

Maktabi added, "People need to be heard. I give them an arena where they can speak freely."

With the many joys and pressures that plague the contemporary family, these presenters will likely play an important role on the airwaves for some time to come. ☐



Zaven Kouyoumjian '92



Family, Law, and

By Anna Louie Sussman



Demonstrators in Beirut in April 2009:
(sign reads: "A woman represents half of society.
Nationality is the right of our children.")

Nationality for Women

Lebanon has always been depicted as the home of the effortlessly multilingual sophisticate, its signature greeting a quick tumble through English, Arabic, and French: “Hi, keefek, ça va?” But when it comes to nationality and family, Lebanon appears to lack basic fluency in both the international language of love, and the language of international human rights law.

Lebanon’s 1925 nationality law grants Lebanese citizenship to those born of Lebanese fathers, those born on Lebanese soil to unknown parents, and those born in Lebanon who are otherwise stateless. The law was partially reformed in 1960 and 1994, but falls short of allowing Lebanese women to pass citizenship on to their children and spouses.

“States’ Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.”
—1979 Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

According to activist Lina Osseiran Beydoun, writing in the Fall/Winter 2009 issue of *Al-Raida*, the publication of LAU’s Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World, much of Lebanese discriminatory legislation against women—including the nationality law—preceded developments in international law that stipulate total equality between women and men.

Nonetheless, the persistence of the nationality law despite Lebanon’s ratification of such treaties as the 1966 International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, is in flagrant violation of Lebanon’s obligations under international law.

In March 1993, Lebanon ratified the 1979 Convention to End All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), but entered a reservation to Article 9(2), which stipulates that “States’ Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.” Its justification, wrote Beydoun, “is that Lebanon is protecting the Palestinian refugees from any form of settlement in Lebanon that would jeopardize their right to return to Palestine.”

Cedar Mansour, J.D., vice president and general counsel and special assistant to the president of LAU, does not buy this explanation.

“I don’t care about their justifications,” she said. “It’s denying women a basic human right. I don’t think there is any justification that can be put forward to justify treating women like this. There is inherent discrimination in the law in general, and this is just another example of this discrimination.”

Mansour bridled at the “exceptionalism” that Lebanese politicians claim prohibits them from fulfilling their obligations under international law.

“They don’t even make an effort to reconcile national law and their international obligations,” she said. “They always hang their hats on ‘this is a very special society,’ an ‘exceptional situation.’”

The Palestinian condition, furthermore, is “a political issue being used to continue this cruel treatment of women. We are penalizing our female citizens,” Mansour said. “It is really a form of cruelty to deny people the right to be a normal family in their country.”

Mansour, who formerly practiced immigration law in the United States, as an attorney in Washington, D.C., and Virginia, suggested using a procedure such as that employed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in America, in order to prevent marriages of convenience. “If the intention is to prohibit the use of marriage to resettle Palestinians in Lebanon,” she said, “then scrutinize the marriage. You have the right to examine if it is a genuine marriage or not.”

Research conducted by Dr. Fahima Sharifeddine for the Lebanese Women’s Rights and Nationality Law project, and sponsored by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), showed that 17,860 Lebanese women were married to foreign nationals, mostly from other Arab states and Europe. When spouses and children are included in the estimate, 80,000 people, or approximately 2 percent of Lebanon’s population, are affected by this law.

Nayla Madi Masri, the project manager of the campaign, planned to launch the findings of the study over the summer and to begin a debate as the new Lebanese cabinet was being formed. She hopes that despite a decrease in women’s participation in the new parliament, MPs will be receptive to women’s demand for equal rights. In the meantime, families continue to suffer. 🍷



LAU Professor Brian Prescott-Decie with his family

"None of the children [of women married to foreign nationals] can benefit from any social programs," said Mansour. "It's really a disgrace. There are no alternatives for these people. They don't want to go to their father's homeland."

"Families legitimately living here should have support like all other families here," she added. "But just because the father is not of Lebanese origin, there is total disregard for the fact that the woman is of Lebanese origin."

Professor Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, assistant professor and the director of LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) and a member of the UNDP Gender and Citizenship project steering committee, knows this from experience. When she and her Austrian-American husband married, he had a job in Austria. But one year after their marriage, the Lebanese authorities decided they didn't want him staying here. To keep the family together, Dabbous-Sensenig and her husband had to come up with LL100 million, or more than \$65,000, in order for him to qualify for a business visa.

While they eventually borrowed sufficient funds, the prospects are worse for their children, she said, once they have graduated college and are seeking employment.

"No one wants to employ them because they are 'foreign,'" she said. "They're rejected by the only country they've ever known."



LAU VP and General Counsel
Dr. Cedar Mansour

**"There is inherent discrimination in the law in general, and this is just another example of this discrimination."
—Cedar Mansour, on the reservation to Article 9 (2) barring nationality rights for Palestinian women**

Beyond its practical effects, the discriminatory law sends a powerful, and ugly, message about the place of women in Lebanon, Dabbous-Sensenig said: "This law says, 'Women don't count.' It says, 'If they don't marry one of us, they are outside of our society.'"

She added, "If you fall in love with a man, you're not going to not marry him because he's French, Syrian, Qatari, or American. You are going to marry the man you love. Then, you realize that every year you have to go to the General Security and get a permit to stay in the country."

Mansour agreed: "A person does not make marriage decisions based on whether or not their spouse can get an ID card."

The nationality law is based on the notion of patrilineality, or passing lineage through the father's line. But as Dabbous-Sensenig pointed out, "Of course biologically, you can always be sure of the mother, but you can never be sure of the father."

Instead, she believes "it is patriarchy behind this, and politics, in the case of Palestinians, who in any case are an absolute minority." Older statistics by the CRTD-A indicated that less than 2 percent of foreign marriages involved Palestinian men.

Like Dabbous-Sensenig, Brian Prescott-Decie, an instructor of English and cultural studies at LAU and a native of the U.K., also worries for his children. Married to a Lebanese-Armenian woman for the past 10 years, he has two children ages 5 and 7.

"If it weren't for the children, it wouldn't be a significant issue," he said. "We can afford the occasional lawyer; we know how to make the government system work. For a person like me, there's always a way to live here."

And, he continued, "my children are from here. They were born in a Lebanese hospital; they know the Lebanese flag and think of it as their own. But there's a certain amount of understanding about [the law] already. They ask, 'Why can't I have the same passport as my mom?'"

Although Prescott-Decie said his wife worries about the issue more than he does, he is not looking forward to the day his children reach majority: "When they're 18, their residence is no longer automatic. They'll need work permits, or they'll have the option of going 'back' to England."

This, he pointed out, is a false choice. "We have no home in England. My home is here. I own my house here," he said.

Still, he acknowledged his relative good fortune.

"Because of these restrictions, the kids can miss years of school." —Brian Prescott-Decie

"Many people don't have the same advantages," Prescott-Decie said. "If you look at the people with whom CRTD-A is working, you'll realize many of them are women of limited education, who married a Syrian laborer, for example, and have been left with one or two foreign children. In order to get a residence permit, so that their children can go to school, they need to travel to Damascus to get passports for them, something that might be beyond their financial means."

"Because of these restrictions, the kids can miss years of school," Prescott-Decie added. "Even on the level of emergency medicine, they get sent to Karantina Hospital, where they're treated for a day or two, and then they're on their own."

Three years ago Prescott-Decie, along with Dabbous-Sensenig's husband Eugene, founded an unofficial group, which works in conjunction with CRTD-A, called "Fathers and Sons for Citizenship," although he acknowledges that daughters have a stake in this too. The pair want to remind people that it's not just a women's issue.

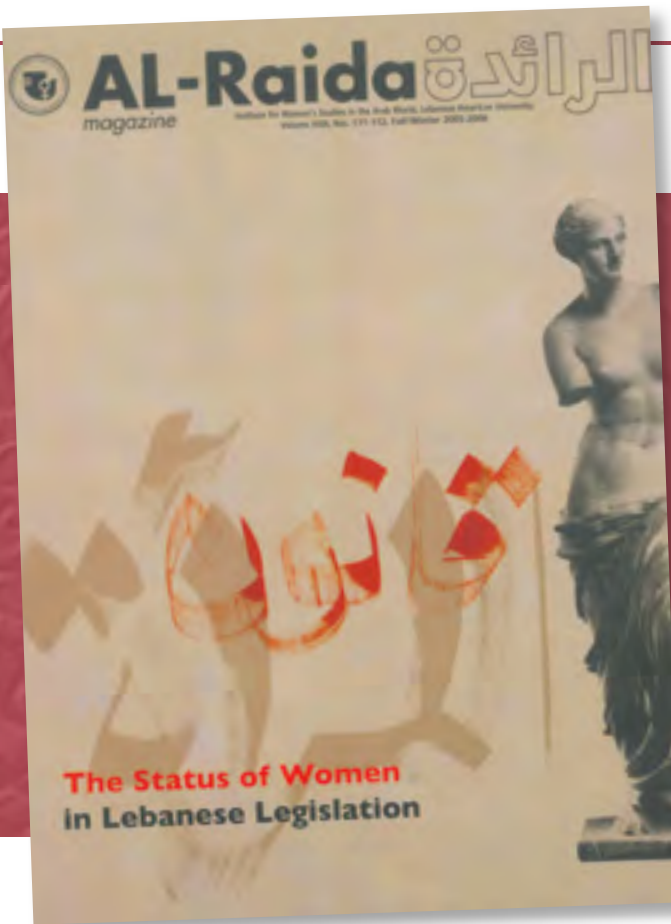
"We want to ask, 'What are our rights?' Because they're being infringed on too," he said.

"Above all else," Prescott-Decie said, "it's a matter of principle. Article Seven of the Lebanese Constitution states unequivocally that 'All Lebanese are equal before the law. They equally enjoy civil and political rights and equally are bound by public obligations and duties without any distinction.' So the nationality law is at the very least unconstitutional."

However, Mansour cautioned that, unlike in the United States, changing the law via a court challenge is hard to do in Lebanon, which relies on a Napoleonic system in which judges are asked to apply the law to the letter.

LAU Professor and head of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) Dima Dabbous-Sensenig with her daughter





"It's changed in several Arab countries, so there's no reason it can't change here, although they will not want to include Palestinian men."

"It's difficult to bring a legal challenge to this law, because the discretion of the judge is limited when there is a very clear codified law. These arguments do not get far. I can bring the most brilliant argument that [the law is] clear-cut discrimination, but the judge has very little room to change a code that's enforceable," she said.

But as Dabbous-Sensenig pointed out, there have been precedents set elsewhere, such as in Algeria, where the law was changed in 2005 to allow equality with men in terms of nationality, and in Tunisia, where a 1993 law allowed the mother to pass on her nationality to her children if they were born on Tunisian soil and had the father's consent.

"None of the children [of women married to foreign nationals] can benefit from any social programs." —Cedar Mansour

"It's changed in several Arab countries, so there's no reason it can't change here, although they will not want to include Palestinian men," she said.

Interior minister Ziad Baroud, who has thrown his support behind Lebanese women's nationality rights, recently told the news website Menassat that he was "hopeful" the law will change soon. He said that a draft law prepared by campaigners and the Ministry of the Interior "would likely be moved into the legislative docket in the near future, and [it] would either be conferred by

the Lebanese cabinet or presented as an emergency law by the parliament." He added that he was "optimistic the Lebanese parliament would approve the law in the end."

But the June 7 parliamentary elections passed without the law ever being presented to parliament, leading Roula Masri, director of CRTD-A's "Jensiyya" or "Nationality" campaign, to conclude that political maneuvering once again took priority over women's rights.

"Publicly, every party agrees to pass this law," Masri said. Citing CRTD-A's meetings with representatives from each party, as well as their on-the-record statements in media appearances and interviews, Masri named the parties that have said they would pass this law if it were put in front of the parliament. According to her, even Prime Minister Fuad Siniora and President Michel Suleiman gave CRTD-A their rhetorical support.

"But when it comes to translating that into action...", Masri said, trailing off. "It's politics," she said. "This is a highly politicized issue."

If the movement eventually does succeed, Mansour suggested it would be the result of years of sit-ins and campaigns. Social change has never happened overnight, and perhaps this is how it should be, Mansour added.

"Changing the law should come as part of a movement against discrimination, unfairness, and robbing people of their rights in general," she said. ■

"If you fall in love with a man, you're not going to not marry him because he's French, Syrian, Qatari, or American. You are going to marry the man you love." —Dima Dabbous-Sensenig





Students try out the "seat belt convincer," brought to LAU by KunHadi on Traffic Awareness Day

Family Charities and LAU

By Dalila Mahdawi

**"He lost his life, but he's saved others."
—Fadi Gebran, on his son Hadi Gebran**



The late Hadi Gebran (right) in a photo now used on many foundation posters

In the early hours of April 16, 2006, LAU undergraduate Hadi Gebran and a friend were driving home after a night of clubbing. The roads were deserted, so Hadi drove faster than usual. Suddenly, a scooter crossed the road in front of them, and in an effort to avoid collision Hadi swerved out of the way, losing control of the car. The two friends were wearing seat belts, but the impact of the crash was so severe, Hadi was killed immediately. He was 18 years old.

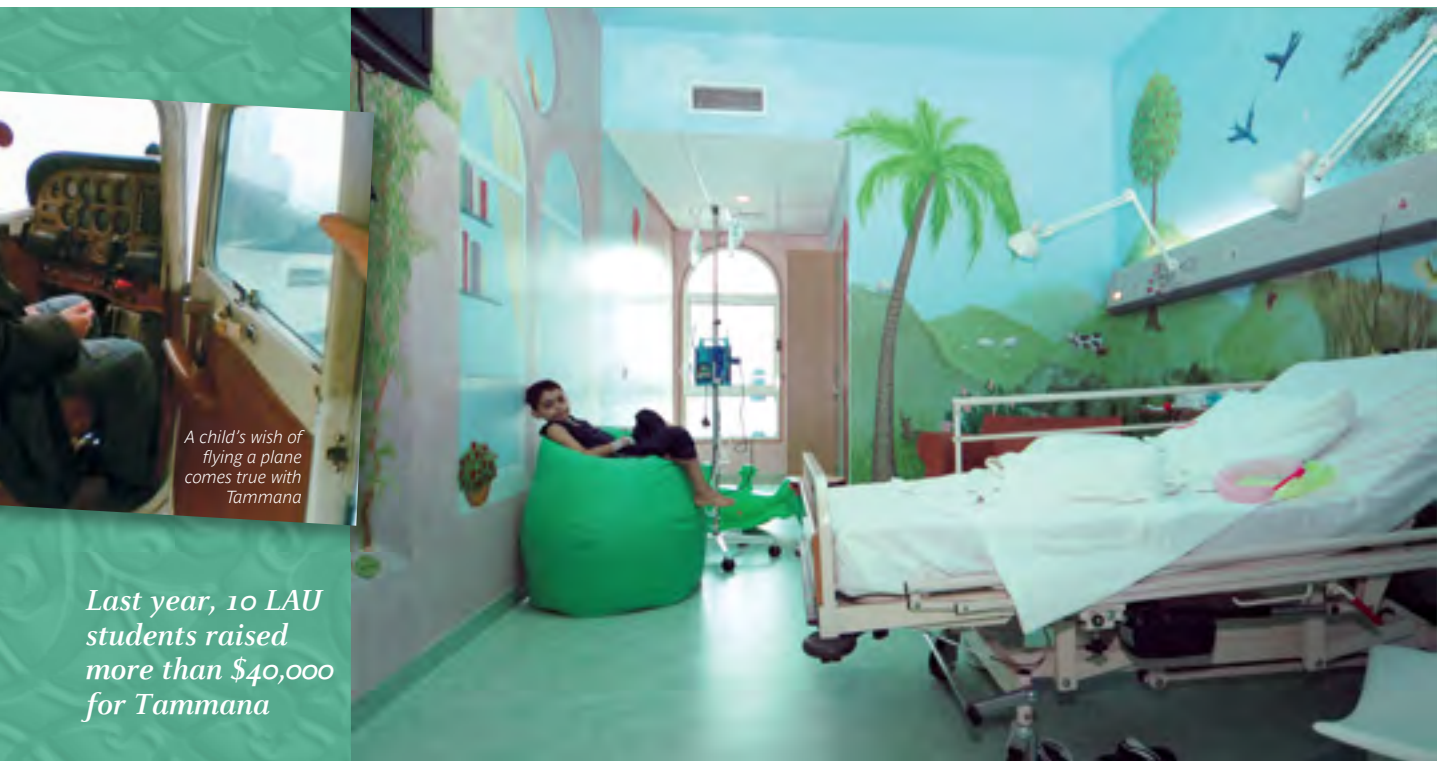
In the wake of Hadi's death, "one of his friends had the idea to start an association in his memory," Hadi's father Fadi told LAU Magazine. The Gebrans jumped at the plan, and together with friends, Fadi and his wife Lena founded KunHadi to raise awareness about road safety. For Hadi's parents, the association transformed their son's death into something that could help keep other young people from dying in preventable circumstances. "He lost his life, but he's saved others," said Fadi of his son. "I'm very happy if at least one person a month survives" thanks to KunHadi's efforts. By relying on family teamwork, the association has also helped the Gebrans cope with their loss. "We feel that Hadi is still with us" through KunHadi, Fadi explained.

Like the Gebrans, others in the LAU community have started family charities after experiencing the death of a family member or witnessing the suffering around them.



Diala Rayess (left) and Tala Sinno (right) received Alumni Achievement awards in 2008





A child's wish of flying a plane comes true with Tammana

Last year, 10 LAU students raised more than \$40,000 for Tammana

A Toufoula dream room

Alumna Diala Rayess created Tammana shortly after losing her five-year-old son Karim in a jet-ski accident in 2005. Although it would have been much easier for her to spiral into depression, Rayess explained, she launched Tammana with the help of three family members. The association, founded in Karim's honor, grants the wishes of children in Lebanon with critical illnesses. Every week Tammana fulfills about four wishes, which can range from receiving a laptop or meeting a celebrity to traveling or becoming a pilot or princess for the day. Last year, 10 LAU students raised more than \$40,000 for the charity. Rayess is currently planning to open Tammana offices in every Arab country.

Another organization, Toufoula, whose founders include four LAU alumni (sisters Yasmine and Tala Sinno, Amal El-Kabbour, and Hussein Abbas), enlists such high-profile talent as architect Bernard Khoury and fashion designer Zuhair Murad to build "dream rooms" for children with cancer. "The idea is to transport the child to another dimension" as a distraction from the pain and fear of medical treatment, Kabbour said. The project has seen active involvement from LAU students and faculty, who have helped to create designs for Toufoula's corporate identity and volunteered their time.

Before and after shots of a kitchen renovated by Beytuna



Beytuna, co-founded by alumnae Yasmeena Masri and her sister Lama, and their aunt, empowers women heads of households who live in precarious circumstances. The group helps to improve the living conditions of these women by educating them about health care and sanitation and helping them develop job skills.

While at LAU, Yasmeena had taken the course "Women in the Arab World" and visited impoverished communities—experiences that led her to launch Beytuna with her sister and aunt in November 2008. Today their work is helping to restore the dignity of women across Lebanon. The founders hope to formally register Beytuna in the near future, to ensure that their efforts continue.



Masri sisters Yasmeena (left) and Lama (right) founded Beytuna with their aunt



Opinion: The Disenfranchised Families Among Us

By Shereen Nabhani and Zeina Abdallah



Dr. Shereen Nabhani



Zeina Abdallah

Nabhani (a former faculty member in LAU's School of Pharmacy) and Abdallah (currently an account manager at MARCOM) donate their time at the Volunteer Outreach Clinic (VOC), a registered non-governmental organization located in the Shatila camp and launched by the American University of Beirut and LAU. The VOC provides free medical care to patients, including access to physicians, pharmacists, and nutritionists, as well as free lab tests and medications.

Though the Palestinians of our parents' and grandparents' generations expected that their exodus would only be temporary, more than 400,000 registered Palestinian refugees now live in Lebanese camps. It is difficult to escape the feeling of despair that pervades a camp like Shatila, where we have spent many days. Shatila, like most Palestinian refugee camps, offers very little in terms of comfort for its residents. But that does not always tell the whole story.

Family life in Shatila is often fractured and complicated to a degree not experienced in other parts of Lebanon, yet in some ways it is the very bonds of family that hold everything together there. While many of Shatila's children do not have the opportunity to go to school—unless they happen to be among the fortunate few who attend one of the handful of United Nations-run schools in the camp—not every child gives up on the dream of an education. It is true that most parents in the camp simply cannot afford a tuition fee at a non-U.N. school, particularly since most Palestinians in the camp are grappling with chronic unemployment or underemployment. But in spite of the hardships, most Palestinians in Shatila try to maintain a semblance of normalcy and hope. And that hope often manifests itself in the family bond.

With more than 8,000 residents of Shatila packed into a mere one-square-kilometer of space, it goes without saying that conditions are cramped beyond belief. Buildings are haphazardly built and, in many cases, crumbling. Electricity and plumbing are improvised. Narrow, unpaved passageways weave between these dilapidated structures, creating a maze of squalor that seems almost otherworldly. For the Palestinians who live in these conditions, life is beyond difficult. Even when somebody in the camp does gain a good education, he or she cannot count on becoming gainfully employed. There is no real economy to speak of, so there is rarely work inside the camp. And Palestinians who search for an escape will usually be disappointed, since Lebanese law still bars Palestinian refugees from taking part in many professions. Residents of the camp have been barred from as many as 70 jobs, ensuring that they remain on the bottom rung of the economic ladder.

Yet despite these grim circumstances, we have seen numerous examples of happiness and contentment in Shatila. We have seen

children who are hopeful in the face of a seemingly hopeless situation. We have seen mothers take on unfathomable burdens while maintaining their dignity and strength.

In one example, a mother of six, whose husband was diagnosed with hepatitis C and had no access to treatment, frequented our clinic. Despite her circumstances, this mother retains a commendable outlook—one of dedication to her children and bed-ridden husband—while trying to provide the best care within her means. Her concern for her family manifests itself in her effort to learn about all pediatric health issues, including nutrition, vaccines, and care.

Though many are concerned about how to solve the problems that come with Lebanon's confessional system, the rights and needs of 400,000 people must not be ignored.

We have also seen families endure remarkable hardships in order to stay together, and we have seen them provide for one another at all costs—even adopting new members when necessary. This often results in a close-knit society, which is particularly beneficial for patients like "Fattoum." She is a delightful 80-year-old woman who visits our clinic every Saturday. The war left her without any next of kin, yet she finds herself part of a large extended family.

While many are concerned about how to solve the problems that come with Lebanon's confessional system, the rights and needs of 400,000 people must not be ignored. The benefits of solving this problem are clear to many Lebanese and Palestinians alike. No one, regardless of origin or creed, should come to accept or expect the fate that lies within the faded walls of Shatila. But until a permanent solution is found, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon will continue to sustain themselves as they have for decades: by maintaining the close family ties that shine light in perpetual darkness.

The Volunteer Outreach Clinic is always seeking volunteers and financial assistance. To get involved, please contact Zeina Abdallah at 03 668259, or visit www.voclebanon.org.



LAU's Extended Family

By LAU Staff

LAU alumni chapters worldwide

When Ed Shiner, LAU's alumni programs manager in North America, attended a dinner gathering of the newly formed Ottawa alumni chapter, he was struck by something he noticed. Despite everyone being of Lebanese origin and living within close proximity of each other thousands of miles from Lebanon, almost none of the attendees knew each other prior to meeting that night.

"I guess I had just assumed that, because these folks shared a Lebanese heritage and lived in the same city, that somehow they would have met before," Shiner said. "Clearly I assumed too much."

Months later, at a national alumni gathering in Orlando, Shiner saw many of those same Ottawa alumni interacting like old friends. "I really saw first-hand how much an alumni chapter can bring people together," he said. "In many ways these chapters can be like family."

Nearly 30,000 strong and growing, LAU's alumni play an important role as ambassadors for the university. But what makes LAU's alumni network unique is the university's global reach. The network stretches from Abu Dhabi to Los Angeles and encompasses almost 30 organized chapters worldwide.

Abdallah Al Khal, LAU's director of alumni relations, said the university is working to show its graduates the importance of alumni networks in their professional as well as social lives.

"We encourage our alumni to think of their chapter like a second family," Al Khal said. He added that alumni events have been known to produce job offers or business deals, citing as an example what recently took place among members of the Dubai chapter. As the economic crisis washed over the region, employees

were inevitably laid off, leading the executive committee of that chapter to spring into action and successfully help many of their members find new jobs. "They looked out for one another like family members would," Al Khal said.

The Toronto chapter, one of LAU's strongest alumni groups in North America, began with a picnic for 15 people, co-founder Samer Andray said, and it has now grown to encompass more than 100 alumni.

"They looked out for one another like family members would." —Abdallah Al Khal

"We have been fortunate to have good people around us, and we're extremely happy that our children have been able to form strong relationships with other members. This is the foundation of the Lebanese community," Andray said. He added that it gives him comfort to know there is a global network of LAU alumni. Members of the Toronto chapter have readily made themselves available to assist LAU alumni passing through the area, providing them with lodging and travel plans.

The alumni relations office recently kicked off Net Community, a global social-networking portal that will make it even easier for LAU's widely dispersed alumni to connect, reconnect, and stay connected to both the university and each other.

"The Alumni Relations Office and LAU, along with the Alumni Association Board, are working very hard to continuously strengthen our alumni network," Al Khal said. "We should never underestimate the tremendous power that such a network can have in people's lives."

"I really saw first-hand how much an alumni chapter can bring people together. In many ways these chapters can be like family."

—Ed Shiner



LAU in Motion



The High-Flying Professor and His Unconventional Aircraft

By LAU Staff

When you walk into Michel Khoury's office on the LAU Byblos campus, you immediately notice the airplane-inspired decor on the walls. In one corner there is a two-meter-wide wing from an airplane model built by his students a few years back. The assistant professor at the School of Engineering and Architecture has loved airplanes ever since he took his first plane ride at the age of 13. It so sparked his interest that he started making paper airplanes and building models immediately.

He still builds models today, but they are highly evolved unconventional aircraft that he has designed and built with his students. On July 9, Khoury flew the latest version of their unconventional aircraft at the Hamat Airport in the north of Lebanon, along with Senior IT Support Administrator Alexei Karam and two of the three students that have been working on the aircraft. Karam, whose hobby of flying planes began at the age of 10, said his practical know-how has contributed to the successful flights of this and previous aircraft.

It all started when Khoury joined LAU right after receiving his Ph.D. from Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, where he did U.S. Air Force-funded research on unmanned combat air vehicles. But Khoury had bigger plans in store. "It was at the back of my brain," he said, "that we should try to design an airplane, build it, fly it—see how it goes." And so they did.

In his second semester of teaching, Khoury taught an elective on aircraft design that culminated in the successful flying of the airplane developed in class. In 2007, he taught a similar elective, Unconventional Aircraft Design. According to Khoury, conventional airplanes are easy to build because the design is readily available and easy to copy.

With unconventional aircraft, however, there is nothing to copy, which gives its designers much more room for creativity and challenge. "You can't find unconventional aircraft designs," Khoury said. "You can find aircraft design books [about] just regular aircrafts, but once you talk about unconventional aircraft, it becomes very challenging."

The unconventional aircraft that started as the 2007 class project was later modified by three students for their final year project. That model was flown last summer but still needed some work. Khoury continued to amend the model further because he wanted it to be "a full success."

Now, he can say that it is. In May, the University Research Council at LAU approved a grant on the unmanned solar aircraft, which led to the production of the third aircraft, spearheaded by Khoury in coordination with Dr. Barbar Akle, another assistant professor at the School of Engineering and Architecture. The aircraft aimed to demonstrate the theory of a solar-powered aircraft, Khoury said. The entire aircraft design and manufacturing process took the professors and students about two months. The aircraft was tested without solar panels on July 9 and was expected to fly in full armor by the end of July.

Khoury said the students learn more than just how to design an aircraft, a skill that unfortunately will not likely lead to a career in Lebanon. What they do learn is methodology, and seeing how engineering equations work and how they materialize in a lab. They also see their work take off, literally. "The 2005 [aircraft] flew like a dream. And students were yelling like crazy!" he said.

"It gave us a more practical aspect of engineering. It was the first class where we went to the lab and we built [the aircraft] with our hands."

—Richard Mouawad, senior, LAU



Students working on the conventional plane in 2005



> Shortly after a successful landing, the group pose with their aircraft. (from left to right): Wael Nahas, Joseph Najem, Dr. Michel Khoury, Alexei Karam, and Fida Majzoub



“You can find aircraft design books [about] just regular aircrafts, but once you talk about unconventional aircraft it becomes very challenging.” —Michel Khoury

“It gave us a more practical aspect of engineering. It was the first class where we went to the lab and we built [the aircraft] with our hands,” said senior Richard Mouawad, who took Khoury’s Unconventional Aircraft Design course in 2007. Fida Majzoub, who took the course and graduates this year, said another thing the students learned was how to find solutions for problems faced during the manufacturing phase. “Theory is very different from manufacturing, especially when you are using cheaper materials,” she explained. Joseph Najem, another senior who took the course, agreed, and noted that one other difficulty was dealing with the machines in the workshop. “We had no background on these machines,” he said. However, through the challenges they gained a sense of the value of teamwork.

“He’s the master of aircraft here,” said Majzoub of Khoury. In response, Khoury modestly replied, “I’m good enough, but I’m not the master.” Khoury recently received an offer to teach aircraft design at Delft University of Technology, one of the top universities in the field in Europe, but he wants to continue living in Lebanon, working at LAU, and teaching yet another installment of Unconventional Aircraft Design—perhaps this time involving an end-of-semester competition with other universities.



LAU Team Builds Solar Car on the Byblos Campus

By LAU Staff

What would inspire a group of LAU professors and students to spend their Saturday mornings working in the basement of a campus building? A few years ago it was to build a rocket, last year to create a balloon launcher, and two years ago to construct remote-controlled, solar-powered race cars.

In 2009, two LAU professors and seven students—including five from Lebanese high schools—got involved in an even bigger project: the first solar car built at LAU. The result of their three-week project was exhibited and tested at the 10th Annual Science and Arts Fair on May 7.

The unusual-looking vehicle, made of three boards containing solar cells and sustained by a metal framework, sits on three bicycle wheels.

“The boards have to be horizontal so that they can receive the maximum amount of sunlight,” explained Dr. Barbar Akle, an assistant professor at the LAU School of Architecture and Engineering.

Sako Khatsherian, a 14-year-old who attends Montana International School and helped build the car, said, “I’ve already decided to come to LAU and become an engineer.”

“These are very talented students whom I see becoming LAU students in the future,” added Dr. Brigitte Wex, assistant professor at the School of Arts and Sciences. Wex received a grant for the project from the Society of Photographic Instrumentation Engineers (SPIE), and the Student Affairs Office at LAU Byblos matched the funds. The budget for the solar car project was around \$4,000, Wex said.



Students hard at work building the solar-powered vehicle



LAU Awards Honorary Ph.D. to Distinguished Scientist Dr. Bassam Shakhashiri

Renowned chemistry professor Dr. Bassam Shakhashiri was granted an honorary Ph.D. at the LAU Byblos commencement ceremony on July 16. A faculty member at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Shakhashiri is known internationally for his efforts in promoting science education at all levels and developing demonstrations for teaching chemistry in classrooms and other settings. He has given more than 1,300 invited lectures and presentations around the world, written numerous books, and been featured in national and local media of every type. Shakhashiri has also received numerous awards, and is described in the Encyclopedia Britannica as the "dean of lecture demonstrators in America."

From 1984 to 1990, Shakhashiri served as assistant director for science and engineering education at the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the United States, where he led efforts to rebuild and develop educational programs in these fields after their decline in the early 1980s, and established a strategic plan that influenced the last two decades of the NSF's activities.

Shakhashiri promotes policies for the advancement of science and technology to serve society, and works to establish links between science and the arts and humanities.

Shakhashiri was born in Anfe, in the north of Lebanon, to an alumna of LAU, Adma Shakhashiri, and Dr. Zekin Shakhashiri, who was a pioneer in public health at the American University of Beirut. After moving to the U.S. in 1957, he graduated from Boston University in 1960 with an A.B. degree in chemistry, then earned master's and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Maryland. In 1970 he joined the University of Wisconsin, where he went on to become the founding chair of the University of Wisconsin System Undergraduate Teaching Improvement Council in 1977 and founder and first director of the Institute for Chemical Education (ICE) in 1983.

LAU Comm



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LAU Awards Honorary Ph.D. to Central Bank Governor Riad Salamé

Riad Salamé, Lebanon's Central Bank governor, received an honorary degree at the LAU Beirut commencement ceremony, held on July 18. Salamé was honored for his outstanding achievements in the banking sector in Lebanon.

Having served in his current position since 1994, Salamé has won numerous local and international awards over the years for his exceptional leadership, especially during troubled times that gripped Lebanon.

In 2006, he received the prize for the world's best central bank governor at an annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. He has also received awards like Best Arab Banker in 1996, Best Central Bank Governor in 2003, and Best Central Bank Governor for the Middle East in 2005.

Most recently, in light of his work during the global financial crisis, he was named Best Middle East Central Bank Governor by the internationally renowned magazine *The Banker* in early 2009.

"Lebanon has been exposed to many tumultuous events, from assassinations to wars," Salamé said in a March 2009 interview with *The Banker* magazine. "The banking sector kept it together throughout, and this adds to the conviction that our system can operate in stressful situations."

Born in Beirut on July 17, 1950, Salamé studied at the College Notre-Dame de Jamhour before graduating from the American University of Beirut with a degree in economics. He worked at Merrill Lynch for 20 years, from 1973 until he was appointed to his current position.



Children from the summer camp visit a local water park

LAU's Summer Camp Thrills Children and Parents Alike

By Marc Abizeid

It has been two decades since Maha Makki last attended LAU's annual summer camp, but she can still describe in vivid detail the experiences that defined two of her childhood summers.

"We used to do gymnastics, tennis, swimming, two types of art, basketball ... and we used to go to the LAU library once a week," she recalled. "And I remember that the trainers were nice, but strict."

Now 32 years old and a mother of three, Makki is enrolling her seven-year-old twins in the same summer camp that she remembers so fondly.

For Makki and the parents of about 150 youngsters who enrolled in LAU's summer camp for the 2009 season, the purpose of signing up their children is not simply to get them out of the house and away from video games.

"It's not that I want them to go to summer camp because there is nothing else to do," Makki said. "I want them to go to this summer camp specifically, because they're going to have a good time and practice their skills."

The camp, which has been a staple of LAU's Continuing Education Program (CEP) since 1982, is split into two age-based programs.

Children ages 6 to 8 enroll in the regular day camp, where activities include sports and art-related projects, along with cooking, chess, storytelling, and Wushu.

For children ages nine to 12, CEP offers the "Little Business Leaders" program, which trains kids to manage budgets, sell products, and make calculated, business-minded decisions.

"I was shocked by the capacity of the kids to perform and act just like adults," said Nathalie Moukarzel, an instructor for the program.

Both day camps take place on the LAU campus Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Families are given the choice of enrolling in a two-, four-, or six-week program.

Every Wednesday the children are either taken on a field trip—past destinations have included the Animal City zoo and the Splash Mountain water park—or remain on campus for a special activity.

New activities are added every year. Last summer, the camp introduced the Universal Concept in Mental Arithmetic System (UCMAS) program into both age-based groups. UCMAS is designed to stimulate both parts of the brain using the ancient Chinese abacus calculator, and to help develop memory, concentration, imagination, and logic.

"It's not that I want them to go to summer camp because there is nothing else to do. I want them to go to this summer camp specifically, because they're going to have a good time and practice their skills." —Maha Makki

Layan Mhanna, a summer camp group leader, said most of the children react to their camp activities with tremendous joy and excitement.

"At the beginning, the children would be very shy, and some of them wouldn't want to come at all," Mhanna said. "But after one week, I noticed that they had become very attached to us and would never miss a day."





“When you look at the team, you don’t see it as a team. You feel like they are a family.”

“People still can’t believe we won, as we were missing key players.”
—Coach Remond Safi



LAU Rugby Team Sets National Record

By Jay Heisler

After the dust settled from the Bank of Beirut Rugby League Championship, the LAU team stood proud with another record-setting performance. Despite a tightly contested loss to Jounieh in the tournament’s final game on May 16, the Immortals set a record in national sport, having won all the other games in the championship.

The team’s streak of 12 uninterrupted victories was not its first record-breaking accomplishment. It has already set the bar for the most tournaments won by a single Lebanese rugby team, with five national championship victories under its belt.

LAU coach Remond Safi, now director of coaching for the Lebanese rugby league, attributed the team’s strength to its close-knit and supportive approach to the game.

“When you look at the team, you don’t see it as a team,” he said. “You feel like they are a family. They are always together. There is good bonding among the players, and they trust that they have each other’s back on the field. They can rely on one another.”

His favorite example is a game against Jounieh in which 80 percent of the players on field were rookies, some of whom were playing their first real game. Their more experienced teammates “showed them courage and guided them,” Safi said.

“People still can’t believe we won, as we were missing key players,” he added, openly proud of his team. “I give motivational speeches once a week—depends on who we’re playing,” he said. “I psychologically try to get them into the game, pump them up, that kind of stuff.”

Of the 25 players on the Immortals, nine are on Lebanese national teams, Liban Espoir and Cedars. Although they pride themselves on their discipline, practice three times a week, and play one game a week, the players agree with Safi on the role camaraderie plays in their success.

Immortals player Robin Hachache stressed that his team has a very good relationship, saying, “We’re like a family. ... We’re always like that, always together.”

“Skill-wise, fitness-wise—in all aspects of the game, we have the best players,” said Hachache, who has four years of experience playing.

In the Bank of Beirut championship, which started in November 2008, the LAU team took on AUB, Jounieh RLFC, Université Saint Joseph, and University of Balamand.

The Bank of Beirut Rugby League Championship started in 2007 as an amalgamation of spring and winter tournaments that began in 2002.

According to LAU Director of Athletics Sami Garabedian, when the tournament was created, “LAU’s team was the weakest, but they still called themselves the Immortals because they believed they could win. The team started getting better and better and better.”

From their underdog beginnings to their current record-breaking prominence, the Immortals live up to their name in Lebanese athletics.



Faculty Talent Highlights

In Love with Ceramics **Dr. May Abboud,** retired professor of computer science

Dr. May Abboud, a retired professor in the LAU Department of Computer Science and Mathematics, has been involved in a 24-year love affair with ceramics—a passion that has brought her the Musée Sursock Award for her installation, “The July War.”

As she sat in her Beirut studio, sipping coffee from a ceramic cup she worked on herself, Abboud remembered how she first discovered what would become a lifelong pursuit.

“I always loved art, but I didn’t have any real education in art when I was young,” Abboud said. When she found herself in the United States in 1984, she decided it was time to sign up for some classes.

She registered for a ceramics course at George Washington University, and the first thing she wanted to make, Abboud recalled, was a dinner set. But she soon discovered that working with clay opened up her imagination.

The installation that brought her the Sursock award consists of a number of small boats, symbols of the refugees who left South Lebanon in the 2006 war. “The boats are filled with little things, which can be people and their belongings,” Abboud explained. “The refugees in the south did not leave their house



Dr. May Abboud with one of her works

“When I don’t know what to do, I go back to the wheel. It’s almost like meditation.”

by boat, but I chose to make boats because they are more symbolic.”

Abboud said she has also started exploring other artistic interests, among them painting and photography. “With painting you can control color more,” she said.

Still, she added, “When I don’t know what to do, I go back to the wheel. It’s almost like meditation.”

A Passion for Cinema **Khalil Zaarour,** part-time faculty member in the Department of Arts and Communications

He used to skip school when he was a boy, taking refuge in a cinema hall and watching two or three movies a day—sometimes the same movie over and over. Deep down, he always knew: Someday he would be a director.

Khalil Zaarour followed his dream, graduating in 2001 with a bachelor’s in communication arts from LAU, then a master’s in film directing from the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik.

“But the movie theater was my hideaway, my retreat,” he said. So, in addition to teaching film at LAU this year, Zaarour is busy making movies.

The Window, a 13-minute drama he made in 2006 about a lonely old man who anxiously awaits a visit from someone who sent him a Christmas card, won first prize at the 13th European Film Festival, third prize at the MINI Film Festival in Dubai in 2007, and a nomination in Sapporo, Japan.

“This film was my passport to filmmaking,” Zaarour said. “I always tell my students to make their short films in university with a great deal of passion, because it is their first ticket to the industry.”



Khalil Zaarour at the Dubai Media City Mini Film Festival in 2007

“The movie theater was my hideaway, my retreat.”

The Strangers, a docudrama that Zaarour shot in Tripoli and that focuses on poverty, has also had a successful run at international film festivals, as well as at universities and cultural centers in Lebanon.

Zaarour now has a feature film in the works. “I am taking my time in writing it, because I want it to be mature enough and ‘Lebanese’ enough,” he said. “That’s what I also tell my students, [to] write something genuine ... something from their land, their people. Because we cannot compete with Hollywood in action movies, but we can compete with our Lebanese stories.”



Among the Best **Dr. Samira Korfali,** a scientist for the Middle East

“We have set a plan in an official meeting of how to establish research units in each country.”



Korfali at the World Economic Forum on the Middle East

In an era of highly volatile energy markets and a global economic crisis, science and innovation offer the best hope for growth and prosperity.

At this year’s World Economic Forum on the Middle East, which took place May 15-17 at the Dead Sea in Jordan, 20 scientists from around the region were selected to develop a strategy to tackle the crisis. Among them was Dr. Samira Korfali, chair of the LAU Natural Sciences Division in Beirut.

“The forum is mainly on economics and politics, but for the first time they decided to include technology and science, because if you want to look at the long term for the economical growth of any country, you have to go into science, technology, and education,” Korfali said.

The Swiss Institute of Technology team that was in charge of selecting the group of 20 scholars was impressed with the work of Korfali, a well-known Lebanese scientist. A member of the Lebanese National Research Council, Korfali is also the only Middle Eastern scientist in the European branch of the Society of Environmental Geochemistry and Health.

Korfali was chosen to lead the discussion for one of the forum’s Role Model Series panels, dedicated to the importance of the scientist in the Middle Eastern educational system. She also participated in other panels, including “Architect of Science,” “Privatization of Science,” and “Rethinking Education.”

In the session she led, the participants, all youth leaders, talked about the characteristics that make a scientist a good role model in the Middle East. Korfali said she was happy to find an LAU pharmacy student among the young leaders selected to participate in the panel.

Korfali added that she was impressed with the idea of creating a network of scientists in the Middle East, and would like to see that project implemented as quickly as possible.

“We have set a plan in an official meeting of how to establish research units in each country,” Korfali said. “But first we have to have the data, what the countries need, the resources, the experts.” She said she has high aspirations for the project. “We have very good scientists here at LAU, and they need to receive such recognition,” Korfali added.



Abboud’s award-winning piece symbolizing boats carrying refugees out of Lebanon during the 2006 war



Faculty and Staff on the Move



ALESSANDRO ARTIZZU

Professor Alessandro Artizzu, who hails from Italy, is now teaching interior design and interior architecture courses at LAU. He said he is interested in working in the Middle East because he sees its culture as “an important crossroads between West and East” and as the origin of many contemporary ideas. Artizzu looks forward to helping students develop the knowledge and skills they will need to pursue careers as interior designers. After studying in Italy—earning a degree in architecture from the University of Florence and a master’s in industrial design from Domos Academy—Artizzu taught in several universities in South Korea before joining LAU.



GEORGE SADAKA

A newly appointed full-time professor in the English department, **Dr. George Sadaka** said he admires LAU for its ability to harness the energy of the young generation. Sadaka, who has been working at LAU part-time since the age of 23, has taught various subjects in the humanities department, from rhetoric and creative writing to the cultural studies courses in the liberal arts curriculum. He graduated with an M.A. in English literature from the American University of Beirut and is currently working on a Ph.D. in English literature from Lancaster University in the U.K.



RALPH ABI-HABIB

Dr. Ralph Abi-Habib is a newly appointed assistant professor in the natural sciences department. He has conducted research in cancer therapeutics and cancer drug development at the discovery, pre-clinical, and clinical levels. Abi-Habib previously worked as manager of research and development and later as manager of clinical research at Protox Therapeutics, Inc. in Vancouver, Canada. He holds a Ph.D. in biochemistry and molecular biology from Wake Forest University School of Medicine, as well as an M.S. in biochemistry from the American University of Beirut and a B.S. in biology from the Lebanese University.



EVELYN DABAGHI CHATILA

LAU alumna **Evelyn Dabaghi Chatila** has recently joined her graduate alma mater as a full-time English instructor. In her capacity as a teacher, Chatila—who also holds a B.A. in English literature and a Teaching Diploma from Notre Dame University in Lebanon—said she wishes to positively impact the overall attitude of students toward reading and writing. She is also a member of the Writing Center Ad Hoc Committee at LAU.



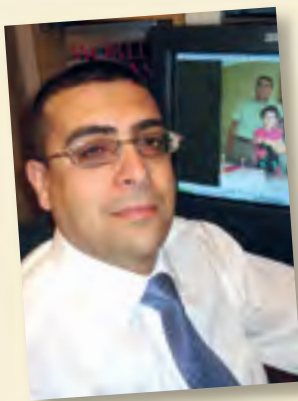
ZOYA GHOSN AL ZAHABI

Eleven years after graduating with a B.S. in business administration, **Zoya Ghosn Al Zahabi** is back at LAU—this time as an executive assistant in the office of the vice president for student development and enrollment management. She holds an M.A. in money and banking from the American University of Beirut and has gained extensive administrative experience from her previous jobs, including a position with Beam International, an offshore company in the oil and gas field. “I am proud to be a member of the LAU family and looking forward to a bright future on all levels,” she said.



HANI DIMASSI

Dr. Hani Dimassi has been with LAU’s School of Pharmacy since 1998 and recently joined the school full-time. He plans to support interdisciplinary research and teach statistics with an applied approach, so that “students walk out of the course with an understanding that will remain with them after graduation,” he said. Dimassi has also helped to establish an assessment committee at the school. Dimassi holds a Ph.D. in biostatistics from the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center, as well as a B.S. in environmental health and MPH from the American University of Beirut.



ABDO GHIE

LAU welcomes **Abdo Ghie** as its new assistant vice president for enrollment management. Born and raised in Lebanon, Ghie has been studying and working in Canada for the past 20 years. After obtaining a Bachelor of Commerce degree in management and public policy from the University of Ottawa in 1996 and a master’s in international management from the École Nationale d’Administration Publique (ENAP) in 2001, he held various positions at the University of Ottawa, which enrolls more than 36,000 students. He first worked in international advising and student development, and then, more recently, in enrollment management. For the past five years, Ghie has been the chief administrative officer (CAO) and executive assistant to the associate vice-president and registrar in the Strategic Enrollment Management office.

“I am very proud of my achievements, and I strongly feel the need to help in the advancement and expansion of my country. I want to help the young Lebanese generation see things clearer, simpler, and differently. I have a great desire to help make the university more accessible to students and to help transform Lebanese students into world citizens,” Ghie said.

Ghie, who considers enrollment management to be the heart of a university, joined LAU in mid-June and will be working to complete and implement the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and to oversee the offices of the registrar, admissions, and financial aid on both campuses.

“Together, we will do our utmost to answer the needs of our prospective and registered students and to meet the institution’s objectives,” Ghie said. “I am very excited to join the E.M. team at LAU and look forward to many years of collaboration, progression, and opportunities.”

LAU Joint Ventures

Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine to Open Its Doors in September

By Cindy Saleh



Dean Kamal Badr speaks to faculty members at the first founding faculty meeting in April

September 2009 will usher in the inaugural class of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine.

According to President Jabbara, the school aims to produce doctors who “are energized by a fundamental ethical fiber that would govern their behavior day in and day out.”

LAU board member Gilbert Chagoury, St. Lucia’s ambassador, permanent delegate to UNESCO, and ambassador to the Holy See, and his wife, Rose-Marie, provided a donation of \$10 million to fund the medical school and \$3.5 million for the construction of the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing. The \$18 million complex is a technologically advanced, 12,500-square-meter structure designed to house the school’s innovative curriculum.

An affiliation with Harvard Medical International (HMI) was established in 2007 as part of a 10-year collaborative effort in which representatives are consulted on issues such as curriculum development, faculty standards, and admissions processes.

HMI delegates Dr. Lynn Eckhart, director of academic programs; Dr. Thomas Aretz, vice president, global programs; and Dr. Constance Bowe, senior consultant, spent four days in May with faculty and administrators at an annual Joint Advisory Board meeting and a faculty development workshop at Le Meridian Commodore Hotel in Beirut.

“LAU is a special institution that really knew what it wanted to accomplish. It decided it wanted high quality and excellence in education. [The representatives] are very experienced, know what they want, and are willing to work together,” Dr. Eckhart said.

Dr. Aretz agreed: “I think [LAU] has a track record. It’s really an established institution. It put several new programs and facilities in place. We thought everything was absolutely right.”

Dr. Kamal Badr, dean of the School of Medicine (SOM), said the representatives were extremely positive in the evaluation of the school’s progress. “I think they were very impressed. They will be coming and spending extended periods of time here after the school opens, and we look forward to working with HMI in developing our clinical programs,” he added.

In April, the SOM held its first founding faculty meeting on the Beirut campus. “The meeting represents a foundational event to help us start the process of building the school,” Badr said.

The school has recruited 108 researchers and doctors out of 300 applicants for faculty positions. Chosen on the basis of high merit and research accomplishment, the faculty members hail from the United States, Canada, the U.K., Lebanon, and other Arab countries, and bring diverse specializations—general surgery, cardiology, neurology, genetics, oncology, radiology, obstetrics, gynecology, dermatology, and gastroenterology.

The SOM signed its first clinical agreement in July 2007 with Clemenceau Medical Center, an affiliate of Johns Hopkins Medicine International, followed by a second agreement with the Rafik Hariri University Hospital in June 2008. According to Badr, this will “provide LAU with an excellent facility for the training of its students, residents, and fellows. It will allow students to gain experience in inpatient and outpatient treatment and observe directly a variety of medical and surgical cases from the outset of their medical education.”

“[The SOM] was conceived and designed to create a new physician, one who is superbly trained in the skills of 21st-century medicine but who believes deeply that a physician is, above all, a merciful healer,” Badr said. ■

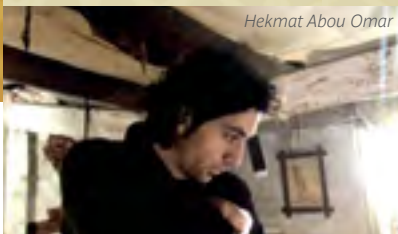
Student Achievement

Lena Hamady, Hekmat Abou Omar, Elias Moubarak

Things have been busy lately for LAU communication arts graduate Lena Hamady. On May 12, she attended a conference in Italy, where she presented a documentary filmed with fellow LAU alumni Hekmat Abou Omar and Elias Moubarak. Commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF), a nonprofit NGO, the 10-minute documentary looked at how several countries were tackling unemployment. Hamady and Abou Omar spent a week in November filming in Morocco, where they focused on the issues of women's entry into the workforce and the development of the tourism sector. A few weeks later, Hamady teamed up with Moubarak to film at a conference in Lebanon that gathered some 200 professionals from around the Arab world to discuss entrepreneurship strategies. Although it was the first time she had worked on such a large-scale project, Hamady said, "the documentary was very successful; the ETF really loved it." Of course, it wasn't smooth sailing all the way. All three graduates said they found it difficult to balance their work on the documentary with their scholastic commitments, and they were grateful for having received support from the department. Getting visas to travel to other countries was also problematic. The group was not allowed to enter either Jordan or Belgium, and consequently had to use secondary footage of conferences there that they subsequently edited into the whole. Notwithstanding, the overall experience was positive: All are keen to continue making documentaries in the future, despite the obstacles posed by full-time employment and funding. The inspiration and dedication of these three budding filmmakers, coupled with the international success of their documentary, seem to indicate that the world is their cinematographic oyster.



Lena Hamady



Hekmat Abou Omar



Elias Moubarak

Farah Abou Hassan

Farah Abou Hassan, a senior in LAU's Department of Education, has been admitted into the 2009-10 Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) Program. The only Lebanese student accepting a place in the program, Abou Hassan, who received the award this past spring, was gearing up for a busy summer. "After I graduate in June, I'm attending a series of workshops, first in Cairo in July and then at Jackson State University in August. Afterwards, I'll enroll at Florida State University (FSU) to teach Arabic for a semester," Abou Hassan said. In return, FSU will provide her with four graduate courses, which amount to half of a master's degree. After finishing the FLTA program, she intends to complete her postgraduate studies with a focus on special education, an area in which she already has some work experience. "Special education is more advanced in the U.S.," Abou Hassan said, adding that she hopes her time there will enable her to contribute to developing the field in Lebanon.



Student Achievement

Montasser Bayoud

"Mitsu Domo," written and directed by communication arts major Montasser Bayoud, was selected to appear and compete in the Short Film Corner at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2009. Shot in five days for LL425,000 (around \$280), the film won first prize at the European Film Festival in Beirut last November. "Cannes was a dream," Bayoud said. "It was a good experience to know where you stand. You see the real world of cinema. You have the opportunity to sit and discuss issues with people who have already tackled all the limitations and are making a living from creating films. It was a very important learning experience for me." Bayoud plans to start working on another short film portraying another criminal world in the future.



Joelle El Hayek and Rania Al Ayash

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We are gathered here to talk about my love life. ... Yes, my love life." Though perhaps these are not words one would expect to hear from a competitor in a public speaking event, their boldness and honesty were probably key factors in the success of the speech, entitled "Lover's Swift," by LAU senior Rania Al Ayash. The speech delved into Al Ayash's relationship with her "schizophrenic lover": Lebanon. "One day I'm partying till dawn, while the next I'm dodging bullets," said Al Ayash, who majors in psychology with minors in education and philosophy. "But in the end, when we are broken down, we are regenerated more beautifully than ever." She was chosen alongside fellow LAU student Joelle El Hayek, a senior in computer science, to represent Lebanon at the annual International Public Speaking Competition in London, along with 70 other participants from 43 countries. Organized by the English Speaking Union (ESU) and funded by HSBC's Global Education Trust, the four-day event engages participants in a series of workshops and debate clubs and provides them with an opportunity to read an original speech to an international audience. The theme for this year's competition was "Regeneration and Renewal."

"It was a life-changing experience. It boosted my self-confidence and taught me how to be more independent and responsible," said El Hayek, whose speech, "Bring out the Light," won over Lebanese judges with its resolute optimism. "My speech was meant to persuade people to maintain a positive attitude toward everything in life, no matter how tough, difficult, or undesirable circumstances may seem," she said.

In preparation for the competition, El Hayek and Al Arash were mentored by Nabilah Haraty, a member of ESU since its establishment in Lebanon. Haraty gave them guidance in brainstorming the content of their speeches and focused on charisma and earnestness in delivery. "This is the first time that both winners from Lebanon come from the same university," Haraty said. "I can't tell you how proud I am of them both."



Joelle El Hayek and Rania Al Ayash with other students at the Public Speaking Competition in London

Campusnotes

Campus Fun

LAU held its first **Spring Fiesta**—a two-day outdoor fair of music, games, and fun. During the event on May 16–17, the Beirut campus was sectioned into zones for games, shows, and a food court. The event attracted adults and children of all ages, who participated in bungee jumping, wall climbing, bungee trampoline, and space ball.



For six consecutive years, the LAU Byblos Athletics Department has organized the **Strongest Man Competition**. At the two-day event in May, students and graduates from both the Beirut and Byblos campuses competed in such games as pulling a truck with a rope and repeatedly lifting a tree trunk above their heads. The winners, in separate categories, were LAU varsity football player Wael Azar, under 80 kg; Hrag Artanian, under 90 kg; Joe Nassar, under 100 kg; and Johan Maksoud, open-weight category.



Inspiring Change

This semester, numerous **traffic awareness activities** took place on the Beirut and Byblos campuses. On April 29 the Beirut Guidance Office, in collaboration with the Lebanese Red Cross and the KunHadi foundation, organized “LAU Rallies for Road Safety,” an event in which students answered road-safety questions and participated in a rally paper.

Seventeen teams from LAU and other universities journeyed through Lebanon—within a speed limit—as part of the LAU Rally Paper, organized by the Discovery Club with the help of the Byblos Guidance Office. Participants had to correctly answer all questions to win. Of the 11 who completed the contest, one of LAU’s teams ranked first and won a \$1,000 prize.



The LAU Byblos community has benefited from newly created shuttles to transport students from the lower parking to the lower gate, posters explaining the hazards of double parking, and a live demonstration by the Lebanese Red Cross to inform students about what to do in a car accident.



Around 70 students from LAU’s Scouts, Pulse, and Music clubs participated in the **HSBC EarthRace 09**, organized by the Beirut Marathon Association, on April 26. The clubs set up a 25-meter stand on Hamra Street—along the runners’ route—with the motto “The Earth Is Turning On Us.” Environmental issues such as air pollution, deforestation, and contamination of Lebanon’s water were highlighted.



Experts Explain



Pharmacy students addressed three major public health issues during the sixth annual **Pharmacy Week** in Byblos, organized by the School of Pharmacy and No Apathy Pharmacy and Health Student Society (NAPHASS), on April 22–24. They distributed sunscreen to students and informed them of effective ways to protect skin, and used posters and videos to warn about the risks of smoking. On the third day, high school students were invited to visit the campus to learn about the pharmacy program and attend the poison prevention campaign.

LAU's Center for Program and Learning Assessment organized **learning assessment workshops** on both Beirut and Byblos campuses at the end of April. The workshops aimed to familiarize faculty members from local and regional higher-education institutions with assessment processes through hands-on exercises. The Byblos workshop was held for faculty members in LAU's School of Engineering and Architecture and tackled the sustainable assessment processes in the field.



Thirty-three International Affairs students took part in a conflict resolution simulation held on the Byblos campus May 8–9. The two-day **"Diplomacy as Strategic Defense"** event was organized by LAU's Institute of Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation, in collaboration with the Political Science/International Affairs Unit at LAU Byblos and with the support of the United Nations Development Program and Berghof Foundation. Students assumed the roles of internal and external actors in the Lebanese National Dialogue in an exercise designed to teach key elements of conflict resolution. Using their diplomatic skills, students had to react and defend their position in the hypothetical scenario of an invasion by Israel of Lebanon.



Around 20 LAU students participated in two workshops to prepare them to monitor the June 7 elections. Trainers from the **Lebanese Association for Democratic Election (LADE)** shed light on Lebanon's legal system, electoral law, and the specifics of the monitoring process.

LAU's Institute for Migration Studies launched its series of lectures under the theme of **"Home Politics Abroad: The Role of the Lebanese Diaspora in Conflict, Peace Building, and Democratic Development"** at the end of April. One of the topics discussed was Lebanese migration to and from Lebanon and the Arab region. In 2008, the International Development Research Center awarded the institute a three-year grant of \$342,000 to carry out studies on the Lebanese diaspora's impact on Lebanese politics and migrant political activity and public interest in Australia, Canada, and the United States.



Cultural Exchange



Twenty LAU students from both campuses played leading roles in the **Harvard World Model United Nations 2009 conference** held on March 22 – 27 in The Hague, Netherlands. The students represented Turkey and the Samoan Islands, and negotiated and debated their position in U.N. committees and international organizations such as the U.N. General Assembly and NATO. They also brainstormed resolutions for major world issues such as human rights in Tibet and immigration to Europe.

On April 1, LAU students celebrated diversity on the Beirut campus during the annual **International Heritage Day**. Nine cultural clubs set up stands to display customs from Armenia, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United States. Students dressed in national costumes and presented traditional dances, songs, and food. The day concluded with performances by folk, Latin, and hip-hop dance clubs at the Irwin Hall Auditorium.



After seven weeks of hard work, 80 LAU students and more than 1,000 high school students from across Lebanon said goodbye at the **final conference** of this year's **AL WALID GC – LAUMUN** program in early April. For almost two months, students acted as delegates of countries, defending their position on various global issues such as refugee rights and land-mine clearance. The program was a learning experience that taught high schoolers skills in negotiation, diplomacy, and writing position papers. At the **Global Village** celebration during the final conference, students dressed in the national costumes of their represented countries and sampled traditional foods.

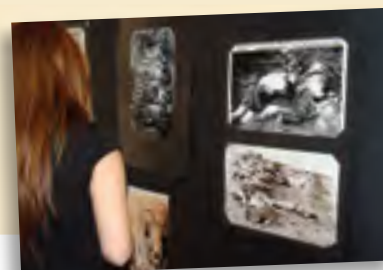


Beirut's Humanities Department hosted its **Inaugural Poetry Competition** for students from both LAU campuses. Poems from four categories were submitted: English metric, English free verse, Arabic metric, and Arabic free verse. The winners gathered during the award ceremony held at the faculty lounge in Irwin Hall on April 24 to receive their cash prizes.



The conference "**Venues of Transition: Architecture in the Middle East Between Identity and Modernity**" brought together six history and architecture experts from across the region to offer insights on modernism, globalism, and orientalism, which have all influenced architectural transitions in the Middle East. The event was organized by LAU's Institute of Islamic Art and Architecture on the Beirut campus on April 30. Some of the projects showcased were on modern architecture in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey.

LAU's Armenian students commemorated the **Armenian Genocide** on both Beirut and Byblos campuses in late April. Byblos students organized a musical performance and a lecture on the genocide's history. Photos documenting violence committed against the Armenians were exhibited on both campuses.



On Display

Students in the Photography, Graphic Design Beirut & Byblos, Architecture Beirut & Byblos, and Fine Arts divisions held **exhibitions** of their work from the end of May through the beginning of July.



The Graphic Design exhibition
(Byblos Campus)

Center Stage



The LAU Beirut campus's Arts and Communications Department selected Spanish dramatist Federico Garcia Lorca's **"The House of Bernarda Alba"** as its major spring theater production.

Translated into colloquial Arabic, the drama exemplifies the melee of human emotion by illustrating the physical and psychological manifestations of desires repressed as a result of duplicitous cultural mores.

Matriarch Bernarda Alba represents this oppression as she vehemently forces her five daughters into an eight-year mourning period upon the death of her second husband. Isolated from the rest of the world by their virtual imprisonment, the family members face mounting tensions as the eldest daughter receives a marriage proposal upon inheriting a fortune from her father, Bernarda's first husband. Although the story culminates with the suicide of Bernarda's youngest daughter, an additional scene was added to demonstrate the hope lurking in all of humanity and embodied by uninhibited, ageless desire.

The play was originally written against the chaotic backdrop of early 20th-century Spain, but its themes exhibit sharp parallels to Lebanese society. Dr. Lina Abyad, assistant professor in the School of Arts and Sciences, along with Lebanese novelist and LAU part-time instructor Dr. Rashid Al-Daif, translated the piece from English and French texts. While keeping the heart of Lorca's vision intact, the play's scenes and dialogue were redesigned to adapt to the play's unique audience.

Abyad directed a cast of students from the School of Arts and Sciences, including local Lebanese actor Ziyad Ghawi, who played the role of Bernarda Alba.

The play opened at the Irwin Theater on Thursday, May 14, and ran for three additional showings on May 21-24.

Latino Festival

The LAU Byblos campus turned into a Latino dance floor on Wednesday, May 20. As salsa music played near the fountain, two professional dancers took the students through Latin dancing steps. The Mexican and Venezuelan instructors opened the first **LAU Latino Festival** with a salsa workshop.

The two-day festival, organized by the LAU School of Arts and Sciences, Byblos, and the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, in cooperation with the embassies of Cuba and Mexico in Lebanon, introduced students to Latin American culture through music, dancing, and movies.

The Latin American spirit was also brought to the big screen by two films, one Cuban and one Mexican, shown in Selina Korban Auditorium. *Viva Cuba*, selected for the Cannes Film Festival in 2006, was screened for the first time in Lebanon at the launching ceremony. The students were also invited to see the Oscar-winning *Pan's Labyrinth*.

The festival was a first step to strengthening the bridge between Middle Eastern and Latin American cultures, according to Mexican Ambassador in Lebanon Jorge Alvarez Fuentes. Dr. Gulnar Nader, a Spanish-language instructor at LAU, put the event together.

"We started this bridge when we introduced the Spanish language in our curriculum. We had an event like this every year for one day, and now, thanks to Dr. Gulnar Nader, we have extended it to two days," Fouad Hashwa, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences in Byblos, said.

"Spanish is the second most important language after English," Nader added. She hopes to organize student trips to Latin America to foster a wider cultural exchange between Lebanese and Latin Americans.



Live Science

LAU celebrated its fifth anniversary as a regional **Cisco Academy Training Center** by hosting more than 150 participants from around the world at a conference on “Education and the Internet: Leaping Into the Future.” The event was organized by LAU’s School of Engineering and Architecture on April 25–26. Topics ranging from women in IT and tools for blogging were discussed. LAU was given Cisco Certified Network Professional Regional Academy status, which will qualify it to offer programs that build on the foundational Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) courses, with more complex network configurations, diagnosis, and troubleshooting.



This year, 25 molecular biology graduate students from the American University of Beirut, University of Balamand, University of Saint Esprit, University of Saint Joseph, and LAU shared their scientific research with the public at the **Second Annual Molecular Biology Poster Conference**, organized by the LAU Byblos Natural Sciences Department on May 14. The students explained and defended their projects in front of a jury, and prizes were distributed to the first three winners.



The Byblos campus was packed with around 868 students—representing 40 Lebanese high schools—who participated in the two-day **Annual Science and Arts Fair**, May 7–8. For the first time, a solar-powered vehicle was demonstrated on campus (more on page 27). High school students displayed creative science projects and artwork and took part in competitions and a solar-car race.



On June 5, mechanical engineering students displayed projects they worked on for various classes as part of the **LAU Design and Manufacturing Day '09**. Organized by the Department of Industrial and Mechanical Engineering and held on the Byblos campus, the event featured all kinds of mechanisms and gadgets, from Rube Goldberg–style machines to robots.

Business as Usual

On May 12–13, the **Career Fair** welcomed around 83 companies on the Beirut campus and 59 on the Byblos campus—from industries such as auditing, banking, education, and information technology—with the hope of employing qualified LAU students. The day-long event held on the Beirut campus on May 13 was followed by a networking reception at the Gefinor Rotana Hotel.



*The Career Fair
(Beirut campus)*

LAU Libraries

The LAU Beirut and Byblos libraries organized the first **Library Open House** to increase student awareness of the two libraries' services and resources. During the two-day event in May, students listened to music and poetry, participated in quizzes and raffles, enjoyed refreshments, and took home freebies. There were also free drawings with several electronic gadgets as prizes.



Sidelines

Around 100 LAU student athletes from both the Beirut and Byblos campuses returned from **international competitions** in France and Serbia. Byblos athletic teams competed in basketball, volleyball, and futsal with teams from Switzerland, Belgrade, Croatia, and Lebanon during the Belgrade Sport Tournament 2009, April 9–12. The men's futsal team reached the semifinals. Beirut athletes competed against 11 European countries in handball, volleyball, basketball, and tennis in the Euro Cup Paris 2009, May 7–10. The men's handball team ranked first place, and the women's volleyball team came in fourth.



Both LAU men's basketball teams participated in the Lebanese Federation for University Sports (FSUL) **basketball championships** in May. The Byblos team reached the finals.



LAU's athletics departments held their **Annual Athletics Awards Ceremonies** this summer. Beirut's ceremony was held outdoors on the Beirut campus on July 1, while the Byblos ceremony was held on June 30 at the Byblos campus's student center, and featured piano and vocal performances by LAU students. Every year athletes and coaches are honored for their achievements in sports.

UPCOMING EVENTS—Mark Your Calendar!

- > **August 10–11** Young Women Leaders Workshop on women's national and international rights, campaigning, conflict resolution and negotiation skills, organized by the Institute for Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation
- > **August 16–19** LAU Summer Basketball League: college students from Lebanon and the U.S. have been invited to participate in this four-day tournament organized by the Byblos Athletics Department
- > **August 16–25** Summer School for Emerging Leaders on Conflict Prevention and Transformation, organized by the Institute for Peace and Justice Education
- > **September 2** Peacebuilding Forum, New York: panel discussion will include at least one LAU faculty member
- > **September 3–4** LAU Board of Trustees meeting, New York
- > **Last two weeks of September** New student orientation
- > **First two weeks of October** LAU branding initiative launch ceremony
- > **November 8–11** LAU will undergo a comprehensive evaluation visit from the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (CIHE-NEASC)



Alumni Family Snapshots: Where You Are Now



*LAU Professors Ruth and Maurice Maalouf
with their son Adoni (center)*

Ruth Maalouf

LAU professor Ruth Maalouf studied at the Royal College of Art in London before meeting her Lebanese husband in the 1980s.

"I just came for a visit and fell in love with it," the British-born Maalouf said. "I think Lebanon has that effect on people."

Maalouf and her husband, Maurice, were instrumental in starting up LAU's Byblos campus in 1983, during the civil war. They worried that students would sacrifice their studies if commuting to Beirut became too difficult.

Maalouf's son, Adoni, studied communication arts at LAU and went on to study in London before LAU Byblos lured him back to teach part-time. Maalouf disagreed with Adoni's decision to study theater, primarily because of the difficulty of building a career in the profession. But "as I tell all of my students," Maalouf said, "you have to choose what you love, and that is what he did."

For Maalouf, teaching is a passion: "There must be a one-on-one relationship with your students if you want it to work."

Maalouf has noticed the phenomenal rate of growth at the campus, all because of her original dream 20 years ago.

The third generation of the family, Maalouf's grandson, John Zienoun, will continue the Maalouf legacy when he starts his studies in biology in the fall.



LAU Professor Usama Acra

Usama Acra

Usama Acra has taught speech communication on the Beirut campus for more than two decades since finishing his own studies in speech at LAU. His mother, who attended Beirut College for Women, influenced his decision to choose LAU.

His mother's studies were interrupted for marriage, which was common at the time. "There was peer pressure not to continue. People asked her, 'Why study if you don't need to?' She never graduated," Acra said. "But she always said she would have liked to go back."

Acra's sister graduated with an accounting degree in the late 1980s, and his brother taught at LAU for a year. "It really is a family thing," he said.

Acra's mother, now retired, spends more time in the United States and sees her friends from LAU less, but he knows she enjoyed her time here. "And why wouldn't you? The relationship between students and staff has always been like a family," he explained. "I still see students I had years ago, and they are so keen to tell me when they get a new job or get married. You never lose those bonds."

Acra started teaching at LAU in 1982. "In the '80s it was wartime, and the difference between then and now is remarkable. Because of the war, students were aching to get an education. Now they take more for granted because education is more readily available."

"I love teaching at LAU, and I love my students. It is the best part of my life," said Acra, who added that he foresees this happy relationship continuing well into future generations.



*LAU Professor Usama Acra
with his sister*



LAU Professor Mona Nabhani and her husband with their daughter, former LAU faculty member Shereen Nabhani

Mona Nabhani

Mona Nabhani joined the LAU faculty in 1981 and is the director of the teacher training institute. Her children attended the university's nursery, and the news that the nursery is under threat worries her: "It has so many memories. I still think about my children playing there."

As an undergraduate at LAU in the early 1970s, Nabhani studied English and theater. Recalling being taught by a top professor from the United States, she said, "even then it had a great reputation."

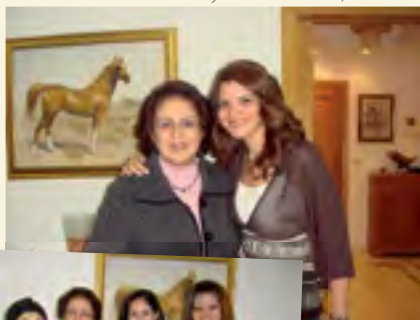
Nabhani's eldest daughter is the only one of three children who did not graduate from the university. After trying the pre-med course at LAU, she decided it wasn't for her and switched to a nutrition degree at AUB. "It creates huge debates in our house that she chose AUB. We wanted to keep it in the family and tried to explain to her the benefits of LAU."

Her son's LAU computer science degree prepared him well for his master's in America and later a doctorate. He has come back to teach at LAU because he missed it so much. "I'm not surprised he came back," Nabhani said. "LAU isn't like other universities. You have the freedom to do whatever you want here, and staff and pupils are all friends."

Nabhani keeps in touch with her university friends in Saudi Arabia and the United States, and they often talk about their shared experience at the Beirut campus.

"LAU encourages ideas," Nabhani added. "It nurtures them, and if you want to shine, you shine. It has always been like this."

Suha Karaky with her mother, Khulud



Suha Karaky

Suha Karaky graduated with a degree in education and journalism from LAU and has begun a successful career juggling teaching full-time at Zayed University in Dubai and acting as editor of the Dubai edition of Marie Claire. "LAU definitely helped me do these two things," Karaky said. "I wanted to major in journalism, and LAU was known for its high-quality program and for its emphasis on my major."

Karaky's grandmother, one of the first A.A graduates, who studied English literature, remembers when it was an all-female college and she had to choose from electives that were "fit for women," such as cooking and sewing.

"My mother's experience was different," Karaky said. "As an Iraqi, she lived in the university dorm, not with her parents as in my case. My mother describes it as a time when she had a lot of fun with the girls she met there."

She added, "My experience was all about meeting friends and becoming a more sociable person. As a graduate assistant, I worked closely with staff and faculty and fell even more in love with the university community!"

Karaky has kept in touch with many of her LAU classmates, who all have jobs in media, from working for TV stations to writing for newspapers, and many of her lecturers are still at LAU.

"We are proud of being a three-generation LAU family," Karaky said, "and I hope to go back to Beirut when my children are college age so they can go to the university too."



Suha Karaky (right) with her sister Dima, mother Khulud and grandmother Suhad Kadri



The Legacy & the Promise Campaign

LAU Campaign for Excellence Continues Global Launch

LAU's comprehensive fundraising campaign, "The Legacy and the Promise: LAU Campaign for Excellence," continues its worldwide initiative. "The Campaign serves as a way to bring LAU's global community into closer touch and to highlight the remarkable opportunities that exist for the university to play a leadership role in Lebanon and the region," said Robert Hollback, Director of Development for North America.

After a successful North America launch in Los Angeles on February 26, LAU continued to celebrate the public phase of its campaign with a series of mini-launches in the Gulf over the past few months. LAU President Joseph Jabbra, accompanied by senior management at LAU, embarked on a series of trips to Eastern Province, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on April 14; Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates on May 14; and Muscat, Oman on May 18.

A gala dinner in Beirut kicked off the public component of the campaign in October 2008. Hundreds attended from all over the region, including Prime Minister Fouad Siniora. However, additional launches outside of Lebanon have served to share the university's progress toward the campaign goal—as well as its current developments and future projects—with an even broader audience of loyal LAU supporters, dignitaries, and alumni.

About 60 guests, including LAU Board of Trustees member Sheikh Abdul Aziz Turki and alumni chapter president Omar Honeini, attended the first launch gala in Eastern Province, under the auspices of Prince Mohammad Bin Fahed Bin Abdul Aziz, governor of Eastern Province.

On May 14, about 120 guests gathered in Abu Dhabi. Led by president Faysal Saab, the Abu Dhabi alumni chapter presented a \$110,000 check to LAU, their yearly contribution to their alma mater, in celebration of the launch. The event was held under the auspices of Sheikh Nahyan Bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the minister of higher education and scientific research in the UAE. Nahyan and Jabbra delivered speeches, after which Jabbra presented a commemorative plaque of appreciation to Nahyan for his ongoing support for education in the UAE and for sponsoring the mini-launch.

At the Oman launch dinner, attended by 160 people including chapter president Carla Zein, Jabbra presented a commemorative plaque to Dr. Rawia Albousaydia, Oman's minister of higher education, as a token of appreciation for her support to education in the country. During the dinner Salim Sfeir (BIA member) presented a scholarship in the amount of \$50,000 to support the study of an Omani student at LAU.

Earlier that day, Jabbra and the LAU delegation discussed a memorandum of understanding and gave a presentation to the minister and her staff.



North American Campaign Launch, Los Angeles, February 2009



Campaign Launch, Eastern Province, April 2009



Campaign Launch, Abu Dhabi, May 2009



Campaign Launch, Oman, May 2009

GOAL \$65 Million

RAISED \$39,345,075

THE LEGACY
& THE PROMISE
LAU CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE

Profile of Excellence



Yvonne with her late husband, Jad Kabban

Yvonne Aajine Kabban

Pay it forward.
Education is vital.
Good nurses are hard to find.

These adages sum up the philosophy of Yvonne Aajine Kabban, whose life experience has made her a generous donor to LAU's School of Nursing.

Kabban spent her childhood in Haifa, now in Israel. When Israel took over Haifa, her family fled, seeking refuge in Lebanon. But the family businesses had been in Haifa. Their savings lost, the family had to rebuild from scratch.

This meant that money to educate the large family—six children—was hard to find. But through the goodwill and generosity of others, Kabban was able to attend school on scholarship. She spent part of her undergraduate career at LAU (formerly BCW), which resulted in a special fondness for the school.

Kabban finished her teaching degree with the help of a full scholarship, which carried with it the proviso that, working through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), she teach underprivileged children in the Palestinian camps for one year. That experience made her fully appreciate the value of education.

What Kabban received, she now gives: scholarships through the Jad and Yvonne Kabban Endowed Scholarship Fund. The scholarship fund commemorates her late husband, Jad Kabban, who was also a philanthropist. Through the fund, Yvonne Kabban is now paying forward: paying for the education of a new generation of students, just as someone paid for her education.

The scholarship fund supports the education of aspiring nurses, a profession that attracted Kabban herself but that her parents opposed. Kabban's unfulfilled dream is not the only reason why the fund she established supports students of nursing. "When Jad was sick, it was really difficult to find him a good nurse," she said. After experiencing the shortage of trained nurses in Lebanon firsthand, she geared the fund to rectify the problem.

The need (nurses), the solution (education), and the means (funding): Yvonne Kabban gets it, and she has responded.

*What Kabban received, she now gives:
scholarships through the Jad and Yvonne Kabban
Endowed Scholarship Fund.*



Kabban (right) during her tenure at LAU

The Legacy & the Promise Campaign

Seat and Bench Initiative

LAU is offering a special opportunity to alumni, faculty, and staff to be a part of "The Legacy and the Promise: LAU Campaign for Excellence." With a pledge of \$500, a donor's name will be permanently associated with one of 640 seats in Irwin Hall Auditorium on the Beirut campus or in Selina Korban Auditorium on the Byblos campus. For a \$5,000 donation, benefactors will be able to name one of 230 benches on LAU's historic Beirut campus and contemporary Byblos campus. Contributors can choose to name the seat or bench in their own name or in another person's honor or memory.

The contributions to The Legacy and the Promise Campaign will be used in areas of greatest need "to help LAU continue and progress in its current projects and future ones, focusing on academic excellence, student centeredness, and the promotion of scholarship to needy and deserving students," according to Samir Kadi, assistant vice president for development.

In September, alumni and friends in North America will receive a mailed invitation to participate in the project as well.

Around 50 donations have already been received, and hundreds of prospective donors have inquired about the initiative. Don't miss your chance to be a permanent part of the LAU campuses.

Please visit the new interactive website to find more information and to begin the simple three-step pledging process online instantly: <http://seat-bench.lau.edu.lb>



Beirut campus

The contributions to the Legacy and the Promise Campaign will be used in areas of greatest need.

Byblos campus

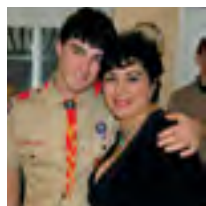


Alumni News

Leila Salman Younes (B.A.'70) works in the fine arts field, which she specialized in at LAU. Younes is married and has three children, Najla, Younes, and Lama.

Suad Bin Afifi (B.A.'73) recently completed her Ph.D. at King Abdulaziz University. She currently lectures on sociology and social work at the university, and is an active member of various civil society organizations in Jeddah.

Renne Matta Awar (B.A.'80) currently lives in Houston, Texas, with her husband, Ghaleb Elawar. They have three children, Maya, Rami, and Jad.

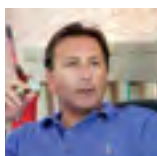


Hana Rustom Archbold (B.S.'82) obtained her master's degree in computer science from the University of San Francisco. She married John Archbold and the couple has two sons, Bernard and George. Hana Archbold was a product design architect and worked in the software industry for about 16 years.

She stopped working to take care of her sons but is currently returning to her field. She serves as the president of the LAU Northern California Alumni Chapter and is a board member of the Lebanese American Association. She is also the chairperson of fundraising for Boy Scouts Troop 206.

Laila Debs (B.A.'82) has been a broadcast media consultant, creative director, theater director and producer, casting director, and theatrical agent based in London since 1987. She has also worked with and appeared on major TV networks on various shows. Debs holds an M.Phil. and a Ph.D. in theater comparative literature from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. At present she is working on setting up a global consultancy company in London—with offices in Dubai, Riyadh, Beirut, and Nigeria—to specialize in motivational coaching for corporate senior heads of departments and their workforce to enhance performance and productivity. She has a website: www.lailadebs.com.

Salam Nazih Saad (B.S.'84) is married with two children, Toufic and Sara, who will both be graduating from AUB in the engineering field very shortly.



Ahmad Rabie Issa (A.A.S.'85) is currently working for Nestle in Dubai but plans to leave Dubai in order to work on another assignment, based in Kenya, as the country manager Nestle professional.



Leila Ghantous (A.A.S.'86) has been a member of the Women's League at AUB since 1993. She was elected president of the league twice and, in recognition of her efforts, was awarded the order of merit by the president of the Lebanese Republic. Ghantous is a member of the LAU Alumni Association-Beirut Chapter. She is married and has six grandchildren.

Ghada Abou Assaly (B.S.'88) has a diploma of competency in human resource management from Saint Joseph University and is also a member of the Society for Human Resource Management. She presently serves as a human resource and administrative manager for the Société Nouvelle de La Banque de Syrie et du Liban sal.

Imad Riad Mirza (B.S.'88, M.B.A.'92) is currently working with Kuwait Finance House, the second largest Islamic banking concern in the Middle East, as development and training manager, a position he has held for six years. He and his wife, Hana, have two sons, Zeid and Ghaith.

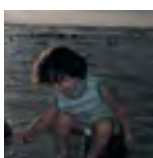


Malena Dagher Haddad (B.S.'89) worked in Italy for three years as an auditor following graduation. Afterward she moved to Berlin, where she married Emile Haddad, and has lived there for the past 15 years. They have two sons, Carl and Ralph.

Haddad obtained her M.B.A. in 2001 from the Berlin School of Economics and the Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge. Presently, she is the marketing and business development manager of a real estate company.

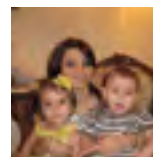
Ahmad Taljeh (B.S.'90) is married to Massara El Hajj and has one daughter. Presently he works in Lebanon as the general manager of Media Signs Supply, as well as the financial manager at La Lunetterie SARL.

Marwan Fouad Abou Chedid (B.S.'91) is now the authorized customs agent and CEO of Trans Mediterranean Services (TMS). He is married and has three children.



Marwan Mayassi (B.S.'96) is currently working as the IT manager for Dubai Holding, a position he has held since 2005. He is married with one child, Karim.

Samar Hashem (B.S.'97) lives in Kuwait and works for the Arab Open University as coordinator of examinations and external relations. She is married with two children, Aya and Yousef.

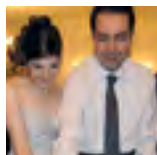


Hiba Yazbeck (B.S.'97) completed her M.B.A. at Warwick Business School in the U.K. She married Chady Wehbe on July 10, 2004. Yazbeck gained several years of experience as a CPA with Arthur Andersen in Detroit. She currently works as a manager and financial reporter for TRW Automotive.



Firas Abouzaki (B.E.'99) earned a master's degree in project management from George Washington University and a Ph.D. in engineering management in 2006. He has been elected director of Project Management Institute (PMI). His current position at International Project Management (IPM) is head of the projects controls and operation departments, which includes managing mega construction projects.

Mohamad Berjwai (R.C.D.'99) married Amal al Harati on October 27, 2007, and has one son, Karim. He currently works at Kharafi National in Lebanon.



Raef Hachache (R.C.D.'99, A.A.S.'01) is the owner of the Hamra-area store Raef Hachache Est, which he started in September 2005. The shop provides office and school goods, including laptops, computers, and supplies; it also has a professional copy center. He has a website with a complete and updated list of prices and items available (www.hachache.com). Hachache has been engaged to **Nadine Marashli (B.A.'04)** since March 2007, and the couple plan to marry this summer.

Faysal Amar (B.S.'00) married Olya Bardukova and currently works for the Jaguar Land Rover regional office in Dubai, where he has been living for the past eight years.



Ali Basma (B.S.'00) has been living in Dubai for more than six years and currently works for Zenith Media Dubai as a media manager for Bel Groupe, Atlantis: The Palm Dubai Hotel & Resort, Jazeera Children's Channel, and SAMBA (Saudi American Bank).

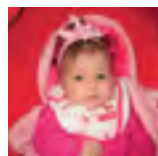
Gabriel Fernainé Jr. (B.S.'00) completed his military service upon his graduation from LAU. In 2002, he joined Byblos Bank and was promoted to branch manager after two years. He obtained his M.B.A. from Université Paris Dauphine in coordination with Saint Joseph University in 2003. He is currently in charge of Byblos Bank's Badaro branch. Fernainé married Youmna Warde (B.Pharm.'04) in June of 2008.



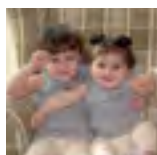
Nisreen Wehbe Jaber (B.S.'00, M.B.A.'03) married Mohamad Jaber in 2007, and the couple has one child. The family currently resides in Muscat, Oman, where Jaber is a volunteer for LAU's alumni chapter.

Rabee Shams (B.S.'00, M.B.A.'03) has been working in Kuwait since 2004 in various sectors such as banking, insurance, and retail.

Jalal Abdelahad (B.S.'01) currently lives and works in Syria as chief financial officer at Abdel Ahad Bros., a manufacturer and distributor of fine menswear with a four-continent distribution network. He recently became engaged to Line Marina.



Rabih Kansou (B.S.'01) is a corporate category manager for the Sultan Center. He is the proud father of Leva and Lamita.



Mohamad Marouf (B.S.'01) started as accountant and team leader for an IT company in June; he previously served there as a senior accountant. He is married and has two daughters, Maya and Tia.

Tamara Gazzaz (B.A.'02) started her own day care in Saudi Arabia after graduating from LAU. She worked for Effat College for two years, and in 2006 she moved to the U.K. and completed her M.A. in school effectiveness and improvement from the Institute of Education in London. In October 2009, Gazzaz will begin studying for her Ph.D. in education consultancy and youth work. She married Mohammad Bundakji last October, and they reside in London.

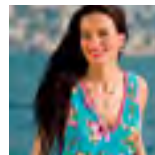


Hussein Abou Merhi (B.S.'03) is the deputy chief operations officer at Integra, a printing and publishing company that owns Al Balad newspaper (Arabic and French), Star, Layalina, and TopGear magazines.

Sabine Farhat (B.S.'03) is currently pursuing her E.M.B.A. from a French university in collaboration with Sorbonne and Université Paris Dauphine. In addition, she is a project manager for Murex Systems, a company that delivers financial applications to top worldwide banks.



Dominique Hourani (B.S.'03, M.B.A.'07) was married in November 2007 and had her first child, Delara Sue, on August 8, 2008. She started her successful singing career in 2006 and is currently working on a video clip called "Chaltako."



Ibrahim Itani (M.B.A.'03) is now working for BBAC Bank as a senior trader and portfolio administrator in the private banking sector, and specializes in European and American stock markets. He has attended many seminars on stock markets, locally and internationally.

Tania Kassis (B.S.'03) was granted the Lebanese accomplishment medal in 2001 for her participation at the fourth Francophony Games, with the role of cultural Lebanese ambassador. Her singing repertoire ranges from classical to musicals to jazz and includes French, Lebanese, and Spanish songs. Kassis has a website with more information about herself: www.taniakassis.com.

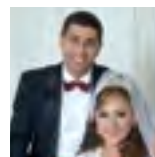


Ahmad Ghandour (B.S.'04) will be getting married in June to Rima Rahhal (B.S. Business Management '01). Ahmad was recently promoted to development manager for investment and advisory at Thomson Reuters, where he is covering the Middle East and North Africa.



Mahmoud Ghalayini (M.B.A. '05) is a computer and communications engineer, as well as the holder of an information systems auditor certificate. He is currently the head of the IT audit at PricewaterhouseCoopers, the audit and consultancy firm. He is married and has one son, Salah. His wife, a Saint Joseph University graduate, is an assistant dean at her alma mater.

Amani Khudr El Hage (B.A.'05) presently works as an economist for National Investment Funds Company in Muscat, Oman, and serves as a member of the LAU alumni chapter in Oman. She married Fouad El Shahall on June 26, 2008.



Hani Al Jamal (B.S.'05) left Lebanon for Dubai, where he worked in many positions in advertising. After three years of experience in UAE, Hani returned to Lebanon to work at 3D Stickers Technoprint, his family's business printing company.

Abdel Rahman Sabban (B.S.'05, M.B.A.'07) is working as a credit officer for Lebanese Credit Insurer, which was established in 2001 and is the first independent specialized credit insurance company in Lebanon and the Middle East.





Mohammad Saie (B.S.'05) is now working in Abu Dhabi as a service department manager for a food and beverage company.

Christine Audi (M.B.A.'06) got married on August 8, 2008, and currently lives in Abu Dhabi, where she works at Abu Dhabi University as a careers, internship, and alumni coordinator.

Dana Hachach (B.S.'06) worked in Lebanon for two and a half years after graduating. She married another LAU graduate and now resides in Riyadh, where she and her husband work for different companies.

Nassib Hassan Mohsen (B.S.'06) has been working as an intelligent network engineer for Nokia Siemens Networks Company in Beirut for the past two years.



George Rehayem (B.E.'06) opened a restaurant called Hanine in September 2008 in Beirut's downtown district. The restaurant serves both traditional Lebanese fare and fusion dishes.

Charles Rouhana (B.E.'06) worked in the gas plant construction field in Qatar from 2006 to 2008. In summer 2008 he returned to Lebanon to work in the same field and travels from time to time.

Mohamed Abboud (B.S.'07) is presently working for IBM Middle East as a regional system service representative, as well as a procurement professional buying solutions, products, and resources for IBM. He is planning to return to Lebanon in July, depending on the political situation, to open a small business.



Omar Abi Farraj (M.B.A.'07) got engaged directly after graduation and plans to marry on October 10, his birthday. He worked as a customs technician for the General Transportation Services in Lebanon and upon receiving his M.B.A. was promoted to assistant air-freight manager. When the company opened its branch in Qatar with a German partnership, Omar was chosen as country manager.

Jad Elias Abou Rjeily (M.B.A.'07) is presently working at BLOM Bank Qatar LLC as head of internal audit.



Marellie Akoury (B.E.'07) is pursuing an M.S. in sustainable electrical power at Brunel University in the U.K. She married Julius Shima on December 26, 2008, and the couple resides in London.



Mahmoud Barakat (B.S.'07) traveled to China upon graduation and established his own import and export trading company there. Called Phoenician Trading Company, it deals mainly in hardware, building materials, and electronics, and exports goods to Africa, Brazil, and Lebanon.

Sarah Ahmed Buhijji (B.S.'07) returned to Bahrain after graduating from LAU and started working as an associate for the Global Banking Corporation. As of today, she is a senior associate in the corporate communications department. She recently got engaged to Subah al Zayani.

Ali Chehade (B.A.'07) received a scholarship from the U.S. Department of State to participate in the Fusion Arts Exchange-Screenwriting and Film Production at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. He worked in different TV positions before becoming a segment producer and director at Future News on a youth program called "Mazaj." He is also a web manager for www.zavenonline.com. Chehade was granted a Fulbright scholarship to study for his master's degree in media management at the University of Southern Illinois in fall 2009.

Elias Khonaysse (B.S.'07) is working on the expansion of his family's company, Khonaysse Motors. Most of his work is done in Iraq, Pakistan, UAE, and KSA.

Rabih Ashkar (B.E.'08) presently works as an electrical engineer in Abu Dhabi.

Mohammad Darwish (B.S.'08) is currently working as a corporate sales coordinator for Qatar Airways at its headquarters in Doha. He and two other LAU alumni were the only three chosen for the job.

Tala Fakhoury (B.Pharm.'08) has been working as a medical representative for Pfizer as of May 2009.

Nadeen Mohamad Saad Khabbaz (B.S.'08) is currently a marketing executive in Rosewood Hotels and Resorts in Jeddah. Next year she plans to pursue her M.B.A. in the United States or Sweden. She is also helping her mother open a clothing business.

Ibtihaj Matraji (B.S.'08) is currently working at the Lebanese Canadian Bank SAL. She is married to Rami Demachkie (A.A.'08), who has his own company called SANICRO SARL, specializing in sanitary wear and building materials.

Aya Takeddine (B.Pharm.'07, Pharm.D.'08) is currently working at Tawm Hospital in Al Ain, UAE, in affiliation with Johns Hopkins.



Alumni Events

Chapter Events



Kuwait Chapter Picnic

The LAU Kuwait Alumni Chapter organized an all-day picnic, called "Open Day," on March 6 in the desert in the south of Kuwait. More than 500 alumni, friends, and families attended the second such event the chapter has organized, following last year's great success.



The Pursuit of Harmony: LAU Alumna Sheds Light on "Feng Shui"

LAU graduate Lara Klait introduced "feng shui"—the ancient Chinese science that teaches people to live in harmony with their surroundings and enhance their careers, wealth, health, and relationships—to about 130 alumni and friends at a lecture organized by the Alumni Relations Office at the Beirut campus on March 20. She has been studying the ancient practice for more than seven years and is the first Lebanese consultant with advanced certification.



Abu Dhabi Chapter Gala Dinner

More than 700 people attended the Abu Dhabi Alumni Chapter's 16th Annual Gala, themed "Butterflies" to celebrate the beginning of spring. Held on March 26 in the Thuraya Ball Room at the Beach Rotana Hotel in Abu Dhabi, the event was hosted by media figure and alumna Lama Lawand and featured entertainment by the band from Beirut's Shah restaurant, flown in especially for the event.



North Lebanon Alumni Chapter

In an effort to revive the North Lebanon Alumni Chapter, the Alumni Relations Office organized a reception in Tripoli at Silver Shore restaurant on April 30. LAU President Joseph Jabbra attended the event and informed the attendees of LAU's latest accomplishments and plans. The official reactivation of the North Lebanon Chapter followed at a meeting at the same location on May 22, when a 14-member committee was elected.



Byblos Chapter Picnic

Around 300 alumni, along with their families and friends, gathered for a picnic organized by the LAU Byblos Alumni Chapter on May 3 at the Nahr El Asrar restaurant at Nahr El Kalb. The group enjoyed horseback riding, took a walk to a historic bridge and the site of Nahr El Kalb's "History Carved in Stone," and visited a nearby zoo.



Riyadh Chapter Gala Dinner

On May 7, the Riyadh Alumni Chapter organized a gala dinner at the Lebanese Embassy, attended by H.E. Marwan Zein, the Lebanese ambassador in Riyadh. The event featured Fadi Sayegh and his band from Mandaloun restaurant and attracted more than 300 alumni and friends.



Bahrain Chapter Outing

The Bahrain Alumni Chapter organized an outing to the Lost Paradise of Dilmun Water Park on May 8. More than 100 alumni from both the Bahrain and Eastern Province chapters attended with their families and friends.

Ottawa Dinner

The Ottawa Alumni Chapter held the first of its annual dinners on May 10 at El Mazaj restaurant in Ottawa. Famous Lebanese singer Assi Hellani performed at the dinner.





Damascus Annual Gala Dinner

On May 16, the Damascus Alumni Chapter organized its third annual gala dinner at the Sheraton Hotel in Damascus. The event featured singer Cynthia Baroud and her band from Beirut's Belluci's restaurant and attracted more than 400 alumni and friends, as well as President Jabbra, who updated the attendees on the university's latest news. During the course of the evening, the committee members successfully engaged alumni and friends to contribute to the chapter's already established Scholarship Endowment Fund, which helps needy Syrian students at LAU. Earlier that day, Damascus committee members took Jabbra and alumni officials on a tour of old Damascus souks.



Northern California Alumni Chapter

The officers of the newly formed Northern California Alumni Chapter met May 18 at the home of chapter president Hana Archbold, who hosted a brunch in conjunction with the meeting. The officers discussed several plans for the coming year, including an annual dinner in October, their upcoming picnic, outreach to the Lebanese American Association, and increasing alumni member participation.

Beirut Chapter Presents "Bab El Jara"

On May 26, the Beirut Chapter presented Les Diseur's new comedy show, "Bab El Jara," in Irwin Hall Theater on the Beirut campus. Both levels of the theater were completely full with alumni and friends.



LAU Alumni Basketball Game

The Alumni Relations Office organized a basketball game between LAU's Alumni Association basketball team and LAU's Beirut and Byblos varsity team on May 29 at the Beirut campus. Alumni and students crowded the gymnasium to watch LAU varsity snatch the game at 85 to 72. In either case, congratulations to LAU!



Toronto Chapter Breakfast in the Park

The Toronto Alumni Chapter held a Breakfast in the Park on Sunday, June 7, at Adams Park in Scarborough. Alumni and friends enjoyed a full menu of dishes and a program of sporting events and games.



Senior Students Alumni Orientation Activity

An orientation activity was held on May 14-15 at the Byblos campus and on May 21-22 at the Beirut campus. More than 500 seniors were introduced to the Alumni Association and its member benefits. Alumni were asked to provide contact information to allow the university to keep in touch after graduation. Booths set up on both campuses served refreshments and cookies, and attendees were offered a stainless steel mug printed with "LAU Alumni Association Class of 2009" as a souvenir from the Alumni Relations Office. They were also given copies of LAU magazines and the alumni chapters directory.



Third Annual Business Networking Alumni Reception

The Alumni Relations and Guidance (Career and Placement) offices held the Third Annual Business Networking Alumni Reception at the Gefinor Rotana Hotel in Beirut on May 13.

Following career fairs on both campuses, the reception gathered H.R. representatives from over 45 key companies, LAU officials, and alumni to converse about the state of the job market, employment issues, and the job performance of graduates within the market.

The reception offered LAU alumni the chance to make contacts and create their own opportunities, said Alumni Relations Director Abdallah Al Khal.

LAU alumnus Alain Yazbeck was invited to share his experiences on the road to becoming the supply and initiative manager for Procter and Gamble. He also offered suggestions on how to help graduates on their quest for employment amid the current economic crisis.

"Students were very pleased with the efforts of LAU to provide them with the opportunity to find jobs, or better ones for those who are already employed," Al Khal said.



LAU's Inaugural Alumni Conference in Orlando, Florida

LAU held its first Annual Alumni Conference on March 13–15 in Orlando, Florida. More than 50 alumni from Chicago, Florida, Michigan, New England, New York, Ottawa, Toronto, and Washington, D.C., attended the event, which was an opportunity for former students to reconnect with old classmates, their alma mater, and some of LAU's leadership. It also provided attendees with information on building and growing alumni chapters.

The three-day event, hosted by Alumni Relations Director Abdallah Al Khal and Alumni Programs Manager Edward Shiner, also included appearances by LAU President Joseph Jabbra and Vice President for University Advancement Richard Rumsey.

"This alumni gathering was an idea that we'd been contemplating for some time. I'm excited that we moved ahead with it and that it was so well received," Shiner said.

A dinner held in a Lebanese restaurant gave Jabbra the opportunity to update alumni on many of LAU's recent developments.

May Sarout, president of the Toronto chapter, LAU's oldest alumni chapter in North America, gave a workshop about how to successfully establish and nurture alumni chapters.

Hiba Yazbeck, an alumna from the Detroit chapter, spoke about how volunteerism can be applied to alumni chapters.

A farewell brunch was held on the last day, before which Jabbra led a discussion about globalization.

"LAU alumni have such a strong affinity with the university, and this is something that needs to be nurtured very seriously," Al Khal said. The alumni conference "was an energy booster for many of the leaders of LAU's North American alumni chapters."

"My hope," Shiner said, "is that its success and the enjoyment of the participants will encourage others to join us for future gatherings."

Reunions and Homecoming Weekend July 9–11, 2009

Alumni Reunions

More than 200 alumni returned to campus in July for milestone reunions, marking the 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, and even 50th anniversaries of their graduation. They celebrated at a reception with President Jabbra, friends, staff, and former professors, and received graduation jubilee pins.

Alumni Brunch

The annual President's Forum Brunch at the Beirut campus gave alumni the opportunity to spend time with the president of the university in an informal setting. The graduates asked questions about the university's current undertakings and future plans at the July event, which was organized by the Alumni Relations Office. Former presidents of alumni chapters were honored and presented with awards of appreciation by the Steering Committee of the Alumni Association board.

Annual LAU Alumni Dinner

A gala dinner was held at the Metropolitan Hotel in Beirut, with more than 400 alumni, board members, and friends in attendance. Entertainment was provided by comedian Nemr Abou Nassar and by Cynthia Baroud and her band. At the dinner, the Alumni Recognition Award and the Alumni Achievement Award were presented to two honorees.

The Alumni Recognition Award was given to Hala Jabr ('57), president of nine blood banks of the Lebanese Red Cross, member of the Tuberculosis Association, and committee member of Festival Baalbek.

The Alumni Achievement Award was given to Honey Al Sayed ('97), described as the "Oprah of Syria." Al Sayed is the radio host for Al Madina FM's morning show "Good Morning Syria."

Alumni Trip to Qadisha

Homecoming Weekend came to an end with a trip to Hadath el Jibbeh village, where about 50 alumni breakfasted together and hiked on a trail in Qadisha Valley before stopping for lunch at an outdoor restaurant overlooking the valley. The trip was organized by the Alumni Relations Office.



Remembered With Love

Najib Nimah (1975 – 2009)

By LAU Staff

His smile is what everyone will remember most about Najib Nimah. A contagiously positive attitude and a strong spirit were hallmarks of the LAU professor, who passed away on June 10, 2009, of leukemia.

"[His sickness] had an impact on his character," said his mother, Dr. Layla Nimah. "He became stronger, more loving, more giving...it gave him an inner strength that molded his character.

"Najib felt that all time should be used well, all opportunities should be built on constructively, and that there was no room for individual egos when you were working for the greater good," said Dr. Maha Damaj, a friend and colleague at UNICEF.

Nimah, who graduated with a B.S., an M.D., and an M.P.H. from the American University of Beirut, began teaching at LAU's School of Pharmacy in 2004. He was simultaneously a professor at the University of Balamand and worked at the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health.

President of LAU Dr. Joseph Jabbra said Nimah was "full of passion for life, and always ready to help and serve others," in an email to the LAU community. He added, "His devotion to our students was contagious. His dedication to LAU brought joy to our hearts. He was a role model for all of us."

Nimah devoted time to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Lebanese Red Cross. With a group of Lebanese university faculty, staff, and students, Nimah helped start the Phoenix Foundation, a non-profit organization that aims to develop Lebanese society by implementing projects rooted in civic and ethical values.

"He had the characteristics of a diplomatic, inspiring leader who is trustworthy and efficient. Najib could motivate others and shed light on things from different perspectives," said Dr. Nadine Taleb, a friend.

Edith Karam, a co-worker at UNICEF, said Nimah was honest, respectful, and just, and "always had time to be a friend and make you feel important."



Nimah in scout's uniform

Nimah also devoted time and effort to the Lebanese Scout Association as the B2 group leader, and the scouts carried out a special salute at his funeral.

Ali Abdallah, a friend and co-worker at UNICEF and the Phoenix Foundation as well as in the scouts, described Nimah as a hard worker and a leader who was modest and humanitarian.

Former student and friend George Na'was said Nimah was "the most caring professor in our school of pharmacy. He also was my chief in scouts—we used to call him Superman."

"Najib was able to communicate with young people in a fantastic way," his mother agreed. "I think he was a role model for young people."

Dr. Najib Nimah was laid to rest in Douma, in the north of Lebanon, near Holy Trinity Family Monastery, where he often went to gather strength when he was sick. He is survived by his mother, Dr. Layla Nimah, who served at LAU for three decades and retired from her position as vice president for student development and enrollment management in 2007; his father, Dr. Musa Nimah, a professor of agriculture and food sciences at the American University of Beirut; and his sister, Marianne Nimah Majdalani, a pediatrician at the American University of Beirut Medical Center.

"He was quite selfless. Very few people are in his league," said Dr. Sherine Nabhani, a former faculty member at LAU's School of Pharmacy. "No one truly dies unless they are forgotten. Najib touched so many lives: he will forever live in people's hearts."



Nimah (left) with his father, sister, brother-in-law and mother





Why I Give Back Hala Masri, '87

DEGREE

B.A. Communication Arts

CAMPUS

Beirut

WHERE SHE LIVES NOW

Beirut

OCCUPATION

Theater Coordinator, Department of Arts and Communication, LAU

WHAT HAS SHE GIVEN TO LAU?

A lifetime commitment—and many, many hours of hard work—to the theater and to students of theater at LAU, where she has worked full-time since 1994. In addition, Hala has made financial contributions to the university.

HOW SHE'D LIKE HER DONATION USED

Helping students join the LAU family, just as she was helped when she attended LAU (formerly BUC). Through the hours of work she gives—and continues to give—she wants students to experience the best of theater and music, as she has.

WHY GIVE BACK TO LAU?

LAU (then BUC) offered Hala financial aid and an opportunity not available elsewhere: a major in communication arts, which has become her life's work. The university is also her home. "LAU ... has been—for 25 years—another home to me," Hala said, "with lots of family members. I do feel I am surrounded by sisters and brothers on whom I can call for a shoulder to cry on, an ear to listen ... or to share my good and bad times."

"Being a member of this decent and well-educated community keeps me secure. Interaction with students keeps me young and updated...I really mean it when I talk about [the LAU] family."



Hala in a performance
of Blood Wedding



THE LEGACY & THE PROMISE
LAU CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE

Allan and Reda Radwan Riley recently established a Scholarship Endowment Fund that will permanently provide financial assistance to deserving LAU students from Reda Radwan's hometown, Enfeh, and El-Koura district.



❧ ALLAN AND REDA RADWAN RILEY
ARE THE LEGACY AND THE PROMISE.



Allan, who is a great supporter of Reda, is a real estate investor in commercial property, with headquarters in New York City.

"Allan and I could think of no better way to honor my parents, Aref and Helena Jabbour, who were adamant that I should further my education at BCW, than by making it possible for deserving students primarily from my hometown, Enfeh, to have access to the outstanding education that Lebanese American University offers. Since my days at BCW, much has changed to suit the times. Yet, LAU still carries on the same traditions and excellence in teaching and caring for students. We are happy that we can help future applicants benefit through our scholarship from an LAU education."

For more information, please contact:

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