

# LAU magazine

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## & ALUMNI BULLETIN





## “Against All Odds”

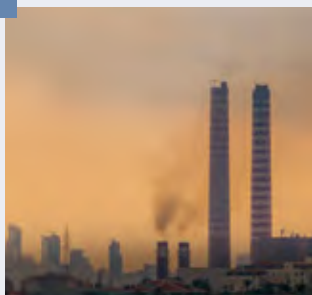
LAU is not an ivory tower. In a way, the university is a microcosm of Lebanon and, like Lebanon, has been struck throughout its history by political, social and economic hardship and uncertainty. Yet, it has survived, graduated a raft of cohorts, and celebrated accomplished alumni who have received international acclaim. Its community has time and again rallied to address humanitarian crises and continues to be an important component of Lebanese society. Lebanon endures, and LAU endures, against all odds.





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## Wherever You Go

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



## Have a Story to Tell?

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: [stratcom@lau.edu.lb](mailto:stratcom@lau.edu.lb), or

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# From the **President's Desk**

*Dear friends,*

*The destiny and duty of an academic institution are inextricably linked to the community it serves. In times of crises, what sets a university apart is not how well it weathers the storms or mitigates their damage whenever possible. Rather, it is its long-term view, anchored in a steadfast commitment to the country and its people.*

*LAU has faced many such moments in its long history, challenging the norm by educating women, showing resilience in times of adversity and bolstering higher education for all – Against All Odds.*

*Spring 2020 will be marked by the publication of the first-ever commemorative book on LAU's past and present, tracing its rise from a modest school for girls to the powerhouse that it is today. Collated from testimonials of alumni, faculty, staff and archival material, the book – from which we have included a few excerpts in this issue – brings to life some of the university's most difficult as well as most rewarding moments, many of which mirrored those of our beloved Lebanon.*

*Once again, we find ourselves in a socio-economic climate that calls for us to act and to help come up with solutions across our academic, research and advancement areas.*

*At the stage where the economic, social and environmental crises could still be averted, we asked our esteemed faculty to weigh in on lifelines that may pull our economy out of its stalemate, and what expertise they and their students were lending.*

*Since then, however, the situation has taken a turn for the worse, with severe financial hardship threatening to deprive our youth of the education they deserve. These young men and women, who will embody and carry LAU's values into the future, desperately need every assistance possible. We have, therefore, launched an emergency financial aid fund to help both prospective and enrolled students, which I urge you to consider.*

*The special supplement, which coincidentally fell under this issue's theme, provides an academic perspective on the October 17 uprising as this momentous event in Lebanon's living history was unfolding.*

*As you leaf through this issue, you will more than likely find each of our society's concerns being addressed by the LAU community. From education to underserved yet outstanding students, innovative learning, empowering local communities in the face of the refugee crisis, to disease prevention – none have escaped our attention.*

*Education wields great power, and we have long pledged to draw on our resources, research and ability to educate everyone equally for the benefit of our community and our country.*

*That is, after all, our purpose and mission.*



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joseph G. Jabbra". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Joseph G. Jabbra  
President

# Class of 2019 Up for the Challenge

LAU's 94th Commencement Exercises celebrated more than 2,000 graduates across its seven schools. The university also presented Honorary Doctorates in Humane Letters to three outstanding individuals who embody the university's drive to empower women and the principle of giving back: Minister of Interior Raya Haffar EL-Hassan, LAU's own former Chairman of the Board of Trustees Philip Stoltzfus, and former Member of LAU's Board of International Advisors and Board of Trustees Mike Ahmar.

*"It will be up to you, Class of 2019, uniquely gifted by your Lebanese heritage, armed with your LAU degrees, to ensure that the blessing of the technological miracle is not hijacked by social discord. I have a simple suggestion – through service."*

– Philip Stoltzfus, CEO of Thayer Brook Partners and grandson of the late William Stoltzfus, who was one of the founding fathers of LAU, having headed the American Junior College for Women for some of the most active years in its history.



*"I would like to salute the founding fathers [of LAU] for their landmark vision to establish a college for women – a vision that laid the foundation for the achievement of gender parity in higher education and contributed to advancing women's rights in Lebanon."*

– Raya Haffar EL-Hassan, Minister of Interior and Municipalities, whose own career was distinguished by notable firsts in Lebanon and the Arab World as a woman in key ministerial positions.



*"What you have learned will complement the drive and entrepreneurial spirit that characterizes the Lebanese people. It is this very spirit that allows the Lebanese to thrive around the world, no matter what they do or where they go."*

– Mohamed (Mike) Ahmar, President of Ahmar Investment Inc. and Founder and Executive Board Chairman of Partners Bank of California, who drew from his own experience as an entrepreneur with Lebanese roots.

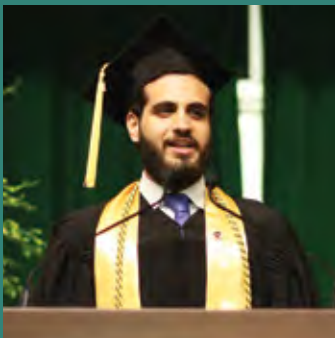






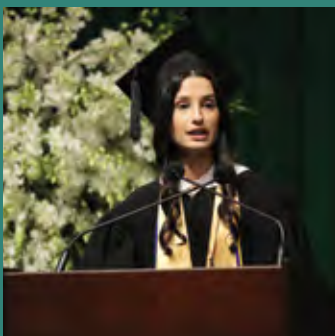
*"I look at graduation as an opportunity to grow, grow in our wisdom, grow in our strength and to grow in our resolve to do good."*

– Zahia Eid, biology graduate and class valedictorian at the Byblos campus ceremony.



*"I urge you to become aware of Destination Addiction: a preoccupation with the idea that happiness is in the next place, the next job, or the next partner. Until you give up the idea that happiness is somewhere else, it will never be where you are."*

– Ahmad Ismail, biology graduate and class valedictorian at the Beirut campus ceremony for the Schools of Architecture and Design and Arts and Sciences.



*"Thank you, faculty members, for sharing with us your knowledge and expertise in order to equip us with the right tools to successfully meet the challenging job market."*

– Fatima Lama Muhiedli, class valedictorian at the Beirut campus ceremony for the Adnan Kassar School of Business.



The Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine Hooding Ceremony and Residents Graduation had a dual celebratory purpose: a group of medical students made their transition to becoming full physicians, and residents were ready to take on the next steps in their medical career.

*"With [LAU graduates], we dream that Lebanon can return to the golden trio of being the 'Hospital of the East,' the 'Library of the East,' and the 'University of the East.'"*

– Akram Chehayeb, Minister of Education and Higher Education and keynote speaker at the ceremony.



*"We adapt to working in the gray area where the true art of medicine resides. We have prepared ourselves to sacrifice ourselves to the service of others. LAU has encouraged us to do our best and has shown us the way to becoming well-rounded people."*

– Adam Abdel-Ella Fawaz, class valedictorian.



*"Conscience is what makes human doctors better than robots. As doctors, our conscience should not only be our ability to differentiate right from wrong, but rather, it should be the mouse and the keyboard of our everyday actions."*

– Dr. Jad Maamari, graduating residents' class speaker.



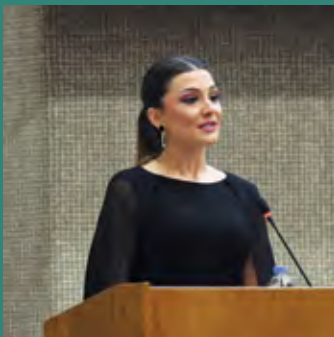


The Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSN) honored its graduating class at the Recognition and Pinning Ceremony.



*"[LAU] has made you more cultured and well-rounded individuals with heightened compassion and empathy that will allow you to improve humanity. Keep a place in your heart for those who need help. You are the future of Lebanon."*

– Dr. Mouna Haraoui, Founder and President of the Chronic Care Center and the Lebanese Heritage Foundation, and keynote speaker.



*"It is our responsibility to be agents of change in the nursing profession and in our communities. This requires us to be knowledgeable healthcare providers, holistic caregivers, and most importantly, advocates for our patients."*

– Meghry Kevork, class representative.



# Meeting Change with Innovation

By Dana Abed

The newly established LAU Fouad Makhzoumi Innovation Center helps to bolster creativity and entrepreneurship.



Fostering a culture of innovation and revolutionizing the mode of education delivery has been at the forefront of LAU's mission as a means of empowering students in an increasingly competitive market.

To that end, and in addition to revamping its curricula, the university has established the LAU Fouad Makhzoumi Innovation Center, following a generous donation by Dr. Fouad Makhzoumi in 2016.

The center was inaugurated on Beirut campus earlier this year in a ceremony

attended by the Minister of National Defense Elias Bou Saab – representing President Michel Aoun – Dr. Fouad Makhzoumi and his wife May, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra, members of parliament, ministers, ambassadors, and LAU leadership, alumni, friends, and students.

"We live in a world where the only constant is change and more of it, and the only way to successfully meet change is through innovation and creativity,"

Dr. Jabbra said in his address. "Hence, the idea of establishing an innovation center at LAU with two major arms: one arm is the academic, and the other the entrepreneurial."

Students should be taught to create their own jobs, added Dr. Jabbra, in anticipation of the shift in the workplace and the elimination of jobs in various fields as a result of technological advancement.

Reinforcing Dr. Jabbra's message from a businessman's perspective, Dr. Makhzoumi



spoke at length about the importance of revolutionizing the university's curricula and placing innovation and creativity at its center in order to give Lebanese students the edge.

While education is important, he said, "I worry about the students' attitude and their knowledge of data; can they deal with the change that we are experiencing every day? If they can, then they will be proper managers."

A main concern for Lebanon, he continued, was the need to discourage our youth from emigrating, by equipping them with the right tools to face changes that are imminent.

The center will focus on initiating training programs, competitions, ideation sessions, and hackathons, among others, that will target LAU students, staff, and alumni, and the community at large, explained Assistant to the President for Special Projects Saad El Zein. It will also serve as an incubator that seeds innovative ideas and prepares them for acceleration and start-ups.

This focus forms part of the "development needed by LAU to become a hub of creativity and innovation to sustain a vibrant learning environment whereby the entire university body becomes a community

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*"Innovation is an essential 21st century skill needed for success at work in a global economy impacted by the fourth industrial revolution."*

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of learners" – as set out in Pillar Two of LAU's Third Strategic Plan (SPIII).

"Innovation is an essential 21st century skill needed for success at work in a global economy impacted by the fourth industrial revolution," remarked Provost George Nasr. "Accordingly, students need to develop an innovative mindset that includes creativity, critical thinking, flexibility, and complex problem solving."

The LAU Fouad Makhzoumi Innovation Center is the latest among many contributions by the Makhzoumis, who have steadily supported the university's mission and offered guidance to LAU students through internships at their foundation.







## LAU's Writing Center Leaves Its Mark

By Hanan Nasser

**An outreach program to create writing hubs in Lebanon spells success.**

Over the years, the LAU Writing Center has fostered connections with a wide network of high schools and sister universities, as part of an outreach program launched in 2016 in response to a need for writing hubs in Lebanon.

Further cementing LAU's regional leadership role, the center in collaboration with the Middle East-North Africa Writing Centers Alliance (MENAWCA) held in April the 6th 2019 Biennial Conference,

Resilience through Reconstruction – the first to be hosted in Lebanon – which addressed resilient writing programs, multilingualism, and managing the scope, services and students in writing centers.

Initiatives of this kind comply with the third pillar of the university's Strategic Plan III (SPIII): LAU without Borders.

"Building on SPIII, the aim is to make LAU a major academic powerhouse of local eminence and regional leadership," said the center's director, Paula Abboud Habre. After almost a decade of "serving the LAU community and outreaching to schools and other universities in addition to regional participation, the LAU Writing Center has managed to fulfill that role," added Habre, who co-organized the event with Assistant Director Hala Daouk.

Launched with the help of a small grant from the US embassy, the project has since offered several training workshops on the theoretical and pragmatic elements of writing centers. Five schools across Beirut, the South and Mount Lebanon have since established their own centers, and with enough funding Habre is confident that a second phase will be able to cover schools in the North as well.

Highlighting the impact of writing centers on a community, Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy Ellen Peterson – who was also present at the conference – said the embassy's "support for writing centers aims at helping students and academics across all disciplines so they can integrate concepts from various fields, and thereby maximize the impact of their work."

One outreach success story is Brummana High School (BHS), which established its own center three years ago following training workshops by the LAU Writing Center's team.

Its director Lisette El Hage credits LAU for the school's decision to start a center of its own. "We still collaborate with the LAU Writing Center from time to time," she said, "I send Paula [Habre] feedback, tell her what the students reflect on, what problems we have, and she gives me some insight."

While at the beginning students did not understand the concept, Hage said that with time they came to see the center as a destination for support and feedback.

At the university level, a similar writing center was established at Haigazian by a former LAU tutor, who received training during the 2016 outreach schools project.

In addition to its engagement with the Lebanese community, the LAU Writing Center also serves as a learning space where students train to become tutors – a perfect example of the university's commitment to active learning and student centeredness.

While tutees seek help to improve their work, however, the center's ultimate objective is to help them master the skills to become "independent' writers, which is in line with LAU's strategic plan of making our students 'life-long learners,'" Habre said. The same goes for tutors who, through teaching, are also able to evolve their approach to writing and tutoring.

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*"Building on SPIII, the aim is to make LAU a major academic powerhouse of local eminence and regional leadership."*

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The center has now forged a name for itself and for LAU as agents of change with the recent appointment to MENAWCA's board of Habre as treasurer and Daouk as International Writing Center Alliance representative, and the election of the first LAU peer tutor, Karim Bader (BA '19), for the peer tutor seat in the alliance.

"The idea of bringing in more peer tutors is for the center to have a mix between them and professional tutors as is the case in many writing centers abroad," Habre explained. Enriching cross-university meetings with "peer tutors from sister institutions can be made for them to exchange ideas."

Commending the center's initiative, Provost George E. Nasr said that events such as the MENAWCA's conference that "address current trends, both theoretical and practical, in writing, teaching and learning," fall within the university's commitment to revamp "its liberal arts curriculum to achieve a more resilient curriculum."

# Boosting Local Responses for Refugee Relief

By Raissa Batakji

Along with international universities, CLS is leading the quest to empower local communities in the face of refugee crises.

Understanding the severity of the global refugee crisis may feel unattainable, but one look at the figures may be eye opening. As of June 2019, the United Nations High Commissioners for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates "an unprecedented 70.8 million people" who have been forced from their homes, among whom were "nearly 25.9 million refugees."

In the hope of spreading knowledge and responding to this grave crisis, four prominent Canadian universities – Carleton University (CU), University of Ottawa, McGill and York University – partnered with Oxfam and Care Canada to initiate the plan for a project, the Local Engagement Refugee Research Network (LERRN), which secured seven-year funding by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada in 2018 to the tune of \$2.5 million.

From Carleton University, Associate Professor of Political Science James Milner, explained that 85 percent of refugees in the world are hosted in countries that neighbor refugee-producing states in the "Global South." In contrast, the vast majority of research on refugees comes from Canada, the US, Europe and Australia – the "Global North."

"The idea is to have working groups in four major refugee-hosting countries: Lebanon, Jordan, Kenya and Tanzania," he said, adding that the goal of the research is three-fold: to collaborate with existing universities and civil society groups that are conducting research, to identify refugees' needs and priorities, and to amplify their research to reach a global audience.

In Lebanon, work on refugee issues by the Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS)

at LAU stood out, and contact was established with its director Maha Shuayb. "Our aim is to branch out of the humanitarian relief model and evolve into development work," said Dr. Shuayb, whose experience on refugee issues spans several years. Currently, she is also working on a research grant with the International Development Research Center called RELIEF, which she hopes to combine with LERRN.

By partnering with LERRN, Dr. Shuayb hopes to provide LAU and its graduate students with opportunities not just to work with international researchers, but also to learn from those who have had a longer history dealing with refugee issues. "As we can already tell, in countries like Kenya and Tanzania, the discourse on development is well departed from ours, and we have much to explore."

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*"Our aim is to branch out of the humanitarian relief model and evolve into development work."*

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As she explains, the timeline of this project began by identifying areas of priority, which informed a summer course for graduate students and civil society actors from the four countries – including a handful of graduate students from LAU who are currently majoring in relevant topics.

The first course took place this summer in Kenya, with a plan to rotate among the three other refugee-hosting

countries over the duration of the grant – including potentially Lebanon.

Dr. Milner describes the partnership with Dr. Shuayb and LAU as "exceptional" and hopes that the collaboration between the different partners will serve as "a skeleton for more opportunities to emerge organically from this mutually beneficial relationship."



# Stepping Up to **Combat Pollution**

By Alyce Abi Shdid

Faculty and students work to address the pollution crisis Lebanon faces today.

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*"As an influential member of the community, it is our responsibility to lead the way forward by raising awareness of potential risks and benefits within the limits of the available science that we have."*

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You've seen it. You may have even smelled it. Pollution in Lebanon is a crisis that can no longer be a back-burner topic or a political poker piece – and LAU has jumped in head-first in an effort to responsibly tackle the problem.

The facts are daunting: emissions are increasing with the growing number of vehicles in Lebanon, unregulated factories are polluting rivers and surrounding lands, and waste is an ongoing battle for adequate removal. According to a report by the Lebanese Ministry of Environment and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Lebanon, a master plan for the closure and rehabilitation of dump sites in Lebanon became critical in 2015.

"The solid waste collection and disposal crisis started in July 2015 with the closure of the Naameh Landfill which served the most densely populated regions of Beirut and Mount Lebanon," the report states.

With this reality as a backdrop, LAU has assumed its role not only as a higher education institution, but as a leader in the community for responsible action. The university has homed in on two particular concerns facing Lebanon today: the treatment of industrial wastewater and the use of incinerators for waste removal.

LAU's own Dr. Mahmoud Wazne, associate professor of civil engineering, was recently awarded the prestigious Partnerships for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) grant to further his research on the treatment of industrial wastewater, and the potential use

of the treatment by-product as an alternative energy source.

As part of his ongoing research, Dr. Wazne and his team of LAU graduate students have visited five factories that currently have no effective treatment for their industrial waste or no treatment at all and have collected more than 50 liters of wastewater samples from each factory, and bacteria seed from a wastewater treatment plant in Bkassine. These will be used to feed new experimental bioelectrochemical reactors in an effort to develop a more efficient treatment process for the industrial waste streams produced in the Litani basin.

"With this project," he said, "our students are doing the work, and so they are not only gaining exposure to the problems facing our environment, but they are also becoming part of the solution."

Dr. Wazne's research is being closely followed by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), who also sponsored the PEER grant, as well as the Lebanese Ministry of Water and Power. His work is furthermore part of an integrated collaborative effort with Washington State University (WSU), underscoring the worldwide urgency in protecting the environment.

"Through intensive training and cooperation with the faculty at WSU, our findings will have significance on both the local and global levels," he states.

But when it comes to pollution, LAU confronted the crisis from more than just the technical perspective. When



the Blat municipality, home to LAU's Byblos campus, was approached with the prospect of building a new waste incinerator plant just 600 meters from university grounds, it was LAU faculty, staff, and students who mobilized into action. Aside from the obvious concerns that a plant of this nature would adversely impact campus life and the community, the more global concern was that the technology of the proposed plant would not be adequate enough to mitigate long-term health impacts that are the byproduct of waste treatment sites.

LAU's Dean of Students in Byblos and Assistant Professor of Political Science Makram Ouais was one of the first to spring into action. Leading the committee established to evaluate the proposed plant, Dr. Ouais launched awareness campaigns on both Beirut and Byblos campus. His next step was to bring all parties together in the context of an open forum, where the municipality, the land owner, community groups, local schools, hotels, and the project's engineer would have an opportunity to voice their opinions.

While Dr. Ouais worked the community engagement angle, Dr. Wazne took on an independent study to evaluate the proposed 500-ton per day plant facility's waste treatment technology, which was quickly determined to be inadequate. But LAU's efforts did not stop at simply identifying a potential environmental threat to their community; they reverted back to what LAU does best: educate.

After tense meetings and heated debates, "the School of Engineering and the Dean of Students' Office hosted a lecture on alternative waste treatment options, which was attended by the stakeholders of the Blat community, as well as the Byblos municipality and other interested parties," said Dr. Ouais.

He noted that because of the overwhelming garbage crisis that Lebanon has faced in recent years, municipalities are being encouraged to treat their own waste. "The problem," however, "is that these municipalities may not be aware of the impacts that these facilities pose to their communities." And these impacts are serious. Dr. Khalil Diab, clinical associate professor and program director of Pulmonary Disease Fellowship at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, noted that the health risks that inherently accompany pollution – whether it be caused by industrial waste or the use of garbage incinerators for waste removal – affect everyone, and cannot be ignored.

"The risks associated with any type of pollution are greatest for the youth, elderly, and existing asthmatic patients and those suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)," he said, adding that "the more alarming truth is that increased levels of pollution could potentially lead to new cases of asthma and other pulmonary diseases, including lung cancer."

Dr. Ouais, Dr. Wazne, and Dr. Diab all agreed on the importance of LAU's role

in addressing Lebanon's pollution. And for a crisis that might seem too tough to tackle, LAU is confronting it from all sides.

"As an influential member of the community, it is our responsibility to lead the way forward by raising awareness of potential risks and benefits and to offer, whenever possible, viable and environmentally sustainable solutions within the limits of the available science that we have," said Dr. Ouais.

Dr. Diab echoed this sentiment; "LAU's contribution to a solution to Lebanon's pollution crisis is two-fold: we must not just educate our own students, but also raise awareness in our communities; and we must be active in local associations that provide platforms to make change."



# What Do I Need to Know about Lung Cancer Screening?

By Khalil Diab, MD, ATSF

LAU interventional pulmonologist outlines the benefits and risks of lung cancer screening.



*Dr. Khalil Diab is a clinical associate professor at the Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Pulmonary Diseases & Critical Care Medicine at the LAU Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine. He specializes in interventional pulmonology with a focus on the diagnosis, staging, genomic analysis, and bronchoscopic treatment of lung cancer.*

Lung cancer is the most common cancer in men, the third most common cancer in women, and the leading cause of cancer deaths worldwide. In 2018, there were two million new cases of lung cancer worldwide, accounting for 1.8 million deaths in the same year.

Lebanon has the second highest incidence of lung cancer in males and the highest incidence of lung cancer in females in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in Lebanon after breast and bladder cancer, and its incidence in the country is on the rise. It accounts for 9.2 percent of all newly diagnosed cancer cases in Lebanon with 1,641 new cases diagnosed in 2018. It is also the most common cause of cancer deaths in the country accounting for 1,490 deaths or 16.6 percent of cancer deaths.

The lung cancer five-year survival rate (18.6 percent) is lower than many other common cancers, such as colorectal (64.5 percent), breast (89.6 percent) and prostate (98.2 percent). The five-year survival rate for lung cancer is 56 percent for cases detected when the disease is still localized (within the lungs). However, only 16 percent of lung cancer cases are diagnosed at an early stage. For distant tumors (spread to other organs) the five-year survival rate is only 5 percent. More than half of people with lung cancer die within one year of being diagnosed.

Lung cancer typically presents with chest pain, a cough, shortness of breath, or coughing up of blood. But, by the time the symptoms occur, the cancer is usually at a more advanced stage. Therefore,

it is crucial that it is diagnosed before the symptoms set in. This can be done through screening, which can detect early stage lung cancer so that it may be treated with surgery or other modalities.

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*Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in Lebanon after breast and bladder cancer.*

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Lung cancer screening became standard of care after the results of the National Lung Cancer Screening Trial (NLST) conducted in the US between 2002 and 2009 were published. The trial compared low dose radiation computed tomography scans (LDCT) to chest X-rays in 53,456 participants (26,723 in the low-dose CT group and 26,733 in the radiography group). Based on the results of the NLST, the US Preventative Services Task Force recommended lung cancer screening with LDCT for those with the following risk factors:

- 55-80 years of age
- Current smokers or former smokers who quit less than 15 years ago
- Smokers of at least 30 pack-year (1 pack per day for 30 years or 2 packs per day for 15 years, etc...)
- In good health to undergo lung cancer surgery, which may involve removal of part of the lung (lobectomy) if needed. As people whose lungs are not fit for surgery were not part of the study, it has not been determined whether they would benefit from screening.

An individual is eligible for lung cancer screening



Counseled about benefits and harms of screening and agrees to screening and smoking cessation counseling



Low-dose CT Chest

**No nodule detected (70% of the population)**

- Annual low-dose CT Chest follow-up

**Nodule detected (30% of the population)**

- Majority (96%) require only further imaging follow up and majority classified as benign or non-malignant.
- Minority require biopsies and are diagnosed as lung cancer.



## What are the benefits of lung cancer screening?

### • Reducing death rate from lung cancer

- Without screening, the rate of death from lung cancer is 21 out of every 1,000 people vs 18 out of every 1,000 people with cancer screening.
- This means that with LDCT screening, 3 fewer people will die from lung cancer out of every 1,000 people.
- For every 320 people who are screened, 1 lung cancer death is prevented.

### • Reducing death rate from any cause (not just lung cancer)

- In the absence of lung cancer screening, 75 out of every 1,000 people will die from any cause.
- If 1,000 people are screened once a year with LDCT for 3 years, 70 will die from any cause.
- This means that with LDCT screening, 5 fewer people will die from any cause.

### • Lung cancer screening is as effective as other types of screening

Type of cancer screening <sup>1</sup>		Years of annual screens	Number of cancer deaths prevented <sup>2</sup>
Lung		3	3.1
Colorectal		5	2.8
Breast	Age 60 - 69	10	2.6
	Age 50 - 59	10	0.8

<sup>1</sup> The procedures corresponding to lung, colorectal, and breast cancer screening here are: low-dose CT scan, sigmoidoscopy with fecal occult blood testing, and mammography respectively.

<sup>2</sup> This indicates the number of deaths prevented per 1,000 people screened.



## Are there any harms to lung cancer screening?

### False alarms that lead to unnecessary additional testing

- Out of 1,000 people screened, 356 will have a false alarm.
- 18 of those will undergo invasive procedures for non-malignant disease (biopsies)
- 0.4 will have complications from procedure (bleeding, infection, collapsed lung, etc...)

### Radiation exposure

- LDCT has a lower dose of radiation than a CT chest at 1.4 mSv. However, if there are positive findings

on LDCT that require further follow-up, the patient will be exposed to much higher doses of radiation multiple times.

### Overdiagnosis

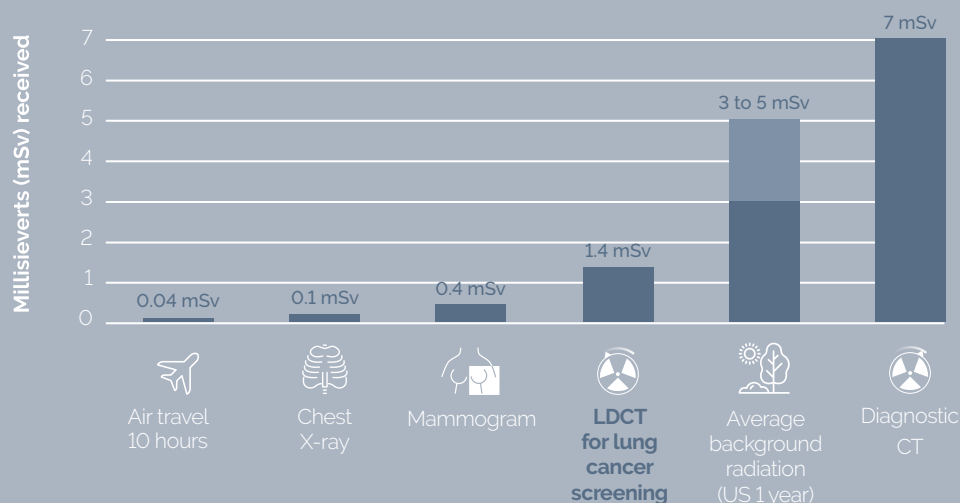
- Finding slow-growing lung cancers that may not have caused symptoms or harmed the patient
- Researchers found that for every 10 lung cancer cases detected via screening, one to two patients are treated for cancer that, in all likelihood, would not have harmed them.

### Findings outside the lungs

- On the CT scan, the radiologist could

find other incidental issues such as an enlarged thyroid gland, or an enlarged aorta that need further investigation. It is not known whether detecting these early would affect one's long-term health.

It is always important to discuss the benefits and risks of lung cancer screening with a physician before undergoing the first low dose radiation scan. Lung cancer screening is not an alternative to quitting smoking. Quitting smoking will decrease the risk of all cancers.



mSv = millisievert, a measure of the amount of radiation absorbed by the body

Source: "Lung Cancer Screening With Low-Dose Computed Tomography (LDCT)" in Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

## Electronic Cigarettes

### What are electronic cigarettes?

They are cartridges of various types that contain nicotine and other substances – which may include formaldehyde – that create the reaction that leads to smoke in the cartridge.

### Are electronic cigarettes as harmful as regular cigarettes?

Preliminary studies are showing that electronic cigarettes cause the same

harm over the short term as regular cigarettes. They can lead to increased asthma symptoms, coughing, and wheezing or whistling sounds in the chest. Because they are relatively new to the market, their long-term harm has not been adequately studied. Research to date indicates that they may pose the same risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) as regular cigarettes, and that they

are associated with a higher risk of cancers than for nonsmokers, although the risk may be lower than smoking regular cigarettes.

### Should I try electronic cigarettes?

If you are not a smoker, you should not try them as they will lead to addiction and to potential harmful effects over the short and long term. If you are a smoker and want to quit, they may be a slightly safer alternative to smoking.

# Ralph Daher: A Passionate and Multitalented LAU Graduate at a Crossroad

By Naseem Ferdowsi

At a turning point in his life with two huge opportunities, Daher embodies the values of resilience, hard work, and ambition that LAU stands for.



Ralph Daher's interest in the medical field began in an unusual fashion: his elementary school's French class.

"I decided on my major back in fifth grade, surprisingly enough, when my classmates and I were learning about medical jargon in French class, and I fell in love with it right away," explains the recent LAU graduate, who earned his BA in Biology in 2019 with High Distinction.

Fast forward more than a decade and Daher now has his chance at a medical profession, with his recent acceptance into LAU's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine on a full merit scholarship.

Yet, with his boundless ambition, Daher has worked hard to make sure he has plenty of options after completing his bachelor's degree, just in case medicine is not his true calling.

"I have also been accepted into the University of Oxford's PhD program in chemical biology, a prospect I never even thought I could achieve this soon," he says.

Explaining the life-changing decision he is now faced with, Daher comments, "This opportunity has turned my life around and created two diverging paths – one of which I will be choosing soon."

At LAU, Daher had found the ideal environment to cultivate his talent and work ethic. He had had his sights set on the university since his first piano concert as a high schooler in the Selina Korban Auditorium in 2013. Enabled by the scholarship he received thanks to the generosity of LAU donors, he made sure to make the most of the top-notch rounded education that the university prioritizes, garnering several accolades.

"In my three years at LAU, I have received several awards including Highest GPA in 2018 and Best Capstone Project in 2019. I also received a grant from the American Chemical Society to

attend their national meeting in Boston," says Daher, who was also very involved in extracurricular activities on campus.

"These, of course, are only rivaled in importance by the amazing friends and connections I have made through my classes, and professors, all of whom I wish to cross paths with in the future."

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*"LAU and all those I met there have built in me the values of loyalty, attention to detail, kindness, and helpfulness; all of which I will be carrying into my future whatever and wherever that will be."*

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As he reflects on his experience at the university, the scholarship, Daher notes, was an added incentive to excel, while upholding high moral principles.

"Aside from easing the financial burden, scholarships have a way of propelling you to move forward and keep up the good work, not only to maintain the scholarship's monetary value, but also its moral value. Scholarships truly carry an intrinsic value of excellence."

Whether Daher decides on LAU or Oxford, the character-building education he received in his undergraduate years, he says, will serve him well in both his personal and professional careers.

"LAU and all those I met there have instilled in me the values of loyalty, attention to detail, kindness, and helpfulness – all of which I will be carrying into my future whatever and wherever that will be."

# From Lebanon to the World

By Chirine Mchantaf

LAU's Beirut campus was transformed into a glamorous dining area, where more than 300 guests basked in the splendors of the university's first Award Ceremony and Gala Dinner in honor of distinguished leaders in hospitality.

Themed From Lebanon to the World, the event honored 12 of Lebanon's hospitality leaders who have significantly impacted the business, in the presence of hotel and restaurants owners and executives from the entertainment industry alongside LAU's faculty and staff.

The occasion also showcased the skills and high standards of students from LAU's robust 20-year-old hospitality and tourism management program.

"We take pride in recognizing and honoring role models in our society who contribute to the well-being of our culture despite all the problems it's facing," LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra said in his welcome speech. "Through them, we gain optimism and a ray of hope."

In addition to paying tribute to the distinguished guests, the event aimed to engage hospitality and tourism management students at the Adnan Kassar School of Business (AKSOB)

with the hospitality community. Hence, and as part of their senior project, they were in charge of the organization, catering and servicing.

"As faculty members, we are being innovative to ensure that our students are active learners rather than passive apprentices in the classroom," Dr. Jabbra remarked. "This helps them create jobs instead of look for ones."

That said, "we decided to call for a revolution in higher education with respect to our curriculum and made sure that we are constantly providing our students with a great degree of creativity."

Underlining the importance of LAU's recently established innovation center on both the academic and entrepreneurial levels, Dr. Jabbra acknowledged Phoenicia's generous donation toward a hospitality lab in Beirut.

Together with the Hospitality and Tourism Management Program, "the school has been greatly thinking of introducing another graduate degree in event management," announced AKSOB's Dean Wassim Shahin in his address.

The program is also in the process of acquiring the Accreditation Commission

for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA). "The work has effectively begun in the presence of the prestigious organization here today," Dr. Shahin said.

For Associate Professor and Associate Chair of Hospitality and Tourism Management Rania El Haddad, the students made all this possible.

"Here at LAU, the students acquired the right knowledge and attitude while building the foundations that will help them become the future leaders of the hospitality industry," she said. "We could not have done it without them."

She also specially thanked AKSOB Instructor Bassem Slim, Hospitality Lab Supervisor Georges Tamer, Chef Ibrahim Haddad, and Senior Executive Assistant Faten Dabboussi. At the end of the ceremony, the scholars honored Dr. Jabbra in a kind gesture of appreciation and recognition for all his contributions that reshaped LAU into a premiere institution.

"For 15 years, Dr. Jabbra gave all he has learned to our university and country, pushing LAU forward as a spearhead to success and innovation," concluded senior student and president of LAU's Hospitality Club Johnny Salamani.



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*"We take pride in recognizing and honoring role models in our society who contribute to the well-being of our culture despite all the problems it's facing."*

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## Honorees

President of the Lebanese Hotel Federation for Tourism Industries Pierre Achkar

Founder of Audi Catering Nicolas Audi

CEO and Founder of Patchi Chocolates Nizar Choucair

Owner of Hospitality News Services Nouhad Dammous

President of Jounieh Festival Zena Frem

Owner of The Bridge Andreas Iliovits

Co-owners of MINE Wedding and Events Pamela Mehanna and Ramzi Mattar

CEO of Nakhal Travel Elie Nakhal

President of the Syndicate of Owners of Restaurants, Cafés, Night-Clubs & Pastries, Tony Ramy

Owners of Phoenicia Hotel Mazen Najib Salha and Marwan Najib Salha



# Ever-Growing Simulation Programs Shape Youth Development

By Raissa Batakji

The MUN, MAL and MEU have been a powerhouse of pedagogical, cognitive and leadership progress.



A staple of student leadership across the country, LAU's simulation programs have grown exponentially since 2005. They are led by the university's Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) Department, which is gearing up to add one more this year: The Model African Union (MAU).

At the end of spring 2019, OCE recognized the top delegates from the Model United Nations (MUN), Model Arab League (MAL) and Model European Union (MEU), at a special ceremony on Beirut campus.

Assistant Vice President for OCE Elie Samia declared that "we have built bridges for optimism, connection, and diplomacy, from Sidon, to Beirut and Byblos and all the way to New York City."

Samia further commended the middle – and high-school delegates for well-earned 569 awards as well as 212 university scholarships throughout the academic year. He called on them to embrace the age of "SMAC: that is, you becoming Social, Mobile, Analytic and Cloud – meaning digitally connected."

Each of the three secretary generals touched base about the collective efforts it took to reap success, and recognized members of their secretariat and student awardees for their hard work.

The program with the highest reach, and the biggest MUN cohort worldwide, Global Classrooms LAU MUN trained 3,300 students this year on both campuses under the slogan "We Believe in YOU(TH)." Secretary General Alec Hagopian thanked advisors for "having faith in student leadership," and affirmed that for a program that "loves to fall in love with problems, it has inspired students to come out with innovative solutions of their own."

For MAL, the theme for the year was Reviving Arab Leadership and has included 1,300 students who trained at LAU Beirut and the LAU Outreach and Leadership Academy (OLA) in Sidon. Secretary General and LAU alumna Maya Makarem (BS '19) spoke in Arabic in line with the program's call for preserving the Arab identity. She dubbed the simulation programs "a school

of thought" that leaves a mark of civic responsibility on each of its veterans, who turn the lessons they've learned into life-long convictions.

As for MEU Director General and industrial engineering major Mohamad Ali Kalassina, every single region in Lebanon has potential to become "a standard for diplomacy, an example for democracy, a hub for diversity, and a stage for development." This year, MEU ran its training in both English and French across both campuses and trained 500 delegates.

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*"We have built bridges for optimism, connection, and diplomacy, from Sidon, to Beirut and Byblos and all the way to New York City."*

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LAU Model United Nations	LAU Model European Union	LAU Model Arab League
<b>200</b> <i>Schools</i>	<b>60</b> <i>Schools</i>	<b>112</b> <i>Schools</i>
<b>300</b> <i>Trainers</i>	<b>60</b> <i>Trainers</i>	<b>120</b> <i>Trainers</i>
<b>3,300</b> <i>Delegates</i>	<b>500</b> <i>Delegates</i>	<b>1,300</b> <i>Delegates</i>







## LAU Nurses Tend to their Profession

By Dana K. Haffar

ARCSON students  
prepare to contribute  
to the advancement  
of nursing and healthcare  
in the country.

Lebanon's healthcare system is suffering from a great shortage in nurses and a disproportionate patient-nurse ratio, placing a significant burden on those who choose to remain in the profession.

Understaffing, however, is not so much due to the lack of graduate nurses as it is to poor retention. Low wages, long hours and a lack of prospects are driving nurses away from hospitals and medical centers, with some even choosing to emigrate.

To reverse the downward slide, an advocacy strategy is required so that nurses can take matters into their own hands, increase their visibility and become part of the decision-making process at the legislative level. For this reason, LAU's Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing (ARCSON) ensures that its students are well-informed about the economics, policies, and regulations surrounding healthcare in Lebanon, and how they – as nurses – may best serve their profession and its advancement.

In their senior year, nursing students learn to examine the structure, function, and effectiveness of services across all levels, and to recognize the importance of accountability for their own actions, among other outcomes, says Associate Professor and Associate Dean Myrna Abadallah-Doumit.

As this knowledge is best gained first-hand, Dr. Doumit – who is also the President of the Order of Nurses in Lebanon (ONL) – accompanied her students on informative visits to the ONL, the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and Parliament, during which they explored their potential role in each institution, the advantages of joining ONL, and laws and regulations set by the MoPH.

They also got to raise health and career issues and learn about the progress made in increasing the visibility of nurses and securing the benefits they deserve.

Through these visits, said Dr. Doumit, students learn to "Evaluate the influence



of policy, regulation, and economics on the delivery of healthcare to individual, families, communities, and populations," and to hone their skills in preparing and posing questions in public – "leadership skills that we would like to instill in our students."

The experience was an eye-opener for the future nurses who were encouraged by the strides that ONL is making on behalf of their community, through its "strategic goals to protect them, advance the profession, and enhance the nursing image," said senior student Meghry Kevork.

While advocating for the nurses' rights, the order's committees are in effect redressing the misconception in Lebanese society that nurses do not matter as much as other healthcare professionals and are not entitled to benefits, added student Rayan Al Orfali. For her peer, Sylvia Seraydarian, this change in society's perception of nurses "may be the main source of resolving the problems that the profession is facing," as a clear definition of the job might attract more students to choose nursing for a career.

Against their expectations, the students were pleased to learn that they had an essential role to play at the MoPH, where they discussed the healthcare

system in Lebanon with key people from various departments.

When it came to regulations and economics, the students took the opportunity to enquire about the MoPH's monitoring programs for vaccinations, support programs for mental health, measures to prevent or stave off noncommunicable diseases, and plans to resolve the garbage issue and enforce non-smoking in designated areas.

"We learned, for instance, that Lebanon has been a polio-free country since 2002, because of vaccination and proper hygiene," said Kevork," and that primary healthcare centers also carry out community-based work through home visits and awareness campaigns."

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*While the nursing profession is undergoing many changes at the legislative level, there is still room for improvement which the nurses, themselves, need to realize.*

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The meeting with Deputy and Head of the Health Committee at Parliament Assem Araj stood out the most for Al Orfali and her peers. "At parliament, we felt that we can actually make a change," she said, and "I personally learned from this visit that, contrary to what we Lebanese tend to think, parliament does put in work for the sake of Lebanon."

While the nursing profession is undergoing many changes at the legislative level, there is still room for improvement which the nurses, themselves, need to realize. Critical issues that need to be addressed are salaries and adjusting the nurse-to-patient ratio to ease the burden borne by the healthcare providers.

"Nurses should be there with the authorities at the decision-making table and should make sure that no decision in healthcare is made without them," said Kevork, "because, at the end of the day, they are the heartbeat of every healthcare institution."

This is precisely what ARCSON aspires for – that its students not only grow into excellent healthcare providers, but also bold speakers and active participants in advancing health and patient care.



## Young Designers in Play Mode

By Raissa Batakji

A new cohort of 13 fashion design graduates put their talent to play, producing a fashion show that attested to the program's success, and the power of collaboration with ELIE SAAB and London College of Fashion (LCF).

In late June, fashion designers, reporters, influencers, and alumni as well as university leadership, faculty and staff all flocked to the vibrant scene at La Magnanerie to attend Play, the theme of the program's third graduate fashion show. From the personal to the extravagant, LAU's young designers mixed colors and materials, crossed gender lines, paid tribute to icons and muses and created entire outfits – including accessories, shoes and bags – from scratch. "A year in the making," as Chair of the Department of Art and Design Randa Abdel Baki noted, the show is a culmination of the students' own efforts, including "versatile research, conceptualizing, planning and executing photoshoots, and building their very own brand."

Providing background on the theme, Program Coordinator Jason Steel pointed out how difficult it is for designers to build their individual creations without copying others. "Play comes when you reflect inwards and experiment with untapped ideas," and that is precisely what students had to do. Ultimately, he said, "they really defined what fashion practice could be."

Abdel Baki shared LAU's adamance to grow the program further. "We have international speakers come in every semester, as well as jury members from LCF," she explained, adding that alongside local and international influences, students gain invaluable feedback and encouragement. Next year, the program will introduce an International Studio – a 3-credit course – designed to expand students' exposure to global trends, and which will help them gain international experience.

Commenting on the program, world-renowned designer and Honorary Chair of the program Elie Saab expressed his pride in how "this experiment has

matured," and how "the students' sense of responsibility and search for their creative personas have become ever more pronounced."

In a short period of time, underlined Dean of the School of Architecture and Design Elie Haddad, the program "has taken a major leap, in a highly competitive market, to become a reference in design education in Lebanon and the region."

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*"From the personal to the extravagant, these young designers mixed colors and materials, crossed gender lines, paid tribute to icons and muses and created outfits from scratch."*

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**Therese Raffoul**  
Excellence and Craftsmanship Award

In *Perversions of Quiet Girls*, Raffoul explored what oppressed women throughout the history of the region would have looked like in our world today, had their voices not been silenced.

**Jihane Semrani**  
Concept and Portfolio Award

In *O'stora*, Semrani was inspired by the formation of pearls from grains of sand into displaced entities. She drew a connection between them and Lebanese immigrants, who transform themselves and go on to shine internationally.

**Jana Abou Zahra**  
Prix du Jury

In *Depersonalized*, Abou Zahra delved into the struggle of losing control of time and direction, and falling out of touch with reality.









# Is Lebanon Heading Toward Economic Collapse?

By Chirine Mchantaf

A critical yet slightly hopeful prospect on shaping Lebanon's roadmap for economic recovery.

Treading an unsustainable path, Lebanon is struggling to retain the economic resilience that once helped it achieve buoyant growth. The last 30 years of mismanagement of public resources and the adoption of poorly designed public policies have led to a challenging public finances situation that has left the country on the brink of economic collapse.

Undeniably, Lebanon's economic situation is increasingly alarming. The recent trends of slowing deposit inflows – coupled with constant political quarrels – indicate that Lebanon's historical economic model may no longer be sustainable.

Ranking fifth globally in indebtedness, the country now has one of the biggest debts to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio. Public debt stands today at 150 percent of the country's GDP while interest rates and financial market volatility have risen.

All this leaves Lebanon in a "multidimensional and structural crisis permeating the economic fabric at all levels," says Dr. Ghassan Dibeh, LAU professor and chair of the Department of Economics at the Adnan Kassab School of Business (AKSOB).

Although the central bank of Lebanon still has enough foreign currencies reserve

to defend the peg for a few more years, holding the currency peg to the US dollar "will become an unattainable proposition if the budget deficit is not reduced significantly and public debt not put under control," says Dr. Walid Marrouch, assistant dean of Graduate Studies & Research and associate professor of economics at AKSOB.

While the fiscal deficit was expected to reach double digits in 2018 – in a scenario that highly pushed the public debt – the significant narrowing of the deficit in the first quarter of 2019 is a positive development for the Lebanese economy.

According to Byblos Bank's weekly report *Lebanon This Week* (Issue 593), global investment bank Morgan Stanley noted in a recent paper that a "significant recovery in deposits would strengthen the banks' ability to roll over sovereign debt, while successful fiscal consolidation would reduce the government's funding needs."

It also noted that fiscal deficit narrowed by 28 percent year-on-year to \$1.4 billion, in the first four months of 2019, "which is equivalent to a deficit of nearly 7.5 percent of gross domestic product on an annualized basis."

The report, overall, takes a positive view on the fiscal, banking and yield curve in the first quarter of 2019.

For Dr. Dibeh, the increased financialization of the economy with ever-increasing fragility due to high public and private debts, high interest rates and balance of payments stop-go dynamics make the current crisis more difficult to tackle and solve.

"Lebanon has likely never experienced the convergence of several economic

dislocations including a secular stagnation of the economy, a rise in unemployment and a dominance of low productivity sectors," he explains.

Although the CEDRE loans – reported to be more than \$11 billion in aid – will increase the total debt and its share in foreign currency, the "Vision for Stabilization, Growth and Employment" adopted by the government during the Paris conference promises to reduce public debt.

As reported by the European Commission, the reform program is set to decrease the budget deficit by one percentage point of GDP per year over five years.

Over and above that, a possible drop in remittances could worsen the banks' ability to continue financing the public debt. Nonetheless, the World Bank Development Indicators show that remittances from Lebanese diaspora are still high and had increased by around 2 percent in 2018 (to reach \$72 billion) – a component that can "play a vital role in boosting the consumption and secure foreign currency in the economy," argues Dr. Ali Fakih, associate professor and associate chair of the Department of Economics at AKSOB.

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*"If used properly, investments in essential public infrastructure can boost long-run economic growth prospects."*

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What makes the situation slightly more critical is the fact that around 80 percent of the government's budget is currently spent on unproductive expenditures consisting of debt servicing and wages. Such a situation "leaves very little room for a proper fiscal policy that boosts growth and reduces unemployment," states Dr. Marrouch, but "if used properly, investments in essential public infrastructure can boost long-run economic growth prospects."

On the upside, tourism, which took a substantial shock during the Syrian conflict, weighing heavily on Lebanon's economic and social fabric, has shown a remarkable recovery this year with the numbers of tourists holding steady and slightly increasing in 2019.

This sector, the three professors maintain, remains a crucial contributor to economic growth and stands robust to

the political instability engendered by the Syrian crisis. As reported in a latest study entitled "Tourism-growth nexus under duress: Lebanon during the Syrian crisis," conducted by Dr. Dibeh, Dr. Fakh and Dr. Marrouch, "policymakers should focus on investing in infrastructure and other tourism-related facilities that are crucial to the future expansion of the industry."

In this context, Dr. Fakh stresses that the tourism sector is gradually growing from one year to the next, whereas the decent amount of money spent by the Lebanese expats on visits to their home country "helps recompensate the low spending on consumption."

What about the oil sector? The discovery of oil or gas in the country has left experts wondering about its pros and cons, and whether it will eventually boost job creation in the market.

"These new jobs will contribute to reducing the unemployment rate especially among the educated youth; a mechanism that is expected to create more economic growth in the long-run," Dr. Fakh projects. He adds that policymakers will protect this sector from corruption to avoid "a sort of social exclusion and the employment of unqualified people."

Dr. Marrouch disagrees, as the prospects for oil exploration and production are still many years away, he says; "yet, a number of Lebanese politicians are acting as if the oil windfall is a certainty while avoiding much needed structural reforms".

## Promoting Growth

Though the economic growth has long been sluggish, the way out of this predicament is to promote growth by investing in public infrastructure instead of increasing the public sector's wage bill as was the case most recently in 2017.

"This can happen through investing in ports, airport, roads, railways and the internet," says Dr. Marrouch.

Other ways to boost development include introducing competition to monopolistic markets, breaking down cartels and oligopolistic markets and reducing barriers to doing business both for Lebanese and foreign investors.

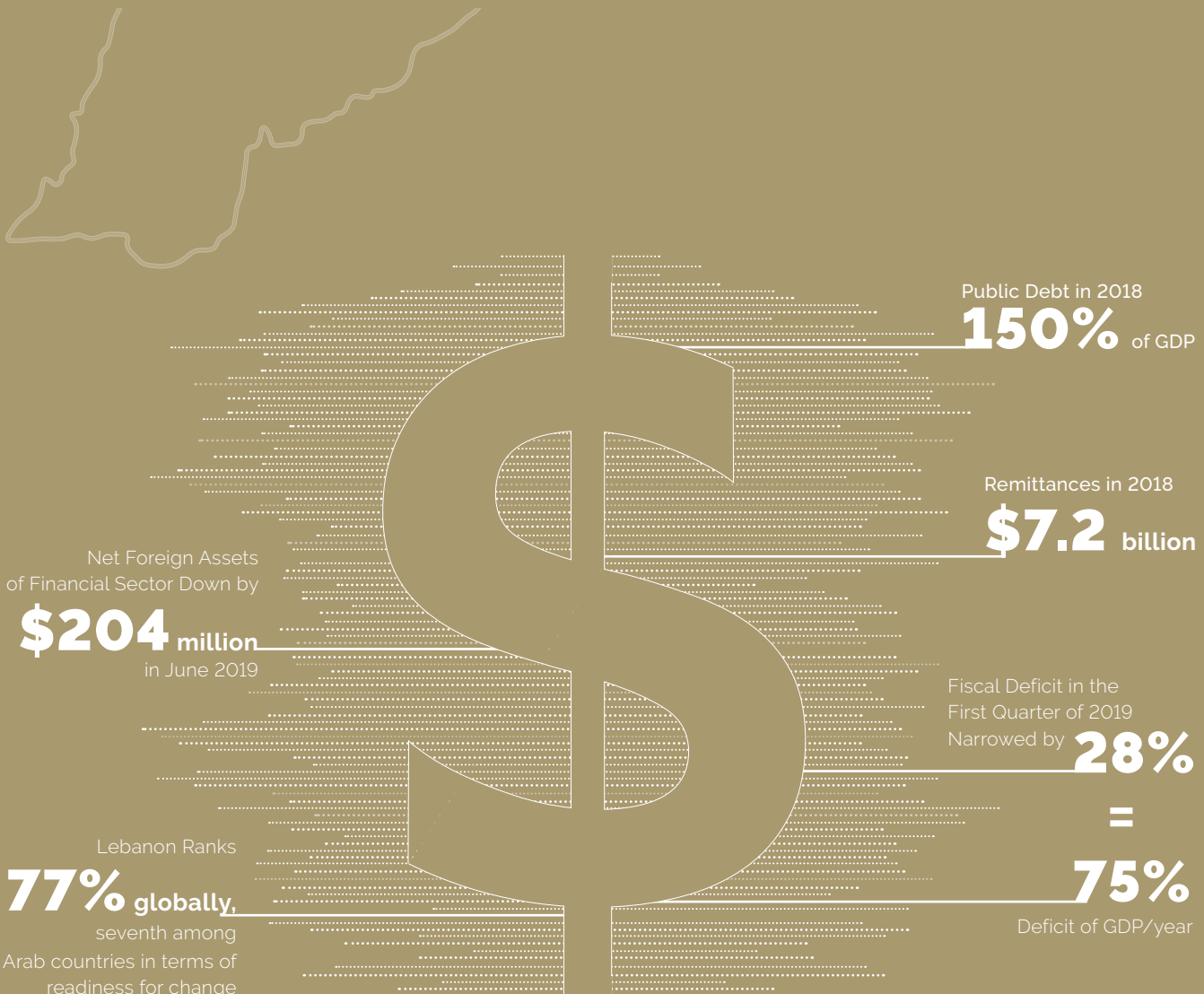
However, these measures can only be effective when reforms materialize, mainly in the public policy. "That is, long-run financial solutions require important reforms in the political system in order to deliver efficient economic outcomes," Dr. Fakih concludes.

According to Dr. Dibeh, a radical change is what's needed the most.

"We have to decide whether we want to keep doing what we are doing and have been doing for the past 25 years or whether we want to chart a new course," he says. "If the latter, we have to take all necessary measures to build a productive

economy, a modern secular political system and a fairer society."

Lebanon's financial problems are undoubtedly significant, but possible courses of action are available. These will require a political decision and a consensus among policymakers to help avoid the bitter cup and ensure a transition from an era of economic worries to a gradual containment of risks, a prerequisite for real economic recovery at large.



# Festival Next Celebrates Lebanon's Greats

By Hanan Nasser

Nidal Al Achkar honoring ceremony  
opens the Communication Arts  
annual festival.

Bedecked in her signature abaya, the grande dame of Lebanese theater Nidal Al Achkar breezed into a packed Irwin auditorium, greeting familiar faces and embracing friends as she made her way to the front row for the opening ceremony of the 2019 Nidal Al Achkar Festival Next.

The evening inaugurated the Communication Arts Department's annual festival – an evolution of LAU's Theater Festival launched in 1998 – replete with workshops, screenings and concerts.

Introduced by Chairperson Jad Melki as "an innovator and a pioneer, whose life reflects the spirit of LAU's motto: to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield,"

the actress/director – a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts in London – steered the theater movement in both Lebanon and the wider Arab world.

She founded the Beirut Theater Workshop in 1966, a period some call Lebanon's Golden Age. By the mid-1980s, she had established the Arab Actors Theater Company in Amman, Jordan, following the outbreak of the civil war in Lebanon. She also founded Al Madina Theater in 1994, which was redeveloped into the Al Madina Theater Association for Art and Culture in 2005.

"A cultural provocateur," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, Al Achkar



"shook up and provoked Lebanese society. She tried and succeeded in bringing down Lebanese theater from its level of elitism and made it accessible to everyone."

The scale of her contribution to the stage was manifested by the presence of Minister of Culture Mohammed Daoud Daoud, MP Rola Tabsh, foreign ambassadors and dignitaries, Board of Trustees Chairman Peter Tanous, and a host of deans and faculty members in the audience.

The tradition of paying tribute to important Lebanese cultural figures was initiated years ago by the Public Relations and Media Office. Since then, a number of impactful figures, including poets and artists, have been honored.

The collaboration with Festival Next started in 2018 with the honoring ceremony of Lebanese ballet dancer Georgette Gebara, and continued this year with Al Achkar.

"The significance of this initiative is to introduce these prominent cultural figures to the students. There are many among the young generation who do not know who these people are and are not familiar with their work," said Nada Torbey, the head of the PR and Media Unit of the Strategic Communications Department.

"Second, we are inviting to LAU all the eminent personalities from the cultural scene to attend the event, giving them the opportunity to witness first-hand the talent, skillsets and capabilities of LAU's students," she added.

In a fitting tribute to Al Achkar, a 20-minute film written and directed by LAU Assistant Professor of Film Sabine El Chamaa in collaboration with Associate Professor of Theater Lina Abyad and Al Achkar herself was screened, followed by a short play written and directed by Festival Next coordinator and LAU alumnus Awad Awad (BA '16) and Assistant Professor of Music Amr Selim.

The performers, who included students from LAU and other universities, in addition

to professionals such as Lebanese actress Bernadette Hodeib, re-enacted scenes from Al Achkar's personal anecdotes, before ushering her onto the stage and showering her with rose petals.

"I have never once thought about living in another land," Al Achkar told the crowd. "I hope never to leave this world before I drink from the Litani River, travel by train to Arab capitals, see free admission at hospitals and schools, and a library for all, and for streets to be named after Arab poets and literary figures."

The 2019 Nidal Al Achkar Festival Next turned out as impressive as its eponym.

Highlights included a captivating homage to the Rahbani Brothers in a concert led by Senior Music Instructor Joseph Khalife and a rerun of *The Rite of Spring*, a 1913 ballet by Russian Composer Igor Stravinsky, under the artistic direction of Assistant Professor of Music Seba Ali.

An intense and frantic 50-Hour Film Competition challenged eight teams to write, edit and produce a film in a little more than two days. LAU alumna Christy Samaha (BA '17) and USEK alumna Malak Abdo won the Best Picture Award for their film *Beit El Menjel*. Samaha and Abdo will have the chance to produce another film over the summer using the department's equipment.

As the festival is also an occasion for the department to honor one of its own, this year's Communication Arts Alumni Award went to alumna Maya Mikdashi (BA '00).

On receiving the award, the assistant professor at the Department of Women and Gender Studies and lecturer in Middle East studies at Rutgers University, remarked that universities were "laboratories of intellectual, political, social and emotional experimentation. We learn life and professional skills here, and those are often the same thing."

Thanks to the dozens of students, alumni and faculty who worked on it, Festival Next has become a staple of the department's motto to reinvent communication, as it moves forward in promoting interdisciplinary education.

And reinvent, it certainly did.

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*"An innovator and a pioneer, whose life reflects the spirit of LAU's motto: to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield."*

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# Trailblazing Engineers Showcase their Work

By Raissa Batakji

LEW'19 celebrates young engineers and their latest work.



In what has become a School of Engineering (SOE) tradition, one highlight of the spring semester was the fourth annual LAU Engineering Week (LEW '19).

From lectures on data science and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to medical informatics and the results of a collaboration with the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine, the week of events drew industry experts, faculty, students, alumni and public figures.

At the opening event SOE Interim Dean Raymond Ghajar lauded the synergy between the school's students and their mentors, saying that he hoped it will lead to "yet more groundbreaking achievements" at the school.

The academic importance of non-classroom events such as LEW '19 cannot be overestimated, said Interim Assistant Dean Joe Tekli. "Engineering education is not only about coursework or lab work, but also about engaging with others: successful engineers, distinguished alumni, experts from the industry and professional leaders."

Such exchanges, he added, "are what our graduates will most likely remember from LAU after graduating, and we are working hard to make sure they have the best of such memories at the SOE."

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has long captivated SOE students and graduates, many of whom went on to specialize in or

research solutions that could be realized with AI. Some came back to campus to speak about their work on Pioneers' Day of LEW '19.

Thanks to an agreement between LAU and BMW, cohorts of engineering students have been interning at the Bavarian giant's headquarters in Munich every year. Two interns, computer engineering students Clara Akiki and Joseph Attieh connected live from Germany to present a joint project in which they used AI neural networks to identify handwritten letters.

As part of his internship, Attieh also mentioned another assignment he was working on, "helping the After-Sales Department at BMW Group derive sentiments from feedback we've received from customers." The project, he said, was initiated by a previous group of LAU interns.

Yet another AI-related project is being conducted by award-winning researcher and graduate student Rayana Jaafar that proposes a solution for indoor robot positioning using machine learning. With plans to pursue an academic career in engineering, Jaafar shared valuable advice with students who are considering the same path: "Keep your opportunities open to multiple areas of specialty as it will give you an edge in a competitive market"

Away from AI but equally innovative, Hussein Basma's (BE '16) PhD thesis

at Mines ParisTech treats electric mobility in public transportation. The mechanical engineering graduate, who has been collaborating with SOE Associate Professor Charbel Mansour on the research, remarked that "the results of testing electrified vehicles in Lebanon turned out to be better than the already optimistic forecasts."

Not surprisingly, presentations on Pioneers' Day seemed to draw inspiration from day-to-day struggles for students and alumni alike.

Civil engineering graduate Michel Khalil (BE '18), for instance, is determined to relieve traffic on the Nahr El Mot Highway interchange, and a collaboration between alumni Ibrahim Ezzeddine (BE '16) and Basel Jalaalddine (BE '16) since their LAU days sprang from the need to teach robotics to school students.

Upon graduation, they devised an online platform that does just that, after securing the funds from an accelerator at Beirut Digital District. Reflecting on their time at LAU, the duo agreed that it was the multiple opportunities for internships along with their passion to "create things" that led to their success.

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*"Exchanges with successful engineers, distinguished alumni, experts from the industry and professional leaders are what our graduates will most likely remember from LAU after graduating."*

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# Student Centeredness at its Best

By Hanan Nasser

Academic Success Center serves students  
beyond its purpose for tutors and tutees alike.

Every semester, the Academic Success Center caters to more than 1,000 students to help them achieve their full academic potential. The center has been running since 2015, providing more than 100 walk-in and group tutoring sessions that cover a myriad of subjects from education to math and accounting, among others.

The driving force behind the initiative, Directors of Student Services Zeina Trad and Aya El Mir – in Byblos and Beirut respectively – explained that the center was set up to respond to students' distinct learning needs. "The tutoring service is one example of the university's student support vehicles which drives home its mission of being a student-centered institution," declared Trad.

El Mir explained how the process plays out: "Run in close coordination with the various schools and departments, ASC assesses the needs of students in

certain courses and asks the course's instructor or department chair to nominate an academically excelling student to assist his or her peers." She also underlined how the unique dynamic of students being tutored by their peers removes the formality of a classroom setting.

From the tutees' perspective, computer engineering undergrad Rami Kanj said that his tutor helped him better understand the material at hand and improved his performance in exams and assignments, while mechatronics engineering student Ali Mezher said the sessions provided "a completely new perspective that helped in better overcoming the harder parts of the course."

From the tutors' standpoint, tutoring helped them gain teaching experience, enhance their soft skills, and deepen their own knowledge of the subject matter. For alumnus Hussein Basma (BE '16) tutoring

was also a way of giving back to his alma mater. "I felt that this experience was my opportunity to say thank you to the university for its continuous and generous financial aid."

Through its service, the ASC is ultimately fostering team spirit and promoting camaraderie among students, whereby tutors and tutees have become a source of inspiration and encouragement for one another.

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*"The unique dynamic of students being tutored by their peers removes the formality of a classroom setting."*

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# A History of Triumphs

Since its inception as the first regular girls' school in Syria, LAU's journey has been one that may read like an obstacle course of challenges and triumphs, now captured in a commemorative book due out next spring 2020.

Compiled from archives, interviews, testimonies and anecdotes of alumni, and faculty and staff – both former and current – the book traces the university's evolution from the American Junior College for Women (AJCW) through Beirut College for Women (BCW) and Beirut University College (BUC) to the LAU of today.

The below excerpts are sneak previews from the book, illustrating LAU's resilience through its long history.

## 1834

### Educating Women?

Presbyterian missionaries Eli Smith and his wife, Sarah Huntington Smith, take on a project that some had feared may be doomed. A year before the pair disembarked in Beirut, prevailing strong prejudice against female education and the perception of missionaries as "religious heretics" had confined a bold attempt to educate young girls to no more than two-hour lessons a day in the mission house.



## 1927

### AJCW Receives Unlikely Support

"In her correspondence with her family in the United States, AJCW's first president Frances Irwin, explains that the [Syrial] Mission gave its unwavering support to the budding college in its second year of existence by overwhelmingly voting to separate AJCW from the school and moving it to a new location in Ras Beirut, thus officially recognizing the college as its own entity. 'I wouldn't have been awfully surprised if they had decided to drop the whole thing in view of the condition of the country, the few girls interested etc. But they didn't.'"



## 1930-40

### Roots of Social Service

The first social work program gave AJCW students the chance to cater to the educational and health needs of deprived villages in remote areas across the country. The five-to six-week camp meant that students – all women – lived in tents that were set up in the vicinity of those villages over the summer.

"When the Village Welfare Camp was temporarily suspended during World War II, the Social Service Committee voted in 1940 to establish an educational center for children in the college's backyard, which became a permanent element of the college's social service work to serve underprivileged families in the neighborhood."



## 1975-81

### How the Show Went On

Street battles, sudden mortar bombardments and faculty and staff kidnappings were the everyday reality of the Lebanese civil war. Yet, faculty and staff pulled together and kept campus gates open, reversed enrollment numbers, replaced foreign faculty and sought external sources of financial aid. Perhaps the most telling resilient sentiment on campus was that of the communication arts faculty, staff and students. "Except for one semester in 1976, productions continued unabated. During the war we survived through theater. We were here until two, three and four o'clock in the morning, building sets and rehearsing, nothing stopped us. With or without electricity we worked to protest the war."



## 1982-86

### Refugees Welcome

Following the Israeli invasion, BUC not only stayed open, but it also welcomed refugees. Approximately 700 people, mostly children, from the immediate surroundings in Beirut and from as far as South Lebanon took shelter on campus. "What is remarkable about the institution's coping with the war is not only its ability to survive as much as its ability to innovate under such circumstances." Notwithstanding the difficult circumstances, a pioneering Dual Degree program was launched: undergraduates who had completed three years at BUC could continue their studies for two additional years at a partner university in the United States and receive BS degrees from both institutions.

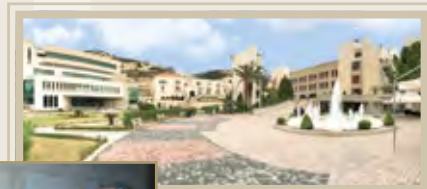




## 1988-91

### Facing Resistance with Byblos Expansion

As the war raged on, access to Beirut campus from the eastern side of town became a growing challenge to students, faculty and staff. In fact, the president himself had no choice but to relocate from his residence in Orme Gray to his hometown of Munsif. Despite some opposition to the university's expansion, the establishment of two consecutive temporary branches in Louaizeh and Amchit, and countless setbacks, the new Byblos campus was finally opened in the fall of 1991.



## 2008-14

### The Complexities Behind the Health Complex

In a country with several medical schools, the establishment of one more – let alone a health complex to house schools of medicine, nursing and pharmacy as well as a university medical center – was no easy task and one that continues to exemplify LAU's resilience. "Besides undertaking tremendous infrastructural work in the renovation of a working hospital, likened to 'fixing an engine of a car while running,' LAU launched a major study to strengthen the hospital's human resources by both hiring top-notch physicians from the US and Europe while retaining as many of the hospital's staff as possible."



# Inaugural Jr. NBA League Elevates Young Talents

By Raissa Batakji

LAU introduces world-renowned league to Lebanon and the region.



An exciting new partnership between the National Basketball Association (NBA) and LAU brought the Jr. NBA – a competitive championship for boys and girls under the age of 14 – to Lebanon, marking the first collaboration between the league and an educational institution in the region.

Running through May and June, the competition featured 30 school teams, each simulating a team from the NBA, who faced off at an eight-game season, culminating in single-game elimination playoffs. The champions were from Collège Maristes Champville, whose

team simulated the Milwaukee Bucks, while that of Lycée Abdel Kader, simulating the Denver Nuggets, came in second.

Fashioned on the NBA – complete with branded jerseys and representatives in attendance – the league was set up to inspire and engage more young people to participate in basketball through a fun, positive first experience, according to Athletics Director on Byblos campus Joe Moujaes, who orchestrated the partnership.

In a separate commentary, NBA Associate Vice President of Basketball Operations for Europe and Middle East Neal Meyer said: "We are excited to work

with LAU to launch the first Jr. NBA League in the country." He noted Lebanon's "strong tradition in basketball" and hoped that the league will allow young Lebanese to take their talent to the next level in basketball.

Talent scouts from the NBA, in fact, did attend the final playoffs and according to Moujaes, saw "so much potential in young Lebanese players that they offered to be yet more involved on the ground for next year's edition." He further announced that plans were in place to add a qualifier round in next year's league plans to accommodate the high demand for more school participation.





## Let's Extend Them a Lifeline

Due to our country's financial crisis, a rapidly increasing number of our current and prospective students are at risk of having to forgo their education.

In response, LAU has allocated one-third of its operating budget in fall 2019 to financial aid, benefitting more than half of our student body. But additional funding is urgently needed to take these efforts to completion.

We count on your support to extend a lifeline to as many families as possible.

The fund will be immediately deployed, so that academically strong but financially vulnerable students don't lose their academic year and their chance at becoming the outstanding professionals that our country desperately needs.

**Thank you for supporting Lebanon's youth.**

*The future of  
Lebanon's greatest  
asset is at stake*



Visit [giving.lau.edu.lb/emergency-faid](https://giving.lau.edu.lb/emergency-faid) to make a gift now.



# Pharmacy – More than Meets the Eye

By Imad F. Btaiche, BS Pharm, PharmD, BCNSP

One profession,  
one white coat, but  
myriad tracks and  
responsibilities.



*Dr. Imad F. Btaiche is Professor and Dean of the School of Pharmacy and Chair of LAU's Interprofessional Education Program (IPE).*

The pharmacy profession is deeply entrenched in the life sciences as it involves the application of science, practice and art. It provides countless career pathways with a variety of engaging responsibilities.

Pharmacists have great flexibility in career tracks and can apply their skills and abilities in different settings such as a community, hospitals and health systems, clinical specialties, the pharmaceutical industry, academia, regulatory affairs and public policy. As public health professionals, they also play a major role in preventing disease and promoting health and wellness. It has been said that "pharmacists wear white coats and many hats,"<sup>1</sup> which is absolutely true.

Community pharmacists are the easily accessible, frontline health professionals who hold greater value than it seems on the surface. They attend to the needs and care of outpatients, and independent community pharmacists typically follow their own practice management and business operation styles.

While pharmacies provide the needed supply of medications, community pharmacists compound and dispense medications, review the adequacy of prescriptions, provide drug information and medication-use advice. They also advise patients and clients on over-the-counter medications, supplements and self-care, and offer select health screenings and risk assessments for diabetes, hypertension, dyslipidemia, tobacco use and smoking cessation.

Their interaction with physicians is therefore essential in order to ensure the accuracy of prescriptions and safety of medication therapies.

Hospital and health system pharmacists work in the inpatient settings of hospital pharmacies and health systems. They have a wide set of responsibilities that are mostly unknown to the outside world. They ensure the acquisition and timely supply of medications used

throughout the hospital for all types of patient populations and clinical conditions, and ascertain that the right medication is safely and properly administered to the individual patient at the right time.

They also screen for drug allergies, drug interactions and incompatibilities, and oversee the preparation and dispensing of sterile, injectable and intravenous medications. They coordinate with physicians and nurses to ensure safe and cost-effective medication therapy. These pharmacists can be under great pressure, especially when dealing with emergencies and complicated patient cases.

Clinical pharmacy specialists work directly with patients and healthcare professionals as part of the interprofessional team. They determine whether medication therapies are appropriate, effective, safe, and improve health outcomes. Clinical pharmacists typically undergo intensive postgraduate residency trainings and develop specialized knowledge to address specific disease management and appropriate medication use in areas such as oncology, infectious disease, neurology, psychiatry, nutrition support, transplants, critical care, home care, and drug information, to name a few.

Industrial pharmacists work with the pharmaceutical industry and can assume various roles and responsibilities such as research and development, drug product development, quality control, sales and marketing, clinical trials, medical science liaison, drug information, regulatory and scientific affairs, and administration.

Academic pharmacists hold school faculty positions and engage in students' teaching and learning. This mostly includes a practice component and clinical research, as part of clinical, social and administrative sciences or the pharmaceutical sciences.

Regulatory affairs pharmacists work with the guidelines and regulations in clinical trials and the protection of human subjects who participate in the studies.



Public policy pharmacists engage in population-based analyses and help define how laws and regulations affect patients. These pharmacists can also be part of governmental agencies engaged in reviewing new drug applications, research, clinical, policymaking and administrative roles.

So, is pharmacy right for you? If you enjoy science, have an interest in drug development and clinical drug effects, care about patients' health and possess people skills, then it may very well be.

What might the future hold for pharmacy? With the aging population, fast pace of new and innovative drug discoveries, complexity of medication therapies and increase in healthcare costs, there is a growing demand for prescription medications and pharmacy

services to optimize patient outcomes and provide cost-effective medication therapies. Furthermore, as machines are taking over dispensing, and with the fast development of eHealth technology and e-commerce, pharmacists must rapidly transform themselves from the product (i.e. medication) to deliver more patient-focused services. They should also seek legislation for a "provider status" to be able to bill directly for their patient care services.

Moreover, pharmacists need to be on the cutting edge of preventive and precision medicine (drug treatment based on patients based on genetic, environmental and lifestyle factors). They should seize the opportunity to prove their absolute worth in chronic disease management where interprofessional coordination

and team-based care are of utmost necessity to improve patient care and quality of life and reduce healthcare costs.

Up until now, pharmacists remain under-appreciated and under-utilized healthcare resources. Pharmacists' advanced and multidimensional skills in all practice settings have much added value in the anticipated upcoming transformational changes of healthcare delivery systems.

So, can one even imagine people getting the best results of their medications where a pharmacist does not exist?

<sup>1</sup> <https://pharmacyforme.org/learn-about-pharmacy/>

# Berytus the Mother of Laws: An Oxymoron?

By Dana K. Haffar

First-ever printed book on Beirut speaks volumes about its people and culture.

It might come as a surprise to some that at one time in Lebanon's rich history its capital was known as the "mother of laws."

Admittedly, that was millennia ago, as of the reign of Roman Emperor Alexander Severus in the 3rd century through to that of Justinian Augustus in the 6th. But a closer look at why Beirut had earned the prestigious title of *Berytus Nutrix Legum* reveals traits of its people and culture that survive to this day.

The first-ever printed book on Beirut, recently unearthed and published by the Center for Lebanese Heritage (CLH), sheds light on the city as a commercial center and a Roman colony, focusing on the origins and function of its "very noble School of Law" – one of the oldest Phoenician academies.

*Berytus or the Metropolis of Berytus* – published in Latin in 1662 by the German jurist Johann Strauch – was initially discovered by Attorney-at-Law Joy Tabet and USEK Professor of Latin Mireille Issa who put out a French translation with Dar An-Nahar in 2009 on the occasion of Beirut's nomination as the World Book Capital.

Earlier this year, Director of CLH Henri Zoghaib produced an edition in French, English and Arabic, along with a facsimile of the original, as one single volume.

In his dissertation, Strauch draws on the works of authors, poets, travelers and historians to paint a picture of the "glory" of Beirut, and how the capital came to be the only city apart from Rome and Constantinople where the teaching of Roman law was "permitted, by the public authority of the Emperor." Favored

by Emperor Augustus, Berytus in the 1st century had become a colony under the Italic law. Its citizens were exempt from taxes and automatically granted Roman citizenship and the benefits that came with it.

From the records gleaned by Strauch, Berytus emerges as a "noble and ancient city ... renowned especially for the charm of its nature and the clever cheerfulness of its inhabitants," rich in wheat, wine and oil. It also "owed its reputation to the remarkable linen work" produced in countless weaving

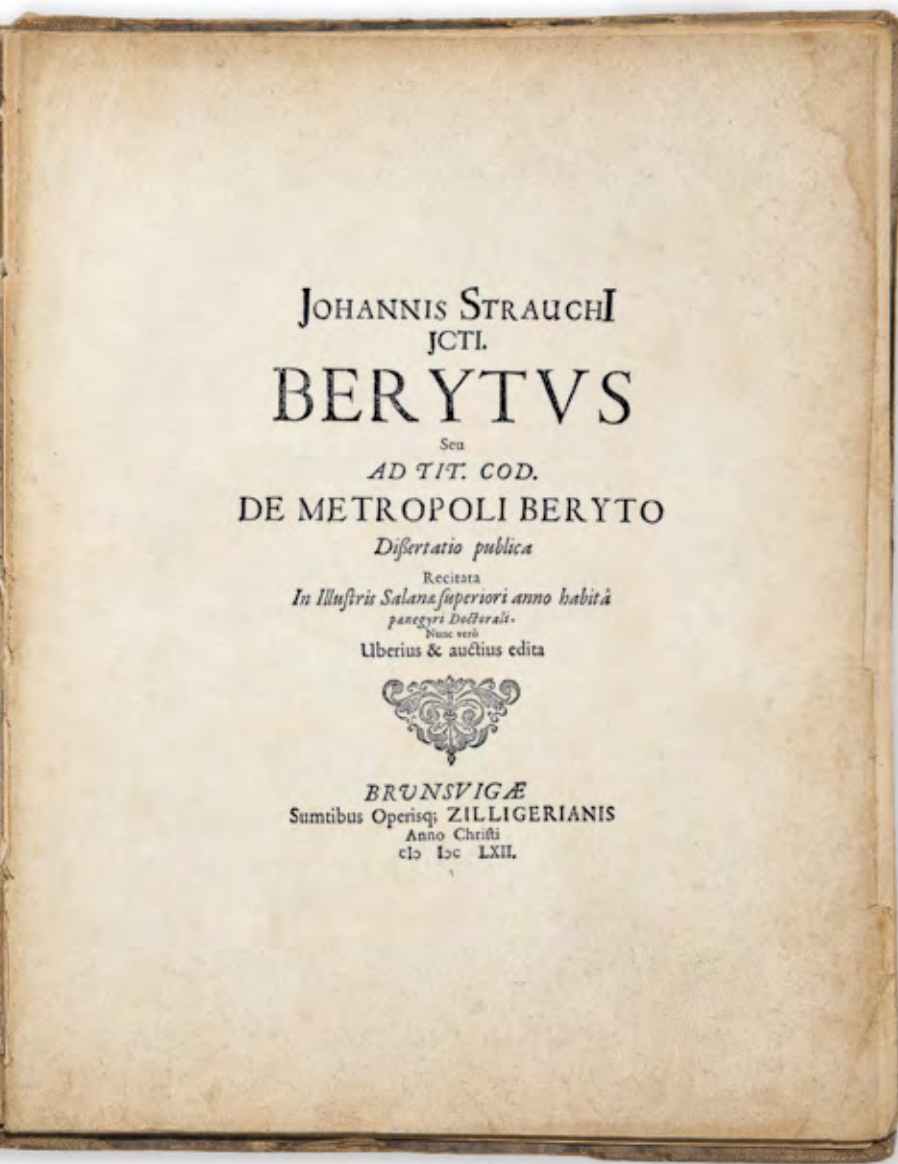
and dyeing workshops, "to a point that its fabrics and those of neighboring towns were sent out to the whole world."

When it came to the privilege of housing a law academy, however, the requirements were stringent. Archives of the ancients, says Strauch, show "how much the neighboring bishops they [the Princes of Germanial sent had examined the nature of the place, the temperature of the air, the mores of the inhabitants ... and the safety of the place."

A law academy demanded an environment where learning was revered,








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*By the 4th century  
"Berytus began to shine  
through the study of law,  
'mother of these studies.'"*

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of law, to which it dedicated Berytus' headquarters and houses." The students' insatiable thirst for knowledge and education drove them to request a special dispensation from Rome not to be diverted from the study of law to fulfil their military or public duties until the age of 25. By the 4th century "Berytus began to shine through the study of law, 'mother of these studies.'"

At the peak of Berytus' glory, disaster struck. In 551 AD, during the reign of Justinian, an earthquake razed the city to the ground, claiming the lives of the locals and the foreigners who had come to study Roman law. Undeterred, the professors transferred the school to Sidon until Beirut was restored. But no sooner had the city been rebuilt than it was ravaged by a fire, and later besieged by the Saracens, before rising again to become "the largest and most illustrious store and port of Syria."

There have been many moments of glory in Lebanon's history, and sadly too many periods of adversity. That Strauch saw it necessary to dedicate an entire chapter, out of five in the book, to the "Diseases, Calamity and the Destruction of the Academy," is telling.

Yet, throughout, the country has miraculously preserved its sense of hospitality, and the Lebanese their high regard for education, the arts and culture. And if there's something valuable to be drawn from Strauch's priceless record, it is this: it was not the law academy that brought fame to Beirut, but rather the noble character of its people.

and "where the habits of townspeople were not foreign to the spirits and morals of its students," as there had been previous instances where cities had revolted against the establishment of universities, going as far as attacking the teachers and students "with impunity."

Phoenicia, on the other hand, was "not only distinguished from the other nations by the glory of having invented letters," but also by "a clever species of men, remarkable in the works of war and peace, in writing and literature, as well as in other arts."

Among illustrious Berytians, Strauch cites grammarian Marcus Valerius, Mnaseas of Berytus – who wrote about rhetoric in the Greek dialect – Locrius who published elegies, and prolific grammarian Lupercus, among others. "Who would then doubt," concludes Strauch, "that the glory of literature and arts was not naturally and almost intimately associated with Berytus?"

The nation's devotion to "noble studies with ease and diligence" eventually extended during Roman rule to the "science

# Diabetic Foot 101

By Kaissar (Cesar) Yammine, MD, MPH, PHD

A definitive guide to warning signs, tips for prevention and what to do, courtesy of the Diabetic Foot Clinic at LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital.



*Dr. Kaissar (Cesar) Yammine is Head of the Diabetic Foot Clinic at LAU Medical Center-RH and a Clinical Associate Professor of Orthopedic Surgery at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine. He has over 20 years of experience in treating foot and hand conditions, with a subspecialty in diabetic foot surgery.*

The diabetic foot syndrome is a set of complications – mainly ulcers, infections and deformities – due to the chronic effect of high levels of glucose on the nerves and small vessels of the foot. Foot complications can occur in 25 percent of patients with diabetes, and even when mild, could lead to amputation. Regular check-ups and early detection can minimize these later-stage complications and significantly reduce the rate of amputations.

## Signs of Diabetic Foot Neuropathy

- Numbness
- Reduced ability to feel pain or thermal changes
- Tingling or burning sensation
- Sharp pains or cramps
- Increased sensitivity to touch
- Muscle weakness
- Loss of balance and coordination
- Ulcers or blisters

## Signs of Diabetic Foot Infection

- Redness
- Swelling
- Hot sensation in the foot
- Fever

## Signs of diabetic foot ischemia (reduced blood flow)

- Acute pain
- Change in the color of the toes (red, blue, white or black)
- Cold feet

## Diabetic Foot Prevention

### Caring for your feet:

- Check for reddened areas, cuts, or scrapes that could become infected
- Wash your feet every day with soap and warm (not hot) water
- Dry your feet carefully, especially between the toes
- Apply cream or lotion recommended by your dermatologist

### Caring for your toenails:

- Cut your toenails carefully, straight across
- Do not cut the sides or the cuticles
- Clean your nails carefully
- If your nails are hard to trim lightly, file them daily

### What to avoid:

- Hot water bottles or electric heaters to warm your feet
- Putting your feet where they could be burned (hot sand, hot bath, near a fireplace)
- Stiff, tight shoes
- Walking barefoot

### Tips for choosing footwear:

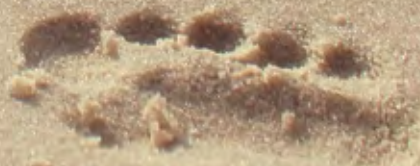
- Make sure that your shoes fit well
- Buy footwear made from natural materials, soft and spacious
- Keep slippers by your bed and use them when you get up at night
- Check your shoes regularly for torn linings or things that should not be there

## Diabetic Foot Medical Prevention and Management

Treatment modalities are not at-home remedies. The orthopedic foot surgeon is the expert on preventing, detecting and treating the diabetic foot.

While knowledgeable and well-informed patients may be able to reduce any complications, it is strongly advisable to regularly screen for detecting ulcers, infections, and neuropathy – including co-existing peripheral artery disease.

In case of detection, treatment entails debridement (medical removal of damaged tissue), targeted topical agents and/or surgery.





# New Giving Report Reveals Donor Impact on LAU and its Students

By Naseem Ferdowsi

Fiscal Year 2018 saw a 14 percent increase in funding from last year with \$18.9 million raised toward LAU's mission.



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*"When you invest in education, you are investing in a better future not only for our students, but also for the community as a whole."*

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One of LAU's core values is to stand by its community. Year after year, LAU has proved its ability to fulfill that promise and support deserving yet financially challenged students in their education, and the 2018 Contributors Report reflects this. During Fiscal Year 2018, 4,276 deserving students received just over \$31.7 million in aid, a 6 percent increase in funding from 2017.

"When you invest in education, you are investing in a better future not only for our students, but also for the community as a whole," said LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara in his message in the Contributors Report.

Donor contributions to LAU are key to fulfilling the promise of academic excellence and supporting students in their academic journey. The report revealed that LAU received a total of 1,533 donor contributions during Fiscal Year 2018, which amounted to \$18.9 million. That is a 14 percent increase from Fiscal Year 2017, despite the uncertain economic situation, which is a true testimony to the unparalleled commitment and generosity of LAU's donor community.

"Gifts go toward the continuous development of effective teaching and learning methods at LAU, and are translated into robust academic programs, high-tech facilities across our two campuses, growing research efforts, and necessary financial aid programs, making education at LAU accessible for all, while maintaining a high-standard world-class quality," added Dr. Jabbara.

Assistant Vice President for Development Nassib N. Nasr, who spearheaded the annual report, explained the importance of partnerships to the university.

"We are honored to have such staunch supporters who showcase unwavering

dedication toward LAU and its students, and the results of such partnerships are indeed inspiring," said Nasr. "Together with our incredible benefactors, we are able to create state-of-the-art programs and build cutting-edge facilities, managing to create an impact on our students, our community, our region, and beyond."

LAU's family of donors includes generous alumni, friends, businesses, NGOs and government entities who made in-kind and monetary gifts that enabled the institution to continue providing its students with an unrivaled learning experience, and pave the road to academic excellence and leadership in community and civic engagement.

Featured in the report are information and infographics about donations received, and detailed lists reflecting the numbers, the destination, and the source of gifts. Scholarship students' success stories, impactful collaborations, and fundraising programs and activities are also highlighted.

Among the success stories is Tala Lakiss, an award recipient of the USAID-funded University Scholarship Program (USP), which aims to give public school students an opportunity to pursue a university education.

"LAU and all my community involvement have taught me many values that are now a part of me, and essential to my identity. I have learned the importance of integrity, patience, teamwork, and to be responsible for my actions and my words, among so many others," said Lakiss.

LAU's Contributors Report is produced annually in recognition of donors' generosity and the difference it makes to the university and its students. It is put together by the university's Office of Development, in coordination with several other departments.

# In Memoriam



## Nadia Daoud (1950-2019)

The LAU community lost a dear member on August 18 with the passing of Nadia Daoud, who was a steady presence at the university first as a student, and later as a staff member. Daoud retired in 2017 after nearly three decades of serving her alma mater.

Daoud's unique journey dates back to 1968, when she enrolled as an elementary education student with the help of financial aid. She divided her time on campus between attending classes and working at the library in Irwin Hall, as she herself once recalled in an interview with the LAU Magazine.

Upon her graduation in 1972 from Beirut College for Women (as LAU was known back then), Daoud first worked as a grade school teacher and later joined Continuing Education at Beirut University College as an English instructor.

In early 1990, Daoud formally joined the staff at the Alumni Relations Office.

Together with her former teaching colleague Leila Saleeby, who had invited her to apply for the position, she was instrumental in connecting the dots and laying the groundwork for what was later to become the university's alumni database.

Reflecting on her experience during those days, Daoud had spoken of the tight-knit LAU community just after the civil war: "There were only around 100 or 150 students then. We worked a lot, and it was a very nice job – you get to know people and learn how the university changed their lives."

A few years later, Daoud went on to take up a new challenge: setting up the newly opened Admissions Office. Along with colleagues, she visited schools from all over Lebanon to build and strengthen ties with the university. As the office grew and evolved, Daoud continued to serve with dedication,

working on a part-time basis for two more years past retirement.

"LAU offered me great opportunities to grow and get to know people. Everything I gained at LAU was to my benefit." Likewise, everything she gave to LAU through dedication and commitment will be remembered by many.

In his tribute to Daoud, Vice President of Human Resources and University Services Roy Majdalani described her as "not only a dear colleague but also a true friend and a part of the LAU family."

Quoting poet Thomas Campbell who once said "To live in the hearts we leave behind is not to die," he added, "anyone who knew Nadia would agree that she will continue to live in our hearts."

# Postcard from New York

By Elida Jbeili

## Newcomers

Greek philosopher Heraclitus has been quoted as saying that "change is the only constant in life." And so it's been for LAU New York Headquarters and Academic Center with several major appointments including that of Executive Director Nadim Shehadi, formerly director of The Fares Center for Eastern Mediterranean Studies at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University.

Nadya Mikdashy also joined us as assistant vice-president for Development, after 15 years as director of the Lebanese non-profit Skoun Lebanese Addiction Center that she co-founded. Additionally, Dr. Lina Abirafeh, executive director for The Arab Institute for Women (AiW) is now based at LAU New York, dividing her time between New York and Beirut. The appointment of these crucial positions has rejuvenated LAU New York with a host of new activities, programs and events.

Every year since 2005, LAU has celebrated a culture of youth leadership in creative diplomacy, and after acquiring the Global Classrooms International (GCI) Model MUN in 2016 from the United Nations Association of the United States of America (UNA-USA) in 2016, it has been organizing mega conferences in New York. Model UN conferences for middle and high schoolers were held in April and May respectively, bringing together thousands of students from all over the world to an LAU-led flagship program.

## Events

Several other events were held at the academic center in coordination with LAU Beirut and Byblos campuses, including a book launch and a photography exhibit. In March, LAU NY hosted the launch of two new books co-written by LAU Associate Professor Nada Saab and AUB Professor Robert Myers, which

were the product of researching, translating and producing seminal dramatic works from the Levant.

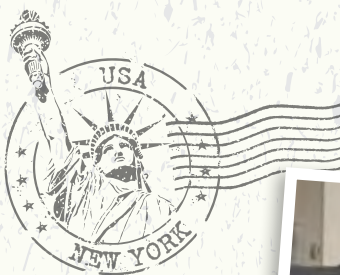
In late April, a week-long exhibition of photos by LAU instructor Bassam Lahoud capturing the 'golden period' of Lebanon was the latest of many initiatives by the School of Architecture and Design (SaD) to foster relations in North America and introduce the school to an American, and specifically, New York audience.

In early May, friends and supporters of LAU gathered at the New York Athletic Club overlooking Central Park to honor, once again, the university's legacy as a school founded by a woman, for women. In keeping with previous galas, the proceeds were designated for AiW. LAU President Joseph G. Jabbra presented the Sarah Huntington Smith Award to former First Lady of Lebanon and Head of the René Moawad Foundation Nayla Moawad, a driving force in serving Lebanon through countless educational, humanitarian and social justice programs.

The second award of the night went to Chairman and CEO of Interaudi Bank Joseph G. Audi, who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and vision in business and banking, and steady commitment to philanthropic efforts in the New York Community and beyond.

For Dr. Abirafeh, relocating to the NY office enables her to scale AiW, build a broader donor base and reach a wider audience. "There is interest and momentum

# Revitalizing Change with New Appointments



here," she said, "and we need to change in order to keep up. Now is not the time to stop moving!" During her short time in New York, Dr. Abirafeh has already hosted several events, including three panels that tackled the fashion industry and gender equality, to sexual and reproductive health in the Arab region, and challenging gender-based violence and structural inequalities in the Arab region and beyond.

Toward the end of May, LAU NY hosted the launch of *Assad or We Burn the Country: How One Family's Lust for Power Destroyed Syria* by Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist Sam Dagher. Dagher was in conversation with Anne Barnard, former Beirut Bureau





Chief for *The New York Times*, and Brian Katulis, senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. It was one of the most popular events this season with a full house of journalists, academics, and students.

### Vision and Initiatives

Shehadi sees the headquarters in New York as an integral part of the university's vision of an LAU without borders, connecting institutions in the broader region to this side of the world. "New York," he commented, "is a base that engages both North and South America and there are immense opportunities that benefit our students, faculty and the community as a whole."

Mikdashi wants to focus the fundraising efforts of the LAU NY development team to support an inclusive progressive education, which is perhaps more important now than ever in the current climate in Lebanon. "My vision is for fundraising efforts in North America to significantly boost LAU's commitment to quality education for young people from all walks of life," she said.

Importantly, recalling Dr. Jabbra's quest to give out more financial aid and scholarships for LAU students, the development team launched a fundraising campaign in June titled #95for95 seeking at least 95 donations to commemorate the 95 years that LAU has been offering college courses. All funds went directly to

financial aid and scholarship assistance for LAU's students.

LAU NY Director of Alumni Ed Shiner volunteered to make a donation to LAU for each gift received throughout the campaign to encourage participation. "I wanted to do something that would be a catalyst for others to offer their support. I was especially focusing on our alumni of North America and particularly on those who haven't yet made a gift to LAU. My intent was to 'give back' to LAU as a staff member and hope that it would inspire our alumni and friends."

In the words of Dr. Jabbra, "We need to answer the ills that afflict Lebanon and the region with education, education and more education."

# Campus Notes



## LAU on the Rise

LAU has been reaping the rewards of its drive for academic excellence. The 2020 edition of the QS World University Rankings has placed it among the top 55 percent universities globally – up from the 70th percentile in 2015 –having moved up twice over the six years considered by QS. This follows its ranking tenth in **Times Higher Education (THE) 2019 list of top universities in the Arab World**, and its inclusion

in the first-ever THE impact rankings based on the 17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). On both THE lists, LAU was one of the only two universities in Lebanon to be ranked. It has also ranked second in Lebanon, and 16th in the Arab World out of 123 universities in the QS Regional Rankings of the Arab World 2019.



## Young Biologists Convene at LAU

The Department of Natural Sciences organized its annual **2019 Young Biologists Symposium (YBS)**, exposing students to the latest advances in biological sciences on April 9 on Beirut campus. The symposium – co-sponsored by the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) – was attended by around 80 participants from LAU, the American University of Beirut, the University of Balamand and the Arab University of Beirut, in addition to LAU faculty. Speakers covered topics ranging from biochemistry, genetics, neurobiology, microbial genomics, cancer therapeutics, metagenomics, and cell biology. LAU students, post-doc and PhD candidates represented each lab in the Biological Sciences Graduate Program, while students from outside LAU gave presentations about their work.



## Whatever It Takes for Climate Change

LAU and the Egyptian Al-Ahram Foundation have partnered up to confront the devastating effects of climate change, in their joint support of the Lebanese athlete, **Michael Haddad's North Pole Initiative**.

Haddad, who lost the use of his legs after a spinal injury at a young age, holds three world records in climbing, snowshoeing, and walking in Lebanon's extreme conditions, and has been named 2016 UNDP Lebanon Climate Change Champion. His next challenge is to walk the 100 km in the Arctic to highlight the threats posed by global warming and melting ice caps – an initiative that he will undertake under the UNDP banner, with the support of LAU and AUB, and aided by an exoskeleton developed by a team of faculty and students at LAU's School of Engineering.





### Zahi Hakim Museum of Antique X-Ray Tubes

LAU's Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine has been entrusted by eminent radiologist Dr. Zahi Hakim with the custody and care of his extensive collection of antique X-ray tubes – one of the best five in the world and the only one outside Europe and the US. The 185 plus items, housed at the **Dr. Zahi Hakim Museum at the Chagoury Health Sciences Center on Byblos campus**, include one of the rarest 1896 Crookes tubes, radiology-related accessories, the largest number of X-ray kenetrons, and television camera tubes that Dr. Hakim amassed over 50 years of his career.



### IC and LAU Strive to Keep Talent in the Country

The **International College Alumni Association (ICAA)** and **LAU** are joining forces to provide scholarship opportunities to graduates of International College (IC). This new agreement will give selected IC alumni a full scholarship until graduation with ICAA covering 40 percent of the tuition fees, and LAU the remaining 60 percent.

Established in 1980 by a group of alumni, ICAA strives to retain the IC morale among the community by supporting those in need as well as assisting the school's development projects. The partnership agreement was signed by ICAA President Karim Baalbaki and LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara.

### A Boost for Higher Education

In the interest of education and Lebanon's future, **LAU and the Lebanese University (LU)** have reached an agreement for Inter-University Cooperation in the areas of humanities, law, science, health, engineering and technology.

The agreement, signed by LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara and LU President Fouad Ayoub on May 13, will allow LU students to earn a dual degree from LAU's Adnan Kassar School of Business and LU upon satisfactory completion of the program. Discussions between LAU and LU had been ongoing in an attempt to arrive at a formula that empowers students to meet challenges and prepares them to build the world of tomorrow.



### Alumnus Makes Forbes' Middle East 30 Under 30 List

Just four years after graduating from LAU, **Charlie el-Khoury** has helped turn NAR, the company he co-founded with fellow LAU alumnus Nicolas Zaatar (both BE '15), into a tech leader and made the Forbes' Middle East 30 under 30 list.

El-Khoury and Zaatar produced the first real-time software platform specifically designed for drones to transform images into data. Now el-Khoury, Zaatar and their team have taken NAR overseas, working on a number of high-profile projects in the Middle East and North America, and recently opening an office in the US state of Delaware.

### MDLAB for Social Justice

In its seventh edition, the **Media and Digital Literacy Academy of Beirut (MDLAB)** focused its training on media literacy for oppressed and marginalized communities. On June 16, some 60 media academics, professionals, graduate students and activists from the Arab region and Europe participated in the week-long program. Lectures and workshops addressed topics such as media framing of conflict, dismantling media bias, feminist mobilization, sustainable financial models for new media and digital security. MDLAB was organized by LAU's Institute of Media Research and Training (IMRT) and sponsored this year by the Canadian Embassy, UNESCO and the German Academic Exchange Service.





### SOE Capstone Project Recognized

For their capstone project, three electrical and computer engineering students researched and worked closely with the Alzheimer's Association in Lebanon to devise a prototype that aims to improve patients' quality of life. **SAFE – Smart Alzheimer Friendly Environment** is an Internet-of-Things-based solution that monitors patient behavior and logs and processes data on heart rate, sleep, injury and memory conditions. The information is then delivered to physicians and caregivers to help them monitor the progress.

During late spring, **Joey Jules El Helou, Joseph Chalhoub, and Rafic Mansour** received a monetary award from software and computer services company CME Offshore, in recognition of their innovative work.



### Walid Joumblatt Foundation for University Studies Contributes to LAU Scholarships

Since 2011, LAU has received over \$300,000 in donations from the Walid Joumblatt Foundation for University Studies, which have supported a number of students in their academic journey, including 94 current students. A delegation from the foundation came to campus in May to present its annual contribution, and to reaffirm its commitment to LAU despite challenging economic times.

On behalf of the LAU community, President Joseph G. Jabbra thanked the Joumblatt family for their continuous generosity and for "investing in a key pillar to rebuilding the country."

Apart from the annual scholarship, the foundation assists several other LAU students on top of their financial aid allocations, going as far as helping graduating students settle their loans to the university.



### Walid A. Mroueh Conference Room

Longtime supporter of LAU, trained pharmacist and businessman Walid A. Mroueh has dedicated a conference room in his name at the Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury Health Sciences Center, following a considerable donation.

A member of the board and executive management of both the Food & Drug Corporation and Mersaco, – a leading healthcare name in distribution and services in Lebanon – Mroueh has made a big impact in the pharma industry and continues to do so today.

"LAU is my second home. We are very proud of our partnership, which is being consolidated year after year," Mroueh said at the dedication ceremony.

### Child Marriage in Emergency Contexts

The Arab Institute for Women (AiW) at LAU took on a study which covered Lebanese and Syrian refugee women in South Lebanon to assess the prevalence of child, early and forced marriage in fragile and humanitarian contexts, and to evaluate the effectiveness of child marriage interventions and programming.

The study was part of a larger, multinational study covering Lebanon, Ethiopia and Myanmar. Toward the end of the spring semester, AiW hosted a panel to share key research findings on the state of child marriage in South Lebanon, drawing a full house of local and international organizations, reporters, exchange students as well as LAU faculty, staff and students.

Panelists were LAU's own Clinical Associate Professor of Pharmacy and researcher Ghada El Khoury, Lebanese University Professor of Epidemiology Pascale Salameh, and from the International Rescue Committee: Stefania Chirizzi, women's protection and empowerment coordinator and Farah Salhab, adolescent girls' manager.



### Music to Our Ears

The IMAGINE Workshops and Concerts Series (IWCS) 2019 launched its spring residency with two classical music concerts that further cemented the program's mission to promote and integrate the appreciation of the arts. On March 22, musicians from LAU and the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra performed the Triple Concerto, in a first-ever collaboration between the two institutions. Accompanying the orchestra were this IMAGINE residency's guest artists: internationally acclaimed violinist Salley Koo and Juilliard-trained cellist Avery Waite, along with LAU Assistant Professor of Music and IWCS Founder and Director Seba Ali.

### Much More than Child's Play

The School of Engineering hosted the first ever *FIRST LEGO League 2019 (FLL) Open International Robotics Competition* to be held in Lebanon and the MENA region, organized by LAU and the Education and Technology Center (ETC) – the FLL operational partners. Over two days, school students from 46 countries got to design, build, program, and test robots, and enhance their knowledge of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). The event was one of the school's many initiatives to help "transform Lebanon into a hub of technology and innovation and strengthen the human talents that are essential for a knowledge and technology-based economy, early on," said SOE Assistant Professor of Computer Engineering and Interim Assistant Dean Joe Tekli.



### Hands-on Food Safety Inspection

Nutrition students now have the chance to conduct food safety inspections in factories across Lebanon thanks to an agreement signed on May 20 between the **Ministry of Industry** and eight universities, including LAU. The ministry thereby commits to welcoming undergraduate and graduate students interested in food safety-related practical experience, vocational training, or in the framework of preparing for their theses. Interns will assist in sample collection and their delivery to labs for testing. At the end of their internship, they will receive certificates of participation signed by the minister and inspectors.

### SArD's Collective Student Exhibition for Accreditation Visit

The School of Architecture and Design (SArD) hosted a collective review on the occasion of a visit by a team from the **National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD)**. The exhibition spotlighted students' work from foundation year, Fashion Design, Fine Arts, Graphic Design, Interior Architecture and Interior Design programs.

The review is part of an ongoing process toward the school's accreditation by NASAD, which was established in 1944 "to improve educational practices and maintain high professional standards in art and design education."







### Questioning the Absolute

On July 6, LAU hosted the **TEDxLAU 2019** on Beirut campus. The theme **Unmasked** aimed to challenge participants to question their assumptions and the ideas they take for granted. The topics varied from architecture to parenting to astronomy. Pediatric dentist Jad Nasr argued for a need to change how people view the 'professional' mold. LAU Architecture Professor Sulaf Aburas presented on responsive architecture

and the ability to learn from nature, while LAU alumna Naila Al Hares (BA '15) unmasked the art of communication to show how language is not limited to words. The event was organized by the TEDxLAU Student Club, with the support of Student Development and Enrollment Management, the Dean of Students Office, and the School of Arts and Sciences.

## CEREMONIES

### USP Merit Scholars' Graduation

Along with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), LAU's Outreach and Civic Engagement Department celebrated the graduation of 59 University Scholarship Program (USP) scholars, thanks to the full support of the US Agency. The event took place on May 30, at LAU Beirut campus where the graduates shared their stories, and USAID and university leaders attested to their hard work in a room full of proud families and friends. Since its launch in 2010, the program has provided 542 outstanding, yet disadvantaged, Lebanese students with a world-class university education.





### Honors Program Graduates Urged to Give Back

With 192 students enrolled from nine majors this year, the highly selective Honors Program celebrated the graduation of 62 at a ceremony on Byblos campus on June 7, attended by Lebanese Minister of Defense Elias Bou Saab, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, Provost George E. Nasr, deans, faculty, staff and proud parents. Bou Saab urged the distinguished students to persevere in the face of challenges, and to always consider ways to give back to their university, their community and their country. "Lebanon is at a crossroads, and the future is bright despite the difficulties – but it will depend on how you shape it," he said.



### Joint Celebration for MEPI-TL Cohort at LAU

This year, the Middle East Partnership Initiative Tomorrow's Leaders Program (MEPI-TL) graduates from both LAU and the American University of Beirut (AUB) were honored in one ceremony held on Beirut campus, June 13. In its 11th year, the program continues to provide outstanding students from underserved communities across the Arab world with an excellent American education, provided they commit to giving back to their communities. More than just certificates, the 2019 MEPI-TL cohort received words of advice and kudos from LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara, AUB Provost Mohamed Harajli, US Embassy MEPI Coordinator Shawn Tenbrink, and Program Directors at LAU and AUB respectively, Dina Abdul Rahman and Hani Hassan.



### Medical Students Don their White Coats

The Gilbert and Rose-Marie Chagoury School of Medicine (SOM) hosted the 9th Annual White Coat Ceremony on June 19, to celebrate a new cohort of 53 medical students who recently completed two years of academically-focused, interprofessional learning and will be transitioning to the clinical wards soon. Dean Michel Mawad urged the students to simply "go out there and help people," because "the best of people are those who serve others."



# Alumni Update

## JANUARY 2019



### New Students, Future Alumni

The Alumni Relations Office was on hand to welcome new LAUers on Beirut and Byblos campuses on January 11 at the New Student Orientation event. Students received bracelets engraved with "Welcome to LAU 2019-2020" and handouts detailing the role of the Alumni Relations Office and chapters worldwide.



### Talking Health

As part of the Stay Aware Alumni Lecture Series, the Alumni Relations Office organized an informative lecture on Habits and Tips for a Long and Healthy Life by interventional cardiologist Dr. Omar Hamoui on LAU Beirut campus. The event on June 24 attracted a full house.



### Sponsors Dinner in Dubai

On January 16, LAU President Joseph G. Jabbara and the Dubai & Northern Emirates Alumni Chapter hosted a dinner for the chapter's sponsors in appreciation of their continuous support to LAU and higher education. The dinner was held at Chez Charles restaurant in Dubai.



### Sponsors Dinner in Abu Dhabi

President Jabbara and the Abu Dhabi Alumni Chapter hosted a dinner for the chapter's sponsors in appreciation of their continuous support toward helping LAU students in need of financial aid. The dinner was held at Byblos Sur Mer, Intercontinental Hotel, Abu Dhabi.

## FEBRUARY 2019



### Weekend Conference

Alumni from several chapters gathered at the LAU New York Academic Center for the first-ever LAU North American Alumni Conference, from February 22 to 24. Chapters represented included New York/New Jersey; Washington, DC; Boston, MA; Detroit, MI; Chicago, IL, and San Francisco, CA.



### Kuwait Chapter Open Day

More than 400 alumni of the Kuwait Chapter enjoyed Open Day with their families and friends on February 15 at the Safir Hotel, Fintas. Attending from Beirut was Associate Director of Alumni Relations Ghada Majed, representing the Alumni Relations Office.



## MARCH 2019



### Toronto Gala Dinner

The Toronto Alumni Chapter held their annual dinner at Lara's Restaurant on March 2. More than 70 alumni and friends gathered for an evening of fun, food and dance.



### Keep Learning

The Alumni Relations Office at LAU invited Dr. David Matta to deliver a two-part lecture on Mindfulness at Work, as part of the Keep Learning Alumni Lecture Series. The first session was held on March 7, and the second – subtitled Team and Organizations – on March 13, both at LAU Beirut campus.



### Avant-Première

Alumnae of BCW (Beirut College for Women, as LAU was known back then) organized a preview of the movie *Aftermath* on March 19 at Beirut Souks Theater.



### DC Happy Hour

On March 20, the LAU Alumni and Friends – DC Chapter gathered for a casual happy hour at the Lebanese Taverna in Pentagon City to enjoy an evening of socializing and networking.



### Spring Has Sprung

The Montreal Chapter celebrated spring and Mother's Day with their families and friends at a cozy brunch on March 24.



### A Warm Welcome

On March 26, friends and members of the Houston Alumni Chapter gathered at the beautiful home of alumna Tania Shaheen Tayssoun and her husband, Wissam, to welcome LAU's PharmD students who are doing their clinical rotations at Methodist Hospital, as well as several graduates of LAU's medical school.



### Abu Dhabi Annual Dinner

More than 450 guests attended the Abu Dhabi Chapter's 26th Annual Gala Dinner on March 28, at The Beach Rotana, Abu Dhabi. The event turned into a great national gathering during which MP Fouad Makhzoumi was honored for his great contributions to society and the launching of the Fouad Makhzoumi Innovation Center at LAU.



### Florida Fanfare

Members of the Florida (Tampa) Alumni Chapter enjoyed a festive dinner at Hellas Restaurant in Tarpon Springs, on March 29.



### 'Sawa' at Sawa

On March 30, members of the South Florida Alumni Chapter gathered for a quick photo after dinner and socializing at the Sawa Restaurant & Lounge in Coral Gables.



## APRIL 2019



### Ladies' Spring Brunch

The Beirut Chapter held their annual ladies' spring brunch on April 6 at Bebabel, Downtown. Committee members presented the Lebanese actor Badih Abou Chakra with a trophy in recognition of his great talent, in the presence of more than 130 alumni and friends.



### Business Networking

Together with Career Development Services, the Alumni Relations Office hosted its 13th annual business networking reception at Eau de Vie, Intercontinental Phoenicia Hotel on April 9 which drew a total of 350 guests. HR executives, alumni and university leaders socialized and discussed new trends in the marketplace, following a motivational talk by MP Neemat Frem in which he invited attendees to take on a new perspective despite the challenging economic situation in the country.



### Telling Tales

The joy of giving was celebrated at A Night of our Tales, the theme of the Oman Chapter's 11th annual ball. The memorable night of One Thousand and One Tales took place on April 12 at Kempinski Hotel, Muscat. More than 300 alumni and friends mingled with the Ambassador of Lebanon in Oman Albert Samaha, officials from different countries, and LAU leadership.



### Gala Dinner in Qatar

The Qatar Chapter's gala dinner on April 5 at La Cigale Hotel was a huge success in the presence of Lebanon's Ambassador in Qatar Hasan Najm and MPs from Lebanon, Michel Moussa, Rola Tabsh and Hagop Bakradonian, in addition to Secretary General of the Lebanese Parliament Adnan Daher. President Jabbra, Senior Advisor to the President for Public Affairs Christian Oussi, and Assistant Vice President for Alumni Relations Abdallah Al Khal also attended. In his address, the chapter's president Wassim El Dayaa thanked Prince Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and the Country of Qatar for the great hospitality they have shown to the Lebanese Diaspora and LAU graduates, in particular.



### EMBA Gathering

The EMBA Alumni Group held its first group activity, a get-together on April 30 at Wadad Khoury Student Center, Beirut campus. The event was a great opportunity for EMBA graduates of different promotions to reconnect.



### For a Good Cause

The Beirut Chapter and Shifaa Junior Club held the musical play *Hubbuhu Tariki* – loosely translated as *His Love Will Show Me the Way* – in Irwin Hall, LAU Beirut campus, to raise funds for scholarship grants for underprivileged deserving LAU students and Shifaa NGO. The event which took place at the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan, on April 29, 30 and May 1 drew more than 1,200 attendees over the three days. The success of the initiative translated into the substantial amount raised.

### Breaking the Cycle of Violence

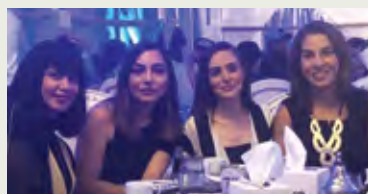
In support of efforts against domestic violence and representing LAU's athletic team, alumnus and athletics coordinator Mohamad Mawas (BS '16) took part in the SPEAK™ 5K annual run/walk hosted by Safe+Sound Somerset, the lead agency against domestic violence in New Jersey. He won first place in the overall male race.

## MAY 2019



### Honoring Salim Sfeir

At its 41st annual gala dinner on May 3 at Roda Al Bustan, the Dubai & Northern Emirates Chapter honored Dr. Salim Sfeir, chairman of the Bank of Beirut, in the presence of a large crowd of alumni and friends of LAU.



### Bahrain Ramadan Ghabga

The Bahrain Chapter held its annual Ramadan ghabga – a local term for celebratory gathering – on May 10 at the Gulf Hotel Ramadan tent. The evening was a great success.



### Kuwait Chapter Ghabga

Around 200 alumni and friends shared the spirit of Ramadan at the Kuwait Chapter's annual Ramadan ghabga on May 16 at the Marina Hotel, Salmiya.



### Joint Suhoor

Alumni from a group of private Lebanese universities – including LAU – gathered in Doha, Qatar, for the second joint Ramadan suhoor there on May 16 at St. Regis Hotel Ramadan Tent.



### Montreal Iftar

On May 26, the Montreal Chapter celebrated the holy month of Ramadan with an Iftar dinner at the Zyara restaurant, Quartier DIX30.



### DC Iftar

Alumni of the Washington DC Chapter gathered for a Ramadan Iftar with family and friends at the Baladna Restaurant & Lounge in Fairfax, on May 27.

## JUNE 2019



### Met Visit

On June 14, friends and members of the New York/New Jersey Chapter took a trip to The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY, to view the new ParaPivot installation by Polish-German artist Alicja Kwade on the Met's rooftop garden.



### Cooling Off

The soaring summer heat drove alumni and friends of the LAU Association – Byblos Chapter to host a party by the pool of Moria Restaurant, Jounieh, on June 22. The gathering dined beneath the palm trees to the strains of a Gypsy band.



### Play Ball

For the second year in a row, the Alumni Relations Office teamed up with the Athletics Department to organize the Alumni Athletics Day, June 29, at LAU Beirut campus. The event is an opportunity for former varsity athletes to return to campus and play against their past classmates as well as current student athletes.

# Saving Lives One EKG Screening at a Time

By Naseem Ferdowsi

LAU's Athletics Office  
is keeping student  
athletes heart-healthy  
through collaboration  
with the Remy Rebeiz  
Young Heart Foundation



Like many young boys, Remy Rebeiz was passionate about football. A skilled basketball player at the age of six, his dream, ultimately, was to become a professional football player, maybe even as good as his idol Cristiano Ronaldo.

A leader at heart, he co-founded the Football Club Beirut with his coach so that young Lebanese footballers could compete yearly in the Gothia Cup event in Gothenburg, Sweden. He was 16. Five years later, on his way out to a family dinner, Remy collapsed. He died within four days. The cause: an undetected heart condition.

To save others from suffering the same fate, the Rebeiz family initiated the Remy Rebeiz Young Heart Foundation (RRYHF), an organization dedicated to providing the community's youth with tests that detect hidden signs of heart disease.

Vigilant over its athletes and their wellbeing, and in a bid to ensure they are healthy enough to take part in strenuous physical activity, the LAU Athletics Office decided to take measures to monitor the students' fitness.

The office teamed up with RRYHF, to introduce electrocardiogram (EKG) screenings to campus last fall.

"Because of the Athletics Office's full commitment to our athletes' wellbeing," said LAU Director of Athletics in Beirut Sami Garabedian, "we made it clear to all student athletes that they would not be able to join their respective teams unless they had cleared the EKG with flying colors."

More than 260 students participated in the screenings, which were complimentary from RRYHF.

Among the LAU athletes screened, six required further testing – an echocardiography – due to a suspicious anomaly. Out of those six, Khaled Hibri, a third-year entrepreneurship and family business major, was diagnosed with a cardiac condition that prevents him from playing heavy sports.

"I've always been an athlete and have never shown any symptoms of heart problems until the EKG screenings, when I discovered that I have a condition called hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, which can be fatal," explained Hibri.

Expressing his appreciation for the university's collaboration to bring EKG

screenings to campus, Hibri said, "Without the screening I would not have known about this condition, so I am very grateful to the Remy Rebeiz Young Heart Foundation and the LAU Athletics Office for their constant support and care for their athletes."

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*"Prevention is better than regret, especially when most heart conditions can be treated if detected on time."*

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Helping young athletes like Hibri become aware of a heart condition and take precautionary measures is precisely RRYHF's objective. "Prevention is better than regret, especially when most heart conditions can be treated if detected on time," said Remy's mother and co-founder of RRYHF Sylvia Rebeiz.

Her advice to athletes is simple. "You could be strong and not feeling anything, but please screen your heart as you never know," warned Rebeiz, who was an LAU faculty member for many years.

LAU plans to conduct annual EKG screenings with RRYHF to make sure that all incoming student athletes are heart-healthy to take part in sports.

"Every year we have a number of new athletes joining our teams and these also need to be screened," Garabedian explained. "One automated external defibrillator (AED) – a portable electronic device that automatically diagnoses the heart rhythm and treats life-threatening cardiac conditions through defibrillation – has already been installed at the main gymnasium in collaboration with RRYHF," he added.

The EKG screenings provided by the Remy Rebeiz Young Heart Foundation is one example of gifts-in-kind that LAU encourages and appreciates. Through such gifts, supporters help the university strengthen programs and improve facilities to provide the best possible educational experience to students and Lebanon's youth.



# A First Step Toward Independent Activism

By Raissa Batakji

**LAU students initiate a collective working session incorporating seven universities, to lay the groundwork for apolitical social justice.**

In a country where young people are frequently described as politically charged, identifying as a non-affiliate is arguably the exception. Independent activism – commonly understood as self-governance without having political ties – is what two students from LAU Beirut campus sought to define, develop and set in motion in collaboration with a wide network of like-minded young scholars from other universities.

Initiated by third-year architecture students Nader Akoum and Leen Elharake – with logistical support from the Outreach and Civic Engagement (OCE) unit – the full-day working session brought in 35 students from the American University of Beirut, Lebanese University, Sagesse University, Saint Joseph University, Notre Dame University and Beirut Arab University, as well as LAU students from both campuses.

"We could have sought out people with different mindsets and invited them to debate topics," said Elharake, "but the point was not to leave it at a debate, since we intentionally wanted to agree and produce an action plan."

She added that though the participating students come from diverse backgrounds, majors and universities, they "remain very much on the same page" when it comes to independent activism.

Akoum suggested that the lack of consensus on how independence is defined was a driving factor. "Not being

politically affiliated is the mainstream understanding – but it's also about equal representation, gender equality, human rights and abolishing social constructs, to name a few," he said, adding that for him, to be independent is to advocate for all of these and know how to prioritize them.

Because Akoum and Elharake have had limited experience with activism so far, they invited speakers who "may not be the experts, but are more experienced than we are," to guide students through the process. One of the guests was writer and activist Joumana Haddad, who drew from her own experience running in Lebanon's parliamentary elections last year. She underlined the importance of agreeing on core values that define an independent student and citizen.

Another guest speaker, President of the Rotary E-Club of Global Peace and Leadership Maxton Scotland, brought in a more global perspective, highlighting the positive impact of youth-led activism. He also reassured students that their challenges were not limited to geography and were indeed shared by independent student activists across the world.

"For the most part, the session was highly interactive and unstructured in the formal sense," said Elharake. The students were divided into groups, each of which tackled a real-life case study from campus. "From those case

studies," she said, "we branched out into establishing values and drafting action plans per campus."

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*"The future belongs to young people, and we will support them by any means we can."*

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Both Akoum and Elharake agree that there are plenty of possibilities moving forward. "In the future, we are hoping to target a larger audience and spread further out within the country," said Akoum, adding that the workshop had been inquiry-based and "informative thanks to its lack of structure."

In a commentary, Vice President for Student Development and Enrollment Management Elise Salem said she was proud that the students took initiative "to build a movement that is youth-led and one that advocates for social change," pointing out that their mission crosses that of OCE's – youth empowerment and outreach.

"The future belongs to young people, and it's up to them to improve their world," Dr. Salem concluded, adding that "we will support them by any means we can to help them empower themselves."



# Staying Connected



Anne Almond-Hamlin

**Anne Almond-Hamlin (BA '69)** lives in Medford, MA. After receiving an MA in Education from Lesley University in Cambridge, MA, she taught for 12 years before retiring in 2013. She is married to Bryan Hamlin and has two children, Rebecca who is a professor at UMass Amherst and John, who is working in finance in Portland, ME, as well as three grandchildren.

**Salim Takieddine (BS '86)** recently added new offerings of immigration services to his specialized company, General Lines of Immigration Corporation. GLI helps with Canadian citizenship and residency programs through investment services.

**Diana Ali Khalil (BS '94)** received an MBA in Management from Newport University and is now an operations and country sales manager at ZA Packaging.

**Hiba Abbas (BA '98)** is currently working on developing medication for multiple sclerosis in her capacity as a product specialist at Novartis.

**Rabih Khalil Taktak (BS '98)** is branch manager for Al Baraka Bank in Chtaura. He lives in Zahle, Hosh Al Omaraa with his wife and three children.

**Fadi Ahmad Ramadan (BS '99)** lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and is currently a business planning manager.

**Johnny El Hachem (BS '01)** went on to receive an MS in Financial Engineering from the ESSEC Business School in Paris, France. He is the CEO of Edmond de Rothschild Private Equity and lives in Geneva, Switzerland, with his wife and two children.

**Mazen O. Bekdash (BS '02)** obtained a PhD in Business Administration from the Toulouse Business School and is currently the vice president for business development at Kenyon International in Lebanon.

**Nader Hassan Nehme (BS '05)** is living and working in Dubai as a director of operations, following 13 years of experience in fashion retail.

**Mona Al Tawil (BS '06)** lives in Dubai and works for BLOM Bank.

**Farah AlHashem (BA '09, MA '18)** is a filmmaker and journalist, pursuing her PhD at Sorbonne 1, having obtained an MFA in Film from the New York Film Academy in 2013. Her most recent work is a documentary about independent cinema and suicide, *The Fifth Day*, which features Lebanese actors and filmmakers, along with renowned French and Belgian industry professionals.

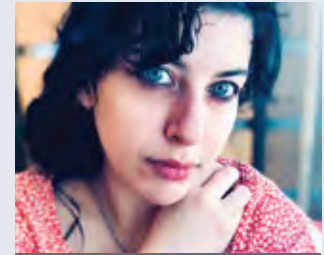
**Iman Adnan Ghalayini (MS '10)** is a certified information security hacker and incident handler. She is studying toward two new certificates in Web Penetration Testing and Network Penetration Testing, while working at BankMed as a security analyst. She is married with a three-year-old daughter and lives in Aramoun.

**Abdallah Mohammad Barazi (BS '11)** is based in Dubai and employed by Argus Media as an account manager for the Middle East. He is married and has a three-year-old son.

**Alaa Yassin (BA '13)** went on to receive her MA in Leadership and Management in 2018 and is currently working as a homeroom teacher at the Wellspring Learning Community. She got married in Spring 2019.

**Khaled J. Mehio (BS '13, MBA '18)** works with Khatib and Alami as a corporate accountant at its headquarters in Beirut.

**Emile Adib Lakis (MS '14)** received a PhD in Biology and Health from the University of Montpellier and is a postdoctoral researcher at Institut Curie in Paris, France.



Farah AlHashem



Alaa Yassin



Khaled Mehio



Emile Lakis



Hani Eid

**Hani Raja Eid (BE '14)** completed his MS in Business Analytics and Big Data at IE Business School in Madrid, Spain. He is now working at Murex in Lebanon as a technical analyst after having worked for CCC in Dubai.

**Martine Zaarour (BArch '14)** is a freelance designer, architect, and an entrepreneur currently developing her own women empowerment startup, Jar Thuraya. She has been elected as Lebanese delegate for the Third International Youth Forum on heritage and creativity. She was also selected to take part in the Youth Leadership Program, organized by the UNDP at the Regional Gender Equality Forum in Tunisia, and the ECOSOC Conference in New York where she pitched her startup with UNESCO, UNWOMEN and UNDP.

**Mohammad Fleyfel (BS '14)** is an account strategist at Criteo, a firm for advertising technology. He was previously a performance analyst at Performics (part of Publicis Media).

**Michelle Hasbany (BS '14, MBA '16)** lives in Lebanon and works as an accountant at International Fairs and Promotions.

**Barik Khaldoun Mhadeen (BA '15)** went on to receive an MA in International Relations from the University of Nottingham, UK. He resides in Jordan and is currently a researcher at the WANA Institute, a policy think-tank. His research focus is human security and violent extremism.

**Jessica Torossian (BS '15)** completed an MS in Healthcare Management at the Lebanese University and is now a community health nurse in Beirut.

**Nadine Oussama El Hadi (BS '15, MD '19)** is an ENT/Otolaryngology resident at the American University of Beirut Medical Center.

**Jad Nachaat Abdo (BE '15)** works in project production control for the Consolidated Contractors Company in Kazakhstan, after having worked as a piping site engineer in Saudi Arabia for three years.

**Danielle Jean Zouein (BS '16)** is a coordinator in the Local Development Office at the Federation of Keserwan Ftouh. She completed a leadership training in the Netherlands as part of the Local Government Resilience Programme (LoGoRep).

**Ilham Berjaoui (BS '16)** is a US-registered nurse. She feels that LAU's Alice Ramez Chagoury School of Nursing prepared her well to pass the US nursing licensure exam and looks forward to excelling in her career abroad.

**Mirna Issam Dakhallah (BS '17)** founded Printbear in Beirut, a printing company that handles the full process of indoor and outdoor printing, from design to production and installation.

**Marwa Ahmad Al Rammal (BS '18)** is pursuing an MS in Physical Chemistry at the American University of Beirut while working as a research assistant.

**Hussein Moussa (EMBA '18)** is a managing partner at Medius Marketing and Advertising. His career spans 20 years of marketing and advertising for local and international brands. He lives between Lebanon and Kuwait, and is married with two boys, Ali and Jamil.

**Mazen Abadi (EMBA '18)** is a senior marketing manager covering Africa and the MENA region at Karl Storz Endoskope. He lives in Beirut with his wife and one-year-old son, Kamal.

**Ghadi Abdel Nour (BE '19)** is currently working in Lebanon as a consultant for Strategy&, formerly known as Booz & Co.

**Rayane Awdeh (BS '19)** is working in the automotive industry for NATCO and Sidia as a group marketing officer.

**Abdallah Anwar Saleh (BS '19)** lives in Dubai and is an HR payroll specialist at Dr. Suliman Al Habib Hospital in the United Arab Emirates. Previously, he gained experience as an HR assistant at a local contracting company.



Ilham Berjaoui



Marwa Al Rammal



Hussein Moussa



Mazen Abadi



Abdallah Saleh



# Why I Give Back



## **Sonia Konialian Aller (BA '66)**

*"I consider the institution as having been al-manara, the beacon, as a junior college."*

Born in Aleppo, Syria, Sonia Konialian Aller completed her BA in psychology at Beirut College for Women (BCW) – now LAU – where her husband, Dr. Wayne Aller, has also chaired the department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. The liberal arts education she received at BCW, she said, had awakened in her an "innate tendency to explore ideas, ask questions, and venture into new realms of knowledge and perspective."

BCW exposed her to the field of child development "in the most wonderful way" through an on-campus lab school designed and led by Dr. Julinda Abu Nasr – head of the Child Development program – who later founded The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), now the Arab Institute for Women (AiW). Having earned a PhD in cognitive psychology from Indiana University and a master's in speech-language pathology, she has worked with children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and taught in the field for more than 30 years.

In 2006, Aller founded the Armenian Autism Outreach Project, a nonprofit that helps families who have children with autism in the Greater Los Angeles area. She has been elected to offices in the California Speech Language and Hearing Association (CSHA), and in 2017 received the CSHA Diversity Award. In her words, "BCW/LAU has served me well."

Aller is currently Director of Communication Disorders at the USC University Center for Excellence in Development Disabilities (UCEDD) at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. She gives to LAU through a scholarship endowment fund directed toward AiW.

### **You have been very supportive of the LAU Southern California Alumni Chapter. Why is your involvement with the chapter important to you?**

Alumni are a core constituency of any institution of higher education. It is after leaving college or university and experiencing the 'real world' that one realizes its true impact and value in shaping the rest of one's life. Therefore, it is important for alumni to remain connected, especially with new graduates and to help them understand the importance of supporting their alma mater so that it may provide the same opportunities for upcoming generations.

### **Why do you give back to LAU?**

Based on my experience at BCW and its enduring impact on all aspects of my life, I consider the institution as having been *al-manara*, the beacon, as a junior college. At the time, it led the Middle East in providing higher education to young women from all over the region, and now it is striving to continue its legacy of leadership not only regionally but also worldwide. While it has added a multitude of professional programs and research for both women and men, LAU has not abandoned its original mission of addressing gender issues, and indeed created a field of study through the AiW. Wayne and I were very happy to be able to contribute to its work with a small scholarship endowment two years ago.

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

For the 'older' alumni, it is important to stay connected with the institution, remain abreast of its new goals and achievements and provide meaningful input and support. BCW has gone through a long metamorphosis to becoming LAU, and we, as alums, should appreciate and support its growth and milestones. It is also important that current students make the most of the diversity LAU has to offer and become effective leaders in bringing about change.

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

Keep doing what you have been doing and are doing as you live out your legacy. Always *al-manara*.

# Creating a **Lasting Legacy**



## *The Ali-Ahmed Family*

The legacy of the Ali-Ahmed family goes back to 1959, when the late Lamia Sabbah Ali-Ahmed graduated from Beirut College for Women (BCW), now LAU, with a psychology degree. Today, her legacy lives on in the form of another student who is following that same educational path, all thanks to a scholarship created in her memory by her children: Rania, Fadi, Rim, and Rami Ali-Ahmed.

The Ali-Ahmed Designated Scholarship, established in the summer of 2018, is funding one female psychology student from Nabatieh, Lebanon, until her graduation, which are the two criteria for being awarded the scholarship, along with financial need.

When they honored their mother's legacy with a scholarship at LAU, Lamia Sabbah Ali-Ahmed's children also uncovered her senior thesis. The psychology

research, which is considered valuable work on social issues surrounding rural and urban adolescents in Lebanon, tackled seven issues that remain, surprisingly, the same concerns of today's youth.

Her children republished the avant-garde thesis in a book titled *Coming of Age in Lebanon*, which was distributed at a special event held at LAU in January 2019. The thesis and its impact were discussed at the launch, and gathered faculty members, family, and friends of the Ali-Ahmeds to honor the late alumna.

The legacy of the Ali-Ahmed family will forever be cherished at LAU, through both the scholarship and *Coming of Age in Lebanon*.



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