

LAU magazine

VOLUME 18 | issue n° 3 | Fall 2016

& ALUMNI BULLETIN



Investing in people



LAU *Gala* 2016
Partnered for Excellence *dinner*

TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION OF *"FULFILLING THE PROMISE"*

Save the date

Thursday, December 1, 2016, Pavillon Royal, Biel

To purchase your tickets, please contact
the Development Office on: 71-500646

#LAUGala2016





Investing in people

FEATURES

6 Supply and demand



It's not always obvious how one can translate a bachelor's degree into a job, unless it happens to be in a relatively straightforward field like banking or healthcare. However, in today's economy, the match between skills and available jobs is more important than ever. *Irina du Quenoy* explores how universities are training students to meet the needs of employers.

16 Lebanese start-ups

Every year thousands of qualified new job seekers join the Lebanese job market, however many will not find a job. To help boost the knowledge economy and support start-ups, the Lebanese Central Bank launched Circular 331, which offers commercial banks guarantees and incentives to set aside a specific percentage of their investments for this sector. *Gaja Pellegrini-Bettoli* explores how this measure has impacted the ability of new graduates to launch their careers and dreams.



28 Fighting poverty one microloan at a time



The microfinance industry provides small loans and other non-financial services essential for low-income households. Despite high poverty rates, the MENA region continues to be the smallest financial market worldwide due to perceived high risks and insufficient regulation. *Federica Marsi* explores the new microfinance initiatives making headway in the region and yielding success even among the most underprivileged in the Middle East.

42 Investing for and in the region's human capital

The baby boom of the late 20th century was not matched by an equally explosive economic boom in the Arab world. As a result, the region is now home to millions of out of work youths. *Reem Maghribi* reviews the consequences of poor state planning, limited creation of jobs and skills mismatch and considers the priorities and remedies proposed by experts, which spotlight an urgent need for development in government policy, national education and entrepreneurship.



CONTENTS

- 4 Joining forces to support students
- 5 Inspiring future generations
- 10 Mentoring graduates into the workforce
- 11 Filling the knowledge gap
- 12 California dreamin'
- 14 Countering violent extremism with digital literacy
- 15 A scene for celebration
- 20 Gender profiles of Arab countries provide valuable resource
- 21 Groundbreaking research takes a leap forward
- 22 Postcard from NY Dismantling Misconceptions
- 23 Op-Ed The ability to play
- 24 It takes a university
- 25 New programs expand students' horizons
- 26 Internships favored by employers
- 32 On the move
- 37 100-year-old LAU alumna Saloua Raouda Choucair shines on
- 38 Reminiscing at the Beirut campus
- 40 An opportunity not to be missed
- 41 Q&A Greening indoor air quality solutions
- 46 Campus notes
- 49 Graduating students leave their mark
- 50 Fun in the sun
- 51 A taste of social medicine
- 52 Alumni update
- 55 A source of inspiration
- 56 Staying connected
- 60 Why I give back

Wherever You Go

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



Help Tell Our History

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

Submit to: marcom@lau.edu.lb, or

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

**New York Headquarters
and Academic Center**
Lebanese American University
211 East 46th St.
New York, NY 10017, USA

LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin is published by the Marketing and Communications Department (MarCom) at LAU and is distributed free of charge to alumni, students, staff, faculty, friends and supporters worldwide.

Direct comments and letters to the editor may be sent to: marcom@lau.edu.lb.

CONNECT WITH LAU THROUGH:



President

Joseph G. Jabbara

Editorial Advisory Board

Marla Rice-Evans, *VP University Advancement*

Peggy Hanna, *Special Advisor*

Nassib Nasr, *AVP Development, MENA and Europe*

Abdallah al Khal, *AVP Alumni Relations*

Edward Shiner, *Director, Alumni & Special Projects*

Managing Editor

Leena F. Saidi

Associate Editor Beirut

Linda Dahdah

Associate Editor New York

Paige Kollock

Copy Editor

Irina du Quenoy

Writers

Naseem Ferdowsi

Zalfa Halabi

Reem Maghribi

Federica Marsi

Gaja Pellegrini-Bettoli

Contributors

Zeina Abdallah

Amal Abdel Massih

Lana Abou Teen

Nicole Barghoud

Sevine Fakhoury

Manwa Ghanoum

Palig Haroutiunian

Ghada Majed

Nayla Abou Merhi Moujaes

Nada Torbey

Editorial Assistants

Hoda Hilal

Production Manager

Sana Kouatly

Graphic Designer

Marianne Amkieh Sibli

Photographers

Bahaa Ghoussainy

Jad Jbara

Karem Mounzer

Yehia Malla

Pro Studio

Front & back cover by: Nour Itani (B.S. '16), a talented LAU graduate who is working as a graphic designer. She may be contacted at nouritani93@gmail.com.



From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

At LAU, we believe in pairing skills with education. By continually developing new academic programs based on industry demand, by running a mentoring program to assist in the transition from education to the workplace, and by offering a multitude of courses beyond the standard undergraduate and graduate curricula, the university carries out its vision of providing access to a superior education.

LAU's Continuing Education Program (CEP) courses are, for instance, designed to contribute to a knowledge economy, where the focus is not on beating existing competition but on expanding and creating markets. With companies increasingly attuned to the benefits of investing in their workforce, over 13 percent of employers fund students taking such CEP courses and shoring up their professional qualifications.

At the same time, with the job market for recent graduates more competitive than ever, internships have become increasingly important for both students and employers. We at LAU firmly believe that this practice allows students to gain valuable hands-on experience, improving their know-how and allowing employers to differentiate qualified graduates among competitors. A fine example of which is the internships that our B.S. in hospitality and tourism management students undertake in establishments all around the world.

LAU is also at the forefront of fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of its students to propel them into the work place. Knowledge gained in the classroom is only one part of what students will need to be successful practitioners, the remainder can only be taught through experience. For this reason, the university has developed a set of minimum requirements for all its business graduates, preparing them to launch their own businesses once they are finished with their education. The initiative, which began three years ago, has seen a number of start-ups by our students launched on the open market.

Our alumni are a key element of this strategy. Graduates who have already established themselves in their chosen sector are paired with final year students to coach and mentor them. Over 80 students have been matched with and benefited from the guidance of a mentor since the launch of the Alumni Mentoring program in the spring of 2014.

Another in-house means by which we implement our belief in gaining practical skills is by employing students, whether through financial aid or direct compensation. On average, LAU employs about 400 students per semester, while around 2,200 students benefit from financial aid.

In this issue, we draw on the vast wealth of knowledge and experience of our students, faculty, staff and alumni. But that's not all. LAU is but a fraction, though vital, of the community at large from which the human capital is drawn. Join us on our journey of discovery as we trace how the accumulation of knowledge, habits, social and personality attributes, including creativity, come to life in the ability to perform labor and thereby to produce economic value.



Joseph G. Jabbra
President



Joining forces to support students

By Naseem Ferdowsi

A synergetic partnership helped raise more than \$220,000 in a matter of months

"Life is about giving and taking," says Abdallah Yabroudi, an LAU supporter with an eight-year track record of giving generously towards scholarships at the institution.

His solid belief in giving back, combined with an encounter with members of the LAU community at a university alumni gathering in the UAE earlier this spring, led to the launch of the School of Engineering's recent "mini campaign" to raise \$250,000 toward helping currently enrolled students in crucial financial need.

"We were inspired by Yabroudi's empathy and generosity and decided to launch this mini campaign toward the Engineering Students' Emergency Relief Fund, putting pressure on ourselves — in terms of time and effort — to raise the amount in just three months," explains Dean of the School of Engineering George Nasr, who played a pivotal role in the initiative, along with Nicole Barghoud, director of development at LAU.

dire need," points out Dean Nasr. Together with Barghoud, he visited dozens of corporations and individuals to inform them of LAU's latest achievements and secure funds for student scholarships.

Dean Nasr's active participation in the university's fundraising efforts is something that many universities count on from their academic leaders and an approach that LAU is firmly advocating. In October 2015, the Office of Development brought together all of the university's deans and advancement leaders for a two-day fundraising workshop to provide awareness and coaching. Indeed, the results one year later are encouraging: the engineering mini campaign has nearly met the target with \$223,700 raised so far, in large part thanks to Dean Nasr.

"Fundraising is really a team effort that involves engagement and effort from all university stakeholders," explains LAU's Assistant Vice President for Development Nassib Nasr. "The partnership of Dean Nasr and Nicole is a model that really demonstrates what can be accomplished when you join forces for a common and worthy goal. We are so excited for this fundraising achievement and are very hopeful for similar initiatives from across the campus," he adds.

And there is a lot to be excited about. The money raised through the engineering mini campaign will go toward establishing scholarships to help dozens of currently enrolled engineering students.

"Many students consider dropping out of university for financial reasons, but through this fundraising initiative and with the support of the dean who made the campaign a priority, we will be able to respond to urgent situations and disperse funds to LAU's most prized assets — its students," stresses Barghoud.

As CEO of leading engineering company Dubai Contracting Company (DCC), Yabroudi understands the need to educate the region's youth and continues to offer many scholarship and internship opportunities to students in the region and beyond.

Commenting on his substantial efforts, Yabroudi explains, "I believe that giving to an institution like LAU will have a great impact on society that will resonate for generations to come."



"Fundraising is really a team effort."

—Nassib Nasr, LAU assistant vice president for development

"The campaign served as a practical driver for Nicole and me to knock on every door possible looking for partnerships with engineering industry leaders and other special benefactors in this worthwhile endeavor to help students in

Inspiring future generations

By Federica Marsi

LAU's 2016 honorary degree recipients recount how they overcame obstacles along their path to success, stressing that education and determination make this possible for all students.

CEO of Allied Wallet Andy Khawaja, who received an honorary degree in humane letters, left Lebanon at the age of 15 to embark on a journey into the unknown. After twelve years of flipping burgers and stacking supermarket shelves, Khawaja turned his life around by investing in a dream: creating his own chain of retail fashion stores.

"I came up with an idea for a business that I really didn't know anything about," says Khawaja. "Many of my close friends discouraged me and said I would fail, but I was determined! I believed in myself so much and I wanted to prove everyone wrong."

Following this first successful experience, he decided to do something that would benefit others. He built a company, Allied Wallet, which helps people generate money through online payment processing, cyber security, and a virtual wallet — now referred to as the Cloud. Today, Allied Wallet is a multi-billion-dollar company with more than 140 million active members and over 1,000 employees.

"You will never achieve anything in your life if you don't start somewhere," says Khawaja. "Most people fear failure, but failing is the only way you can prove to yourself and others that you have started."

President of the René Moawad Foundation Nayla Moawad, who received an honorary degree in humanities, never turned down a challenge, whether in her professional or private life. Her marriage with René — a member of a family with whom hers shared a long history of animosity — was the first of many battles.

In 1990, in order to perpetuate the legacy of her husband — who was killed in a car bomb on Independence Day in 1989, shortly after being elected president of Lebanon — she founded the René Moawad Foundation, which seeks to further the goals of dialogue, peace and social justice.

"In battle, when the soldier carrying the flag is killed, another picks it up and keeps going," she says. In 1991 she became one of the few female members of parliament that Lebanon can claim and retained her seat for several mandates. "I was a woman

in a male-driven field and I encountered a lot of public scorn," she admits, "but it was in my guts to continue fighting. I couldn't let my husband's sacrifice go to waste."

Since then, Moawad has spearheaded numerous development programs, in areas such as finance, children's rights, and education, which have changed the lives of many.

"You will never achieve anything in your life if you don't start somewhere."

—Andy Khawaja, LAU honorary degree recipient

Executive Chairman of Future Group Holdings Fouad Makhzoumi, who received an honorary degree in humane letters, was born into a seven-member Beirut family. His mother had to borrow money so her son could pursue higher education in the United States. Makhzoumi returned home soon after the civil war ended and set up Future Security Company, which provides human and electronic protection services. Today, the company boasts almost 1,000 employees.

"I have harnessed my success, not only for my own benefit or that of my immediate family, but also, and most importantly, for the benefit of my extended family, by which I mean my fellow Lebanese citizens," he says.

His philanthropic efforts have also been oriented toward benefitting the larger community. Among other initiatives, the Makhzoumi Foundation gives support to the displaced and encourages sustainable development, while the Beirutiyat initiative seeks to create a bond among Lebanese of all creeds and beliefs.

"I am but one of many Lebanese entrepreneurs who have, out of their love and care, harnessed their resources to serve their country and people," he says, adding, "I call on each and every individual to keep the same objective in mind when carving a professional path."



CEO of Allied Wallet Andy Khawaja



Executive Chairman of Future Group Holdings Fouad Makhzoumi



President of the René Moawad Foundation Nayla Moawad

Supply and demand

The training provided by universities is seen by employers as valuable, even if some degrees are more valued than others.

By Irina du Quenoy

FEATURE



I pursued a straightforward path through university to a Ph.D., which allowed me to obtain a teaching position at a university in Europe, receiving what was then considered a decent salary. My younger sister obtained a B.A. in hospitality, of which a few courses in economics proved useful as she ended up pursuing a successful career in finance. Our youngest sister trained at an arts institute and is a certified massage therapist, but works in HR. In the meantime, my brother left community college without graduating and is now headed toward a well-paying salaried management position at an airline service company.

Here, in a microcosm, is an important question: what is the relationship between education and jobs? Recently, L.D. Burnett, an adjunct professor of history at Collins University (Texas), published an article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* lamenting the fact that humanities degrees are increasingly seen as worthless, being far less lucrative in the long-run for their holders, as B.A.s in English or philosophy (for example) don't seem to have much practical application in the "real world." "Policy makers and the public view the purpose of university as purely vocational," she writes, "And see humanistic inquiry — the study of literature, the arts, history,

anthropology, philosophy — as a waste of time and money."

Time magazine published in April of 2015 the results of a survey supporting this view, at least if you think of the purpose of a university degree as leading to a well-paying job. As of 2015, one year out of university graduates with a bachelor's in engineering were earning an average of \$64,891, as opposed to the \$46,065 earned by graduates in the humanities. Social science grads did only about \$500 better per year, at \$46,585, while education majors fared worst of all, at \$34,891. Math, science and business graduates tended to do well, with average salaries above \$50,000.

Assuming that starting salaries reflect the types of skills employers are looking for, university degrees in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) sectors are the most desirable. Does this then mean that universities should reorient their priorities towards training students primarily in those disciplines, at the expense of degrees in the humanities and even social sciences? For Burnett, such a solution is tragic. In her view, the purpose of a university education should be not just "purely pecuniary." Courses in the humanities provide students with "the

opportunity to ... grapple with ideas and questions of enduring value" and as such should be at the core of any university's mission, even if they don't lead to a well paying job.

"Being part of society demands that we respond to its needs."

—Joseph G. Jabbra, LAU president

The reality is, of course, that the vast majority of us are forced to work for a living. Without a salary, feeding yourself let alone a family is a highly difficult proposition and it is doubtful that knowing that one can quote Shakespeare better than one's neighbors would be sufficient comfort in the face of starvation. Luckily, even degrees in the humanities appear to be worth more in purely economic terms than none at all: according to the American education non-profit College Board, the average B.A. recipient (in any field) will earn approximately 66 percent more over forty years than the typical high school graduate over the same period.

It seems that the training provided by universities, regardless of the field, is seen by employers as valuable, even if some degrees are more valued than others. For Sharlyn Lauby, president of ITM Group Inc. — a consulting firm which focuses on developing training solutions that engage and retain talent in the workplace — and widely-known author of the blog HR Bartendner, the entire process of college, from the application stage forward, “teaches you time management, personal discipline, accountability, etc.”

At the same time, it’s not always obvious how one can translate a bachelor’s degree into a job, unless it happens to be in a relatively straightforward field like banking or healthcare, and even then, students are often left to swim by themselves. Career fairs abound, but learning about the existence of various jobs is not the same as learning how to go about getting them, or convincing employers that your skill set matches their needs.

Lauby believes that with a bit of innovative thinking, institutions of higher learning can do a lot to address these issues. In her view the study of humanities itself brings “a lot of value in areas like organizational development, company culture, etc.,” and pairing humanities majors with some business courses universities could prepare students to

enter job environments they might not have otherwise even considered.

Furthermore, “Universities need to build partnerships with human resources professionals,” Lauby says. “Get HR pros to tell stories about how the skills [students are learning] are used in everyday workday situations.” She encourages universities to bring in HR pros to “talk with students, do mock interviews, host a student for a day at their workplace, maybe do an internship.” Beyond the immediate benefits to the students, such a partnership would also allow HR offices to “know they can pick up the phone and get the ear of a university when the needs of their businesses are changing.”

LAU is at the forefront of such a collaborative approach. For example, every year for the past ten years, the university’s Alumni Relations Office has organized an Alumni Business Networking Reception. “The purpose of the event is to bring together recent graduates and HR Directors of key companies (from Lebanon and the Middle East) to discuss, in an informal setup, market and employment issues,” says Abdallah al-Khal, assistant vice-president for Alumni Relations.

The same spirit guides LAU’s seven constituent schools in their effort to build up relationships over the years with employers both within Lebanon

and abroad, providing students with internships that are often integrated as mandatory part of the schools’ curricula. In addition to these opportunities, students have a direct chance to learn about what awaits them from others who have gone before them, through the Alumni Mentoring Program (see page 10).

“We bring together recent graduates and HR Directors of key companies to discuss market and employment issues.”

—Abdallah al-Khal, LAU assistant vice-president for Alumni Relations

For recent computer science graduate Siba al Hajjar, the university’s focus on training that is relevant to the job market bore fruitful results, as she landed a job at Google soon after graduation. “LAU has always pushed me in order to achieve more, to learn new things and go beyond what was discussed in class, a skillset that is invaluable in my career at Google,” she says.

LAU’s programs actively push students to engage in outside competitions





that further hone their skills. During her time at LAU, al Hajjar's professors "always encouraged us to participate in the Lebanese and Arab Collegiate Programming Contest." Training for the contest, which involved learning new algorithms, proved key to her future. After winning the local version of this competition that was held at LAU, a recruiter contacted al Hajjar and the rest was history.

Today's students may be well equipped to enter the job market, but what happens when the needs of the market change? The recent transformation of the United States from a manufacturing giant to a country where the greatest job growth is in the service sector is but one example of tectonic shifts in employment opportunities that has left millions outside of the market altogether. While universities are not endowed with prophetic gifts of insight into the future, they may still play a role in preparing their graduates for what's coming up the road.

"Today's freelancer economy is growing every day," says Lauby, offering Uber as only one example. "Freelance entrepreneurs need to understand economics, marketing, technology, branding, sales, accounting and much more. It makes me wonder if universities should offer 'freelancer degrees.'"

While LAU does not, at least for now, offer a degree in freelancing, the university does showcase a number of recently introduced curricula geared toward the jobs of the 21st century. "Being part of society demands that we respond to its needs," says LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra. For example, the School of Engineering has launched a B.A. in mechatronics, "which we implemented in response to the demand for a modern, multidisciplinary professional engineering major that combines essential aspects from the fields of mechanical, electrical and computer engineering."

"The greatest takeaway that university can give is the desire to constantly be learning."

—Sharlyn Lauby, president of ITM Group Inc.

Similarly, "by bringing mathematics and business together in our Executive M.A. in actuarial science, we established a program for those who want to specialize in the area of insurance," Jabbra notes. The degree responds directly to market

trends, in that "insurance companies really need people who can predict the likelihood of events and create innovative solutions to minimize risk and its impact," he adds.

Implementing new programs are based on analyses of the job market explains Jabbra. "Based on surveys through which we seek to find out what people need and what they are interested in," he explains, "We try to provide them with real and relevant options."

In today's increasingly competitive global economy, career training and retraining is a process that continues long past graduation. LAU's Continuing Education Program (CEP) is dedicated to helping university graduates to upgrade their skills through short, intense certification programs in various fields. The program's focus is driven by marketplace demands often gained through consultations with industry leaders.

For her part, Lauby also puts a high value on continued training after graduation as a way of adapting to the ever-changing job environment. "In fact," she says, "the greatest takeaway that a university can give someone is the desire to constantly be learning." 📖

LAU alumni give their time
and know-how to ensure
a smooth transition



Vanessa Katar (B.S. '16) and media planning director
Jad Saab (B.S. '07)

Mentoring graduates into the workforce

By Reem Maghribi

While formal training and education programs are designed to prepare students for the tasks and activities they will undertake in their first and subsequent jobs, they cannot fully prepare young people for the social and organizational hurdles they will face upon entering the workforce. Herein lies the value of mentoring.

A culture of coaching and mentoring can help bridge the generational gap within a workplace, promote knowledge sharing, and support young employees in navigating their new surroundings. This is the rationale behind LAU's alumni mentoring program, which pairs students in their final year of study with graduates who have already established themselves in their chosen sector.

"I'll be able to tap into the wisdom and experience of those in my field, and that is invaluable," said then-student of political science Maria Abou Atmi (B.A. '15) upon hearing of the launch of the program in the spring of 2014. Over 80 students have since been matched with and benefited from the guidance of a mentor.

A committee formed by members of the Alumni Relations office and the office of the Dean of Students, who co-run the program, matches mentors and mentees. "Mentors have practical knowledge of the field, studied the same major and also endured before reaching their current position," explains Abdallah al-Khal, assistant vice-president for Alumni Relations.

This is how engineers Rana Zeitouni (B.E. '01) and Mira Wehbe (B.E. '15) came to be paired together a few months before Wehbe graduated. "I told my mentee to search for companies to apply to and went through the list with her, giving insight into each company's real scope of work," recalls Zeitouni, who graduated from LAU in 2001.

"It's very encouraging to have a person motivating and reassuring you. Rana taught me how to be a professional, to understand a company's profile, and to

ask the right questions to help me figure out its real identity," enthuses Wehbe.

Vanessa Katar (B.S. '16), who graduated from the Adnan Kassar School of Business this summer, also recalls fondly her time with her mentor. "I needed a professional who could prepare me for the business world and who could guide me in my job hunt. The experience exceeded my expectations," reminisces Katar, who was paired with 2007 graduate and media planning director Jad Saab (B.S. '07).

"It's very encouraging to have a person motivating and reassuring you."

—Mira Wehbe, LAU graduate (B.E. '15)

Saab has thus far mentored two students. "They were both amazing experiences. Each had a different character but both were very receptive, friendly and family like," says Jad of his two mentees. "I enjoyed being there for them and learning from them as well."

Having been introduced to one another by Saab, the mentees also support each other. "At first, I thought that the program would be limited to a certain period of time," says Katar. "But I still talk to my mentor on a regular basis, and I think he will be my mentor for a long time."

All graduating students and alumni are invited to register to participate in the program through the dedicated web page at alumni.lau.edu.lb.

Filling the knowledge gap

By Federica Marsi

Regional first as medical student lands book contract



Medical school is likely to be one of the toughest endeavors a university student could choose to undertake. What makes it challenging is not only the workload but the large amount of material a student must engage with during the learning process.

As a senior medical student*, Mohammad Nouredine knows these difficulties all too well. His project — a book on neuroscience suitable for academic teaching — sprang from the desire to remove at least one of the obstacles faced by future generations.

"The idea came to me two years ago when I was taking the module on neuroscience," says Nouredine. "As no comprehensive text was available for teaching purposes, professors had to extract chapters from different books to provide the literature for the course."

Using a variety of different texts not adapted to students meant more work for both teachers and students, who had to discern essential information from the more in-depth material tailored for professionals.

"I thought this void should be filled with a book that teaches neuroscience in a concise and yet comprehensive way," says Nouredine. The book, scheduled for publication in early 2017, will combine neuroanatomy with correlated clinical cases and provide students with multiple-choice exercises to test their knowledge.

Digital contents will also be made available through access codes, allowing students to learn by means of videos and 3D images. "Students need more realistic images that offer a greater degree of detail," says Nouredine. "Plus, technology

is also a catch that will encourage the younger generations to study."

The idea for the book was already brewing when he attended the Second International Conference on Medical Education hosted by LAU in November 2015, where he met the Elsevier representatives.

"Who better than a student knows what students need," says Senior Content Strategist at Elsevier Rasheed Roussan. "Students are often discouraged from taking up projects before they graduate, but Mohammad is proof that this is an unfair stigmatization."

Thanks to his enterprising spirit, Nouredine has become the first Arab student in the Middle East to have a book accepted by Elsevier. More than that, he was also selected to be part of Elsevier's new worldwide marketing campaign *Uncommon Knowledge*, which will feature those whose exceptional stories can be of inspiration to others.

"Becoming a role model was not something I was aspiring to when I came up with my book idea," says Nouredine.

"Who better than a student knows what students need."

—Rasheed Roussan, Elsevier's senior content strategist

"However I will be delighted if this inspires others to get involved in their own learning process and contribute to it."

* Pending completion of registration formalities with NYSED

California Dreamin’

By Paige Kollock

Participants in LAU’s MEPI TL
experience diverse cultures



*“UC Berkeley is located
in one of the most open
and culturally diverse
environments in the country.”*

—Walid Touma, director of LAU’s
University Enterprise Office

For eight years now, LAU has been a proud host of Tomorrow’s Leaders, a joint program with the U.S. State Department’s Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). The initiative provides full scholarships to youth from the MENA region — who demonstrate outstanding leadership potential — with the goal of shaping them into responsible, ethical and professional leaders able to bring about positive change in their home countries.

A requirement of the MEPI TL program is that the students must spend one semester studying at a U.S. college or university. This year, for the first time, LAU

sent 23 MEPI TL students to the University of California, Berkeley, just outside San Francisco and a far cry from home, both geographically and culturally.

“UC Berkeley is the top state university in the U.S. and is located in one of the most open and culturally diverse environments in the country,” points out Walid Touma, director of the University Enterprise Office, which runs the LAU-MEPI TL program.

Students from Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen spent three months on Berkeley’s campus studying a diverse range of subjects —





from business to biology, political science, psychology, to computer science, among others— and taking in the sights and sounds of Northern California.

Cole Harry, UC Berkeley International Affiliates administrator, says the university had 16,000 students taking classes this past summer, 4,000 of whom were visiting international students. In addition to LAU, Berkeley currently enjoys partnerships with 90 affiliated universities around the world who send students to the California institution for summer sessions.

“We are trying to increase the international presence on campus,” said

Harry. “Lebanon was the sixth-largest sender of students this past summer. Its educational institutions are well-reputed and LAU students have a good command of English. Their education is similar to Berkley’s in that it is liberal arts-oriented,” he added, saying that Berkeley is hoping to attract more students from the MENA region in the coming years.

For their part, the students were blown away by their experience, both in and out of the classroom. Second year political science and international affairs major Maryam Chaabouni took courses on American government and politics and analytical research methodology. While the work was demanding, she says what struck her the most was the teaching style.

“Professors there are very understanding. There’s no such thing as taboo. Everything is possible. They encourage us to speak up and speak out,” she said.

Marouane Oueslati, who like Chaabouni is from Tunisia, also remarked on the classroom experience — he took courses in project management, business sustainability, corporate finance, and security analyses management — as well as the diversity on campus.

“You feel that the professor would do anything to get you to speak in class and contribute, and whatever question you have they always start by saying ‘thank you for asking,’” he said. “I had a Mexican professor, a Russian professor, and Indian professor, so this led to a really rich classroom experience.” Chaabouni made friends from Hong Kong, Germany and Andorra — a country he didn’t know existed.

LAU’s Office of International Services facilitated the summer exchange,

“More than ever before, I now strongly believe in the success of cultural integration.”

—Nathir Haimoun, MEPI TL student from Syria

completing the required registration materials, hosting a pre-departure orientation, and booking the students’ housing, which in this case was co-educational dorms, a bit of a culture shock for some students.

“This year, they were given the option to either go to UC Berkeley or Syracuse University,” said Dina Abdul Rahman, International Services Associate Program Manager. “They overwhelmingly chose Berkeley.”

For Nathir Haimoun, from Syria, the exchange was life-changing, prompting him to write an essay about her experience titled, “I Found My Childhood There, Do You Want to Try to Find Yours?”

“More than ever before I now strongly believe in the success of cultural integration, despite the fact that I come from a place where people have unsuccessfully coexisted with each other...” Haimoun writes. “I found my childhood, which I have long been looking for, not in my old house near Damascus, which is under fire right now, neither in my beloved hometown. My lost childhood was found there in California, where I met my spontaneous soul which I missed so much.”

LAU-MEPI TL working together

In a tense regional geopolitical context, 67 youngsters from 11 different MENA countries were brought together at the beginning of September with the common goal of becoming community, business and national leaders of a future they hope will be more peaceful and promising. The 15 new recruits of the LAU-Middle East Partnership Initiative Tomorrow’s Leaders program (LAU-MEPI TL) — administered

by LAU’s University Enterprise Office (UEO) — bonded with the 52 current students and administrators of the program during a three-day retreat organized in Ehden, North Lebanon.

More than an academic experience, the university affords students the opportunity to take part in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including community engagement, a component

where MEPI TL students usually excel. According to UEO Director Walid Touma, the pressing need for reform in the region is best addressed by educating future generations: “We are doing the right thing empowering and teaching the new generations of the MENA region ... This program is the oxygen to equip our youth to effect change.”

Countering violent extremism with digital literacy

By Federica Marsi

LAU hosts the fourth MDLAB summer academy to battle radicalization

"We realized that media usage starts at a younger age."

—Verena Wendisch, regional manager for the Deutsche Welle Akademie

Violent extremism is not a new phenomenon. However, the use of new communication tools has dominated its most recent manifestations, spreading the outreach of radicalization.

This year's edition of the four-year old Media and Digital Literacy Academy (MDLAB) program emphasized the importance of empowering youth with critical competencies and digital skills in order to help them resist and counter the narrative of extremism.

"If we possess the necessary critical thinking to grasp how media language works, we can understand the strategy behind the extremist message," says Jad Melki, chairperson of the Department of Communication Arts at LAU and founder of MDLAB. "Once we know the strategy, we can respond to it more effectively."

MDLAB has so far introduced media literacy courses and curricula to 26 Arab universities and schools. In 2015 Melki received the UNESCO-UNAoC International Media and Information Literacy Award in recognition of these efforts.

"Media literacy is a worldwide issue, and the MDLAB has been working hard to try to advance a concept that is still not common anywhere, even in Europe," says Verena Wendisch, regional manager for the Deutsche Welle Akademie, which implemented the lab with the support of Federal Foreign Office Germany and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), as well as funds from the European Union.

The participants — who took part in the wide array of courses and workshops

held from August 7 to 16 — came from a variety of backgrounds. Teachers from all over the region were instructed how to develop a syllabus relevant to their country, graduate students developed projects focused on countering violent extremism, and high school students learned how to use multimedia tools to convey their stories.

"In the past years the MDLAB focused on university students and their teachers; however, we realized that media usage starts at a younger age," says Wendisch. "High school students are already media producers, therefore we had to expand our target if we wanted to successfully promote media literacy."

Kamil Fahd, a student at the Jesus and Mary High School, dreams of a career in politics. "This experience was eye opening for me," he says. "I started thinking about the relationship between free speech and terrorism, and how our democracies can control one without sacrificing the other. I am now more aware of many of the problems affecting our society."

One of the projects developed by graduate students tackled homophobia, another form of extremist violence. For a whole week, the campaign's hashtag #oneless3antar gained second place in Lebanon.

"The students used the skills we offered them in the training to come up with a very catchy campaign," says Jad Melki. "It was rewarding to witness the commitment, dedication and enthusiasm shown by this year's participants in producing a counter narrative to extremism."

Dr. Henry Jenkins, University of Southern California, MDLAB

Dr. Susan Moeller, Maryland University, MDLAB





A SCENE FOR CELEBRATION

LAU NY Gala 2016
dinner



More than 150 people gathered at New York City's iconic Metropolitan Club, facing Central Park, to enjoy a festive evening in support of LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW).

During the gala, guests watched a video message from an excited Lina Abirafeh, IWSAW's indefatigable director, who was in Brazil attending the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) conference. In a first for the institute, Abirafeh was among thousands taking part in the largest gathering of women's rights organizations worldwide, one that takes place only once every four years. The audience also had the chance to learn more about the institution they were benefitting through a short film detailing the diverse range of work the institute carries out in education, research, development, outreach and LAU engagement.

This year the gala honored mezzo-soprano opera star Rosalind Elias,



Ambassador Edward M. Gabriel, and entrepreneur and philanthropist alumnus Joseph Maroun.

"The institution where I spent 13 years of my life ... has rocketed into the sky," said Maroun upon receiving the Sarah Huntington Smith Award, referring to the university's remarkable growth during LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra's tenure.

Elias brought the audience to tears with her speech about her determination to succeed despite the odds. "I was the thirteenth child in my family, my mother never spoke English, my father was from the '*dayaa*' (village) and thought any woman who went on stage was a bad woman," said the singer.

"As a little girl doing my chores, I would always listen to the Metropolitan Opera on the radio and fantasize that I was on stage," she confided. Elias went on to give 690 performances at the Met, winning three Grammys and two Emmys.



Edward M. Gabriel, former U.S. Ambassador to Morocco, grew up in a working class family in a small town in upstate New York, with little connection to Lebanon. As a child, he set up a shoe-shine stand charging a quarter per job. NBA star Bob Lanier was one of his first customers. That work ethic led him to a successful career in Washington, D.C., as a government servant.

"We must work together in service of each other," emphasized Gabriel. "Almost everybody in this room could be up here. Many of us come from humble backgrounds and now we must give to others ... for it is in giving that we receive."

The memorable evening was marked by musical performances from renowned tenor Amine J. Hachem, accompanied by pianist Brian Holman. Rita Zihenni took on the role of master of ceremonies and even sang a few notes of songs by the famous Lebanese diva Fairuz at President Jabbra's request.

Lebanese start-ups

By Gaja Pellegrini-Bettoli



FEATURE



Every year, thousands of well-trained LAU students join the Lebanese job market. However, this market is saturated and cannot accommodate them all. With the trends in advanced economies toward greater dependence on knowledge, information and high skill levels, and the increasing need for ready access to all of these by the business and public sectors, the Lebanese Central Bank launched the Circular 331 initiative in August 2013 to stimulate the country's knowledge economy and boost investment in start-ups. Given the uncertainties of the current state of the country's economy, the relevance of this enterprise is on the rise. It represents a new way to invest in the country's future, creating opportunities to develop its human capital and offset Lebanon's brain drain.

"Start-ups need to expand into the MENA region to become self-sustainable."

—Bassem Maamari, LAU assistant professor in management

Historically Lebanon is based on commerce and an entrepreneurial spirit, but government laws have not always been conducive to their flourishing. For example, in the 18th century, when Lebanon was still part of Ottoman Syria, commerce and entrepreneurship were heavily taxed. Over time, however, things changed enough that by the 1950s, Lebanon's Central Bank had separated from its Syrian counterpart and launched an improved open policy conducive to entrepreneurial attitudes. Yet, there is room still for more government encouragement.

"Today we have fewer new ideas because people are risk-averse, but the ideas are there," says Bassem Maamari, assistant professor in management at LAU's Adnan Kassar School of Business. It is common in Lebanon to have a controlling ownership in a

business enterprise in one country by an entity based in another, otherwise known as foreign direct investment. Maamari stresses the need to boost the entrepreneurial climate by allowing loans to small businesses and not only focusing on attracting significant investments from abroad.

In response to these demands, the Lebanese Central Bank initiative, Circular 331, offers commercial banks guarantees and incentives to set aside a specific percentage of their investments for the start-up sector. The funds come with binding pre-requisites: the start-ups must be Lebanese firms working "in the knowledge economy and supporting creative intellectual skills (intellectual capital)" and therefore contributing to job creation in Lebanon.

Start-ups are not new in Lebanon, albeit traditionally they have usually been funded within family and community networks. (Statistically, 80 percent of businesses in the country are family owned). "We are only hearing about them now. The media wasn't interested in them until recently, when it became easier to fund them independently," says Zahi Nakad associate professor and chair of LAU's Electrical and Computer Engineering Department.

Although human capital is highly-valued in Lebanon in terms of knowledge and experience, Maamari explains that the problem lies in the limited financial capabilities of firms to offer competitive remuneration packages. "Multinationals can offer far more attractive conditions, thus luring fresh graduates abroad," he points out.

Circular 331 is a genuine attempt to inject a change in the system but it cannot thrive unless other aspects are also in place. Lebanon is ranked as sixth worldwide with regards to venture capital investment as a percentage of its GDP, preceded by Israel, the U.S., India, China and the U.K., according to Arabnet Business Intelligence report "The State of Digital Investment in MENA 2013-2015". However, for this investment to truly affect the economy, "several factors need to improve, namely infrastructure,

"We need to bridge the gap between what students learn at university and what is needed in the work market."

—*Krystel Khalil, head of Communications and Outreach at Berytech*

legal framework, and access to talent," says Mohamed Sabounh, co-founder of the start-up Moodfit, which allows local Lebanese talent to provide digital expertise to clients on-line to design their homes.

According to Sabounh, start-ups are set to play an important role in the economy over the next decade. "The major catalyst for growth in our ecosystem over the past two years has been Circular 331, injecting up to 400 million dollars through banks into the knowledge economy," he emphasizes. These funds were an essential aspect of the development of venture capital funds and support programs such as accelerators, incubators and co-working spaces.

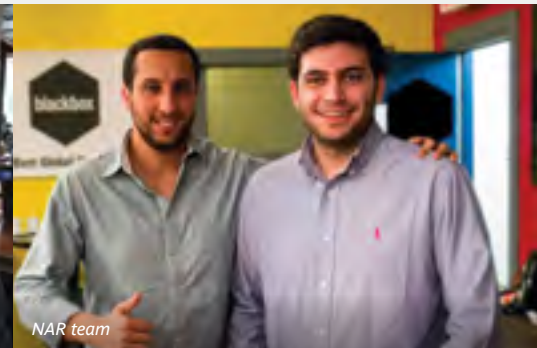
The funding availability has joined together with mentorship to create the environment for many entrepreneurs to pursue their business ideas, explains Sabounh. He adds that finding the human capital with the right skillset in Lebanon and with the right approach to working in a start-up still represents a challenge.

"It came out from a pure need," says Ralph Choueiri (B.S. '09), the co-founder of the start-up Blink My Car in explaining how the idea for the enterprise originated. "Maintaining a car can be such a headache and so time consuming. Yet, we do so many things through our smartphones, like order food and buy plane tickets, so why not have the ability to order a car wash to your location? Blink My Car makes the whole experience of owning and maintaining a car much easier and less frustrating."

"A lot of new Lebanese start-ups are emerging thanks to the help of the Central Bank's Circular 331," points out Choueiri. "With such an ecosystem being nurtured, the future for the Lebanese entrepreneurs looks very promising. I cannot wait to see how things will develop."



Blink My Car team



NAR team

According to professor Maamari, the size of the Lebanese market is small; he believes that "start-ups need to expand into the MENA region to become self-sustainable. Finding the right channels to expand into other countries is therefore crucial for their survival."

Meanwhile Lebanon ranks 111th out of 189 countries for its ease of doing business, lagging far behind other Middle East counterparts, as highlighted by the World Bank's 2014 "Doing Business" annual report. Saudi Arabia for example ranks at 26 while Bahrain is at 46 and Morocco at 87.

Founded in Lebanon in 2001, Berytech is the first Business Innovation Center (BIC) in the region to receive EU accreditation. Berytech hosts 90 start-up companies which receive its support. It has helped create 1,500 jobs and it receives from 20 to 50 new projects per year, despite the current negative economic environment in the country.

For its Head of Communications and Outreach Krystel Khalil, Circular 331 has had a significant impact on the knowledge economy, which still needs additional guidance. With this in mind Berytech is currently launching a mentoring program



Blink My Car



NAR drone solution



Moodfit team

"LAU students are driven because the university both provides mentoring and flexibility."

—Charlie el-Khoury, LAU alumni and cofounder of the start-up NAR

in cooperation with MIT. Berytech is able to support early stage start-ups through its network, providing the needed mentoring system that fresh graduates seek. "We

need to improve the training of students, bridging the gap between what they learn at the university and what is needed in the work market," says Khalil.

LAU is at the forefront of fostering the entrepreneurial spirit of Lebanese youth and a number of its students have already benefited from this measure. For example, LAU has developed a set of minimum requirements for all its business graduates, preparing them to launch their own business once they are finished with their education. The mandatory Capstone course, which began three years ago, includes a simulation of managing a company over a 12-week period, with each week representing a year of business.

Recent engineering graduates Charlie el Khoury (B.E., '15) and Nicolas Zatar (B.E., '15) partnered up to use their Capstone project, a mandatory empirical exercise for their final year, to experience what it's like to be an entrepreneur. They developed a drone, the "Quadrocopter" that is able to detect fires. From this project, which won the Microsoft Imagine Cup— a very prestigious student technology competition — they went on to launch

their own start-up, NAR. "The Central Bank made possible the creation of the SPEED@ BDD program, an accelerator which helps to launch start-ups. We applied with a detailed on-line submission and a live interview, and NAR received the needed funding," explains el Khoury.

For el Khoury, part of what makes students at LAU so driven is the fact that the university both provides mentoring to students and gives them the flexibility to choose their own projects. This contributes to a higher level of dedication to student projects, leading some of them to becoming launching pads of start-ups.

Last March, Blackbox, a leading Silicon Valley accelerator, listed NAR as one of the 12 international start-ups to look out for. ■

Gender profiles of Arab countries provide valuable resource

By Reem Mahgribi

IWSAW's new publications help expand knowledge, reach and regional thinking

"This is a wake-up call. Feminism is not outdated."

—Lina Abirafeh, director of LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World



"We can't afford to keep thinking locally. There are challenges across borders, and those borders are fluid, porous and problematic," says Lina Abirafeh, the director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at LAU. This need for and interest in regional thinking is the impetus behind the institute's new series of gender profiles.

By year's end, 22 profiles — one for each of the members of the Arab League — will be published, each outlining the legislation, efforts and challenges related to gender in various sectors, including politics, the economy, health and education.

"We selected eleven sectors after considering a long list of possible areas to cover," explains profile author Nida Latif. "We wanted to limit our profiles to ten pages so as to reach a wide audience, meaning that they're each more of a snapshot than an in-depth profile."

That said, the first profile — launched in July — offers up a comprehensive list of relevant legislation and statistics related to Lebanon. "The Lebanon profile was the least challenging to prepare, because there was, compared to the other countries, more information available. Saudi Arabia was the most challenging," adds Latif.

The profiles, she says, will force us to see the extent of gender inequality across the region, Lebanon included. "This is a wake-up call. Feminism is not outdated," says Abirafeh. Once all the profiles are published, IWSAW intends to develop them further. "There's a lot we can do with them. We can compare challenges and ideas across the region and identify areas of cross-pollination and inspiration," she notes.

IWSAW also intends to develop regional topic and sector-specific studies. Each profile includes a section on sexual orientation and gender identity, prepared in partnership with the Beirut-based Gender & Sexuality Resource Center. "We can then easily consolidate that information into a regional profile, just as we may with the sections on media and gender based violence, for example," the director explains.

The profiles will all be available online, on IWSAW's website. "They are a public multi-functional resource for all to refer to and use. They are living documents, to be updated regularly and we invite our readers to send in information to be added to them."

An obviously valuable resource for civil society activists and organizations, the profiles will also be a learning tool for students of LAU's master's in interdisciplinary gender studies* and diploma in gender in development and humanitarian assistance. "We need more specialists in this area, who are from and are based in the region, and so we developed this program to help boost the supply of much needed experts in this sector," says Abirafeh of the motivation behind the new diploma, launched this fall in collaboration with LAU's Continuing Education Program.

The new profiles and educational programs complement the array of activities IWSAW undertakes in the areas of education, research, development, outreach and LAU engagement, all of which work toward the advancement of gender equality and empowerment of women.

* Pending completion of registration formalities with NYSED

LAU professor leads international team in creating a pill to synthesize exercise benefits



Groundbreaking research takes a leap forward

By Federica Marsi

The beneficial effects of physical activity are hardly a secret nowadays. The scientific explanation lies in a protein named BDNF, or “Miracle-Gro,” for its role in the growth of nerve cells.

What no one has yet managed to figure out is how to synthesize these benefits into a pill that could be administered to those patients affected by neurological diseases and unable to exercise.

Research published by LAU assistant professor of biochemistry Sama Sleiman in the journal *eLife* is an important milestone on the path to unveiling this secret.

“Up until now, research had been focused on how to introduce BDNF into the body, but no one could identify a successful strategy to make the protein effectively penetrate into the brain,” says Sleiman. “What we are doing instead is identifying what in the body triggers BDNF, in order to induce its production and natural absorption.”

Sleiman began her research back in 2014 while teaching at the NYU Langone Medical Center. She then brought her research to Lebanon, where she is receiving the full support of LAU, as well as assistance from NYU, Cornell University, and a grant from the National Council for Scientific Research – Lebanon (CNRS-L).

By monitoring the biological mechanism that takes place in mice while they exercise on a wheel, Sleiman and three postgraduate students — studying for their master’s in molecular biology at LAU — have unraveled the mystery behind the production of BDNF.

While it has been traditionally thought that physical activity and the process of learning and memory formation are independent and carried out by different organ systems, the research has now revealed in molecular detail that the two are intertwined.

Among the key findings of the research is a ketone body called beta-

“Our goal is to harness exercise as a therapeutic target.”

—Sama Sleiman, LAU assistant professor of biochemistry

hydroxybutyrate (DBHB), produced in the liver and responsible for activating the BDNF gene to produce more of its protein.

Biochemical experiments also unveiled how this change occurs when DBHB stops the action of enzymes known as histone deacetylases that usually inhibit the production of BDNF.

The next step is to identify all the molecules that — together with DBHB — will be combined into a pharmaceutical product that will stimulate cognitive improvement and the alleviation of depression and anxiety.

Among the beneficial effects of this protein are also a heightened resistance to injury and an increase in memory formation, which would allow the therapies for Alzheimer’s disease to make a huge leap forward.

“Our goal is to harness exercise as a therapeutic target,” says Sleiman. “This pill will increase the plasticity and connectivity of the brain and therefore greatly help those who are affected by psychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases.”

Postcard from NY: Dismantling Misconceptions

By Paige Kollock

On May 24, the city of Eden Prairie, Minnesota, just outside of Minneapolis, honored one of LAU's own. Hanadi Chehabeddine (B.A. '98) received the Human Rights Award for her work dismantling misconceptions about Islam and Muslims.

Unbeknownst to Chehabeddine, her friend Megan Soukup had nominated her. The two met at an early childhood education class several years ago. Soukup says she'd never had any Muslim friends before meeting Hanadi: "I had a lot of questions about Islam and she wasn't offended by any of them. She told me, 'there are no stupid questions,' and that really put me at ease."

One of the things Soukup was curious about was the headscarf. "A lot of people assume that Muslim women wear their hair covered because they are forced to," she said. "It was very interesting to hear Hanadi explain that she wears her hair covered because she wants to, and that some of the women in her family choose not to cover their hair at all."

Since 2006, Chehabeddine has been working with the Islamic Resource Group (IRG), an organization that educates people about Islam and Muslims and offers programs jointly with many interfaith and educational organizations to build bridges of understanding.

Onder Uluyol, president of IRG in Minnesota, says Chehabeddine is an invaluable resource, leading presentations on topics like "Introduction to Islam and Muslims," "What You Always Wanted to Know about Islam and Muslims," and "Women in Islam" at schools, universities, churches and community centers.

"Hanadi personifies confidence, openness, truthfulness and friendliness,"



says Uluyol. "She connects with people easily and articulates her views clearly and forcefully, all of which breaks the stereotype some people have about a Muslim woman."

"I want to be the catalyst that establishes platforms for understanding and peace."

—Hanadi Chehabeddine, LAU alumna

Community member Barbara La Valleur attended one of Chehabeddine's presentations and is now both an avid supporter of her work and a friend: "How she presented the information was so down to earth and easy to understand. She's really unstoppable in terms of going after opportunities that have presented themselves to her and I'm encouraging her to go even further, to take her advocacy work to the national level."

The national stage may not be far off. Chehabeddine was recently asked

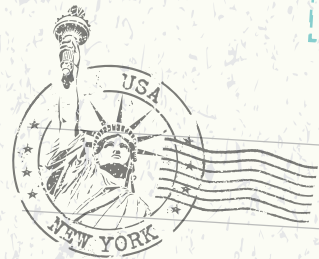
to participate in a panel sponsored by the U.S. Department of State on "Peacebuilding through Countering Violent Extremism." On a more local stage, she's been speaking to audiences of the award-winning play about what it's like for a Muslim-American living in post 9/11 New York, *Disgraced*, which is showing at the celebrated Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

She even penned a two-page spread titled "Graced" in the play's program, in which she talks about her experiences as a Muslim woman.

"Now that I'm friends with Hanadi, whenever I see a Muslim, I first think of her," says Soukup. "Once you know one Muslim, it puts a face on the religion for you that is different from what you see in the media."

Chehabeddine says she recognizes that the Muslim community in the U.S. may not be doing enough to reach out to the larger community. "I see the disconnect and I want to be the catalyst that establishes platforms for understanding and peace."

LAU alumna breaks the stereotype some people have about Muslim women



The ability to play



Visiting Assistant Professor at LAU's Department of Education Mahmoud Natout's research involves inquiring into the meaning of teaching. An LAU alumnus, Natout, who earned a D. Phil. at Oxford University, wants to help teachers develop the attitudes, dispositions and skills to respond to the changing demands of classroom life.

At the beginning of every academic year, I ask my students what they looked for in their teachers when they were still at school. They inevitably answer that they wanted them to be caring, motivating and inspiring. Yet, as a teacher educator, I have frequently wondered why mainstream teacher education programs seldom address such characteristics in their curricula and training. In fact, most teacher education programs that I'm aware of often ignore these important traits, instead drilling prospective teachers with theories, teaching methods and classroom management strategies. Although these elements are important, existing programs have yet to recognize the importance of integrating empathetic qualities in their curricula and philosophies.

There is a plethora of research suggesting that those teachers who do express the desire to care for as well as motivate and inspire their students are often driven by certain attitudes and dispositions that underpin their behaviors. Such teachers are often curious, imaginative and spontaneous and thus better prepared to respond to their students' needs.

In their paper "Toward a Better Understanding of Playfulness in Adults," researchers in occupational therapy Guitard, Ferland and Dutil suggest that such qualities may be captured by one overarching feature, namely, playfulness. They define the latter as "an internal predisposition characterized by creativity, curiosity, pleasure, sense of humor and spontaneity," adding that this "attitude extends to all life situations and modifies how adults perceive, evaluate and approach situations."

"I like to explore critical pedagogy and find new innovative ways of teaching, especially with regards to teacher education and development."

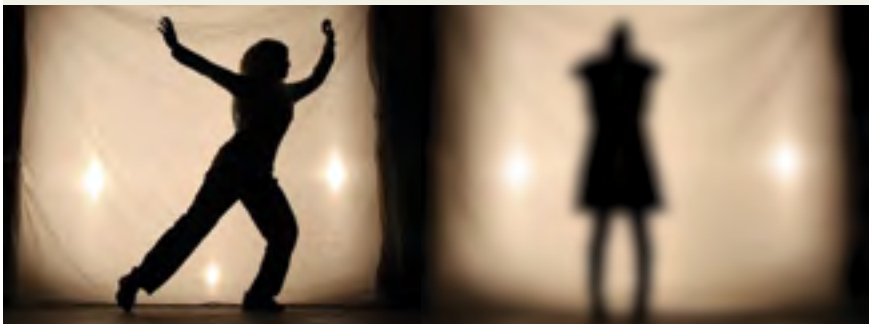
But do teacher education programs allow pre- and in-service teachers to develop playfulness? Are teachers, like their students, allowed to play in the classroom so as to foster an environment that engenders creativity, exploration, risk-taking and the acceptance of failure? In response to these questions and concerns, myself and three of my former students — Naila el-Hares (B.A. '15), Sara Sibai (B.A. '09) and Lianne Souki (B.A. '16), LAU alumnae from the Education, English and Communication Arts Departments respectively — decided to undertake an activist research study exploring the role that drama plays in the development of playfulness and creativity in teachers.

In spring 2016, we conducted a series of workshops — inspired by Augusto Boal's *Theater of the Oppressed and Games for Actors and Non-Actors* — in which we immersed 15 novice and experienced teachers in dramaturgical games and exercises with the intent of exploring how this may impact their ability to play. Findings point to the importance of integrating play in teacher education programs to better equip teachers with the attitudes, dispositions and skills to respond to the changing demands of classroom life.

"I felt like the students were motivated to listen to the story over and over again," explained one experienced biology teacher. "The story approach stimulated their imagination in visualizing the journey, the setting, the purpose, and they had fun living it."

The next stage is to invite all our participants to be co-interpreters of its findings, thus giving them voice on various levels. We hope that both the results and the overall process will prove useful for teacher education and training programs that are keen on developing their teachers' attitudes, dispositions and skills in creative and critical ways.

For another student teacher it was "sometimes hard to let go of the traditions and restrictions you have faced throughout your educational path, but seeing your work from a new perspective makes all the difference."





“It takes a university”

By Reem Maghribi

TEDxLAU curator Reine Azzi on four years of sweat, tears and community spirit

“It takes a university to put on an event like this.”

—Reine Azzi, LAU instructor of English and moral reasoning

Having organized and hosted four successful TEDxLAU events at the Beirut campus since 2012, instructor of English and moral reasoning Reine Azzi will this year be launching another series of talks at the university. Based at the Byblos campus, the new initiative will see students of the MEPI Tomorrow's Leaders program take to the stage to share their ideas and experiences.

Azzi decided to organize the first TEDx talks at LAU in 2012 after watching a TED talk about creativity in education by Ken Robinson. “I fell in love with the talk and began by screening it on campus,” says Azzi, who subsequently applied for the license and hosted the first TEDxLAU with the theme “unleash your passion” in 2012.

“We had an audience of 100 people that first year based on TED restrictions. I then travelled to California for a four-day TED experience and returned to Beirut with a full understanding of what it takes to put on an event that conforms to TED ideals and standards,” says Azzi. Since then, each TEDxLAU event has sold-out, filling all 344 seats in the Gulbenkian Theatre.

Azzi believes that the strict standards set by TED are part of the added value to both the audience and the organizers. “They’re not stifling, but they ensure that you pay attention to detail. It’s an excellent opportunity for our volunteers to practice real life skills with an event that is trying to maintain international standards,” she explains.

All members of the team organizing the talks work on a voluntary basis. This year there were 35 volunteers. “It takes a university to put on an event like this. The Dean of Students office and School of Arts and Science sponsored the event, the fashion design program

designed our t-shirts, an army of students worked on our social media campaign, communication arts students formed the audio-visual crew, and the department provided the film and sound equipment and helped with the logistics of the Gulbenkian Theatre,” says Azzi, naming but some of the many contributors to the success of TEDxLAU.

The Gulbenkian’s round theatre setup was particularly ideal for this year’s agora themed event. Like the public open space at which people would assemble and go to market in Ancient Greece, the courtyard in front of the Safadi Arts building hosted a market, with sales of soap and jewelry complemented by cupping sessions and fortune telling.

“I teach moral reasoning and Aristotle and Plato, so for me the theme of the agora this year was like coming home,” says Azzi. “There is so much you can do with the theme visually, as the agora is a physical concept.”

In an elaborate stage design perfectly portraying the theme, Natalie, a young volunteer, sat wearing a Grecian dress on the faux-stone wall throughout the fourteen live talks. Meanwhile, Ghida, an LAU graduate, also wearing a Grecian dress, pranced around the marketplace lightening the mood and offering photo opportunities.

“Ghida was our first ever speaker in 2012 and this year she was backstage during the talks giving speakers a pep-talk and water and just offering support. This is the beauty of the community spirit that develops,” explains Azzi. “The process of putting on a TEDx event is so intimate and personal that people are rooting for each other. It’s beautiful, the bonds that develop.”

New programs expand students' horizons

By Federica Marsi



In an effort to provide real and relevant options, LAU announces four new bachelor degrees.

In an era where journalism is increasingly engaging in new technologies, young professionals will need to be able to tweet, film and take pictures, as well as write, in order to produce a great story. The B.A. in multimedia journalism, just one of three new bachelor degrees replacing the previously existing one in communication arts, draws upon a rich blend of theoretical and hands-on courses that involve extensive use of technology to equip students with the set of skills required by today's media industry.

New courses include disciplines long neglected in the region, such as investigative, photo and data journalism. Students will also have the opportunity to take free elective credits or a minor in another discipline, in order to shape their education according to their future professional goal. "Keeping an interdisciplinary component is good, but first and foremost we want our students to specialize," says Jad Melki, chairperson of LAU's Department of Communication Arts. "This is compatible with the market request and our students' desires," he says.

Students wishing to focus exclusively on music, theater and dance will now be able to enroll in the B.A. in performing arts, which prepares them to become innovative artists, creative performers and critical thinkers. Classes cover a wide range of skills, including acting, voice training, body movement, writing, and crafting with lights. The program prepares students to pursue careers as performers, artists, actors, producers, art managers, teachers and directors.

LAU also offers practical training through an array of festivals and workshops, also designed to let students learn from local and international professional artists. "Our graduate in performing arts will be able to work in

any field of arts and to speak a universal language," says Mona Knio, LAU professor of theater. "This degree opens up great possibilities both for our students and the community."

The intensive B.A. in television and film requires students to produce and direct TV shows and short films, taking up a variety of production roles and tasks. It provides cutting-edge facilities and equipment and prepares students to pursue careers as writers, producers, directors, sound designers, and directors of photography.

LAU's state-of-the-art TV studios offers high-end studio cameras with autocue systems and a master control room with an HD broadcast switcher. "We offer a true simulation of what happens in TV and audio production," says Farid Boustani, LAU TV and film studio supervisor. "Students leave LAU equipped with enough practical knowledge to face the real world."

Meanwhile, the B.A. in Arabic language and literature combines a wide array of language and culture courses, based on the philosophy that these two fields are naturally intertwined. Students will master the fields of Arabic literature and language, as well as Arab-Islamic thought, and acquire a high level of mastery of Arabic grammar and other branches of Arabic linguistics, such as philology and lexicology.

"Arabic is a language increasingly widespread around the world and one of the official languages of the United Nations," says Vahid Behmardi, chairperson of LAU's Department of Humanities. "This new program is responding to the increasing demand for Arabic language and culture experts in the fields of international relations and diplomacy, among others."

"Students leave LAU equipped with enough practical knowledge to face the real world."

—Farid Boustani, LAU TV and film studio supervisor





Internships favored by employers

By Leena Saidi

LAU students sharpen their
skills outside the classroom

Internships have become more important for both students and employers, as the job market becomes increasingly competitive. LAU believes that internships allow students to gain valuable hands-on experience, which improve their skill set and allows employers to differentiate qualified graduates among competitors.

In order to complete her degree, final year fashion student*, Nour el Daher was required to put together a professional portfolio of her work for potential internships. After researching for opportunities online, she ultimately chose Mary Katrantzou and spent a spring semester in London interning for the Greek fashion designer who is famous for very bulky prints.

"I felt very proud that my work interested such a well-known designer," says el Daher. She landed in the British capital without really knowing what to expect. "I knew I was going to work with the fabrication department, but I didn't know that I would also have to work with different teams and I'd be seeing everything happening in front of me," says el Daher. "I thought I was going to be at a desk, working on whatever I was assigned to."

*"One of the head designers
was once an intern, that's
how they start."*

—Nour el Daher final year
LAU student



Reality outdid her expectations. "I was even backstage during the catwalk show. I helped in dressing the models before they went on stage," she says. "I had an incident where one of the buttons fell off and I



had to put it back just seconds before the model went on the runway. It was crazy.”

As one of five interns at the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations in New York, fourth year business student, Wadih Khnaizir got a front row seat to the corridors of power this summer. Khnaizir was an integral member of the team, attending meetings, preparing briefings and conducting research. “I thought I’d mostly be watching and learning, but I actually got to participate in the diplomatic process,” said the finance major.

Exposure to the workplace encourages students to interact with peers and colleagues and participate in academic and social activities. Khnaizir, for example, was no stranger to the United Nations, having participated in LAU’s award-winning Model UN program for four years. He also served as a member of the senior staff during the university’s two Global Model UN conferences in New York earlier this year.

“When I go into a committee, I know how many members are going to be there, I know who the veto powers are in the Council, and I’m familiar with many of the UN resolutions,” says Khnaizir.

Similarly, final year hospitality students Sarah Halabi and Karim Balhawan did their obligatory internships at London’s Four Seasons and Savoy hotels, respectively. “When I started university I wasn’t sure what I wanted to study or become,” says Halabi. “I fell into hospitality completely by mistake, but ended up finding that it is the perfect domain for me.”

Students may know what type of work they want to do when they graduate, but not what the day-to-day looks like. Internships provide real-life exposure by concretizing abstract theories, which place

students in work situation with real life co-workers performing actual professional tasks. “Teamwork was a really important aspect of my internship,” points out Balhawan, “You rely on your team both inside and outside work.”

Established in August 1889, the Savoy Hotel reflects the height of British tradition. “I worked as a butler, something I only thought existed in period dramas,” says Balhawan. “It was a real eye opener as the butler does almost anything the client asks, from going to a department store to buy an expensive tie to getting a cup of coffee from the nearest Starbucks.”

LAU prepares students to perform as well if not better than other interns, who come from various establishments worldwide. “During the first month, I wouldn’t always know exactly how they wanted me to do a certain task, so I would try and then they would give me feedback and I would do it again just as they wanted,” says el Daher.

The internship experience provides students with a valuable understanding of the field in which they want to work once they graduate.

With a head for business mind but also a love of fashion, Halabi wasn’t sure she “had made the right decision” even after having studied hospitality for two years. But the internship showed her otherwise. “It brought out my good qualities, such as being fast to react and coming up with solutions to problems. It also made me overcome my weaknesses, like having to smile constantly and approach people I didn’t know.”

“Shaving my beard was one of the hardest things I have had to do,” says Balhawan. “However, last term I had to do it for one of my classes, which made it

much easier to do for my internship.”

One remarkable experience, Khnaizir recalls, was attending the Security Council elections for its five non-permanent seats: “There was tension for the European seat because neither the Netherlands nor Italy got the votes needed to win. In the end, they took an unprecedented decision to split the two-year term. Witnessing the moment when the ambassadors shook hands and made that compromise was something I’ll never forget.”

Employers increasingly see internship programs as the best path for hiring qualified entry-level candidates that also guarantees a high retention rate.

“It meant a lot working with a fashion designer this well-known — Michelle Obama wears some of her outfits — and knowing that I’ve been part of [Katrantzou’s] Winter 2016 collection. It gives me so much happiness and encouragement,” say el Daher, adding, “maybe later on after I graduate I can go back. One of her head designers was once an intern and that’s how they start.”

“She is a bright and bubbly young woman, who just wanted to learn as much as possible of every aspect of the business and we are extremely sad she has to return to Lebanon,” reads Halabi’s recommendation from the hotel. “They offered me a job,” she explains. “But it was important for me to finish my degree. Maybe after I graduate I will return.”


As for a career in the field of diplomacy, Khnaizir is still deciding. But he knows his LAU Model UN experience, coupled with a hands-on internship in New York, will give him the tools to succeed, no matter what path he chooses.

** Pending completion of registration formalities with NYSED*

Fighting poverty, one microloan at a time

By Federica Marsi

When the banks say “no,” microfinance may be the only way out of poverty and the key to unleashing untapped human capital.



***“Refugees currently
constitute a lost potential
for Lebanon.”***

**—Mahmoud Araissi, assistant
professor at LAU's Adnan Kassar
School of Business**

Far from being a simple lack of resources, poverty is a multi-dimensional condition of social and economic deprivation that imprisons individuals within the limits of their financial capabilities. The poor often lack the tools to break free from their condition and unleash their human potential. Even access to wealth in the form of financial loans is a prerogative of those who already dispose of capital. Financial services providers (FSP) apply strict eligibility requirements in order to limit the risk of default. Nearly three billion people in developing countries are currently excluded from the formal financial system.

In Lebanon, following the inflow of refugees fleeing the Syrian war the number of people living under the poverty line has risen by 66 percent since 2011. According to the World Bank's estimates, an extra 170,000 Lebanese became poor between 2011 and 2014. Among the more than one million Syrian refugees present in the country, approximately 350,000 are estimated to be unable to meet minimum survival requirements.

At a time where 1.6 billion people around the world still live in poverty and

humanitarian coffers are increasingly going bankrupt, the need for new solutions has become evident. Over the past 15 years, microfinance has built a solid track record as a critical tool in the fight against poverty, granting loans to approximately 130 million low-income individuals. Can this be a successful recipe in Lebanon, both for its local and refugee populations?

In Lebanon, the number of microloan providers has passed 20, with the top five microfinance institutions (MFIs) having a combined worth of \$62 million. Al Majmoua, the largest such provider according to publicly available data, was created in 1994 as a microfinance program by Save the Children and then spun off as a fully-fledged non-governmental organization (NGO). Currently, it offers individual and group loans to 60,000 users.

Although it serves some of the most underprivileged individuals in Lebanon, al Majmoua's default rate is below one percent. Its lending methods have been crafted to serve the specific needs of the targeted population.

“We spend a lot of time with each client, making sure not to over-indebt



them,” says Alia Farhat, al Majmoua’s business development manager. “We also offer them non-financial services, including financial education and technical skills training to make sure their business is well managed.”

The majority of al Majmoua’s loans are issued to individuals, with others issued through groups consisting of three to five members each. These are smaller than individual loans (on average \$400-500 per person versus \$1,000-1,500) and are designed for borrowers who lack a credit history and therefore need joint liability lending.

Around 15 percent of al Majmoua’s clients are non-Lebanese, including Syrians, Palestinians and other minority groups. While many financial service providers are reluctant to work with refugee populations — considered unreliable due to their transient nature — the NGO is bucking the trend.

“Refugees are a resource, but we lack a national strategy that can unleash their potential,” says Farhat. Of the 450 group loans granted to Syrian refugees in Lebanon, only six have not been repaid. Since February, al Majmoua also granted 28 individual loans, all of which are being repaid on time.

However, including refugees in microfinance programs is a delicate procedure that can cause an earthquake on already shaky grounds. “We need to be very careful not to create direct competition between Syrians and the local community,” says Farhat. “Therefore we must create businesses that tap into a niche market.” Financed activities include bakeries selling Syrian manoushi bread, which is slightly less salty than its Lebanese version, and woodcarving, among others.

Other providers have attempted to serve refugee populations, with limited success — partly because the products and services offered were not adapted to the specific needs of the clients. To provide guidance on the topic, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) released in July 2016 a report with detailed guidelines on how to successfully serve refugee populations.

“The Lebanese host communities have realized that it is also in their interest if refugees have income-generating activities,” says Farhat. “However, our ability to help the Syrian community is limited by our ability to identify new value chains that will not affect Lebanese businesses.”

Mahmoud Araissi, assistant professor at LAU’s Adnan Kassab School of Business specializing in the banking sector, agrees. “Refugees currently constitute a lost potential for Lebanon,” he says, “when they could be integrated in the market and generate revenues as is happening in other host countries.”

“We need to be very careful not to create direct competition between Syrians and the local community.”

—Alia Farhat, business development manager at al Majmoua

Rather than encouraging refugees to resettle permanently, investing in human capital could prove a more effective long-term strategy. “Lebanon has always witnessed economic immigration from Syria, therefore giving them the tools to reinvest in their own country would enable them to create a better economy,” says Araissi.

But funding a loan always involves a risk for the lender — even more so if the beneficiary has no credit history, proof of residence, or bank account. MFIs can limit their default risk by assessing the credit capacity of clients and other factors such as natural risks. Taking it a step further, new microfinance models are emerging that may allow for the development of courageous projects that do not directly translate into a business initiative, such as green loans and support for education.

“Some individuals may not be able, for example, to pay their children’s school fees upfront, but they are able to cover that sum if they can pay over a period of time,” says Lev Plaves, Middle East portfolio manager for Kiva, an international nonprofit that developed the world’s first online lending platform. Through its website, Kiva allows users to lend money to low-income entrepreneurs and students in over 80 countries. Its local partners identify suitable beneficiaries, whose pictures are posted on the Kiva platform along with a description of what the loan will be used for. Each lender chooses whom to support and allocates a \$25 loan.

“Kiva takes the responsibility for the loan upon itself, enabling its local partners to do things they would otherwise not have done,” says Plaves. As the loan’s total amount is spread among many lenders, losses in case of default are very limited. Kiva’s default rate is only three percent.

In Lebanon, Kiva is partnering with al Majmoua, which is responsible for verifying the eligibility of each beneficiary. Loans are then granted to local MFIs without interest when the sum required

by the beneficiary is raised. Once the loan is paid back, each lender receives \$25 back and can decide whether to reinvest the sum to help another borrower.

“We like the idea of strangers helping one another,” says Plaves, “and this solidarity chain has reached mind-blowing proportions.” Among Kiva’s beneficiaries, he recollects one woman from northern Iraq whom Kiva helped start a sewing business. “When she saw the pictures on the website of the users who helped her start her business,” Plaves recalls, “she was so touched that she too decided to lend money to someone else.”

“Lebanon’s potential to expand its microfinance sector is great.”

—Marcel Rached, LAU alumnus and International Financial Corporation investment officer

But what is the future for microfinance in the Middle East? Access to finance via deposit accounts, payments and credit has proved to reduce poverty and enable the poor to build assets, increase incomes, and reduce their vulnerability to economic stress. While MFIs can operate as a “non-profit” institution such as NGO, credit cooperative, non-bank financial institution (NBFI) or even as a formal, regulated and “for-profit” bank, microfinance institutions are commercially driven which ensures business suitability.

While the microfinance sector still holds great business opportunities for investors in the Middle East and North Africa region, external risks are currently the highest risk category in the Arab region, with Syria, Lebanon and Tunisia ranking among the countries where the risk perceived by stakeholders is “high” or “very high.”

According to Marcel Rached, investment officer with the International Financial Corporation (IFC) and LAU business graduate (’98), perceived risks do not always reflect the reality on the ground. “Lebanon’s potential to expand its microfinance sector is great, but of course this won’t happen if changes are not made to facilitate this process,” he says.

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, is the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries. As part of its mission, oriented toward strengthening private sector development where it is needed the most, the IFC advises governments on how to improve financial institutions.

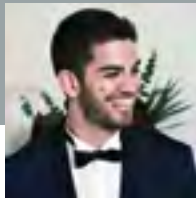
“What Lebanon needs is an update in its regulatory environment,” says Rached, “starting with a dedicated microfinance regulatory framework.” Non-profit institutions providing microfinance services are registered with the Ministry of the Interior and do not have to follow the lending regulations incumbent upon financial institutions registered with Banque du Liban (BDL), Lebanon’s central bank. One of the main risks deriving from this is over-indebtedness among microentrepreneurs who might be taking out loans from multiple MFIs at the same time, the expert explains. “These NGOs should be regulated under a special microfinance regulation that enables information sharing.”

While investors may tend to stay clear of the Middle East due to its political instability, its microcredit recipients are not any riskier a gamble than others elsewhere in the world. With the need for financial inclusion stretching across the globe, strengthening the regulatory system is a first necessary step toward making the region a more fertile ground for financial services catered to its growing population of microentrepreneurs. ■



On the Move

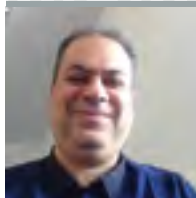
SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING



EVAN FAKHOURY, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

After completing his B.E. at LAU, Fakhoury went on to obtain an M.Sc. in advanced mechanical engineering followed by a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the University of Leeds. In addition to being an alumnus, Fakhoury's desire to be a catalyst for change compelled him to join LAU, to provide his current and future students with the information they need to become successful engineers while constantly challenging them along the way to seek problems in their daily lives and look for ways to solve them. His current research projects can be placed under the umbrella of computational modeling and design.



ADEL GUIRGIS, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

With a Ph.D. in engineering from the University of Calgary and 20 years experience in the field as a production engineer and subsurface engineering manager, Guirgis returns to his passion for research and teaching. By joining LAU's ABET accredited School of Engineering, he hopes to provide his students with real-life examples and motivation to pursue a career in petroleum engineering. Continuing from his doctorate research on produced water treatment from oilsands projects, the areas of research that interest him now include thermal recovery of heavy oil and enhanced oil recovery methods.

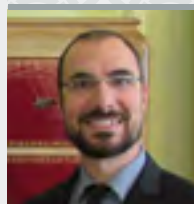
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY



YARA KUYUMJIAN, PH.D.

Clinical Assistant Professor

After graduating with a Pharm.D. from LAU, Kuyumjian joined Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, Florida, as a pharmacy resident specializing in emergency medicine. In addition to transmitting her expertise in emergency medicine and critical care to the new generation of pharmacists, Kuyumjian aims to encourage students to pursue residencies and hopes to develop a pharmacy residency program at the university's medical center.

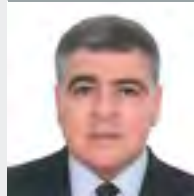


THE ADNAN KASSAR SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

PUZANT BALOZIAN, PH.D.

Assistant Professor

Balozian received his Ph.D. in information systems (Baylor University). He researches the impact of organizational factors on individual user behaviors in the context of information security and privacy, with work appearing in the Database for Advances in Information Systems, the International Conference of Information Systems and the Americas Conference on Information Systems. He intends to spark students' interest in technology, cybersecurity, critical thinking, and ethical dilemmas involved in computer security. Balozian research interest lies primarily in the impact of organizational factors on individual user behaviors in the context of information security and privacy, as well as address security policy compliance and violation in the organizational environment.



AHMAD JACHI, PH.D.

Adjunct Faculty

A leading international expert in Islamic finance, Jachi has served as Global Head of Islamic Finance at the Global Association of Risk Professionals. Previously, he served as the First Vice Governor of Banque du Liban and as Alternate Governor for Lebanon at the IMF. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from Northern Illinois University, with research addressing the challenges faced by Islamic financial institutions in managing their risks.



TANIA KALLAB, PH.D.

Adjunct Faculty

Kallab holds a Ph.D. from the joint program between ESSEC Business School and Université Cergy-Pontoise in France. Her ongoing research lies in the field of economic history, institutions and trade. She hopes that her return to Lebanon and her fondness for LAU will allow her to expand her research on economic history, international economics, economics of institutions, and development macroeconomics and international trade.

**FADILA MARAOUCH, PH.D.**

Lecturer

Maraouch obtained a master's in hospitality management from the university of Houston, followed by a Ph.D. in organizational leadership. She served as a chairperson at AUST and a full time lecturer at UOB. She researches the MENA region's unique culture, seeking to apply successful concepts to local needs. She is very interested in and closely monitors the strategic planning of tourism activities in the area, such as the efforts of Lebanon's Ministry of Tourism to launch the Phoenician route, which she believes is a great endeavor that deserves attention. Maraouch aims to introduce her students at LAU to the latest theories and practices in the leadership and hospitality disciplines.

**NAGHAM SAYOUR, PH.D.**

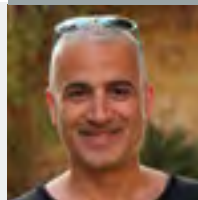
Lecturer

Sayour obtained a Ph.D. in economics from McGill University in Canada, specializing in the field of empirical microeconomics with special interest in labor economics, child development, and experimental economics. She is also interested in examining the effect of immigration on natives' labor market outcomes. She joins LAU to teach students to become informed citizens and critical thinkers through learning about economics. Prior to joining LAU, Sayour taught several courses at McGill University, including topics such as economic crises and microeconomic analysis.

**SCHOOL OF
ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN****RAMONA ABDO**

Adjunct Faculty

Abdo's master's of architecture from the Netherlands' Berlage Institute allows her academic career at LAU to compliment her architectural practice at Atelier Hapsitus. She aims to help her students understand the role that architecture can play in disrupting everyday life, the unexpected possibilities that designers can provoke through manipulating space and place, and the tremendous possibilities architecture holds for resolving numerous social problems.

**CARLOS AOUN**

Adjunct Faculty

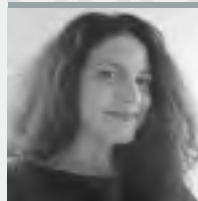
Aoun's desire to share the knowledge and expertise he acquired throughout his international professional career motivated him to join LAU. He aims to awaken in his students a sense of the beauty surrounding them by teaching them to interact with and enjoy this beauty through photography that touches on the humane aspect of people by trying to reach deeper into the layers of human emotions and feelings. Through Beirut Workshops, where he teaches people to look so they can see, Aoun is currently building a community of people that want to share what they see.

**KARMA DABAGHI**

Visiting Assistant Professor

Product designer and architect

Dabaghi's work proposes solutions to social issues, treating design as a tool to communicate new ideas, test new conceptual assumptions, and explore connections between theory and practice. Dabaghi joins LAU after having earned a master's of design from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and worked with international companies such as DuPont, Bruce Mau Design and Danese in Milan. She very interested in exploring the connections between theory and practice. Outside of academia, she focuses her efforts on establishing a conceptual studio practice that addresses academic discourse and formulates new possibilities with the goal of changing existing social conditions.

**TANIA HADDAD**

Visiting Assistant Professor

Haddad holds an M.A. in anthropology from UC Berkeley and an A.A.S. in fashion design from Parsons School of Design. She has worked in the design departments of Donna Karan Collection, DKNY, Yeohlee and 10 Crosby Derek Lam, and taught at New York University. Haddad joins LAU's fashion design program with the aim of nurturing the creative, intellectual and professional growth of the region's next design innovators.

On the Move



MISSAK HAJIAVEDKIAN

Adjunct Faculty

After graduating from ESMOD Beirut in 2007, Hajiavedkian sought inspiration from the fashion capitals of the world, Paris, Milan and New York. His innovative vision, his engagement with art, and his Armenian heritage earned him a cult following among celebrities and fashion editors. His desire to spread knowledge to people from different backgrounds entails volunteering at the NGO fashion institute Creative Space Beirut.



YOUSSEF HELOU

Adjunct Faculty

Helou holds a D.E.S in Architecture from Académie Libanaise des Beaux Arts. He has worked as an architectural designer for GreenbergFarrow architects in New York and as a senior designer for Dagher Hanna & Partners in Beirut. Helou aims to inspire and to motivate his students by igniting their curiosity and thirst for knowledge instead of relying on rote learning methods to become successful designers. In addition to his work in architecture, Helou is a published illustrator and is interested in various design disciplines, including stage and set design, product design, video games design, graphic design and typography. He is presently in the early stages of a book project that integrates architectural graphic design and illustration principles.



CYNTHIA ISSA

Adjunct Faculty

Issa holds an M.A. in art history from the University of Toronto and has worked for several years with the Beirut Art Center. Her pedagogical approach consists of dialogical learning and theoretical readings of texts, media and forms, as well as engaging her students in the urban landscape and its contested sites. Her research interests include visual culture and critical visibility studies and spectacle and simulacrum, among others. Her research interests include visual culture and critical visibility studies, spectacle and simulacrum, architecture and public space, nature and culture, class, race and gender, revolutionary and avant-garde moments, and critical pedagogy.



SOPHIE KHAYAT

Lecturer

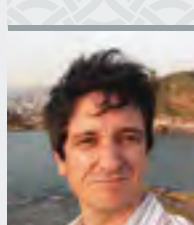
Khayat earned her D.E.S. in Interior Architecture from Académie Libanaise des Beaux-Arts in 1995. She has worked in interior architecture, furniture design, exhibition design and movie art direction, teaching various courses and studios at LAU's SARd as a part-time and adjunct faculty member since 2001. She is most interested in the relationship between the human body and the space as a site of what she calls "evolutive" experiences.



ZENA M. MESKAOUI, PH.D.

Adjunct Faculty

With a Ph.D. in philosophy, art and critical thought from the European Graduate School in Switzerland, Meskaoui has been teaching graduate and undergraduate students art history and theory as a part time faculty member at LAU since 2003. Her research interest lies in the Lebanese and regional artistic production and underlining theories, particularly notions relating to war and their relevance or lack thereof in art. Her present and past research focuses on 20th and 21st century art in Lebanon. For her, the area's diverse and prolific cultural production offers invaluable fields for research. And the interdisciplinary approach of art history enables her to make comparative studies between cultures and societies and enhances a use of methodologies and critical thought from various disciplines.



RICCARDO PEDRAZZOLI

Visiting Assistant Professor

After earning his master's degree in architecture from Italy's Ferrara University, Pedrazzoli started his career as a Leonardo trainee at an Austrian architectural firm. He then founded MIRO architects in Bologna. As a teacher and lecturer, his main interest is the urban environment. He strives to teach the young generation of architects to get more involved in what he calls "grassroots requalification." Such initiatives usually take place during a time of economical crisis, which is what happened recently in his country. He believes it's important that young professionals offer their contribution to the quality of life in times like these.

SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES



RUDY ABI HABIB, PH.D.

Assistant Professor

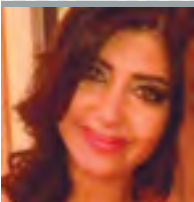
Clinical psychologist and psychodynamic psychotherapist Rudy Abi-Habib has completed a double Ph.D. program and a two-year postdoctoral program. His research interests are specific psychopathologies, such as personality disorders and psychosomatic disorders, psychometrics and basic psychological constructs such as attachment and mentalization. Abi Habib believes LAU is a place where intellectual and emotional growth foster a positive learning environment for faculty and students. He aims to help students find their passions and grow to be independent thinkers and healthy professionals by being committed to high quality teaching and fostering positive learning environments for them.



ANDREE AFFEICH, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

Affeich holds a Ph.D. in multilingual lexicology, terminology and translation from the University of Lyon II. She is the first Lebanese and Arab researcher to be elected member of the Pan-Latin Terminology Network "REALITER" at the Royal Academy of Belgium-Brussels. She served as associate dean of the Faculty of Letters at USEK, is the author of three books and a contributor to multiple national and international publications.



NADIA BHUIYAN

Instructor

A former LAU graduate, Bhuiyan earned her master's degree in English from the American University of Beirut, where she served as a tutor at the writing center for two years. Her teaching experience at AUB, LAU and NDU, as well as her belief in the value of one-on-one teaching, motivates Bhuiyan to help students see the importance of writing in everyday life, beyond just academia.



NASSER CHOUR

Lecturer

Chour boasts 14 years of experience in academia as a communication faculty member and 20 years of experience in the media industry both in the MENA region and the U.S. He has also served as an International Emmy jury member, a lecturer of film at the prestigious Bryn Mawr Film Institute, and as director of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies at Villanova University. Social Justice and change are at the heart of what Chour aims to do, whether by teaching students the importance of the media in bringing about change or through assigning his students projects focused on outreach and social justice related issues.



HALA DAOUK

Instructor

On completing her M.A. in comparative literature, it was Daouk's experiences as an undergraduate — which had allowed her to grow personally and professionally — that attracted her to LAU. She hopes to positively influence students by helping them reach their full potential. Through her work at the LAU Writing Center, she is currently involved in a project to assist schools in starting their own writing centers.

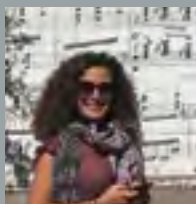


MICHELE KELLY, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

Having obtained a Ph.D. in human ecology from Louisiana State University, Kelly aims to pursue teaching, research and writing opportunities regarding child protection in situations of natural and man-made disasters, including refugee crises, human rights, the expansion of the profession of social work internationally, and the development of indigenous models of social work practice. Kelly has also served as the Refugee Resettlement Coordinator for Catholic Charities in New Orleans. She is interested in institutionalizing a Human Rights Film Festival at LAU and fully supports the students interest in establishing a nation social work organization.

On the Move



CLAUDIA KOZMAN, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

Kozman has been reporting and editing on sports for over 13 years. She covered sports media in Lebanon before moving to Malaysia as the press secretary of the President of the Asian Football Confederation. Armed with a Ph.D. from Indiana State University, she now joins LAU in the aim of teaching students material that is relevant to their environment and training them as new age citizen journalists. Her research revolves around mediated communication in the Middle East. This includes the media and the people using them. Kozman is particularly interested in researching news content and those creating it. Her goal is to educate students in investigative journalism.



OMAR EL MAARRI, PH.D.

Associate Professor

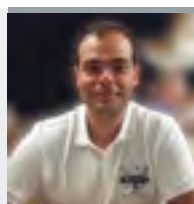
El Maarri holds a Ph.D. in molecular genetics from Bogazici University. He has worked at at Max Plank Institute in Berlin and the University of Bonn, and has published more than 60 scientific papers and supervised a dozen of master's and Ph.D. students. He aims to expose students to practical biomedical research, inserting the spirit of research in everyday life. He is interested in biomedical research, intracellular trafficking of coagulation F8, cellular modeling of genetic diseases and epigenetic deregulations associated with both health and with human diseases.



JAD MELKI, PH.D.

Associate Professor, Chair of Department

Melki holds a Ph.D. in journalism and media studies from the University of Maryland. He aims to empower students by providing them with sharp critical skills, cutting-edge media competencies, and rigorous scientific research abilities. He runs the Media and Digital Literacy Academy of Beirut (MDLAB), which targets issues of political division, sectarianism and extremist ideologies in the Arab region within the context of media literacy education. His research is at the intersection of digital media literacy, gender studies, war and conflict, and political violence.



JOSEPH REBEHMED, PH.D.

Visiting Assistant Professor

Armed with a Ph.D. in computational chemistry and informatics from the University Paris Diderot, it was LAU's new bioinformatics program that motivated Rebehmed to return to Lebanon. His research includes studying the relationships between the sequences, structures and functions of proteins, their evolutionary conservation, and their alterations upon mutations leading to diseases. Rebehmed is committed to innovative teaching, active learning approaches and critical thinking.



GRACE SAWAYA

Instructor

With an M.A. in education, Sawaya returned to Lebanon after an absence of 27 years. LAU's mission and its dedication to staff members, faculty and students inspired her to join its ranks and to further develop her interests, which include applying the Inquiry Learning Method in teaching, applying the flipped classroom technique, incorporating technology in education, and creating mentoring programs.



AMR SELIM, PH.D.

Assistant Professor

Selim has appeared as a horn soloist with multiple orchestras worldwide. He holds a doctorate of music arts from Stony Brook University. His interest in musicology encouraged him to join LAU. His students' eagerness to learn, their positive attitudes and seeing them push their limits inspire him to be part of what he sees as a change in Arab history. As an educator, he has taught and given workshops at the Manhattan and Aaron Copland Schools of Music, and the Adelphi, as well as Stony Brook and Ithaca Universities. He recently finished his book Vocalizing the Horn; A pedagogical approach to interpreting Arab vocal music on the horn and his research includes work on music and Qur'an.



100-year-old LAU alumna Saloua Raouda Choucair shines on

By Zalfa Halabi

“My mother was very creative and highly optimistic about the modernity of Arab culture,” says Hala Choucair Gharzeddine. Born in 1916, Saloua Raouda Choucair modernized Arab art by blending western abstraction with Islamic aesthetics. Through this combination she created art works that exude an air of equilibrium. Her sculptures, paintings, tapestries, architectural plans, and jewelry designs reflect a holistic vision of the world. Choucair meshes diverse interests, including quantum physics, molecular biology, optics and Arabic poetry, to create pieces that are simultaneously complex and simple.

Choucair started her career as a painter in a studio housing renowned artists and intellectuals such as Moustafa Farroukh and Omar el Onsi. In 1948 she studied at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Art in Paris. There she attended the studio of the prominent French cubist painter and sculptor Fernand Léger.

When examined closely, Choucair’s complex structures are comparable to DNA molecules. The pieces that make up her sculptures, for example, are interlinked like the nucleotides in DNA strands. The centenarian’s fascination with abstraction in art is rooted in her initial field of studies: science. “She believed in progress and was very curious about science. She wanted her work to be a synthesis of all these elements,” says Gharzeddine.

In fact in 1938 she earned her degree in biology from LAU, then known as the American Junior College for Women. LAU began as a women’s college in 1924, with roots extending back to 1835, when it started as the first school for girls in the Ottoman Empire — an early effort to develop education for girls, of which Choucair was an advocate.

This year, on the 24th of June, in celebration of Choucair’s 100th birthday, the Sursock Museum in Beirut put

together a show of recently produced sculptures. In the hope of holding a permanent exhibition of her mother’s masterpieces, Gharzeddine established the Saloua Raouda Choucair Foundation, which loaned Sursock the pieces. Based on smaller originals and sketches, the new large sculptures are transfixing. They are elusive, light and airy, and yet are made of black stone.

“My mother was very creative and highly optimistic about the modernity of Arab culture.”

—Hala Choucair Gharzeddine, the artist’s daughter

Choucair’s avant-gardism only started gaining international traction in recent years, making up for the little attention it received in her earlier days. In 2013 London’s Tate Modern exhibited her work. That show marked her first major international exhibition since the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism displayed her work in the glass exhibition hall in Hamra in 1974. Before that Choucair was awarded the National Council of Tourism Prize in 1963. She has also received several distinctions from the Ministry of National Education and was awarded the highest national honor, the Cedar Decoration (Knight and Officer Grades). In 2011 a retrospective of the artist’s work was held at the Beirut Exhibition Center.

In appreciation of its alumna, LAU — by then known as the Beirut College for Women — acquired in 1975 a sculpture that now sits in the campus’ garden, responding to Choucair’s belief that art should be made public and accessible to all.

Reminiscing at the Beirut campus

By Reem Maghribi

LAU has a long and vibrant history. Established as a girls' school in 1835, the university has changed its scope — and name — over the decades, while always maintaining a strong passion for education and community. Hundreds of thousands of people make up the LAU community, among them students, alumni, staff and faculty. Three women, who between them have studied and worked at the university for over a hundred years, share with us their most vivid memories of their time at the Beirut campus.



Safadi Fine Arts building during construction

Hala Masri 1982-present

In 1982, Hala Masri first came to LAU, then known as Beirut University College (BUC), as a student of communication arts. The first room she entered on campus was the office of the then-chair of humanities, Irene Faffler. That same room in the Safadi Fine Arts building, with its wonderful view over the courtyard, would later become Masri's office.

"I worked in here as a part-time student assistant and after graduation I became a staff member. This room became my office around 1988. I've asked the university if I can permanently buy it, it means so much to me," says the senior theater coordinator half-jokingly.

A few floors down, in a classroom with a piano, Masri recalls the moment when she discovered her voice, during her first year as a student. Her Theater in Performance course lecturer John Everton singled her out during one of his classes. "He played the scales on the piano and each student had to sing. I always thought I could sing, but that's when both the students and the teacher confirmed it." Masri went on to sing and perform for many years thereafter, including on the stage of the Cairo Opera House in Egypt.

As both a student and a staffer, Masri has performed many times on the stage of the Gulbenkian Theatre, the grand semi-circular space that has welcomed many a dignitary and artist as guests and collaborators to a string of university productions. "I used to adore Ziad Rahbani and remember clearly the excitement I felt when I first saw him in the Gulbenkian, never imagining I'd later work with him as a singer," recalls Masri.

"For over thirty years, I have spent countless hours preparing for shows here at the Gulbenkian," she explains. "However, as the building's steps were a popular student hangout, there was always someone to lend a hand."

"This room became my office around 1988. I've asked the university if I can permanently buy it, it means so much to me."

—Hala Masri, LAU senior theater coordinator



Hala Masri



Nadia Daoud

Nadia Daoud 1968-present

Nadia Daoud will soon be retiring from her job as admissions administrator, almost 50 years after first joining LAU as a student. It was known as the Beirut College for Women (BCW) when Daoud attended to study elementary education with the help of financial aid in 1968. "I worked in the library, which was at the time in Irwin Hall," recalls Daoud, sitting in her office on the west side of the same building.



Back of Irwin Hall

Irwin Hall was renovated in 2005 and Daoud, with animated hands, points out the location of the old library, her first office, and that of Leila Dagher, the one-time head of the External Relations office who hired Daoud in 1989. "I had been working as a school teacher during the day while also teaching English as a second language as part of LAU's continuing education program in the afternoon."

By 1990, Daoud was committed fulltime to LAU and touring schools across the country as part of the university's outreach initiatives. "There were no reliable phones

then during the war, and no internet. The relations office had been inactive for many years before Dagher took over, so we had a lot of work to do," says Daoud, recalling fondly the many challenges and the camaraderie in the office.

"Each corner of this building holds a memory," says Daoud with a smile, remembering her first day on campus. "We all gathered in the auditorium of Irwin Hall, hundreds of young women eager to learn, and were put into groups and assigned a 'big sister.' Mine was Mona Habayib, with whom I'm still in touch."



Door of Sage Hall

Nahla Nola Bacha 1966-present

Nahla Bacha, better known as Nola, spent a month on a ship at the age of 16, traveling from her birthplace of Sydney to her new life in Beirut, after her parents decided to move back to their homeland. "Sage, Irwin, Shannon and Nicole, those

are the only ones I remember," says Bacha, referring to the buildings that stood on the Beirut campus when she joined LAU, then BCW, as a student upon arriving in Beirut in 1966. "And the tennis court!" she later adds.

Talking about the teachers she had and the classes she took, she recalls a course in childhood development and remembers another space. "The nursery. I used to watch the children there. It's still in the same space, though it's been developed since."

The auditorium of Irwin Hall, where the students used to attend weekly prayer services, hasn't changed much, says Bacha. Nor has Sage Hall. "My clearest memory as a student is of Fouad Rifka standing at the head of a classroom in Sage Hall staring out the north-facing window. I loved his philosophy classes." Rifka, who has since passed away, later became Bacha's colleague when she joined the university's off-campus intensive English program as a coordinator.

"I have seen the university grow over the decades," says Bacha, who became chair of the Department of Humanities in 1987 and chair of the Department of English upon its inception in 2015 and is

now predominantly based at the Byblos campus, which itself was only established in the early 1990s.

"When I was a student in Beirut, it had a high-school vibe. It actually had fewer students than my high-school in Australia," recalls Bacha, who would enjoy conversations and meals with her peers on the benches and among the trees that still adorn the central space of the Beirut campus. "I've enjoyed seeing the university expand and grow."

Bacha first joined the LAU faculty in 1972, having gained an A.A. at BCW and a degree in English at AUB. She began to teach intensive English courses around the same time the university began accepting male students, which resulted in a change of name from BCW to BUC in 1973. "There weren't many men then, but I witnessed that evolution, as I did many others," remembers Bacha fondly.

"I've enjoyed seeing the university expand and grow."

—Nola Bacha, acting chair of LAU's Department of English and professor of applied linguistics/TESOL



An opportunity not to miss

By Linda Dahdah

"More than technical knowledge, what I have gained is confidence."

—Roni Kastoun, LAU computer science student

From educator to employer, LAU helps students build their skills and personality

When thinking of student employment, the first image that comes to mind is young people being made to run errands of all kinds, from photocopying to making coffee, in various university offices. However, working at LAU — although it might indeed include photocopying — can be truly life-changing, providing both experience and financial gain.

Certainly, one department that has made a difference for its student employees is the IT department, which counts around 15 financial aid and 10 student employment students per semester — coming second after the Library, which tops the list of student employers. Eligible students benefit from financial aid, where payment for hours worked is removed from tuition fees, or from student employment, where the student receives payment for hours worked.

Computer science student Roni Kastoun started working at the IT department, better known as Information Technology @ LAU, soon after enrolling two years ago. Initially, he was only slightly familiar with computer science, however, in just two semesters he became comfortable enough to assist members of LAU's staff and faculty who encountered IT related problems.

"We train the students by taking them on calls with us."

—Farhan al Ghareeb, LAU senior IT support administrator

"You learn on the job," he says, adding, "we are involved in everything that is IT related, from formatting to software and hardware debugging, software installation, network configuration, and so on."

Senior IT support administrator Farhan al Ghareeb (B.E. '12) supervises the students. According to him, building trust between the community and the students

is important. "We train the students by taking them on calls with us," he explains. "IT is a domain that is needed in all the disciplines, from computer science and math to engineering and business, and we need to be able to cater to everybody's needs. So it is a win-win situation."

An LAU alumna who graduated in engineering, al Ghareeb started as a financial aid student before becoming a part-time and then a full-time employee at the university. "The experience opens many doors. In fact, it is truly amazing: you build your skills, a network of friends, and your personal identity while receiving financial aid."

This experience is one Kastoun completely relates to. "More than technical knowledge, what I have gained is confidence. My interaction with the LAU community has taught me how to talk to people. At the same time, I feel I belong, we are like family and we get a lot of support from the IT staff ... They are real leaders. If it wasn't for them, I wouldn't be here today."

Marc Kassib graduated in computer science last June and was immediately recruited by Murex, a leading software developing company. "Working at the IT department was really beneficial. I learned useful technical and professional tools, and teamwork, all in a natural working environment, which is a big plus for my career."

According to Ghada Abi Fares, director of financial aid and scholarships, LAU employs about 400 students per semester, while around 2,200 students benefit from financial aid.

Unanimous about the benefits of the experience, all interviewees advise students to work during their time at university. "The experience made a real difference for me," says Kastoun. "When a leading IT company was looking for an intern, they chose me from among the other students because I had more hands-on experience."

Greening indoor air quality solutions

By Naseem Ferdowsi

The growing emphasis on green and sustainable buildings means a shift in heating, ventilating and air conditioning (HVAC) solutions

Jamal Jawhari, CEO of SAFID, a regional engineered air solutions company and an HVAC expert, is currently working toward providing innovative and energy efficient air systems that improve the quality of indoor air while reducing the region's carbon footprint.

Are current HVAC technologies still viable for green and sustainable buildings?

Like any other technology, the HVAC sector is being continually developed into smarter systems. Old methods are being redeveloped and new products are being introduced, leading to better indoor air quality while utilizing less energy and reducing carbon emissions. If we don't stay abreast of the sector's news, developments and innovations, we will be left behind.

What are the new HVAC trends in energy saving and environment protection?

There is the demand-controlled ventilation and air conditioning, which — by using advanced sensors and control technology — allows the system to work only when it is required. Another trend is solar cooling, which uses solar energy to power air conditioning systems. Shifting from rectangular to round ducts for indoor distribution of cooled air has also been proven to be more energy efficient. There is a move toward the building of district cooling plants for large projects as an alternative to numerous units, thus reducing the energy consumption of the entire area.

Are there any challenges facing green HVAC in the region, especially for the Gulf countries?

Due to their geographical location, the Gulf countries have a naturally high demand for HVAC. However, because of new building codes and regulations, there are a lot of initiatives for more green buildings, and here lies the challenge. Designers and contractors need to be educated in the new technologies, in their long-term advantage for both people and the environment. Not to mention the long-term commercial advantage for project owners.

Are governments providing any support to encourage sustainable building?

Yes, governments are aware of the new trends, and new building codes are being

"Courses on energy consumption and efficiency provide the tools necessary to develop value engineering on projects."



Jamal Jawhari and LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara during a signing ceremony where Jawhari established an annual scholarship for needy and deserving students

imposed on new projects, but it is not only the governments that should be making an effort. We should also support them by educating our clients and project owners in the new technologies and the benefits of energy efficient systems.

What should LAU students looking for a career in HVAC concentrate on?

The career growth in HVAC is very promising, and students should take courses that focus on energy consumption and efficiency to provide them with the tools to develop value engineering on projects. I am sure this will add value to their CVs as potential candidates. I would advise them to believe in themselves and be passionate about what they do.

Nowadays, technology is moving very fast, so I suggest that students read and follow trends in parallel to their studies. Keep abreast to stay alive!

Investing for and in the region's human capital

By Reem Maghribi



FEATURE

The baby boom of the late 20th century was not matched by an equally explosive economic boom. As a result, the Arab world is now home to millions of out of work youths. The creation of jobs and the development of skills are, say the experts, priority goals that require development in government policy, national education, and entrepreneurship.



“The focus is not on beating existing competition but on expanding and creating markets.”

—Michel Majdalani, director of LAU's Continuing Education Program

For no less than fifty years, many academic and human resources executives have been crunching numbers to determine which investments in human capital yield the strongest returns.

Such concepts and calculations find their roots in the work of economist Gary Becker, who championed the need for investment in “human capital,” a phrase he coined to refer to employees’ knowledge, habits, and personality attributes that enable them to produce economic value through their labor.

While investments in employees’ health and even morals are positively correlated with increased economic output, the primary focus of those responsible for studying or implementing human capital investment has to date been education and training. Consequently, the positive

relationship between education and earnings is now well documented.

A 2016 index presented by the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranked 130 countries based on their ability to maximize and leverage their human capital endowment, measuring among other indicators enrollment in and the quality of formal education. Also measured were the availability of workplace training and the economic participation of the potential labor force. Lebanon was not included in the report, but of the twelve Arab League states that were, Bahrain was ranked highest overall (coming in 46th) and Mauritania lowest (130th).

A lack of investment in education by the region’s many authoritarian regimes is likely a contributing factor to the low

rankings, which are particularly worrisome when viewed by age group. Finland dominated the rankings for people under 15 years old, those between 15 and 24 years old, and 25-54 year olds. The highest ranking Arab country in the 15 to 24-year-old group was Saudi Arabia, coming in at 68, a very poor performance for a high-income country, compounded by the fact that overall the Gulf state ranked 87th. That Egypt — with a significantly lower GDP than Saudi Arabia — ranked 86th highlights the fact that economic factors alone are not an adequate measure of a country's ability to successfully leverage its human capital potential.

Issues affecting the youth labor market in Arab Mediterranean Countries (AMCs) in general and Lebanon in particular were the focus of a 2016 policy paper written by faculty members of the Department of Economics at LAU's Adnan Kassar School of Business professor and department chair Ghassan Dibeh, associate professor and associate chair Walid Marrouch, and assistant professor Ali Fakih.

In "The Poor and Marginalized in Lebanon: Labor Market Challenges and Policy Implications," the authors highlight the paradoxical fact that AMCs enjoy the highest rate of employment growth in the world while concurrently experiencing the highest rate of unemployment of any region. A growing youth population, underinvestment in job creation, and poor governance all have a role to play in the underdevelopment of the region's workforce. So too does skill mismatch, which, the report notes, "is highly persistent in the AMCs and has been identified as a severe obstacle for growth."

In fact, say the LAU experts, "employability of youth and the identification of factors that improve education-to-work transitions for young people is a pressing topic in the reform of the youth labor market in Lebanon." LAU plays its part by continually developing new programs based on industry demand, by running a mentoring program to assist in the transition from education to workplace (see page 10), and by offering a multitude of courses as part of its Continuing Education Program (CEP).

The CEP courses are designed "to contribute to a knowledge economy, where the focus is not on beating existing competition but on expanding and creating markets," explains the program's



director Michel Majdalani. Companies are also increasingly seeing the benefit of investing in their workforce. Over 13 percent of CEP students take courses and gain professional qualifications funded by their employers. "Firms adapting to the use of capital to enhance skills of available workforce have benefits accruing to everyone, with a more educated workforce capable of adjusting better to changes necessitated by competitiveness and productivity," Majdalani says.

One of CEP's latest offerings is a postgraduate diploma in Gender in Development and Humanitarian Assistance, launched in collaboration with LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) and Human Rights Education Associates. "Our new diploma is providing tangible, marketable skills with direct access to jobs in a growing sector with established organizations, both local and international," says Lina Abirafeh, IWSAW's director, explaining the importance and timeliness of the diploma. "This innovative program not only provides marketable skills, it also serves as the impetus for social and policy change — bringing us closer to achieving gender equality."

Female employment is a key indicator of gender equality, and while women in the workplace are no longer an uncommon sight in most Arab countries, we are still a long way from achieving equal economic participation. A 2004

study by the World Bank, titled "Creating 100 Million Jobs for a Fast-Growing Work Force", highlighted that "rising female labor participation since the 1980s ... constitutes one of the most important developments affecting the size and gender composition of the region's labor supply." That momentum appears to have died down, according to more recent reports. Data published by Silatech in 2013 ("Underemployment in the MENA Region," Dec. 2013, Gallup) suggests that 27 percent of women aged 18 to 29 in the MENA region participate in the labor force, compared to 70 percent of men in the same age bracket.

"Our new diploma is providing tangible, marketable skills with direct access to jobs in a growing sector."

—Lina Abirafeh, director of LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World

While boosting female participation in the workforce is proven to result in the growth of economies, the scale of the unemployment problem in the Arab countries, particularly among youth, is

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA TOP 10 ECONOMIES LEVERAGING THEIR HUMAN CAPITAL

HUMAN CAPITAL INDEX 2016	GLOBAL RANK*
Bahrain	46
Qatar	66
United Arab Emirates	69
Jordan	81
Iran	85
Egypt	86
Saudi Arabia	87
Kuwait	97
Morocco	98

Source: World economic forum 2016

so great that solving it demands more than continuing education and gender programs. It demands a shift at the national level.

The education systems across the region are failing our youth, believes Rima Bahous, associate professor of education at LAU and director of the university's Center for Program and Learning Assessment, as well as its Teacher Training Institute. "The main role of primary and secondary education should be to prepare citizens who are active and valuable to the work force; who are problem solvers, critical thinkers, proficient communicators, professionals, and ethical," says Bahous. In her view, this is not the case in Lebanon and elsewhere across the MENA. "The educational system is very traditional, based on memorization and note learning. Teachers, principals and stakeholders are in their comfort zone and are afraid of change," she adds, noting that a lack of strategic planning and interference from old timers, politicians, and religious figures stand in the way of progress.

This lack of quality and strategic planning in the formal education sector is resulting in a weak work force. As Ana Martiningui, research and communications manager at Education for Employment Europe, wrote in the 2016 policy paper "Getting the Job Done in the Arab Mediterranean Countries," "The demand for modern skills is

increasing, but the region's educational systems have still not evolved fast enough to prepare students to join an increasingly competitive market. This skills mismatch is aggravated by social and gender divides, with youths from marginalized socioeconomic backgrounds, especially women, being particularly affected."

"The main role of primary and secondary education should be to prepare citizens who are active and valuable to the work force."

—Rima Bahous, LAU associate professor of education

The disparity in quality between state and private education further compounds the problem faced by members of marginalized communities, who continue to suffer underinvestment. Arab governments had invested heavily in education in the post-independence decades, but a boom in the population and the rapid labor force growth of the 1990s shifted their focus from providing health and education for a young population to facilitating employment. Even then, the state education systems

concentrated on making public sector jobs accessible rather than on building skills that would be valuable to the private sector, an essential actor in job creation.

The World Bank report of 2004 posited that 100 million new jobs would need to be created across the region by 2020 to provide sufficient employment opportunities for the growing work force. The rate of job creation has, however, not been high. At present, only 3,400 new jobs are created each year in Lebanon, a number that Dibeh and co. say needs to increase no less than six-fold to keep up with youth entrants to the Lebanese labor market over the coming decade.

The same report stated that the "MENA's economic future will be determined by the fate of its labor markets" and declared that "if current trends continue, economic performance and the well-being of workers will be undermined by rising unemployment and low productivity." In doing so the report seemed to predict the uprisings of 2011, in which inaction by authoritarian regimes led to the venting of frustrations by millions of Arabs who are undereducated, unemployed and underinvested in. ■

Commitment to Excellence

Faculty honored

The university held its Faculty Award ceremony during this past September's Faculty Orientation Day (Byblos campus). Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering Chadi Abou Rjeily was the first recipient of the Award for Excellence in Research. Since joining the university in February 2013, Abou Rjeily has been very active in the field of research and has succeeded in making remarkable contributions in the area of wireless communication both in Lebanon and worldwide. Gabriel Bazi, assistant professor of civil engineering, and Wissam al Hussaini, assistant professor of business administration, shared the Excellence in Teaching Award. In his quest "to develop capable and ethical business leaders," al Hussein mixes interactive sessions with role play, contest, practical case studies, external visits, guest speakers, and last but not least, business simulations. Bazi's philosophy is also based on interaction, encouraging discussion while adapting the style of teaching to achieve effective learning. Introducing his students to new cultures, helping them develop a high level of maturity and knowledge, all the while emphasizing the importance of ethics is what guides Bazi in his teaching approach.



CEP graduation ceremony

This year's Continuing Education Program (CEP) graduation in Beirut registered a full house: 300 professionals from various communities of practices walked into Irwin Hall in August with heads held high. The certification they obtained is the latest achievement in their career and tangible proof of their commitment to excellency. Provost George K. Najjar underlined the necessity to "make sure we are fit and adapt to the future," adding, "CEP gives a strategic response to a world changing at the speed of thought."

Graduate Jana el Hout landed her dream job thanks to the Human Resources Business Professionals program. "I wanted to distinguish myself from other candidates and I managed to do so thanks to CEP," said el Hout, who now works in the HR department of the International College. "I used to consider the CV only during the recruitment process, but now I see the full picture and how HR policies impact the company."

Writing center supports schools nationwide

"Getting help isn't a sign of weakness but a sign of strength," said Paula Habre, the director of LAU's Writing Center, in May, quoting American First Lady Michelle Obama while addressing two dozen school and university educators and administrators. They had gathered at the Beirut campus to receive their certificates for completing a two-month tailored training program taught by Habre, writing center tutors, and a guest speaker, who made her presentation and interacted with the participants through Skype from LAU's New York headquarters.

"The LAU program was a generous one," said Rose Lindgren, the cultural attaché at the U.S. embassy in Lebanon, which funded the training following an open call for proposals. "It did not focus on expanding itself but reaching out to others all over Lebanon."



Donations



Walid A. Mroueh pledges support to LAU

Walid A. Mroueh, board member and executive management of both the Food & Drug Corporation S.A.L. and Mersaco, Lebanon's leading importers and distributors of pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, pledged \$125,000 in August to LAU's School of Pharmacy. His generous contribution will go toward naming the school's conference room located on the sixth floor of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Science Center, with the funds being channeled to the school's capital projects. "The plaque bearing my name is just a symbol for strengthening the collaboration with LAU's School of Pharmacy to benefit both our pharmaceutical companies and the school," said Mroueh during the signing ceremony.

Interstate Resources, Inc. continues support of education

Interstate Resources, Inc., a U.S.-based manufacturing company headed by Antoine Frem, recently contributed \$100,000 towards the President's Scholarship Endowment. Frem, a former board member of the university, commented, "Interstate Resources, Inc. is pleased to support LAU in its mission of building solid educational systems, supplying a creative environment and fostering intellectual expansion in Lebanon." Interstate Resources, Inc., which is part of INDEVCO, has supported LAU for more than a decade.

Kheireddine el Jisr contributes major gift toward scholarships

Friend and supporter of LAU Kheireddine el Jisr donated \$100,000 to support scholarships for needy and deserving students. El Jisr, a high-level executive at Saudi Oger who has supported to the university for several years, has made a significant contributions towards the Gala Dinner Endowed Scholarship Fund since its launch in 2012.

Hot Topics



Strong debating team wins at Young Arab Voices finals

In June, a team of five students representing LAU at the Young Arab Voices debate finals clinched first place, following months of rigorous training. Eleven debating teams from universities and youth movements throughout Lebanon participated in the initiative — sponsored by the British Council and the Anna Lindt Foundation — which has been replicated in various Arab countries since 2011. "Debate can solve the lack of communication among people in our region. As debaters, we learn first to listen and then to critically evaluate an argument," says LAU student and MEPI TL scholar Safea AlTef, a member of the winning team.

LAU instructors taught the debaters how to use evidence and reasoning, organize and respond to arguments, and to coordinate and work as a team. The winning students, arguing in English, squared off against Balamand University, defending the motion that inter-ministerial coordination in Lebanon will help increase job opportunities for Lebanese youth; and against AUB, opposing the motion to put a stop to the marriage of girls under the age of 18 in Lebanon.

Beirut campus sets higher efficiency standards

A complex and impactful project has been finalized by LAU as part of its efforts to address the growing power demand, enhance existing facilities, ensure the latest technology, and provide advanced high-quality services to its community. The official inauguration of the Beirut Campus Infrastructure Plant and Main Data Center took place in the presence of the Facilities Management and IT teams, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, the project's consultant Pierre Dammous & Partners (PDP), and the project's contractor Saccal Enterprises, among others. With the completion of this project, LAU acquires a fully-automated 7,000 KVA power plant, including a redundancy of 2,000 KVA, feeding the campus facilities through an underground medium voltage loop cabling system. The newly developed Data Center conforms to the highest standards and requirements for redundancy and availability, meaning a fault tolerant site infrastructure with electrical power storage and distribution facilities guaranteeing around 99.99 percent availability.



Academic Collaboration



LAU builds a bridge to the U.S. for its nursing students

A panel of representatives from LAU and the Lebanese American Medical Association (LAMA) met in August to sign an agreement constituting a new milestone on the success path undertaken by the Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON).

"It is a pleasure to be affiliated with a top-notch university like LAU. This is the first school of nursing to be affiliated with us in the region," said Firas Harb, president of LAMA, following the signing of the agreement. "I am sure we will be able to provide a good bridge for your students."

As an accrediting and academic training non-profit organization, LAMA provides Lebanese medical students and graduates with the opportunity to improve their learning experience through clinical rotations at various hospitals throughout the U.S.

In the agreement signed with ARCSON, LAMA commits to granting 15 to 25 scholarships to nursing students and graduates that cover their training costs.

LAU and Tripoli medical center to collaborate in research

In May LAU signed a memorandum of understanding with Al Hamidi Charity Medical Center in Tripoli that laid the groundwork and set out the mechanisms for collaborative research projects. "Through this endeavor, we will strengthen not only our two institutions but our communities as well," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara to an audience of representatives from the university, the LAU University Medical Center-Rizk Hospital, and Al Hamidi Charity Medical Center.

Signing on behalf of the Tripoli-based hospital was the chairman of its board of trustees, Walid Alloush. "In a world where selfishness reigns, we come together to work for humanity and the prevention of illnesses," said Alloush. "This is what all doctors must be dedicated to, and the advancement of man lies in scientific research," he added.

For LAU Dean of Graduate Studies and Research Pierre Zalloua, this partnership has far-reaching rewards: "The doors that we have opened today are significant and we cannot yet know the benefits they will reap. We are proud of this agreement."

Conferences & Seminars



Celiac Awareness Day

In May, the nutrition program of LAU's Natural Sciences department held a scientific meeting at the Beirut campus in cooperation with the Lebanese Celiac Association and AUB medical experts to increase awareness of celiac disease in Lebanon. Highlighting its pioneering aspect, the discussion, titled "Celiac Disease from Another Perspective" offered a platform for members of the medical community, dietitians and patients to discuss this physical condition and its effects on the Lebanese population.

Alice Saab, a member of the association, who has two children grappling with the disease, hoped that "step by step we will spread awareness about this condition in Lebanon." Aware of the needs, Assistant Professor of Human Nutrition Maya Bassil and her colleagues are conducting two studies on celiac disease. The first one looks at the level of gluten contamination in products labelled in the country as gluten-free. The second examines the nutritional status of a gluten-free diet to determine if it is healthy and complete.

LAU's women's institute hosts gender and peace conference

Academics and professionals active in the field of gender equality gathered in August for a three-day international conference featuring discussions by seasoned experts about the prioritization of women, peace and security on the Arab agenda. Eight distinct panels addressed a range of topics, including the role of institutions, current peace processes, expanding women's participation, and the significance of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, which reaffirms the importance of women in conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, and humanitarian responses, among others, and calls for their protection from gender-based violence. LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World organized the event in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and the Danish research institute KVINFO.



NEARLY
\$25,000

RAISED IN 5 YEARS

TOWARD SCHOLARSHIPS FOR NEEDY
AND DESERVING STUDENTS

2,497
STUDENTS

CONTRIBUTED
FROM 2012 TO 2016

450
STUDENTS
DONATED

IN 2016

\$4,500

RAISED IN 2016

10

OLIVE TREES
PLANTED

ACROSS THE BYBLOS AND
BEIRUT CAMPUSES

COUNTLESS STUDENTS

GRADUATING WITH THE IMPORTANT
VALUE OF GIVING BACK



Graduating students leave their mark

By Naseem Ferdowsi

During its five years, the Senior Class Gift Program, held under the banner "Plant Your Class Tree," has seen strong participation among students on both LAU campuses to raise money for scholarships, while leaving a mark on campus grounds in the form of olive trees.

"Participation in such campaigns is more important than the dollar amount. What's important is the value of giving back, which is instilled in students before they graduate."

—Lana Abou Teen, director of development and head of the Senior Class Gift program

"It's important for graduating students to give back to LAU, because our university gives a lot to its students. Plus, students feel a sense of accomplishment and more attachment toward LAU when making a contribution to the university."

—Line Safieddine, a student in the political science/international affairs B.A. program (expected graduation fall 2017)

"It's a duty to help the community, just like the community helped us once."

—Rana Obeid, B.S. in business with emphasis in international business, class of '16

"I'm honored to be contributing to LAU, even in such a small amount. I think LAU has given its students so much and whenever we can give LAU back we should."

—Layla Itani, M.A. in education, class of '16 and a beneficiary of the university's graduate assistantship program

"Every person at a certain stage in his or her life is in need of external support, whether financial or emotional. It's a must for those surrounding to do their best to push that person forward and give them the needed support. Many students just need a little push or a small encouraging word in order to excel."

—Nour Masri, B.S. in computer science, class of '16 and currently enrolled in the M.Sc. in computer science program (she benefitted from the university's financial aid program as a work study student)

Fun in the sun

By Reem Maghribi

LAU children's summer
camp continues to
engage and expand



*"They make unforgettable
memories here and feel like
they're already LAU students."*

—Bushra Badran, senior officer at LAU's
Continuing Education Program



This year, LAU's summer camp welcomed over 420 children aged between four and fourteen years for a program of education and recreation at its Beirut campus. Swimming, tennis, mental math, medicine, dance, storytelling and cooking were among the 17 topics and activities included in the diverse schedules.

Rana Daher, whose five-year-old son attended the camp for the second year this summer, says the boy enjoys the diversity. "There's so much on offer. He really loves it and doesn't get bored. That's why he wanted to come back this year." Eleven-year-old Lara Daife plans to come back next year after enjoying her first experience at a summer camp. "I made new friends and really enjoyed the activities, especially astronomy."

Over 70 people were hired to coordinate and care for the camp and the children over the summer. Among them was Lea Sakr (B.A. '14), a graduate of LAU's education program, who joined the team for the fourth consecutive year. "I was a group leader four years ago, now I'm a coordinator," shares Sakr, noting that many of the kids she oversaw four

trebled over the past four years.

Fellow coordinator LAU graduate and educator Leah Itani (B.A. '14) also enjoys participating in the summer camp. "As a teacher, I'm usually working with children from the same age group. This experience offers me an opportunity to work with and experience children from different age groups," she explains.

Conversely, the children who attend the camp also enjoy the unique opportunity to experience a university campus. "They make unforgettable memories here and feel like they're already LAU students," notes Bushra Badran, who runs the summer camp in her capacity as senior officer at the Continuing Education Program (CEP). This LAU unit launched the initiative twenty years ago and half of the youngsters who attend are in fact children of LAU alumni.

Also working at the CEP with Badran is LAU graduate and postgraduate student Aseel Jalaledin (B.S. '13). She believes that the camp curriculum widens the children's horizons. "Many of them have said that the business class is their favorite. At their age, I didn't even know what business was," says Jalaledin, who is currently studying for her M.B.A. at the Adnan Kassas School of Business.

Despite their success, Badran adds that year on year she and her team aim to continue improving the experience and adding to the curriculum. "We had more applications than we expected this year, but we adapted to accommodate them all. For many, this is where their childhood memories of their homeland are made," she says, noting that half the children live outside Lebanon during the school year.

20 YEARS SINCE LAUNCH OF CEP CHILDREN'S SUMMER CAMP	50% CHILDREN OF ALUMNI
420 CHILDREN ATTENDED IN 2016	300% RISE IN ATTENDANCE SINCE 2013
50% LIVE ABROAD	70+ TEAM MEMBERS

years ago were also at the camp this year. "It's so great to see that we're growing every year and to hear the kids tell us how much fun they had." Attendance has

A taste of social medicine

By Gaja Pellegrini-Bettoli

LAU's medical students look to raise Syrian refugees' quality of life

Lebanon hosts approximately 1.1 million refugees from Syria, which amounts to around one in five people in the country. Yet, few studies have been carried out to assess and evaluate the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health's (MPH) preparedness plan — which was put in place to address this crisis — against the standards and recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). LAU, however, took up the challenge and designed an in-depth study to analyse the current situation.



"The public health plan needs to be more practical."

—Dr. Roula Husni, head of LAU's Infectious Diseases Division and Infection Control Program

Final year students* of LAU's Gilbert and Rose-Mary Chagoury School of Medicine, Yasmine Agha, Remie Chrabieh, Elliot Koury, Mohamad Serhal, Rasha Shimlati and Esther Tannoury carried out the research study — which ran for a period of 18 months from inception to the issuance of written recommendations. The team, led by Gregory Nicolas, was under the supervision of Dr. Roula Husni, head of the school's Infectious Diseases division and Infection Control Program, and Dr. Marie Deeb, the school's associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics. The main objective of the study was to provide recommendations to Lebanese policy-makers, so that they could improve the support offered to refugees. Thus impacting positively their quality of life and therefore also the lives of Lebanese citizens.

While the project was Husni's brainchild, the medical students expanded the scope of research to include all aspects of the refugee's quality of life, not only the area of disease itself. "For example living conditions, poor control of diabetes, lack of education, and shortage of resources may have a strong impact on how the disease develops," points out Zeinat Hijazi, the school's interim dean. "We felt the need to cover all aspects of the refugee camps rather than only focus on Lebanon's epidemic preparedness, as we first started out to do," explains Nicolas.

Students obtained data from the World Health Organization and Lebanon's MPH on the current situation of Syrian refugees, while Husni carried out interviews with medical health providers in charge of refugee health care in Beirut's free clinics. These doctors revealed that — in addition to gastrointestinal, skin and respiratory ailments — they expect outbreaks of cholera, typhoid and hepatitis A in the near future.

The data was then measured against UNHCR guidelines for refugee emergencies, which showed that some services were adequate, while others fell below the required standards. For example, UNHCR recommends the use of large central health facilities to accommodate a population of 50,000 refugees. However, no such center with the required capabilities has been established in Lebanon. For Husni, one of the most significant findings is that "the public health plan needs to be more practical, especially as the finances available to fund it are insufficient." Donations or the creation of foundations can ease the burden on the budget. The research also shed light on the fact that in some cases, refugees were not aware of services available to them (such as education) and therefore did not benefit from them.

"Our generation is very keen to join organizations such as Doctors Without Borders to work in social medicine abroad, but what they don't realize is that it can easily be practiced in Lebanon and for a worthy cause," says Nicolas, reflecting on the personal, as well as professional experience, of this research project.

* Pending completion of registration formalities with NYSED

Alumni update

May



Dancing under the stars

The Byblos chapter organized its Spring Gathering on Saturday, May 28, at Jounieh's Tike Bar & Restaurant. The evening was a great success and continued into the small hours of the morning, as the crowd couldn't stop dancing to the music!

June



Barefoot in the park

The Toronto chapter gathered for its Annual Breakfast in the Park on Sunday, June 5, at the Lakefront Promenade Park in Ontario. The weather was perfect, as family and friends enjoyed a wonderful gathering and scrumptious breakfast picnic.

July

HOMECOMING WEEK 2016

Alumni Homecoming Dinner

More than 400 alumni and friends enjoyed an enchanting evening at Beirut's number one nightclub, *White*, on Tuesday, July 12. They gathered for dinner on the rooftop, where Asmara gave an electric live performance that got everybody wanting to groove to the rhythm. The evening kicked off Homecoming Week and featured the Alumni Association's Recognition and Achievement awards, which this year went to Joseph Abi Ghosn (B.S. '01) and Mona Hatoum (B.A. '72) respectively.

A successful businessman, Abi Ghosn took charge of ENJM upon his graduation from LAU with a bachelor degree in business management, taking it to another level that earned the company — now ENJM Energy — the Golden PAN Arab Web Award for the oil and gas section in 2008.

A Lebanese-born Palestinian video and installation artist who lives in London, Hatoum studied advertising design at LAU (then Beirut University College) in the class of 1972 before being forced into exile. She exhibited worldwide including at Centre Pompidou, Paris, The New Museum of Contemporary Art, NY and Tate Britain, London.

"The idea behind these awards is to recognize the achievements and contributions of LAU alumni and for alumni to take pride in their fellow alumni," said Abdallah al-Khal, assistant vice-president for Alumni Relations. "It is also a way to tell the world who are the graduates of LAU."





President's Forum Brunch

Also as part of its Homecoming Week, the Alumni Relations Office organized the annual President's Forum Brunch on Saturday, July 16, at the iconic Beirut fish restaurant Feluka at the Sporting Beach Club. As always, the brunch was a great opportunity for alumni to chat with LAU's president in an intimate and pleasant setting. In his informal word, President Jabbra noted that the alumni were the real ambassadors of LAU worldwide and thanked them for the loyalty and affection they have shown for their alma mater.



Beirut & Byblos Alumni Reunions

An air of nostalgia swept through the Byblos campus on Thursday, July 14, and through the Beirut campus on Friday, July 15, as more than 350 alumni visited their home campus for the 2016 Alumni Reunion. Visitors took a trip down memory lane, browsing through graduation pictures from old yearbooks while being entertained with live music and the occasional spontaneous dancing.

Business graduate Zeinab Makkeh (B.S. '90), said, "LAU was my light and my second home. It is not just stones, it represents a very special place."

An anniversary pin made sure that those gathered would always have a memory of this day. Together with other alumni from across the generations, Makkeh waited patiently in line to receive her pin from LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra.

Alumni Association Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 19, witnessed the meeting of the Alumni Association Board held to wrap up the Homecoming Week. The gathering brought together the presidents and/or representatives of all alumni chapters from around the world, who were present in Lebanon at the time. The meeting took place at the LAU Beirut Campus and was followed by a lunch at the Lebanese fusion restaurant Liza in Ashrafieh. The chapters' representatives shared ideas about their events and activities, which were especially beneficial to new chapters. They also marked their events on the calendar so not to overlap with others' events and promised to try and attend each other's events as much as possible. Here's to another successful alumni year!



Alumni update

September

U.S. ALUMNI CHAPTER TOUR

This fall, Assistant Vice-President for Alumni Relations Abdallah al-Khal and Director of Alumni and Special Projects Ed Shiner embarked on a tour of LAU's alumni chapters in the U.S., re-connecting with existing chapters and even starting a new one. Their trip included stops in Washington D.C., Atlanta, Houston, Chicago, Detroit and New York.

Detroit, Michigan

On Monday, September 26, Abdallah and Ed were welcomed by a small but enthusiastic group of alumni — including three newly discovered members, who are eager to serve on the committee — at the Bravo Italian Restaurant in Livonia, Michigan. Chapter President Hiba Yazbeck, Vice President Hala Choukair and Secretary Ghina Yazbeck were all present.



Houston, Texas

Alumni Tania Shaheen and her husband Wissam Tayssoun hosted more than 40 alumni and friends at their home on Thursday, September 22. The guests included 15 LAU pharmacy students, who are currently doing their clinical rotations at the city's Methodist Hospital. Dr. Ray Hachem, who helps guide the young pharmacists, and Mike Liebl, clinical manager of the Methodist's Department of Pharmacy, were also present.



Atlanta, Georgia

Friday September 23 saw the birth of a new LAU chapter in Atlanta, with a gathering at the home of alumnus and son of LAU former president Riyad Nassar (1982 – 2004) Ziad Nassar and his wife Jocelyn. The enthusiastic group has already established a Facebook page and will follow up with a planning meeting soon.

While in Atlanta, Ed and Abdallah visited 101-year-old alumna Lily Badre, whose late husband, Albert Badre, was the president of LAU from 1973-1983 (then known as Beirut University College). Lily was donned with a 50th anniversary alumni pin.



Chicago, Illinois

Chicago-area alums gathered for dinner at the Pappadeaux restaurant in Elmhurst, Illinois, on Sunday, September 25. Some had traveled for up to two hours to attend the event and the youngest guest was just five months old.

Washington D.C.

More than 40 alumni and friends gathered on Sunday, September 18, to welcome Abdallah and Ed at the Neyla Mediterranean restaurant in Reston, Virginia. The group included several alumni, who were attending a chapter event for the very first time.

A source of inspiration

By Leena Saidi

LAU alumni and TV celebrity Ricardo Karam highlights Arab endeavors



Ricardo Karam

"Being honored from within the Arab world is extremely culturally significant."

—Suad Juffali, managing director of the Ahmed Juffali Benevolent Foundation



The jury

There is no doubt that renowned television presenter, producer and talk-show host Ricardo Karam (M.B.A. '96) has inspired many an LAU student. And that is exactly what Karam seeks to do with Takreem, an organization he founded with the aim of rewarding outstanding Arabs in their respective fields in the hopes of inspiring future achievers.

For Karam, who is also a social and humanitarian activist, the last two decades have witnessed world events that have tarnished the Arab world's image. "Takreem was established in 2010 with the fundamental goal of counteracting these sensitivities and altering the misconceptions about the region by exposing the outside world to its wide array of talents," he says.

With this objective of promoting a positive Arab identity, the organization strives to be a source of inspiration to the region's youth in their search for role models. "Through the stories of those we honor we can also broadcast the message that the Arab world is a place of initiative, creativity, positive thinking, entrepreneurship and the sanctity of youth," Karam stresses.

Each year, Takreem holds a prestigious award ceremony to witness and recognize outstanding winning laureates in their different fields, such as scientific and technological achievement, humanitarian and civic services, environmental development and sustainability, cultural excellence, and outstanding corporate leadership.

Indeed, for Karam, the most difficult task is not searching for deserving recipients but deciding which of the many outstanding candidates to honor. A jury composed of inspirational figures such as Noor al Hussein, Bindary al Faisal, Lakhdar Brahimi, Mai al Khalifa, Saleh al Turki, Carlos Ghosn, Paula al Sabah, Marc Levy, and Nora Joumblatt joins him in this

tough and complex endeavor.

In 2011 the Humanitarian and Civic Services Award went to Suad Juffali (A.A. '53), founder and director of the Help Center and founder of the Women's Welfare Society and the Al Faisaliyah Women's Society. "Being honored from within the Arab world is extremely culturally significant," Juffali pointed out during her acceptance speech. A former member of the LAU Board of Trustees, Juffali's dedication to social welfare, art, literature, music, health, medical and educational programs spans over 60 years of active service in the Middle East and the U.S.

Takreem enjoys support from a number of LAU alumni, some of whom have joined its board. These include Manal Saab (B.S. '04), who has a strong record of community service in the healthcare sector; Wissam Moukahal (B.S. '95), currently executive chairman of Macquarie Capital Middle East and the founder of Z. Moukahal Foundation, which aims to provide access to learning environments for Lebanese children who lack the financial means to pursue top quality education; and philanthropist Latifa Kosta (B.A. '73), who has held, among others, the title of president of the Federation of International Women's Association in London, an umbrella organization encompassing dozens of London-based female communities for the purpose of creating a platform for the exchange of information, ideas and expertise.

Since its inception, Takreem has honored and awarded over 70 laureates from the various Arab countries: Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, KSA, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Sudan, Kuwait, Tunis, Qatar and Yemen. In the words of the Takreem, Karam's determination is not "a step," but a stride "towards enlightenment in the Arab world."

Staying connected

Samira Baroody (A.A. '52, B.A. '54) lives in San Francisco, California, where she is the concert manager of the San Francisco Academy Orchestra, as well as a music administrator and musicians' manager.

Carol J. Johnson-Miller (External Degree '55) obtained her postgraduate degree from Mankato State University in Minnesota, where she currently lives. Carol is now retired but previously served as chaplain at Good Samaritan Society for 10 years, prior to which she had taught special education at Estherville High School for 23 years. She has two grown-up children, Tim and Martha, and five grandchildren.

Lina Mishalany (B.A. '77) lives in Lebanon, where she practices quantum healing hypnosis therapy.

Masud Hasnain (B.S. '79) lives in Ashburn, a suburb of Washington D.C., where he is a translator and interpreter. He previously worked in software quality assurance, as well as in software training and support. Masud and his wife, a high school teacher, have two grown-up children.

Hani Antar (B.S. '91) obtained his B.S. in industrial production (quality assurance and control) from the Université du Québec à Montréal. Hani currently lives in Laval, Canada, where he is a quality assurance manager. He previously worked as a quality systems auditor and consultant. Hani is happily married and has one boy.

Paulette el Hajj (B.A. '93) plans to continue her education next year by pursuing a master's degree at University of Western Ontario, where she currently lives. For the past 23 years, Paulette has had a successful career directing television programs, newscasts and political shows. Her son aged 11 is called Jason.

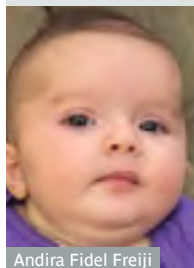
Antoine Haswani (B.S. '96) lives in Laval, Canada, where he is president of EMM Williams Productions Inc. and Luxempire Inc. Antoine is also the founder of the event and entertainment company SOLICET (Lebanon). He is married with two children.



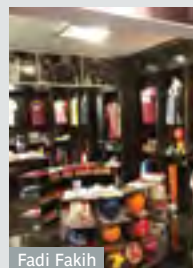
Ahmad Ghalayini



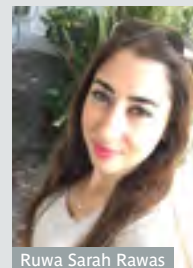
Marwan Abdul Malak



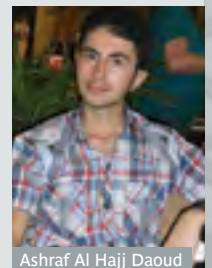
Andira Fidel Freiji



Fadi Fakh



Ruwa Sarah Rawas



Ashraf Al Hajj Daoud

Lubna el Sinn (B.S. '97) lives in Sidon, Lebanon, where she heads the Human Resources Department's sector for training at OGERO's South Lebanon Branch. Lubna is married and has two boys.

Ghassan Shamseddine (B.S. '96, M.B.A. '99) lives in Canada, where he currently works in supply chain management for the consumer goods industry. However, after a successful 12-year career with Kraft Foods between Montreal and Toronto, Ghassan is relocating to Dubai to join Nestle Middle East and is looking forward to a new chapter of success in his career.

Marwan Abdul-Malak (B.S. '00) obtained an M.A. in human rights and democratization from the University of Malta on a scholarship funded by the EURO MED Program. Marwan currently lives in Beirut, where he works as a chief accountant. His career has encompassed various roles in the accounting industry both here and in the Gulf region. Marwan's son is in CE2 Classe for this academic year.

Dany Charbachy (B.E. '00) obtained his postgraduate degree from École nationale

supérieure des télécommunications de Bretagne (ENST). Dany currently lives in Bourg La Reine, France, where he works as a sales consultant at Oracle.

Gabriel Junior Fernaine (B.S. '00) obtained his M.B.A. at Université Paris-Dauphine. Gabriel currently lives in Beirut, where he is the head of business development at Byblos Bank. In June 2016, he was elected to the Municipal Council of Beirut City. Gabriel has three children: Olivia, aged six, Alexandre, aged four, and Georges, aged one.

Hadi Majed (B.S. '00) lives in Jeddah, where he works as an ethics and compliance officer for the pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline. Hadi's son is in CE2 Classe for this academic year.

Elissar Saddy (B.S. '01) obtained her M.B.A. from École hôtelière de Lausanne. Elissar currently lives in Beirut, where she works as a senior consultant at Lumen Hospitality Consultants.

Hamza al Mohtar (B.S. '02) lives in Lebanon, where he is the C.E.O. at Dot



Fadi Hammoud



Oussama Shaya



Mike Aoun



Hamza Al Mohtar



Ghassan Shameseddine



Khaled Mehio



Gabriel Junior Fernaine



Ramy el Kassir



Roba Youssef

Print International. His son Yehya turned one this year.

Fadi Hashem (M.B.A. '03) has a Ph.D. in administration (leadership and management) from Cranfield School of Management in the U.K. In addition to his current academic position at LAU's Continuing Education Program and to his previous administrative position at the Arab Open University, Fadi has been very active in executive education. He is a senior trainer and consultant with the American Consultancy and Training Center (ACT), the co-founder of the global community Leaders Across Borders (LAB) in Beirut, and has authored a book titled *The Effect of the Leader/Follower Interaction on the Follower's Work/Home Balance: An exploratory study in a Lebanese context*. Fadi's teaching and training interests are in leadership paradigms, organizational behavior, employees' personality, emotional intelligence, and neuro-linguistic programming.

Fadi Hammoud (M.B.A. '04) lives in Saudi Arabia, where he has been the

country manager of Azadea Group since October 2015. Fadi joined Azadea in 2005 after completing military service. He has served as inventory and cost control manager, operations manager, markets manager, and general country manager in several countries, including Qatar, the U.A.E., Bahrain, Lebanon, Ghana and now Saudi Arabia. Hadi is married to Farah and they have a son, Marcel.

Maya Kanj (B.S. '04) lives in Egypt, where she is a housewife and fulltime mother to two daughters, one aged five and a three-month-old baby. Previously Maya was the Nasr City branch manager of Cairo's Tameer and Iskan Bank.

Aref Yazbeck (B.S. '05) lives in Bahrain, where he is the general manager of Bell Racing Helmets. Bell is a leading car helmet manufacturer with an export factory in Bahrain. Previously Aref worked in hospitality but moved to manufacturing three years ago. He is married.

Mariam Jabbour (B.S. '07) lives in Lebanon, where she is a senior brand executive. Mariam is married with a son.

Mohammad Badran (B.S. '04, M.S. '08) lives in Beirut, where he works as a senior systems engineer at Dar al Handasah.

Khaled Itani (M.B.A. '08) lives in Beirut, where he works as a corporate budgeting and control manager at Khatib & Alami CEC.

Ralph Choueiri (B.S. '09) lives in Beirut, where he is the COO and co-founder of Blink My Car, a startup he launched that provides carwash delivery on demand through an app.

Ahmad M. Ghalayini (B.S. '09) obtained his E.M. in financial management from École supérieure des affaires in Lebanon, in conjunction with the Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University in the Netherlands. Ahmad lives in Beirut, where he was promoted to SME and Retail Credit Officer at Fransabank's head office at the beginning of the year, around the same time as he got engaged.

Jasmina Khalaf (B.S. '09) obtained his M.Sc. in management with an emphasis

Staying connected

in entrepreneurship from École supérieure des affaires in Lebanon, where he lives and works as a digital communication officer in BLC Bank's communication and marketing team.

Omar Alwan (B.S. '10) lives in Sydney, where he is senior auditor with Ernst & Young Australia. Omar had previously been with Ernst & Young in Kuwait.

Rola Bass (M.B.A. '10) lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where she works as a career and employee relations specialist. Rola is married and has two children.

Ayman Beydoun (B.S. '10) lives in Beirut, where he works as a sales and marketing manager, as well as being an entrepreneur. Ayam is married, has a son, and is expecting a baby girl in December.

Ramy el Kassis (B.S. '10) lives in Dubai, where he works as a senior sales manager at Digital Media Services (part of the Choueiri Group). Ramy is one of the key leads at the company's entertainment vertical (Shahid.net & MBC.net), helping sales and dealing with clients and agencies seeking to come up with solutions for formats such as: Arab Idol, The Voice, Arabs Got Talent, Project Runway, etc. He also collaborates with Choueiri Group's TV arm team to ensure that TV campaigns have an extension on digital whether on Shahid or MBC.net.

Zuhair el Kawas (B.S. '10) is currently studying for his master's in international business at Grenoble École de Management in France. Previously Zuhair was a customer service representative at Bankmed in Lebanon.

Fadi Fakh (M.B.A. '10) obtained his M.A. in marketing communications from the University of Westminster in the U.K. Fadi currently lives in Beirut, where he founded the Football Shop, Lebanon's first specialty football fan shop. Prior to opening his own business he worked for many years in the advertising and communication sector.

Lara Temsah (B.A. '10) lives in Beirut, where she is part of the fundraising executive team at Children's Cancer Center of Lebanon. Nine months ago Lara was blessed with a baby boy.

Mike Aoun (B.S. '11) obtained his master's degree from the Pierre and Marie Curie University, also known as University of Paris VI, in France. Mike is currently studying the innate immune system (dendritic cells and macrophages) in chronic inflammatory diseases, with a special focus on rheumatoid arthritis, for his Ph.D. in immunology at Karolinska Institutet in Stockholm, Sweden.

This year on July 14, **Fidel Freiji (B.S. '11)** and **Jose Tohme Freiji (B.S. '11)** welcomed the arrival of their daughter Andria. Fidel described the day as one that will remain engraved in his heart.

Souad Idriss (B.S. '12) lives in Kuwait, where she works for ZenithOptimedia as a media executive, handling clients such as The National Bank of Kuwait and Qualitynet. Previously, Souad worked in the advertising field for companies like Raad Afyouni and fp7, handling clients such as The Kuwait Finance House, Ford Motors, etc. LAU Football Varsity Team Captain **Ahmad Idriss (B.S. '16)**, Souad's brother, who graduated this year, has just started work with Beirut's PricewaterhouseCooper.

Ruwa Sarah Rawas (M.A. '12) is a science teacher at the Global Academy International School in Doha, Qatar.

Christian Adib (B.E. '13) obtained his M.S. in mechanical engineering from Columbia University in New York. Currently Christian lives in Beirut, where he works as a strategy consultant with Booz Allen Hamilton.

Ibrahim Alabdali (B.S. '13) obtained his postgraduate degree from City University in London. Ibrahim currently works as a lawyer in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

William Charro (B.S. '10, M.B.A. '13) lives in Beirut, where he is a managing director at SHARING electromechanical.

Mohammed el Ghandour (B.S. '13) obtained his M.Sc. in international business management from the Berlin School of Economics and Law. Mohammad currently lives Berlin, Germany, where he is an IT recruiter at the Swiss RM Group.

Akram Kheirallah (B.S. '13) obtained his M.S. in information and knowledge

systems from Paris 1-Panthéon Sorbonne. Akram currently lives in Paris, where he is an IT project manager in business intelligence at L'Oreal Paris.

Khaled J. Mehio (B.S. '13) is currently pursuing an M.B.A. at LAU, where he is a research assistant at its school of business (AKSOB). Khaled was previously a junior accountant at the Associated Mechanical Engineers.

Salim Mougharbel (B.S. '13) lives in Brussels, Belgium, where he is a senior consultant within the Enterprise Risk Services Department at Deloitte Belgium. Salim previously worked at the company's Beirut office as an IT audit specialist.

Nazha Gali (M.B.A. '14) is in the third year of her Ph.D. in entrepreneurship management at Durham University in the U.K. Apart from being a student, Nazha is also a seminar teacher and has published two articles, one in the Journal of Corporate Governance and other in the Journal of Management and Organization.

Ali el Rida Khraizat (B.A. '14) lives in Lebanon, where he is an auditor at Grant Thornton.

Roba Youssef (B.A. '14) lives in Beirut, where she is the CEO and owner of Lines | Roba Youssef. Roba is the main interior architect of her firm, which she founded in 2015, and which specializes in interior architecture, interior design, architecture, furniture design, and identity design. Currently located at Beirut Souks, the company will soon open a branch in Cairo.

Jad Abdo (B.E. '15) lives in Saudi Arabia, where he works as an aboveground piping engineer at Consolidated Contractors Company's JRTF Project. Jad previously worked on and launched an Automatic Waste Sorting Machine.

Khaled Alameddine (B.A. '15) is currently studying medicine at St. George's of London Medical School.

Lina Hwaidy (B.S. '15) recently moved to Dubai to take up the post of operations supervisor at Hayamed Middle East, a Lebanese medical company.

Mostafa Moussawi (B.Arch. '15) is currently studying for his master's in landscape architecture and environmental technology at the Lebanese University. Mostafa lives in Beirut, where he founded HRMIS Designs, an architecture and design office that specializes in introducing eco-friendly prefabricated and shipping container houses to the Lebanese market.

Zeinab Abou Seif (B.S. '16) is currently job hunting. She lives in Borj el Barajneh Camp in Beirut.

Ashraf al Hajj Daoud (B.E. '16) is still looking for work. He lives in Jadra in Mount Lebanon.

Pascale el Khoury (B.S. '16) lives in Lebanon, where she is currently a social media marketing intern at Addbloom.

Safa Hamzeh (B.A. '16) lives in South Africa, where she works on a program on Islam, sexual orientation, and gender identity. After graduation, Safa worked briefly as a social media specialist for the marketing company ELM.

Mira Rustom (B.S. '11, M.B.A. '16) is changing careers to HR. She is currently a student at the Skema Business School in France. She previously worked with Ernest & Young, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Louis Vuitton Dubai, and Transmed as a senior corporate accountant. Mira got married recently and lives in Paris.

Oussama N. Shaya (B.E. '16) works as a freelance management consultant at ISO Certifications. Oussama recently got engaged to Lilian Mounif.

Obituary

Leonora Y. White
West Melbourne

Leonora Yenovkian White, 93, of Melbourne, FL, died May 24, 2016 at Buena Vida Estates. Leonora was a retired teacher from Brevard Public Schools where she taught for 23 years, primarily at Henegar Elementary and Gemini Elementary. Earlier in her career, she taught at the Tabeetha School in Jaffa, Palestine and the Interamerican University of Puerto Rico in San Juan. She was born December 1, 1922 in Acre, Palestine to Armenian parents who had emigrated from Turkey. She was a graduate of the Friends Girl School in Ramallah, Palestine and in 1950s from the American Junior College for Women in Beirut, Lebanon. She moved to the U.S. to attend Hunter College, where she received a B.A. degree and later an M.Sc. degree from the University of Rhode Island. She was a world traveler, having visited all the continents except Antarctica. She greatly enjoyed her daily walks on the beach. She was a daughter of the late Levon and Josephine Najarian Yenovkian and the wife of the late William Stewart White. A sister, Arpiné Yenovkian Hanna, also an LAU alumna and a brother, Levon Yenovkian, preceded her in death.

LAU ALUMNI'S MOBILE APPLICATION

- Stay connected to LAU & fellow alumni
- Discover the latest LAU & alumni news
- Find out about alumni events at LAU and near you
- Search the alumni directory
- Link up with alumni chapters
- Receive event notifications

Download it now and start making contact!



WHY I GIVE BACK

Salam Abou Ghanem (B.S. '94)



With the help of what he calls an “all-time passion” for the field of building, contracting and interior design, alumnus Salam Abou Ghanem embarked on a journey that eventually led him to running his own business. It all started in 1994 when he graduated from LAU equipped with a degree in business marketing. He entered the job market armed with knowledge, skills, values and most importantly, passion, gaining 12 years of experience at several leading companies in his field. It is in 2006 in the UAE that he launched his own fit-out contracting company, bci décor. The journey toward establishing his company was not an easy one, he says, but worth it.

Today, as bci décor continues to grow, Abou Ghanem is giving back to LAU so that other students have the resources to follow their passion.

Why do you give back to LAU?

Giving back to LAU is an opportunity that every alumnus can use to offer hope to the next generation to get an education. Any investment in those seeking education is an investment in the future of the country.

What is your fondest memory of LAU?

Each and every corner of the campus holds important memories for me, but my fondest ones are from my last few semesters at the university. I remember sitting with my friends contemplating our future post-graduation: this was a weekly routine, if not a daily one.

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

To my alumni friends: we should always strive to give back to where everything started. Giving back does not always involve contributing financially, as there are other ways we can give back. And in all cases, the end result is the same.

To the current students: although each individual student will have a different experience, one thing is certain — LAU will expand your world socially and academically.

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

LAU opening campuses across the Gulf states is the dream of every Lebanese or Arab high school student living in the region. Maybe one day the dream can become a reality. I live in a country that appreciates, supports and invests limitlessly in education. Indeed, the presence of LAU would be a big plus to the value of the educational offerings here, as well as to many other countries in the region.

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

Why not? I am Lebanese and I am proud of what my country has to offer in terms of education. Our education system should be available to anyone who seeks it, irrespective of their economic situation. Education is the strongest and most powerful tool that we can pass on to the next generation.



Fulfilling the Promise

LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence



✧ EVA KOTITE FARHA IS FULFILLING THE PROMISE

It has been years since she moved away from Lebanon, but Eva Kotite Farha's (B.S. '74) commitment to LAU has never waned. After completing her undergraduate degree in mathematics and computer science, she moved to Wichita, Kansas, with her husband, Dr. Peter Farha, for his medical residency.

A few years later, they relocated to Houston, Texas, where she put her education to work at leading U.S. cancer center MD Anderson as a statistical mathematician in the biomedical department. During a visit by former LAU President Riyad Nassar to Houston she made his acquaintance and started becoming more active with her alma mater.

Farha was asked to join the Board of Trustees (BOT) in the early 1990s and served up until last year. She has seen the institution grow and flourish and always holds a special place in her heart for the students, calling them the "bread and butter of the university."

Originally from south Lebanon, the couple established an endowed scholarship at LAU — the Eva Kotite and Peter Farha Scholarship Endowment — specifically for students coming from her hometown of Marjayoun.

In addition to being a longstanding BOT member, Farha has also served on LAU's Board of International Advisors, as a co-chair of the New York Gala for three years, and continues to be an active member of LAU's Houston alumni chapter.

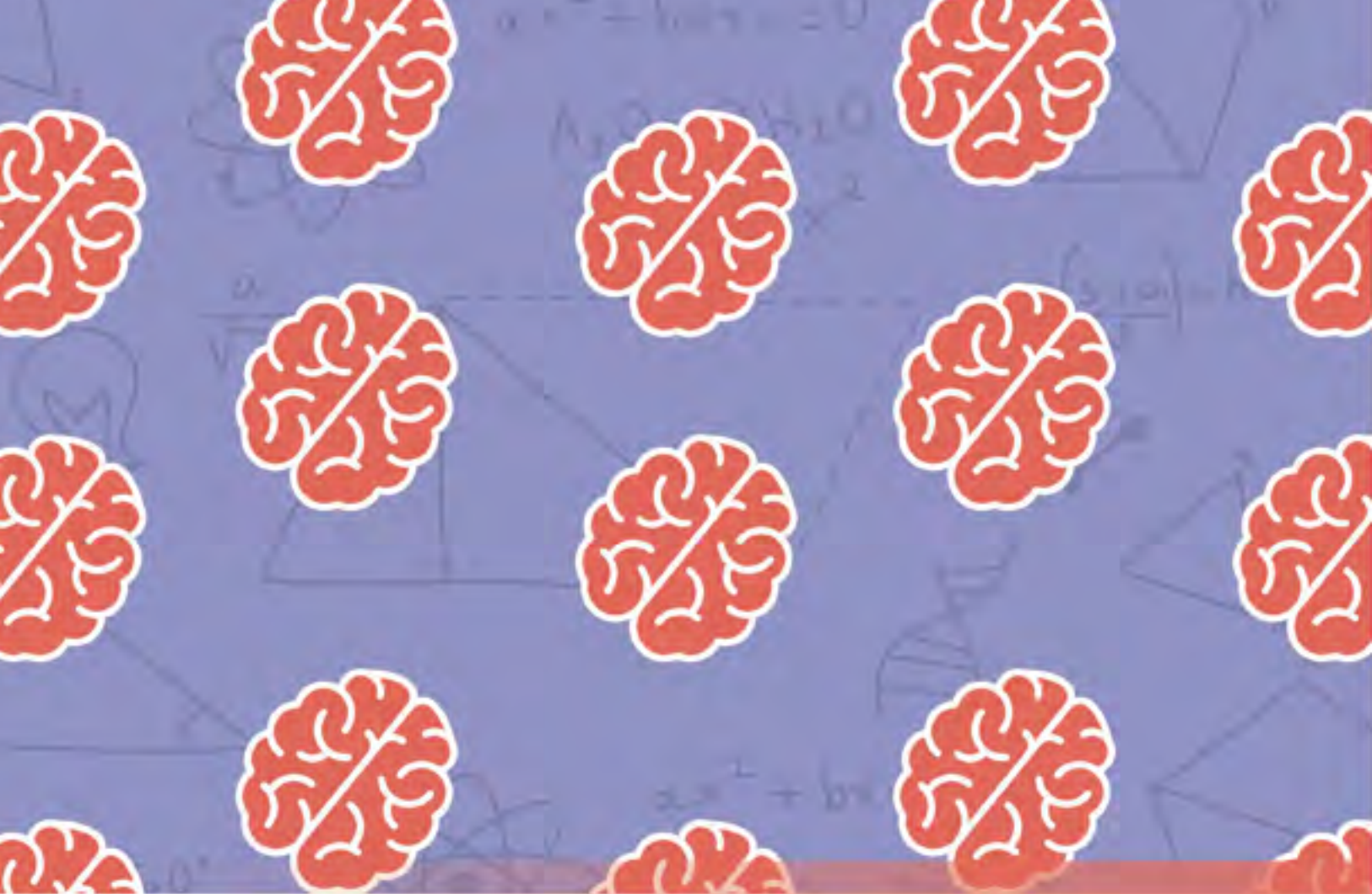


Scan this code with your Smartphone
to go to our giving page

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
Email: development@lau.edu.lb

New York Development Office
Tel. (212) 203 4333
Fax (212) 784 6597
211 East 46th St.
NY 10017, USA
Email: nydevelopment@lau.edu



www.lau.edu.lb

BEIRUT CAMPUS

P.O. Box 13-5053 Chouran
Beirut 1102 2801, Lebanon
Tel. +961 1 78 64 56
+961 3 60 37 03
Fax. +961 1 86 70 98

BYBLOS CAMPUS

P.O. Box 36
Byblos, Lebanon
Tel. +961 9 54 72 54
+961 3 79 13 14
Fax. +961 9 54 62 62

NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS & ACADEMIC CENTER

211 East, 46th Street
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. +1 212 203 4333
Fax. +1 212 784 6597



Postage paid Port payé مدفوع مسبقاً

C 1041

RVU