

LAU magazine

VOLUME 11 | issue n° 4 & ALUMNI BULLETIN

Lebanese Women in Power and Politics

The continuing struggle
for just representation

From Washington to Beirut

A personal account from an aide to the
Lebanese candidate for the Presidency
of the United States

Chibli Mallat on the Non-Violent Revolution

The lion for international human rights
outlines a map for peace

Regional Politics & Art Values in the West

A strange cocktail of politics and stellar sales
bolsters Middle Eastern art

Digital Media and the New Politic

Will bloggers and tweeters change the game?

Plus

The LAU Gilbert & Rose-Marie Chagoury
School of Medicine Welcomes Inaugural Class

Teach for Lebanon Program
Brings Quality Education to Rural Poor



The Politics of Change



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The Politics of Change

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Marketing and Communications Department
Lebanese American University
P.O. Box 13-5053/F24
Chouran, Beirut 1102-2801, Lebanon

New York Office
Lebanese American University
475 Riverside Drive #1846
New York, NY 10115-0065

*The Days of Negligence,
performed by students from
Syria's Higher Institute for
Dramatic Arts at LAU's 2009
International Theater Festival*



Corrections for LAU Magazine, Volume 11, Issue 3, Summer 2009

Dr. Huda Abdo is chairperson of the Social Science Division, LAU Beirut (Page 11).

The photograph on page 13 (bottom) is of Dr. Huda Rizk, professor of sociology at the Lebanese University and consultant at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

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Don Duncan

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Dalila Mahdawi

Austin G. Mackell

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Photography

Tamara Abdul Hadi

Rasha Accad

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Saba Fatima Haider

Bassam Lahoud

Imad Salamey

Hassan Nisr

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The Royal Hashemite Court

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Direct comments can be sent to
marcom@lau.edu.lb.

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Marketing and Communications Department
Lebanese American University
P.O. Box 13-5053/F24
Chouran, Beirut 1102-2801
Lebanon

Tel. +961 1 786 456 ext. 1948/1917
Fax. +961 1 786 470

New York Office

475 Riverside Drive #1846

New York, NY 10115-0065

Tel. +1 212 870 2592

Fax. +1 212 870 2762

Please send changes of address to:

alumni@lau.edu.lb

+961 1 786 456 ext. 1341/1136

From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

Politics is a pervasive part of our lives no matter where we live. Whatever our stance on the issues, each of us is profoundly affected by the actions of our governments and of politicians throughout the world. In this issue of LAU Magazine, we explore some of the significant aspects that make politics and the political world so tantalizing to so many of us, taking a particular focus on the changing face of politics in the Middle East.

A few months ago Lebanon held important national elections and, for the most part, regardless of their political views, Lebanese voters respected the democratic process. One of the most intriguing aspects of this election, and indeed a hallmark of most modern political elections the world over, was how it engaged the youth of the country. In this issue we address this vitally important topic and discuss ways in which politics can often act as a catalyst for younger generations to become active in the world around them. It is for this reason that we dedicate this issue of the magazine to examining the fresh new ways in which younger generations engage in politics today.

Barack Obama's unprecedented election in the United States served as a blueprint for how to invigorate people who might have otherwise held little interest in politics or the political system. Indeed the level of enthusiasm that his campaign generated was nearly unprecedented. Yet, as citizens of the world we have a sincere obligation to engage ourselves in politics and we can do it in a myriad of ways, as you will read about in the pages ahead.

As always I thank you for your continued support of LAU and your commitment to our values. I also commend the service that you give to your communities as well as your engagement with the important issues that surround us all.

Thank you,



Joseph G. Jabbara
President



LAU President Joseph Jabbara
with President Jimmy Carter

LAU alumna and current
Lebanese MP Strida Geagea



Still Held Back: Lebanese Women in Power and Politics

By Don Duncan

The celebratory firecracker smoke has cleared from Beirut's streets and the purple electoral ink has faded from the thumbs of Lebanese voters. It's been more than four months since Lebanon went to the polls and, regardless of political affiliation, there was clearly one big loser across the board – the women of Lebanon.

The number of women serving in government has moved down from six seats to just four seats out of the 128 seats in the Lebanese parliament.

"It was a major, major setback for women, at least in terms of representation," said Lina Abou-Habib, director of social justice at NGO Center for Research and Training on Development Action. "It is also a setback in the sense that the way that women who enter parliament do so is through patriarchal channels, and yet again this has been reproduced, reiterated, reinforced, exacerbated in the latest parliamentary elections."

Lebanon was at the forefront of women's empowerment in the Middle East when it extended suffrage to women in 1952, the third country in the region to do so after Israel/Palestine in 1948 and Syria in 1949. Since then, Lebanon has slid significantly down the scale. With only 3 percent of its parliamentary seats currently occupied by women, Lebanon now languishes at the bottom of the table of parliamentary representation by women in the Middle East, side by side with conservative Gulf states like Oman (0 percent), Bahrain (2.7 percent) and Yemen (0.3 percent). At the top of the scale is Iraq, whose parliament has a 25 percent quota for women MPs, Tunisia with 22.8 percent, and Lebanon's neighbor Syria with 12.4 percent.

Lebanon was at the forefront of women's empowerment in the Middle East when it extended suffrage to women in 1952, the third country in the region to do so after Israel/Palestine in 1948 and Syria in 1949. Since then, Lebanon has slid significantly down the scale.



"Lebanon fools you," said Professor Dima Sensenig, who teaches communications at LAU and is director of the university's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW). "You walk down the street and you see women driving cars and walking alone, and people assume women's rights are intact. My students assume so as well, and I have to try to explain to them that things are in fact not OK at all."

Many people point to Lebanon's 1975-90 civil war and its numerous other periods of domestic tumult for putting the brakes on advancement for women, and for subjecting women's rights here to the volatilities of the country's infamous sectarian political culture.

"The issue then was how to help Lebanon and how to save Lebanon from those difficult times, and it was all-consuming," said Strida Geagea, LAU alumna and one of Lebanon's current women MPs. "Women's rights were a secondary issue and weren't raised enough."

Women in Lebanon frequently come to power in mourning clothes, stepping into a seat vacated by a father or spouse who has been assassinated. Such is the case of newly elected deputy Nayla Tueni, 26, whose father Gibran Tueni, MP and editor of Lebanon's *An Nahar* newspaper, was assassinated in 2005.

Geagea found herself thrust into politics when her husband, Samir Geagea, a Christian leader and head of the Lebanese Forces party, was imprisoned for 11 years during the Syrian occupation of Lebanon.

"Lebanon has passed through extremely difficult times," said Geagea at her home in east Beirut. Around her were portraits of her and her husband set against billowing Lebanese flags or romantic mountain landscapes. "And all during those times, Lebanese women have proved to be on the front lines as activists."

"I think this parliament is as conservative, as patriarchal, as removed from the citizens and women's rights as its predecessors," said Abou-Habib. "We need more women in parliament, but then you have to ask, would the four women who are there now have had the same possibilities had they different family names?"

All four of the women MPs in the newly elected government come from longstanding political dynasties. And therein lies the glass ceiling above the heads of young Lebanese women with political aspirations. 🍷



IWSAW celebrated Women's Day 2009 by inviting female soldiers in the Lebanese Army to LAU

Unlike on the political level, engagement in politics by women on the grass-roots and university levels is relatively high in Lebanon. Some of the youth branches of political parties boast female membership levels of up to 40 percent.

"In Lebanon, everything is politicized, even in school," said Yara Boutros, a 19-year-old student of business at Université Saint Joseph in Beirut. "So I started to talk and think about politics in school, and that's when I started to get involved."

Boutros is an example of how younger Lebanese women are getting involved in politics and quickly climbing up the lower echelons of political parties. Boutros is a member of the youth branch of one of Lebanon's main political parties, and she sits on the branch's university committee, a board of 10 people, each representing one of Lebanon's universities. Every Thursday, the committee meets in a basement room at the party headquarters to strategize and talk politics. Boutros is one of two female members on the committee, a level of representation that is already a vast improvement on the meager parliamentary ratio.

"I think it is at this level and at the level of local activism that we can find the most encouraging signs for women in Lebanon," said Abou-Habib.

LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) is a pillar in this respect, mobilizing women both on its campuses and beyond. The institute advances women's rights and issues on several fronts, as well as academic research, public policy and grass-roots awareness through "on-the-ground" contact with students.

"I know that civil society is pretty vibrant, but so far change is not coming," said Sensenig. "For the change to come, some things have to change materially—economic power or force that will turn these civil society groups into a critical mass that will in turn effect real change in this country."

The IWSAW is an example of how political change for women can take place even when there is retrenchment happening for them in explicitly political channels such as the parliament. There is an inherent politics in the empowerment of women, and in this respect the IWSAW is contributing to the political advancement of women through its work with female prisoners, its literacy outreach efforts to women in Lebanon, and its "Basic Living Skills" educational drive, which targets women. The institute is also making an impact through its broad-based, awareness-raising campaigns, including conferences at LAU based on topics pertinent to women's rights, as well as local mobilization around events such as International Women's Day.

"In my classes, I confront the students with details, like how just a few years ago a woman couldn't leave the country without her husband's permission," said Sensenig, who was instrumental in getting Introduction to Gender Studies accepted as part of LAU's liberal arts core curriculum in 2007. "These students are not aware of these problems because they haven't experienced them directly. But I see that by the end of the semester, there is a change in attitude."

The latest issue of Al-Raida



The IWSAW is active in integrating women's issues into both the spread of courses offered at LAU and the university's research prowess. Knowledge is power and power is political, and at LAU, students can take courses on Gender Studies, Feminist Theory, Psychology of Women, Female Representation in the Arts, Women and the Economy, and Women in the Arab World.

LAU also sponsors academic research in the fields of women's roles in the environment, education, literature, economic development, management, media, history and politics, and a master's program in gender studies is in the early stages of development. A tentative launch date is 2011. When it begins, it will be the first such program in Lebanon.

The IWSAW also publishes Al-Raida (which means "Trailblazer" in Arabic), a quarterly journal. The journal covers topics including female criminality, disability, sexuality, warfare, legal status and race.

"It's an academic journal. What we try to do is disseminate recent information about women in the Arab world," said Myriam Sfeir, managing editor of Al-Raida. "We're a data bank by which researchers get the information they need on women in this region."

More and more people are subscribing to Al-Raida, but also the internet is bringing net-savvy researchers all over the world into the fold, said Sfeir.

"We have subscribers from Europe, America, Asia and the Arab world, and a lot of people visit our magazine on the web," she said. "Some professors, like at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, have put Al-Raida on their reading lists in their classes."

Al-Raida recently got additional funding from LAU to publish future editions in Arabic, opening up the publication to new pools of potential readers across the Arab world.

The next edition, a double-issue, comes out in November and is focused on the theme of Women and Scripture in the Arab World. Hard copies can be obtained through the IWSAW, and electronic versions of Al-Raida can be downloaded for free from the IWSAW website.



LAU professor and director
of IWSAW, Dima Sensenig



By all accounts, it is clear that grass-roots activity and generalized awareness are progressing, yet explicit political empowerment in Lebanon still seems to evade women. An insight into why comes from the mouths of young women like Yara Boutros. For her, getting involved in politics means learning to play by its sectarian rules, and that means community, religion and culture come first, before all other concerns.

"I'd love to have the same rights as men, but for me it's not my goal," Boutros said. "My Lebanese and religious identities come first. I don't see myself as being a woman in political terms. Now I am fighting for a country that is still at war, in a sense, one that hasn't really emerged from the war, so before being a woman or a man, we must focus on survival as a community."

Sectarianism is the biggest foe of women's political advancement in Lebanon, and the June elections, largely recognized as Lebanon's most tightly fought ever, were a further example of this.

"When the going gets tough, you're going to get rid of the most disposable, and what is disposable in the patriarchal system are women," said Abou-Habib.

"Politics is not about issues; it's about the preservation of your own sectarian power," said Sensenig. "The women who make it to parliament make it because they are part of that system. It has nothing to do with women's issues at all."

Sensenig saw this writ small in LAU's own student elections, which she describes as a "microcosm" of the national process.

Campaign issues included conditions in the cafeteria and other such campus-based concerns, but when it came to the election, "the students' voting patterns were very confessional, with the same slogans repeated as on national campaigns," added Sensenig.

MP Strida Geagea said progression of female parliamentary representation cannot happen naturally in the Lebanese political context, and that forceful measures are now required to push through change. Lebanon's new government is expected to pass reforms to current electoral law during its four-year mandate, and Geagea said she will push to include a quota for women MPs in parliament as part of those reforms. She declined to specify what percentage of parliament is an appropriate quota; Iraq, Morocco and Jordan have quotas of 25 percent, 9.2 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively.

"Though this is not the best way to promote women's rights, because it's a kind of segregation towards them, we have to do it this way for perhaps two parliamentary terms so that people can get used to seeing women in government," said Geagea. "Then we can progress to a more natural political process."

With Lebanon's notoriously slow consensus politics, Geagea's vision could be years if not decades in the offing. 🌐

"When the going gets tough, you're going to get rid of the most disposable, and what is disposable in the patriarchal system are women."

—Lina Abou-Habib





*Photograph by Tamara Abdul Hadi:
a Palestinian woman at the Bekaa camp,
Amman, Jordan*

The Politics of Conflict and Despair: Middle-Eastern Art Rises in the West

The first of a two-part feature on art and politics
in the Middle East

By Saba Fatima Haider



The value of politics in art

It was the point when Arab artists became the subject du jour at cocktail parties in high-society art circles in London, Paris and New York, and when Western art buyers, gallery owners and collectors started, well, diversifying their art collections.

Back in 2006, the prestigious and long-established Christie's auction house opened in Dubai, and sales at its first auction reached close to \$8.5 million. Not only did this event formally mark the beginning of a new era for Middle Eastern artists, but on a much greater scale, it also signified a renaissance in contemporary art from the region.

Works of many Arab artists have sold for unprecedented figures in recent years. This year at the Christie's auction in April, "Oh Persepolis" by Iranian artist Parviz Tanavoli—a bronze wall that has been interpreted by some as a tribute to the former ceremonial capital of the Persian empire, and by others as a metaphor for Iranian cultural unity—sold for a record-smashing \$2.84 million, marking a world auction record for a work by any Middle Eastern artist.

Carrying works of art from new and established artists from around the Arab world as well as from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey, Christie's boasts that it has established itself as, perhaps unsurprisingly, the leading auction house in the region, having sold nearly \$130 million worth of art in the Middle East in the past three years. On its website, Christie's states that its semi-annual Dubai auctions, held in April and October, "continue to act as a major catalyst in the development of the contemporary art market in the Middle East."

For its seventh International Modern and Contemporary Art auction in Dubai in October 2009, Christie's has said it will present an important selection of Middle Eastern art—167 sculptures and paintings, particularly from Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia—and expects to achieve \$11 million in sales.

What many of the works by Middle Eastern artists have in common is that they are politically, culturally, religiously (and even historically) engaged in a region that has a long-established history of conflict and diversity. Their appeal to Western tastes lies in that exact fact—that the works reflect authentic voices coming from often complex and fragmented societies.

Whether the chosen medium is film, fine art or photography in the work of a Middle Eastern artist, politics is often a major theme, as well as a great part of the appeal of art from the region. Regardless of the common themes that thread through the works and distinguish them from one another, this "creative political engagement" presents a new medium for dialogue and discourse.

Truth in photography

Lebanese photographer Bassam Lahoud has been a photography instructor at LAU for the past 22 years. He notes that Lebanese people appreciate most the photography that they relate to most, and that happens to be war photography. "They appreciate war photographers here because they can see it and feel it," Lahoud said, adding that there is still a long way to go before photography is accepted as an art form in Lebanon. "If they [the Lebanese general public] see art photography, they don't make a [distinction] between the beauty of the subject and the beauty of photography," he said. "We don't have the art culture yet that allows people to understand things."

Tamara Abdul Hadi is an Iraqi-Canadian photojournalist and photographer. Since 2004, she has been based in the Middle East, mainly between Beirut and Dubai, where she has worked for Reuters and completed assignments for

The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal and other publications. After living in Dubai for three years, Abdul Hadi moved to Lebanon, where she is currently working on personal projects, including giving photography workshops to the disadvantaged. "Apart from the fact that it is a 'hot zone,' news-wise, it is also a vast area full of history, culture and relevance, with stories that need to be heard," said Abdul Hadi about the Middle East.

Abdul Hadi notes that one does not need to be a war photographer to make it in the region, although war does trickle down into just about every subject in the region, whether or not the artist wants it to. "Conflict photography stands on its own. It is very important and needs to be seen," she said. Abdul Hadi added, "There are Arab photographers that work on projects that are not directly related to conflict and are still quite successful. Most of the important issues in the Middle East, like refugees of war and poverty, are in direct relation to the effects of war, which this part of the world has been plagued with for years."

As a photographer, Abdul Hadi focuses her work on what she describes as social change. "By living in the Middle East," she explained, "it is upon us to use our tools to break the stereotypes placed on us and show the public our truth." 🌸

"By living in the Middle East, it is upon us to use our tools to break the stereotypes placed on us and show the public our truth."

—Tamara Abdul Hadi, photographer



Artist: Ahmed Moustafa
Title: "Qur'anic Polyptych' of nine panels,"
1995AD / 1414AH
Size each panel: 102cm x 102cm
Size overall: 306cm x 306cm
Media: Oil and water colour on middle grain linen canvas
Inspired by The Quran - surahs 112, 113, 114
Used by permission of the artist



Photograph by Tamara Abdul Hadi:
a mosque reflected in a Bahraini neighborhood

Key works that have recently sold for impressive figures include Iranian artist Shirin Neshat's "Whispers" (ink on gelatin silver print), which depicts the profile of a veiled Muslim woman in the foreground and a man watching her from the side. In October 2007, revered Egyptian artist Ahmed Moustafa's Qur'anic polyptych of nine panels (opposite) set a world auction record for a painting by an Arab artist. Lebanese painter Paul Guiragossian's oil on canvas painting "La Grande Marche" depicts cultural diversity in a nation that has infamously suffered from problems rooted in sectarianism. Palestinian filmmaker Elia Suleiman's 2002 film "Divine Intervention," filmed and produced during the Second Intifada in the West Bank, won the Jury prize at the Cannes Film Festival.



Photograph by Tamara Abdul Hadi:
Palestinian women at the Bekaa camp
in Amman, Jordan



On the big screen

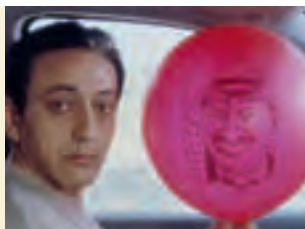
Khalil Zaarour is an LAU communication arts alumnus and a part-time film instructor at the university. Zaarour's 2007 film "The Strangers" depicts the extent of the deprivation endured by more than 200 families living in neglected areas of Tripoli, Lebanon, including residents of the Ghuraba cemetery and also Khan Al Askar, a soldier's caravansary. Zaarour gave an interview to a Lebanese television channel earlier this year to discuss his film, and he explained that the characters depicted in "The Strangers" are Lebanese people who are "strangers in their home country," and who try to survive in every way possible. He cited the example of the residents of the Ghuraba cemetery who scrape a living by burying the dead. "There is no society that accepts people living this way," Zaarour said. Another LAU film instructor, Assad Fouladkar, established himself as a legend in Lebanese cinema with his first feature film, "When Maryam Spoke Out" (2002), which explores the strains of cultural and family pressures on relationships and grieving.

The growth of Palestinian cinema as a medium for expression and as a powerful form of cultural resistance over the past 10 years has quickly created an opportunity for political engagement by Palestinian filmmakers in the region. Films such as Hany Abu Assad's "Paradise Now" (2005) and Elia Suleiman's "Divine Intervention" (2002) have proven successful at engaging audiences with political discourse on the Arab-Israeli conflict, by screening to broad audiences at top international festivals such as Cannes. Bearing voices firmly committed to presenting the Palestinian truth of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and immediately becoming a powerful form of resistance, Palestinian films did not experience the warm welcome in the United States that other world cinemas might have offered.

For example, while "Divine Intervention" won a top honor at Cannes, in the United States, the Academy Awards did not accept the film as the Palestinian submission for the Best Foreign Language Film category, on the basis that "Palestine is not a country."

As Hind Shoufani, a Palestinian filmmaker and former LAU film instructor, said recently, echoing most filmmakers in the region: "Our stories need to be told."

Elia Suleiman,
"Divine Intervention"



"There is no society that accepts people living this way."
—Khalil Zaarour, filmmaker, LAU instructor



While Abilama readily admits that politics as a theme is prevalent in contemporary Middle Eastern art, she points out that it is not always a sincere inspiration for the artists of the region, who often struggle to sell their work and make a living.

The point of art?

Beirut-based Pop Artist Laudi Abilama is an up-and-coming talent in the Middle East, creating paintings of popular culture icons in the Arab world and taking as an inspiration the signature style and techniques of American artist Andy Warhol and the 1960s Pop Art movement he popularized.

Although her signature works are paintings of popular Lebanese sex symbol and singer Haifa Wehbe and revered Egyptian singer Oum Kolthoum, Abilama also created, between late 2005 and early 2006, a series of paintings of the five Lebanese politicians who were assassinated that year. While Abilama is adamant that she is not a political artist and is reluctant to be categorized as such, she said she did the series because she was inspired by what was going on around her. The assassination of the politicians had a huge impact on the Lebanese society around her, she explained, and she felt the need to capture that mood. “I thought it would be cool to do the series to remember them,” said Abilama. “But I did not exhibit them because I didn’t want to be labeled as a political portraitist.”

While Abilama readily admits that politics as a theme is prevalent in contemporary Middle Eastern art, she points out that it is not always a sincere inspiration for the artists of the region, who often struggle to sell their work and make a living. Politics is an influence in the work of the majority of the region’s artists, according to Abilama, because they know that the subject sells. “Western museums, galleries and collectors come to this part of the world and are only interested in getting just that—political or controversial subjects such as the veil,” she said.

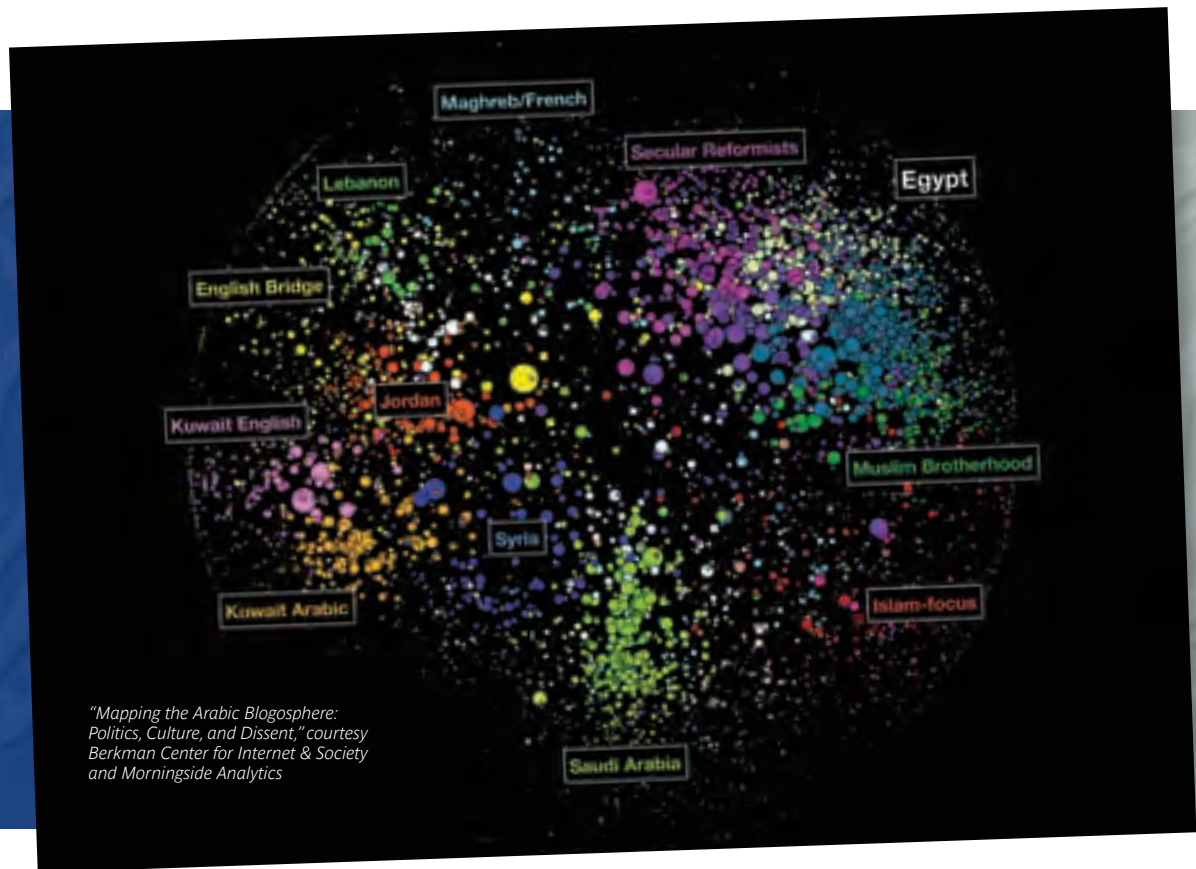
“I think artists in the region tend to take advantage of that. Sure, they may come from troubled backgrounds and may have experienced political instability, war, racism, sexism, and so on. But over the past few years, more artists have taken on those subjects because they want to further their careers,” said Abilama.

She added, “Political engagement is becoming more economically driven, and driven by an artist’s career ambitions. As opposed to having an ideological or political inspiration, chances are that any art which appears politically engaged in the region is either fake [in its proposed expression] or exaggerated.”

“No one really says it, though,” Abilama concluded. “Art dealers aren’t going to say it. The only people that are going to say it are the artists.”

“Western museums, galleries and collectors come to this part of the world and are only interested in getting just that—political or controversial subjects such as the veil.”

—Laudi Abilama



New Media = New Politics?

By Austin G. Mackell

Like the printing press, the radio and the television before it, the internet has created broader opportunities for people to involve themselves in political discourse. Older forms of mass media did this by giving the public a new way to get information, a new way to listen. But the internet has also provided a new way to share information, a new way to speak. This is particularly significant in the Middle East, where broadcast and print have long been severely affected by political and social constraints.

Still, the internet, as with all new forms of media, is experiencing growing pains—and its impact on political discussions and outcomes has so far been positive in many cases, less so in others.

LAU journalism professor Ramez Maluf pointed out one of the downsides of the new-media craze. "The quality [of online political analysis] is severely uneven," said Maluf. "There is a tendency to abridge analyses, because internet readers have a shorter attention span forced on them by the nature of the computer."

But despite the sometimes truncated nature of online political discourse, Maluf believes the internet has ultimately "widened the debate and given way to greater transparency." He pointed to "mobiles that can film and photograph events and upload them, [and] dissenters who can carry their messages across large audiences."

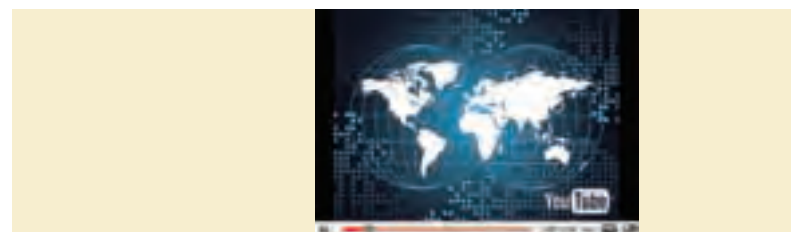
The power of the internet to rapidly disseminate information and opinions about political events to a worldwide audience is one of the subjects of a recent report titled "Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics, Culture and Dissent," by the Internet and Democracy Project of Harvard University's Berkman Center

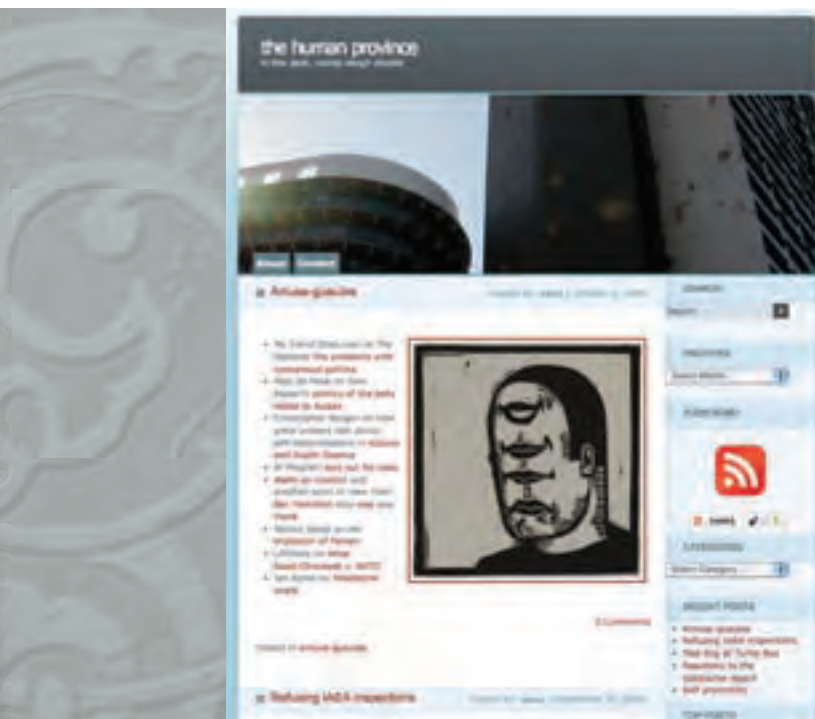
for Internet and Society. The report pointed to the "seamless combination of modes of communication" made possible by new media, and to the "networked public sphere" that the digital age creates, "in which the power of elites to control the public agenda and bracket the range of allowable opinions is seriously challenged."

Although the report did not conclude that the internet has so far fostered international political communities to the extent that many had predicted it would, the authors noted that political blogs—even while many tend toward "personal, diary-style observations"—succeed in offering a variety of idiosyncratic perspectives.

While Iran is outside the scope of the Harvard study, the authors pointed out that, despite its slightly fewer than 20 million internet users, the country has a vigorous online political scene. According to the Internet and Democracy Project, there are twice as many blogs in Persian as there are in Arabic.

In the recent political unrest that swept Iran, the internet played an undeniable role, through not only blogs but also other forms of new media, from text messages to Facebook and Twitter.





When the Iranian regime shut down text-messaging services in the wake of the election, Twitter and Facebook became invaluable as ways of organizing protests. These in turn were also blocked by government filters, which the more tech-savvy members of Iran's reform movement then quickly dodged by using proxy servers.

The digital age has also had more wide-ranging effects, such as the blurring of the lines between producer and consumer, a phenomenon that has become evident both in Iran and throughout the Middle East. For instance, it was through his website that, once the contested election results were announced, opposition leader Mir Hussein Mousavi reached his supporters with his claims of electoral fraud and his calls for protest—during a time when state-run television preferred to focus on the Iranian taekwondo team's triumph. The death of Neda Agha-Soltan, who was shot by a member of the pro-regime Basij militia, was captured on a cell-phone camera and circulated widely on the internet. It became an iconic image for the protest movement and caused great embarrassment to the establishment. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Hoseini Khamenei even went as far as claiming that the video was a fake—the product of foreign agents hoping to discredit the regime in the eyes of its subjects.

One Iranian internet user, whose name is changed here to Ali to protect his identity, perfectly illustrates the fluidity of the roles of producer and consumer in the digital era. An information technology student in Iran, Ali had long been receiving his news from the BBC's Farsi service, as well as participating in email groups and sharing links on www.balatarin.com, a site where users post links that are then rated by other users; those that receive the best ratings rise to the top of the list and receive more views. But since the election, Ali's reliance on the internet has increased, not just as a way of getting information—the regime has shut down opposition newspapers—but also of

sharing news. Ali's informal email updates to a foreign reporter were of such high quality that they were eventually published, anonymously and with his permission, on a magazine website based outside Iran.

Without even planning it, Ali had made the transition from media consumer to media producer. This and other acts of "citizen journalism" in Iran after the elections demonstrated clearly that, in a country with even a moderate level of internet activity, the regime cannot keep information from getting out simply by deporting journalists or freezing their movements, as was attempted in Iran.

**"There is a tendency to abridge analyses, because internet readers have a shorter attention span forced on them by the nature of the computer."
—Ramez Maluf, chair of the Communication Arts Division**

In Lebanon as well, new media has led to more voices entering the political debate, and a more creative approach to the production and consumption of news. Sean Lee, a professor at the American University of Beirut whose blog, "The Human Province," has focused on Lebanon since he moved here three years ago, described old media as "very much a top-down affair, where the *zu'ama* and their respective television and print outlets drive things." LAU student and blogger Amer Saidi, author of "LebBohemian," a blog on Lebanese politics and social issues, agreed. "Much of the old media in Lebanon is controlled and run by established families [and] sometimes takes the form of patronage, nepotism and various other egregious regional habits," said Saidi. "Also, the dialogue in the new media can often be less conventional and more creative due to the looser rules attached." 🐞



But Saidi pointed out that the role of the internet, in tandem with the general mood surrounding the Lebanese elections in June, was somewhat muted. “New media played some role in the Lebanese elections,” he said, “but one that pales in comparison to that played in the Iranian election ... because the elections took place with relatively little disturbance, unlike what happened in Iran.”

Lee, whose blog would be considered by the authors of Harvard’s “Mapping the Arab Blogosphere” study as one of the “English bridge” sites that link the Arab blogosphere with its Western counterpart, elaborated on that view. “I don’t think [online activism] had much of an effect,” Lee said. But he added that the internet did lead to positive changes in the election process. “It did allow people outside of Lebanon, including Lebanese, to follow the results in English more closely,” said Lee. “One interesting thing to note, though, is that the Ministry of the Interior put up an elections website, which had information about how to vote and the results. This made the election results much more transparent than before, allowing people to take a look at how the vote broke throughout the country.”

Despite the positive changes that new media has engendered around the world, internet freedom is still far from absolute. New-media practitioners are getting arrested more and more frequently, and Reporters Without Borders noted that there are more than 80 “net dissidents” currently behind bars worldwide, 58 of them in China. At least 10 dissidents currently languish in jails across the Middle East. The number of other dissidents who have been scared away from sensitive topics or provocative statements is unknown, and probably much higher.

Nonetheless, the internet can never be subject to the same authoritarian crackdowns as old media. For example, internet users in Iran or Iraq, especially if they are savvy with the use of proxy services (which get around state-imposed filters), can access information stored on databases located physically outside the borders of a country. This gives dissident bloggers, particularly those living abroad, the ability to disseminate unconstrained content comparable to that of satellite television or a shortwave radio station, at a tiny fraction of the cost—as many do.

Even for dissidents and reporters based within the country they write about, it is much easier to start a Twitter account or a blog, or to post a video on YouTube, than it is to start a newspaper, radio station or television channel, and not even the most repressive regimes have so far attempted to make people apply for a license to blog or set up a video-sharing account. The authorities can block a site (although this will not stop proxy users from seeing it) or arrest a blogger once he or she is deemed to be important enough or to have crossed a “red line” in statements, but they cannot regulate the digital networks as easily as they can the print and terrestrial-based broadcast markets.

As LAU professor Maluf pointed out, old-media reporters are also subject to other forms of control beyond the threat of incarceration. “Journalists working in old media work under other constraints, such as media affiliation [and] gatekeepers who are too careful or who share different views,” he said. The internet age has changed all that. Those who want to participate in the online discussion, said Maluf, “operate under freer structures” than ever before. ☐



Ramez Maluf, LAU professor,
chair of the Arts and
Communications Division,
and director of the Institute for
Media Training and Research



A Personal Account



Abizeid first meets and interviews Nader in May 2008 during a campaign rally in Santa Cruz, CA. Abizeid was a student reporter at the time

From Washington to Beirut

By Marc Abizeid

We were advocating for a universal, single-payer health care system that would take care of the country's 50 million uninsured residents.

It was November 4, 2008, Election Day in the United States. I was in Washington, D.C., when the results were announced declaring Barack Obama the nation's 44th president.

Not long after the sun had come down, the streets were filled with people, mostly supporters of the president-elect, who were intoxicated, dancing, hugging each other. A mob had assembled outside the White House to yell, chant and curse the mansion's residents of the last eight years. It was the first time in the U.S. that I had witnessed convoys of cars ignoring traffic lights and street signs while drivers honked as if it were some sort of competition.

To put it brusquely, I felt like I was in ... Lebanon.

I had spent the last five months prior to the election working as a press officer for the presidential campaign of Ralph Nader, a Lebanese-American consumer advocate icon and champion of dozens of causes that paved the way for legislation protecting workers, consumers and the environment. The man has an achievement record longer and more remarkable than any American political leader in recent memory, which is especially impressive considering he has never held public office.

Most people outside (and far too many inside) the U.S. were completely unaware, largely due to a total absence of media coverage, that there were more than two candidates running for president. There were in fact six candidates whose names were on enough state ballots to theoretically win the election.



Presidential candidate Ralph Nader and his staff



A rented campaign car gets topped off at a gas station in Reno, NV (July 2008)

Abizeid takes a call from the campaign headquarters in Washington, D.C.

It was Nader's third consecutive presidential bid (first with the Green Party, then twice as an independent), and while we had no intention of actually winning the election, we were determined to put certain issues on the table, issues that neither Obama nor John McCain would endorse. We were advocating for a universal, single-payer health care system that would take care of the country's 50 million uninsured residents. We were calling for a real end to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bottom line was that neither of the other two candidates had a spine tough enough to stand up to the corporations and special-interest lobbyists occupying Washington. I still remember the words of one newspaper vendor I met in a D.C. Metro: "He ain't gonna win, but at least he'll give 'em hell."

One of the goals of the campaign was to enter the presidential debates and offer viewers a fresh set of ideas that we believed were being deliberately and systematically suppressed by the "servile" media, as Nader calls them. The odds of being allowed to debate, however, were heavily against us. In the late 1980s, a phony debate commission controlled by former chairmen of the Democratic and Republican parties was created to ensure third party and independent candidates play no part in debates. The commission set unattainable thresholds for candidates to gain access.

But in October, Nader accepted an invitation to debate Chuck Baldwin, a presidential candidate running under the Constitution Party. The highlight of the debate was when the moderator hit on the Middle East. Nader unleashed, blasting Israel for its siege on the Gaza Strip and ripping Obama for his token 25-minute visit to the West Bank during a trip to the region.

After the debate, a swarm of reporters invaded the stage to interview the candidates. One reporter from LBC, who was sent to Washington to cover the elections, stuck his microphone out to Nader and asked him the same question that he has been asked thousands of times: "Why are you running?" Without missing a beat, Nader shot back in Arabic: "Adeleh." "Justice," he told the reporter.

On Election Day, after months of a media blackout, Nader concocted a rather clever way to be heard: He would hold a one-word press conference. For the first half of the hour-long conference, Nader responded to a heavy list of wide-ranging, sometimes funny, questions from the roomful of journalists with one-word, sometimes funny, answers. To give a sample of his sharp analysis of Middle East affairs that afternoon:

Reporter: How do you assess the situation in Iraq?

Nader: Worsening.

Reporter: What about Israel/Palestine?

Nader: Stagnant.

Reporter: Lebanon?

Nader: Hummus.

Eighteen hours later, physically and mentally exhausted from the work of the past five months, I was on a 6:34 a.m. departure back to California, where I spent about a week visiting family and friends. I then packed my bags and came to Lebanon, where I have been living since then.

I arrived in Beirut on November 13. My first few weeks in Lebanon were spent relaxing and catching up on sleep in my family's village of Ain Saade. It would not have taken a foreigner long to guess that elections were on the way, considering the omnipresent display of political flags, symbols, graffiti and honking. (To readers outside Lebanon: Yes, some political parties in Lebanon even have their own honks.)

Despite the series of violent events that had rocked the country over the past few years—including the Israeli aggression in the summer of 2006, the war at the Nahr el Bared Palestinian refugee camp, the May 7 fighting, and the string of political assassinations—the Lebanese were still divided between the March 8 and March 14 coalitions, as they were four years earlier, during the previous parliamentary elections.



Abizeid is now employed as a full time writer at LAU

The system that had given birth to the March 8 and March 14 coalitions in Lebanon was in a way similar to what had produced the two-party system in the U.S.



Abizeid helps a colleague prepare campaign documents near Reno, NV (July 2008)

The mood in Lebanon intensified when the bombs started to fall on Gaza at the end of December. It put the Lebanese people on edge, fearing that the war might extend from Gaza to Lebanon, as it had in 2006. The fears were only compounded when the Israelis shelled areas of southern Lebanon after two incidents where rockets were launched from Lebanon over the border.

One of the most compelling reasons why I had been drawn to the Nader campaign was a promise to end U.S. support for Israel's military. Despite benign differences between Obama and McCain/Bush on their attitudes toward the region, and even with the full acknowledgment that both men had supported the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006, Arab and Muslim voters in the U.S. had overwhelmingly backed Obama during the election. In Lebanon, too, people were excited over the new U.S. president and had the hope or belief that Obama would bring significant policy changes to the country and to the wider region, though it did not take long before we proved them wrong.

On May 23, two weeks before the parliamentary elections, U.S. Vice President Joe Biden paid a visit to Lebanon and threatened to "reassess" U.S. aid to the country based on the outcome of the election—sending a clear message to the Lebanese about which way they should vote. His interference in the election in Lebanon was quite indiscreet and caused the opposition to react. But more importantly, it proved to many the point that the Nader campaign was vigorously trying to communicate during the U.S. election: Neither a Democrat nor a Republican in the White House would be prepared to offer fresh policy to Lebanon or to the region.

The system that had given birth to the March 8 and March 14 coalitions in Lebanon was in a way similar to what had produced the two-party system in the U.S. Just as the Democrats and Republicans had left many issues off the table in the U.S., the rival coalitions in Lebanon were also criticized for ignoring critical topics, especially with regard to creating a civil state through civil marriage and a change to the sectarian electoral law.

But there were of course some Nader-type dissidents in Lebanon who tried to shake up the system during the elections. In February, for example, I had an opportunity to meet and interview Ibrahim Al Halabi, a former communist fighter who was running for parliament in Beirut as a member of Harakat As-Shaab (The People's Movement). Like Nader, he was a critic of both rival political coalitions; he refused to take money from political parties and special interests; he was an advocate of workers' rights; and, not so shockingly, he had no real shot at actually winning a seat.

As in the U.S., the election results in Lebanon had been called before the night was over. March 14 had won and people took to the streets to celebrate. A colorful display of fireworks could be seen glittering in Beirut from my home in the mountains overlooking the capital. I couldn't sleep well that night because of the nonstop honking by supporters of the winning coalition, who drove in endless circles around my village. Before finally nodding off, I found my assurances in at least one thing: I knew that no matter who is declared winner on election night, whether in Lebanon or in the U.S., we will still always find the muckrakers, dissidents and social critics there the next day, charged up and ready to "give 'em hell." 🍷



Abizeid with Nader at the National Press Club, Washington, D.C.





LAU graduate student Manal Sarruf participated in the 2009 G8 University Students' Summit



Karim Chaanine, former director general, LAU AL WALID GC Model U.N.

State of the Union: Student Activism in Theory and Practice

By Brooke Anderson

Student activism in Lebanon had its heyday in the early 1970s, with Marxist-inspired strikes throughout the country as well as anti-Vietnam War protests that sometimes ended in violent confrontations between students and authorities.

These days, universities in Lebanon are encouraging their students to become activists, hoping to inspire a new generation of leaders and free thinkers.

"In the past, universities looked at activists as troublemakers or a threat," said Imad Salamey, assistant professor of political science at LAU. "In our experience here, we've been trying to set the stage for positive engagement. We're trying to get involved in positive activism—in which students bring their initiative and imagination into action and make informed decisions."

It is through education that universities such as LAU are trying to promote individual initiative.

"In Lebanon, there's a lot of mobilization—not through critical thinking, but through brainwashing and ideology," said Paul Salem, director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut. "When people are taught critical thinking, they learn to question things and think for themselves."

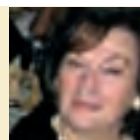
Besides introducing a mandatory ethics course, LAU is also offering its students the opportunity to get involved in extracurricular activities that help further their political education, for instance by participating in the Model United Nations or by helping to monitor the parliamentary elections, as some LAU students did in June.

"My LAU education has certainly influenced my student activism. LAU is a very student-centered community, with a liberal arts curriculum that helps you identify with your bigger community," said Layla Kabalan, an international affairs student entering her junior year at LAU.

"The clubs at LAU, as well as the huge amount of institutions with all their programs, guide you through to the field that you would like to be active in," noted Kabalan, citing as examples

"When people are taught critical thinking, they learn to question things and think for themselves." —Paul Salem, director of the Carnegie Middle East Center

LAU in Public Life: A Timeline of Alumni Political Service

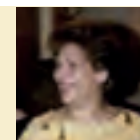
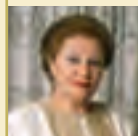


Jeanette Mufti Dakhkhan
**B.A. Interdisciplinary
(HD) 1955**
Parliamentary candidate
(Jordan)

Insaf Sultan

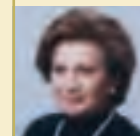
**B.A. History, Political
Science 1958**

Former Lebanese ambassador
to Egypt, Pakistan, and the
Czech Republic



HRH Princess Wijdan Ali
B.A. History 1961
Jordan's ambassador to Italy

Wijdan Talhouni Saket
**B.A. History,
Political Science 1967**
Member of Senate (Jordan)



LAU's Institute for Conflict Resolution and Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. She added that the university "has internationally accredited programs, such as the Model United Nations, that expose you to recent political and social turmoil."

Campus programs aimed at encouraging student involvement might seem like a given. But throughout the 1975-90 civil war, and for about a decade afterward, there were no student elections held, for fear of violence on campus. Today, Lebanon's college students represent a postwar generation that has more opportunities for civic involvement than its predecessors.

"The Lebanese society, and I think that everyone is aware of that, is still living in a postwar and post-conflict period," said Kabalan. "Activism is the only way where the spirit of citizenship can grow above that of sectarianism. Moreover, activism brings the Lebanese youth closer to their government and more aware of it, thus breaking the cycle of corruption."

But this emphasis on activism comes with a new responsibility: While expressing themselves freely, students must also give "the other" the chance to do the same.

"The notion of activism might mean militancy," noted Sami Baroudy, associate professor of political science at LAU. But, he adds, "At the university, we accept that students have different positions. It's this kind of student engagement that educates students. This is the idea behind the Model United Nations—to educate students about how the U.N. works and make them good listeners as well as speakers. Student engagement can lead to dialogue."

Nonetheless, listening to those from different backgrounds is easier said than done in a post-conflict society divided along sectarian lines.

"There are many challenges of being a student activist in a sectarian country," said Ghina Ali Harb, a political science major entering her third year at LAU. "The main challenge would be to convince all the sectarian communities to engage with accepting the 'other.' Accepting, listening and negotiating are the three basic steps. Another challenge would be to convince the communities to overcome their own sectarian identity and to manage to work united for a sole purpose, which is the benefit of Lebanon."

Harb, who was elected to the student council body last year, said her courses have taught her to be "aware of the 'other world within the world,'" adding that her education "made me realize the importance of engaging one to personally benefit and to benefit all as well." She noted, "LAU offers the basic background needed to nourish students' empowerment. It enables students to 'take the lead, and not follow.' Personally, I have participated in many committees at LAU whereby I was the only student representative yet was able to deliver the message clearly."

"The main challenge would be to convince all the sectarian communities to engage with accepting the 'other.' Accepting, listening and negotiating are the three basic steps."

—Ghina Ali Harb, LAU student



LAU students Davigh Karamanoukian, Amani Abdel Ghani and Zarmig Tchekijian, election monitors in the Zahle district, Lebanese parliamentary elections 2009

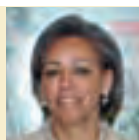
Kabalan added, "Activism is basically finding your passion in fighting for a cause that is much bigger than you, for the good of a much bigger audience."

Both Harb and Kabalan plan to continue their activism after graduation. Kabalan plans to participate in political life "through taking part in seminars, workshops and NGOs that interest me." She added, "The cause I am most concerned about is civil rights in Lebanon and not linking them to one's religion or sect."

Harb, who hopes to pursue a political career, noted, "There are many ways to continue through politics, mainly to represent my country in its real image, and to struggle to have an energized Lebanon that could only be achieved if we all work together hand in hand, united." She added, "If I was not a part of the Lebanese government or a foreign messenger in the future, I could deliver my message through educating coming generations about politics."

Salamey said he is confident that the younger generations will be able to make better decisions than their parents and grandparents.

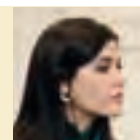
"I think this generation is very, very informed. There is so much more information for it to process and make more informed decisions than any previous generation. They're much more responsible, despite being in an overwhelmingly sectarian-charged society. They handle situations much more responsibly than adults that experienced war," said Salamey. "Students are much more careful about handling activism." ■



HRH Sheikha Hissah Al Sabah
External Degree 1971,
Honorary Ph.D. 2005

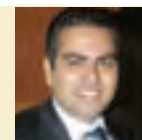
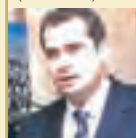
Daughter of Kuwait's crown prince; vice president of the Committee for Women's Affairs in Kuwait

Dr. Chibli Mallat
B.A. English Literature 1982
Candidate for presidency 2008
(Lebanon)



Sethrida Geagea
B.A. Political Science 1994
Member of Parliament
(Lebanon)

Emile Lahoud
B.S. Business Marketing 1996,
M.A. International Affairs 1999
Former member of Parliament
(Lebanon)



Samer Saade
B.E. Civil Engineering 2001
Member of Parliament
(Lebanon)

A Nonviolent

By Saba Fatima Haider



LAU's Saba Fatima Haider talks to Dr. Chibli Mallat, LAU alumnus, leading international human rights lawyer and scholar of European, Islamic and Middle Eastern law, about how to achieve peace in the East

Path to Advance Politics

In June 1982, a young Lebanese man by the name of Chibli Mallat was studying toward a degree in English literature at LAU (then BUC) when Israel invaded Lebanon.

Like thousands of other students around the country, his studies were abruptly halted during the war as Israeli forces spread around Lebanon, occupying Beirut.

A few weeks later, on September 19, 1982, Mallat was in a car in Washington listening to the news on the radio when he first heard of the Sabra and Chatila massacres.

News of the massacres sent shock waves around the world, enraging politicians, governments and civilians, who all asked, “How did this happen, and why?”

A democratic activist adamant in his support for nonviolence, Mallat was outraged, and he soon embarked on a career as a lawyer, academic and human rights activist. He earned an LLM at Georgetown and a Ph.D. in Islamic law at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the U.K., and gained international respect for bringing the case of Victims of Sabra and Chatila v. Ariel Sharon et al., under the law of universal jurisdiction in Belgium, winning the judgment against Sharon in February 2003.

The author of several books on law and politics, Mallat has taught at Yale, Princeton, University of Lyon and the School of Oriental and African Studies, among other top universities around the world. He has been the E.U. Jean Monnet Chair in European Law at Université Saint-Joseph in Beirut since 2001 and was a Lebanese presidential candidate in 2007.

He is now Presidential Professor of law at the University of Utah.

SH: How do you see political engagement emerging in other parts of the world, such as Europe and the U.S., compared to the Middle East, especially considering the recent Lebanese and Iranian elections and issues such as Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan?

CM: Politics in the region and internationally is characterized these days by the immense amount of violence it carries. My political engagement is moved by the “distaste” for violence as a political means. “A nonviolent path to advance politics” would probably be the heading of my political and academic life.

This nonviolent path takes various shapes: Some are pure human rights advocacy, such as the defense of prisoners of opinions; and some are more “activist,” in the sense of helping victims bring their case against usually immensely criminal thugs of the Muammar Gaddafi and the Ariel Sharon sort—or of the Saddam sort, when he was in power. These are cases which I pursued in my career as a lawyer. Obviously they are “political” cases because the plaintiffs are victims of political violence, and the accused are usually political leaders.

The more general dimension of the nonviolent path is academic. How do you think through the history and politics of a region that is immensely complex with a vision that won’t make “nonviolence” be seen as an ineffective and vague term? How do you convince people that nonviolence yields better results than violence? It’s really hard, but it is probably how I would summarize my view of political engagement and academic research.

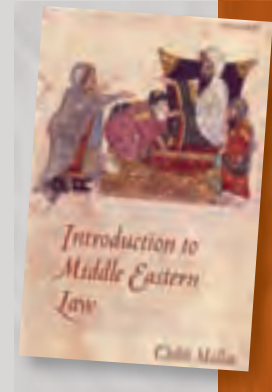
SH: Would you identify a dramatic change in the way young people in the Middle East are looking at their own governments and leadership?

CM: The academic work of my life is a book which I published two years ago, called “Introduction to Middle Eastern Law,” at Oxford University Press. It is a result of 20 years of work as a lawyer, as a human rights activist, and as an academic—a specialist—particularly in Islamic law and the laws of the region. The general thrust of this book is that from a democratic perspective, insofar as you can approximate the discipline of law as a science, I cannot see any of the countries of the Middle East adhering to the basic labels of democracy as understood universally. And that controversially includes Israel.

There is no doubt that people are yearning for a nonviolent change in leadership that is more representative. My generation failed in changing those regimes in a nonviolent, democratic way. But we committed politically and got to various stages, and we continue to be moved by a belief in the need for democracy in our countries. The new generation is going to confront this and I’m sure will be more successful than us. 🌱



Mallat with Patriarch Mar Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir of Lebanon's Maronite Church



SH: How will the new generation confront the anti-democratic movements of the Arab autocratic regimes?

CM: The two ways are easy to conceive. One is the violent way, which is legal under political science and the received notions that we have since the French and American revolutions: Dictatorship and tyranny can be challenged violently. That's one way and, curiously, it's a legitimate way, but I don't believe in it morally. It will do more harm than good.

The other is the nonviolent way. It started haltingly with the first Intifada in Palestine in 1987, then firmly in the Cedar Revolution, and now in the electoral revolution in Iran.

True, the Middle East youth are also confronted with a third choice—to not do anything—which one can understand. There is an apathy, which is understandable because people are tired from politics and they think politics doesn't give results, but they're still affected by politics. Apathy is a dead end. Violence needs to be resisted, but the resistance needs to be nonviolent. Otherwise you start looking like those you resist.

SH: With the current manifestation of Iraqi democracy that is emerging, do you see Iraq's as heading in the same way as post-Civil War Lebanese democracy?

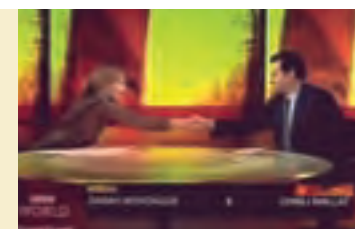
CM: I feel that they are ahead of us. The situation in Iraq is much more promising than the one in Lebanon because they are very aware of the danger of sectarianism, and they say: "We

don't want to be like Lebanon." But how do they address it? It's not easy because when you talk with leading Iraqi politicians, it's immediately a question of, "Are they Kurds? Are they Shia? Are they Sunni?" So they're trying to square it constitutionally, and it's not easy.

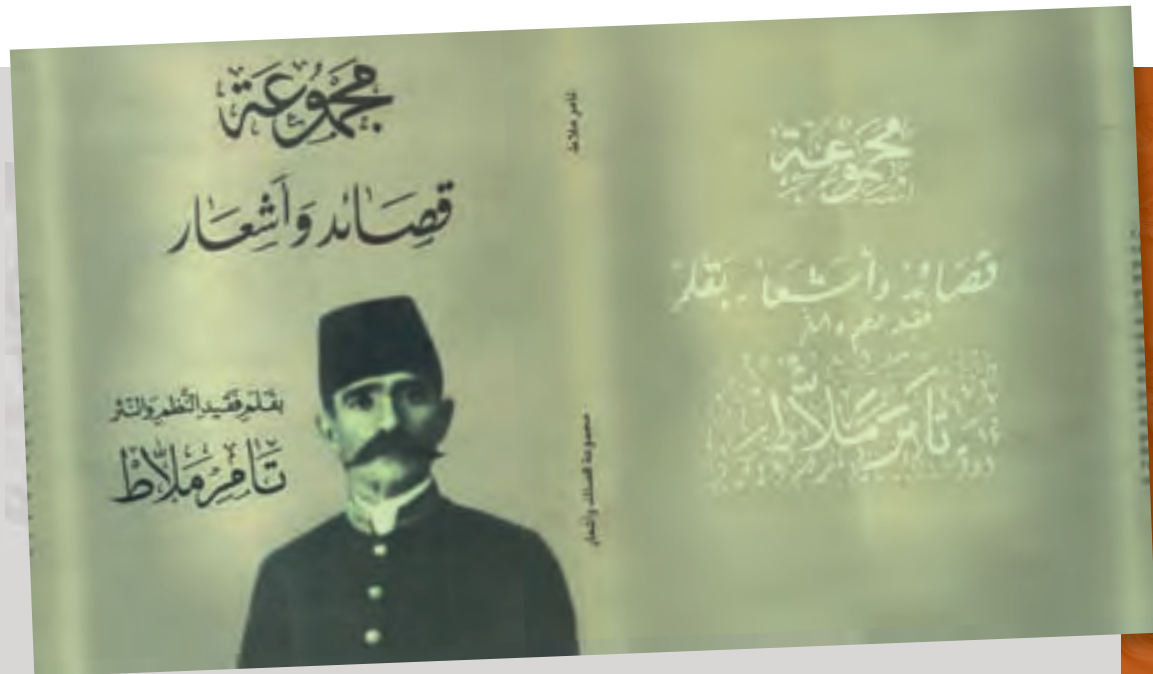
They have already had two presidents: One was a Sunni Arab, and the current president is Kurdish. If this natural alternation continues, then that's one way to defeat sectarianism.

SH: What can you say about the search for democracy by Iranians right now?

CM: The Green Revolution that's happening in Iran—more accurately, it should be called the electoral or representative revolution, because the people were deprived of their votes—is the second great nonviolent revolution in the Middle East, the first being ours in Lebanon in 2005. The trend toward nonviolence is real in the 2009 electoral revolution in Iran. There has been characteristic tampering in elections, which triggered massive nonviolent resistance by people who wanted their vote to be counted. And so we have to support them. It's going to be a very long and difficult struggle. But the fractured lines are clear between those who are for nonviolence, democracy and human rights, and the brutes in power who kill kids in the street and stage Stalinist trials against their own friends.



Mallat on air



Collection de Poèmes Inédits, by Tamer Mallat, Chibli's great uncle

SH: Would you say that the popular Iranian quest for democracy can be fulfilled in an Islamic regime?

CM: Definitely. As I say that you can fulfill a democratic country in Israel whilst keeping the Jewish state, so you have to find a formula where, against the Jewish state, you have a non-Jewish Palestinian state that is recognized collectively. Hence my campaign for a federal Israel-Palestine. You have to make sure that being a Jew doesn't mean that being a non-Jew is the object of discrimination. And in Iran, like in Turkey, countries with clear Muslim majority and tradition can also adhere to democracy.

That is something that the European Union has proved. You cannot have an effective, regional union if the countries are not democratic, because their authoritarian leaders don't trust each other. Plato formulated this principle in "The Republic" 2,500 years ago. Look at where we were in 1945 when the Arab League started—we were far better countries in terms of political systems at the time, and now look where we are. Then look at where Europe was in 1945—it was completely devastated—and look at the E.U. now.

SH: I don't think anybody would disagree that the quality of debate needs to improve in the Middle East. Do you think questioning the lack of academic freedom in the Middle East is the only way to improve the quality of debate?

CM: We live in a country that is relatively blessed. We can say generally what we think. There are taboos that one continues to hit—one of them is Israel. In other countries it's a catastrophe. It's not only academic freedom, it is also freedom in the press, and basic freedoms for the citizen.

In the U.S., people are free to say what they think anywhere, but there is an additional dimension of academic freedom which has to be calibrated depending on the duties that professors have toward their students and institutions.

If you criticize the prime minister of Israel in the U.S., the consequences are grave on your career and your standing. I think that should be fought and changed.

SH: You have talked about apathy being embedded in the Arab region. Do you think that nonviolent resistance can achieve its goal if there is so much apathy?

CM: It is hard; it's a big test. The problem is that I don't see another way. I don't believe in using violence, as it has proved to be counterproductive. Nonviolence is not as inefficient as one thinks. We have had two great instances that have relatively failed and relatively succeeded: The Cedar Revolution in 2005, which was through and through not violent, and what we see today in Iran with the electoral revolution, which is so far through and through not violent. Of course there is violence, in the sense that people in power are reacting to the challenge of nonviolence with increased violence. That's the nature of things.

I think in various parts in the Middle East, we can reach a point where nonviolence succeeds. We need to stay the course. It is not true that nonviolence is not efficient, as it has proved its worth in a number of important countries. It has not been a success so far, but it is up to the new generation to make sure that it will be successful decisively. ☒

"We live in a country that is relatively blessed.
We can say generally what we think."
—Chibli Mallat





Darfur protest, London

The Long Road Toward Claiming Human Rights for the Middle East

By Dalila Mahdawi

When it comes to human rights, the situation in many Middle Eastern countries leaves much to be desired.

Indeed, the region has a long list of rights grievances. Sudan's protracted civil war and ongoing conflict in Darfur have led to ethnic cleansing, along with staggering refugee, health and illiteracy problems; most recently, an international arrest warrant was issued to President Omar al-Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Further east, Saudi Arabian women are limited by laws that forbid them from driving and from traveling without permission from male relatives, and they are denied equal access to employment and the legal system. Human rights activists and critical bloggers in the Middle East face trumped-up charges that they are weakening state morale, and if convicted they are punished with long prison sentences, often after unfair trials.

With sectarian tensions brewing and repressive autocratic regimes in place across the region, the Middle East continues to attract criticism for flagrant human rights abuses. But while local and international organizations work hard to sound the alarm bells, how aware are people in the Middle East about human rights? In particular, how informed are the youth of the region about their rights and obligations under international human rights law?

The answer, according to Fouad Hamdan, director of the Beirut-based Arab Human Rights Fund (AHRF), is discouraging. "Most young people are not even aware of the existence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and what it entails," he said, making reference to the United Nations document that outlines the fundamental human rights subject to international protection.

While human rights concepts have become the norm in many countries, Hamdan argues that those ideas have been deliberately ignored by Middle Eastern states that wish to retain tight control over their affairs. As a result, the very notion of human rights is often left out of national curricula entirely.

Obstructionism aside, Nadya Khalife, Middle East and North Africa researcher for the women's rights division of Human Rights Watch, believes apathy discourages youth from getting involved in human rights and activism. "Sometimes people in the Middle East feel they can't do anything because there's no one else around with common interests," she noted. But she suggests that, rather than be put off by the culture of indifference, young individuals should be encouraged to "find out what's going on in their local area ... find other people and organizations that have the same interests and try to mobilize."

While Hamdan and Khalife pointed to a lack of awareness about human rights, they also noted increasing efforts to foster respect for the issue in the region, particularly by civil society organizations and centers of education.

"Universities ought to play a major role in human rights education."

—Irma Ghosn, IPJE founder and director



“Most young people are not even aware of the existence of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and what it entails.”

—Fouad Hamdan, AHRF director

UN Headquarters, New York

One pan-Arab initiative to advance women’s rights is being led by the Lebanese social justice organization Collective for Research, Training on Development – Action (CRTD.A). The collective has brought together women’s rights organizations across the region to campaign around a broad range of issues: to make it legal for Arab women to pass on their nationality to their families, strengthen the capacity of Arab NGOs to lobby for policy changes, consolidate action against gender inequalities in legislation, and build partnerships between women’s NGOs and parliamentarians. The efforts are proving tremendously successful, leading to growing public awareness about gender equality and, as a result, the whole or partial amendment of discriminatory nationality laws in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Egypt.

Another regional initiative is The Arabic Network for Human Rights Information (<http://www.anhri.net>). Taking advantage of the growing number of Arabic-speaking internet users, the network’s website gathers valuable reports and statements from Middle Eastern and North African human rights organizations and provides explanations and resources for relevant issues in the region to activists, the media and the general public.

LAU is playing a significant role in efforts to promote human rights: The university is home to the oldest women’s rights center in the Middle East, the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW). The institute runs several programs to empower women around legal rights, citizenship and gender-based violence, and to improve their economic and educational opportunities through vocational training and literacy programs.

In addition, LAU hosts the Institute of Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation (IDCT) and the Institute for Peace and Justice Education (IPJE), which is the first university-based organization of its kind in the Middle East.

Every summer, IPJE runs a 10-day academy, open to all Arab university students, on the subjects of conflict resolution and peace-building. Participants learn how to respond to conflict

and how to enhance their skills in reflective listening, dialogue, consensus-building and negotiation, as well as how to network with like-minded individuals and coexist with “the other.” Participants also work together to formulate proposals for cross-community projects, which are then submitted to a local non-governmental organization.

According to IPJE’s founder and director, Dr. Irma Ghosn, 25-30 percent of all participants go on to work in human rights, conflict resolution or social justice. “Universities ought to play a major role in human rights education,” Ghosn said. “After all, students are going to be the leaders and parents of the next generation.”

Sister organization IDCT, meanwhile, works on diplomacy and conflict management and on enhancing human rights awareness, and also provides training on negotiation, bargaining, decision-making and many other issues. The institute’s latest offering is the Beirut Human Rights Film Festival, a competition encouraging students to produce short films or documentaries about a specific human rights issue. A number of films from the 2008 festival were screened to members of the public and high school students and were followed by discussions.

“You cannot imagine the enthusiasm and engagement of the audience,” said Walid Moubarak, IDCT’s director. The three winning films were later distributed to high schools across the country, along with educational material, so students could learn more about human rights. The festival has proven so popular that LAU opened the competition up to all Arab countries. The 2010 film festival is being financially supported by the Arab Human Rights Fund.

While widespread awareness and respect for human rights will not happen overnight, civil society organizations and centers of education are playing a vital role in informing people in the Middle East about their rights and responsibilities. In doing so, they are sowing the seeds for the next generation to create long-term social and judicial change. ■



Harvard World Model UN participants from LAU



Teach for Lebanon Brings Quality Education to Lebanon's Rural Poor

By Marc Abizeid



Participants at the six-week training seminar on the Beirut campus

After an intensive six-week summer training seminar at LAU Beirut, 18 fresh graduates from universities across the country will be immersing themselves this fall in a two-year teaching program at some of Lebanon's poorest schools in towns and villages throughout the northern, southern and Bekaa regions.

The program is the product of a three-year partnership between LAU's Teacher Training Institute (TTI) and Teach for Lebanon (TFL), a local NGO seeking to bring quality education to children living in poor rural areas where student dropout rates are the highest in the country. The partnership between TTI and TFL began in 2006, when LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, a member of TFL's Board of Trustees, took notice of the organization's efforts in underprivileged schools and urged the institute to get involved. TFL is also part of a larger global network of NGOs from 11 countries.

"What we are trying to do is to get these graduates to know a little bit about education in Lebanon, to be able to cope with everything in the schools and at the same time to make a difference," said Dr. Rima Bahous, LAU faculty member in the education department and TFL advisory board member.

The training took place from June 29 to August 7. One of the most essential aspects of the training program, said Ali Dimashkieh, CEO of Teach for Lebanon, is offering the graduates, most of whom have backgrounds in fields outside education, a structured exposure to teaching.

"The seminars definitely prepared our fellows," Dimashkieh said. "Although they are bright and have high degrees, they are graduates with backgrounds in business, engineering, arts—you name it. Very few of them have backgrounds in education."

According to TFL records, some preliminary-school students in rural areas reach the third cycle of their education lacking the ability to read and write. One of the main factors, the group said, is that the absence of public schools in poverty-stricken regions forces local communities to provide only minimal education that is way below state standards.

"The seminars definitely prepared our fellows. Although they are bright and have high degrees, they are graduates with backgrounds in business, engineering, arts—you name it. Very few of them have backgrounds in education."

—Ali Dimashkieh, CEO, Teach for Lebanon

Many of the teachers hired at some of those rural schools, said Dimashkieh, lack proper qualifications and come in with just the equivalent of a high school diploma. "In many cases, the teachers don't have university degrees, and there is no other choice," Dimashkieh said. "Without those types of schools, the children wouldn't have a school at all."

The seminar organizers explain that the graduates, aside from developing their skills and gaining preliminary teaching experience, will also be expected to engage in the local communities. To gain the most out of the experience while making the heaviest impact on the communities, the graduates will be living in the villages where they are teaching, and collaborating with local residents to organize events and extracurricular activities.

LAU-MEPI Program to Empower Women Kicks Off

By Marc Abizeid



The program included meeting female leaders MP Bahia Hariri, Education Minister (left), and Michele J. Sison, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon (above)

Announced in September 2008, Young Women Leaders program (YWL) finally kicked off at LAU Beirut this summer with the completion of the program's first phase: 15 days of nonstop workshop training, made possible by a \$500,000 grant awarded to the School of Arts and Sciences from the U.S. Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).

Twenty Gulf Arab business professionals and community leaders from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman and Yemen took part in training designed to build their knowledge, skills and leadership abilities in the hope of creating a regional network of activists working to advance women's rights.

"One objective of the workshops is for participants to develop project ideas to be implemented in their countries that would impact and empower women in their own communities and advance their social, economic and political situations," said Dr. Imad Salamey, YWL program director.

The workshops, held August 1–15, were the products of a collaboration between several LAU institutes led by the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World. About a dozen LAU faculty members hit on subjects including how to deal with social disputes, using technology to promote oneself, proposal writing, and violence against women.

Organizers announced the program nearly a year before it officially began and spent a good deal of time beforehand preparing a detailed proposal and outline of their goals and strategies to submit to MEPI.

"MEPI was soliciting proposals toward women's empowerment in the Middle East, so we developed the main ideas and program components of this project and applied for the grant," Salamey said. "It was a competitive grant, with many other proposals, but we won."

Applications poured in from countries across the Middle East after YWL was announced, attesting to the perceived need for a program to advance the position of women in the region. Of the 20 participants, three of them are men.

"We got over 440 applications—some from Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, even though the program specified that just Gulf countries were eligible. It's a sign that the program was very well received in the Arab world," said Dr. Nabelah Haraty, YWL program coordinator.

"We got over 440 applications—some from Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia, even though the program specified that just Gulf countries were eligible."

—Nabelah Haraty, YWL program coordinator

After completing the 15-day training, the participants submitted project proposals to develop and implement in their countries as the second phase of the program. They will return next summer to report on the results of their projects and identify areas that need improvement.

Anticipating success, Haraty said that LAU will likely ask MEPI to extend the program another year.

After completion of the training, the 20 participants were awarded certificates during a ceremony attended by LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara and U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michele Sison.

Jabbara thanked Sison for U.S. "gifts" to Lebanon, and the ambassador in turn thanked the participants for "breaking a glass ceiling" in the Gulf region.

LAU Joint Ventures



The project's first workshop was held at LAU Beirut campus

LAU and the Université de Montréal Promote Democracy and Citizen Empowerment

By Dana Halawi

In a world where democracy is often more of a wish than a reality, two political science professors, LAU's Dr. Bassel Salloukh and the Université de Montréal's Dr. Marie-Joelle Zahar, have embarked on a project that will research the impact of foreign democracy assistance on citizenship empowerment.

Their three-year study, titled "Empowering Citizens: Elections, Civil Society and Peace Building," is meant to interrogate and to critically examine attempts to advance democratization in the Arab world, specifically in Lebanon, Iraq, Sudan, and the West Bank and Gaza. The initiative is funded by the International Development Research Center, which reports to the Canadian Parliament.

"Our starting point is really a critical perspective on the literature and the argument that says that there is a connection between external democracy promotion and democratization in the Arab world," said Salloukh. He noted that democracy-promotion projects "are foreign-funded programs that aim at building sustainable, accountable and participatory institutions in postwar societies."

Salloukh explained that the study defines citizen empowerment in terms of elections, electoral law and civil society reintegration.

"We want to see whether or not all this push from the outside in the form of external democracy promotion and assistance to local actors is really leading to the kind of electoral laws and elections that empower citizens," said Salloukh. "Or is it the case that despite this external intervention in the form of foreign democracy promotion, elections are being sabotaged and hijacked by local actors to produce results that, under

the name of elections, do not really empower citizens?"

Zahar added, "There are those who take elections as a proof of democracy; we want to go deeper and investigate the quality of citizen participation. It is citizen participation, we believe, that really tells analysts about the quality of a given democracy."

She remarked that outsiders have increasingly attempted to steer political outcomes in "troubled" societies toward peace and democracy, but their efforts often backfire or do not have the transformational impact expected, in spite of considerable efforts and resources. Zahar cited as an example the limitations of outside impact on the course of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, invoking a point of view shared by many analysts that sustainable peace depends on the democratic transformation of society.

The program will also involve LAU and Université de Montréal graduate students, along with NGOs from the four countries under study, in the collection of data, development of policy recommendations, and completion of other aspects of the research.

Salloukh predicted that it will take a year to finish the first step of field research, at which point the results will be discussed in a regional workshop. A second workshop will assess intermediate results.

Zahar and Salloukh are currently preparing to present preliminary parts of their research at the Middle East Studies Association meeting in Boston this coming November. "Most importantly," Zahar said, "we are now planning for fieldwork to be undertaken in 2009-10."



Founding Dean Kamal Badr addresses new students on orientation day



Expanding Education: LAU's New Medical School Welcomes Inaugural Class

By LAU Staff

This fall semester officially welcomes a new school and set of students to LAU. After years of preparation and planning, the opening of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine and its inaugural class of LAU medical students is finally here.

The university's 10-year affiliation with Harvard Medical International has allowed LAU's School of Medicine to benefit from a program that not even Harvard has been able to utilize in the same way.

"The integrated curriculum we are applying is actually unique and has not been applied in this fully developed form anywhere—including at Harvard," explained Dr. Kamal Badr, founding dean of the School of Medicine. "We've taken it to a degree of integration that is not present anywhere else to our knowledge."

According to Badr, a number of factors make the program unique: its structure, the way it is being delivered, the closely knit integration of clinical sciences and other themes, and an assessment process that takes into account the disciplines and how they are integrated together, as well as the emphasis on very early clinical exposure.

The school's progressive curriculum—divided into the four themes of basic and clinical science, clinical skills, professional and behavioral development, and population health and social medicine—will require students to take all four in each of their years of medical school.

"What is unique is the delivery of these four themes throughout the four-year curriculum," said Badr. "These are usually taught as small modules, whereas we have a continuous theme."

Although the \$18 million complex that will house the school is not set for completion for another two years, students are taking courses in comprehensive, high-tech temporary facilities

set up in the Byblos campus Dorms A Building. Facilities such as the case-method room, the multidisciplinary lab—which will highlight virtual microscopy—the anatomy lab and simulation equipment are already in place for student use. The university has also obtained three cadavers for study in groups of eight students—an exceptional ratio per cadaver.

"The integrated curriculum we are applying is actually unique and has not been applied in this fully developed form anywhere—including at Harvard."

—Kamal Badr, founding dean

Students will benefit from the University Medical Center-Rizk Hospital, the university's principal clinical facility, as well as from Rafic Hariri University Hospital and Clemenceau Medical Center, "both of which present different types of additional resources to teach and for research," according to Badr.

The student body comes from diverse backgrounds and universities in Lebanon and the United States. Students were not chosen based on good scores alone, said Badr, but also "on their adventurous personalities and for being outgoing and willing to share with us in the creation of the school and not just be passive recipients."





"The Medium" by the Hamburg Academy of Theatre and Performing Arts

12th Annual International University Theater Festival—Lebanon

By LAU Staff

LAU gathers performers from around the world on the Beirut campus

Crowds packed into LAU's amphitheaters throughout the last week of July, when the 12th Annual International University Theater Festival took over the Beirut campus.

Organized by the Department of Arts and Communication's School of Arts and Sciences, the festival brought together more than 200 performing-arts students, professors and drama professionals from Lebanon, Turkey, Kuwait, Germany, the Netherlands, the United Arab Emirates, Morocco and Syria.

Participating countries tackled themes ranging from Arab history and legend to theater philosophy, as in the LAU production "Mirror, Mirror," and even explored the flaws of the justice system in such plays as Morocco's "A Balance with One Plate."

In addition to "Mirror, Mirror," LAU students contributed four productions to the festival: the opening play, titled "Sex, Drugs, Rock 'n' Roll," as well as "Black Swans," "Finding the Sun" and "Silicon Bomb."



Palestinian Circuna Troupe



American University of Beirut students performed "Then +3 shorts"



Palestinian Circus Troupe

Two of the most acclaimed plays at the festival belonged to troupes from the Kuwaiti and Syrian Higher Institutes for Performing Arts. The Kuwaiti production of "The Crookbacked Bird," the story of detainees in a big prison who long for the outside world while enduring torture by a sadistic guard, received high praise on the sixth night of the festival. The Syrian students also scored a hit with "The Days of Negligence," a story about student life and graduation mixed with personal stories of treason, which they performed in classical Arabic.

In addition to plays, the festival hosted concerts on campus, as well as professional workshops on circus and clowning skills, reading skills and poetry reading.

Participants said they were happy with the facilities and the experience they gained during the festival. Members of the Kuwaiti Al Jaheel Al Waie Theater Troupe had decided to attend the festival after realizing how much they stand to learn from events like this, according to one of the company's directors, Esam Al Kazemi. He said the actors were pleased with the well-equipped room in which they performed, and with the "very helpful and efficient" LAU organizing team. At the festival, the troupe's play, "Antar, Who Protects Her," inspired by the story of an Arab pre-Islamic warrior and poet, received rounds of applause in Gulbenkian amphitheater.

"Since we have this equipment and the technique, we have to give the students the opportunity to produce their plays and be in front of the audience that judges their performance," said LAU professor Maurice Maalouf, one of the four festival co-directors. "And they have the chance not only to show the world what they have to offer, but also to see what the outside world has to give them."

Maalouf, who has been with the festival for 12 years, said he is proud of the organization. "There is a group of people at LAU who feel very close to the theater. They are well-trained, and they are quick and effective in organizing," he said. He added that he predicts the festival will become a prestigious event for the Middle East, and that he can only see it growing in the future.

"They have the chance not only to show the world what they have to offer, but also to see what the outside world has to give them."

—Maurice Maalouf, LAU professor and festival co-director



MarCom Publications

The New Face of LAU

By Marc Abizeid

After a thorough 18-month process that involved image assessments, research, consultation and testing, LAU is poised to become the first university in the Middle East to undertake a branding initiative. Scheduled for a public launch in January, the initiative will unveil a new visual identity that will encapsulate the mission and aspirations of the institution.

The effort, led by LAU's Marketing and Communications Department (MarCom) with the support of the university's upper management and community, will introduce revamped logos, slogans and a tagline.

"Steeped in history, with ambition and pride, LAU is a university where rich heritage meets exceptional faculty and programs that have paved the way for significant achievements over the decades," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara. "We felt those accomplishments deserved to be recognized and reflected through a branding effort worthy of institutions of impressive stature."

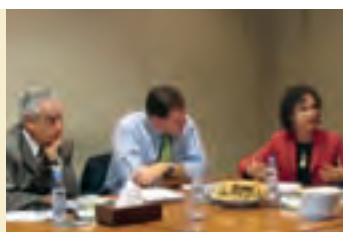
The upper management at LAU entrusted MarCom, following its establishment in late 2007, to lead the branding initiative and present LAU as an institution that not only has deep-seated roots, but also remains on the move with its cutting-edge programs and unique opportunities.

"Branding is not only about logos, seals, colors and look. It's also about our identity, how to bridge the gap between how people currently perceive us, and how we would like to be perceived in the minds of our stakeholders," said Peggy Hanna, MarCom director. "We want to showcase to the outside world the points of excellence of LAU."

While LAU is the first university in the region to undergo branding, similar initiatives have been taken by the private sector to help businesses and organizations reestablish and market themselves worldwide.

MarCom selected Mind the Gap, a leading branding agency based in Beirut, to collaborate on the project with a special steering committee composed of LAU faculty, staff and alumni. The team worked together to combine Mind the Gap's marketing and branding expertise with the LAU committee's solid understanding of the university's history and culture.

"We have very high hopes for the branding initiative to be able to shed light on the strengths and improve the perception of the university," said Karl Bassil, creative director of Mind the Gap. "The process was very much an inside-out one where ... everything was based on the university's core values, and the work in progress was being carefully assessed and validated at all times."



LAU officials during a branding presentation for the President's cabinet

The MarCom team





"We embarked on this branding project with enthusiasm," Basil added, noting that the team members "thoroughly explored LAU, and hope to have discovered its true essence."

Nathalie Fallaha, a member of the steering committee and an LAU faculty member in the graphic design department, said she is excited and optimistic about the project: "I could not hide the thrill of finally seeing our dream come true, with our institution finally having an identity that really reflects its points of excellence and portrays to the outside world the promise and the legacy of LAU."

MarCom took an inclusive, participatory approach in gathering data about impressions and perceptions of the university. Department staffers polled nearly 700 stakeholders, including students, alumni, staff, faculty, prospective students and their parents.

After collecting the information through focus groups and surveys, the branding team took on the monumental task of constructing the university's new visual identity by developing a brand portfolio of potential taglines, logos and graphics. The team then tested the new branding with the stakeholders.

"Honest opinions from our stakeholders helped us implement important changes to optimize our marketing tools, while deciding on ideas and suggestions after intensive consultation and scrutiny," said Sawsan Bistanji, MarCom research consultant.

According to members of the branding team, the main challenge was to fully satisfy all of the stakeholders, who offered varying opinions and sometimes contradicting interests and aspirations.

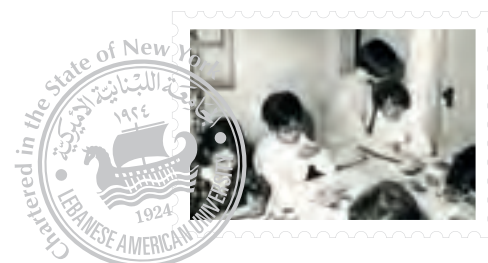
"The multiplicity of the stakeholders and decision-makers involved within this initiative, and their incredible diversity, was a major complexity that had to be tackled very carefully," said Nayla Moujaes, the MarCom account manager in charge of the initiative.

The combined efforts to undertake and complete the project were heralded by Richard Rumsey, LAU's vice president for university advancement, whose blessing and support helped pave the way for the initiative.

"The process to brand LAU was long and painstakingly thorough. We considered feedback from a diverse group of constituents who offered varying perspectives," Rumsey said. "In the end, I think we succeeded at developing an image that represents the university's unique and innovative character."



The Mind the Gap team



LAU Profile in Politics



Nimat Kanaan ('58): Former Director General of the Ministry of Social Affairs

By Dana Halawi



Kanaan with her three daughters, Lara, Leen and Lama

From her first job as an English teacher to her appointment as director general of the Ministry of Social Affairs, LAU alumna Nimat Kanaan surmounted many challenges as she worked her way up to one of the most prestigious positions in the country.

A highly distinguished student, Kanaan enrolled at LAU (formerly BCW) at the unusually young age of 13. She graduated in 1958, when she was 17, with a B.A. in education and psychology.

"My first job was as a teacher of English language in public schools," said Kanaan, "until the Office for Social Welfare came into existence. [That is] where I started my real career path, at the age of 19."

Kanaan's ambitions led her to enroll in the master's program in education and social psychology at the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 1964, at the same time as she held a job as an editor and administrator at the social welfare office. Kanaan's punctuality, organization and enthusiasm helped earn her a promotion to head of the social assistance department in 1963.

She credits LAU for giving her the tools to succeed and "providing me with a wide range of skills," said Kanaan, adding that LAU "also revived in me the sense of independence and helped me achieve my ambitions. Freedom of expression was one of the best attributes I gained from my education at LAU."

Kanaan pointed out that the communication skills and confidence she developed have proven invaluable: "If you don't ask for your rights with confidence, no one will ever give them to you." That conviction drove her to request a big promotion in 1968. "I went to the director general and asked him to give me the position of my previous manager, as an acting director of the social services department within the office for social welfare," said Kanaan. "I felt I had all the qualifications for the job. Why not ask for it?"

When she landed the position, Kanaan began establishing a national network of social development centers, with the aim of offering social and health services to citizens. The first center was established in 1971 after Kanaan got the approval from President Suleiman Franjeh.

"In 1974 there was a plan of appointing me as the acting director general of social affairs, but unfortunately the war started. I became a member of the two interim committees established to receive and distribute food and life commodities aid at the beginning of the civil war," she said.

The strong-willed Kanaan did not give up on her dream, and was appointed acting director general of social affairs—before the establishment of the current Ministry of Social Affairs—and deputy director general of the Ministry of Public Health in 1992. The following year, she was named director general of the Ministry of Social Affairs. "Some people have objected to my appointment to this position," said Kanaan, "but I threatened to resign if they give it to someone else."

"If you don't ask for your rights with confidence, no one will ever give them to you."

Kanaan was the first woman in Lebanon to hold such a position. She has played a key role in the development of the ministry and has raised its profile significantly. She has also survived several ministers, each with a different agenda, and managed to keep her programs running efficiently.

Some of her most influential work has been in raising awareness, improving legislation, and establishing national committees and services for children, the elderly and the handicapped. She has also focused on population growth, poverty, and social and health conditions.

"The path I have chosen was very tough, but I had the will to work for the prosperity of my country," she said. "My advice to LAU graduates is to work from the heart and never give up on your rights."

Before her retirement in 2005, Kanaan was named "Woman of the Year" by the American Biographical Institute. "I believe I paved the way for other women," said Kanaan, "and I ask them to believe in themselves and always seek for the best in life."

Faculty and Staff on the Move



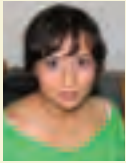
OMAR FARHOUD

Omar Farhoud has been working at the LAU libraries since he was a financial aid student at the university, so it's no wonder he finds the environment very friendly. He has been appointed the new systems librarian, having previously served as assistant systems librarian and a library computer center supervisor. He realizes that his promotion comes with new responsibilities and obligations to LAU and plans to make a difference. Farhoud earned a B.S. in 1998 and an M.S. in 2001, both in computer science.



JOSEPH KANAAN

Recently promoted to program coordinator at the guidance office in Byblos, Joseph Kanaan has been serving LAU since his days as a student here, first as a student assistant at the Vice President for Academic Affairs Office and then as an academic assistant in the Department of Economics and Finance. Now with his new post, he feels that LAU is the right place for an ambitious individual like himself. Kanaan holds a B.A. from LAU in business, with a dual emphasis on banking/finance and marketing.



SABA FATIMA HAIDER

Originally from Toronto, Canada, Saba Haider is the recently appointed associate director of print communications at the Marketing and Communications Department. She has 10 years of international experience as a journalist and editor in print and online media and oversees content for all print media and publications for MarCom. Haider joins LAU from London, where she was based for the past five years as a journalist and filmmaker. Previously, she spent four years in California as an editor for a Time Warner magazine. Haider has a bachelor's degree in political science from the University of Guelph in Canada, and a master's in film studies, specializing in Palestinian cinema, from University College London in the U.K.



MARC ABIZEID

U.S.-born Lebanese Marc Abizeid was recently recruited as a full-time staff writer for the Marketing and Communications Department. After graduating from the University of California, Santa Cruz, with a B.A. in history and politics in 2008, he moved to Washington, D.C., and worked as a press officer for Ralph Nader's presidential campaign. With a passion for journalism, writing and the Middle East, Abizeid decided to move to Lebanon after the election to start a new life and build a career. He chose a position with LAU because of its fast-paced and challenging nature. He is thankful for being teamed up with caring staff members who go out of their way to offer encouragement and support.



JALAL KAHWAGI

Jalal Kahwagi has been appointed a full-time academic computer center administrator on the Beirut campus. His previous positions at LAU were as technical support and IT support at the computer center. Kahwagi graduated from LAU with a B.S. in business computer.



ZEINA ABDALLAH

The Marketing and Communications Department has recently hired Zeina Abdallah as an account manager. She previously worked at LAU as a website and communications coordinator for the newly established School of Medicine, and at the American University of Beirut's Department of Internal Medicine and in administrative roles in its English department. In addition to her work, she was one of the founding members of the Volunteer Outreach Clinic, an NGO that provides primary health care to people in need. Abdallah remains an active volunteer and serves on the executive committee as a public relations officer. She holds a B.A. in public administration from AUB.



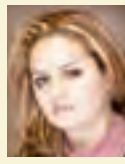
CARLA FREIJ

After graduating with a B.A. and an M.A. in education from LAU, Carla Freij has been appointed as executive assistant to the dean of students in Beirut. As she deals with students directly and works to improve the way the university assists them, she finds her job very fulfilling. Freij previously held positions as an administrative assistant in the education department and taught at International College in Aar for a year.



JOY BALTA

Joy Balta is the newly hired science lab technician for the School of Medicine on the Byblos campus. Balta earned a B.A. in biology from the Lebanese University – Faculty of Science II and has previously worked with the NGOs World Vision and Kafa.



LINDA NASR

Linda Nasr has been appointed executive assistant at the School of Business, Beirut campus. While studying at LAU, she had a 100 percent graduate assistantship and served as a graduate assistant at the dean's office in the faculty of business, Beirut campus. She enjoys LAU's work environment and hopes to repay the university for what it has given her. Nasr received a B.A. in business marketing from Notre Dame University in Lebanon and an M.B.A. from LAU.



MAKRAM OUAISS

Makram Ouais has been appointed full-time assistant professor of political science and international affairs at the LAU Byblos School of Arts and Sciences. In addition to teaching a variety of courses, he is eager to develop LAU's Institute for Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation into an internationally recognized establishment and a potential new major. Among his many activities outside the university, he has worked with international organizations such as the National Democratic Institute, Amnesty International, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). He is currently the coordinator of a pro-peace coalition of 22 nongovernmental organizations. He holds a Ph.D. in conflict analysis and resolution from George Mason University's Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

Student Achievement



Lama Masri

At 21 years old, Lama Masri already has more accomplishments under her belt than many people do in a lifetime: high-flying media professional, founder of an NGO, professional football player and reality television star—all squeezed into just over two decades.

Even before Masri graduated from LAU with a bachelor's in international affairs in spring 2009, she was already working part-time for her present employer, media giant Avalon Arabia, as a marketing and public relations executive. Also as an undergraduate, Masri's ambition combined with an ethic of social justice to compel her, in 2008, to launch Baytuna, a humanitarian initiative that seeks to improve the living conditions of disadvantaged women and children.

While juggling these commitments, during the summer of 2009 she managed to fit in 40 days of intense filming across the United States for the second series of the reality television show *On the Road in America*. Masri was one of four cast members chosen from some 10,000 young people who auditioned from all over the Middle East to participate. The show aims to dispel Americans' stereotypes of Arabs while offering up a diverse range of Arab opinions about the United States. Despite the hectic 7 a.m.-to-11 p.m. schedule, Masri described being part of the show as "one of the most memorable and exhilarating experiences of my life." One specific highlight was the opportunity to meet with U.S. congressmen, who Masri claims have policies that will shape the future of the Middle East. "My main dream," Masri admitted, "is to be involved in politics in Lebanon. But I want to get there not because of my father, my husband or my family, but because of who I am."



Faisal Abbas

By his own account, Faisal Abbas has never been one to rest on his laurels. "It's not enough to have a dream. You have to chase it," he maintained. From a young age, Abbas was inspired by the media as an avenue for impacting people, perceptions and broader politics: "I truly believe that it's the passion for change that is the real driver for journalists." Abbas majored in marketing at LAU and did a minor in communication arts with an emphasis in journalism. But while his friends were whiling away their freshman year at parties, the budding 18-year-old journalist was filling his spare time with a full-time job at Future TV.

Nine years later, Abbas believes his efforts are starting to pay off. As a blogger, he has used "the democratization of communication brought on by new technology" to contribute an Arab perspective to the global media community. Abbas believes that blogging, particularly in the context of Middle Eastern countries, harbors immense potential for not only escaping the tight confines of government-controlled media outlets but also for fostering cross-cultural dialogue and combating negative stereotypes.

Abbas' dedicated work as a blogger and contributor to several English and Arabic language newspapers, including *Al Hayat*, *Al Sharq Al Awsat* and the *Huffington Post*, recently earned him the Cutting Edge Award of the 2009 International Media Awards. He is currently enrolled at the Westminster Business School in London, where he is working on a master's in marketing communications.

Dana El Zein

After a hectic summer, Dana El Zein is taking some hard-earned time off. Following her graduation from LAU in spring 2009, where she majored in business and marketing and minored in psychology, El Zein was selected from among six of the top marketing students in Lebanon to take part in this year's Dubai Summer Surprises (DSS) Apprenticeship Programme—the third year in a row that someone from LAU has been awarded the opportunity.

For 12 days, she worked alongside eight other star students from around the region to devise a marketing strategy and program that was presented to DSS management as a pitch for upcoming events. In open-minded internationalist spirit, her team chose to highlight the cultural richness brought to Dubai through the Asian migrant worker communities and suggested such cultural events as Indian Cinema Week. Despite the challenges of a tight schedule and working with people from different countries and cultures, El Zein said that the privilege of participating far outweighed the difficulties: "It was a huge thing for all of us to represent our countries." The experience put her in touch with key marketing companies in Lebanon and the region, and those connections have provided valuable contacts for pursuing her career in the field.

Unfortunately, due to the fragility of the global economy, El Zein said that finding a job has been tough. She has been offered many interviews, but companies are being cautious about hiring. She tries not to let this bother her too much, though, and is enjoying some postgraduate relaxation and partaking in her favorite pastime, horseback riding.



Ali Chehade and Alaa Ladkani

This year two more LAU graduates have been offered Fulbright scholarships. Ali Chehade graduated from LAU in 2007 with a major in communication arts and an emphasis in radio, TV and film, and Alaa Ladkani received his bachelor's in economics with a finance emphasis in spring 2009. The two will join the ranks of the prestigious Fulbright community by pursuing master's degrees in their respective fields at American universities, all expenses paid.

Yet it is not only the academic and financial aspects of the Fulbright scholarship that are appealing to its beneficiaries. A core objective of the program is promoting cultural exchange. Chehade, who will begin a master's in media management at Southern Illinois University, is convinced that this is why he was selected: "They want people who are not just there to study but who like to share experiences, to learn things and to teach people about their culture." Chehade got his first taste of this when, in 2007, he participated in the Fusion Arts Exchange, another cross-cultural initiative, sponsored by the U.S. State Department. Ladkani also recognizes the value of traveling as a means of gaining knowledge and experience but is nevertheless keen to return to Lebanon after completing his master's in applied economics at the University of Wisconsin. "I love Lebanon. It's the country I grew up in, and it's the country where I am going to spend my life."

In the long term, Ladkani is hoping for a position in the financial sector, possibly with the Lebanese Central Bank. Chehade also hopes to give back to his community: One of his dreams is to come back and teach at LAU.



"I love Lebanon. It's the country I grew up in, and it's the country where I am going to spend my life."

—Alaa Ladkani, Fulbright Scholar



CampusNotes

Inspiring Change

On June 27, the **No Apathy Pharmacy and Health Awareness Student Society (NAPHASS)** held its **first annual dinner** at BAY 183 restaurant in Byblos. The dinner celebrated student achievements in learning and volunteering at community outreach events organized by NAPHASS over the year, and gave students positive reinforcement for their efforts. About 100 students and faculty attended the event, which included a talent show with musical performances by four students and a student-faculty general-knowledge quiz. Pharmacy student Lama Kheir received the Distinguished Leadership Award for the year. Next year's calendar of events was also revealed: It includes community awareness campaigns on osteoporosis, vaccinations, drug abuse, cancer screening, and chronic-disease management for illnesses such as diabetes, hypertension and dyslipidemia.



On August 5, approximately 80 guests attended a **driving awareness charity dinner** organized by nine students taking Dr. Ramez Maluf's summer Introduction to Public Relations course on the Beirut campus. Proceeds from the dinner went to Kunhadi, a Lebanese foundation established after LAU student Hady Gebran died in a car accident in 2006. The event included comedy sketches by renowned Lebanese comedian Adel Karam and LAU students, a performance by the band Foulblighter, speeches by students and Gebran's father, and a video—all focused on driving. A raffle was also held.

Experts Explain

This summer LAU offered its employees an on-campus **staff development program** organized by the Human Resources Department and LAU's Continuing Education Program. It included seven training sessions on time management and scheduling, general office management, customer service, organizing of events, conflict management, and oral and writing communication. Other such development programs are being planned.



On the Beirut campus June 22–26, LAU faculty members attended a **training workshop** in quantitative research methods. The workshop, given by retired University of Arizona professor in quantitative methods Lawrence Aleamony, examined research methods and advanced statistical methods in education and provided an introduction to statistics. Organized by Dr. Ahmad Oueini, chair of LAU's Department of Education, the event was vital in helping instructors gain insight into theories and methods necessary to meet research expectations set by the university.

In mid-June, LAU faculty members from the **English language unit** attended a one-day **workshop** on the Byblos campus. Guest speaker Dr. Ann Johns, a professor of linguistics at San Diego State University in California, introduced the faculty to new methods and strategies to enhance student learning and examined course rubrics and international teaching trends. The workshop was part of an ongoing effort to enhance LAU's English program and provide students with the necessary skills to succeed in their future careers.



Cultural Exchange

On Display



Emirati artist **Samar Al Shams** exhibited 20 of her works on the Beirut campus for one week in mid-August. Her work focuses on such themes as nature, emotion and politics. The Beirut-born artist has previously exhibited at Lebanon's Ministry of Tourism in Beirut, as well as in Dubai, Cairo and Paris.

Graduating **computer science students** displayed their **end-of-year projects** at the brand-new computer lab on the Beirut campus on June 12. Projects included security alarm systems, employee organizers and whistle-melody-recognizing programs.



Center Stage

The LAU Choir performed pieces from Mozart, Handel and Schneider at its annual spring concert on June 10–11 in Beirut campus' Irwin Hall. The choir also sang modern hits and Brazilian folksongs.



On August 14, more than 200 talented young dancers, actors and musicians from across Lebanon performed in the LAU Beirut campus's Irwin Hall Auditorium as part of the **Youth Excellence on Stage Academy Lebanon**. The project has been run by the American Voices Association in Iraq and Egypt for the last three years and was held in Lebanon for the first time by the Levant Foundation in Houston, with the support of LAU, the American Community School and the American University of Beirut. For two weeks the students, who have diverse backgrounds, trained together at ACS in Beirut with nine leading teachers from the United States, and focused on theater, hip-hop and street dance, jazz music, classical piano, voice and vocal ensemble, violin and viola, cello and bass, and Broadway musical theater. The group also performed in Faqra and the University of Balamand.



English language unit
workshop participants

Center Stage

LAU hosted Lebanon's first **workshop on Noh theatre**—a form of classical Japanese musical drama in existence since the 14th century. The workshop was held August 28–September 8 in Beirut's Glubenkian Theatre, where Noh master Dr. Naohiko Umewaka gave a lecture and demonstration, led a workshop, and rehearsed and staged his latest play, "The Italian Restaurant," with some of the 20 professional actors and LAU performing arts students who attended. The events were organized by LAU's Department of Arts and Communication in collaboration with the Embassy of Japan in Lebanon and the Arab Theater Training Center.



Arts and Culture

On June 22, seven LAU students screened their films at the annual one-day non-competitive **festival** in the Selina Korban Auditorium on the Byblos campus. The films were produced as part of two separate courses—an advanced TV production course and a filmmaking course—with no single theme. Organized by Khalil Zaarour, an LAU communication arts graduate and part-time instructor in filmmaking, and hosted by LAU's Department of Humanities and Social Sciences in the School of Arts and Sciences in Byblos, the goal of the event was to prepare students to present and defend their films, as they would at festivals.

Live Science

LAU's Computer Science and Natural Sciences departments in Byblos held an event June 30–July 2 entitled "**Bioinformatics Workshop**: Genomics, Proteomics and Statistics." It was hosted by guest speaker Georges Khazen, who is currently doing his Ph.D. in computational neuroscience at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in Switzerland. LAU plans to integrate the interdisciplinary field of bioinformatics—the application of information technology to the study of molecular biology—into its curriculum, and this crash course combined lectures and hands-on practice for students in the departments.



Fifteen teams from nine universities across Lebanon gathered at the LAU Beirut campus July 2–3 for the first **Lebanese Collegiate Programming Competition**. The three-member student teams were given five hours to solve nine programming problems that were prepared by experts from Lebanon and Egypt. LAU's Department of Computer Science and Mathematics organized the contest with the Association of Computing Machinery–International Collegiate Programming Contest. One of the three LAU student teams, the LAU Sailors, won first place; the AUB Engineers took second place. The winners were set to participate in this year's Arab and North Africa Regional Programming Contest, an annual competition established 10 years ago.

Business as Usual

LAU's **Banking and Finance Institute** organized its **12th annual summer seminars** July 6–14 on the Byblos campus, attracting local bankers, businessmen and executive M.B.A. students. The six seminars covered topics that aim to improve management skills and engage employees. Dr. Joseph F. Sinkey, former professor of financial institutions at the University of Georgia, led the first seminar, which was held over a three-day span. Other daylong seminars were led by Phillip Borzilleri, professor at DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management in St. Louis, Missouri, and senior vice president of Morin & Associates, an American training and consulting firm for financial institutions.



Three LAU students—along with 22 other young women from Lebanon, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman and UAE—participated in the **HSBC Financial and Entrepreneurship Awareness program**, held in the United States July 5–22. Organized by HSBC in the Community Middle East Foundation and AMIDEAST, the program provided training to young Arab women in finance, banking and entrepreneurship. The participants visited the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, where U.S. dollars are printed, the Federal Deposit Insurance Company, and the American Bankers Association in Washington, D.C. In addition, they took courses at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and visited HSBC headquarters and the Chicago Mercantile Exchange.

Summer Learning

Participating in this year's sixth LAU **Summer Institute for Intensive Arabic Language and Culture (SINARC)** to study Arabic and Lebanese dialects were 112 international students from around the world, including Canada, the United States, South America and Europe. The program, which took place June 22–July 31, included trips all over Lebanon, a well-structured program of 20 hours per week of literary Arabic and five hours of Lebanese dialect, and afternoon talks by experts about Lebanese history and current issues and politics in the region. The fall program, which is to take place September 7–December 11, will be offered at intermediate and advanced levels, with two special courses available on Arabic writing skills and the challenges of the Middle East in the 21st century.



*SINARC participants
explore Byblos*

Summer Learning

From July 25 to August 10, six LAU undergrads attended the **International Institute for Political and Economic Studies**, an intensive summer academic program on the Greek island of Crete, with more than 80 students from 20 different countries. The program covered topics such as politics, economics, intellectual history, conflict management, and culture, and helped students sharpen their listening and debate skills. They also had the opportunity to engage in social and sightseeing activities.



Thirty students from universities throughout Lebanon attended the annual **Summer School on Conflict Prevention and Transformation**, organized by LAU's Institute for Peace and Justice Education, August 16–25 on the Byblos campus. Two graduates also traveled from Palestine and Egypt to participate. The education and training program, during which the students lived together and attended classes and activities, taught peace-building skills and how to confront prejudices. For the first time this year, 10 students who had previously attended the program returned for a special course.

Awards

LAU honored its best students at the **2009 Student Honor Society ceremonies** held on both campuses in early June. The Rhoda Orme award, traditionally given to senior female students in recognition of their outstanding spirit and services at LAU, was presented to Alexandra Chreiteh and Stephanie Rayess. Every year, more than 300 students who complete 24 credit hours or more with a GPA above 3.5 automatically become part of the Student Honor Society. Those who complete more than 60 credits and maintain a similarly high average receive awards.



Sidelines

For this year's Francophonie Games in Lebanon, LAU, along with Antonine University, was given the privilege of hosting some of the practices of all 12 women's national basketball teams competing in the games. Practice sessions were held September 23–25, and the games started on September 27.



President Jabbra recognizes Joelle Michel Hayek, who achieved the highest GPA in the School of Engineering and Architecture this year

VIP Visitors

Former U.S. President Jimmy Carter discussed issues related to Lebanon and the region with LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Michele J. Sison, and members of Lebanon's business community in early June at Jabbra's residence. Carter was in Lebanon, on behalf of the Carter Center, to monitor the parliamentary elections and the formation of the next government.



Saqr Ghobash, **UAE Minister of Labor** and chairman of the National Media Council; Rahmah Husain Al Zaabi, UAE Ambassador to Lebanon; and Albert Matta, a Lebanese businessman and supporter of LAU in UAE, visited the LAU Beirut campus on July 30 and met with President Jabbra and other university officials. The visitors were briefed on LAU's major projects and taken on a tour of the Fine Arts Building's Sheikh Zayed Hall, built in early 1972 and named after the former UAE president.

UPCOMING EVENTS—Mark Your Calendar!

- > **October/November (and continuing)** Center for Lebanese Heritage lectures begin on the first Monday of each month. (Beirut)
- > **November** Film Festival on Common Grounds, Institute for Peace and Justice Education.
- > **November 5–7** Inclusive Education and Diversity in Early Years Regional Conference, organized by The School of Arts and Sciences—Department of Education at LAU and The Early Childhood Care and Development Program at ARC for ECD Professionals.
- > **November 6** LAU Alumni presents a lecture on the Japanese art of Reiki, a technique for stress reduction and relaxation, Business Building, Beirut.
- > **November 6–7** LAU's Center for Program and Learning Assessment (CPLA) presents A Regional Conference on Program and Learning Assessment in Higher Education.
- > **November 6–8** 7th Arab Conference for Antimicrobial Agents at the Byblos campus and University Medical Center – Rizk Hospital.
- > **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).
- > **November 14–16** Darwin's Living Legacy: An International Conference on Evolution and Society in Alexandria, Egypt. LAU faculty members Drs. Pierre Zalloua and Ramez Maluf are guest speakers.
- > **November 21** LAU reception for alumni, faculty and Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA) friends to be held in conjunction with the MESA conference, Boston, Massachusetts, Marriott Copley Hotel, 8:30 p.m.
- > **Mid–December** Christmas Carol Concert.
- > **First two weeks of January** LAU branding initiative launch ceremony.

For updates on LAU news and events please visit www.LAU.edu.lb



LAU Board of Trustees



Ghassan Saab

A native of Lebanon, Ghassan Saab received his B.E. in civil engineering from AUB. He subsequently moved to Michigan, where he joined and later became the owner of Sorensen Gross Construction Services. Currently the company's CEO, he lives in and operates the firm out of Flint, Michigan, and is founder and co-owner of two other companies in Michigan and North Carolina.

Saab chairs or serves on boards at the University of Michigan–Flint and the American Task Force for Lebanon, among others. A product of an American education in the Middle East, Saab is an advocate and major supporter of LAU's mission and believes that "we should have ten more universities like LAU and AUB in the region." He is the former chairman and a current member of LAU's Board of Trustees, but his involvement with the university dates back to the early 1980s.

Impressed with President Joseph G. Jabbra's achievements since taking over the reins of the university, Saab is a champion of LAU. He said recently, "Dr. Jabbra has taken the university forward in record time." Having observed some of its more difficult periods, Saab said he is now "looking at the brightest days of the university" under Jabbra's leadership.



John Wholihan

A Fulbright Scholar, John Wholihan, Ph.D., grew up in Michigan and received a bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame, an M.B.A. from Indiana University, and a Ph.D. from American University. He currently serves as president of Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, where he was dean of the College of Business Administration for 23 years. Prior to joining LMU, his administrative experience included five years as associate dean at Bradley University and serving several years as director of both its M.B.A. program and the Small Business Institute.

Currently on the Board of Trustees of the Turner Funds, Wholihan is a former chairman of the board of Notre Dame Academy in Los Angeles. He was also president of the Board of Governors of Beta Gamma Sigma, the international honor society, for AACSB International, which accredits business schools throughout the world. Wholihan has developed a keen interest in LAU's School of Business, a dynamic program that graduates more students than any other field of study at the university.

Wholihan has been an esteemed member of LAU's Board of Trustees for four years. Having known and worked with President Joseph G. Jabbra at LMU for many years, he joined LAU's board to further its efforts to make the university a world-class institution.



Ron Cruikshank

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Ron Cruikshank is a graduate of Denison University and Duquesne University School of Law. Before retiring, he spent more than 25 years in the communications industry, most recently as senior corporate counsel for Omnicom Group Inc. in New York City. Prior to that he was senior vice president and general counsel of Ketchum Communications Inc. in Pittsburgh. Cruikshank has a long-standing relationship with the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York, where he has been an elder and a trustee since 1997. He is also an elder at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh.

Cruikshank has a passion for Presbyterian causes and a particular interest in LAU because of its Presbyterian connection and the fact that it retains a connection to the church while remaining secular. A dynamic member of LAU's Board of Trustees, Cruikshank is also drawn to the pioneering role that LAU has played in the education of women in the region.



Wadih S. "Bill" Jordan

Wadih S. "Bill" Jordan's parents immigrated to the United States through Ellis Island in 1907. He was raised in Lebanon, however, and graduated from AUB with a B.S. degree in agriculture in 1957 and also holds a certificate in international business from Columbia University. He currently lives in New Jersey, where he moved in 1993.

Jordan has been working in the pharmaceutical industry for many years, currently serving as director of Antigenics since 2003 and president of NearEast Enterprises LLC, a company marketing pharmaceuticals in Near East markets, since 1996. He is also a board director of Pollex SAL. Jordan, and he served as vice president of Cyanamid International from 1993 to 1995 and as its managing director from 1976 to 1993.

Jordan sees education as the hope for Lebanon and is involved in philanthropic organizations such as Drug Free Lebanon and Act for Lebanon, an advocacy group and foundation working for a better Lebanon, as well as Friends of the Lebanese Academy of Science. A newly "graduated" member of LAU's Board of Trustees, Jordan is also a trustee of the board of directors of AUB.



THE LEGACY & THE PROMISE CAMPAIGN



Ex-LAU president Riyad Nassar, James Stoltzfus, chair of the BIA Paul Boulos, BIA member Philip Stoltzfus and William Stoltzfus Jr. at the dedication ceremony of the William A. Stoltzfus Reference Library in Beirut



Stoltzfus: Three Generations of Promise at LAU

For more than 70 years, the Stoltzfus name has been intertwined with the history of Lebanese American University and deeply ingrained in Lebanon and the region. Today, a third generation of the family is maintaining this relationship, with Philip Stoltzfus having just been named chair of the Board of International Advisors.

The Stoltzfus family's relationship with LAU dates to 1937, when William A. Stoltzfus Sr. assumed the presidency of Beirut College for Women (BCW). President Stoltzfus and his wife, Ethel Leck Stoltzfus, served BCW until 1958, the second-longest tenure of any president in the institution's history.

President and Mrs. Stoltzfus had two children, William Jr. and James, who grew up in Lebanon. James' life took him away from the Middle East, but William's career in the U.S. Foreign Service brought him back to the region in a number of capacities, culminating with his serving as U.S. ambassador to Kuwait, Oman, the UAE, Bahrain and Qatar.

In 2004, William Jr.'s son, Philip, was approached by then-President Riyad Nassar to join the Board of International Advisors. Philip admitted that he agreed initially because of the "nostalgic connection, a multigenerational presence" in Lebanon. But when he met Dr. Joseph G. Jabbra and heard his "vision of what LAU could do in the service of Lebanon and the people in the Middle East," he became more invested. "Initially my involvement was for old-time's sake, but what Dr. Jabbra was doing made me seriously take notice of the course he was trying to chart for LAU."

Philip was actually born in Saudi Arabia while his father was assigned there by the U.S. State Department, but he said he has always had a close attachment to Lebanon. He recalled spending childhood summers "in the mountains visiting friends and family"

but noted sadly that their visits were severely restricted during the civil war. In fact, Philip would graduate from Princeton before finding himself back in Beirut in 1979, teaching English literature and composition at International College. Terrie, his future wife, was also a professor there, teaching math and science.

Meeting future spouses in Lebanon is also something of a family tradition. Before becoming president of BCW, William Stoltzfus Sr. met his wife, Ethel Leck, while she was a missionary working in an orphanage in Sidon. William Jr. met his future wife, Janet, while she was teaching English and drama at BCW.

Despite the tumult of the civil war of the 1980s and the passing of time, Philip has worked to nurture his family's link to Lebanon and LAU. "The older I get, the more I realize one shouldn't forget the efforts of one's family in the past and the links they forged to institutions and people," he said. "My grandfather was genuinely dedicated to public service," he continued. "I'm quite proud of his service to the university."

In fact, it was this tie to LAU that brought nine members of the Stoltzfus family back to Beirut in July for the dedication of the William A. Stoltzfus Sr. Reference Library. President Joseph G. Jabbra joined university board members, faculty and staff at the Riyad Nassar Library on the Beirut campus to celebrate the naming of the eighth-floor reference library after William Stoltzfus.

Among those returning to Beirut for the dedication were President Stoltzfus' two sons, William Jr. and James, and his grandson, Philip. It was James' first trip to Lebanon in 60 years. The dedication was also an opportunity for all of them to reflect on the Stoltzfus legacy at LAU and what LAU and the region mean to them.



James and William Stoltzfus
in the new library

William Jr. said that his upbringing in Lebanon was integral to his success as a diplomat living in Libya, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman, among other countries. His knowledge of Lebanese culture and the Arabic language “made it ideal to serve in these places,” he said. “The Stoltzfus family has had a long-standing link to LAU, and now they have Philip, who has regenerated the connection,” said William Jr. “Our connection has been given new life with Philip’s interest.” He added that he was very impressed with the reference library bearing his father’s name. “It’s a fantastic state-of-the-art library,” he said. “The reference section is spectacular.”

Added James Stoltzfus, “The contribution my father made in developing women’s education is spectacular,” he said. “I’m very proud of him, and that is the reason I went back to honor his contribution.”

Philip echoed his uncle’s thoughts concerning women’s education in the region. “Lebanon, BCW and LAU have a tradition of championing the improvement of the status of women in the region,” he said. “BCW was the first women’s university in the Middle East and is one of the most significant universities for the education of women in the Middle East as a whole. LAU is in the vanguard of the advancement of women’s education and opportunities in the region.”

“Initially my involvement was for old-time’s sake, but what Dr. Jabbra was doing made me seriously take notice of the course he was trying to chart for LAU.”

—Philip Stoltzfus



GOAL \$65 Million



RAISED \$40,430,549



THE LEGACY & THE PROMISE
LAU CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE



THE LEGACY & THE PROMISE CAMPAIGN

New Grant Offerings at LAU: SBG Bridges Financial Gaps and Secures Jobs

**“We believe that if we assist starting engineers,
we can help to build better potential leaders.”
—Mutaz Sawwaf**



SBG CEO Mutaz Sawwaf

High school seniors approach their final school year with aspirations of heading off to a prestigious college, where they will develop into well-rounded individuals who conceive the next revolutionary idea in their field and change the world. However, there are many instances in which these ambitions are shot down due to economic circumstances.

In today's constantly fluctuating economy, many gaps are created, gaps that students struggle to overcome. "The severity of the current crisis may deprive highly qualified students from receiving quality education," Dean of LAU's School of Engineering and Architecture Dr. George Nasr commented. "Consequently, it is important that other financial support is made available for students in need."

Much of the world's wealth is consolidated and controlled by large corporations and organizations, many of which have seen that it is advantageous for them to give back to the communities from which they benefit. As such, it should be no surprise that these businesses are major sources of support and funding for college-bound students. They become the bridge that many underprivileged students cross to turn college dreams into action-oriented targets, and to find the guidance, support and motivation they need to mature and grow.

Saudi Binladin Group (SBG), a multinational construction conglomerate and holding company with several branches across the world, has been a pioneer in this new form of support, and the company has recently established a new fund for LAU students. Headquartered in Saudi Arabia, SBG is renowned for its involvement with several developmental projects.

The Saudi Binladin Group Annual Scholarship Grant, which will total up to one million dollars, aims to support at any point in time 15 engineering students, whether in civil, mechanical

or electrical engineering branches, as well as architecture students. "We believe that if we assist starting engineers, we can help to build better potential leaders," said SBG's CEO Mutaz Sawwaf, highlighting the importance of supporting all students in the departments in enhancing their educational experience to build better futures.

Scholarship recipients will receive assistance throughout their college education, and upon graduation they will be offered a position within the SBG syndicate. Those engineering students interested are encouraged to apply.

"This will allow selected students to be more focused in pursuing their engineering education, knowing that they are given the opportunity to gain a rich technical experience at SGB as they initiate their professional careers," said Nasr. Students can shift their energies to focus on furthering their academics, advancement and development without worrying about financial gaps.

This reinvestment of wealth is beneficial not only for students but also for the donor company. Its scholarships provide students with a sure road to success and a secure future, while allowing the company itself to be more close-knit and provident. In addition, the newly assimilated team will help drive the company to be more competitive and established in the global marketplace.

In Sawwaf's words, dedication and diligence are the keys to success: "Work hard, believe in the future, believe in yourself, and, finally, believe in luck." With scholarships like these, LAU is determined to ensure that high-level education is available for all students and that LAU graduates have the opportunity for assured success.

Alumni News

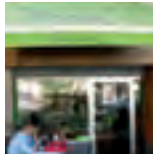
Sumaya Khouri Fanous (B.A.'60) has been living in Dallas, Texas. She visited Lebanon this summer after spending 36 years in the United States. Her three sons are Ramsey, an orthodontist; Ghassan, a gynecologist; and Ziad, who studied computer science. She also has nine grandchildren.

Aida Khouri Salameh (B.A.'60) has retired from teaching at Broumana High School. She has three sons: Bassam, a professor at Lancaster College in California, holds a Ph.D. in environmental science and medical research; Nabil works in real estate in Lebanon; and **Samer (B.A.'96)** graduated from LAU Byblos with a degree in computer science.

Haikal Massaad (B.S.'83) is presently CEO of Mesma, a marketing consulting firm for European construction products.

Rima Osserian (B.A.'83) is currently living in Hazmieh with her husband, Karim Kamel Mroueh, and their three children.

Carla Cheaib Daou (A.A.S.'87), upon graduating from LAU, moved to the United States, where she lived for 13 years. She recently returned to Lebanon and opened Bread Circle, a bagel shop located in Ashrafieh.



Bassam Moujabber (B.S.'88, M.S.'94) has been working at the academic computer center since 1989 and is now supervisor. He is also acting director of the Cisco Institute and main legal contact for the LAU networking academy, and also serves on the board of Sodeltel, a telecommunications company. Moujabber is married to **Marlo Faddoul (M.B.A.'95)** and has three children, Marv Nadine, Macy Cyrine and Mark Paul.



Samer Youssef Wakim (B.S.'89) is presently working at the Nation Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon in Rabieh. He married Mirna Al Turk on May 21, 2000, and they have two daughters, Marie-Joe and Tia-Maria.

George Victor Ghazi (B.S.'90), upon graduating, worked in Abu Dhabi for the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority. In 1995, he returned to Lebanon and worked for the Regency Palace Hotel and for Al Habtoor Group in 2001. He is currently in Saudi Arabia working for Nesma & Partners as deputy chief of human resources. Ghazi is married and has three children: two girls and a boy.



Mazen Masri (B.S.'92, M.B.A.'95) is married to Rima Hadid. They have recently welcomed a son, Samir, and their daughter, Hala, is 6 years old.



Carl Adel Rbeiz (A.A.S.'92) is currently working for the Alfozan Hardware Company in Khobar, KSA, as a regional sales manager. He married Maya Raja on May 9, 2008, and they are expecting a son in December.

Jean Bassil (B.S.'94, M.B.A.'05) has been working at Byblos Bank Syria in Damascus since 2005. He is married to Karen Bou Ramia, and the couple has two sons, Victor and Christopher.

Nada Jisr (B.S.'94, M.B.A.'97) married Naim Rizk in 2002, and they had triplets in June 2005. Having taught at AUB, Jisr now works as the branch manager at Bankmed in Verdun.

Samer Michel Salameh (B.A.'96) lived in Canada for a few years and is now living in Florida. He has a son, Michael, born in May 2008. Salameh and his family visit Lebanon almost every year.

Samar Aad (B.S.'97) completed her M.B.A. at the University of Liverpool and also a PGSE from the University of Sunderland. Aad has lived in Saudi Arabia for the past seven years and is now head of the ICT department at the British International School. She is married to Elie Makhoul, a mechanical engineer, and they have a 4-year-old daughter. Aad hopes to pursue a Ph.D. soon and return to Lebanon.

Aline Antoine Abboud (B.S.'97) established a real estate company in Lebanon called Lebanon Estate, s.a.r.l., in 2006 upon her return from Tehran, where she lived for six years. She has two children.

Samer Bassem Ghandour (B.A.'97) is currently working as a sales director for Choueiri Group in Saudi Arabia. He lives in Jeddah and is married to Nisrine Bchouty. They are expecting a baby girl in October 2009.

Moussa Alameddine (B.S.'98) got married on March 26, 2009, to Chorouque Armoush. He has been working at Banque Misr Liban's head office since 1999. He is currently head of the financial control section.

Inas Faraj (A.A.S.'98), after graduating from LAU, returned to Qatar and worked for Fortune Promoseven and later at Al-Jazeera's satellite channel. After getting married in 2003, Faraj moved to Dubai and worked for CNBC Arabiya and later as a freelance art director. In 2007, Faraj and her husband, Kamal J. Hannawi, moved to Oman and launched Orange Art Production Company.



Asma Bazzi (B.Pharm.'99, Pharm.D.'04) has recently been honored as one of 10 pharmacy awardees in the entire United States.

Emma el Karout (M.B.A.'99) has been working in her area of specialty, human resources, for the past 10 years and has developed her skills across the Middle East, where she contributed to the development of specialist H.R. solutions for her employers and clients.



Ninar Keyrouz (B.A.'99) has worked for Future TV in Beirut and Alhurra TV in Washington D.C., as well as for Grey Worldwide-MENA as a P&G producer and Rotana Mousica as a senior producer. She is currently looking to finance her own autobiographical film.

Ahmad Amer El-Rifai (R.C.D.'99), formerly general manager for Universal Enterprises in Bahrain, has recently been appointed general manager of Delta, a leading Italian manufacturing company in Syria.

Rola Zeidan (B.S.'99), after graduating in the fall, enrolled in the master's program and started her career with Holiday Inn Martinez and Sheraton Coral Beach Hotel & Resort Beirut. She moved to Dubai in 2002 and worked at the American University. As of May 2008, Zeidan has been working as part of the H.R. team at Impact BBDO. She married Ayman Hamouda on July 19, 2008.



Hassan Daaboul (B.S.'00, M.B.A.'08) is working for Universal Tempered Glass in Damascus as the managing director. He has three children: two boys and a girl. His second son, Amr, was born on August 15, 2009.



Samer Eid (M.S.'00, M.B.A.'08) is currently working as an implementation and support manager covering the eastern Mediterranean region for Thomson Reuters in Beirut. Eid is married to Gina Cordahi, and they have one child, Tatiana.

Tariq Judeh (B.S.'00) recently earned a Visa Bank Card Business School certificate from Robinson College in the United Kingdom. He serves as the vice president of the Riyadh Alumni Chapter. He and his wife recently welcomed their son, Mustafa.



Marie Rose Younes (B.E.'00) is currently working as a project manager for a Telecom company.



Ahmad Hamdan (B.S.'01), upon graduating from LAU, completed his military service and went on to expand his father's electronics and home appliances business. Hamdan got married in 2007 and now has two children, Karen and Youssef.

Annabella Kyriakos Matta (B.Arch.'01) is married to Mario Matta (B.S.'99), who is vice president of Clarins in Dubai. She currently resides in Lebanon with her two children, Alex and Christabel, and is pursuing a career as a freelance designer and home decorator.



Sylvana Bitar Karam (Excelsior College External Degree '02) is currently working at the production company Intaj as a production coordinator. She is married to Marc Karam, and they have a daughter, Yasha.

Assaad Matar (B.E.'02) married Nayla Azar on May 10, 2009, in Jbeil.



Khaled Shala (B.S.'02) is presently working as an account director at Memac Ogilvy, a multinational advertising agency located in Jeddah.

Rania Fakhoury works as a media planning manager for Zenith Optimedia. She and Khaled have a three-year-old daughter, Lea.

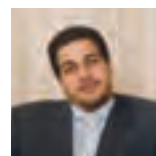
Tarek U. Chabklo (B.S.'03) is currently working at Lab Care, his family's business. He also has a web design company called ST Designers and is a partner in the Couch Potato DVD rental store. He and his wife, Lamis, recently welcomed a son, Adam, on August 25; they also have a daughter, Lea.

Nahil Talal Hamdan (B.S.'03) worked for his family's business and later moved on to work as international coordinator with Subway. He currently works for Booz & Co. as an executive assistant in the Abu Dhabi offices. Hamdan has traveled extensively and has recently been accepted to Hult University for his M.B.A.

Rania Jammal (B.A.'03) moved to Qatar in 2006, and she currently works there as a producer and presenter for Al-Jazeera's children's channel. She won a UNICEF award last year for her work. Jammal is engaged to Kais Sharif, and they plan to marry in April 2010.



Dany Nachabe (B.S.'03, M.Sc.'06, M.B.A.'09) is the owner of Medilic, s.a.r.l., a Beirut-based company that specializes in medical and scientific laboratory supplies. Nachabe recently married **Dima El Masri Chaarani (B.S.'08)**.

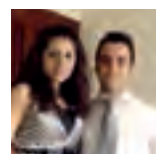


Maysa Al Tannir (B.S.'03) worked for four years at Semaan, Gholam & Co. as an external auditor. She now works at the Lebanese Canadian Bank as the assistant head of their internal audit department.

Fadi Abilmona (B.S.'04, M.B.A.'07) is currently working for the United Nations Development Programme (Lebanon) as project officer of the Strengthening Electoral Processes in Lebanon project.



Fadi Hammoud (M.B.A.'04), upon graduation and completion of his military service, joined Azadea group, where he is currently employed. He is now working as a department manager of operations and inventory in Dubai. Hammoud plans to marry Farah Moussawi in September of this year.



Hussein Hariri (Excelsior College External Degree '04) currently resides in Jeddah, where he is the director of eight programs at Al-Resala TV and Daleel TV.

Mireille G. Aoun (B.A.'05) married Nassib Kamar on July 5, 2009, and moved to Qatar. She currently works as a freelancer.



Lara Klait (B.S.'05), after graduating from LAU, went to Malaysia and received a certificate as a feng shui consultant. She has clients in Lebanon and abroad, and delivers regular workshops and seminars. She also earned a master practitioner certificate in neurolinguistic programming in South Africa.

Mohamad Nouredine (B.S.'05) worked for four years in United Arab Emirates with Transmed in the FMCG industry before recently changing employers. He joined Philip Morris International as a field supervisor for the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain regions.



Joseph Saliba (B.S.'05) is currently working in Abu Dhabi as a financial controller for Citiscap, a contracting company that specializes in landscaping and irrigation. He plans to open La Maison du Café in Jbeil this summer.

Maya Tarabay (B.S.'05) is presently living in Dubai and working for Air Charter Service FZCO as a senior account manager.



Lamia Arouni (B.S.'06) recently married Mohammad Kawash. They live in Athens, where she works for Mid East Travel as a sales coordinator.

Christine Audi (M.B.A.'06) got married on August 8, 2008, and moved to Abu Dhabi. She has recently begun work at Abu Dhabi University, where she is a careers, internship and alumni coordinator.



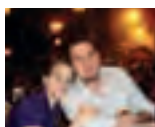
Hiba Bazzi (B.S.'06) became engaged to Ahmad Hneineh.



Haytham Afifi Ghaddaf (B.S.'06, M.B.A.'09) is currently working for IATCO in Saudi Arabia as a sales manager.

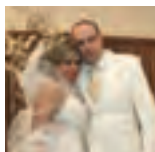
Nader Itani (B.S.'06) is currently living in Jeddah and working at Landmark PR & Events as an account manager. Itani got married in 2006 and has one daughter.

Ali Natout (B.S.'06) is now working in Riyadh at the Saudi Oger Ltd. Co. as a senior analyst. In December 2008, he married **Dana Hachach (B.S.'06)**.



Amer Wahoud (B.S.'06) was featured in the September 2009 issue of Time Out magazine.

Tarek F. Younis (Excelsior College External Degree '06) married **Faten Saeed (B.S.'06)** on March 28, 2009. He is the owner of Advanced Car, s.a.r.l., a rental-car business that is one of the five leading companies in Lebanon.



Ali Hajj Ahmad (B.S.'07) is currently working as a financial consultant for Consulting Group Holdings.



Samar Issa (M.B.A.'07) has been living in the United States for three years and presently works at the U.N. headquarters in New York City, where she has a fixed term position. She recently gave birth to a son.

Ahmad Koumihai (B.E.'07) became engaged on July 16, 2009, and is currently working for the Arcan Group, a construction company in Riyadh.

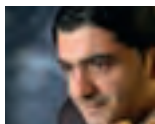
Noor Al Kuzbari (M.B.A.'07) is currently working in Syria at Bank Bemo Saudi Fransi as a market and data analyst. She also recently got married.



Carine Raymond Kyprianos (B.Pharm.'07, Pharm.D.'08) opened her own pharmacy called Pharmacie Carine in Amchit. She is concurrently completing an M.S. in infectious diseases at the University of London.

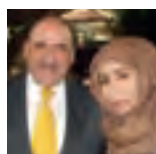
Charbel Makhoul (M.B.A.'07) is engaged to **Rita El Douaihy (Pharm.D.'08)**. Makhoul moved to the United States after graduating and worked for a CPA firm in Boston. He currently works in Washington, D.C., for the Embassy of the State of Qatar in the department of protocol and public relations. His fiancée, Rita, works for CVS Pharmacy in D.C.

Rafic Maknieh (B.S.'07) presently works as a sales and marketing representative for a publishing firm in Beirut and as manager of his father's drugstore.



Etwal Bou Raad (B.Pharm.'07, Pharm.D.'08) is presently working for the Lebanese International University as coordinator and clinical assistant professor for the school of pharmacy.

Abdel Rahman Sabban (M.B.A.'07) is currently working as a credit analyst at the Lebanese Credit Insurer, which is part of the Atradius Group. He is also studying in the CEP program at LAU and plans to apply for CFA level one.

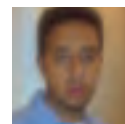


Eman Al Ali (B.S.'08) recently began working at Capital Investment Bank in Bahrain. Originally from Bahrain, she lived in Beirut for four years while completing her degree and is proud to be part of the LAU family—so much so that she plans to come back to Beirut to start her M.B.A. degree.

Fida Drouby (Pharm.D.'08) is currently a full-time faculty member at Lebanese International University. She holds the position of clinical assistant professor.

Khaled Walid Itani (M.B.A.'08) welcomed a son in July 2008.

Nathalie Maalouf (B.S.'08) is currently working in system support in the information systems department of Banque Libano-Francaise.



Khaled al Mawla (B.S.'08) has been working in Riyadh with Saudi Oger for the past four months.

Maran Toufic Mezher (B.E.'08) is currently working in United Arab Republic as a business/system analyst.

Rola Assi (M.A.'09) obtained a master's in private international law and international commercial law from the University Pantheon-Assas Paris II and is currently a Ph.D. candidate in international investment law at the Université Paul Cézanne Aix-Marseille III, in Aix-en-Provence, France.



Ahmad M. Ghalayini (B.S.'09) is presently preparing for the CFA level one exam as well as interning and training in several banks to enhance his field experience.

Zahi El Husseni (B.S.'09) plans to begin working at an insurance company for which his father is the general manager.

Houssam Lababidi (B.S.'09) gained his initial experience by working for a company on Hamra Street. Following Ramadan, he plans to head to Iraq and the Kurdistan area to manage the marketing department for a Wimax project in Erbil.

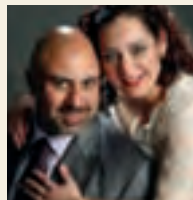
Hadi Otrouk (M.S.'09) is currently an assistant professor at Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi.

Brothers **Adnan and Rabea Ragheb (B.S.'09)** both plan to pursue master's degrees in September 2009 at Lancaster University.

Rana Shehadi (B.A.'09) plans to travel to the United Arab Emirates for work following Ramadan.



IN MEMORIAM



Bilal Omar Sidani (1974–2009)

Bilal Omar Sidani (B.S. '94, M.B.A. '97), a successful businessman and active LAU alumnus, passed away on July 30, 2009, in a tragic car accident in Turkey. His mother, Amnah Jumanah Merhi; his fiancé, Yeliz Duru; and several others also died in the accident.

After graduating from LAU, Sidani started an import/export business called Tigers International. He often traveled on business to Asia, Europe and Africa and spent a few months every year in Malaysia. Sidani met Duru—a Turkish businesswoman with her own shipping company—on one of his trips to the country. Their wedding was set for August 1, days after the accident.

Sidani, who was a member of the Sarawak's Lions Club in Malaysia, was a certified diver and also enjoyed playing chess. While at LAU, he was a member of the chess club.

He was buried, along with his mother, on August 7 at the Dar Al Fatwa cemetery in his beloved city, Beirut.

Sidani is survived by his two sisters, Nada and Mirvat. He also leaves behind a large, loving family, as well as many friends around the world.

Alumni Events

Montreal Chapter Oriental Brunch Gathering – April 26

Members of the Montreal Alumni Chapter gathered at Al Sultan Restaurant to enjoy a delicious Sunday brunch and catch up with other alums in the area. While the adults reminisced about their days at LAU, a clown entertained the children, who also sang and played games.

Montreal Chapter Radio Appearance – May 14

As part of its promotional campaign, LAU's Montreal Alumni Chapter appeared on Radio Canada International to introduce the chapter. Alumni Lamia Labban Jammoul and Ammar Ouwaïda represented the chapter and talked about its founding, goals, future plans and elections. They also introduced the chapter's newly launched official website and contact information: <http://laualumnimontreal.com/>

Jeddah Dinner – June 1

The committee members of the Jeddah Alumni Chapter organized a dinner at the Jeddah Marriott Hotel in the presence of the Lebanese Consular H.E. Ghassan Al Moalem and his wife. The evening was hosted by Michel and Joumana Labaki, with more than 70 alumni in attendance. It was an important opportunity to restrengthen the alumni network in the Jeddah area.

Alumni Association Board Meeting – July 14

The second LAU Alumni Association board meeting was called to order on July 14 at the LAU Beirut campus in the presence of representatives of chapters in Lebanon and around the world. The purpose of the daylong meeting, which was called by Leila Saleeby Dagher, the association's board president, was to discuss issues related to the welfare of the alumni and to encourage more participation from the alumni, whose number today exceeds 30,000.

Chapter representatives reported on their activities throughout the year and suggested ideas for enhancing the operations of the chapters. The meeting also included a discussion of the Alumni Association's constitution and bylaws, as well as other alumni-related issues.

Alumni Association Office Director Abdallah Al Khal reported on the office's activities during the academic year 2008–09. He also thanked the board's steering committee and members of chapter executive committees for their hard work and dedication to the association and to the university. He promised all the necessary support to strengthen the link between the alumni and the association.

Ed Shiner, university programs manager at LAU's New York office, reported on the organization of the first annual alumni gathering in North America in March and on his efforts to develop new chapters there.

Engineering and Architecture Chapter Lunch – August 2

The Engineering and Architecture Alumni Chapter organized its annual summer reunion at Rikky's Restaurant in Faqra, Lebanon. More than 52 alumni and friends attended the lunch, which lasted into the late evening.

Oman Chapter Check Donation – August 6

On August 6, the Oman Chapter committee members presented LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara a check donation in the amount of \$25,000 in support of the Scholarship Fund at the university.

Toronto Chapter Picnic – August 9

Despite bad weather threatening the event, more than 100 people attended the Toronto Chapter picnic. Attendees gathered to enjoy lunch together, and children were entertained with face painting, racing games and a piñata. Apple-on-a-rope games, dancing the Lebanese dabkeh and more than 60 raffle prizes added more fun for everyone.



New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter Gathering – August 10

The New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter enjoyed a “summer happy hour” at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in Times Square, New York City. It was a welcome respite from the August heat and afforded many alumni a chance to take a break from their busy schedules.



Florida Chapter Bennigan’s Channelside – August 15

The Florida Alumni Chapter had a fun-filled Saturday when a group of LAU alumni gathered for lunch, bowling, a movie, dinner and nightclubbing. The chapter is planning more daylong events for its members the near future.



Montreal Elections – August 16

The Montreal Alumni Chapter held elections at the Centre des Loisirs St-Laurent. The committee elected Reina Hallab, president; Lamia Labban Jammoul, vice president; Georges Madi, treasurer; Ammar Ouwaïda, secretary; and Rania Hammoud and Leila Issa, active members.



Damascus Chapter Ramadan Suhour – August 30

The Damascus Alumni Chapter organized its annual Ramadan Suhour on Sunday, August 30, at Haretna Restaurant in Old Damascus. More than 100 alumni and friends attended the event, which included raffles of 30 valuable prizes that were distributed during the evening.

Bahrain Chapter Gathering – September 2

On the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan, the LAU and the American University of Beirut alumni chapters in Bahrain jointly organized a Ghabqa. The event, held on September 2 at the Regency Intercontinental Hotel’s Manama Ramadan Tent, included live music, games and raffles. More than 150 alumni and friends of both universities attended.



Following a tradition long practiced at American universities, LAU alumni chapters are now naming parts of the university after their respective cities. This initiative will help the university maintain and update its facilities, while giving former students the chance to keep a lasting connection with their alma mater. Recently the Riyadh and the Abu Dhabi alumni chapters gave generous donations, leaving their mark on the business building on the Beirut campus.



Mary and Saba Elyousef



Why I Give Back Mary Elyousef, '71

DEGREE

B.S. mathematics

CAMPUS

Beirut

WHERE SHE LIVES NOW

Upland, California

OCCUPATION

Homemaker, former mathematics teacher

HOW SHE'D LIKE HER DONATION USED

My first preference is to scholarships, because I received a full-tuition honors scholarship for the four years I spent at LAU.

WHY GIVE BACK TO LAU?

I give to other organizations, but LAU is where my heart is. My years there were the best of my life. Although I have lived in the United States for a long time, I always think back fondly on my days in Lebanon. Lebanon is my home country. LAU gave me a lot, and I would like to give back to the students who are there now. It is *always* good to give back.

“Education is the most important thing you can give to anybody. To give an LAU education to someone is an even greater privilege.”



THE LEGACY 
& THE PROMISE
LAU CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE

Sheikh Ayman Abudawood, a prominent Saudi businessman and well-known philanthropist, is strongly committed to LAU.



✧ SHEIKH AYMAN ABUDAWOOD
IS THE LEGACY AND THE PROMISE.

In 2009 he established a Scholarship Endowment Fund that will provide financial support to Business Administration students.

Through his belief in the noble cause of education, Sheikh Ayman is helping to build a better and stronger community for all of us.

For more information, please contact:

Beirut Development Office
Tel (961) 1 786456 Ext: 1323
Fax (961) 1 803658
P.O.Box 13-5053
Chouran Beirut 1102 2801, Lebanon
E-mail: development@lau.edu.lb

New York Development Office
Tel (212) 870 2592
Fax (212) 870 2762
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1846
New York, NY 10115-0065 - USA
E-mail: nydevelopment@lau.edu



*Orme-Gray Hall was named
in honor of BCW presidents
Rhoda Orme and Frances Gray,
March 1965*



BEIRUT CAMPUS

P.O.Box 13-5053
Chouran Beirut, 1102 2801
Lebanon
Tel. +961 1 786456 / 64
Fax. +961 1 867098

BYBLOS CAMPUS

P.O.Box 36, Byblos, Lebanon
Tel. +961 9 547254 / 63
Fax. +961 9 944851

NEW YORK OFFICE

475 Riverside Drive, Suite 1846
New York, N.Y. 10115 0065
USA
Tel. +1 212 870 2592
Fax. +1 212 870 2762

www.lau.edu.lb

