

LAU magazine

VOLUME 19 | issue n° 2 | Summer 2017

& ALUMNI BULLETIN



Equipped for the Future



The job market is more competitive than ever.

Make sure you're on the inside track.

A CRUCIBLE FOR CAREERS

LAU students begin their careers long before graduation day. Our programs are regionally and internationally renowned hothouses for the next generation of innovators. Over 100 major companies attend dozens of campus recruitment events and job fairs per year, and hundreds of students annually receive corporate and academic internships. With figures like these, and with LAU's energy and foresight in career guidance, it's not surprising that so many of its graduates land promising jobs within six months of commencement. An LAU degree gives you the practical skills you need to confront life's challenges head-on, and the intellectual flexibility to adapt to a dynamic economy.

www.lau.edu.lb



Embark, explore, discover...



Equipped for the future

FEATURES

6 Leadership skills as pillars of success



Across the landscape of American-style education the quality of "leadership" has emerged as a trait so desirable that all levels of the education system have been flooded with programs aimed at developing it in young people. As institutions of higher learning increasingly prioritize their ability to prepare graduates for the marketplace, *Irina du Quenoy* studies how leadership training becomes a hot commodity with university students eager to impress future employers.

30 Employability, more than just top grades

While the attainment of knowledge is very much the goal of academic programs, the development of skills and personal attributes happens mostly outside the classroom, though not necessarily outside the university. *Reem Maghribi* investigates how LAU fosters the development of the whole person and not only the academic self.



42 Halting the brain drain



Top U.S. universities have created venture funds to invest in the entrepreneurship ideas of their graduating students. They are not only give them a place to work, the university also invests money in their idea as partners. This is exactly what LAU is trying to create, a mechanism for people to remain and bring their ideas to fruition in Lebanon. *Lizzie Porter* explores new initiatives that have made headway and are yielding success, even among the nation's underprivileged.

CONTENTS

- 4 A bright future for sports
- 10 Chasing their dreams
- 14 **Q&A** Understanding Lebanese and Arab youth
- 15 From the boardroom
- 16 The key value of simulated-based medical education
- 18 An essential part of the medical body
- 19 **Op-Ed** Gender equality in the workforce
- 20 Young designers make their debut into the world of fashion
- 24 Tackling present day issues
- 26 Promoting education through exchange
- 27 Honoring six decades of the European Union
- 28 Putting students on the right career path
- 34 LAU theater production goes national
- 36 Postcard from New York
- 38 A mathematical solution
- 39 Students' achievements underline scholarship initiative
- 40 Life expectancy of family-owned businesses on the rise
- 46 That's what makes the magic and dance occur
- 48 Campus notes
- 53 Beyond the classroom
- 54 Diversity in the spotlight
- 56 An indispensable research tool
- 57 The value of collaboration and learning from each other
- 58 Alumni update
- 62 We recycle for a cause
- 63 Staying connected
- 68 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 goes environmentally friendlier!

The pages of this copy of the magazine are printed on paper sourced from sustainably managed forests that are FSC certified.



LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin is published every semester 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

Gabriel Abiad, *AVP Marketing & Communications*

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

Linda Dahdah

Copy Editor

Irina du Quenoy

Writers

Lina Abirafeh

Lina Beydoun

Naseem Ferdowsi

Sima Itayim

Reem Maghribi

Lizzie Porter

Victoria Yan

Contributors

Zeina Abdallah

Amal Abdel Massih

Lana Abou Teen

Nicole Barghoud

Sevine Fakhoury

Manwa Ghanoum

Ghada Majed

Nayla Abou Merhi Moujaes

Nada Torbey

Zoya Zahabi

Editorial Assistant

Hoda Hilal

Production Manager

Sana Kouatly

Graphic Designer

Marianne Amkieh Siblini

Photographers

Emile Ghazal

Karem Mounzer

Bassam Lahoud

Yehia Malla

Pro Studio

Front and back cover by

Marianne Amkieh Siblini



From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

In today's economic climate and competitive global market, enterprises are under pressure to increase productivity. Throughout the sectors, recruiters are looking for "work-ready" graduates with clear evidence of job specific skills. In response to mounting calls to make university education more relevant to the workplace, enhancing graduate employability has become a central concern of many such institutes worldwide.

One result of these efforts has been identifying the traits that employers value the most in recent graduates. Leadership, for instance, has emerged as a quality so desirable that universities as prestigious as Yale and Stanford have embraced the philosophy that such skills—the key to the success of youth in today's world—are best enhanced through systematic training.

In this, as in many other areas, LAU has been ahead of the curve. The university's Outreach and Civic Engagement unit oversees a range of programs explicitly focused on fostering leadership-related soft skills in youth both in Lebanon and abroad. At the head of the list stands the Global Classrooms International Model United Nations, whose flagship conferences in New York have been run exclusively by the university since 2016. The unit also curates Lebanon's Model United Nations for middle- and high-school students, as well as its own Model European Union and Model Arab League, in addition to other leadership training programs.

Beyond leadership, employability depends on students developing the skills necessary to successfully navigate the employment market in their chosen fields, find and retain jobs, and develop their career. Collaboration between LAU and local and international enterprises enable students to acquire professional knowledge in their disciplines and familiarize themselves with organizational practices. Furthermore, as international exposure increases student success after graduation, our Office of International Services has established agreements with more than 40 partners worldwide, giving students a wealth of opportunities to study abroad.

The experience students gain during internships or other real-life projects—whether at home or abroad—clearly helps them to make better-informed decisions about their career choice and path, shortening their transition from university to employment. To that end, LAU's involvement with the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience provides students with great internship opportunities in well-established industries worldwide.

While the attainment of field-specific knowledge is very much the objective of academic programs, the development of soft skills and personal attributes—which happens mostly outside the classroom—is the chief goal of Student Development and Enrollment Management, the LAU division that oversees many of the units offering extracurricular initiatives for students wishing to excel and hone their skills.

The university is also constantly adapting its programs through a culture of self-assessment in order to meet the constant evolution of the job market. As they near graduation, students seeking employment in these markets find a wealth of information and support on campus through our career guidance office, which organizes career fairs, runs interest inventory tests that help students identify the type of job and work environment most suited to them, and coaches students for job interviews.

Although technical and practical knowledge, as well as skills for career preparation are important and necessary goals of higher education, the best outcomes of a university experience go far beyond this. They include the development of the whole, thinking person, the cultivation of creativity, the maturation of social and cultural sensibilities and even increased passion for life, in addition to learning and civic engagement of all sorts. In this issue, we highlight some of the many means by which our students are equipped for the future.



Joseph G. Jabbara
President





A bright future for sports

By Naseem Ferdowsi

LAU breaks ground on a multi-million dollar athletics center

During a groundbreaking ceremony held in April, LAU laid the foundation stone of the Antoun Nabil Sehnaoui – SGBL Athletics Center on the Byblos campus. SGBL senior management, university leaders, community members and dignitaries and hundreds of students attended the milestone event.

“Sports can change the world,” stressed Khalil Khamis, an LAU student on the men’s football team, citing Nelson Mandela. “Since athletics is based on global ethics, fair play, respect and friendship, it can have a positive influence on peace within a society, as well as on its development,” he told the gathered audience.

Addressing Antoun Sehnaoui himself, the athlete added, “Thank you for believing in youth and our potential for a better future.”

Sehnaoui, the Chairman and CEO of Société Générale de Banque au Liban (SGBL), pledged a generous \$7 million allowing the university to add the 8,500 square-meter three-story athletics center to the Byblos campus. The facility is expected to open in mid-2021 and will include a swimming pool, multipurpose indoor court, outdoor football pitch, basketball and tennis courts, as well as a gym and several other related amenities.

“The center will include everything that any young man and woman needs in terms of forming a sound mind and body,” explained LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra.

Describing Sehnaoui’s long-held passion for philanthropy and his interest in the benefits of sports for community building, Jabbra said, “Antoun wanted to contribute in a major way to building an athletics center on the Byblos campus because he



felt it would bring together people from different backgrounds." He added, "This complex will not only be a sports facility, but also a platform for discussion, dialogue and social interaction between young men and women from diverse environments."

Indeed, Sehnaoui believes strongly in the power of sports to create unity and solidarity and foster coexistence. "Sports can be an important and healthy solution to our political and social problems and divisions in Lebanon. It breaks the isolation imposed by society and destroys all barriers between people," said the philanthropist.

"Having known Mr. Sehnaoui for many years, I can say with confidence that he seeks the best for mankind, and his donation to LAU is a testament to that commitment," said LAU Assistant Vice President for Development Nassib N. Nasr,

adding, "He is interested in continuing his philanthropic efforts by developing new projects to best serve our students."

The celebration, which featured student performances including a marching band parade and a cheerleading demonstration, kept audience members both engaged and entertained. It also featured a ceremonial groundbreaking complete with hardhats and shovels that Sehnaoui, his team, and LAU leaders used to symbolically lay the center's foundation.

LAU puts sports at the heart of its education and was the first university in Lebanon to introduce athletic scholarships to encourage its athletes, who have gained an excellent reputation in individual and collective sports in university championships in Lebanon and abroad.

"We work hard — with or without facilities — to make this university's flag

"Sports breaks the isolation imposed by society and destroys all barriers between people."

—Antoun Sehnaoui, Chairman and CEO of Société Générale de Banque au Liban

fly high in every encounter, whether local or international," said Director of Athletics at LAU's Byblos campus Joe Moujaes, who was also the event's master of ceremonies.

Sasha Mattar, an LAU student on the women's basketball team, expressed her appreciation for the donor's initiative and encouragement: "I stand here today with great pride and promise, in the name of every student athlete, to make you [Mr. Sehnaoui] proud."

Leadership skills as pillars of success

Integrating civic engagement with extra-curricular activities encourages students to broaden their horizons and gain leadership qualities sought by employers

By Irina du Quenoy



A few months ago, LAU international business major Alex Muller found himself on the phone with an interviewer for internships at the United States Congress. “The conversation revolved heavily around MEU,” says Muller, referring to the university’s Model European Union for high school students, of which he served as Director-General this past spring. “The interviewer was extremely intrigued to learn more about the program and my role in it. Even when I was asked unrelated questions, it was always easy to respond with an example and experience from my time at MEU.” Muller got the internship and is spending the summer at the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C.

While he will certainly learn a lot in the presence of the leaders of the world’s most powerful nation, Muller will bring to the table something few young people his age have acquired — substantial leadership experience of his own.

When, in October 2016, LAU added MEU to its roster of simulation programs, Muller jumped at the chance to become involved. “I happened to be in London the day the Brexit referendum was held last June. With its unfortunate outcome, a sudden interest in European politics and the European Union sparked within me and has stuck,” he says. As Director-General of the MEU secretariat, he oversaw the training of more than 300 Lebanese high school students in the history, functions and politics of the European Union, culminating in a final conference hosted at LAU Byblos. A difficult task, but one that he relished: “Overlooking the smooth running of the

program in its first year with no precedent to bank on and a secretariat of 40 LAU students was no easy task, especially since I was as young or even younger than many of the team.”

Across the landscape of American-style education, whether in the United States itself or abroad, the quality of “leadership” has — since the 1990s — emerged as a trait so desirable that all levels of the education system have been flooded with programs aimed at developing it in young people. In middle and high school, for-profit training sessions with such lofty names as the “National Young Leader Conference,” “National Student

“The ability to tell the story of millions of people living through conflict to a global audience comes from having done so within the four walls of a Model UN classroom.”

—Joelle Eid, LAU alumna and spokesperson on the Syria crisis for both UNHCR and the World Food Program

Leadership Conference,” “Congressional Student Leadership Conference” and the simply-monikered “Leadership Classroom” bring together tens of thousands of young people every year in a variety of settings, often in Washington, D.C.



Typically, the students engage in role-play, meet high-level politicians and visit national monuments, all with the goal of fostering leadership capabilities. According to a New York Times article from 2009, although most participants report high levels of satisfaction, a number of questions surround the concept. For example, participation comes at a cost, sometimes of thousands of dollars, closing the door to this opportunity for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. And according to the college admissions counseling company College Confidential, admissions officers “usually just yawn when they see [one of these for-profit programs] mentioned on the application,” because the selection criteria for taking part are actually quite loose and have more to do with ability to pay than anything else.

Luckily, the for-profit sector is not the only player in the leadership training field. Government entities such as the U.S. Department of State, non-profits such as the YMCA and universities as prestigious

as Yale and Stanford have embraced the philosophy that leadership skills are key to youth success in today’s world and that they are best enhanced through systematic training. In this as in many other areas, LAU has been ahead of the curve, particularly through the university’s Outreach and Civic Engagement Unit (OCE), which oversees a range of programs explicitly focused on fostering leadership-related soft skills in youth both in Lebanon and abroad. At the top of the list stands the Global Classrooms International Model United Nations (GCI MUN), of which flagship conferences in New York have been run exclusively by LAU since 2016. But OCE also curates Lebanon’s own MUN for middle and high school students (GC LAU MUN), the already-mentioned Model European Union (LAU MEU) and the Model Arab League (LAU MAL), in addition to offering other leadership training opportunities.

While the benefits of such programs aimed at middle and high school students seem to rest mainly in the realm

of character building — the teenage years are, after all, formative — on the college level, their purpose takes on a different meaning altogether. Namely, as institutions of higher learning increasingly prioritize their ability to prepare graduates for the marketplace, leadership training becomes a hot commodity with university students eager to impress future employers.

Indeed, a quick investigation into the corporate world reveals that “leadership” as a concept encompasses a range of traits that employers are looking for in eager young applicants. These include confidence, communication skills including public speaking, the capacity to take responsibility and negotiation abilities, as well as networking and problem-solving competences, among others. All of which LAU students may gain under the auspices of OCE, as every single one of the simulation programs mentioned above is run by students themselves.

“I was always interested in public



“There is a positive correlation between student leadership programs and employability.”

—Elie Samia, LAU assistant vice president for Outreach and Civic Engagement

speaking, and when I heard of MUN at LAU I decided to join the program and fell in love with it at once,” says Frederick Mourad, currently finishing his M.A. in International Affairs at LAU Byblos. His responsibilities as Secretary-General of the GCI MUN Conference for middle school students read like the resume of an experienced manager, involving “coordinating the secretariat’s communications, reporting on its activities to LAU, managing all tasks and deliverables, and building a sense

of community among staff members,” among other duties.

And it seems employers are paying attention. Since graduating from LAU with a B.A. in Political Science and International Affairs in 2010, Joelle Eid has acted as a spokesperson on the Syria crisis for both UNHCR and the World Food Program. She gives credit for her professional success to her years involved in LAU MUN, which she joined during her first semester of university, eventually becoming Secretary-General of the middle school conference. “As a communications professional, I can say that my ability to communicate is a skill and a passion that was directly passed on to me through the MUN,” she explains. “The ability to tell the story of millions of people living through conflict to a global audience comes from having done so within the four walls of a Model UN classroom at LAU.”

For Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Civic Engagement at LAU Elie Samia, “There is a positive correlation between student leadership programs

[such as the ones curated by OCE] and employability.” Samia emphasizes that, in managing programs such as MUN, MEU or MAL themselves, students acquire a range of skills that include project management, time management, budgetary and communication skills, among others. “They learn to work under pressure and assume responsibilities for their actions,” he stresses. “All of these traits sharpen their professional skills and prepares them to embark on professional careers with a superior level of professional legitimacy, cognitive preparedness and psychological readiness.”

Recent graduate in banking and finance Wadih Khnaizir has already translated his time heading the Secretariat of LAU’s GC MUN in New York into an internship at the United Nations headquarters, where he was also part of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the UN for three months. For him, the benefits of the experience for his future career path are clear. “It gives you an obvious boost in communication skills, and helps you tackle any interview or conversation when applying for jobs,” he says. “And it improves your diplomatic and interpersonal skills, charisma, ability to negotiate and knowledge of conflict resolution.”

Finally, the benefits of participating in the running of local and international simulations of international diplomatic conferences are not major-specific. LAU alumna Rahma Dalbani graduated in 2016 with a degree in interior design, a specialization seemingly unrelated to global diplomacy. Still, she says, “being a part of leadership and simulation programs at OCE has helped me build my character, outside of my educational resume. Now, not only do I have the grades and degree to support me, but I also have the experience and leadership skills that set me apart from everyone else.”

As with so much in the twenty-first century, interconnectedness is key to the importance of leadership-related soft skills. Dalbani points out that “in a fast-changing world, where business, diplomacy and marketing are intertwined in everything we do, it’s not enough to just have a degree in a certain area. Having the required skills to navigate and understand people, and to lead them, is as important as having the technical skills of our chosen domains.” ■



Chasing their dreams

The graduating class of 2017 celebrated the end of a rewarding journey and the beginning of a bright future for themselves and Lebanon.

Thousands of guests and hundreds of graduates filled both the Beirut and Byblos campuses this June, attending a series of commencement ceremonies to celebrate the end of the arduous and fulfilling journey of the 1,814 students who earned degrees from one of LAU's seven schools. Before offering an overview of the university's strategic and academic accomplishments, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra told the audiences that the key objectives of these ceremonies was to celebrate the achievements of the LAU family during the past academic year and

to share in the joy of graduating classes of 2017. However, the focus was of the speeches was very much on the future and how LAU, its students and alumni could shape and improve it — for themselves, their community and their country. Four recipients of honorary doctorates, three valedictorians and two keynote speakers all joined President Jabbra in encouraging the graduates to use the knowledge and skills they gained at LAU in the service of Lebanon.



Never tiring of encouraging young people as they embark on their lives post university, Joseph G. Jabbra, in his 13th year as president of LAU, urged the graduates to “strive for excellence, be ethical and uphold your values, and most importantly, to serve and love the other.” Referring to the university, he pointed out, “Through continued success... LAU has become a powerhouse, taking its rightful place in the constellation of leading institutes of higher education.” However, the president stressed, “We need to do more, to be indefatigable, to continue to self-improve in serving the young people of Lebanon, the MENA region, and beyond.”

During the commencement ceremonies, LAU presented honorary doctorates in humane letters to four eminent figures and outstanding achievers from the fields of finance, media and advertising: innovative banker Naaman Azhari, award-winning journalist Marcel Ghanem, regional advertising pioneer Joseph Ghossoub, and visionary financier Salim Sfeir.



"We are in need of you, to stand up to the deteriorating political and economic situation in Lebanon ... so the Lebanese here can achieve the miracles that those abroad have."

—Naaman Azhari

The former Minister of Finance, Economy and Planning in Syria and current chairman of BLOM Bank Group, was in 2013 awarded for Distinguished Service to Banking by the Arab Bankers Association.

"I hear too much about emigration and thoughts that this country is not worthy of your success and achievements ... Don't let the divisions, political parties and politics affect you ... Come together for the benefit of Lebanon."

—Marcel Ghanem

Through his popular show *Kalam Ennas*, the award-winning journalist has been a powerful and influential voice for democracy, freedom of expression, social justice and political autonomy.



"You have no choice but to think outside the box and be innovative enough to look for roles that would differentiate you from your peers, and strangely, from machines."

—Joseph Ghossoub

A pioneer in the MENA region's advertising industry, the founder of the holding group MENACOM was the first recipient of the first-ever Dubai Lynx Advertising Person of the Year Award.



"You are the generation who will breathe new life into our nation and its people ... Each and every one of you can make a change. You can not only change your fate but also that of your community and your country."

—Salim Sfeir

Under the leadership of the Bank of Beirut Chairman and CEO, the financial institution was in 2014 recognized for being the "fastest growing bank in Lebanon" by Banker Middle East.





The president told the 46 graduating medical students and ten residents of the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine in Byblos, "You are coming out at a time when your education, experience and expertise are thoroughly needed in order to meet the challenges that medical education and healthcare delivery systems face." Touching upon current global crises, Jabbra urged all students to remember that not only were they students, but more importantly "students who heal."

For his part, Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health Ghassan Hasbani offered words of encouragement for the students facing arduous times ahead. "Never before

has progress been so fast and drastic. Technology is allowing humanity to automate most basic tasks...paving the way for a new industrial revolution that will transform our lives at an unprecedented pace...so, you will move from being simple users to sophisticated designers and manufacturers." Dealing with a "world full of uncertainties, challenges and opportunities" requires strength of character, Hasbani pointed out, urging them to be self-confident and undaunted by failure, but rather to learn from it while remaining passionate and curious. "You will undoubtedly face all the existing ethical challenges of today's world, but remember new ones are rapidly emerging."



Dean of Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine Michel Mawad implored the graduating class to prioritize compassion in their burgeoning careers. "Sympathize and empathize with patients, hold their hands, be there for them and let them feel deep down in their inner selves that that day, you have made your best effort," said Mawad, professor of neurosurgery, neurology, radiology, ophthalmology and practicing interventional radiologist at LAU Medical Center – Rizk Hospital. "It is only in your discovery of the fears, anxieties, and desires of your patient that you will become a doctor."



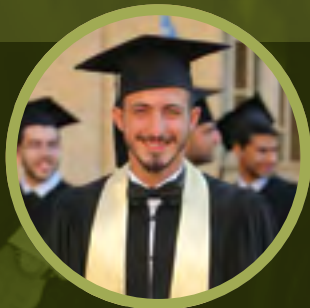
LAU's Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing celebrated its 33 graduating students in the presence of former Minister Leila el Solh Hamade. An LAU honorary doctorate recipient (2006), el Solh Hamade spoke fondly of her special ties to the university, saying that this event was the only such ceremony she has accepted to attend this year. She paid homage to one of the "most noble and human professions," reminding the audience that Lebanon, which currently counts 7,000 practicing nurses, needs no less than 17,000 nurses, which opens up great job opportunities for the graduates. "We need you," she told the students before presenting them with pins and awards, alongside dean of the nursing school Anahid Kulwicki and LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra.

In turn, valedictorians thanked LAU and their families for being role models and nurturing them during their academic journey, and promised to come back and help the community that had given them so much.



"LAU has exceptionally encouraged us to actualize our potential and to be great citizens of our community. We should follow the steps of our President Jabbra, who left Lebanon to actualize his intellectual potential but came back to share the harvest with his country."

—Ghazi Ousmat Bou Ghanem, biology major
Valedictorian, Beirut campus (Schools of Arts & Sciences and Architecture & Design graduation)



"Today we celebrate the end of our journey at this prestigious university that has opened the doors for us into the real world, that has pushed us persistently beyond our limits, towards academic excellence, personal and social development, promoting respect, equality and being a true source of inspiration to every one of us to become leaders in our society."

—Marwan Hteit, business major
Valedictorian, Beirut campus (Adnan Kassab School of Business graduation)



"Role models are not only physicians, celebrities, entrepreneurs and politicians, they're plentiful. The strength of having you, dear parents and friends, by our side will get us to our next goal and destination. We will make you proud."

—Mahmoud Merhi
Valedictorian, Byblos campus (Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine graduation)



"It is at LAU that we learn how to have a stake in our country's progress and in our destiny ... Let's leave our mark on a world that is different because we passed through it, because we are able to shape it and not only be passively shaped by it. Let's dare to be extraordinary."

—Hawraa Raoof, biology major
Valedictorian, Byblos campus graduation

Q&A

Understanding Lebanese and Arab youths

Survey explores the problems shaping the life of the region's youth in the aftermath of the so-called "Arab Spring" that started in 2011

For three years, thirty researchers from fifteen Arab and European institutions conducted an ambitious cross-country project, titled the SAHWA Youth Survey. Recently concluded, the EU-funded study examines the needs, expectations and difficulties faced by youth in the Arab world. Adnan Kassar School of Business faculty members from the Department of Economics Ghassan Dibeh, Walid Marrouch and Ali Fakhri took part in the initiative. We asked the LAU team about the results and impact of the study.

What are the main findings of the survey?

The SAHWA Youth Survey 2016 provides a diverse database on various aspects of the youth in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt and Lebanon. Ten thousand young people aged 15 to 29 participated, allowing us to compile a more complete vision than ever of their life and concerns.

The survey found that the youth in these countries mainly live at home with one or both parents and are mostly single. They are equally divided between urban and rural areas, and around 85 percent still live in the place they were born. Of those who do move out, one in three do so because of marriage. The vast majority is currently at or has attended school in the past. Males tend to have a slightly higher rate of school attendance (97.46 percent) than females (93.7 percent). But among those, females attain a higher rate of tertiary education (27.09 percent) than males (23.09 percent). However, despite high level of school attendance, one out of three youths consider that their education did not prepare them for the labor market.

One in four of those surveyed are currently employed. Roughly 33 percent are currently studying and 40.70 percent are unemployed or housewives. Males tend to start work at 17 and females at 20 years of age. The lack of professional opportunities, the income gap between their home country and abroad, and poor living conditions are the main factors influencing a willingness to emigrate, with Europe being the preferred destination. Additional considerations include helping

their family and the deficiency of an affordable educational system.

They place very little confidence in national and international institutions, especially their politicians, parliament and political parties. Only one in three young people of voting age participated in the last elections. The main reason for not exercising their right to vote is disinterest (44.58 percent). The media (national and foreign) are also regarded with distrust.

Among the many papers written by LAU faculty as part of this initiative was one that looked at emigration among the youth of Lebanon. What are the main factors at play and what policy recommendation did you make to stem the brain drain?

International Migration published our paper titled *Decision to Emigrate amongst the Youth in Lebanon* on the causes behind youth emigration in Lebanon. Based on the SAHWA Youth Survey, we established a socio-economic profile for a typical young Lebanese who reports a willingness to emigrate.

The results indicate that youth from non-wealthy backgrounds living in smaller dwellings have a higher propensity to emigrate. We also found that being male and unemployed has an effect. Moreover, while residents of poor regions are more likely to express willingness to emigrate, university education also promotes such willingness.

Policy-makers might want to intervene by improving the labor market in order to absorb more youth. This means creating more jobs, improving the education-to-work transitions for young people, reducing the problem of skill mismatch between education and job requirements, and solving the problem of regional disparities in income and wealth.

Currently, access to the data of this survey is restricted only to members of the SAHWA consortium and will be made available to the public in April 2018.

From the Boardroom

By Leena F. Saidi

For the first time in five years, the Board of Trustees held its March annual gathering in Lebanon, at university's campuses of Beirut and Byblos



The board members took the opportunity to meet with faculty, students and staff and experience first-hand the institution's drive for excellence and deep commitment to serve both its students and the community at large.

After thorough consultations, the board made two strategic decisions that will be key to positioning the LAU for eminence in the MENA region and beyond. It approved SP111, the university's new five-year strategic plan that is composed of three pillars. The first is dedicated to fostering intellectual capital by recruiting and retaining excellent faculty and strengthening the discovery and dissemination of knowledge. To that end, LAU will be adding over eighty-five new faculty positions over the next four to five years, fostering a faculty development and research budget, and making sure that a grant office is set up to help faculty attract more research grants from outside funding agencies.

The second pillar is dedicated to pedagogy and is aimed at securing the university's position at the cutting edge of the learning process, using technological advances and innovation to support new and effective teaching methods in the classroom, and encouraging interactive learning through effective participation of both faculty and students.

The third pillar, LAU without Borders, is a daring move on the university's part. This pillar will help take LAU beyond its frontiers through a variety of technological modes of program delivery and by exploring the possibility of having branches in the Arab world and even beyond.

Peter Tanous, chairman of the board's investment committee, welcomed the idea as he would like to see the university expand geographically. "As LAU becomes better known around the world, I think the next phase will be a global expansion."

The board also approved an ambitious and integrated strategic plan for the

Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine and the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital. The purpose of this plan is to sustain the medical school in its drive to effectively fulfill its education mission, enhance clinical education practice at LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital, ensure the latter's financial sustainability and communicate its success story through a strong public relations program.

To respond to the needs of LAU students, as well as adapting to market needs and job opportunities, the board also approved — pending completion of registration formalities with the New York State Education Department — timely and exciting new graduate and undergraduate programs in architecture, legal studies, communication, conflict resolution and analysis, human resources and physics.

Making strategic decisions that impact the future of the university and its scholars is taken to heart by the board members, who firmly believe in the university's education and its values. Pointing to the role each school plays in instilling in its students the importance of civic engagement, Sheikh Walid Katibah — the father of two LAU alumni — recounted how his son, during his time as a medical student, would volunteer in clinics, for example, on World AIDS Day.

"I feel proud," he says. "Education is the only weapon that can deter poverty and counteract backwardness."

Through LAU's nearly nine decade-long history, the presidents of the university have been the guarantors of its mission, leading it from strength to strength. President Joseph G. Jabbra's achievements have attested to this, leading the board to unanimously extend his term until 2020. "Each one of the previous presidents was an innovator and President Jabbra has been a transformational person in the history of this university," said Chairman of the Board Philip Stoltzfus.

"For us as board members to really understand what's happening and be able to add some insight, it's very important that we have meetings here in Lebanon."

—Clay Pell, LAU board member
and former U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary
for International and Foreign
Language Education



The key value of simulation-based medical education

By Irina du Quenoy

LAU's Third International Conference on Medical Education focuses on the importance of simulation for education and patient safety

More than 300 health practitioners and students flocked to Beirut's Hilton Metropolitan Hotel for LAU's Third International Conference on Medical Education. Organized by the university's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, this year's conference centered on the use of simulation for education and patient safety. The event was held in collaboration with the Society in Europe for Simulation Applied to Medicine (SESAM) and the Gathering of Healthcare Simulation Technology Specialists (SimGHOSTS).

"Preventable medical errors result in the deaths of more than 400,000 American citizens each year and are the third cause of death in the United States," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, citing a report published in the *Principles and Practice of Clinical Research*. Deficiencies within the medical education culture are at the root of these alarming statistics, highlighting innovative educational approaches such as simulation-based learning.

LAU's medical school has established a pioneering clinical simulation center (CSC) at the university's Byblos campus, allowing students from different health-related disciplines to practice their craft in a patient-safe and controlled environment. The center puts the most recent technology at the service of its trainees, via a large array of simulators ranging from low-fidelity task trainers to high-fidelity computerized mannequins.

"Medical simulation can and should play a major role in preparing our trainees to face the challenges of real life once they go out in the community and deliver healthcare," said the Dean of the medical school Dr. Michel Mawad. "Our goal today is to prepare young physicians of the future to deliver healthcare with a minimum number of mistakes in the shortest learning curve possible," he said, adding that medicine should take its cue from other industries — such as construction or aviation — that have simulation at their core.

LAU's CSC uses life-like mannequins that simulate vital cues which, when connected to monitors, provide real-time information to the trainers. High-fidelity mannequins act like real patients, interact with the learners and present conditions that improve or worsen according to the care or interventions performed by the students. "Our aim is to train our students on the human body, to sharpen their clinical skills and assessment abilities without harming any patients," explained Associate Dean of Medical Education at the medical school Dr. Zeinat Hijazi.

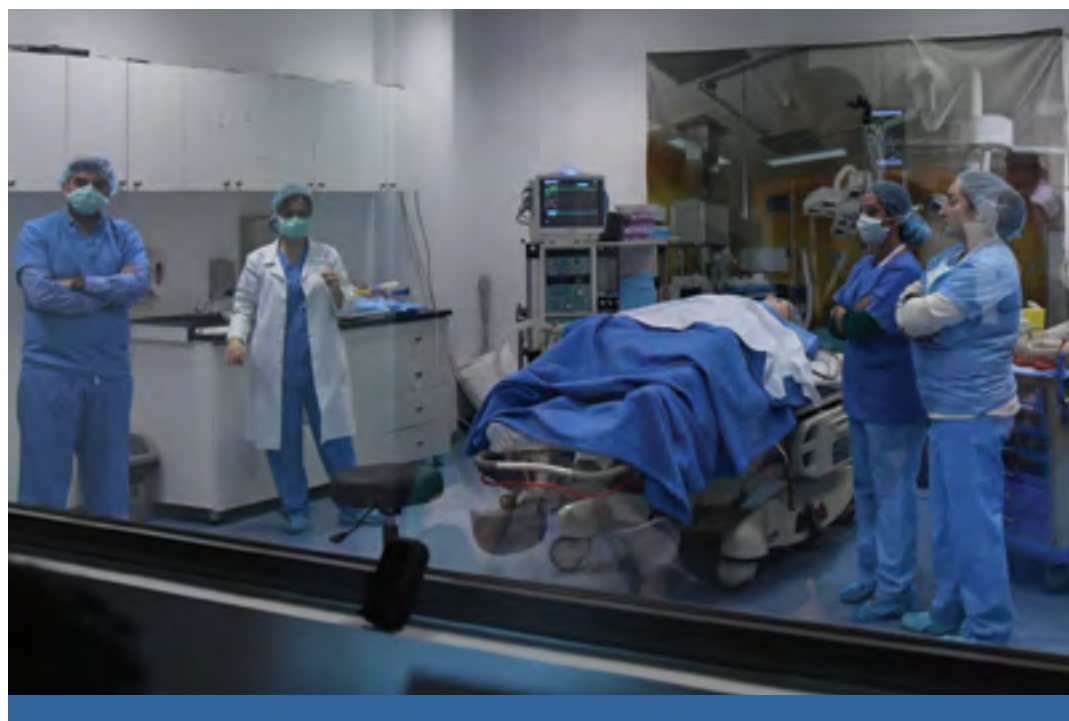
Initially established with significant funding from the USAID's American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) division, in 2014 the CSC partnered once more with ASHA/USAID to purchase pediatric simulators and an A-V system that allows for audio-visual recoding of all simulation center activities for real time feedback and evaluation by faculty.

For SESAM president Dr. Antoine Tesniere, simulation has the potential not only to radically change the way medicine is taught, but also the fundamental way in which health care is provided. "In terms of improvements to our health-care system, [addressing medical error] is the highest impact we can have," he said.

"The conference created a community of Lebanese professionals with the ultimate goal of advancing medical simulation in the country."

—Dr. Vanda Abi Raad, director of LAU's Clinical Simulation Center

New technology brings new, potentially thorny questions. One audience member raised the issue of whether the growing practice of simulation in medical education might undermine the practitioner's bedside manner, which is critical to the healing process. In response, Dr. René Amalberti, a specialist in medical error and senior advisor on patient safety at France's Haute Autorité de Santé and one of the nine international speakers invited to give a plenary address, emphasized the importance of striking



a balance between simulation and theoretical knowledge.

Pleased with the opportunity to have simulation as an educational method privileged among others learning approaches to the audience, professor of simulation education in healthcare at Monash University in Australia, Debra Nestel held a plenary session that explored contemporary approaches to simulation-based education for developing clinical procedural skills. For Nestel simulation can provide a high quality and ethical approach to supporting healthcare professionals and students. "Although often resource intensive and requiring specialist educational faculty, it can also offer flexibility," she said, adding, "Learners also mostly enjoy the experience even though it can at times be stressful."

In addition to enlightening the audience by means of plenary addresses, the nine international speakers led numerous workshops on the practical aspects of simulation-based education. For example, Peter Dieckmann — a work and organizational psychologist at the Copenhagen Academy for Medical Education and Simulation — led workshops on how simulation instructors can teach healthcare professionals non-technical skills and on maximizing the impact of debriefing sessions that follow simulation exercises.

Bringing almost two decades of experience in simulation-based education to the table, Dieckmann admitted to being impressed by the quality of the Lebanese healthcare practitioners who attended the event. "Participants were very engaged and reflective," he said, adding, "They came from a range of experiences in terms of simulation and from different disciplines. I think this mix is really important to move simulation and its potential as it moves forward."

The organizers made sure to involve all medical schools in Lebanon in the scientific committee of the conference. "We at LAU are among the pioneers in the field of simulation-based medical education in the region and this is the first Lebanese conference on the issue," said Dr. Vanda Abi Raad, associate professor at the Department of Anesthesiology and director of the CSC and co-chair of the scientific committee. "But we believe that the importance of this conference goes beyond LAU, being a landmark at both the national and regional level."

The most valuable result of the conference, Abi Raad insisted, is that it created a community of Lebanese professionals who can commune with and learn from each other with the ultimate goal of advancing medical simulation in Lebanon.



An essential part of the medical body

By Leena F. Saidi

Pharmacy students get up close and personal with the profession of a medical representative

"Employability is not limited to just securing a job, but also having a life-long rewarding career."

—Imad Btaiche, LAU dean of the School of Pharmacy

For the second year in a row, LAU has partnered with the pharmaceutical company MSD (Merck Sharp & Dohme) Lebanon in a program that equips soon-to-graduate pharmacist with work-ready skills.

"Employability is not limited to just securing a job, but also having a life-long rewarding career. This requires equipping students with a set of skills, abilities and attributes for them to be work-ready as soon as they graduate," says the Dean of the School of Pharmacy Imad Btaiche. The program aims to do exactly that.

However, it is LAU's commitment to the education of the whole person that has been fundamental to the repetition this spring of the initiative known as the MSD Aim Hire Academy. "Besides the excellent caliber among the LAU alumni that we witness in our MSD Lebanon team — where 30 percent of the organization are LAU graduates — both institutions share similar goals and aspirations for the future," points out the company's Human Resources Lead, Layal Zeineddine.

The initiative selects pharmacy students who are nearing graduation and who have the distinguished skills and attributes to be considered as future hires by the company. "The selected students, who go through the training program, receive a certificate of completion," explains Clinical Associate Professor Lamis Karaoui, who is also the director of experiential education at the School of Pharmacy, adding, "They then become part of a pool of 'more competitive' candidates whenever the company has an opening."

Through a program that is balanced between practical and theoretical content, the academy exposes the students to both the corporate world and the end customer. Spread over a couple of months, the program is open to both under- and postgraduate pharmacy students graduating within the same year. Potential participants are asked to apply online and go through almost the same assessments as any other MSD employee.

The interns go out and witness actual physicians' visits, as well as product specific trainings, they also attend team meetings and are even able to interview MSD leaders. The selected candidates are always matched with a "buddy" to guide them when they need additional support. This year, five LAU pharmacy students were selected out of 35 applicants. *LAU Magazine & Alumni Bulletin* spoke to three of them: B.S. in Pharmacy graduate Michel Khairallah, and 2018 Pharm.D. cohorts Amjad Hamdan and Carole Najd.

While Najd decided to apply to the academy after MSD's presentation at LAU, Khairallah's previous knowledge of the company steered his. "My decision was based on a belief that it is the right place for a fresh graduate interested in pharmaceutical sales to get proper training and mentorship," he explains.

Although part of the program grooms students in the social behavior of a sales representative, the students also attend sessions on how to recognize and relate to different customer personalities, as well as assess their own strengths and weaknesses.

"The academy helped me get hands-on training in the field of work I aspire to join," says Khairallah. It also helped him pinpoint aspects about his character and personality that he hadn't noticed. The same sentiment was echoed by Najd: "This experience gave me a clear idea about my future career path and helped me identify my strengths, weaknesses and personality type."

By the end of the program, the interns had gained a deeper insight into the profession of a medical representative. "I know now that medical representatives are not sellers," explains Hamdan. "They are an essential part of the medical body. They are the experts who guarantee that physicians are properly informed about medications to make sure every patient receives the best treatment possible."

Gender equality in the workforce

Director of the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World Lina Abirafeh tackles obstacles to economic parity



"Women's economic engagement is attainable, but without major political and socio-cultural shifts, equality will not be achieved in our lifetime."



The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal Five explicitly states that gender equality is necessary for achieving a resilient, prosperous and peaceful world. Not only is this a stand-alone goal—it is necessary to achieve all other development goals.

And yet, women still suffer from legal and political barriers, and remain shackled by oppressive socio-cultural practices. As of 2014, 143 countries included clauses for gender equality in their constitution, but to what effect? In Lebanon, for instance, gender disparities are magnified in the economic sector, where only 24 percent of women participate, versus 70 percent of men. Lebanon is ranked the 135th worst country out of 144 countries in terms of gender inequality.

Research has shown that gender parity is critical to sustainable development. In the economic sector, gender equality could add up to \$12 trillion to annual global GDP by 2025. According to the Global Gender Gap Report, at this current pace, economic equality will not be reached for another 170 years.

Building women's economic capacities and ensuring gender parity in the labor market would increase GDP in many Arab countries. The onus is on employers to promote parity by reforming policies to include equal employment opportunities, firstly by recognizing the existence of the "glass ceiling" for women in advancing their careers, obtaining merit-based promotions and ensuring equal pay for equal work. Structural support programs should provide improved maternity leave, paid paternity leave, childcare and other family support services, social security coverage and zero tolerance to sexual harassment in the workplace.

However, even in the most progressive societies, women and men do not enjoy economic equality. The global aspiration is Iceland—the first country to eliminate

the gender pay gap. Unfortunately, the Arab region has a long way to go. For instance, Moroccan legislation clearly states that both women and men have the right to equal pay for equal work, yet this is far from reality. Moroccan women earn 23 percent less than men — and the country as a whole ranks in the bottom 20 percent in terms of female labor force participation.

The informal sector in Lebanon, comprised mostly of women, is another void where rights disappear. These women are not included in the Labor Law, working without benefits, protection and sustained wages. This dangerous working environment exposes women to myriad risks associated with poor working conditions, including violence. Lebanon's agriculture sector employs 40 percent women and yet a 21 percent income gap exists. Although Lebanese law forbids discrimination in the work place, this legislation is hardly enforced.

Refugee women and migrant domestic workers in Lebanon are even more vulnerable. Sixty-one percent of displaced Syrian female-headed households do not have working family members and are forced to engage in negative coping strategies, such as child labor, early marriage and transactional sex. As for migrant domestic workers, they suffer high risks of exploitation with limited legal rights. In 2015 the Domestic Workers Union was declared illegal, abolishing even the possibility of protection and support.

Across the Arab region, patriarchy presents one of the greatest constraints to equality. It therefore is not a surprise that women's labor participation in the region is lowest in the world. Women's economic engagement is attainable, but without major political and socio-cultural shifts, equality will not be achieved in our lifetime.



Young designers make their debut into the world of fashion

By Reem Maghribi

Eclectic show reveals exceptional work by LAU's premier fashion graduates

"Our dream, your dream, is being realized right at this moment," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra at the Abroyan factory in Bourj Hammoud this June, moments before 60 models took to the runway to showcase the collections of the university's fashion design program graduates.

The 16 designers make up the first graduating class of the Bachelor of Arts in Fashion Design spearheaded by LAU and

brought to fruition through a collaboration with the fashion powerhouse ELIE SAAB and the London College of Fashion.

According to Chair of the Department of Art and Design Yasmine Taan, who had headed the task force in charge of creating the major, the program has realized its aims "to turn future students into real trendsetters."

"There are many intellectual collections in here," enthused Jason Steel, head of the

fashion program. "This is the launch pad for creative entrepreneurs who will change the cultural identity of Lebanon."

Director of International at the London College of Fashion Paul Yuille agrees and credits LAU with nurturing an environment that harbors quality and creativity. "While LAU adopts a U.S. model and international standards, it has a very evident local culture and we found this very attractive," said Yuille. "Preserving and enhancing local culture and expression is key, and the fact that Saab was both established and remains in Lebanon is hugely significant and aspirational for young Lebanese designers."

The collections — which included ten outfits per designer — were eclectic and diverse, and the fashion mogul was pleased with the results. "They presented something new and daring, and it was clear they had researched and thought through their concepts in depth," says Saab, who hosted some of the new designers as interns during their four years at LAU.

"Internships are an integral part of the learning process and allow budding

designers to engage in an industry environment in every part of the process, from design to fabric selection and production," explains Saab, who has seen many a former intern launch successful fashion lines.

It is however also important, he adds, to nurture student capabilities beyond design that relate to other disciplines engaged in the fashion industry, such as journalism, advertising and visual merchandising.

The curriculum of the fashion program reflects this concept and includes courses in entrepreneurship as well as many visits and talks by and collaborations with local and international professionals working in the industry, many of who also join the various jury panel sessions held throughout the four-year program.

Steel's mentor fashion veteran Douglas McLennan, who has 45 years experience as an academic, was also on hand to celebrate with the young designers during the catwalk show. "The designers really benefited from his expertise and experience, particularly when it came to merging creative excellence and commercial reality," says Steel, who has

"This is the launch pad for creative entrepreneurs who will change the cultural identity of Lebanon."

—Jason Steel, head of LAU's fashion program

the same strong bond with the graduates and will no doubt be their mentor as they establish themselves in the industry.

The fashion design program and its patrons are also in talks to develop an incubator for recent graduates and possibly a postgraduate degree program.

"The collaboration between our fashion house, LAU and LCF has been strong and fruitful and taken fashion in the region to another level," enthused Saab. "We will continue to build upon our success and offerings, and support — through creativity, education and support — a thriving local fashion industry."





"We have lived an incredible life changing experience that will stay with us for the rest of our lives. All the instructors are family to us now and even though we have graduated, staying in touch with LAU and the fashion team feels natural. If it weren't for this program, I honestly don't know where I would have ended up."

—Alia Malaa



"My collection, 'Passage', is about the passage from life to death. It presents the progress of humans into ghosts, becoming free beings."

—Bayan Halawi



"The fashion show was definitely the highpoint of my entire university experience. I got to witness my ideas come to life. I was able to plant a part of myself in every piece and then lay it out for everyone to live through. It was very intense and extremely rewarding."

—Dana Agal



"We must release our repressed thoughts caged by the unconscious. My collection 'Die Verwandlung' aimed to do so through metamorphosis: remodeling, restyling, transforming or mutating."

—Christie Dawli,
Winner of Ultimaker
Education Challenge
for 3D Printing, 2016
(in collaboration with
Jason Steel)



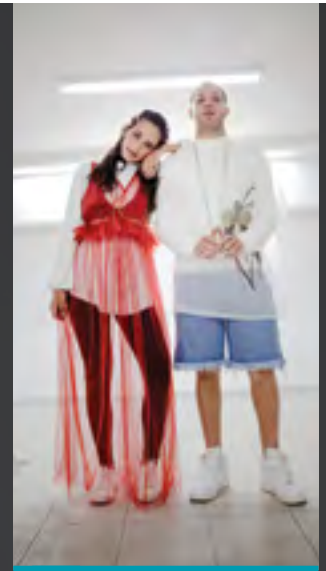
"As the first graduating class, we started this journey together not knowing exactly where we were heading. My favorite part was definitely the people I got to share this experience with. MADE OF STEEL!"

—Dania Mahdi



"Nothing is impossible, as long as you find your own way to get it done. Throughout the program, I learned to develop my creativity."

—Hiba Kawoukji



"The program was full of creativity, workshops, public relations and great teaching."

—Joya Haddad



"My collection 'Vryheid' explores darkness, merging poetic designs based on culture with high-quality craftsmanship and creativity."

—Karen Bou Alwan,
Recipient of the ELIE SAAB
Award for Excellence
& Craftsmanship, 2016



"The past four years have been an essential part of my future success."

—Layal Kazma



"The program helped me understand that everything is achievable if you set your mind to it. The fashion design team supported us and believed in us so much that we believed in our work and our capabilities, and were able to achieve the best."

—Nathalie Saad



"Thanks to the program, I was able to gain the education I wanted without having to go abroad and I met so many interesting people that I would definitely love to work with in the future. I was given the freedom to experiment and tackle interesting concepts on my journey to discover my own identity as a designer."

—Rafah Seoud



"Seeing my work on the runway made filled my heart with satisfaction, so many emotions were going through me that it felt surreal. Being a fashion designer has always been a dream of mine and being a part of the LAU program made me certain this is what I want to be doing for the rest of my life."

—Sara Kayyal



"There's nothing more incredible than seeing Lebanese athletes walk down the runway representing my collection. Short, tall, lean or heavy, they broke stereotypical expectations of body image by embracing strength."

—Nadine Kassem, who designed uniforms for Lebanon's 2020 Olympic team for her final collection



"Representing LAU was a great honor and reward after the four tough and beautiful years I spent there."

—Nour Daher, winner of the Origin Special Stone award, Mittelmöda competition in Milan, selected from among 4000 applicants worldwide



"The program paved the way for me to not only discover my potential as a designer, but also to greatly extend my knowledge and experience—in and out of the fashion world."

—Randa Sabbagh



"The past four years have given me endless mounds of knowledge and an experience that's inarguably tailored to the success of each student."

—Yassmin el Saleh

Tackling present-day issues

By Reem Maghribi

Powerful music production shines light on global greed and stereotypes that segregate

Symbolism, movement and drama converged with oriental and occidental beats and English and Arabic lyrics during the spring major music production of *I am Not a Terrorist*.

Ten students from different majors took to the stage with Assistant Professor Martin Loyato, the creative force behind the production, to present the case against stereotyping Arabs as terrorists. "This message is important to me and definitely drove me as a performer," said LAU graduate of finance Mohammed Zahzah, who played the electric guitar and Turkish clarinet during the production.

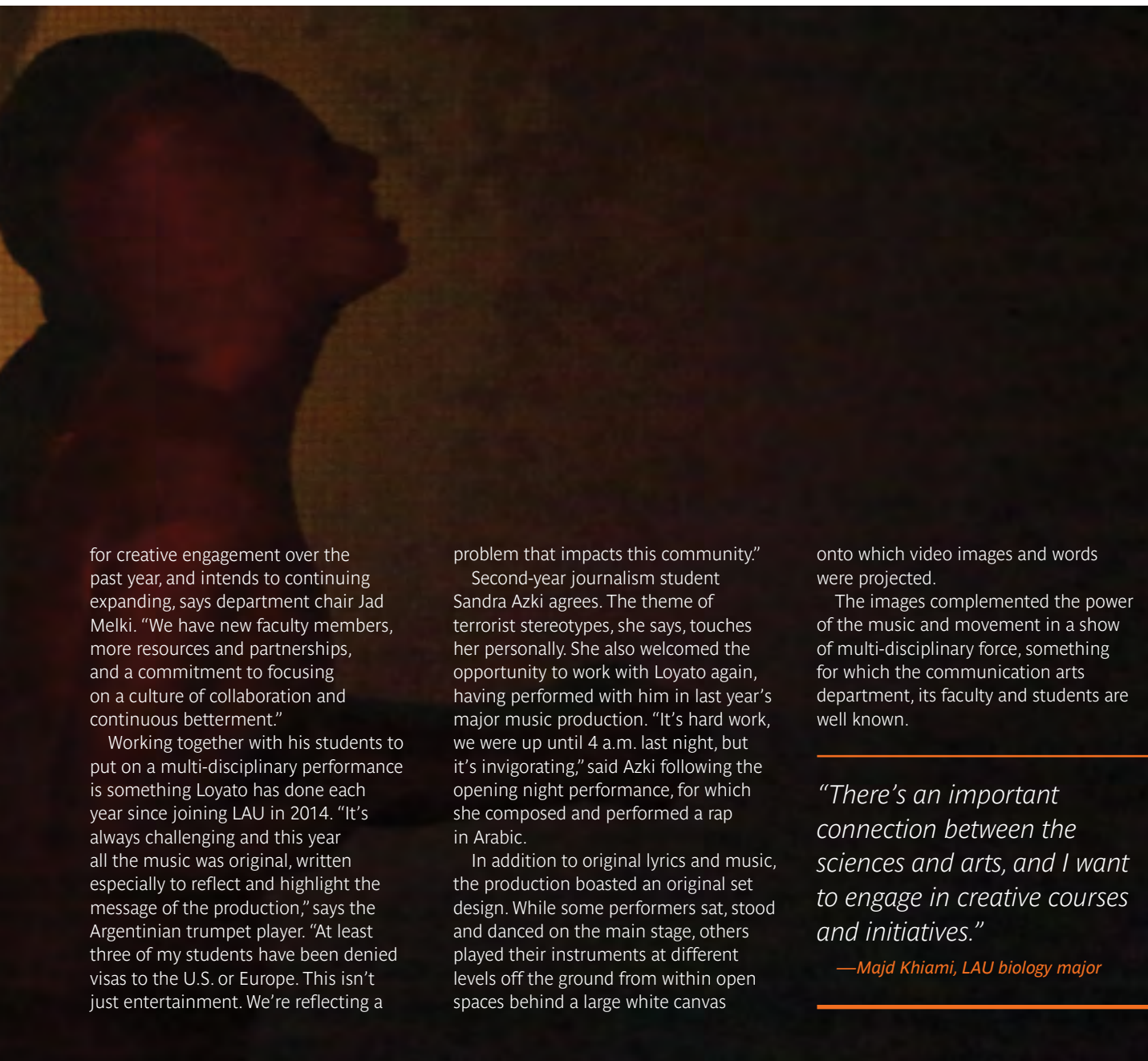
While Zahzah wore a black traditional Levantine men's robe during the one-hour performance, others wore unitards of different colors and patterns that

symbolized greed, death and petroleum.

Before changing character and donning an orange jump suit typically worn by suspected terrorists, biology major Majd Khiami sang a song about oil and war in a deep crisp voice while dressed to reflect greed. "This was an exhilarating experience," said Khiami of his first public performance. "I think there's a huge and important connection between the sciences and arts, and regardless of my major, I want to engage as much as possible in all the creative courses and initiatives LAU has to offer," added the pre-med student after the performance. He has since enrolled in a minor in communication arts.

The Department of Communications Arts has certainly been offering an increasing number of opportunities





for creative engagement over the past year, and intends to continue expanding, says department chair Jad Melki. "We have new faculty members, more resources and partnerships, and a commitment to focusing on a culture of collaboration and continuous betterment."

Working together with his students to put on a multi-disciplinary performance is something Loyato has done each year since joining LAU in 2014. "It's always challenging and this year all the music was original, written especially to reflect and highlight the message of the production," says the Argentinian trumpet player. "At least three of my students have been denied visas to the U.S. or Europe. This isn't just entertainment. We're reflecting a

problem that impacts this community."

Second-year journalism student Sandra Azki agrees. The theme of terrorist stereotypes, she says, touches her personally. She also welcomed the opportunity to work with Loyato again, having performed with him in last year's major music production. "It's hard work, we were up until 4 a.m. last night, but it's invigorating," said Azki following the opening night performance, for which she composed and performed a rap in Arabic.

In addition to original lyrics and music, the production boasted an original set design. While some performers sat, stood and danced on the main stage, others played their instruments at different levels off the ground from within open spaces behind a large white canvas

onto which video images and words were projected.

The images complemented the power of the music and movement in a show of multi-disciplinary force, something for which the communication arts department, its faculty and students are well known.

"There's an important connection between the sciences and arts, and I want to engage in creative courses and initiatives."

—Majd Khiami, LAU biology major



Promoting education through exchange

By Irina du Quenoy

An LAU collaboration that provides opportunities for internships in industries worldwide



"IAESTE is helping our students to become true global engineers, while diversifying their cultural background making them more effective leaders."

—Barbar Akle, LAU associate professor of Industrial & Mechanical Engineering and assistant dean of LAU's School of Engineering

"The kind of work I was required to do was new to me," says Ziad Bassil, a recent LAU graduate in computer engineering, of his School of Engineering (SOE)'s internship requirement. "But I needed to deliver, so I learned to cope with the requirements of the job." In his last year at university, Bassil fulfilled his requisite through the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience (IAESTE), where he spent two months interning at the automotive control department of the Technical University of Kaiserslautern in Germany.

The IAESTE is an international association of national committees representing academic, industrial and student interests. The organization, which reaches 4,000 students, 3,000 employers and 1,000 academic institutions, promotes technical education through the exchange of students at the undergraduate level.

According to SOE Dean George E. Nasr, "LAU's involvement with IAESTE provides great opportunities to our students for internships in well-established industries worldwide." The collaboration "offers our students internship learning experiences with rigorous technical content, sound professional practices and rich cultural and international flavor," he adds.

For four years now, the school has facilitated exchanges through IAESTE for approximately eight LAU students a year. In return, the SOE facilitates internship opportunities in Lebanon for students from international universities, opening up for them technical and cultural experiences in engineering industries throughout the country.

The structure of the IAESTE exchange is somewhat different from typical programs sending students abroad. On the one hand, says Associate Professor of Industrial and Mechanical Engineering and Assistant Dean Barbar Akle, the SOE chooses candidates for IAESTE internships from among highly performing students on a competitive basis. In addition to this, however, the opportunity is also open to "those students who go the extra mile to get an opportunity for someone coming from abroad."

Specifically, says Akle, "an LAU student finds a local internship opportunity for a student from, say, Germany. This created opportunity is then exchanged for one created by a student abroad." The internship exchange is thereby created by the students themselves, who have

to persuade the companies involved to "pay the basic cost of living and provide lodging." All of which fits into the SOE's "leadership training," as the school believes that "it is important for our students to learn how to seek jobs even for other people."

LAU engineering undergraduates have undertaken internships through IAESTE in places as far flung as Poland, Nepal, India and Serbia, among others. "Every aspect of the trip contributed to widening my horizons, changing my perspective on different topics, while breaking many stereotypes that I had engraved in my mind about different cultures," says Marya Sadek, a computer engineering major who interned at Metric Tech in Istanbul. "I am left with beautiful memories, a new circle of friends awaiting visits and, above all, an international experience qualification on my CV," adds Mary, who was able to land a very good job in Lebanon even before graduating, which she believes was boosted by her IAESTE experience.

This combination of cultural and professional enrichment differentiates IAESTE participants as they enter the workforce post graduation. "IAESTE is helping our students to become true global engineers, while diversifying their cultural background making them more effective leaders," says Akle.

For Ziad Bassil, the link between his time in Germany and future career prospects is obvious: "When employers see that you went for that kind of opportunity, they take you more seriously. It shows them that you're someone who is eager to learn and to improve, and not someone who just did the bare minimum to graduate."

However, not all IAESTE interns want to land jobs immediately after graduating. "My internship increased my confidence in my ability to adapt in new environments fast," says computer engineering major Alaa Maarouf, who wants to continue to study for a master's degree and then hopefully a Ph.D. "I wanted to have the experience of living in a new country with new culture and language, which IAESTE perfectly provided."

Honoring six decades of the European Union

By Naseem Ferdowsi

Students ascertain what
60 years of collaboration
mean in diplomacy

*“Through this event we
hoped to show the successful
experience of countries
that are different and yet
have managed to create a
real union.”*

—Marwan Rowayheb, chair of LAU's
Department of Social Sciences



“We are here to celebrate the signing 60 years ago, of the Treaty of Rome, a crucial milestone in Europe’s history,” commented Eduardo Crisafulli, director of the Italian Cultural Institute. The Delegation of the European Union, the Italian Embassy in Lebanon and LAU organized a lecture titled “Europe at Sixty: A State of the Union,” in collaboration with the cultural institute. Students, faculty, staff, ambassadors, diplomats and politicians gathered for a discussion of the EU’s history, achievements and recent challenges such as Brexit, immigration and geopolitics, as well as what these mean for the future of the union.

“Through this event we hoped to show the successful experience of countries that are different and yet have managed to create a real union,” said Marwan Rowayheb, chair of the Department of Social Sciences and associate professor of political science and international affairs at LAU. “This is a valuable learning experience for states worldwide, the Arab world and here in Lebanon, where our students come from different backgrounds and communities,” Rowayheb added.

For Christina Lassen, head of the EU delegation to Lebanon, this anniversary was an opportunity to look back at how much the EU has achieved throughout the years. “It is a reminder of why we decided to have the EU in the first place and why countries have decided to join this cooperation,” she said. “We are proud of what we have achieved.”

The diplomats discussed the current challenges the EU is facing, as well as its main achievements. Ambassador of Italy Massimo Marotti emphasized that “the European integration process cannot stop as a result of the current crisis and the new challenges. Addressing the people’s concerns in order to relaunch the

European model is our key challenge.”

According to keynote speaker Secretary General of the European University Institute of Florence Vincenzo Grassi, “It is time for the EU to turn its weakness into strength and to recreate a new European solidarity. The reasons to be together as a union are still strong, and Europe can still be a key player on the international scene. United we stand, divided we fall.”

“Like you, we value tradition and build on it for a more promising future,” said LAU Provost George K. Najjar to the ambassadors. “As an institution bridging the past, the present and the future, our university is committed to strengthen its partnership with the EU, as well as upholding, fostering and promoting our shared values.”

The discussion hit home for many students. “The Arab world is in deep need of efficiency and the EU experience can certainly help us collaborate, unite and rebuild a better future for our countries and the region as a whole,” said international affairs graduate student Sabah Haidar Khalil.

After the discussion, students had a chance to speak one-on-one with the more than 25 ambassadors in attendance. “The unique opportunity to interact with the speakers and diplomats certainly gave them an advantage to better understand collaboration of international relations between countries,” explained Associate Director of Development Suha Abou Rialy, who spearheaded the event.

“We look forward to many more events like this, especially since this not only benefits our students but is also a strategic effort that will enhance LAU’s international and regional partnerships going forward to best benefit our community,” added Abou Rialy.





Putting the students on the right career path

By Linda Dahdah

School of Pharmacy's course on career planning helps graduates decide on their future

Elsa Kobeissi — who only a few weeks ago bid farewell to her alma mater at LAU's Byblos commencement ceremony — is getting ready for a new journey as she heads for the Imperial College of London this September, where she will pursue a master's degree in public health with an emphasis on global health.

Graduating with a B.S. in Pharmacy, she credits the curriculum and her professors for putting her on the right track. "My choice is the result of a process that started with the Career Opportunities course, followed by regular brainstorming with professor Roy Kanbar," she says,

referring to the assistant professor and chair of Pharmaceutical Sciences. "We took into consideration my academic skills, my personality and passion for volunteering, and finally the best programs and colleges that fit my future career interests."

Reflecting the university's commitment to academic excellence, student-centeredness and the education of the whole person, the School of Pharmacy structures its curriculum and co-curricular activities so as to prepare its budding pharmacists to pursue successful futures.

"It is of strategic importance to the



"It is of strategic importance to the school that its graduates have a high and predictable chance of gaining employment and achieving ongoing success in their careers."

—Imad Btaiche, Dean of LAU's School of Pharmacy



school that its graduates have a high and predictable chance of gaining employment and achieving ongoing success in their careers," says Dean of the School of Pharmacy Imad Btaiche.

With this in mind, three years ago Btaiche worked together with Kanbar and Clinical Associate Professor Aline Saad to create the "Career Opportunities" elective. Offered to second and third-year students, the course provides students with insights into different professional paths. According to Kanbar, the course compensates for the fact that students are so involved in their studies that they do not take the time to think of the next step. The one-credit elective encourages them to plan ahead by introducing them to a diversity of career pathways, from academia to industrial, community and clinical settings. The students are then asked to develop a career vision, explaining why they believe themselves best suited for the path they have chosen.

"This course is a wakeup call for the students," explains Kanbar. "We want them to put a plan together, look at the different options available and hopefully be ready to embrace one once they graduate," he says.

"I never really thought of what I wanted to do," admits fourth-year pharmacy student Diana Frangieh. "Then I wrote my career vision and I now think I have found my path." Frangieh will apply to become a Pharm. D. student as she would like to pursue a residency and work in a hospital setting, preferably in cardiology. "In addition to having a clearer idea of what my future might be like, I have also learned to be more self-confident."

Indeed, the class also focuses on enhancing the students' soft skills and strengthens their verbal, written communication, as well as leadership and entrepreneurial talents. It also emphasizes emotional intelligence, which includes the four key elements of self-awareness,

self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

"People with emotional intelligence tend to be more successful, especially in management and leadership positions," Btaiche explains.

"Pharmacists have to interact daily with patients, which means that they need to acquire soft skills — like compassion and empathy — that allow them to deliver the information to the patient in the most adequate way," says Saad. "The interdisciplinary nature of the profession also requires that we prepare the students to be successful team members."

As another practical step, the course includes mock job interview sessions, allowing students to fine-tune their interview techniques. As the academic year was coming to an end, the school matched each one of the students, according to their interest, with a real employer, who had volunteered for the practice. The students were then requested to take all the necessary and usual steps they would for a real interview.

Fourth-year student Maya Nassar contacted the community pharmacist she was matched with, sent her CV and motivational letter, made an appointment, and went for the interview. Satisfied with the experience, Nassar took the opportunity to learn more from her counterpart on common situations faced in the setting. "The course allowed me to be really well prepared for the exercise and learn new skills, but most importantly gain confidence and basically discover myself," she says.


Employability, more than just top grades

High rates of university enrollment mean that a degree and high academic performance are no longer guarantors of employment, let alone job satisfaction. What then do employers seek in potential employees?

By Reem Maghribi

FEATURE





“Our goal at LAU is the development of the whole person, not only the academic self.”

—Elise Salem, LAU vice president for Student Development and Enrollment Management

A seminal study on employability by Lorraine Dacre Pool and Peter Sewell defined employability as “having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose and secure occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful.” While the attainment of knowledge is very much the goal of academic programs, the development of skills and personal attributes happens mostly outside the classroom, though not necessarily outside the university.

“Our goal at LAU is the development of the whole person, not only the academic self,” asserts Elise Salem, vice president for Student Development and Enrollment Management (SDEM), the division that oversees many of the units offering extracurricular initiatives for students seeking opportunities through which to excel and hone their skills.

While various academic papers, magazine articles and career guidance books present different attributes as key

for employability, almost all of them list teamwork as essential.

Collaboration is key to success in most sports and so training and competing as a member of an athletics team strengthens that skill. LAU’s table tennis team, under the guidance of coach Nabil Stouhi, took gold for the first time this year at the University Sports Conference and, says student Nour Houry, their success was down to teamwork. “I love the team spirit and working with others,” enthuses the postgraduate student of education with an emphasis on management and leadership, whose last match was the decisive game. “I pushed myself hard for the good of the team.”

Also enjoying the camaraderie of teamwork is undergraduate Rana Tabbara. Her experience as a co-host of an LAU youth-centered weekly talk show ‘*sa3a 3l iza3a*’ (an hour on the airwaves) on Radio Liban has enabled her to develop strong team-working skills. “We are five students collaborating on script development and



“Internships are an integral part of the learning process and allow budding designers to engage in an industry environment.”

—Elie Saab

topic selection, and while we each have our select skills and responsibilities, we work together for the good of the program and not the good of the individual,” says the first year student of journalism.

The show is the result of collaboration between LAU’s Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) unit, its Department of Communication Arts and Radio Liban. The university develops a lot of partnerships with the public and private sectors to offer its students internships, which enable them to apply the theoretical knowledge they gain in class to real world situations. “Internships are an integral part of the learning process and allow budding designers to engage in an industry environment in every part of the process, from design to fabric selection through to production,” says patron of LAU’s fashion design program Elie Saab, who welcomes a number of students each year for a work placement at his atelier.

Internships also offer students insight

into the various career prospects available to them after graduation. “Working at the hospital was very much about program implementation, but at Roumieh prison I offered more one-to-one support,” says recent graduate of LAU’s program in social work Hiba Shihab. As a result of the internships, she was able to graduate already knowing which types of work she enjoyed and which she didn’t.

Such experience and insight strengthen one’s ability to dedicate their time and energy to their chosen field and, in the words of coach Stouhi, “dedication is something important not only in sport, but in life.” Also preaching the importance of hard work and resolve recently was LAU board member and former director of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory Charles Elachi. “If you want to shape the future, you have to do hard things... Taking easy classes and getting an A teaches you nothing,” said Elachi to an auditorium packed with students, insisting that if we really work hard, we can do almost anything. His was one of many guest talks held on campus every year to enlighten and motivate current students about the skills they need and challenges they will face as future leaders.

Elachi first left Lebanon as a youth to study in the USA. Exposure to foreign places and cultures is an invaluable experience and one LAU strives to provide its students with. “The advances in technology have laid bare our differences

and in some parts of the world resulted in bloody conflicts,” said President Joseph G. Jabbra recently at an event organized by the Office of International Services (OIS), as he explained the importance of international exposure for student and citizen development.

The OIS has developed agreements with over forty partners worldwide in its bid to give LAU students a wealth of opportunities to study abroad. Business major Kevin Fadlallah enjoyed his semester abroad at the Salzburg Global Academy last year so much so that he took on a second major just so that he could sign up for an exchange program a second time. “I am a distinction student and captain of the volleyball team, but what really makes me unique is that I am an international student.”

Courses like the travelling studio offered by the School of Architecture and Design also offer students the opportunity to travel and engage with peers and experts abroad, as do the various simulation programs run by the OCE unit, which include the Model United Nations (MUN), Model Arab League and Model European Union.

Diala el Masri, who graduated from LAU in 2014 with a degree in political science and international affairs, is among the hundreds of students who have to date travelled with the OCE. During the three years she spent at LAU, she held multiple positions at MUN and among her many

accolades is the Harvard World MUN Diplomacy Award.

"In my experience, those who academically excel are also passionate activists wanting to effect change, so the activities of the Dean of Students offices and the Outreach and Civic Engagement unit are very attractive to them," says Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management Abdo Ghié, explaining why it's no surprise that 40 percent of Lebanon's top performing students of 2017 have chosen to spend their formative years at LAU.

The benefit of el Masri's engagement in civic and other extra-curricular activities has been multifold and evident, and this year she became the first Lebanese graduate to win the prestigious and highly sought-after Rhodes scholarship to study at Oxford. "I miss the university and its culture. I was aware of the multitude of civic engagement programs at LAU and wanted to explore them to the max," says al Masri of her decision to join LAU. "I didn't want just a book education, I wanted a well-rounded education. LAU gave me the best of the best. Most importantly it gave me self-growth."

Al Masri's CV is an impressive one that sells itself. Many students however need help developing their resumes in preparation for the job market and go to the writing center, run by the School of Arts & Sciences, or to Student Services, part of the Dean of Students office, which offers a multitude of opportunities for self-expression and development.

Among them are the student clubs, of

"Engagement in club activities is extremely educational."

—Raed Mohsen, LAU dean of students in Beirut

which there are over 80 across both Beirut and Byblos campuses. "Engagement in club activities is extremely educational," says Dean of Students in Beirut Raed Mohsen, listing event management, negotiation, fundraising and networking among the many skills honed by the scores of students who actively participate in one or a number of clubs.

Fatima el Ahmad, founding secretary of the Intersectional Feminism Club, is one of them and was delighted to receive a medal at the club awards held soon after the club's inauguration in 2016. "It means a lot. Starting out was very challenging, and the fact that our hard work has been acknowledged is very satisfying."

Other awards that promote confidence and self-esteem are the Riyadh Nassar Leadership Award, the Rhoda Orme Award and the Torch Award for High Leadership and Service Spirit. "Awards are physical representations of hard work. Those with ambition and zeal will work hard regardless, but the awards offer an added incentive to push students even further," says Beirut campus activities associate manager Riman Jurdak.

The Dean of Students office also runs

a peer-tutoring program, which nurtures collaboration and civic responsibility in students, as does a recent initiative by the OIS that sees students being trained as "buddies" to mentor international students arriving at LAU.

Student employment within university departments also contributes to the development of these skills, as mathematics sophomore Christopher Antoun can attest. He has been working as a communication officer within SDEM for over a year. "I have learned a lot about procedures and the importance of paying attention to detail," he says. "I have also improved my communications skills, understanding that each person and situation requires a different and considered approach."

As they near graduation, students seeking employment outside the university find a wealth of information and support on campus through the career guidance office, which organizes careers fairs, runs interest inventory tests that help students identify the type of job and work environment most suited to them, and coaches students for job interviews.

The office also runs a career portal through which employers advertise current vacancies, explains career guidance officer at the Byblos campus Hassan Baalbaki. "Local companies, multinationals, public, private and third sector entities... they all get in touch with us to post vacancies because they know that LAU students are of a high caliber and they want them in their workforce." ■





LAU theater production goes national

By Naseem Ferdowsi and Reem Maghribi

A powerful adaptation of a comedic sociopolitical play *Can't Pay? Won't Pay!* goes on the road after six sold-out performances at LAU, thanks to support from the Italian Cultural Institute

"Theater is very powerful for intercultural dialogue," says Edoardo Crisafulli, director of the Italian Cultural Institute, an organization affiliated with the Italian Embassy in Lebanon.

It was this belief that led the institute to sponsor *Can't Pay? Won't Pay!*, a play directed by LAU Associate Professor of Theater Lina Abyad and staged at the Beirut campus' Gulbenkian Theatre before being performed in Tripoli and Nabatieh.

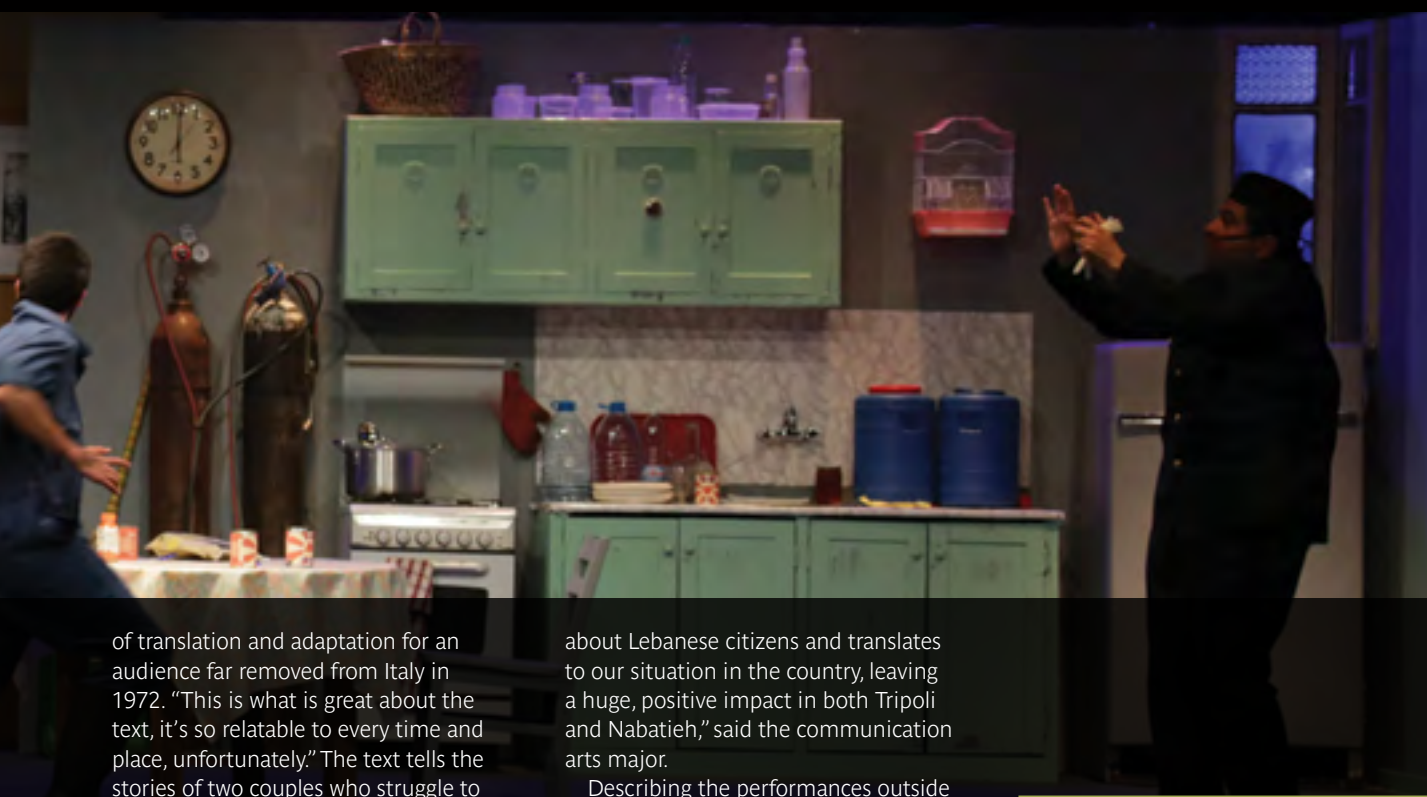
Stressing the importance of taking arts outside of the capital city, Abyad said, "In Beirut we have an abundance of cultural events, but in Tripoli there are very few and even fewer, if any, in Nabatieh."

More than 200 people attended the performance in Tripoli and around 100 in Nabatieh, both of which were held in April and were free to attend. LAU

student of journalism Mohamed Shour had not expected the reception to be as favorable as it was, because of the play's underlying feminist message. "I was proven wrong. Both shows outside Beirut were absolutely marvelous — the crowds were amazing and the critics were generally positive." Many audience members even stayed after the performances to hold in-depth discussions with the actors and crew, and to explore the stage.

The play, written by Italian playwright and Nobel Laureate Dario Fo, is a witty farce with a political and social message that transcends cultures. Abyad's adaptation of the play, which she reworked to reflect Lebanon and its problems and society, was flawless.

"I actually changed very little in the script," says Abyad of the process



of translation and adaptation for an audience far removed from Italy in 1972. "This is what is great about the text, it's so relatable to every time and place, unfortunately." The text tells the stories of two couples who struggle to make ends meet, can't buy decent food and are facing eviction. The struggle between their needs and their ethics takes a dramatic turn when the spirit of revolution takes over in a supermarket and women steal much-needed food.

LAU graduates Hiba Sleiman and Sany Abdul Baki (who teaches theater at the department of communication arts), were among the actors who dedicated six hours a day every day for a month to rehearsing the wordy farce, which relies heavily on movement and precise timing. Rachid Hneineh was among the many LAU students involved in the production crew. "The play is essentially

about Lebanese citizens and translates to our situation in the country, leaving a huge, positive impact in both Tripoli and Nabatieh," said the communication arts major.

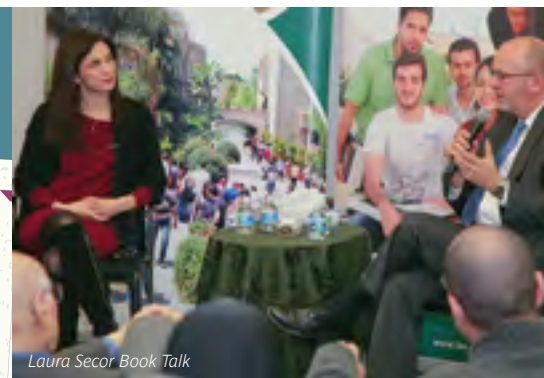
Describing the performances outside the capital as an extension of LAU's dedication to community service, Abyad expressed gratitude for the Italian Cultural Institute's sponsorship. "It is valuable to the arts, great for cultural exposure, and extremely beneficial for LAU and its students, who get to share their work with a wider community."

LAU Associate Director of Development Suha Abou Rialy echoes Abyad's appreciation for the fruitful collaboration. "We look forward to many more so that we can expose new cultures, ideas and messages to communities, who are most in need of the arts."

"It is valuable to the arts, great for cultural exposure, and extremely beneficial for LAU and its students to share their work with a wider community."

—Lina Abyad, LAU associate professor of theater

A myriad of events
leading up to the
summer of 2017



Laura Secor Book Talk



Lebanese Olive Oil

Postcard from New York

By Lina Beydoun

In collaboration with the Bard Globalization and International Affairs program, LAU's New York Academic Center hosted author Laura Secor, whose new book *Children of Paradise: The Struggle for the Soul of Iran* is an unforgettable portrait of a nation and its people striving for change. Drawing on her extensive experience of reporting on Iran, Secor narrated the extraordinary history of the country since 1979, when it became a revolutionary theocracy. She enthralled the audience with the breathtaking drama that has since unfolded, as religious thinkers, political operatives, poets, journalists and activists have imagined and reimagined what the country should be. "Iranians," she said, "have drawn as deeply on the traditions of the West as of the East and have acted upon their beliefs with urgency and passion."

Filled with rare photographs, LAU alumnus and television celebrity Zaven Kouyoumdjian's book *Lebanon On Screen: The Greatest Moments of Lebanese Television and Pop Culture*

made members of the audience gasp as they recognized famous faces. In partnership with the Consul General of Lebanon Majdi Ramadan, the second literary event of the season featured a lively discussion on the role of television and pop culture in bringing the Lebanese people together. "Television came to tell the Lebanese about the Lebanese," said Kouyoumdjian. Leading the discussion, TV host Rita Zihenni noted that she sought out YouTube clips of Lebanese television to show her children, in the hope that it would "make them more Lebanese." Helping young people reconnect with their parents and their roots is exactly what Kouyoumdjian hoped the book would achieve: "What is a nation? It is a collection of memories."

Olive oil — often known as "liquid or green gold" — was the focus of an April gathering at the center. "The olive trees of the town of Bchaale in Lebanon, estimated to be six thousand years old, are the oldest in the world," said event co-host Consul General Ramadan. The



Zaven Kouyoumdjian Book Talk



Phoenician Expedition



Poetry Reading



Poetry Reading

olive tree is a symbol of abundance and peace, mentioned in heavenly books and immortalized by poets as a tree of blessing, he pointed out. Then, using all five senses, Julie Ann Sageer — a Lebanese-American celebrity chef, author and public television host also known as Julie Taboulie — delved into a full exploration of Lebanon's olive oil landscape. "This event is so special," said Sageer. "It spotlights Lebanese products, bridges the gap between our two countries, and transports the olive oil directly to the U.S." Twelve oil producers and coops participated in the event. LAU graduate Tania Bou Raad, who represented Zejd, stressed that the center "was the ideal setting for raising awareness of Lebanese olive oil among the local community." The center's director, Lina Beydoun echoed Bou Raed's sentiments. "This event brought together community members, not only to celebrate the ancient olive trees that have been cultivated since Phoenician times, but also to honor an identity and cultural heritage."

Another voyage was a focal point of discussion in April, that of the first sailors to cross the Atlantic and discover the Americas. Could it have been the Phoenicians? The British sailor, adventurer, expedition leader and entrepreneur Captain Philip Beale tackled these challenging questions and told a spellbound audience of an expedition to take place on a replica of a Phoenician merchant ship to prove the crossing. Beale explained how the Phoenicians had the navigational capabilities to reach the Americas two thousand years before Christopher Columbus. "They were the masters of the sea, and may have even discovered the pole star and circumnavigated Africa as early as 600 B.C.," he said. "Shipwrecks, books, artefacts and ship models point to their amazing ship building techniques," he continued. "They hold all the ace cards — strong ships, navigational strength and over 200 trading settlements on the eastern Atlantic coast." The Phoenicians Before Columbus Expedition in September will demonstrate

if the crossing was possible.

In May, the center, in partnership with the Consul General of Lebanon and the New Pen League, welcomed literary enthusiasts to an evening of poetry, music and song. The event began with a musical medley of Arabic poems that were turned into songs, featuring oud player Mario Chamoun and vocalist Rita Zihenni. Five accomplished poets — Youssef Abdel Samad, Mansour Ajami, Akram Alkatreb, Fadi Saad and Firas Suleiman — hailing from Lebanon and Syria, took turns reciting their poetry in both Arabic and English. They amused the audience with *ghazal* poetry and moved them with poems of war and human suffering. Alternate laughter and applause reverberated around the room. "In our culture, poetry is the highest of art forms ... we are lucky to be able to keep the Arabic poetic culture alive in New York," said New Pen League member Edgar Choueiri.

A mathematical equation

By Sima Itayim

LAU launches its new M.S. in Applied and Computational Mathematics

"This degree is the gateway to a wide variety of challenging jobs and startups in Lebanon and the region."

—Rony Touma, LAU associate professor of applied mathematics

Starting fall 2017, LAU will be offering its new M.S. in Applied and Computational Mathematics. The first of its kind in Lebanon and in the region, the program is essentially research-oriented. Being interdisciplinary in nature, it opens up the door for students to conduct research on problems in applied sciences and engineering, as well as requiring them to cooperate on interdisciplinary projects with researchers from other schools.

"The program is specially designed in a way that provides students with high quality coursework in addition to training on up-to-date research problems," says Associate Professor of Mathematics and coordinator of the newly launched program Rony Touma.

The program is solution driven, putting data science and mathematics skills in an interdisciplinary context, which will allow graduates to adapt to the job market and find employment opportunities easily. "This degree is a gateway to a wide variety of challenging jobs and startups in Lebanon and the region," Touma points out.

"It is the combination that attracted me to the program," says Mira Abou Saleh, a senior student, who is hoping to enroll in the master's degree after having obtained her B.S. in Mathematics next spring. "The degree is appealing as the applied mathematics aspect would allow me to conduct research in interdisciplinary fields — such as physics and engineering — and the computational aspect would equip me with the tools needed to implement mathematical algorithms into ever-advancing technologies."

Skills in applied mathematics and sciences are in high demand internationally, especially in Australia, Canada, Europe and America, and are starting to be so in the Gulf region. "For thousands of years, mathematics has

contributed to the progress in various fields of life," remarks Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and Professor of Computer Science Nashat Mansour. "The M.S. in Applied and Computational Mathematics focuses on applications such as scientific, economic, financial and industrial topics."

The careers that graduates from the department usually pursue are mainly in academia, industry and high-tech start-ups, and research labs. "These opportunities are not only ones," stresses Mansour, who believes that graduates can and will also find them at banks, financial firms, security companies, engineering research organizations, computing companies, energy systems firms, consulting firms, producers of petroleum and academic research centers, to name a few.

Mansour hopes that the program will increase the number of applied mathematics graduates, fill the employment gap and boost their opportunities, so as to grow a community and identify the market. "In the United States, the median annual salary of an applied mathematician is \$129,000," he points out.

The courses offered by the master's degree cover a variety of different topics, such as mathematical modeling, simulations, numerical analysis, non-smooth analysis, control theory and biomathematics, explains Touma. The program introduces mathematical methods that are applied to fields such as biology, economics, fluids, engineering and finance. Students will acquire advanced research experience and skills, a solid foundation in the fields of applied mathematics, and significant exposure to research in applied fields, high performance and scientific computing.

Students' achievements underline scholarship initiative

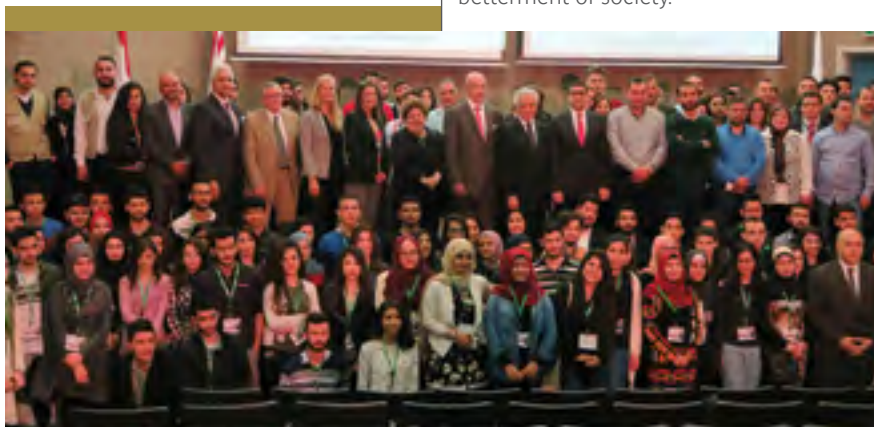
By Naseem Ferdowsi

Hometown event celebrates program's successful collaboration and impact

This past spring, LAU's University Scholarship Program (USP) Hometown event drew a full house at the university's Byblos campus, under the motto of the "Power of Collaboration."

"The only answer to the ills that affect our society, the world over, is education," declared LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra at the opening ceremony. Addressing the students, Jabbra added, "You are our only hope. Take advantage of this opportunity that's been made available to you. Don't waste a second."

This special event, which brought together students, faculty, staff and members of NGOs and governmental agencies, was organized in partnership with Management Systems International (MSI), a U.S.-based development firm specialized in delivering donor-funded community programs. It centered around LAU's USP initiative, more specifically, the scholars' successes and their impressive efforts to embody collaboration for the betterment of society.



"The only answer to the ills that affect our society, the world over, is education."

—Joseph G. Jabbra, LAU president

"Today I stand in front of you proudly introducing myself as a social worker, youth advocate, and even more proudly labeling myself as a volunteer," said scholar Fatima Hallal, speaking to a packed audience that included USP students from LAU as well as AUB. Hallal, a political science and international affairs student and one of the 217 USP scholars currently enrolled at LAU, attributes her invaluable experience in the scholarship program to an unexpected journey of activism that has taken her to collaborative youth workshops across the region, spanning Jordan, Tunisia and Morocco.

Collaboration is a key part of the USP initiative, a merit-based scholarship program that is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Students in the

program are required to collaborate closely with the community through outreach initiatives and service-related activities on campus, as well as to work in partnership with the corporate world by taking on internships.

"The way I put it is you cannot fly except with two wings: an academic wing and a leadership one," said LAU's Assistant Vice President for Outreach and Civic Engagement Elie Samia, who is also the university's USP/USAID program coordinator. "The whole objective is to graduate civic-minded individuals ready to embark on productive positions in Lebanon and abroad, in order to help the economic development of the country and region."

During the event, Samia highlighted the achievements of USP students and alumni. More specifically, he noted that USP scholars typically had higher GPAs than their non-USP counterparts and tended to find employment quickly after graduation. He also noted that they currently hold 41 leadership offices in university clubs and many have been awarded prestigious Fulbright scholarships. "One can easily benchmark the USP students and it is a source of pride. It shows clearly that coaching, mentoring and weekly meetings pay off," he elaborated.

Speaking directly to the USP scholars in attendance, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy Danny Hall said, "We applaud you for what you had to do to get the scholarship to begin with. We know you have to work hard. We also know that you are committed to volunteering and supporting the community. This is especially important to us in America."

Exhibition booths hosted by NGOs showcased the various volunteering and internship opportunities available to students. More than a dozen organizations were present, from Caritas and Aarsal Coalition to Basmat Amal and Spirit of Youth. "We are here to share our projects with students, who can either intern with Caritas or volunteer on the ground with our Baladi projects, of which more than 30 are ongoing," said a representative from Caritas.

Since its launch in Lebanon in 2010, and through its \$99.5 million investment, the USP program has afforded nearly 750 Lebanese students access to higher education at LAU and AUB.



Life expectancy of family-owned businesses on the rise

By Reem Maghribi

LAU conference brings together Lebanese family business owners and hand delivers recommendations to the country's president

Dozens of founders and shareholders of family businesses, together with experts in business law and wealth management, gathered at LAU's Byblos campus this spring for a day of presentations and discussions hosted by the university's Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business. Held under the patronage of Minister for Economy and Trade Raed Khoury, the conference included presentations by lawyers and bankers, as well as personal accounts by co-owners of family businesses.

The following day, a delegation went to the presidential palace in Baabda, where they presented Lebanese President General Michel Aoun with recommendations they believe will help strengthen and protect family businesses, a cornerstone of the country's economy.

"Lack of structure, leadership and responsibility, as well as entitlement and nepotism, weaken and threaten many family businesses," explains Josiane Fahed-Sreih, the institute's director. "While

planning for succession may sound easy, we have found that it brings numerous obstacles to light," added the associate professor of management.

"Lack of structure, leadership and responsibility, as well as entitlement and nepotism, weaken and threaten many family businesses."

—Josiane Fahed-Sreih, director of
LAU's Institute of Family and
Entrepreneurial Business

The Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business has studied and supported family enterprises since its establishment in 2002, held monthly presentation and discussion forums since forming a network of family businesses in 2012, and recently launched a certificate program in family business management.

"Small to medium enterprises make up 95 percent of our economy and a good portion of these are family-owned businesses," said Emile Albina, speaking on behalf of Minister Houry. "We therefore need to ensure the development of a culture of governance in family business to safeguard continuity." This, he added, would require a willingness among family business owners to embrace staff empowerment, transparency and structure.

While a number of speakers stressed the importance of formalized governance, LAU Board of International Advisors member Neemat Frem, who is the president of manufacturing firm Indevco, focused on love and values. "If as family members owning a business you don't have love and shared values, it's not worth making the effort to keep it going. It's easier to cash out," said Frem, whose late father, Georges Frem, founded the company and sponsored the Frem Civic Center at which the conference was held.

Fahed-Sreih concurred, adding that data gathered by the institute showed a correlation between trust within a family and financial performance of the

business. In the coming year, she expects to give several presentations based on her ongoing research into family businesses, one of which will focus on the importance of values in creating family unity.

COO of Salam International Investment Ltd. Hussam Abu Issa spoke candidly at the conference about the difficulties his family faced in the management of the business his father had left them. "We, the brothers and heirs, did not agree on the direction the company should be taking," said Abu Issa, who left the management of the family company to avoid conflict before building another company that ultimately merged with the family business. "All but one of the third generation members did not want to work in the company. This isn't bad. It's a savior," he added, noting that many family businesses are now choosing to appoint non-family members in senior management and to the board.

Future Pipe Industries Group, founded by Fouad Makhzoumi, appointed a non-family member as CEO soon after their son passed away, explained his wife May, who also sits on the university's Board

of International Advisors. "Rami was a visionary and breathed new life into the company," she said of her son, who was CEO of the company when he died aged 33. Second generation family business owners, she believes, are driven by continuity of the family name and vision more than business success.

Many difficulties, it was suggested, arise when family businesses are inherited by the third generation, one that includes many people, who grow up enjoying the wealth of the business. Trusts, said Director Wealth Planner at Citibank Richard Masters, are a good way of enabling family members to enjoy the company's wealth without running the risk of inter-family conflict leading to the business being dissolved. "People think it's important to own wealth, but owning assets in your personal name creates a lot of problems. What matters is having access to it and control of it," said Masters.

Such resources, as well as improved education and business acumen, may be why the average life expectancy of a family-owned business has risen from 26 years to 60 years in the past twenty years.





Halting the brain drain

By ramping up innovation education and expertise, LAU hopes to reverse the trend of talented Lebanese migrating abroad

By Lizzie Porter

In a competitive and globalized world, innovative thinking is increasingly important for young jobseekers. Those who stand out — and open doors for themselves along the way — think outside the borders of academic knowledge. They have an entrepreneurial spirit, a pro-active mindset and involve themselves in civil society initiatives to develop communication and leadership skills.

The need for an inventive outlook is perhaps greater — and more achievable — than ever for Lebanon's graduates. Ongoing high levels of public debt and a wide budget deficit — 139 percent of Gross Domestic Product — combine with a paralyzed political system to curtail economic growth. "Brain drain" is a significant problem. The latest data, from 2014, shows that nearly 175,000 people left the country in the period 2011-2013.

To succeed in Lebanon, creating one's own opportunities might just be the key.

"Lebanon suffers of what we call a brain drain. Because of lack of opportunity here, those with potential leave the country and most end up being very successful," said LAU Board of Trustees member Mike Ahmar, who has been tasked with getting the university's new innovation center devoted to fostering outside-the-box mindsets up and running. "What LAU is

trying to do with the center is to create a mechanism for them to stay to actually bring their ideas to fruition in Lebanon."

While current LAU students benefit from a range of programs that encourage innovative thinking, alumni have gone on to share their skills with less fortunate communities and build successful start-up businesses of international renown. Alumnus Fadi Mikati (M.B.A. '09) was nominated as a World Economic Forum (WEF) "Global Shaper" — a group of individuals between 20-30 with outstanding influence and success in their communities — for his civil society work in Lebanon. This year the role took him to the annual WEF meeting at Davos. The aim was not to further his own career (although he currently works as a successful credit analyst at Beirut-based company Kafalat) but to spread the word about Tripoli's large reserve of skilled, motivated youth.

They are at the heart of Mikati's civil society work: he is part of a generation of young people who are using their own talents and experience in entrepreneurship for wider benefit across Lebanon. He credits LAU for nurturing his spirit of civic engagement, a cornerstone of the university's mission.

In 2013, along with LAU mechanical engineering alumna Najwa Sahmarani,

Mikati founded Tripoli Entrepreneurs Club (TEC), as a non-partisan, non-religious and non-governmental organization, to create entrepreneurship opportunities for their home city's youth.

"What LAU is trying to do is to create a mechanism for entrepreneurs to stay and actually bring their ideas to fruition in Lebanon."

—Mike Ahmar, LAU Board of Trustees member

"I am not claiming that we will solve the poverty and the unemployment rate in the city but the main thing is the brain drain," Mikati said. "If anyone wants to establish a start up in Tripoli, he cannot find the skilled youth to grow his team. Why? Because everyone is leaving for Beirut or the Gulf region." With funding from the World Bank, UKAID and USAID, TEC has now reached more than 450 participants, who have taken skills from more than 20 workshops and events.

Start-ups have become a key part of developing Lebanon's knowledge economy and technology industries in

recent years. In 2014 the Central Bank supported a capital injection of over \$400 million for the start-up economy, leading to the creation of funding and training opportunities.

But all the money in Lebanon is not enough without business people passing on their know-how, contacts and self-confidence to others. According to Sahmarani, who worked at various start-ups before going freelance to consult on social entrepreneurship, she developed skills key for her career at LAU. "We were really exposed to different opportunities and different programs that not a lot of people know about," she said.

Since 2006, the university's Department of Management Studies has offered a "Small Business Start-up Laboratory" course. "LAU was the first university in Lebanon to offer such a course," said Silva Karkouljian, the department's chair. Without proper training, "Lebanese young entrepreneurs were running businesses by trial and error." Addressing this gap, the laboratory allows students to "acquire knowledge for creating new business ideas, seeking funds, meeting competition, leadership skills, benefiting from available technologies, and developing succession planning for family businesses," added Karkouljian.

In addition to the specialized curriculum offered by such courses, the initiative of individual professors who encourage a pro-active mindset is also crucial. "One of my instructors [at LAU] was the sort of person who would always push you to pursue new opportunities," says Sahmarani. "For example, we were undergrads, but he pushed us to write a paper and submit it and present it in Dubai. He pushed us to pursue new topics and think outside the box."

While Mikati and Sahmarani are helping to create a new generation

of Lebanese entrepreneurs, other LAU alumni are solving life and death problems with their start-up businesses. Ziad Sankari, who graduated from LAU with a B.E. in Computer Engineering in 2007, founded his start-up CardioDiagnostics five years later, to produce GPS-enabled heart monitors. The innovation, which received personal praise from former U.S. President Barack Obama, allow medics to make more accurate diagnoses, and is today in use on patients in the U.S.A. and Gulf region.

Although he graduated a decade ago, Sankari sees his studies at LAU as key in shaping his success, both in terms of academic qualifications and personal development. "The education at LAU is outstanding, on par with international standards," he said. "The use of the U.S. system prepared me for my graduate study," added the entrepreneur, who went on to complete a master's degree at Ohio State University.

Adopting a "critical thinking" approach has been key to Sankari's success. He believes that developing a pool of entrepreneurially-minded people is key if the sector in Lebanon is to succeed long-term. "We need to feed the fuel of the start-up revolution and that is through talent," he explained. "We need to encourage a mindset of risk-taking, going outside the box and of critical thinking."

Initiatives and programs at LAU encourage students to follow in the footsteps of alumni like Mikati, Sahmarani and Sankari. This spring, LAU launched the Achieving Creative Entrepreneurship (ACE) Program, an initiative designed by the Outreach & Civic Engagement Unit (OCE) with Speed@BDD, a Beirut-based accelerator for start-up businesses.

"ACE falls within OCE's areas of interest in terms of providing students and alumni with leadership in entrepreneurship, as

we are living in a cognitive ecosystem that encourages creative initiation of useful and creative ideas," said Elie Samia, assistant vice president for Outreach & Civil Engagement. "Universities are often ranked as to their capabilities to graduate students who can generate productive employment opportunities for themselves and for others."

"The education at LAU is outstanding, on par with international standards."

—Ziad Sankari, LAU alumnus and entrepreneur

A select group of 52 students and alumni participated in training sessions over a period of five Saturdays, learning the skills essential to establishing a start-up, including business model planning, marketing and finance. Participants pitched start-up ideas to a jury, with three winners awarded coaching sessions by Speed@BDD leaders. First-prize winner Vanessa Katar, who graduated last spring with a major in Marketing and a minor in Psychology, was also invited to attend the Global Outreach and Leadership Development Conference GOLD at LAU's headquarters in New York this August.

Her start-up idea consisted of a business-to-business mobile application called "ac-company," allowing employees of the same "company" to "accompany" each other to work by arranging carpooling. She said she drew numerous lessons from the training, around risk-taking, trialing and idea development, and would encourage other similar initiatives.



"Trainings related to entrepreneurship or to the basics of business in general can be a great tool to many university majors who do not have the chance to learn the tips and tricks that are usually taught only in business courses," she said. "I believe that trainings related to entrepreneurship specifically are really needed in a country like Lebanon, where many talents are left undiscovered."

While start-ups are the flavor du jour in Lebanon, LAU recognizes the role of encouraging innovation and incubating business ideas more widely. Funded by the Makhzoumi Foundation — a Lebanese non-profit, non-governmental organization that offers vocational training and microfinancing — the university's recently founded innovation center reflects this philosophy. The Fouad Makhzoumi Center for Innovation, as

the institute will be known, will offer educational and training opportunities, including regular international conferences, workshops, lecture series and exposure to international research.

"The trend, worldwide, is for universities to create venture funds to invest in the entrepreneurship ideas of their students when they graduate," explained Ahmar. "We are trying to create such a space at Lebanon using the knowledge that we have learned. We will not only give them a place to work but will possibly try to invest with them. The center is going to be what is known as an accelerator."

The overall aim is to create a climate conducive to creativity and innovation for LAU students and staff, and to boost the Lebanese economy, which would be significant factors in keeping young talent in Lebanon. "The center will not only help

students fostering their ideas and seeding creative thinking, but it will also be a center for faculty, staff and researchers to explore forward thinking and innovative solutions supporting academic excellence," said Saad el Zein, assistant to the president for Special Projects at LAU.

The key involvement of the Makhzoumi Foundation will complement initiatives like the Achieving Social Entrepreneurship program, creating the next generation of alumni like Mikati and Sahmarani, who are giving back to Lebanon. "The hope is to encourage students' involvement in social and community work," el Zein concluded. "Most importantly in providing potential solutions for social issues and problems." ■



“That’s what makes the magic and the dance occur”

By Reem Maghribi

In its seventh year, LAU’s intensive one-week Dance Day Festival is still going strong

LAU welcomed hundreds of students and dozens of professional dancers and educators to its Byblos campus this spring during the Dance Day Festival, for a one-week intensive program of workshops, talks and performances.

Now in its seventh year, the festival, organized by LAU and hosted in partnership with the municipality of Byblos, culminated in a grand gala performance at the public gardens in Byblos, drawing in hundreds of spectators and participants. For the first time in its history, and in a bid to engage the entire LAU community across both campuses, the gala performance was also staged in Beirut.

“This is part of my community and where I belong,” said visiting dance instructor Rain Ross. “We’ve created works here that have been performed in New York,” added Ross, who has participated in all but one of the editions of the annual festival spearheaded and organized by Associate Chair of LAU’s Departments of Humanities and Communication Arts Nadra Assaf, who is also an assistant professor of English and dance.

“I focused more this year on catering to our PFA students as opposed to school students,” said Assaf, referring to the new B.A. in Performing Arts launched by the university last year. In fact, the new degree was a natural outcome of the success of a festival that has annually attracted hundreds of students from Lebanon’s many dance schools, among them Yara Nasrany.

“LAU was definitely my university of choice because of its great dance courses,”

enthused Nasrany, who is majoring in both performing arts and psychology. “There were more talks and opportunities for engagement at the festival this year,” she added, referring to theory-based workshops on choreography, movement and theories of learning.

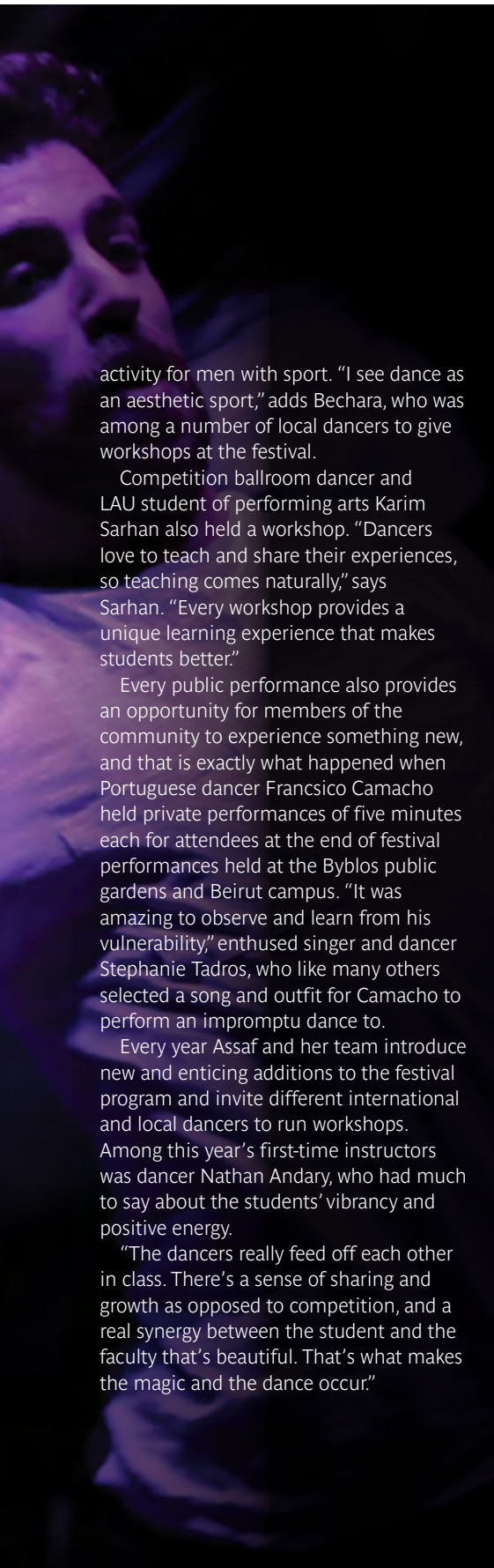
“We’ve created works here that have been performed in New York.”

—Rain Ross, visiting dance instructor

Nasrany was among dozens of performers to audition and rehearse for performances choreographed around the theme of gender equality. “It’s not about letting women know that they are equal to men, but letting men know that they are equal to women — that there is a place for them in the world of dance,” explained Assaf.

Jad Melki, chair of the Department of Communication Arts that runs the B.A. program, concurs and sees LAU’s role as a reformer. “Dance and the arts do not have the same respect and gravitas in this region as they do elsewhere, and it’s our challenge to change that.”

A testament to this challenge was the fact that women far outnumbered men in the festival workshops and the gala performance. LAU instructor of modern and contemporary dance Jimmy Bechara puts this down to the prevailing mentality in the region that associates physical



activity for men with sport. "I see dance as an aesthetic sport," adds Bechara, who was among a number of local dancers to give workshops at the festival.

Competition ballroom dancer and LAU student of performing arts Karim Sarhan also held a workshop. "Dancers love to teach and share their experiences, so teaching comes naturally," says Sarhan. "Every workshop provides a unique learning experience that makes students better."

Every public performance also provides an opportunity for members of the community to experience something new, and that is exactly what happened when Portuguese dancer Francisco Camacho held private performances of five minutes each for attendees at the end of festival performances held at the Byblos public gardens and Beirut campus. "It was amazing to observe and learn from his vulnerability," enthused singer and dancer Stephanie Tadros, who like many others selected a song and outfit for Camacho to perform an impromptu dance to.

Every year Assaf and her team introduce new and enticing additions to the festival program and invite different international and local dancers to run workshops. Among this year's first-time instructors was dancer Nathan Andary, who had much to say about the students' vibrancy and positive energy.

"The dancers really feed off each other in class. There's a sense of sharing and growth as opposed to competition, and a real synergy between the student and the faculty that's beautiful. That's what makes the magic and the dance occur."



Inspiring Talks



Renowned space scientist galvanizes students

Former director of NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) and member of LAU's Board of Trustees Charles Elachi spoke to hundreds of students lucky enough to find seats in the packed auditorium at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Center at LAU's Byblos campus, during an event organized by the campus' Astronomy Club. Retired from his position at JPL since last year, Elachi continues to teach electrical engineering and planetary science at the California Institute of Technology, of which he was once vice president. As head of JPL, he played an instrumental role in the landing of high-tech rover Curiosity on Mars. Indeed, Elachi's main motivation for giving the speech was to galvanize and encourage aspiring engineers to push the boundaries of discovery. "This [achievement] doesn't only inspire engineers and scientists but all people. It shows that if we really work hard, we can do almost anything."

U.S. astronaut tells students to never give up on dreams

Students from various schools and universities enjoyed an engaging and educational discussion with astronaut Donald Thomas at LAU, thanks to a collaboration between the LAU Astronomy Club, the Department of Natural Sciences, the Cosmic Dome, and the Young Leaders Development Program (YLDP Lebanon). Thomas, who orbited Earth a total of 692 times during his four missions and spent over 1,000 hours in space, told students, faculty and guests how he had made his childhood dream of becoming an astronaut a reality. "I persevered, studied the data and worked hard, and to all of you with a dream I say, never give up." In addition to his frank and passionate speech about his fears and achievements, Thomas spoke about the various scientific experiments he was engaged in. "Thomas was so inspiring and the event exceeded my expectations," said chemistry student Najat Fadlallah, president of the LAU Astronomy Club Beirut.



Romero Britto spreads positivity

"I will leave Lebanon enriched and inspired and a self-appointed ambassador to the country," said world-renowned Brazilian artist Romero Britto during his visit to LAU. The Miami-based artist spent a week in Lebanon as part of a charitable initiative organized by LAU board member Thomas Abraham, chairman of the Anthony R. Abraham Foundation, one of the founders of the Children's Cancer Center in Lebanon. "I have been very lucky in my life and I want to use that to help others," says the artist, who uses colorful patterns to reflect his optimistic view of the world. Introducing Britto, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra emphasized the important impact of the arts. "When the arts are driven by a very optimistic view of the world, the sky is the limit. When the arts are passionately committed to good causes, then caring and love will prevail."

Commitment to Excellence



Taking the trophy home six years in a row

The LAU Captains — the Byblos campus basketball varsity team — won the Lebanese Basketball UniLeague Championship, making it their sixth win, a record in the tournament's 12-year history. "We have won every championship since 2011," declared the team's coach and Director of Athletics at LAU's Byblos campus Joe Moujaes, who puts the team's success down to the revamping of the university's athletics program initiated ten years ago. Civil engineering student Elie Chamoun was the game's highest scorer. "This is a particularly emotional win, as some of the players are graduating this year, so we wanted to do this for them," he said. "Six wins is a record. We're building a dynasty here at LAU."

LAU wins Young Arab Voices debate again

A team of four LAU students won first place in the Young Arab Voices (YAV), a national debate competition, the second year in a row that the university has taken home the top debate prize. The winning team competed against students from AUB and NDU, arguing against increasing taxes on the profits of Lebanese banks and in favor of restricting the ability of elected officials to own media outlets. The victory followed months of preparation organized by LAU's Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) unit in cooperation with the British Council and local NGO Masar. "In debate, you use objective criteria to persuade the opponent, all while being concrete and impactful, and our student leaders showed that they are up to that challenge," said Assistant Vice President for OCE Elie Samia.



Community Engagement

Raising awareness about sexual health

Sex education is almost non-existent in Lebanese schools and the need to spread awareness about sexual health issues is increasing. LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) organized a Food 4 Thought and Q&A session titled *Smart SEX!* to discuss frequently avoided but decisive sexual health issues. The control and ownership over one's sexuality and the practice of safe and smart sex are of vital importance. "Talking about sex gives us the opportunity to reflect on our own values," said Clinical Assistant Professor at LAU's School of Pharmacy Ghada el Khoury. Among the topics discussed were sexuality, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, contraception methods, and sexual health services available in Lebanon. "One event isn't sufficient to address the depth and importance of this issue," said Lina Abirafeh, the director of IWSAW.



Automotive engineering day attracts international companies and agencies

The university's American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) chapter held its second Automotive Engineering Day event at the university's Byblos campus during the spring semester. 100 students were invited to learn about sustainable transportation in developing countries. The event was organized in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Sustainable Oil and Gas Development in Lebanon (SODEL) project, and the Lebanese Ministry of Energy and Water (MOEW). Speakers from Toyota Motor Europe, Tractebel Engine Group, Vedecom Institute, UN agencies, and the Lebanese Ministries of Energy and Water, and Environment held workshops and discussions about the impact of technology, policy, infrastructure and the environment on sustainable practice in the automotive industry, as well as ways to adapt to and adopt the current European vision for sustainability.



Faculty and students redesign LAU's Early Childhood Center

Students of education at the university's School of Arts and Sciences teamed up with their peers at the School of Architecture and Design during the spring semester to present proposals for a redesign of the outdoor area of the Early Childhood Center (ECC), a staple of LAU's Beirut campus since the 1950s. The result was a new course that brought students from two very different disciplines together to analyze the behavior of children, survey the existing site, study relevant theories about space and cognitive development, and prepare models and recommendations for new concepts and designs. Julia Aridi, a senior in architecture, praised this new learning experience. "I loved being engaged in something that was real and practical and in support of our university."

Collaborations & Exchanges

The vitality of translation today

In collaboration with the Embassy of Switzerland in Lebanon, the university gathered professionals and students for a two-day symposium to discuss pragmatic approaches to medical and legal translation. "The aim of this event is to keep students up-to-date with current research and developments in the field, and to put them in touch with other students and professionals," said Associate Professor and B.A. in Translation Program Coordinator Nuwar Diab, who organized the workshop in collaboration with the Swiss mission and the university's Office of Development. With the current international migration crisis, the focus of the semi-annual symposium had a special resonance. In his welcoming note, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra reminded the audience of the importance of interpretation and translation at a time of major global displacement, where refugees "need to access proper health care, and know about laws and their rights in a host country." Swiss Ambassador to Lebanon, François Barras said, "I hope that our collaboration with LAU will bring Swiss and Lebanese teachers together to develop fruitful relationships



and exchanges." Diab took the opportunity to announce a future student exchange program between LAU and the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting at the University of Geneva (UNIGE). Sonia Asmahène Halimi, assistant professor and co-director of the Translation Department and head of the Arabic Unit at UNIGE, emphasized that students need to "have a practical approach to translation and follow a strong methodology based on documentation and terminology."

New prospects for studying entrepreneurship

The Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB) will this year partner with UK Lebanon Tech Hub to produce the 2017 edition of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) national report on Lebanon, an international initiative kick-started by Banque du Liban and the U.K. government. A summary of the report's findings was presented to an audience of faculty and students of the business school in Beirut during the spring semester. "This

is the beginning of a great alliance between two institutions of giants who are interested in public welfare," said Said Ladki, dean of AKSOB, as he welcomed guests, among them Former Minister of Telecommunications Nicolas Sehnaoui. LAU's 68 full-time and 60 part-time faculty members will benefit from access to the source data on which the report is based, ultimately aiming to eliminate the barriers to entrepreneurship in Lebanon.



In celebration of international education

"We have the obligation to provide our young people with opportunities for exposure through exchanges," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra at the inaugural session of International Education Week. Organized and hosted by the Office of International Services (OIS), the initiative encourages and assists students looking to spend time at a university abroad. Information sessions were held for students and faculty members in order to help plan for their studies at more than 40 foreign partner universities worldwide. The students agree that such experiences are unimaginably enriching. "What really makes me unique is that I am an international student," said business major Kevin Fadlallah, who enjoyed his time at Salzburg Global Seminar in Austria last year. "When our students excel abroad, it proves that the education at LAU competes at an international level," enthused International Services Associate Program Manager Dina Abdul Rahman.

Panels & Workshops



Celebrating International Nurses' Day

"This is a day for nurses, who care, are compassionate, and are professionals," said Dean of Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing Anahid Kulwicki during a panel discussion on the current status and future directions of the profession in Lebanon, organized to celebrate International Nurses' Day. The four panelists stressed the importance of raising awareness against the negative stereotypes that surround the nursing profession, as well as the need for a national strategic plan in order to improve the status of nurses in the country. CEO of the LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital Sami Rizk agreed: "Nurses make the difference between life and death, comfort and pain, sickness and health."

Narratives of the Levant in the Ottoman era

Hosted by the Humanities Department, a workshop titled *Ottoman Twilight in the Arab Lands* — which centered on Lebanon, Syria and Jordan during the Great War — focused on the Great Famine of Mount Lebanon and Ottoman military leader Jamal Pasha, as well as Turkish Arab relations. Lawyer and independent scholar Youssef Mouawad discussed questions revolving around Jamal Pasha's role in the Great Famine that claimed around 200,000 lives between 1915 and 1918, a catastrophe said to be caused by Jamal Pasha's blockade. However, Tariq Tell, AUB assistant professor of political

science, argued that other factors contributed to the famine. For his part, LAU Professor of History and the event's organizer Selim Deringil drew on personal journals and documented quotes to speak about self-perception and identity in Ottoman and modern-day Turkey. A flurry of questions from the audience resulted in an extended period of discussion about Ottoman era vendettas, events in neighboring countries, and modern-day initiatives to rewrite history.



Conference focuses on refugee contribution through history

More than 20 scholars from dozens of academic institutions in the Arab world, Europe and North America gathered at LAU's Byblos campus to tackle the issue of refugee transfers through and around the Mediterranean in recent and historical times. Assistant Professor of Political Science and International Affairs and co-organizer of the conference — hosted in collaboration with Germany's University of Heidelberg — Tamirace Fakhoury introduced the three-day gathering as one that sought to highlight the role of refugees as contributors to their host

countries, and to counter the dark predominant narrative of a refugee crisis. "This is a global governance crisis," said Fakhoury, member of the Arab-German Young Academy of Sciences and Humanities (AGYA), the sponsors of the conference. In addition to present-day experiences of Syrians in Turkey and Europe, topics addressed included mass migration in the Middle Ages, deportation in the ancient Near East, and peril and protection in the Medieval Mediterranean.

Hot Topics

New map details landslide risk across Lebanon

A workshop on landslide risk assessment hosted by the Department of Civil Engineering and held at LAU's Byblos campus attracted students and professors from several Lebanese universities, many of whom presented their own research projects and findings. The intercollegiate half-day workshop was organized and hosted by LAU Associate Professor Grace Abou Jaoude, whose latest research has centered on developing a map that clearly indicates the risk of landslides across all villages in Lebanon. The research project, funded by USAID grant program Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER), brought together various experts in the field, who studied the risk of both loss of life and infrastructure damage caused by potential rainfall and earthquake-induced landslide failures. "We are delighted to provide an opportunity for others to present and exchange knowledge," said Abou Jaoude. "It is for the collective benefit of all our students and researchers."



Improving Skills

Teachers from public and private institutions train in writing assessment

More than 140 English teachers from schools and universities across Lebanon attended the Fourth Annual Symposium on the Teaching of Writing, organized by LAU Beirut in collaboration with AUB. The event, which this year included teachers from public schools for the first time, aims to improve the skills of English teachers and to create partnerships between teachers and universities in order to promote research collaborations on the theme of teaching writing. "This symposium is the English

Department's contribution to civic engagement, which is at the heart of LAU's mission," said Nuwar Diab, associate professor of English at LAU and co-chair and trainer at the event. As the event came to its conclusion, recommendations from the different sessions revealed that teachers need to be better trained in common techniques and that giving positive feedback to students is important.



Challenges and trends in human resource management

Students and practitioners of human resource management came together at a forum hosted by the Department of Management Studies at the Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB), to learn about historical practices, current trends, and future needs. "Organizations need value adding corporate citizens and business leaders who will innovate and transform," said AKSOB Interim Dean Said Ladki. As for LAU, the university strives to ensure employee satisfaction by boosting their engagement. "Engagement ensures loyalty and retention, and these are our top priorities at LAU," said Vice President for Human Resources & University Services Roy Majdalani. One of the strongest methods of increasing engagement and performance, according to the head of Talent Management & Training at BankMed Roula Ejeh, is team building. "To be an effective HR manager, you need to be a psychologist, coach, consultant and strategist. You need to be a global leader."

Beneficial Opportunities



Major gift fosters scholarship opportunities

The Brummana High School Cultural Society, the philanthropic arm of the Brummana High School, has gifted LAU with \$300,000 towards an endowed scholarship fund. The agreement was made official at a signing ceremony event held at the university's Beirut campus in May, bringing together leaders from both institutes to celebrate the occasion. Explaining what prompted the gift, the chairman of the society Raja Younes said, "The school is flourishing and our students are doing well, and we would like to support them behind the scenes." LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra took the opportunity to show the university's interest in creating more opportunities for students: "This is not the end of it. We will go on to establish even more important relationships between Brummana High School and LAU, and we will make sure to have a special bond that best benefits students." Scholarships from an endowed fund are typically distributed after two to three years from the launch of a fund. However, LAU will award a \$6,000 scholarship to a Brummana High School graduate starting in the 2017-18 academic year.

LAU first university to launch the Student Mobile Plan

LAU students were the first to benefit from nationwide telecom promotional offer dedicated to university students. Prime Minister Saad Hariri and Telecommunications Minister Jamal Jarrah (B.S. '81), who launched the LAU deal with the CEOs of Alfa and Touch, announced a new initiative to reduce telecom costs incurred by university students. For \$15 a month, whether subscribers of Touch or Alfa mobile operators, students can enjoy 5 gigabytes of Internet downloads, as well as free talk-time, text messages and more. The achievement was made possible by LAU's capacity and technical infrastructure, which enabled swift cooperation with the telecom providers while maintaining student information confidentiality.



Beyond the classroom

By Hoda Hilal

Works penned during an Arabic Creative Writing course get published



In a room packed with LAU officials, faculty members, parents and supporters, the only thought that crossed my mind while I was speaking was how blessed I am to be at LAU. The university never fails to show its students love and support, and I particularly felt it this past April, at the book launch of literary works that my classmates and I wrote in the Arabic Creative Writing course and which were published by the Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc.

When we chose this Arabic course, none of us imagined that it would be the start of a journey full of achievements. From the very first session, however, our professor Mona al Shrafi Tayim believed in our abilities. "Inside each of us are creative capacities, waiting to be discovered, encouraged and oriented by developing personal skills and unleashing the imagination," she explained at the launch.

The event was attended by LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, who delighted in our accomplishments. He stressed the importance of the Arabic language as "the key to our culture and rich literary heritage."

Jabbra's words resonate even more when one finds out that none of the students who took the course were actually languages or literature majors. Throughout the semester, we sensed the importance of keeping our language alive. Engineering students and fellow classmates Jalal Moughraby and Samer Awwad wrote a science fiction story titled *Return from Nothing*. They admitted that they've never done this before, but the course convinced them that writing in Arabic doesn't have to be polished and perfect: it just has to come from the heart.

"Arabic language is the key to our culture and rich literary heritage."

—Joseph G. Jabbra, LAU president

While writing our novella, my fellow translation students Maysaa Bou Ali, Takla al Rahbani and I also felt that writing should not be tedious, but should be infused by a candid spirit. The moment we put pen to paper, events and characters were born through brainstorming and teamwork techniques that we were taught



in class. From ideas on paper to chapters in a book, the words came to life without us knowing how.

The next steps took months. Our friend Asrar Hilal came up with the cover and the pictures that illustrated the text. Professor Tayim and Bachar Chebaro, a publisher at the Arab Scientific Publishers, Inc., helped us review and edit our children's tale titled *Let's Begin Our Journey*. At the launch, the look of amazement on the faces of the audience attested to the fact that our hard work had paid off.

At the event, biology student Zainab Hasan recited a poem and political science student Abdullah Malaeb read a politically charged article that they had written.

"I was worried at first about writing in Arabic, but I found through this course that the Arabic language is about far more than grammar," Malaeb said.

Right before sitting for our finals, we were invited to a number of TV shows as the hosts were curious to hear more about our experience. Indeed, all of this wouldn't have been possible without the incomparable support of LAU and our professor, as well as our parents and friends whose eyes shone with pride. I will forever remember this experience as a milestone of my time at LAU, which taught me that we can achieve anything if we just believe in ourselves.



Diversity in the spotlight

By Reem Maghribi

Communications Arts department stages multi-disciplinary multi-genre musical extravaganza

Students from a variety of disciplines collaborated this spring to stage an eclectic music-led performance titled *Alternative Facts*. The event combined acting, dance and video with the sounds of a violin, oud, drums, piano and vocals.

Each student, says Assistant Professor of Music Amr Selim, brought with them a unique expertise and vision that strengthened the production. “A graphic designer, for example, sees colors and shapes better than I do. In music, I hear better than they do. This exchange of perspectives and ideas is truly helpful.”

Within this fruitful and collaborative context, Selim took on the challenge of building a narrative around a newsroom, writing farcical script that tackled the impact of fake news and audience ignorance, and incorporated songs in a number of genres, including rap, jazz, *mawal* and reggae. Even the set — with rubble and a destroyed car on one side, a cage on another and candles lighting up the stairs — clearly drew from the expertise, vision and creativity of people from different disciplines.



“This is the first time I played in front of an audience, and it was so exciting,” enthused computer science major Ikram Hamizi, who, together with performing arts major Stephanie Tadros took on the role of news anchor. “It’s a great chance to interact with people from other majors. I’m usually surrounded by technical brains and here I was with artistic ones.”

Also dedicating time away from his academic discipline was violinist Elie Chahin. “I study architecture but I love



"The goal of a performance is not to take you out of reality, but to let you know that there is more to know."

—Amr Selim, LAU assistant professor of music

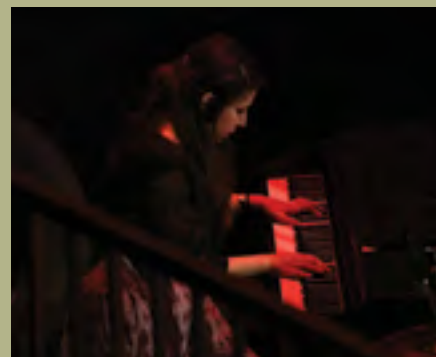
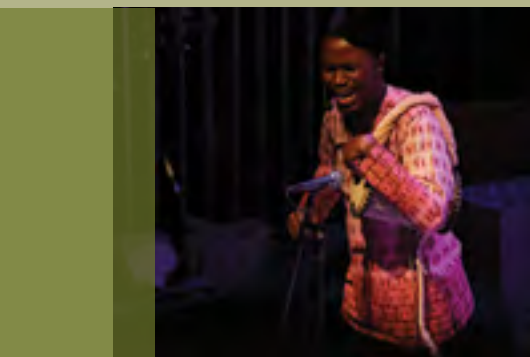
music," explained Chahin, who has a lot of experience on stage. "This was the most important performance by far, though. It was so much fun and I was working with professionally minded people."

Mechanical engineering student Jamil Moussa loved the camaraderie and mentoring by Selim so much that he is now considering taking on performing arts as a second major. "It was my first time playing western music on the oud. Amr encouraged me to improvise and explore the boundaries of my instrument and I learned a lot working with others."

Fellow engineering student Bassam Haddad was personally invited by Selim to take part in the production after the professor heard his raps online. "What's

unique here is that we're creating things, not just performing," says Haddad, who wrote two sets of lyrics especially for the production. "Even with the covers, we're mincing things and each musician is adding chords."

The most rewarding part for Selim was seeing and nurturing the passion in the students. "It's great to see how happy they are. You can see the fire in their eyes. They want to get back on stage and do it again, and for the audience, it's very inspiring and powerful," he adds. "The goal of a performance is not to take you out of reality, but to let you know that there is more to know. The role of arts in this regard, and particular in this region, is very important and deserves to be nurtured."



An indispensable research tool

By Victoria Yan & MarCom news staff

LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World puts 40 years of research on women and gender issues online

"We bridge the divides between academic and activists by focusing on applied research with real potential for social and policy change."

—Lina Abirafeh, IWSAW director

To dive into Al-Raida's pool of knowledge free of charge visit www.alraidajournal.com



From critiquing archaic laws to showcasing Arab women in the arts, Al-Raida, an interdisciplinary academic journal published by the LAU's Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), is one of the few leading publications to spotlight women's rights and inequality in the Arab region. Established in May 1973, Al-Raida — meaning “female pioneer” — was the first publication of its kind in the region. In its nascent years, it served as a modest newsletter covering profiles of women's conference and summaries of academic studies.

Foregrounding issues of gender and human rights, the journal has continued to evolve both in scope and impact. It publishes across a variety of academic and political disciplines, and highlights intersectional and comprehensive research that challenges prevailing gender norms. “Al-Raida itself is a story...a historical snapshot of the evolution of gender equality and women's rights both in Lebanon and across the region,” noted Lina Abirafeh, IWSAW's current director.

With over 40 years of research on women and gender issues, Al-Raida has been an indispensable resource for more than one generation of researchers, activists and scholars. “We bridge the divides between academic and activists by focusing on applied research with real potential for social and policy change,” affirmed Abirafeh. “We have regional and global networks to tap into, bringing together both knowledge and know-how,” she added.

All of the journal's issues highlight important historical moments in the development of feminist activism both in Lebanon and across the region. During the Lebanese Civil War, Al-Raida continued to publish articles and material that soon created a foundational platform for

political discussion at a time when the country had all but shut down. Meanwhile in a 1994 issue, it addressed issues of intimate partner violence and women survivors of all forms of violence, even as activists and feminist non-government organizations themselves were still unable to mobilize around the issue without social and political pushback.

Over the years, Al-Raida has lived up to its namesake, a pioneer in the field of feminist scholarly work. The journal publishes both peer-reviewed scholarship and simultaneously serves as a platform for activists to publish their critical pieces, poems, art, short stories, testimonials and personal essays. “This unique platform has enabled it to successfully tackle many sociopolitical and cultural issues that remain taboo in the Arab region and beyond,” explained said IWSAW's Assistant Director and Al-Raida Managing Editor, Myriam Sfeir.

To celebrate its fortieth anniversary, IWSAW digitized the entire collection of the journal, making all its issues free to the public. Yasmine Masri, a projects manager at Search for Common Ground, emphasizes the importance of Al-Raida's work and archives. Having used the publication extensively in her M.A. thesis on women and peace-building in Lebanon at the end of the 20th century, Masri remarked on how critical it was to maintain an up-to-date resource for projects centered on women in the Arab World.

“Al-Raida is an indispensable resource: 40 years of gender and women's rights research and activism available at the click of a button,” pointed out Masri. “Whether an experienced researcher or a young activist, its archives are a must-read for those invested in gender and women's rights in the Arab region,” she added.

The value of collaboration and learning from each other

By Reem Maghribi

LAU hosts interdisciplinary inter-collegiate dermatology conference



LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital hosted dermatology residents and clinicians from five top Lebanese medical programs during the spring semester, as part of an initiative organized by the Department of Dermatology at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine.

The healthcare professionals toured the hospital's dermatology clinics and observed four patients with rare skin conditions before gathering to present and discuss twenty case studies of diverse and unique skin conditions.

Chair of the Department of Dermatology Associate Professor Zeina Tannous — who acted as the program chair and moderator — has long sought to promote inter-center learning. "I used to attend similar events in the States where case presentation promoted exchange of knowledge and I wanted to bring that to our students in Lebanon," said Dr. Tannous, who completed her residency and three fellowships at the Harvard Medical School before joining LAU.

"We have heard today about rare and unique cases which many doctors may not see throughout their entire careers," said Dr. Dany Touma, head of the Lebanese Dermatologic Society, which sponsored the event. "It is important that we as medical professionals collaborate and learn from each other," he added, noting that he would like to see the event become an annual one.

Before heading to the auditorium to attend presentations of and discuss clinicopathologic correlations and diagnoses of various rare conditions, the medical professionals met and spoke with four of the patients presented in the case studies. It was an exercise as much appreciated by the patients — who enjoyed the opportunity to consult with a number of doctors at once — as it was by the doctors. "That was most useful and insightful," said Lebanese University resident Zeinab Youness, who later presented studies about patients with pruritus and crusted lips.

LAU resident Farah el Chaer also presented a case study, about a mastectomy patient who had developed a life threatening skin irritation. A correlation was found between the two conditions. "I want to raise awareness of the importance of early diagnosis, which is key to improving survival rates," said el Chaer, whose presentation was one of



"The skin is after all a mirror of different internal diseases."

—Dr. Zeina Tannous, chair of LAU's Department of Dermatology

a number included in a special section dedicated to oncology.

"This is a multidisciplinary meeting, enabling us to consider dermatology from different perspectives, through different pathologies, including oncology, to benefit all disciplines," said Tannous. "The skin is after all a mirror of different internal diseases."

On hand to give el Chaer, Youness and the other residents feedback was co-moderator and guest speaker Dr. Selim Aractingi, a prominent pioneer in the field of medical dermatology, whose comments, said Youness, gave her confidence a boost.

"The level of medicine in Lebanon is excellent and I enjoy opportunities that offer reciprocal learning such as this conference," said Aractingi, who is a professor at the Faculté de Médecine Paris Descartes and an adjunct to the Department of Dermatology in Cochin Hospital. He also leads a research team dedicated to stem cells in skin biology at Pierre et Marie Curie Faculty of Medicine.

"This is an important opportunity to scientifically discuss different and new cases with other doctors," said dermatologist at USJ Dr. Farid Stephan, whose residents were among those presenting case studies and engaging in vibrant discussions about journal articles, new research and recent practices and recommendations in the field of dermatology.

Alumni update

February

Annual Sponsors Dinner

LAU and its Dubai & Northern Emirates alumni chapter organized a dinner to thank sponsors for their continuing support to the chapter and the university. During the event, the chapter's committee presented LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara with a check for \$600,000, the total funds raised by the chapter during the previous year. The hugely successful dinner took place on February 21 at Dubai's Jumeirah al Naseem Hotel.



March



Day in the Desert

More than 650 alumni accompanied by family and friends enjoyed a fun day in the desert full of activities for both children and adults during the Kuwait chapter's Annual Open Day, held on March 10.

Oman Annual Gala Dinner

"Choose to be Grateful" was the theme of this year's Oman alumni chapter's annual gala dinner, which gathered around 250 alumni and friends. Mireille Aoun Kamar acted as the master of ceremony, introducing LAU alumnus Philippe Giorgiou, marketing consultant to the Omani Ministry of Tourism to reflect the dinner's theme of gratefulness. Carla Khalil el Zein then introduced LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, who updated the audience on the university's latest news. The Ambassador of Lebanon to Oman, H.E. Hussam Diab thanked the chapter for organizing the dinner. A surprise live appearance by Michael Haddad following a short film about the young Lebanese — who lost control of 75 percent of his body after a jet-ski accident and stays standing up with the help of a steel exoskeleton developed at LAU — received an ovation.



The evening, which took place at Muscat's Grand Hyatt Hotel on March 10 lasted till the late hours of the night with entertained by Asmara and her band, who flew from Lebanon especially for the occasion.

April

Senior Student Orientation

The Alumni Relations Office organized its 15th "Senior Students Orientation Activity" to introduce the students to the Alumni Association and the benefits of membership. Seniors on both campuses had the chance to visit the alumni stand and provide the Alumni Relations Office with their contact information in order to remain in touch after graduation. Refreshments and cookies were served and each senior was gifted a leather business card holder bearing a brass plaque engraved with "LAU Alumni Association Class of 2017" as a souvenir. They were also handed copies of the *LAU Magazine & Alumni Bullet* in addition to the *Alumni Chapters Directory*. Both events drew a crowd of more than 370 seniors on April 4 and 5 at the Byblos campus and April 19 and 20 at the Beirut campus.



11th Alumni Annual Business Networking Reception

A total of 350 people — including more than 140 alumni and 100 company representatives — attended the 11th Alumni Business Networking Reception organized by the Alumni Relations Office and the Offices of the Deans of Students (Career and Placement), held on April 12 at the Phoenicia hotel in Beirut. Alumni, officials, faculty and staff met with top HR representatives following a vibrant panel discussion titled “Modern Trends in Recruitment and Selection” to examine market needs and recruitment trends. Four alumni from the fields of pharmacy, banking, construction and advertising, moderated by Dean of Students in Beirut Raed Mohsen, shared their experience and practical tips with the audience: Head of the HR division at BankMed Dania Kaakani, Senior Country Manager at Amgen for Levant Markets Lama Mouhayar Hokayem, Manager MIS and Business Process Re-engineering at Consolidated Contractors International Corporation Aref Abou Alwan, and VP/MENA Area Director of the International Advertising Association and Assistant to LAU President for Special Projects Saad el Zein.



A Beneficial Collaboration

LAU's Northern California chapter collaborated closely with the San Francisco chapter of the World Lebanese Culture Union (WLCU) to present a seminar titled “Presentations to Enhance Your Life” on April 29. Guest speakers included Dr. Salwan AbiEzzi (a family practice physician from Palo Alto, California), Professor Emeritus of Surgery (Urology) at Stanford University

Dr. Fuad Freiha, director of the Cardiovascular Research Center and the Arthur and Janet C. Ross Professor of Medicine at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine Dr. Roger Hajjar, and president of the local chapter of WLCU Khalil Khoury. The gathering included a luncheon at Tannourine Restaurant in San Mateo.



Dubai & Northern Emirates Annual Gala Dinner

At this year's iteration of their annual gala dinner, held on April 28, the Dubai & Northern Emirates chapter chose to honor the brothers Ilyas and Mostapha Galadari. The pair's contributions to Dubai have been key to the development of its economy, and they are dear friends and major supporters of LAU. The five hundred alumni and friends raised funds for several scholarships supporting LAU needy students while enjoying a superb evening with the Lebanese superstar Ragheb Alameh.

May

Ladies Brunch

More than 100 alumni and friends gathered at Kahwet Beirut in Downtown Beirut for the annual brunch organized by the Beirut chapter on May 6. The event as usual was an astounding success.



Alumni update



Alumni Lecture

As part of the “Keep Learning” alumni lecture series, the Alumni Relations Office organized a lecture titled “Rethinking Leadership” by the global thought leader and professional speaker Michael Kouly, president and CEO of Cambridge Institute for Global Leadership. on May 12. The event attracted a crowd of 400 alumni, faculty, staff and friends of LAU, held on May 12 at the Beirut campus’ Irwin Hall Auditorium.

The Great Basketball Challenge

LAU Alumni and LAU Varsity teams played two great games at the university’s Beirut campus on May 24. The event, like every year, brought back alumni players to the basketball field, not only for the “love of the game” but also for the “love of LAU”!



Spring Gathering

Around 20 alumni and friends enjoyed a lovely lunch the Byblos chapter organized for their Spring Gathering at Les Terrasses de Abdelli on May 21.

Visiting Alumnus

On May 31, LAU Vice President for University Advancement Marla Rice-Evans and Director of Alumni and Special Projects Ed Shiner chatted with LAU alumnus and MENA & U.S. Director of U.K. Lebanon Tech Hub Nadim Zaazaa during his visit to the Big Apple. “We love it when alumni stop by to share the amazing things they’re doing!” says Shiner.



June



Fun on the Charles

On June 3, the Boston/New England chapter enjoyed a picnic gathering on the Charles River, with family and friends enjoying the unique setting and scrumptious food.



Ramadan in New York

The NY-NJ chapter celebrated the holy month of Ramadan with an Iftar for alumni and friends at Balade Lebanese Restaurant in New York City on June 4.

Ramadan in Arlington

The Washington, DC, chapter celebrated the holy month of Ramadan with an Iftar at Lebanese Taverna in Arlington in Virginia for alumni and friends on June 8.



Ramadan in Doha

The Qatar chapter organized a Sohour at Doha La Cigale Hotel Ramadan tent, Khaymé Ramadaniyé. The gathering, on June 8, lasted till the early hours of the morning with more than 140 alumni and friends attending.



Taking Florida by Storm

Director of Alumni and Special Projects Ed Shiner met for dinner in Tampa and Pompano Beach with several Florida alumni who are spread throughout the state on June 10 and 11. Approximately 70 LAU alumni are dispersed throughout Florida. A special part of this Florida visit was a lunch on Merritt Island with Rev. Karen Towner, a study abroad student at BCW 1956-1957, during which she was presented with a 50th-anniversary pin.

Ramadan in Manama

About 50 alumni attended and enjoyed the Bahrain chapter's annual Ramadan Ghabga night on June 15 at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa popular Ramadan tent, Khaimat al Khaleej.



We recycle for a cause

By Victoria Yan & MarCom news staff

LAU's Facilities Management Department teams up with Association L'Ecoule for a campaign with a difference



During Phase 1 #LAUDoorToDoor students from the Red Cross and Environmental club along with Facilities Management staff members visit faculty and staff offices to introduce the partnership with Association l'Ecoule and deliver paper collectors designed and handcrafted by students, with messages like "Let your hands do the talking" referring to sign language used by the hearing impaired.

"This joint effort is creating a perfect awareness message at all levels and touches the civil society as a whole."

—Father Jean-Marie Chami, Association L'Ecoule president

Integrating sustainability into the university's culture and transforming its campuses into green landmarks is one of LAU's Facilities Management's many tasks. As part of this mission, the department recently kicked off a recycling campaign, one with a humanitarian approach: a partnership with L'Ecoule Recycling.

"LAU decided to embark on a recycling plan that had the wellness of both the environment and the humanity in mind," says Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management Georges Hamouche. "This led us to partner with Association L'Ecoule, a not-for-profit and green-oriented charitable organization, in support of their humanitarian mission."

For Father Jean-Marie Chami, president of the NGO, joining hands with a pioneering university goes beyond the walls of both institutions. "This joint effort is creating a perfect awareness message at all levels and touches the civil society as a whole."

L'Ecoule Recycling collects LAU's waste, sorts it and routes it to recycling centers, which in turn finances projects that serve the physically challenged. For example, recycling 85 tons of paper or a million bottle caps can provide an electrical wheelchair for a person with reduced mobility, while five tons of paper or a hundred thousand cans can provide a hearing aid kit for a hearing-impaired person.

"We will keep assessing our growth in this initiative and make the necessary adjustments while trying to seek opportunities to add other lines of recyclables as possible," says Director of the Physical Plant in Beirut Roger Haddad.

Student Nadine el Sayed immediately agreed to volunteer along with other students from the Red Cross club — to which she belongs — and will be leading the awareness campaign targeting LAU's staff and faculty at the Beirut campus. Students from the Environmental Club will do the same on the Byblos campus.

"It was rewarding to see one of my ex-students in our office enthusiastically encouraging faculty and staff to recycle," says Senior Instructor of English Paula Haber, also director of the Writing Center in Beirut. "I am a firm believer in this initiative... Recycling by itself benefits our environment and if the benefit is doubled then even better."

The campaign consists of a number of phases that involve different departments of the university every time, some of which are represented in the Recycling and Waste Management Steering Committee. "This campaign is a great example of teamwork, not only within our department as we also collaborated with Hospitality and Procurement Offices of the Business Services Department and many other entities," says Work Control Unit Manager in Beirut, Rula Nehmeh, who along with Mona Semaan, her counterpart in Byblos, are leading the preparation works on both campuses and the initiative's marketing campaign.

While meticulous planning for Recycle for a CAUSE began a year ago, the initial phase titled #LAUDoorToDoor and which targets faculty and staff has recently started. "We've trained students to shed light on LAU's alarming current consumption of paper and how cutting down on 20 percent of paper consumption can help save approximately 280 trees a year," explains Semaan, illustrating the environmental awareness facet of the campaign.

The next phase of the campaign — which will target students — will be launched in the fall.

By adopting a partnership-based approach, LAU aims to reduce the environmental impact of the university's operations, minimize its use of natural resources, lower operating costs and encourage environmentally responsible behavior within the community.

Currently, the university undertakes numerous initiatives, including green design and building certification, energy and water efficiency, metering and performance audits and tips for living green, says Director of the Physical Plant in Byblos Ziad Haddad. "A major step toward sustainability is LAU's Green Pledge — an agreement to make small changes geared toward creating a sustainable campus."

"It's vital for us to start taking environmental action immediately considering the damages already incurred on our planet," student el Sayed adds. "This campaign is simply amazing and heartwarming."

Staying connected

Aida Awar (A.A. '50) obtained her bachelor's degree with a double major in French and Spanish and a minor in Italian, Portuguese and Religious Studies from California State University in Long Beach, California, where she subsequently worked as an administrative secretary at the Department of Foreign Languages for eight years. Now retired, family takes up much of Aida's time as she organizes frequent get-togethers for her son and three daughters, and her six grandchildren aged between 10 and 28, as well as husbands and boyfriends. Every year, Aida makes the effort to visit family and friends in Lebanon.

Ghada Hijjawi-Qaddumi (B.A. '76) obtained her Ph.D. in the history of Islamic art and architecture from Harvard University after having received her master's in Arabic literature from AUB. Ghada lives in Kuwait, where she is currently the president of World Crafts Council-Asia Pacific Region. She was previously the curator of Kuwait's Islamic Museum (*Dar al-Athar al-Islamiya*) and the director of the country's Research and Cultural Studies Department at its National Crafts Council of Arts & Letters. Three of her grandchildren have married, two of whom are LAU graduates, **Sama Qaddumi (B.A. '04)** and **Tareq Qaddumi (B.S. '03)**.

Cecilia el Moudaber (B.S. '82) obtained her master's in business management from Université du Québec à Chicoutimi. She has also achieved her Senior Professional in Human Resources certification (SPHR) from Morgan International in Lebanon. Cecilia lives in Beirut, where she is an instructor in human resources and soft skills courses at Haigazian University and Université Saint-Joseph's École supérieure d'ingénieurs de Beyrouth. She previously worked as a human resources consultant and capacity developer in various sectors, including education, luxury, healthcare and banking.

Fadi Sidani (B.S. '83) obtained his master's in business from the University of Kansas. He currently lives in Dubai, where he is a partner in charge of Enterprise Risk Services ME at Deloitte Middle East. Fadi previously worked at Andersen Global.

Nader Sobh (B.S. '83) obtained his Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Colorado Boulder. Nader lives in Lebanon, where he teaches mathematics to



Bilal Arnaout



Allan Khoury



Ahmad Saad



Alissar Bakri



Ali Farhat

twelfth-grade students at the Canadian High School and calculus at the Iman Pilot School. He has also written mathematics guidebooks for Lebanese baccalaureate students. Now that Nader's youngest daughter has graduated in June from Beirut Arab University majoring in civil engineering, all four of his children — two boys and two girls — are all engineers.

Sumaya Khauli (B.A. '87) obtained her master's in film from Boston University. Sumaya lives in Dubai, where she is an assistant professor of digital production and storytelling in the School of Communication at the American University of Dubai. She previously worked as head of production for Future TV and a consultant for Dubai TV. Sumaya is married and has three children.

Rami T. Khodr (B.S. '88) obtained his master's in microbiology from Middlesex University in the U.K and his Ph.D. in food microbiology from California State University. Rami lives in Lebanon and spends his summers in Paphos, Cyprus. He is a part owner of Cure Development Co. Saudi Arabia, which specializes in hospital and food industry disinfecting. He is also the owner of RBML labs, which specialize in food and water testing. Rami is the holder of a patent in hydrogen stabilized with silver nitrate registered in Lebanon, GCC and the U.K. (under evaluation). He previously worked as a sales representative for Philips

Medical Equipment, then as regional sales manager for Philips' Middle East and Africa division, before starting his own business in 2008. Rami is married to AUB medical lab graduate Rola Karamah. They have twin 19 year-old boys, both of whom are LAU students (Ragheed is a biology pre-med and Ribal is a business major).

Nahel Wehbe (B.S. '91) lives in Kuwait, where he is a senior consultant for KBF International for Information and Computer Systems. Previously he was the director of sales and marketing at Jeddah Cable Company in Saudi Arabia. He moved back to Lebanon in 2014 with one purpose in mind: to come back home and invest in a career in the biggest cable manufacturing company in Lebanon. So, he joined Liban Cables and took on its distribution activity.

Mazen Sinno (B.S. '93) lives in Saudi Arabia, where he is a sales manager at E.A. Juffali & Brothers. Mazen is father to three daughters.

Ahmad Ghandour (B.S. '94) lives in Beirut, where he is the administrative manager at SACCAL Enterprises.

Maher Kaddoura (B.S. '95) obtained his M.B.A. from Abu Dhabi University. He lives in Abu Dhabi, where he is the human resources and administrative manager at Gulf Fluor LLC.

Staying connected

Bassam Baghdadi (B.S. '97) lives between Beirut, Riyadh and Doha. Bassam is a certified lead auditor with IRCA for ISO 9000, as well as a lead auditor in the ISM Code and ISPS Code. He holds the position of general manager for NATRAD (maritime logistics), BMBG Inc. (environmental waste management and waste to energy solutions), and Leilani SA (K-12 educational solutions), as well as being COO for United Medical Waste Management Qatar.

Rima Hamdan (B.A. '97) lives in Doha, Qatar, where she is the deputy director at the SABIS International School of Choueifat. Rima's daughter graduated from school this year.

Nahla Alkotob (T.D. '99, B.A. '93) lives in Lebanon, where she works in data updating at Lumiere Group. She previously worked as an instructor's assistant in the Department of Architecture and Interior Design at LAU. She then obtained her teaching diploma and started teaching art. Nahla was an art teacher at Wellspring Learning Community for four years before making a major shift back to interior design, this time in the field of lighting. She is getting married to Mohamed Makari in August.

Rosemary Georgarakou (B.S. '99) obtained her diploma in digital marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing in the U.K. Rosemary lives in Athens, Greece, where she is the digital marketing director at Natural Doctor SA and Metabolic Medicine SA. She stays constantly informed on new digital marketing trends, tools and applications, participates in webinars and acquires relevant certificates in digital marketing. Rosemary previously worked in the marketing departments of well-known ERP software companies in Greece for over 15 years. In 2007, she married John, with whom she has been for the past 17 years.

Lara Shaaban (M.B.A. '99, B.S. '94) completed her post-graduate degree at LAU and obtained a second post-graduate degree in hotel management from Cornell Paris (IMHI in ESSEC). Lara lives in Saudi Arabia's al Khobar, where she works as a training and human development consultant. She is married to **Karim Najjar (B.S. '96)** and they have two daughters, Kenzie (nine) and Taj (four).

Joseph Touma (B.S. '99) lives in Lebanon, where he is the owner of IT-Trading Communication Company. He was previously a partner in Digital Links. Joseph has recently become a grandfather.

Sandra Abrass (B.A. '00) lives in Lebanon, where she is a filmmaker. Sandra has directed political crime investigative documentaries, as well as commercials.

Bilal Arnaout (B.S. '02) lives in Lebanon, and is the general manager at Lancaster Plaza Hotel. Bilal started with the Lancaster chain as the room division manager, and was then promoted to deputy general manager before assuming his current post in May 2017. He previously worked at the Intercontinental Hotels Group and Starwood Hotels. Bilal is married to **Zeina Zein, (M.A. '09, B.A. '03)** and they have two daughters, Yara and Aya.

Mohamad Chmaitilli (B.E. '02) lives in Lebanon, where he is a distribution sales manager for Liban Cables.

Rania Temraoui (M.B.A. '02) lives in Lebanon, where she is the finance manager at the international NGO World Learning, Inc. Rania also conducts training on financial management, procurement and financial accountability for many NGOs.

Dalia Baassiri (B.S. '03) obtained her M.F.A. in Fine Arts from the Chelsea College of Arts at the University of Arts London in the U.K. Dalia is a multidisciplinary artist represented by Galerie Janine Rubeiz in Lebanon. Her studio is located in Beirut's Hamra district. Her solo exhibition "Wiped Off" was shown at Galerie Janine Rubeiz earlier this year.

Jad Bitar (B.S. '04) is entering the M.B.A. program at Middlesex University in Dubai as of September 2017. Jad lives in Dubai, where he is a senior marketing manager at the Commercial Bank of Dubai. He began his career in advertising in Beirut in 2004. He then moved to Riyadh in 2005 and stayed there for 10 years, with various jobs in advertising and in marketing. In 2015 he moved to Dubai. Jad recently launched the first digital-only bank in the UAE — CBD NOW — which recently won four Transform MENA Brand awards. Jad got married in April 2016.

Abdallah I. Kabbara (B.Arch. '04) obtained his M.B.A. from University of Balamand. Abdallah lives in Saudi Arabia, where he is a construction manager at Leman Project Management. Previously he was a senior architect and design manager at Projacs International Co.

Marwan Wahbi (M.B.A. '05) obtained his doctorate in business administration (DBA) from Grenoble École de Management in France. Marwan lives in Lebanon, where he is an assistant professor of marketing at the Rafik Hariri University. He was previously a lecturer of marketing at Haigazian University and has fifteen years of experience in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industry in Lebanon and the Middle East. Marwan is married and has one child.

Hani Abas (M.S. '06) lives in Lebanon, where he is a principal consultant at Edar-at Group. Hani's professional qualifications include IT certifications, leadership certifications, IT security, Business Continuity and Cloud Computing. He is married to Meray Jawhar and has two children, Jude (five) and Youssef (four).

Ghady Helou (B.A. '06) studied traditional animation (2D) at the Las Vegas Art Institute and is currently finishing his M.F.A. in painting, drawing and sculpture at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco.

Jony Matta (A.A. '06) graduated from Esmode. He lives in Lebanon, where he is a photo stylist. Jony is married and has a baby boy.

Rana el Moghrabi (M.A. '07, B.S. '01) lives in Lebanon, where she recruits new cabin crew members for MEA's Cabin Crew Operations division. Rana began her career at MEA as the assistant to the head of Operations' Technical Department and received her dispatcher certificate from Phoenix East School of Aviation in the U.S. She previously worked at a number of hotels chains before moving into media, working at the International Press Office of Rafik Hariri and KUNA, the Kuwaiti news agency, then at MBC and MBC 2 as a production coordinator and presenter.

Staying connected

Maha Halaby (B.S. '07) lives in Ontario, where she volunteers at the Canada London Housing Registry. Maha previously worked as an accountant at the Ham-moud University Medical Center in Sidon, Lebanon, for 16 years. Subsequently, she worked as an operation manager in a pro-duction company for two years.

Ali Farhat (B.S. '08) obtained his Ph.D. in chemical engineering from the Uni-versity of Queensland in Australia. He lives in Brisbane, where he is a chemical and environmental engineer at the city's Advanced Water Management Centre. Ali and his wife are expecting their first child this year.

George Yacoub (B.A. '08) lives in Leba-non, where he is an author, actor and mo-tivational speaker. George has published seven books, and one of his novels won first prize at Italy's Premio Energheia Liba-no in 2016. He has sold over 18,000 copies of his books so far and is currently writ-

ing his eighth book. He has played many roles in Lebanese TV series, commercials and films.

Jasmina Khalaf (B.S. '09) obtained her master's in management with an empha-sis on entrepreneurship from the École su-périeure des affaires. Jasmina lives in Leba-non, where she is a senior digital commu-nication officer at BLC Bank. She launched the BLC Bank & We Initiative websites.

Ahmad Saad (Pharm.D. '09, B.S. '08) obtained his PGY-1 from the University of Arizona and is a board-certified pharma-cotherapy specialist. Ahmad lives in Sacra-mento, California, where he is undertaking his PGY-2 health system pharmacy admin-istration residency at Sutter Health. He partnered with an LAU Alumnus, George Nawas, to give back to the university and school of pharmacy. They conducted a webinar for current pharmacy students on how to secure a pharmacy residency. Ahmad is proud to be a mentor for se-

nior pharmacy students through the LAU Alumni Mentoring Program.

Hessa al Muhannadi (M.A. '11) is cur-rently completing her Ph.D. in Gulf Studies at Qatar University. Hessa lives in Doha, where she is a director of legal affairs at Qatar Tourism Authority. She previously worked as a legal consultant. Hessa is mar-ried and has a two-year-old baby girl.

Mohamed Charafeddine (B.E. '11) obtained his master's in transportation system management from the Southern Methodist University in Texas. Mohamed lives in Denton, Texas, where he is a cost engineer at OHL North America-Judlau Contracting for two projects in Dallas (Highway 121-Grapevine and I35 Denton) and one in New York (Second Ave Subway-72nd street station).



Mohamed Charafeddine



Abdallah I. Kabbara



Nahla Alkotob



Mona Saadi



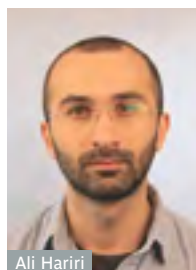
Caline el Khoury



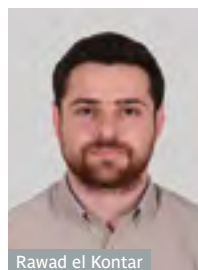
Dalia Baassiri



Jad Bitar



Ali Hariri



Rawad el Kontar



Louluwa Jazairi



Tania al Aawar



Jasmina Khalaf



Roula al Hajjar

Staying connected

Hadeel Dbaibo (B.A. '11) obtained her master's in education from AUB. Hadeel lives in Lebanon, where she is the out-reach coordinator of the TAMAM Lebanon Hub at AUB's Department of Education.

Karim Kattouf (M.B.A. '11) lives in Lebanon, where he is a brand protection manager for the Middle East and Africa at Cisco.

Majed Abou Arraj (B.S. '12) obtained his Program for Leadership Development (PLD) degree from Harvard Business School. He lives in Dubai, where he is vice president of operations at Medicals International covering the GCC countries and Egypt. Majed is married and has two children.

Roula al Hajjar (B.S. '12) lives in Dubai, where she is an account manager at J. Walter Thompson. Roula began her career as a marketing executive at Banque Bemo Saudi Fransi in Syria. She then moved to Dubai and started working in the advertising field with clients like HSBC, Dubai Cares, Abbott, and many more. Roula got married in 2012 and has a one-year-old baby girl.

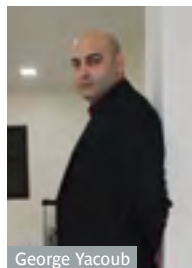
Sara Ayoubi (M.S. '12) obtained her Ph.D. in information and systems engineering from Concordia University in Canada. She lives in Ontario, where she is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Waterloo. During her time at Concordia, Sara was valedictorian for the joint faculties of Engineering, Computer Science and Fine Arts, received the doctoral prize in engineering and computer science and was nominated to receive the Governor General Medal Award.

Rachel Mikhael (Pharm.D. '12, B.S. '11) obtained her pharmaceutical M.B.A. from the Lebanese University. She lives in Lebanon, where she is a senior professional sales representative for the global healthcare company MSD.

Dounia Alexandra Nassar (B.S. '12) obtained her master's in packaging design from the Pratt Institute in New York. She lives in Paris, where she is an art director at the global design and innovation consultancy Dragon Rouge. Dunia had previously worked at Think[package] in New York.



Mazen Chahabeddine



George Yacoub



Sara Ayoubi

Fadi Zebib (M.B.A. '12) lives in Lebanon, where he is the regional sales manager for Samsung Electronics.

Chadi al Halabi (B.A. '13) obtained his master's of law in International and Commercial Law from University of Nottingham in the U.K. He lives in Erbil, Iraq, where he is the Housing Land and Property Cluster Coordinator/Analyst with UN Habitat. Chadi previously worked at ESCWA in Beirut.

Caline el Khoury (B.E. '13) obtained her master's in supply chain engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Caline lives in Chandler, Arizona, where she is a program manager for outbound transportation of the network operations team at Amazon.

Ali Hariri (B.E. '13) obtained his Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Florida State University. Ali lives in Arizona, where he is a test R&D engineer at Intel Co. He previously worked as a research engineer at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) in Golden, Colorado.

Hania Jneid (B.S. '13) obtained her master's in interior design from the Royal College of Art. Hania lives in Lebanon, where she founded the Hania Jneid design studio.



Jad Abdo



Hessa al Muhannadi

Ghaleb Kassab (B.E. '13) lives in Lebanon, where he is the CEO/Founder of GTonics, a company he started during his time at LAU Byblos. GTonics is now a digital agency for websites, mobile apps, social media and branding in Lebanon and KSA (www.gtonics.com).

Allan Khoury (B.S. '13) lives in Dubai, where he is the senior digital designer at Universal Media (UM), which was ranked 5th in the UAE Karting rankings, 8th in the Middle East and 58th worldwide.

Tania al Aawar (B.S. '14) lives in Lebanon, where she works in operation support at Bankmed's Mazraa branch in Beirut. Tania's father passed away seven months ago.

Mohammad el Medawar (M.S. '14, B.S. '11) lives in Lebanon, where he is a training professional and consultant. He founded his own business, TrainerMohammad.com, and holds training courses for companies and ministries in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Jeddah, Riyadh and Muscat. Mohammed still heads his previous business, Websaytat.com, for web design and development.

Alissar Bakri (B.S. '14) lives in Harare, Zimbabwe, where she is the owner at Goats R'Us. For the past three years Alissar has been working with the Goat Herder's Association of Zimbabwe to empower

Staying connected

communities across the country. This year she has been blessed with the birth of two new baby goats from her personal herd.

Jad Abdo (B.E. '15) lives in Saudi Arabia, where he is a mechanical site engineer at Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC).

Joseph Aoun (B.S. '15) lives in Lebanon, where he runs Qortoba Baabdat, a restaurant he launched while still at LAU.

Rana Ayoub (B.S. '15) lives in Lebanon, where she is a research executive at Nielsen.

Rawad el Kontar (B.Arch. '15) will be travelling in August 2017 to pursue his postgraduate studies in architecture and take up a research assistant position at Syracuse University in New York. Rawad currently lives in Lebanon, where he is an architect at Dar Al-Handasah (Shair and Partners). He previously worked as an architect at Atelier Hapsitus and BLANK-PAGE Architects. Rawad also pursued Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification.

Dalia Fleihan (B.E. '15) lives in Lebanon, where she is the front line technical support for Shell Lubricants, distributed by HYPCO and is the first female engineer to occupy this position in the MENA region. Dalia is certified by Shell as professional technical support trainer dealing with the largest power, construction and fleet companies in Lebanon, and in continuous technical collaboration with automotive manufacturers such as Ferrari, BMW, Hyundai, etc. Aside from her current position, she runs a consulting business where she gives advice to different companies in the B2B/B2C sectors using engineering methodologies.

Nazih Issa (B.E. '15) obtained his master's in project and enterprise management from University College London (UCL). Nazih lives in Lebanon, where he is a sports flooring consultant.

Elvire Nakhoul (B.S. '15) lives in Lebanon, where she is a product specialist for oncology and hematology at the biotechnology company Amgen.

Issam Sabbagh (B.S. '15) lives in Dubai, where he is a planning and scheduling agent at MBC Group TV.

Zeinab Abou Seif (B.S. '16) lives in Lebanon, where she is a KG3 teacher at the Isaad al Tofouleh Kindergarten. Zeinab just got married.

Nada Arabi (B.A. '16) lives in Dubai, where she is the general manager of the Kidcare Pediatric Clinic at Dubai Healthcare City.

Mazen Chahabeddine (B.Arch. '16) lives in Dubai, where he is an architect and renovation store planning coordinator at CHANEL MiddleEast in the city's Design District. Mazen currently coordinates regional CHANEL boutique openings, renovations and maintenance, from design to site execution through store planning.

Mae Anna Chokr (M.A. '16, B.A. '13) is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Westminster in the U.K. Mae Anna lives in London, where she is a political researcher and analyst. She previously worked at Middle East Institute in Washington, D.C. Mae Anna is also developing her painting hobby (www.maeanna.com).

Abbas Darwiche (B.S. '16) lives in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where he is IT manager at Sam & Sons Co., Ltd. Abbas previously worked as a database administrator assistant at Abu Dhabi Motors LLC (United Al Saqer Group) and logistic manager at Sam&Sons Co., Ltd.

Sara Nasserredine (B.S. '16) lives in Lebanon and is currently undertaking her postgraduate degree at AUB, where she is a graduate assistant. Sara hopes to find a relevant job in a reputable food industry.

Nour Skayem (B.S. '16) lives in Lebanon, where she has been a medical representative at Eli Lilly since June 2016.

Jana Atwi (B.S. '17) currently lives in Lebanon, where she is a business development employer alliance executive but will move shortly to Dubai for a new job. Jana previously worked as a national director of the NGO AIESEC Lebanon.

In August 2017, **Yorguo el Hachem (B.E. '17)** is moving to Texas, as a graduate student in transportation engineering with an emphasis in pavement engineering at the University of Texas at Austin.

Ali el-HajAli (B.S. '17) lives in Lebanon, where he is a sales manager at MIC Co., supplying insulation materials, as well as being a personal trainer at several gyms.

Mazen Hassan (B.E. '17) lives in Kuwait City, where he is a site engineer.

Dana Itani (M.A. '17, B.A. & T.D.'11) lives in Lebanon, where she is a home-room teacher and team leader at al Hayat International School. She previously worked as an English teacher at al Bayader School. Dana is married and has a three-year-old son, Bilal Ghalayini.

Louluwa Jazairi (B.A. '17) is currently a public administration master's student specializing in international and European governance at Leiden University, The Hague, Netherlands. Louluwa is interning at the Lebanon Center for Policy Research (LCPS) this summer, a non-profit, non-partisan think tank focused on Middle Eastern affairs and Lebanon in particular. "I would not be where I am today without the constant support I have from my parents and family, and amazing fiancée. To my beautiful mother Anna Maria, you have been by my side at every step of the way, I am eternally grateful," she says.

Sarah Kaddoura (B.A. '17) lives in Lebanon, where she is the alumni program officer at Unite Lebanon Youth Project

Mona Saadi (M.B.A. '17, B.S. '14) lives in Lebanon, where she is a nurse at the International Organization for Migration.

WHY I GIVE BACK

Sabah Haidar Khalil
(B.A. '12, M.A. in progress)



The holder of a social work and community development undergraduate degree from LAU and currently a student of the university's international affairs master's program, Sabah Haidar Khalil gives back in many forms. From securing lawyers for underprivileged members of society to making sure food and supplies are distributed to prisoners, Khalil has a long history of helping those in need, focusing her efforts in general on human rights advocacy. She is also a keen supporter of education and recently established the Sabah Haidar Khalil Designated Scholarship Grant at LAU.

Why do you give back to LAU?

I don't believe in giving and taking. Happiness and peace of mind is the reward I strive for and I do my best to ensure that my compatriots — especially our future, young generation at LAU — have these in order to build a strong and honest spirit so they can improve and strengthen our society.

You are an alumna of LAU and also a current graduate student, as well as an active social worker in the community — how do you manage all this and what drives you to help others?

I am indebted to my dear parents, who taught me at a young age to be empathetic. I feel empathy is in my blood. I always find a way to manage between my husband, six children, and five grandchildren to have time to support prison inmates or elderly people in hospitals. Impossible does not exist in my dictionary. Therefore, I have never believed that anyone or anything can stop me from accomplishing my mission and my dedication to be there when I am needed in my community.

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

I would like to raise my voice to my fellow alumni and our current students to help one another in order to change our society, and to love each other for a better and peaceful environment. United we can achieve this.

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

Through our university, Lebanon must and should again be first in spreading knowledge and innovation, which are the only way to eradicate the current mindset of extremism that is destroying our country.

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

Why not? Lebanon was always “*Manarat al Sharq*” (the lighthouse of the east). I want my old Lebanon back — the one I studied about in our history books from the time of the Phoenicians, Gibran and Amin Maalouf.

CREATING A LASTING LEGACY



✧ LINA ARISS-ABDO ✧

It was by an accident of fate that Dr. Lina Ariss-Abdo — a board certified pediatrician and graduate of Hopkins, NYU and Columbia — came to revive the Scholarship Endowment fund established by her maternal grandfather Samih Rashid Barbir (1911-2004) and his sister Mounira Barbir Naamani. Two years ago on his birthday Lina was googling her late grandfather and got two hits. One was a 1955 ship manifest (Ile de France, from New York to Plymouth) on which his name appeared as a passenger. The other was an LAU endowment fund. No one in the family knew about it. The fund was inactive and had been dormant for over 30 years.

For Lina, the mere fact that her grandfather had set up the fund indicated that it meant a lot to him. She decided that she wanted to honor his memory and that of his sister Mounira. With her brother Omar Ariss, Lina immediately put together the first contribution and then reached out to the whole extended family. Shortly after, Mona Farra — Mounira's daughter — along with her children made a donation of \$100,000 through the Moufid Farra Foundation.

In March this year, Nadia Barbir Ariss, Lina's mother, launched her first book C'était hier en Orient (Le Caire – Alep – Damas – Beyrouth 1937-1955). During the launch, which was attended by numerous family and friends of the author, the sales of the book made \$3,000, which was added to the endowment. Augmented still further by a gift of \$10,000 from Leila Naamani Alireza — who is Mounira's daughter and Nadia's cousin — the fund now stands at over \$140,000.

The fund is now active, generating a yearly scholarship for a deserving student. The family continues to sell C'était hier en Orient across the world and is donating all sale proceeds to the endowment fund. For the family, keeping the fund alive is vital, as they are convinced that education is the most powerful tool to improve one's life and make the world a better place.



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



C 1041

RVU