



AUB *Bulletin*

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AUB: A historical accident

The American University of Beirut is largely the result of serendipity, said sociology Professor Samir Khalaf to a surprised audience during a lecture titled “Godly and Ungodly Puritans: AUB as a Cultural Transplant.”

The December 8, 2010 lecture kicked off a series of seminars about the history of AUB which will be held throughout the 2010-11 academic year. The lecture was based on Khalaf’s extensive research on the early American missionaries (New England Presbyterians) who eventually established AUB. The book, covering the 40 years (1820-60) before the establishment of the Syrian Protestant College, which later became AUB, is the first of two volumes which explore the intellectual history of AUB. The lecture attracted an audience that almost filled Bathish Auditorium and included AUB President Peter Dorman, a direct descendant of AUB founder and missionary Daniel Bliss.

Organized by the “Keen on Awareness and Maturity, KamPaign,” the lectures aim to acquaint the AUB community with the development of the University before the founding in 1866. The KamPaign is the brainchild of Kamal Hamadeh, a fourth-year mechanical engineering student and the president of the AUB chapter of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). He initially wanted to introduce the history of mechanical engineering at AUB to his classmates, but the project grew to encompass AUB’s

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Campus cats are the focus of the 2011 AUB Calendar, recently released by the Office of Communications.

AUB: A historical accident



Professor Samir Khalaf addressing the audience

comprehensive history.

According to Khalaf, a veteran researcher and the director of the Center for Behavioral Research at AUB, the American missionaries who eventually established the then-Syrian Protestant College, were only passing through the country for supplies and had no intention of leaving behind a 150-year-old legacy.

“Their original intention was to reclaim the Holy Land,” said Khalaf. “They only wanted to stop in Beirut long enough to secure camels or a boat on their way to Jerusalem.”

By chance, one of the missionaries, Levi Parsons, fell sick and was advised to convalesce in Lebanon: serendipity at work. “The minute they set foot in Lebanon, they found it more interesting than Palestine,” said Khalaf.

In Lebanon, they found all the so-called “nominal Christians,” Maronites, Greek Orthodox, and Armenians as well as resistance from the locals to be converted to Protestantism.

So intense was the resistance, the early envoys had the foresight to start considering other venues for “winning the hearts and minds” of local groups other than direct evangelism.

Enter education (particularly women’s education introduced as early as 1823), along with welfare, sports, outreach activities, and relief.

In this sense, AUB’s distinguished legacy was the by-product of the failure of the founding fathers in their original proselytizing mission, noted Khalaf.

But the men from New England colleges (Amherst, Princeton, Williams, Andover) were “far more perceptive than the neocons of George W. Bush,” said Khalaf. “They knew they could not be confrontational.”

Eventually, the missionaries managed to Protestantize virtually all of Ras Beirut families—Sunnis, Shias, and Greek Orthodox—not via religious conversion, but through the cultural and social practices these families had adopted such as discipline, hard work, and even cold showers.

Of course, the natives’ receptiveness to learning and new ideas and their dynamic pluralism were crucial for the success of the missionaries, said Khalaf. In fact, although the Americans had 17 missions throughout the region, their biggest success was the Lebanese venture.

That success, however, almost never happened. As Presbyterian envoys, they were expected to plant the seed and go home. In other words, not only were they not planning to come to Lebanon, they had no intention of staying. What kept them here? A good old competitive spirit with the Catholic Jesuits, who had already established colleges, universities, and hospitals in the country. “We owe AUB to the [Protestant] missionaries’ hatred of the Jesuits,” said Khalaf.

Again, serendipity at work.

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Responsible Editor: Antonios Francis
Production Manager: Randa Zaiter
Information Coordinator: Sahar Ghandour
Content Coordinator: Manal Zebian
Design and Artwork:
Zeina Jammal, Ranya Abi Aad
Office of Communications

Copy Editors:
Maha Al-Azar
Jean-Marie Cook

Patrick Galey
Houry Mayyissian

Contributing Writers:
Maureen Abi Ghanem
Jamal Aridi
Tracy Chemaly
Danah Halawi
Maya Sfeir
Rosalynn Ghobril
Meryl Haddad
Carole Abi Ghanem

Photographers:
Hasan Nisr
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Ahmad El Itani

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AUB research van to study pollution in a one-year project

A new environmental study which aims to monitor the air pollution caused by traffic near residential areas in Beirut was launched on December 9, 2010, by AUB's Atmospheric and Analytical Laboratory (AAL) with the support of Rasamny Younis Motor Company (RYMCO) and Bank Audi sal-Audi Saradar Group. The launch took place at 11 am at a press conference in the West Hall Common Room.

A first of its kind in Lebanon, this project will measure real-time particulate matter pollution in traffic generated by biogenic and anthropogenic sources, to which vehicles are major contributors.

"The initiative will have a direct and beneficial impact on society and it's certain to have public policy implications," said AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal, who welcomed private sector partnership with the University. "What's missing is the connection between policy-making and the study, and that's where AUB can play a major role by informing the public."

"In Beirut, as in many other overpopulated capitals, traffic is the main source of air pollution," said Najat A. Saliba, a specialist in air pollution and associate professor in AUB's Chemistry Department. "Numerous studies have determined that air pollution caused by traffic near residential areas affects health. We aim throughout the year to study, understand, and assess the levels of particulate matter so that the results will benefit the public sector and guide them in their pursuit of new and efficient rules and regulations."

The project will employ a Nissan Urvan van, provided by RYMCO, which will be equipped with a real-time measuring device installed on a special stand. The device will electronically send its measurements to the computers of the project research team. The collected data will be studied to understand, and assess air pollution sources in Lebanon.

"Being part of the automobile industry mandates that we take a responsible role in developing strategies to help address air pollution and its consequences, one of the top priorities for environmental issues, in keeping with Nissan's two-pillar strategy for year 2010," said RYMCO CEO Abdo Sweidan. "The project was not a mere coincidence," added Sweidan. "It would not have happened without AUB, which is concerned about issues that are important to the general public."

"As the leading bank in Lebanon, we strongly believe we have a civic role

to play within the community we operate in," noted Ibrahim Salibi, assistant general manager and head of corporate and commercial banking at Bank Audi sal. "This specific initiative of measuring the quality of the air and the pollution in Lebanon is key to the blooming of environment-friendly schemes which can only contribute to the well-being of the community."

The study will monitor and assess 31 different types of air pollution caused by particulate matter, from allergens to irritants to carcinogens. The study will report drivers' and passengers' exposure to particulate matter during their travel to and out of Beirut. Results will serve as a basis for studies on the impact of traffic pollution on the population's health while highlighting to the public sector the imminent need for traffic measurements and regulations.

The van, exclusively offered by Nissan for this project, will travel on both sides of the roadway connecting Beirut to Jounieh from 7 am to 10 am and from 5 pm to 8 pm for one year, which started on December 10, 2010.

An AUB driver has been detailed to this project.

A development of the Nissan Caravan, the Urvan is a multi-purpose transporter vehicle which has proved very popular in fire and emergency departments in various countries. Evolved through four generations, it is roughly five meters long, two meters wide and two meters high.



From left to right: RYMCO CEO, Abdo Sweidan; Associate Professor at AUB and air pollution specialist, Najat A. Saliba, Salma Oueida Dannawi, Development Office; Provost Ahmad Dallal, and Ibrahim Salibi, Assistant General Manager and head of corporate and commercial banking at Bank Audi sal

ASHA grant to support teaching, research, and patient care



Fadia Homaidan, PhD, director of the Office of Grants and Contracts

AUB recently received a \$2.3 million grant from the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) to help update teaching, research, and patient facilities on campus and in the AUB Medical Center.

ASHA, which has supported AUB's teaching, research, and medical facilities for several years, is a unit within the United States

Agency for International Development (USAID) which supports American schools, universities, and hospitals outside the United States.

"AUB and AUBMC are committed to excellence in teaching and research and in serving patients from Lebanon and the region, and this grant helps us do that," said Fadia Homaidan, PhD, director of the Office of Grants and Contracts. "By updating our teaching and research facilities, we can compete with the best universities worldwide,

attract top quality teachers, and enhance our research output."

This year, the ASHA grant will be used to update laboratories in several faculties, including improving safety in chemistry labs. ASHA funds will also help install new patient beds in the AUBMC, purchase new operating tables, and buy new equipment for the Intensive Care Unit. The funds will also be used to acquire state-of-the-art equipment to improve research capabilities, while giving students the opportunity for hands-on experience.

Moreover, the grant will establish two new offices to enhance student services and enrollment management. The Ombuds Office will act as an independent, impartial, confidential reference to investigate complaints and disputes not covered by a collective bargaining agreement, and the Graduate Council will be responsible for implementing academic preparation and recruiting programs for prospective graduate students.

"The ASHA program has been supporting AUB for many years and the University is indebted to this program and to USAID for sustaining our institution over the years," added Homaidan.

AUB scientist promotes research during Science Days Exhibition

AUB was well represented at the annual Science Days Exhibition, which opened at Beirut's Hippodrome in mid-October 2010.

Youssef Mouneimne, PhD, director of AUB's Kamal A. Shair Central Research Science Laboratory since 2000, and representatives of other AUB departments participated in the exhibition with booths promoting science. Mouneimneh expressed the hope that the Science Days Exhibition helped pique the interest of young people in science careers. "You would be surprised by the number of bright youngsters who listened to the presentations and asked interesting questions," he said.

The exhibition theme focused on applications of high voltage in science and medicine. "During the fair, Mouneimneh showed a Tesla generator that can produce hundreds of kilo volts which emit sparks in the air. "People were fascinated," he said. The Tesla generator was used to explain the basis of two patented inventions on electroinsertion and

flow electroporation apparatuses. The booth also exhibited posters and simplified models explaining the various inventions that can be applied to AIDS therapy and diagnosis, heart therapy, and drug clearing.

"For three days, the booth was like a beehive, busy with people watching the presentations made by lab assistant Rania El Osta, engineers Joan Younes and Raja Chaaban, and myself," Mouneime said. "By showing my inventions I wanted to give these youngsters an idea about the importance of inventions, while representing AUB . . ."



Youssef Mouneimne, PhD, promoting science

AUB team spearheads international consortium to study marine resources

An AUB team of scientists and researchers helped spearhead a six-million euro international project that will study the potential therapeutic properties of marine resources while preserving biodiversity.

Members of Ibsar, the Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures at AUB, initiated discussions with a Finnish team in 2008 to establish joint research projects rooted in biodiversity.

The result was Project MAREX, which brings together 19 academic, research, and industrial partners from 13 countries (Belgium, Chile, Finland, France, India, Italy, Lebanon, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the United Kingdom), who will collaborate to collect, isolate, and classify marine organisms from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans as well as from the Mediterranean, Baltic, and Arabian Seas.

Extracts of marine organisms will be studied for several therapeutically and industrially significant biological activities including anticancer, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, anticoagulant activities, and for ion channel/receptor modulation and

plant growth regulation by applying a wide variety of screening tools.

AUB Professors Najat Saliba and Marwan El-Sabban attended the project's kickoff meeting held in Helsinki, Finland in early October 2010, during which the four-year MAREX project was implemented.

"This project asserts AUB's leadership position as both regional and international partner in issues related to biodiversity," said El-Sabban, who teaches human morphology at AUB.

"Several members of Ibsar, with diverse expertise, will now engage in extraction, bio-fractionation, and screening for important biological activities and industrial applications from marine organisms both from local sources and from other partners across the globe," explained Saliba, a chemistry professor.

The MAREX project hopes to find more environmentally-conscious marine sources of biotechnology products and to increase public awareness of marine biodiversity.

Technology paves way for team-based learning

Many universities throughout the world are turning more frequently from traditional classroom learning, according to Rayane Fayed, training coordinator with the Academic Computing Center (ACC), the center largely responsible for exposing AUB faculty members to the use of technology in alternative teaching methods.

Fayed was introducing Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB) professor Neil Yorke-Smith's round-table discussion on Team-Based Learning held in Jafet Library's E-classroom on October 21, 2010.

Yorke-Smith's round-table was the first of four yearly presentations sponsored by the ACC in collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to introduce interested AUB teachers to innovative teaching methods.

Yorke-Smith described the use of technology to enable the use of team-based learning to 16 instructors and professors from disciplines ranging from English to civil engineering. Team-based learning, he said, demands a dramatic shift in the use of classroom time: "Time spent lecturing is almost zero." The emphasis is on "a student-centered, problem-based teaching approach that stimulates teamwork and active

learning while maintaining individual accountability."

Yorke-Smith, who based his presentation on experience with students in the OSB with colleagues Randa Salamoun-Sioufi and Nelson King, explained that technology, in the form of the Moodle course management system, can replace traditional paper-based readiness tests, which require special supplies.



Yorke-Smith presenting alternative teaching methods

How to stop headache pain



HSON Director Huda Abu-Saad Huijer addressing LSSP

More than 50 percent of all people experience some form of headache in their lifetimes, as the head is the only part of the body that can experience frequent and recurrent pain unrelated to tissue pathology, said AUB's Dr. Samir Atweh, speaking at the meeting of the Lebanese Society for the Study of Pain's (LSSP) Update on Treatment of Headaches held at the Hariri School of Nursing's

Hisham Jaroudi Auditorium on October 15, 2010.

All kinds of headaches, from migraines to tension to cluster to short-lasting unilateral headaches were discussed, as well as clinical and surgical treatments for pain. Many common causes can trigger different types of headaches varying considerably in their clinical presentation and treatment. Most common headache triggers were identified: fatigue, insomnia, anxiety and depression, stress, ir-

regular meals, high intake or withdrawal of caffeine intake, dehydration, and reduced physical exercise.

St. Joseph University's Dr. Joseph Maarrawi illustrated the latest surgical procedures applied to eliminate severe cases of chronic headaches such as trigeminal and occipital neuralgia.

In his paper, "Tension Type Headaches," Lebanese University's Dr. Jose Chidiac pointed out that alternative methods of relieving pain such as acupuncture and yoga can supplement standard medical treatment, but he also stressed the importance of the individual patient's belief system.

According to the World Health Organization, "Health is not only the absence of infirmity and disease, but also a state of physical, mental, and social well-being."

HSON Director Huda Abu-Saad Huijer, also the president elect of LSSP, said similar discussions on various types of pain will be held every three months.

LSSP, an associate chapter of the International Association for the Study of Pain, plans to launch a website to make the association's plans and expertise more accessible to the public.

Inauguration of the "Nazem Ibrahim Basha Classroom" in OSB

Nazem-Ibrahim Basha, AUB alumnus and chairman of Amwal Advisory Corp., wanted to give back to his alma mater by making a donation to the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB), dedicating a classroom in his name.

"I wanted to be of service to AUB and to give back," said Basha at the dedication ceremony on August 6, 2010.

Basha's family has a long history with AUB. While he earned a bachelor's in economics in 1981 and a master's degree in business administration in 1983, both from AUB, his father, Nihad, a well-known figure in the world of banking and finance, was a part-time professor at the school of business in the 1980s.



From left to right: Dr. Imad Baalbaki, Mr. Khalil Hindi, Mr. Nazem Basha, Dr. Ibrahim Othman

Basha's wife Salma Malas is also an AUB alumnus (BA'82), and she and Nazem met on campus. She is also an active member of the AUB Alumni Society-Bahrain

which helps raise funds for scholarships at the University.

Khalil Hindi, OSB's acting dean, spoke to visitors who came for the inauguration from different parts of the region, thanking Basha for his donation, which will go to OSB's general development fund. "We take great pride in AUB's graduates, who are characterized by a loyalty that we trust, value, and try to inculcate in future graduates," said Hindi.

Assistant Vice President for Development Imad Baalbaki said that donations to classrooms are important for keeping alumni ties with the campus. "A naming campaign has been taking place at OSB for three years now. Graduates and friends of the university are welcome to inaugurate the rooms and labs. We count on their support, for which we are eternally grateful."

A graduate of the AUB School of Business, Nazem Ibrahim-Basha is the founder, chairman, and chief executive officer of Amwal Advisory Corporation, a firm that specializes in mergers, acquisitions, corporate finance, and financial advisory services. He is also the chairman of the Syrian Saudi Touristic Investments Company, which owns the Four Seasons Hotel in Damascus, and a member of the Advisory Board of the BLOM Bank-Saudi Arabia Fund.

Are Lebanon's fruits and vegetables safe to eat?

In the late sixteenth century the Renaissance botanist and physicist Paracelsus stated that “all things are toxic and there is nothing without toxic properties. It is only the dose which makes something a poison.”

Five centuries later, researchers at AUB have released the first comprehensive study of the previously undocumented, but much discussed risk of pesticide residues in fruits and vegetables on sale in local markets.

The research is the first of its kind in Lebanon, combining food consumption and contamination data. The researchers, Assistant Professors of Nutrition and Food Science Lara Nasreddine and Zeina Kassaify were supported by a grant of some \$20,000 provided jointly by AUB and the World Health Organization. The team based their study on a representative sample of the adult population of Beirut and the semi-rural area of Kesirwan by first conducting a survey of foods consumed by adults in the two regions to characterize the diet and contrive a “market basket” for each area.

The researchers then collected five different samples of each food from local markets in the Beirut and Kesirwan areas at regular intervals during 2008-09 to minimize the effect of different sources producing different results.

“What we were doing was mimicking the behavior of the consumer,” says Nasreddine. “Because if you are going to buy something to cook you don't really know where it is coming from.”

The collected samples were washed, in some cases peeled and cooked, and then prepared as they are typically consumed by the population to reflect the true risk

posed by pesticide residues in an adult diet.

“If I do a survey on lettuce and zucchini alone this doesn't tell me anything because what I want to know is how much I am ingesting from all of this together,” says Nasreddine.

The previously unreleased data shows that on the whole, the daily dose of pesticide residues provided by foods consumed by the population are far below the toxicological reference values of acceptable daily intake levels set by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization.

Out of the 43 common pesticide residues tested for, only 12 were detected after food samples were analyzed and many samples turned out not to contain detectable levels of pesticide residues because washing and peeling alone can considerably lower the amount of pesticide residues in food products, according to Nasreddine.

On a national level, however, dietary exposure to pesticide residues, will require several similar studies. Also, other food groups such as animal-based products will have to be incorporated, because certain pesticide residues can exist in animal fats. Children, who may be more vulnerable to pesticide residues, must also be studied. “We have to be careful that this study and others of this nature are like a snapshot in time, so if the levels of contamination and pesticide application change, the ingested dose and the dietary exposure will also change,” says Nasreddine. “These studies need to be conducted regularly and we don't have this standard in place yet.”



Exploring pesticide levels

AUB-UNRWA survey provides figures on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon

Only about 270,000 Palestinian refugees of the 425,000 officially registered in Lebanon actually live here. Of those, about 70,000 need jobs, and only 6,000 can compete with qualified Lebanese job-seekers.

These are the most recent figures unveiled by an AUB-UNRWA socio-economic survey conducted over a six-month period in 2010 embracing 2,600 Palestinian refugee households nationwide, including non-registered refugees.

One-hundred sixty thousand Palestinian refugees living in Lebanon are poor and 16,000 are extremely poor; they do not receive basic food requirements.

While the first set of figures is expected to appease many Lebanese concerned about the perceived threat of giving Palestinian refugees the basic rights of long-term residents, the second set of figures leaves policy-makers concerned about the potential for violence-in-the-making, if solutions for extreme poverty are not implemented.

“These figures reveal for the first time accurate information on the demographic characteristics of refugees, in addition to health, food security, education, employment, housing, and livelihood conditions,” said Jad Chaaban, speaking to a packed audience. Chaaban, assistant professor of economics in AUB’s Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, is the principal investigator of the survey.

Chaaban worked with an AUB team of academics and researchers from the departments of public health, economics, and sociology, who collected and analyzed data on a variety of indicators including food security, health, housing, assets, social inclusion, education, and income among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

The opening session included remarks by Provost Ahmad Dallal, FAFS Dean Nahla Hwalla, Salvatore Lombardo, director of UNRWA Affairs in Lebanon; Maya Majzoub, chair of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee; Diego Escalona, head of the Operations Section in the Delegation of the European Union; and Dr. Abdallah Abdallah, the Palestinian Organization representative in Lebanon.

Many believe that if they had access to a larger number of professions, Palestinian refugees would take jobs away



An AUB team of academics and researchers collected and analyzed data on a variety of indicators

from qualified Lebanese,” said Chaaban. “But the fact is, refugees have a different skills set [from] Lebanese.”

Chaaban noted the presence of twice as many poor and four times as many extremely poor among Palestinian refugees than among the Lebanese population.

However, Palestinian refugees consume \$340 million in expenditures per year and rely either on UNRWA, charity organizations, or family remittances—not on the Lebanese government—for health insurance and education.

Chaaban said the large size of households (4.5 people per family), disability, and low levels of education (more than 65 percent of Palestinians do not have the Brevet or grade nine level education versus 50 percent of Lebanese) contribute to Palestinian poverty.

Moreover, many refugees follow an unhealthy diet high in sugar and low in fresh fruits and vegetables and micronutrients, increasing over time the incidence of chronic disease.

Chaaban said that without UNRWA poverty and extreme poverty would explode among Palestinians, but UNRWA needs to reform its programs. “We recommend,” he said, “that UNRWA reform its program strategies and continue lobbying the Lebanese government” to improve the status of refugees and to erase “misconceptions about them.”

UNRWA’s Lombardo emphasized the importance of evidence in helping UNRWA design more effective programs, noting, however, that although about 270,000 refugees currently reside in the country, 425,000 have “a legal attachment to it,” as they want to safeguard their right to move and their international legal status.

German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) representative visits AUB

The Office of Grants and Contracts in coordination with the Office of International Programs at AUB hosted Andreas Wutz, the Representative of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) on November 2, 2010. Wutz talked to more than 80 students about the German University system, the benefits of studying in Germany and the acceptance requirements as well as the available scholarship programs that Lebanese students and scholars can benefit from.

With headquarters in Bonn, DAAD has 63 branches and information centers around the world, including Lebanon, and provides more than 57,000 scholarships annually. In 2009, DAAD expenditures encompassed 83 million Euros on scholarships for foreigners, and 51 million Euros on educational cooperation with developing countries. During the presentation, Wutz highlighted DAAD's research scholarships for applicants from Lebanon which focus on grant programs for PhD-candidates and academic staff. He stated that PhD-candidates can apply for full grants, covering the full period of their PhD studies (up to 3.5 years) and research in Germany. Another DAAD program targets young professionals who have a Bachelor's degree and at least two years of professional experience in a field related to civil engineering, regional planning, public health and other disciplines.

The one hour presentation also featured information and facts about Germany's population and geography, its inventions, discoveries and noble prize winners and its cultural and religious diversity. Pointing out that Germany has the



Andreas Wutz, promotes study in German

third highest number of foreign students in the world, Wutz went on to talk about the country's various higher education systems and universities which range from technical universities, to universities of applied sciences, to colleges of music, art and film. He explained that there are 900 international degree programs throughout Germany which provide Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programs and provided details on the living and tuition expenses of students as well as the benefits of studying in Germany.

Wutz said that DAAD's role in Lebanon is not only to provide students with assistance on getting scholarship support but also to give guidance on the various programs and fields of study. He invited students to contact him to explore the available international programs and funding sources from DAAD and a vast variety of other foundations.

AUB research team explores the Yammouneh fault

Recent research in the Marjahine area in Hermel has uncovered a previously unstudied segment of the Yammouneh fault—one of three major fault lines in Lebanon. The discovery, explained Elias Ata, assistant professor in AUB's Geology Department, will help create a more precise calendar for past earthquakes along the Yammouneh fault line.

The research conducted by Professor Ata along with Yann Klinger from the Institute for Physics of the Globe, Paris, with the help of AUB students Ramy Farhat and Samy Sheikh Hussein, was funded by the French National Research Agency and aimed to encourage students to become involved in research, particularly in the earth sciences.

The two week long excavations in Marjahine uncovered a major fault not presented on existing geological maps. The Yammouneh fault is the Lebanon segment of the Levant fault, one of the biggest faults on earth, extending from the Gulf of Aqaba

to Turkey and forming the boundary between two pieces of the earth's surface: the Arabian plate to the East and the African or Sinai plate to the West.

The research team chose areas rich in new sediments as recent deposits would have witnessed all recent earthquakes, not older ones. In a trench dug in Marjahine the researchers studied the sedimentary layers uncovered. Radiocarbon dating of samples from these sediments will allow a more accurate dating of previous earthquakes and recurrence patterns along the fault.

A more precise calendar of previous earthquakes will also help geologists come up with a more robust estimate for the occurrence of future earthquakes. "The more we know about previous earthquakes, the better we can anticipate for the future," said Elias, adding that Lebanon's location in an active earthquake zone makes this information important.

A more detailed calendar of events obtained from this site,

when compared with results of studies from the two other main faults in Lebanon, would also provide better understanding of how all three faults function and communicate with each other.

Professor Elias hopes the recent research will reveal information on Syrian earthquakes not thus far recorded. "I hope we

will be able to [pinpoint] earthquakes" in Syrian segments of the fault. "This fault continues all the way up to Syria, where earthquakes were not "powerful enough to rupture the rest of the fault in Lebanon."

New scholarship at AUB for Syrian Orthodox students

His Holiness Moran Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas, the Supreme Head of the Universal Syrian Orthodox Church, recently established an endowed scholarship for Syrian Orthodox students studying at the American University of Beirut.

All Syrian Orthodox students applying to AUB from across the Middle East are eligible for the scholarship, which will be available starting with the 2011-12 academic year. The scholarship bears no restrictions on subject of study as long as the students demonstrate financial need and good academic standing. All eligible students applying for financial aid will automatically qualify for the scholarship; no separate application is necessary.

The fund was established following a visit to the AUB Office of Development by His Excellency Archbishop Mar Gregorios Yohanna Ibrahim of Aleppo. The close relationship that developed resulted in the Mar Ignatius Zakka

I Iwas Scholarship, founded on the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of His Holiness's Patriarchal endowment. The agreement was reached during a meeting with Director of AUB's Office of Development Operations Soha Hmaidan and His Holiness Patriarch Mar Ignatius Zakka I Iwas in the Syrian Orthodox Church's Lebanon headquarters in Atshana on August 3, 2010.

Soha Hmaidan of the Development Office explained that the endowed scholarship is expected to generate annual financial aid money: "This association of the Patriarch's name with AUB demonstrates the trust vested in AUB as an institution that educates leaders across the region."

The scholarship will be added to the already existing Hanna Choulji scholarship for Syrian Orthodox students from Aleppo at AUB.

Scholarship grants for the arts

AUB received scholarship grants from the Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL), which announced its arts grant program at a press conference on October 28, 2010 at the Hotel Albergos's Al Dente Restaurant in Achrafieh.

APEAL, which promotes and supports contemporary art and promising new talent in Lebanon, last April organized

the exhibition, *Convergence, New Art from Lebanon*, showcasing the works of several Lebanese artists in the fields of painting, sculpture, photography, filmmaking, and architecture. The exhibition took place at the American University's Katzen Arts Center in Washington DC, under the patronage of Lebanese Ambassador Antoine Chedid.

AUB professor first Lebanese member of international mediating organization

AUB Professor Ahmad Moussalli of the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration has been appointed to the board of EPOS, an international, non-governmental mediating and negotiating operational agency based in Italy, dealing in conflict resolution and prevention.

This appointment, a first for both AUB and Lebanon,

resulted from Moussalli's many books, papers, debates, and discussions around the subject of arbitration as a form of conflict resolution.

"Arbitration is an informal procedure to resolve social, political, and even individual problems," says Moussalli, an AUB faculty member for 22 years.



Professor Ahmad Moussalli

“I believe people should be able to negotiate their way of life with each other. The state has weakened society by making people depend on it and its formal laws,” he said. “Arbitration is a way of humanizing the process and dealing with problems without violence or resorting to the state”. Although he does not believe that arbitration should necessarily replace

courts of law, he points to very clear examples of how it works in the confines of a society by “humanly connecting people to each other.”

With his appointment to EPOS, Moussalli will be acting as a consultant and will write opinion pieces focusing on arbitration in the Arab and Islamic world, while also dealing

with radical Islamic groups. “One of my objectives [in working with EPOS] is to work with conflicts between the West and the Islamic world.”

Moussalli’s expertise has been sought around the world. In April 2010 he participated in BBC’s Doha Debates. He has also presented seminars, lectures, and talks in places including America, England, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Korea, Turkey, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt.

“I’ve even had offers to move to the West,” he says, “but I feel I can do something more useful in my own region, and I feel great about AUB.”

Professor Moussalli, a member of other professional organizations including the Middle East Institute, the American Political Science Association, the Middle East Studies Association, the Society for the History of Islamic Sciences and Philosophy, and the International Political Science Association, will be part of the EPOS board for an indefinite period.

Biology professor recognized for promoting science



Professor Elias Baydoun

Professor Elias Baydoun of the Department of Biology wants to see the Arab world fully embracing modern science, engineering, and technology so that young people will not have to leave the region in order to develop their careers. His commitment to science was recognized when he was recently announced as the 2010 winner of the

TWAS-ARO Regional Prize for

Public Understanding and Popularization of Science.

Baydoun will receive his award and \$3,000 prize during the TWAS-ARO regional meeting in December, and intends to use the money to help preparing conferences and supporting AUB students.

TWAS-ARO is the regional division of the Academy of Sciences for the Developing World, which aims to promote scientific capacity and excellence for sustainable development in the region. A TWAS fellow since 1998, Baydoun is the fourth recipient of the regional prize, which recognizes individuals who have been instrumental in facilitating science communication to the public in the Arab region.

Baydoun was recognized for making science accessible to a larger audience through teaching at AUB, translating textbooks, giving public lectures, and organizing international conferences through the Arab Academy of Sciences.

While chair of the AUB Biology Department from 1987 to 1993 he updated laboratories, attracted new recruits with PhDs, encouraged renowned scientists to hold seminars on campus, revised the science curriculum, renovated the biology building, and constructed a new laboratory and classroom.

Although he finds many undergraduates to be “reluctant scientists who fear science’s complexity, jargon, and concepts,” he enjoys seeing students change their perspective once they discover how science impacts society.

Outside AUB Baydoun has assisted in developing biology curricula and textbooks for secondary schools and community colleges in Oman and has written school biology textbooks for the Ministry of Education in Jordan. He has also acted as a consultant for such organizations as UNESCO, ENEP, and UNDP, among others.

Among his current projects is an upcoming conference on alternative and renewable energy, as well as others on solar energy, food production and food security, and scientific approaches to the sustainable use of water.

Lebanese Academy of Sciences elects third AUB professor as member



Dr. Fuad Ziyadeh

Dr. Fuad Ziyadeh, AUB professor of medicine and biochemistry, recently became the third Lebanon-based member of the Lebanese Academy of Sciences, after his research on diabetic kidney disease grabbed the attention of the prestigious academy's founding members.

Dr. Ziyadeh, chair of the Department of Internal Medicine, joins two other AUB professors, Nesreen Ghaddar

and Makhluif Haddadin, in the academy. Ghaddar was invited for her research on thermal comfort and renewable energy while Haddadin's innovative research in chemistry earned him membership. The three are the only academy members who conduct their research in Lebanon.

"I am honored and happy to become a new member of the Lebanese Academy of Sciences," said Dr. Ziyadeh. "This particular membership in my career is sweeter than the rest, and means a lot to me because it is Lebanese."

Known officially by its French name, "Académie des Sciences du Liban (ASL)," the academy is a learned society founded by governmental decree in August 2007 with "the aim of contributing to the growth, invigoration, and dissemination of the sciences in Lebanon." ASL membership is a merit-based honor conferred by election. "ASL members are prominent Lebanese scientists working inside and outside of Lebanon, as well as distinguished foreign scientists," according to the ASL website

Dr. Ziyadeh's election stems from his "lifetime contribution to the understanding and treatment of the kidney disease in diabetes mellitus."

ASL President Edgar Choueiri wrote, "Your outstanding contributions to the understanding of the pathogenesis of diabetic nephropathy, and recognized status as a leading scientist, add prestige to the Academy, and your intellectual vigor, wisdom, dedication, and efficacy will be a great capital for the Academy to draw upon as it goes forward in its mission."

Ziyadeh was also a member of the prestigious American Society for Clinical Investigation and, later, a member of the Association of American Physicians.

The Medical Chapter of the AUB Alumni Association awarded him the distinguished alumnus Gold Medal in 2002. He is diplomat of the American Board of Internal Medicine (1984) and Nephrology (1986).

Dr. Fuad Ziyadeh has made seminal contributions to the field of kidney complications of diabetes for the past 20 years. He has more than 150 cited publications in PubMed, and the number of journal citations of his published research has exceeded 9,000.

Dr. Ziyadeh has also pursued original studies in humans as a translation of preclinical findings, and the results have become stepping stones for new potential therapies for kidney disease.

An AUB graduate with distinction (BSc '76, MD '80) Dr. Ziyadeh completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at AUBMC. He was elected member of Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society as a junior medical student and was president of the AUB Chapter (1981-82). He then joined the Renal-Electrolyte and Hypertension Division of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia as a nephrology fellow, and after four years he was retained as a faculty member. He rose through the academic ranks and was awarded tenure in 1994 and promoted to Professor of Medicine in 1999 before his return to AUB in 2002.

Professor honored with top University service award

A leading contributor to educational reform across the Arab world has been awarded the Abdul Hamid Hallab REP Service Excellence Award for his work with AUB's Regional External Program (REP).

Ghazi Ghaith, AUB professor and chairman of the University's Education Department was honored for his work in serving "the peoples of the Middle East and beyond," in

line with the award's criteria.

The winner is recognized as a consultant who has made major contributions to the REP mission of providing "the Middle East and North Africa with world class professional services. . . while reflecting AUB core values and the University's commitment to service excellence." Since 1976, REP has extended consulting services and assumed management roles for over

20 higher education initiatives throughout the region.

As a REP consultant, Ghaith has helped educational reform efforts in several countries in the Middle East and the North Africa region, including Lebanon, as founder of intensive English programs. He has worked with the REP office for over a decade through projects involving program design and evaluation, admission, and exit exam construction and analysis, and faculty recruitment and training.

In particular, Ghaith has implemented three professional development workshops for teachers in Qatar through the School of Education of Qatar University, and devised an operational plan for the evaluation of the institution's Foundation Year Program. He has also been involved in a Prince Fahad Bin Sultan University (FBSU) project, where his contributions laid the groundwork for the development of comprehensive curricular guides and packages, preparing students for college study, and recruiting staff.

Ghaith was also instrumental in designing and shaping the development of the Foundation Year Program and the Teaching Diploma and MA programs in education, as well as



Professor Ghazi Ghaith receiving the award

improving communication skills courses within the English Department of Dhofar University in Oman. He also designed and monitored the Foundation Year Program at Mohammed Al Manaa College of Health Sciences in Saudi Arabia. In addition, Ghaith has aided the preparation and submission of several REP proposals for funding. Foundation year programs are pre-university programs that prepare high school students for university by helping them polish their English skills or meet any required prerequisites.

His professional interests include curriculum development and material writing and his research focuses on the applications of cooperative learning in language teaching and teacher education.

Professor Samir Makdisi explores democracy in the Arab World

The late Winston Churchill once said: “Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others that have been tried.” To this day, the Arab world governments still dabble in the latter. To understand why, an ambitious research project was launched by AUB’s Samir Makdisi and the Dubai Economic Council’s Ibrahim ElBadawi, resulting in a new book, *Democracy in the Arab World: Explaining the Deficit* (Routledge; 331 pages; \$78.60), which includes their essays and those of 18 scholars.

Funded by a \$339,000 grant from the Canadian International Development and Research Center (IDRC), the three-year project employs a double-pronged approach to why the Arab World has been so slow to embrace true representative government.

Firstly, Makdisi, ElBedawi, and World Bank Economist Gary Milante developed their own cross-country model (EMM model) by testing various elements specific to the Arab region with the objective of identifying which of them explain the five to six decades. These elements include regional wars, oil rents, religion, and colonial history.

The three scholars then measured the extent to which real democratic government has taken hold in the region. The most notable conclusions drawn from this study are that oil wealth and conflict, particularly the ongoing Palestine conflict, are the most relevant factors constraining democratization in the Arab region.

Members of the research team then applied the EMM model to specific country case studies to probe to what extent the major conclusions of the cross country work apply in Iraq, Sudan, Lebanon, Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, and the Arabian Gulf.

The research includes the analysis of several prominent non-Arab scholars but draws mostly from the work of independent Arab scholars both inside and outside the region. One inherent theme running throughout the study is that the true significance of the impact of oil wealth on governance can be properly understood only if situated in the socio-political context of the countries concerned.

The abuse of religion is only one of the many facets the work identifies as a tool of autocratic rule.

Makdisi and Elbedawi are now seeking to identify the conditions for a transition from autocracy to democracy. The IDRC has approved a further grant to produce a sequel to the current study, using the same methodology. The research is expected to take two and a half to three years and research teams are currently being assembled.

“The method we used—a thematic paper followed by case studies—was quite useful and efficient,” Makdisi says. “We plan to follow a similar approach in the new project to uncover the conditions that ought to prevail for the Arab World to transition from a state of autocracy to a state of democracy.”

Nursing school director named to American Academy of Nursing



HSON Director Huda Abu-Saad Huijer

AUB's Hariri School of Nursing (HSON) Director Huda Abu-Saad Huijer recently became the first professor of nursing in the Middle East to be selected as International Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing (AAN).

Officially inducted on November 13, 2010 during the academy's 37th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, Huijer said, "I am proud and

honored to achieve this international recognition in nursing, which I hope will serve AUB and HSON. . ." Achieving this recognition puts AUB and HSON "again on the international agenda and underscores our mission "to promote and maintain the highest educational standards of excellence, integrity, and professionalism in nursing," she added.

AAN's fellows are nursing's most accomplished leaders in education, management, practice, and research. Nominees for this post are selected by a panel of elected and appointed

fellows, and selection is based on the extent to which the nominee's nursing career influences health policies and health care delivery for the benefit of all people. AAN fellows also have a responsibility to contribute their time and energies to the academy, and to engage with other health care leaders in transforming health care delivery systems.

"Being elected as Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing is a remarkable testament to Dr. Huijer's leadership in nursing education and research and to her contributions to health care policy. AUB is proud of her achievement," said AUB President Peter Dorman.

Huijer recently received a lifetime achievement award from the Macmillan Cancer Support in collaboration with the *International Journal of Palliative Nursing* in London. She is also a founding member of the European Association for Palliative Care Pediatric Taskforce and heads the Lebanese Society for the Study of Pain. She is also a founding member and fellow of the European Academy of Nursing Science.

Huijer's BS in nursing is from AUB, her MS and PhD from the University of Florida. Appointed AUB's director of nursing in 2003. She has been instrumental in launching the master's program in nursing and expanding the school's academic programs.

Gladys Mouro Scholarship for nursing students announced



Gladys Mouro

Additional financial assistance for nursing students is now available: the Gladys Mouro Scholarship, a full merit scholarship provided by AUBMC, will be awarded every year to the top nursing student at the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing and will cover tuition expenses through graduation.

Announced on October 5, 2010, the scholarship was established in honor of veteran AUB nurse Gladys Mouro, who has been AUBMC's assistant hospital director for Patient Care Services since 1995.

"For 32 years Ms. Mouro dedicated herself to taking nursing at AUBMC to unprecedented heights and there is no better way to honor her before she leaves on Dec 31, 2010, than by maintaining her commitment to nursing and excellence

through this scholarship," said Dr. Mohamed Sayegh, Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Vice President for Medical Affairs. "Although it will be difficult to find someone with Ms. Mouro's passion, commitment, and qualifications, the search is currently ongoing to fill the position of Director of Nursing."

"We are delighted that the AUBMC administration has established this well-deserved scholarship in recognition of the dedicated services of our colleague Gladys Mouro," said Professor Huda Huijer, director of the Hariri School of Nursing.

American-born Mouro earned her BS in nursing from AUB in 1976, one year after the 15-year Lebanese civil war broke out, and built an impressive career for herself under tough and dangerous conditions, rising through the ranks to lead the nurses at AUBMC and nursing services from 1982, after receiving her master's in nursing from the University of Pennsylvania.

Mouro was awarded the Silver Order of Health in 1994

from the Lebanese Ministry of Health and in 2003 she won the Nurse Executive Award from the American Organization of Nurse Executives. In 2010 she received the Ministry of Health Award for promoting the practice of nursing in Lebanon after achieving Magnet Designation for AUBMC, the first hospital in

the Middle East to do so. Her popular book about her experiences with the AUB hospital during the war, *An American Nurse Amidst Chaos* was published in 1999.

Center for Arab Unity Studies publishes Hanafi book

The Center for Arab Unity Studies recently published *State of Exception and Resistance in the Arab World* (312 pages, in Arabic), edited by Sari Hanafi, AUB SBS professor and editor of *Idafat: the Arab Journal of Sociology*.

The book includes chapters by Mona Abaza, Norehan Abu Jedi, Haider Ibrahim Ali, May Al-Jayyousi, Alessandro Betti, Mohsen Bouazizi, Nada Ghandour Demiri, Sari Hanafi, Taylor Long, and Abdul Hay Sayed.

The book proposes a new framework for understanding the reconfiguration of sociopolitical space in the Arab world in the last 15 years through the interplay among actors of states, civil societies, and contestation movements which correspond respectively to state governmentality, governance, and non-institutional protest. This reconfiguration has occurred in a context of transformation of

nation-state sovereignty and citizenship. Based on Giorgio Agamben's works on the state of exception, this book provides some case studies from Palestine, Tunis, Egypt, Syria, and Lebanon on how Arab citizens are not governed by the rule of law but by the "law of rules." The book depicts how political regimes have used the technology of power and how the mechanisms of control become increasingly "democratic," but also how civil society resists that change. This book is the outcome of a workshop held August 29-30, 2008 at AUB in collaboration with the Arab Sociology Association and the Center for Arab Unity Studies.

The Center for Arab Unity Studies, founded in 1975, espouses Arab unity as the path toward solving the problems of fragmentation and backwardness in the Arab world.

AUBMC launches first trauma treatment course

Lebanese and regional doctors now have the chance to save more lives lost to accidents or war, thanks to a new course to be offered at AUBMC in collaboration with the American College of Surgeons Lebanon.

The American College of Surgeons (ACS) in collaboration with AUBMC has recently certified ACS Lebanon and AUB as the first center in Lebanon and the Arab region — excluding Gulf countries — to offer a vital course called ATLS (Advanced Trauma Life Support) to all health care professionals who handle trauma patients.

ATLS-certified physicians have mastered the skills necessary to minimize patient complications, decrease missed injuries, and save more lives among survivors of accidents, war injuries, and similar violent incidents. Valid for four years, the course certificate is recognized worldwide, and can be renewed via the internet.

The course has been a requirement in all major academic medical centers in the United States, Canada, and in some centers in Europe, for over 30 years, but it was offered for the first time in the Arab Mediterranean region at AUBMC

between November 8 and 13, when about 25 physicians from AUB, Hammoud Hospital, Al-Jabal Hospital and Ain w Zein Hospital, and others attended the course. The inaugural ATLS course was overseen by physicians and trainers from ACS-Chicago, where the society is headquartered.

In the region, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have also been certified to give the course in the Gulf region.

"We aim to make this course a requirement for all health care professionals treating trauma patients, and hope to offer it about three times a year," said Dr. George Abi-Saad, director of Trauma Services and Surgical Critical Care at AUBMC and the ATLS course chair and coordinator. "With the collaboration of the Ministry of Health, the Lebanese Association of General Surgery, the Lebanese Order of Physicians, and all academic centers, we want to spread the course nationwide and work to create a trauma registry and trauma systems to save more lives and help in the prevention of this important health problem."

Iraqi emergency professionals train at AUB

Improvement for Iraq's advanced trauma, cardiac, pre-hospital trauma, and pediatric life support systems were explored by 100 Iraqi medical emergency professionals during a week of workshops at AUB's Medical Center October 18-23, 2010, a project organized by AUB's Regional External Programs (REP) as part of the European Union-funded project "Support to Specialized Medical Services in Iraq."

During an opening press conference, Iraqi government, World Health Organization officials, and European Union delegates underscored the importance of the training sessions; Dr. Ghasib Ali, director general of Operation and Specialized Services at the Iraqi Ministry of Health, saw the program as a harbinger of hope in the face of increasing numbers of Iraqi casualties.

European Union program manager Hala Sharifi said improved access to health services was key to rebuilding Iraq. Omar Mekki, deputy head of the WHO-Iraq Office, lauded the Iraqi government's decision to strengthen emergency medical services, highlighted the importance of technical collaboration, and noted that collaborative projects with AUB will take place until at least January 2011. "We cannot prevent disasters," he added, "but we are able to ensure that we are prepared when emergencies strike."

The workshops concluded with an emergency simulation followed by distribution of AUB's Continuing Education Center certificates. Back in Iraq the participants will be able to facilitate and lead similar training workshops at the national level.

President Dorman spoke of benefits of the program to



Simulating an emergency

both the Iraqis and AUB, saying he looks forward to continuing working with dedicated and motivated Iraqis seeking to develop their professional abilities and enhance medical services in Iraq. "Our university benefits greatly from the presence of Iraqi professionals on campus. . . Greater representation of international learners on campus is essential to our efforts to provide the entire AUB community with the opportunity to experience the wealth of perspectives that such diversity brings."

AUB has been extending aid to Iraq over a number of years. In 2005 the University, in partnership with the University of Hawaii, hosted some 70 Iraqi academics from the Universities of Mosul and Dohuk for a four-day workshop aimed at revitalizing Iraq's higher education in agriculture.

In spring 2008, AUBMC carried out a training workshop on emergency medical services and life support programs for some 60 nurses and paramedics working in emergency services in Iraq. In the same year, REP and the US State Department carried out a program aimed at helping displaced Iraqi professionals find jobs in Lebanon.

The first phase of a Faculty of Health Sciences project to develop health services for adolescents, held in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund and the Iraqi Ministry of Health, was completed in March 2010.

How to prevent a global pandemic

Preparedness and prevention were two key words used at the opening ceremony of the Lebanese Epidemiological Association (LEA), at its 8th International Epidemiological Association/Eastern Mediterranean Region (IEA/EMR) scientific conference November 25-27, 2010.

Titled "Globalization and Public Health in the Eastern Mediterranean Region," the conference focused on ways of harnessing global health provisions in order to anticipate and avoid potential pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, influenza, and H1N1 Swine Flu.

Haroutune Armenian, professor-in-residence at the University of California in Los Angeles and keynote speaker at the opening event, said that scientists could avoid a global

pandemic "by predicting . . . the worst and best scenarios in public health and by being prepared for it [sic]."

"We need to develop not just surveillance and monitoring systems," said Armenian, "but a new system of keeping the public aware of prevention methods in the next disaster."

Monique Chaaya, chair and associate professor in the AUB Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, also chairperson and treasurer of the LEA Scientific Committee, spoke:

"LEA allows epidemiologists and practitioners to conduct research on a local and regional level and facilitates communication among professionals engaged in research

and teaching in epidemiology throughout the world,” Chaaya said.

“There is a strong connection between LEA and AUB. LEA was founded by AUB members, and this conference would not have been successful without the advice of many AUB faculty members and graduate assistant students,” she added.

The event was attended by LEA President Mary Deeb, IEA/ EMA councilor Ali Al Zahrani from Saudi Arabia, IEA President Neil Pearce from New Zealand, a representative of WHO (event sponsor), and United Nations Population Fund Deputy Director for Arab States Delia Barcelona. Representatives of the Ministry of Public Health and Prime Minister Saad Hariri also attended the opening.

Speakers agreed that the conference provided a forum



Opening of the EMR scientific conference

for the exchange of ideas and experiences, and offered insights and hands-on guidelines on how to harness globalization for health.

Second annual Fit-A-Thon for healthy living

Students, faculty, and staff were asked to limber up for the AUB’s second Annual Fit-A-Thon, to promote health and fitness on campus.

On November 12, 2010 many participated in a walk from the Green Field to the Green Oval. Decked out in matching T-shirts and hats, walkers sought to educate the AUB community on the necessity of healthy living.

Stands located around the Green Oval also helped promote health and fitness. Three stands organized by members of the Coordinated Program in Nutrition and Dietetics urged healthy eating through various activities. Volunteers distributed health foods and juice to passers-by.

“It’s important to educate people about the importance of fitness,” said community health nurse Rita Doudakian, one of the organizers.

Student Ayla Hourani said she was participating because she cared about “fitness and so should AUB.”



Fit-A-Thon spirit

The event was sponsored by the Wellness Program, in coordination with the Charles Hostler Student Center, the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, and University Health Services.

Full on Food—Safety

With the full-on-food holiday season just around the corner, the University Health Services’ Wellness Program held timely lectures on food safety at home and in restaurants, in West Hall in early December. Food microbiologist Zeina Kassaify, assistant professor in AUB’s Department of Nutrition and Food Science, presented the talks.

“Food Safety at Home” aimed at revealing, based on scientific research, what can go wrong in one’s own kitchen to cause food-borne illnesses.

Quite often after eating a seemingly safe meal diners

may experience nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, and fever. The food eaten may look, smell and taste fine, but may have been contaminated by bacteria not killed by cooking. In extreme cases severe contamination can cause meningitis, paralysis, and even death.

Professor Kassaify spoke of appropriate measures to take to avoid physical, chemical, or microbiological contamination of food at home.

Proper hygiene in the kitchen must be maintained to avoid a high-risk environment for handling food. Kassaify

stressed the need to be a smart shopper. Sorting items appropriately in the cart can reduce spread of a great deal of contamination as can purchasing only fresh produce and paying attention to packaging. Dented, damaged, or leaking cans must be avoided.

After purchase meat, poultry, and dairy products must be kept in the refrigerator at a temperature less than 4 degrees until cooked at a temperature higher than 65 degrees to make sure bacterial growths are killed.

Accordingly, for prevention, food must be stored in the refrigerator and freezer. A hands-on demonstration of proper food storage and hygiene took place in the West Hall Common Room after the lecture.

“While we have control when preparing our own food,” Kassaify said, “when eating out we have no control of the safety of the food served,” and therefore must make smart choices.

Professor Kassaify and her department have done extensive research on food served by many posh Beirut food outlets as well as by more commonplace ones.

“Libel laws in Lebanon hinder our work,” she said. “We cannot publicly give out names of the restaurants that are actually following proper standards.”

This leaves the consumer to personal judgment or hearsay, about unaccountable outlets blatantly violating health standards. “We don’t have a culture of complaining.” Kassaify adds, “People are afraid of complaining and don’t know where to complain. Even if they do,” they often do not trust that “these complaints will be taken seriously and acted upon.”

Kassaify encouraged members of the audience to rely on personal judgment and to look out for signs that might give away what lies beyond the kitchen doors. Foremost, a quick look around the restaurant premises can be revealing.



Kassaify: all about food safety

Dirty public areas might be a clue that things are no better in the kitchen.

Other noticeable unhygienic factors are grease build-up around the exhaust system, mold on the tiles or around refrigerator doors, flaking paint (especially on ceilings in food areas), and piles of dirty utensils and equipment.

Staff hygiene and behavior, such as the wearing of gloves, are also giveaways.

Sushi bars require especial vigilance since preparing sushi involves much handling of both raw and cooked foods with bare hands. Consumers should pay attention to the conditions, handling, and display inside the restaurant.

The AUB Wellness Program, established in 2006, aims to create a healthier study and work environment by providing the AUB community with necessary programs, facilities, services, and incentives to promote and support healthy lifestyle choices. The program involves yearly activities related to university health concerns.

Identifying reliable hospitals

How do you pick your hospital? How do you know if your hospital is reliable and trustworthy? While many hospitals in Lebanon are investing in quality and performance improvement, it is very difficult to assess performance and quality in Lebanese hospitals using comparisons and benchmarking. What sets top hospitals apart is the measurement system and making evidence-informed decisions.

The Lebanese health system still lacks the mechanisms for national benchmarking of hospital performance. While many hospitals in Lebanon are investing in quality and performance improvement they remain challenged with identifying, measuring, and using results of indicator measurement for performance improvement and informed decision-making.

Policy makers in public and private funds in Lebanon

need valid information about hospital performance to strengthen governance and ensure quality of care and value for money; for their part, hospital managers can do their job much more effectively if they rely on knowledge and insight from indicators, both inside and outside their hospitals.

What sets top hospital performers apart is the measurement system and making evidence-informed decisions.

On December 15, 2010, around 140 representatives of private and public hospitals in addition to public and private funds and insurance companies in Lebanon met at the launch of IMPROVE, a nationwide hospital benchmarking scorecard system. The launch, organized by the Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS) Professor Fadi El-Jardali, was held in Beirut’s Crowne Plaza Hotel in collaboration with the Syndicate of

Private Hospitals in Lebanon and the Ministry of Public Health. The launch was funded by the World Health Organization.

Sleiman Haroun, the president of the Syndicate of Hospitals in Lebanon; Dr. Walid Ammar, director general of health representing the Minister of Public Health, Mohammad Jawad Khalifeh; and Professor El-Jardali gave the opening addresses. Representatives from hospitals and public and private funds and insurance systems discussed some implementation strategies and success factors. The Ministry of Public Health pledged to give full support to the program and provide special recognition to all participating hospitals.

In the word IMPROVE, I = Indicator, M = Measurement,

P = Performance, R = Report, O= Observatory, V = Valid-benchmarking, and E = Education.

IMPROVE is the outcome of a three-year initiative led by the Department of Health Management and Policy at FHS designed to develop a balanced scorecard hospital system in Lebanon. IMPROVE has performance pillars: clinical utilization and outcomes, system integration and human resources, client satisfaction, and financial performance and condition.

IMPROVE includes 40 indicators enabling hospitals to benchmark and compare their performance to national, regional, and international averages and to stimulate continuous quality improvement.

Media freedom enhanced by interactivity, digital capabilities

Interactivity and digital capabilities are key elements in liberating media from traditional strictures in the 21st century, Journalism Training Program director Magda Abu-Fadil told seminar participants in Beirut.

“Digital skills have become elementary and citizen journalism is an integral part of journalism today,” she said, adding that regular training and updating one’s knowledge in the field were essential.

While admitting that Lebanon enjoyed a modicum of press freedom not shared by other Arab countries, Abu-Fadil decried the state of antiquated media laws that fail to reflect realities on the ground in the age of Wikileaks.

She made her remarks during the seminar, “Media Freedom: A New Outlook” organized by the Democratic Renewal Movement in December under the patronage of Information Minister Tarek Mitri.

Abu-Fadil called on media organizations to adopt converged newsrooms and to invest in training their journalists in a bid to enhance multimedia professionalism.

“A university degree is not enough,” Abu-Fadil said of the need to acquire hands-on experience in journalism, where the very concept of who a journalist is has changed dramatically in recent years.

Minister Mitri blamed journalists’ and media’s misuse of the freedoms they have by insulting and slandering at will.

“They attack not only officials in power, but society at large, which threatens democracy,” he lamented.

Mitri said he continued to consult with experts in various fields to hammer new media legislation befitting the age.

Also on hand to address the issues of media ethics, laws and declining press freedom were the director of the Samir Kassir Eyes (SKEYES) Foundation, Saad Kiwan, and the executive director of the Maharat Foundation, Roula Mikhael.



Minister Tarek Mitri and Magda Abu-Fadil

“There is censorship tied to the unsettled political climate (in Lebanon), as well as threats with weapons” Kiwan said. “There is direct censorship exercised by some politicians that has included terrorizing journalists and blackmail.”

Mikhael, in turn, pointed to Lebanon’s drop in international press freedom indices given pressures on journalists.

On a positive note, she spoke of Maharat’s diligent work with MP Ghassan Moukheiber, who recently submitted draft legislation to parliament’s Information and Communications Committee that is meant to modernize Lebanon’s print media laws.

In defense of blogging

Diplomats, businessmen, and activists lauded the virtues of blogging during a conference held at AUB on December 3, 2010. “Blogging Lebanon” attracted a crowd of blog-a-holics from both Lebanon and Jordan during its launch at AUB’s Bathish Auditorium.

Mohammad Hijazi, a fourth year double major at AUB and president of AUB’s On-line Collaborative, the student organization that seeks to group social media enthusiasts from all sources, welcomed the event’s first guest speaker, Talal Nizameddine, AUB dean of Student Affairs.

Nizameddine described his once skeptical attitude towards on-line social media: When he first heard the word “blog,” he hastily discredited it as the birth of a web-related disaster. His perceptions altered completely when he understood the word’s meaning—web record.

According to Nizameddine, little has changed over time. Stone age people used to leave their marks on cave walls; today individuals leave an e-trail on the likes of Facebook, Twitter, and Linked-in, to name but a few of the current social media sites dominating the web.

Before welcoming British Ambassador Frances Guy to the stand, Nizameddine suggested that today’s media sites could become the main source of history in the future. Diplomatic blogging has recently become a popular way for ministers to interact directly with the public and at AUB’s “Blogging Lebanon” conference, Ambassador Guy said she had benefited greatly from communicating her thoughts on-line, and praised Lebanon for being the most lenient country in the region regarding freedom of speech.

Guy then compared Lebanon with other countries such as Egypt, Syria, and Iran where individuals face up to nine and a half years imprisonment for voicing “unacceptable” opinions on-line. Guy gave an example to highlight the responsibilities a diplomat must take into account when blogging. Once her positive writings about Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, a prominent leader of the Shi’a community in Lebanon, caused offence. “Thanks to me we have a new rule to follow when blogging,” she said.

Guy posted a blog after her appearance at AUB’s “Blogging Lebanon” conference, and many of those present have already left several comments (<http://blogs.fco.gov.uk/roller/guy/>).

Mohamad Shawash, who flew in from Jordan to underline for “Blogging Lebanon” the power of on-line social media, shared some astonishing facts regarding the evolution of social media sites.

Every minute 13 hours are uploaded on YouTube, a video-sharing site.

If Facebook were a country it would be the third most populated in the world.

About 80 percent of companies turn to LinkedIn as their primary tool for finding employees.

According to Shawash, the future success of any business today lies in interaction through social media. “Stop thinking campaigns, think conversations,” he said.

Social networking has also given birth to many on-line activists. During the “Blogging Lebanon” conference, Imad Bazzi (www.trella.org), a Lebanese on-line activist since 1996, shared his many clashes with the Lebanese police force, which he criticized. Johnny El Hage (www.johnnyhage.com), AUB’s events coordinator and a passionate blogger himself, claimed that on-line social media are the most prominent portals allowing a message to reach an audience.

Other highlights at the “Blogging Lebanon” conference included Meedo Taha’s guidelines for starting a successful blog (www.meedosite.com), Naeema Zarif’s introduction to the new copyright laws available through “creative commons” (www.naeemazarif.com), Marc Dfouni’s essential tips on on-line marketing strategies (www.eastlinemarketing.com/blog), the launch of Farah Abdel Sater’s youth blog (<http://www.unyaleb.org>), Arek Dakessian and Toni Oyri’s mission to implement the world’s first Arabic web drama (www.shankaboot.com), Diana Nemeah Afif’s blog success story (www.dinbity.blogspot.com), and Ayman Itani’s pop culture revelations (www.aymanitani.com).

AUB featured in leading German academic magazine

Germany’s leading academic magazine *DAVO Nachrichten*, a journal of German and Middle East studies, featured in its December 2010 issue an article describing AUB’s faculty, courses, location, architecture, activities, and the many renowned experts who have graduated from AUB.

The magazine also noted Yahoo’s homepage listing of the University among 15 American universities offering “fantastic higher education values.”

The article included photographs of AUB’s landmark buildings, such as the Archaeological Museum with its



College Hall

outstanding collections, the “green” campus, and various athletic facilities such as the ultra-modern track and field, private beach, and tennis courts. The article’s author, Barbara Schumacher, also highlighted AUB’s important contribution in business and culture to the neighborhood, reporting on the Women’s League, founded in 1919 by a group of women including the grandmother of current AUB president, Peter F. Dorman.

She referred to the students’ spontaneous use in one sentence of Arabic, French, and English.

The writer also listed international lecturers at AUB such as Dr. Christian E. Loeben, curator of the permanent Egyptian Exhibition in the Kestner Museum in Hannover, Germany, and briefly told the history of country with particular emphasis on architecture.

DAVO Nachrichten, published in two yearly issues of about 150 pages, includes research projects, internet news, reviews, and presentations of institutions engaged in Middle East studies. More than half of the text is in English and French.

Tenth anniversary of the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business

AUB’s Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB) celebrated its 10th anniversary on October 29, 2010 looking ahead to a future of new achievements in academic excellence both regionally and globally. Lebanese Prime Minister and AUB Trustee Saad Hariri, guests from distinguished business schools worldwide, professors, friends of OSB and students attended the opening celebration in the auditorium of the new OSB building.

Dean George Najjar cited the impressive growth of OSB: “As the OSB celebrates its first ten years, it can credibly state that it has one option for standards, world class; one criterion for assessment, excellence; and one measure for impact, being the gold standard for business schools in the Middle East.”

AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal remarked that after establishing the new school at dizzying speed, “OSB is now making knowledge production and dissemination its true focal point.” He spoke of the importance of AUB’s encouragement of applied research as part of its strategic planning—a step OSB has already embarked on by establishing several research programs and centers.

The liberal arts foundation of business education at

AUB was the focus of President Peter Dorman, who stressed that liberal arts education at AUB is rooted in a firm belief in the need to produce well rounded graduates able to think critically, respond to unforeseen challenges, and to engage their peers intelligently. He added that the variety of business program subjects offered by OSB helps students not only to receive high quality business education, but also to discover themselves and become responsible citizens of the world.

AUB Trustee and daughter of Suliman S. Olayan, Hutham Olayan, spoke about the relationship between the Olayan family and AUB, saying that her father, who had received his education from the school of life, valued higher education and was a long-time supporter and trustee of AUB. “Based on our experience and our own risk analysis, a partnership with the AUB school of business is a very solid bet, . . . a long-term investment in the intellectual capital of the region,” she said.

Prime Minister Saad Hariri recalled the day ten years ago when his late father spoke at the inaugural ceremony of the AUB School of Business. Hariri likened the sensitive political atmosphere of the time to the current situation in Lebanon

and reaffirmed the pledge his father made on that day to preserve dialogue, freedom, and democracy in Lebanon. “I know that the Lebanese people are worried about their freedom, their democracy, security, stability, and economy, but I am here to assure them all that Lebanon will not fall into conflict, into the abolishment of dialogue, into the prevalence of one opinion. And Lebanon will not lose its identity as a free, democratic, Arab country, a place for living together and for complete agreement between Christians and Muslims.” Hariri said this milestone once again affirms the University’s role as a lighthouse for education, knowledge, dialogue, and freedom of thought.

Panelists from Georgetown University (Ali Fekrat and Johnny Johansson), Johns Hopkins University (Yash Gupta), the London School of Economics (Sir Jeffrey Owen), and INSEAD (Soumitra Dutta) discussed the future of business education, moderated by John Fernandes, president of the Association to Expand Collegiate Schools of Business, the leading international accreditation agency for degree programs in business and accounting.

Business education at AUB started in 1900 and was provided either by a department or a semi-autonomous school in the University’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences for almost 100 years. In September 2000 AUB established an independent



Prime Minister Hariri and President Dorman shaking hands

School of Business as the sixth faculty of the University. In June 2003, the AUB School of Business was named the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business in honor of the late Saudi international businessman and long time AUB trustee.

OSB currently offers one undergraduate and two graduate degree programs. To date, AUB has graduated over 6,000 students from its undergraduate business programs and over 1,200 from its graduate business programs. Since its establishment as an independent school, OSB has increased its full-time faculty from 13 to over 55. The school has actively encouraged applied research and sought to forge strategic relations with prominent business schools across Europe and the United States.

2010 AUB student elections: tranquil, transparent, and tweeted

Significant firsts, the tweeting of results within a few minutes of release for the first time in AUB history, the posting of photos on Facebook and Flickr, and the participation of observers from the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections marked AUB’s November 24, 2010 election day.

But the 10 am to 5 pm voting day proved somewhat tepid, with participation rates slightly lower than usual and the chanting crowd outside West Hall somewhat thinner than in previous years.

Some 263 students ran for spots on the 109-member Student Representative Council (SRC). Students campaigning for one of two main coalitions, the yellow “Students at Work” and the blue “We Will Campaign”, were joined by the mostly white “Order of Engineers”. A motley group of independents also managed to grab some 20 seats on the SRC, while the other two main coalitions secured seats on the council (about 50 percent for the whites and blues and 30 percent for the yellows) according to Student Affairs statistics.

Student Affairs Dean Talal Nizameddine described the elections, which took place in the different faculties, as

“democratic, competitive, smooth, and transparent,” giving students “the opportunity to adopt sound democratic principles and practices.”

The Office of Student Affairs, which oversees elections every year, enforced voting rules strictly, relying on four closed-circuit television cameras installed around West Hall to record and possibly punish any violators of the University Code of Conduct. Moreover, Dean Nizameddine banned all political flags, posters, flyers, and photos on campus. And, as usual, access to campus was confined to students and staff with valid AUB IDs and to print, radio, and TV reporters covering the event.

Shortly after voting ended at 5 pm, two large computer-linked screens outside West Hall beamed election results to spirited students, also serving as a buffer between the two rival camps. Nevertheless, the two sides did not skimp on taunts, boos, and cheers.

Newly-elected SRC representatives still have to vote in the coming weeks for SRC cabinets as well as for the 17 representatives on the 24-member University Student-Faculty Council.

AUB holds reception for anti-smoking MPs

Twenty-two Lebanese MPs endorsing a strong tobacco control bill under discussion in Parliament attended a special reception and social advocacy gathering held at AUB in late November.

Under the patronage of Health Minister Jawad Khalifeh, the AUB Tobacco Control Research Group, the parliamentary committee for public health, labor, and social affairs; and the National Tobacco Control Program (NTCP) invited parliamentarians in order to thank them for their support and to raise awareness of the importance of passing a strong tobacco control law to protect the health of all Lebanese.

Several influential MPs participated including MPs Atef Majdalani (the chair of the public health, labor, and social affairs parliamentary committee), Walid Khoury, Imad Hout, Henri Helou, Ali Osseiran, Tammam Salam, Edgard Maalouf, Alain Aoun, Simon Abi Ramia, Ahmed Fatfat, Agop Pakradounian, Qassem Abdel Aziz, Nadim Gemayel, Samir Jisr, Naji Gharios, Ghassan Moukheiber, Ziad Aswad, Ammar Houry, Abdel-Latif al Zein. Dr. Ziad Maalouf, representing MP Sithrida Geagea; Johnny Tawily, representing MP Sami Gemayel; Mohammed Jreidi, representing MP Bahiya Hariri; and George Saade, who heads the NTCP, were also present.

President Peter Dorman, Provost Ahmad Dallal, and many AUB faculty members and students also attended the reception.

President Dorman emphasized AUB's endorsement of a strong tobacco control law, and said he was impressed by the number of parliamentarians supporting strict control. He briefly described AUB's recent implementation of anti-smoking rules. Banned inside buildings in 2000, in 2008 smoking was banned throughout campus, with the exception of a limited number of designated outdoor smoking areas.

Dr. Ghazi Zaatari, chair of WHO's Tobacco Regulation Study Group and member of the Tobacco Laboratory Network, spoke of the dangers of current tobacco policies. "Is it right for 3,500 people to die annually in Lebanon because of smoking-related causes, [some 10 people per day]?" he asked. He also criticized the pervasive display of tobacco advertisements on TV and on billboards, many close to schools and universities. Dr. Zaatari also stressed the need for cigarette box warnings to dissuade people from smoking.

M P Majdalani reviewed the tobacco control law: Since 2004, he has been pushing for the law to be passed. However, destabilization in the country in 2005 and 2006, delayed passage of the law. Once passed the law will ban smoking in public places, and those under 18 will be unable to buy cigarettes or nargilehs, he said.

Minister of Health Mohammed Khalifeh praised AUB for its own non-smoking policy and also highlighted some alarming figures on smoking-related cancer, especially bladder cancer in men. "People need to be warned of the health dangers that can arise from smoking; once the law is passed and enforced, people will follow it."

Rania Baroud of the Tobacco Free Initiative said that within six months of passage of the law, "smoking will be banned in public places; tobacco advertisements will be banned; and pictorial warnings covering 40 percent of each box will be placed on all cigarette packs sold in Lebanon." She invited the participants to sign a petition in support of the bill, the first petition of its kind in the history of tobacco control advocacy in Lebanon.

The AUB Tobacco Control Research Group, created in 1999, held a press conference in February 2010 calling for passage of a strong tobacco control law meeting the requirements set by the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control, ratified by Lebanon in February 2005. The AUB Tobacco Control Research Group is housed in the Center for Research on Population and Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences.



From left to right: MP Atef Majdalani, Health Minister Jawad Khalifeh, Dr. Ghazi Zaatari and President Peter Dorman

Lebanese society—a destructive population?

Why are so many Lebanese apparently so indifferent to conserving the environment? The American University of Beirut's Ibsar tackled this question in the third debate of its public talk series on December 21, 2010.

A panel of speakers asked whether government, activist

groups, or the media, are responsible for under-reporting environmental issues.

Professor Salma Talhouk of AUB's Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management said, "We have a very active Lebanese media and we have a very



Ibsar presentation

active destructive population.”

Guest speaker Mazen Abboud, a freelance journalist and environmentalist, pinned the blame on the lack of civil society in Lebanon. Instead of a functioning civil society, “There are sectarian communities which are fighting each other.” “We’ve got a lot of freedom but no transparency and no accountability,” Abboud added.

Abboud shone a spotlight on the current reality of the Lebanese media: “Our media is for sects. . . Each sect has its own media apparatus for its own goals which do not all the time coincide with the national interests of the country.” Because of political support offered by leaders to newspapers and other media it becomes difficult for journalists to address certain issues without risking censorship or even losing their jobs.

Government could be motivated if more focus is placed on the economic effect of environmental degradation, Abboud said. “Looking at the environment from an economic perspective would give it more value,” he concluded.

Freelance journalist Sobhiyya Najjar, a presenter of Future News television’s environmental program, pointed to the responsibility of members of society to raise their voices for environmental awareness. “Despite the sectarian nature of the mainstream media, we as journalists should be aware of how to work across these barriers so the message reaches the audience,” she said.

The problem is not the lack of good journalists. “We have very good journalists in Lebanon,” Najjar said, “but we do not have the space or the freedom to talk just about anything.”

She told how while working on a TV report about a local quarry, powerful individuals made countless calls to the television station demanding the program be removed from the air.

Media all over the world tend to be lethargic about covering environmental issues, according to AUB’s Jad Melki, assistant professor of journalism and media studies in the Department of Social and Behavioral Studies. He also blamed the media structure and government policy in Lebanon, but he said journalists, easy targets, should not be faulted.

“Environmentalist groups are not media savvy,” he said, underscoring a communication problem between these groups and the mainstream media.

Activist groups in Beirut tend to shy away from the mainstream media because of its politicized nature; they make use of alternative media mostly on-line.

Rima Nakkash, assistant research professor of health promotion and community health in the Faculty of Health Sciences, said it is difficult to point a finger at one specific culprit. “It is a joint responsibility of every sector”; more dialogue among civil society and researchers should take place.

Audience member Ziad Khatib, a PhD candidate in epidemiology and global health in Sweden said he sympathizes with journalists, but he told the journalists on the panel, “I feel jealous because you reach out to the public more than researchers do. And I feel sorry because you are dependent, as researchers are independent,”

The conversation remained heated and engaged throughout the session.

Benefit concerts help Ayadina reach the less fortunate

A non-profit voluntary organization dedicated to community development for the destitute held its fifth annual benefit Christmas concert at AUB’s Assembly Hall on December 15 and 18, 2010.

The Ayadina Association, a charity providing help for people of all religions, ethnic backgrounds, and national origins in the Sin El Fil/Nab’aa area of Lebanon, was joined by the International College Choir to sing Christmas Carols in English, French, and Arabic.

“I am so proud to have this year the full support, collaboration, involvement, commitment, and co-operation of the Office of Communications and the Office of Student Affairs,” Maya Najjar, founding president of the Ayadina Association, told the packed Assembly Hall.

The Ensemble DaCapo performed a number of English hymns before the two choirs teamed up for the final seven songs of the evening including festive favorites such as “Rudolph the



Singing for the less fortunate

Red Nosed Reindeer,” “Jingle Bells,” and “Santa Claus Is Coming to Town.”

On December 15 hot chocolate and homemade cakes were offered at the concert, and even Santa Claus and one of his trusty elves made an appearance next to AUB’s Main Gate.

The Ayadina Association brought 500 needy children from a variety of shelters and hospitals to the December 18 show. The

charity offered each child one toy and a bag of goodies to take home with them for Christmas.

Najjar thanked the following organizations and sponsors for making both events so memorable: Because You Are the Environment, the Business Student Society, Byblos Bank, the Children of Adam Club, Greenpeace, the Red Cross, Special Olympics, and the Syrian Cultural Club.

Beeatoona and AUB collaborate on e-waste dangers

Electronic waste, or e-waste, classified as hazardous waste, should be reduced and recycled, according to participants at the E-waste Awareness and Collection Day, held at AUB in October 2010.

The AUB campus was declared an official e-waste collection point for AUB and the surrounding neighborhood during the event, organized by Beeatoona, “Our Environment,” with the collaboration of AUB’s Center for Civic Engagement and Community Services (CCECS) and the University’s Environmental Club, and held under the patronage of Lebanese Environment Minister Mohammed Rahhal.

Beeatoona Director Nadine Haddad explained that e-waste includes anything with an electronic board, from monitors to cell phones to toners. “They turn into e-waste when we stop using them, even if they’re still functional,” she said, adding that e-waste is classified as hazardous waste, containing more than 1,000 toxic substances that can contaminate the air, the water, and the soil, and lead to potentially deadly diseases. Haddad noted that 65 percent of Lebanese keep their e-waste at home, “ignoring the health risks of this silent killer.”

AUB Vice President for Information Technology Rita Khayat-Toubia said she “was extremely pleased to see AUB championing the initiative to recycle e-waste,” and noted “the urgent need to raise awareness on campus and nationwide



Minister Rahhal among Beeatoona and AUB members

about reducing and recycling all kinds of waste, including e-waste.”

Minister Rahhal visited the CCECS, where e-waste from campus and its vicinity will be dropped off and stored until collected by Beeatoona. He also said the government is currently focusing on the proper management of waste, and he encouraged students and activists to continue spreading awareness of dangers of e-waste.

Beeatoona’s continuous awareness campaign on e-waste engages 500 schools in Lebanon and Jordan, a large number of corporations, and educational institutions.

CCES steers cafés and restaurants toward Braille menus

Soon the visually impaired will no longer depend on their sighted companions to read menus in Beirut cafés and restaurants. On September 24, 2010, Café Younes in Hamra offered the first Braille version of its menu as a result of a project launched by AUB's Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS) in partnership with Lebanon's Youth Association of the Blind (YAB).

This unique project, which also trains staff and waiters to deal with visually impaired customers, will eventually include cafés and restaurants throughout Lebanon.

Café Younes owner Amin Younes hopes the project will be “the first step towards something bigger. I sincerely hope that more institutions will follow Café Younes in their quest to be part of a community system where people with challenging needs are fully integrated into society. . . .”

Fatme Masalkhi, YAB member and coordinator of YAB Projects at CCECS said the “project helps the visually impaired become more included in society. If a café provides a menu in Braille, this means that the staff have been trained to deal with the visually impaired, and it makes me feel more motivated to go out by myself.”

More than a year ago AUB took five YAB interns to work



Ordering from Braille menu

in CCECS and other departments. Since then, the center has actively supported various YAB activities such as the Inclusive Cafés and Restaurants project, which encourages cafés and restaurants to cater to the visually impaired clientele with menus printed in Braille.

Any interested cafés and restaurants may get more information or join the project by calling CCECS at 01-350000, ext. 4430, or by emailing ccecs@aub.edu.lb or YAB at 01-364259, or by emailing zeina-ayoub@yablb.org

A new profession in Lebanon: landscape architecture

Landscape architecture is on the verge of achieving professional status in Lebanon. The Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management at AUB launched the first initiative in the region to formalize landscape architecture as a new and independent profession at the Beirut Landscape Symposium held October 22-23, 2010 under the auspices of the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) and the European Federation of Landscape Architects (EFLA).

“The symposium [funded by Solidere] was a necessary first step [in seeking] professional recognition at the national, regional, and international levels,” said Jala Makhzoumi, AUB professor of landscape architecture.

The 40 participants in the two-day symposium included academics, practicing professionals, representatives of the landscape horticulture industry, students, and delegates from neighboring countries, and from Europe, Canada, and the United States. The serene setting of AUB's farm campus, AREC (the Agricultural Research and Education Center) in the Beqa'a provided an ideal and inspiring venue for heated discussions

of regional determinants of landscape architecture both as a practice and an academic discipline.

Discussions also centered on how the absence of quality contractors may impact results, and on the way importation of concepts and materials disregard local needs. The participants discussed steps to ensure state and international recognition by establishing the Lebanese Association of Landscape Architecture and by applying for membership in the IFLA.

Desiree Martinez, IFLA president, said that landscape architects all over the world “are struggling to be recognized professionally and independently from gardening, agriculture, and architecture.” She emphasized the importance for Lebanon of landscape architecture in “environmental improvement, social wellbeing,” and protection of “cultural and natural heritage.”

Nigel Thom, EFLA president, looked forward to “a much enhanced future for the landscape architecture profession within Lebanon and across the Arab World.” “Landscape architecture,” he added, “affects the lives of everyone in every country.”

Fostering dialogue between academia and policy makers—the elderly

More than 45 regional and international experts called attention to the urgent need to improve studies on the elderly in the Middle East and to translate research into programs and policies during a two-day conference on later life, “Linking Research to Policy in the Middle East: Family Ties and Aging,” held October 20-21, 2010 in AUB’s College Hall.

Organized by Eastern Michigan University, the University of Michigan, and AUB, the conference was launched on October 19 at the Rotana Hotel.

Speakers ranging from academics to social and regional advisers described the challenges of conducting research on the aged and integrating findings into policy-making in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

In a panel on methods of research in the MENA region, Jawad Adra, managing partner of the research consulting firm Information International, highlighted the influence of politics on research, attributing gaps in statistics on the elderly to the Arab countries’ felt need to maintain their highly fragile status quo.

Professor Nabil Dajani, chair of AUB’s Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, said investigators need to be well-versed in the culture of countries under scrutiny, pointing out that studies of the elderly in developing countries are often conducted by foreigners who fail to address a nation’s particular problems.

Rami Khouri, director of AUB’s Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, said the non-democratic nature of Arab countries often hinders the translation

of research findings into policies of benefit to the elderly: “Researchers often find it difficult to have their research signed by men carrying a gun.”

Khouri encouraged researchers to become willing to convince policy-makers of the dramatic consequences of disregarding study findings.

Abla Sibai, professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Population Health at AUB, praised the University for Seniors, a recently-launched AUB program for the older population, as a “pioneering intervention” enabling the aged to add purpose to their lives by taking courses specifically designed for them.

Professor Hiroko Akiyama of the University of Tokyo disclosed plans for an experimental age-friendly community in Kashiwa city in Japan. By providing the elderly with part-time work opportunities and easy access to homes and pharmacies, the city hopes to enable integration with younger citizens.

Participants concluded the conference with a set of recommendations for policy makers, suggestions emphasizing the necessity to prioritize future areas of research that address problem solving and policy formation in the MENA region.

“Recommendations suggested by the conference might take time to be implemented,” stated Professor Kristine Ajrouch of Eastern Michigan University, but “they do form a beginning dialogue between academia and policy makers.”

Global Entrepreneurship Week launched at Olayan School of Business

In an unprecedented initiative to foster entrepreneurial spirit among the country’s youth, Global Entrepreneurship Week (GEW) kicked off on November 11, 2010 at the Olayan School of Business (OSB) Maamari Auditorium.

OSB Dean George Najjar stressed the importance of school curricula: It is important to expose students “to entrepreneurship as early as possible . . . the entrepreneurs of the future will be the best allies in leading Lebanon’s sustained economic growth, particularly through the knowledge economy sector.”

Tony Feghali, director of the OSB Entrepreneurship Initiative, supported GEW’s November drive to entice

entrepreneurs to collaborate and compete with one another. “Now more than ever, it is imperative that we do everything we can to promote entrepreneurship and innovation,” he said.

In a reversal of roles, representatives of the partner organizations delivered one-minute pitches outlining the type of support they offer.

Chairman and CEO of advertising firm Mamac Ogilvy & Mather Edmond Moutran spoke of his journey in the industry.

“It all started with a vision. And luck has nothing to do with it. You work very hard and the harder you work the

luckier you get. Most importantly, if you could do that with \$13,000 and two people. . .today we are 600 people and several hundred millions of dollars' worth of business."

During the following reception, participants exchanged ideas in what Jessica Dheere, cofounder of SMEXbeirut, a social media strategies and advocacy NGO, called "a really great networking opportunity to meet people and expand the community or 'ecosystem.'"

Cofounded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the world's largest foundation dedicated to entrepreneurship, and by Enterprise UK, a business-led, government-backed campaign in the United Kingdom, GEW helps develop young people's knowledge, skills, and networks to inspire them to grow sustainable enterprises.

Lebanon has taken part in GEW since 2007. This year, more than 18 prominent Lebanese organizations spanning



Fostering the entrepreneurial spirit

different entrepreneurial support sectors including academia, incubation, finance, media, NGOs, and associations took part.

A new lounge for FAFS

FAFS Student Representative Committee member Leen Haydar welcomed the reopening of the faculty's student lounge on November 1, 2010. "The lounge was closed for almost a year, she said, "and we need it as students. It's our place to chill out."

The renovated lounge, repainted and equipped with new furniture, was funded by the President's Club, whose president, Laila Baroudi, was on hand for the opening along with President Peter Dorman, Provost Ahmad Dallal, Dean of FAFS Nahla Hwalla, and Professors Imad Toufeili and Mustapha Haidar.

"We are pleased to provide this facility for our students," said Dean Hwalla, thanking everyone who came to the official opening.

Brightly lit with peach colored walls, red chairs, and two couches, the new lounge conveys a friendly and cozy atmosphere.

"This facility is just what AUB encourages and needs. It will give students and teachers the chance to interact and ask questions outside formal environments," remarked

President Dorman. Established in 1981, the President's Club aims to improve the AUB campus by raising funds to provide students with a more pleasant college experience; student lounges and athletic facilities are examples of their many projects.



President's Club members and students with President Dorman

Alumnus donor, Moufid Farra, honored

The Suleiman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB) dedicated a new classroom and the Dean's Suite in its new building on lower campus to a university alumnus in honor of his contributions to the school.

Moufid Farra was honored at a dedication ceremony on October 6, 2010, held in the dedicated auditorium-style classroom in the presence of OSB faculty and staff and Farra family members and friends.

OSB Dean George K. Najjar extolled the business school's achievements. "AUB is now in the top five percent of business schools worldwide in recognition of our accreditation," he said.

Najjar thanked the distinguished alumnus of the class of 1958 for his dedication to the faculty. "Mr. Farra and his generation have created a tradition of excellence which subsequent generations have to emulate," he said. "AUB, as a private institution, competes on the world stage to deliver world class education without large endowments that prominent universities across the world enjoy; without support from alumni like Mr. Farra, we would have no university."



Moufid Farra and family at classroom dedication

Assistant Vice President for Development Imad Baalbaki noted that Moufid Farra was the first alumnus to name a facility in the new OSB building, back when the building was still in the early phases of construction.

Farra spoke about his professors and days at AUB's business school which, back then, was still a part of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. "We are indebted to AUB, its name, and its professors," he said.

AUB Red Cross Club and the world's largest canvas

More than 70 members of the AUB Lebanese Red Cross Club (LRCC) helped the Lebanese Red Cross (LRC) break China's Guinness world record by producing a 4,355 square meter canvas portraying the Red Cross emblem. The canvas also featured some 15,000 handprints from people across Lebanon, united in promoting peace and non-violence.

To ensure broad participation in the nation-wide initiative entitled *Idak maana*, ("Give us a hand"), the canvas was divided into eight parts, each measuring 82 by 9 meters, and was distributed to eight centers across Lebanon. Throughout October 30 people visited these centers in Beirut, Jounieh, Chiah, Aley, Sidon, Hasbaya, Zahle, and Tripoli and left their hand prints on the canvas.

People against violence and discrimination supported peace and humanity by imprinting their hands on the canvas, explained Malek Teffeha, president of AUB's LRCC, underscoring the unity ensured through "the participation of people from different regions."

The eight pieces of canvas were sewn back together at Beirut's Cité Sportive on October 30-31, 2010. The AUB LRCC, one of the biggest Red Cross clubs in Lebanon (more than

320 members), played a prominent role. LRCC members present at Beirut's Cité Sportive were among the more than 8,600 Lebanese nationals and participants from other countries who left near to 15,000 handprints on the canvas.

The idea originated with LRCC member Dana Al Shakarchi. The canvas itself was designed by LRCC's Layla Smaili, a third-year graphic design student. Smaili described her design: I tried to represent people from different backgrounds by "using a set of diverse colors. Coming together with their arms stretched out around the Red Cross emblem, these people seem to be giving something of themselves, thus displaying a significant principle, *charity*."

On October 31 Guinness representative Phil Anderson arrived at Beirut's Cité Sportive to measure the hand-painted canvas. Half-an-hour later, he praised the Lebanese for producing the world's largest handprint painting.

Ibsar debates possible behavioral impact of social networking

As the number of Lebanese registered on the popular social networking site, Facebook, grows to 900,000 members, concern increases about the consequences of widespread use of social networking on social and psychological behavior.

Social networking changes the way we see ourselves and the world around us, and also the way we communicate with one another, concluded an October 28, 2010 panel entitled “Social Networking: Is Our Natural Language Threatened by the New Technology?” the first in a series of public debates planned by Ibsar, the Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures at AUB.

Moderator Jad Melki, assistant professor of journalism and media studies in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences, defined natural language as “the language people use, rather than that which they ought to use, based on grammatical rules.”

Lina Choueiri, associate professor of English language, refuted the popular perception that Arabic is dying because of code switching, the constant interchange of Arabic, English and/or French practiced by many young Lebanese. In fact, code switching marks social class more than language decline, she said, adding that Arabic has never been more alive: social networks enable Arabic speakers to communicate more easily with one another.

Behavioral psychologist Nidal Najjar, also of SBS, said that technology and the internet offer a new environment, albeit virtual rather than physical, for observation of language. “Changes in behavioral patterns might occur as the function of the environment changes.” The internet provides new ways of interacting, Najjar said.

Chemical Physics Professor Mazen Ghoul said that “the language one uses to think,” rather than being threatened by the new technology, is developing. “Humans have an innate passion to communicate and socialize,” he stated.



Ibsar speakers

“We are still going to communicate using technology, if not in more advanced ways.”

Internet technology has many educational benefits, from virtual classrooms to social forums. With almost a decade of hands-on experience, Ghoul is an ardent advocate of using the cyber realm in education. “Some professors are using Facebook to teach large classes,” Ghoul continued. “This method comes with a handful of benefits: professors and students alike get to know each other” in a more personal manner.

All the changes in social behavior are most likely to be reflected in physical, psychological, or social health areas said Tamar Kabakian, associate professor of health promotion and community health in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

“Studies on face-to-screen interactions . . . suggest that these virtual interactions do have social and psychological effects,” she said. “New evidence shows that if technology is used as the predominant form of communication it could be detrimental to mental and physical health,” physically disengaging individuals, distancing them more from one another.

So far no substantial research has yet been done on social networks. Kabakian reminded the audience that much study is needed before the exact effect of social network use on social and psychological health can be determined.

Faculty members and students concluded that growing participation in social networks is irreversible. Only time and further in-depth study will reveal the consequences of widespread use of social networking on social and psychological behavior.



Audience considering social networking

Constant search for improved teaching and learning

Many still picture a university class as a lecturing professor and a group of eager or perhaps sleepy students; university teaching, however, has seen radical changes over the past ten or so years—changes carefully monitored by two AUB centers: the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and the Academic Computing Center (ACC).

These centers sponsored on December 10 and 11, 2010 the First International Conference on Effective Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in AUB's West Hall. Focusing on methodology, the use of technology, and program outcomes in university teaching, and attended by 72 academics from Kuwait, Lebanon, Nigeria, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates, the conference consisted of lecture presentations and workshops.

The CTL led two pre-conference workshops on December 10, one by AUB's CTL Director Saouma Bou Jaoude, "Inquiry-based Learning," and "Program Learning Outcomes: the Why and the How" by CTL Associate Director Amal BouZeineddine. Two ACC members, Hossein Hamam, instructional webmaster, presented "On-line Student Assessment" and Rana Haddad, instructional web designer, "Free Digital Material."

At the opening ceremony on December 11, Professor Bou

Jaoude emphasized the need for building relationships among universities, while Associate Provost Nesreen Ghaddar, representing Provost Ahmad Dallal, gave a history of AUB's development leading to the establishment of the CTL and the ACC, underscoring the relevance of review assessment procedures for improvement and accreditation.

The keynote lecture, "Aligning Technology, Assessment, and Learning Outcomes in 21st Century Higher Education," presented by the UK University of Hertfordshire's Director of Learning and Teaching Jon Altree, emphasized the importance of learning outcomes in assessment and also described the significant support of technology in improving teaching and learning.

Panelists from Lebanon, Qatar, Kuwait, and the UAE led 14 concurrent interactive sessions.

In her closing speech, Rosangela Silva, director of AUB's Academic Computing Center expressed the hope that the themes of the sessions would inspire educators "to try new teaching approaches and methods, and to try new technology tools [to improve] teaching and learning in higher education."

Teach for America cofounder at AUB

The possibility of equality in education throughout the country was the focus of a talk given by Wendy Kopp, winner of the 2009 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship and Chief Executive Officer and founder of Teach for America and Teach for All, hosted by Teach for Lebanon under the patronage of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Kopp shared her experience in founding the two NGOs, which aim to eliminate educational inequality in America and throughout the world, in the Bathish Auditorium on October 28, 2010.

Teach for Lebanon is a Lebanese NGO which aims to eliminate educational inequality while fostering youth leadership and promoting civic engagement.

The organization places top university graduates in underprivileged schools in remote areas across Lebanon as full-time paid teachers for two academic years. The 20-year sustainable program seeks to bridge the gap between the quality of education in urban and rural areas of the country. Teach for America, inspired by Kopp's undergraduate senior thesis in 1989, now boasts over 8,000 teachers committed to two-year teaching stints in 39 regions across the United States in order to bring about excellence and equality in education.

Since 2007 Kopp has also worked to develop Teach for All, adapting the Teach for America model to countries around the globe.

A resident of New York City, Kopp is the author of *One Day, All Children: The Unlikely Triumph of Teach For America and What I Learned Along the Way* (2000) and of the forthcoming *A Chance to Make History: What Works and What Doesn't in Providing an Excellent Education for All*.

AUB takes part in conference on quality in higher education

Procedures to evaluate quality and support for research were key issues explored during a conference on higher education held recently in Beirut.

Organized by the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier (CIHEAM) and QuaRES with support from the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) and the Faculty of Agriculture of the Lebanese University on October 21-22, 2010 at the College of Higher Education of Business, the conference tackled issues related to quality maintenance in the field of higher education in Lebanon and abroad.

AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal outlined AUB's efforts in devising and implementing its own quality assurance programs in the absence of foreign accreditors to evaluate the standard of academic performance in universities in Lebanon. Highlighting the role of research in ensuring academic excellence, Dallal spoke about the central role of AUB's Office of Grants and Contracts in

helping full-time faculty members obtain external research grants. The provost also spoke of the importance of ethical research and related issues of research integrity and copyright protection.

Professor Mohamad Farran of AUB's Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences was part of the organizing committee in his capacity as an AUB faculty member, a member of CIHEAM, and a member of the CNRS Administration Board. Farran stressed the importance of collaboration among universities in Lebanon in all fields of higher education and applied research in order to meet the research priorities set by the CNRS.

The conference, offering a platform for exchanging ideas and discussing common plans for quality assurance in higher education and research across the Mediterranean, featured plenary sessions and workshops. The speakers were from institutions of higher education in Lebanon, Egypt, France, and Switzerland.

AUB Department of Education hosts a series of teacher training workshops

Following a two-decade-old tradition, during the month of October 2010 the Department of Education at the American University of Beirut held a series of eight training workshops for teachers of various school subjects ranging from language theory and practice to educational psychology. The teachers came from private and public schools in Beirut and other regions of Lebanon.

Three of the workshops dealt with teaching English as a foreign language, one focused on reading in Arabic, another on integrating cabri-geometry software in the classroom, and the others concentrated on elementary and early childhood education.



Professor Ghaith conducting workshop

The last of the workshops, entitled "Creating and Implementing Standards-Based Instruction in the English Classroom," conducted by Education Department Chair Ghazizadeh (Ghaith), clarified the standards of teaching English as a Second Language proposed by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). The standards focused on English for communication, English for academic purposes, and English for appropriate cultural and social use. The workshop discussed the extent to which these standards are applicable to Lebanese schools.

All the workshops emphasized the important bridge between theory and practice and offered participants an opportunity to design and implement lesson plans, "taking into consideration their classroom and school context," Ghaith explained.

Ghaith, studying workshop participants' readiness to implement "instructional innovation" in their classrooms, concluded that experienced teachers, socialized into more traditional ways of teaching, were less excited about innovation, while "the younger teachers who have not been teaching for a long time are . . . willing to implement new techniques in their classes. If the school director, the parents, and the students are supportive of innovations, the chances of implementation are higher.

Over the years these AUB workshops have benefited all

parties involved, as the Education Department has accumulated experience and developed a system to design such projects and implement them.

The Department of Education has also been coordinating similar projects across Gulf Cooperation Council countries and in other parts of the Arab world.

Alissar Caracalla visits Women's League

Through dance "You can help the others less fortunate by engaging in foundations and fund raising events," said Alissar Caracalla, founder and director of the Orientalist Dance Company and the Caracalla School of Dance.

A dancer and choreographer, Caracalla was addressing the November 8, 2010 meeting of the American University of Beirut Women's League, one of the monthly meetings designed to provide "exchange of culture [among] ladies of many nationalities," according to Women's League President Leila Ghantous.

Caracalla, guest speaker of the month, who considers dance "a shaping part of culture," revealed how as a student studying abroad, she came to the conclusion that her place was in Lebanon" with the company her father founded in 1968, the Caracalla Dance Theater.

Caracalla recounted briefly the history of the Caracalla Dance Theater, giving credit to her father, a "pioneer and visionary man," for what the Caracalla Theater has become today; his "genius mind," she said, "created something magical." The first ballet, "Today, Tomorrow, and Yesterday" was performed in 1968, after which the Caracalla Dance Theater reached many parts of the world.

"Every two years Caracalla would create a new masterpiece, and the roles of my brother Ivan and I [sic] became



Caracalla with Women's League members

more important in the company." Alissar Caracalla described the process of putting together a masterpiece as being like "Creating a fear, having a baby falling in love with your creation, breaking up, then making up." Caracalla said she was proud of the effect the company was having on people all around the world.

Her own dance school, *L'art de la danse*, having begun with 50 students, ended up with over two thousand. The students, age five and above, are taught the liberating art of all genres of dance to expose them to various types of dancing in order to enable them to find themselves, she said.

Living in Bronze Age Lebanon

AUB's history and archaeology Professor Herman Gentz labeled his presentation to the Friends of the Museum in mid-November a "love story," not a lecture.

Gentz fell in love with AUB's dig at Tell Fadous-Kfarabida, which began when bulldozers accidentally uncovered ruins in 2004. Describing some of the results in his Friends of the Museum lecture, "Reconstructing the Daily Life in the Bronze Age (3000-1800 BC)," Gentz said the dig is a "work in progress"; at least two more years may be spent on the excavation.

The work was eased by an initial accidental bulldozing, the sudden departure of inhabitants making it unnecessary to deal with Roman or modern times before reaching Bronze Age artifacts, radio carbon dating, and electro-magnetic surveys.

The ordinary lives of ordinary people in an urban setting were exposed by Gentz and his team. The architecture

revealed exceptional finds: walls of more than two meters, numerous stair cases, wooden roofs, and indications of multi-storey buildings.

Discoveries produced not only evidence of daily life: food storage and preparation, kitchen objects, a variety of vessels, and perhaps the earliest lamps of the area, but also suggested trade relations with Byblos and other coastal towns, and also with Egypt, Mesopotamia, Turkey, Anatolia, Cyprus, and Greece. Digs brought to light jewelry, metal tools, and bone objects—including some scale beams for measuring precious objects such as silver, spices, and drugs.

Careful explorations also showed what the people ate: domestic and wild animals, marine life, birds, and both cultivated and wild plants.

The ordinary lives of ordinary Bronze Age people animated Professor Gentz's presentation.

The barber shop rejuvenated

For many years the Fisk Hall housed a popular barber's shop in the basement rooms in the east end of the building. Recently the rooms were taken over by the Fine Arts and Art History Department.

FAAH Senior Lecturer Neville Assad Salha first used the space for students to create experimental installations, but recently it has become a place where students can exhibit and critique their work.

Most recently ink collages created by students in Ghada Jamal's FAAH 201 class, Drawing I, were exhibited. Many passers by, including FAS Dean Patrick McGreevy, FAAH instructors, and students stopped in to admire the art work and discuss with the students their creations.

University Preparatory Program welcomes new academic year

Newly enrolled students, parents, professors, and faculty members gathered in West Hall Auditorium C on October 4, 2010 for a University Preparatory Program (UPP) orientation session on its purpose, function, and benefits.

In 2002 the UPP was created to assist students showing strong academic potential but lacking the required fluency in English for acceptance by AUB. The program helps students improve weaknesses in English comprehension, reading, and writing said program director Reem Rashash Shaaban.

Reem Shaaban explained the placement of students in class levels. A certain average is required for admission to either the freshman or sophomore class. Shaaban opened the floor for questions, explaining that non-Lebanese in the UPP can go directly into the freshman class. If they wish to be admitted as sophomores, they have to sit for the SAT, for which the program offers preparation.

Instructor Rima Harake promised classes would be fun, filled with entertaining activities. Another program instructor, Samar Harkous-Rihan, highlighted the importance of reading even more emphatically when she reminded the students of the vast universality of the English language. "Everywhere we go, we have to read, even on the internet," said Harkous.

After a short coffee break, the coordinator of International Programs, Rania Murr, spoke about how to obtain the residence permit, and about the student code of conduct, various student services and activities at

the Hostler Center, the smoke-free campus, and the need to respect the cat population on campus.

Public Relations Officer Sana Murad then led the students on a tour of the AUB campus.

When asked about the goals of the program, Director Shaaban replied, "Our results are good and very promising too, so really, the only thing we hope is to attract even more students. Only then can we grow as a program. . . Perhaps one day we will even find some way to offer UPP scholarships to make AUB more accessible for students of low socio-economic status," allowing students of all ethnicities, nationalities, and religions to enrich AUB's culture.



The new academic year: preparations on the go

President's Club holds annual reception highlighting achievements

Although carved jack-o-lanterns decorated the tables on the terrace of Marquand House, this was no Halloween party—the President's Club's annual reception was being held on the evening of October 28, 2010 to thank members for their continued support and contributions.

The club's members aim continuously to improve the AUB campus by raising funds for the University to provide students with a more pleasant college experience; student lounges and athletic facilities are examples of their many donations.

President Peter Dorman said club members and their guests had come to honor the members and their fundraising efforts in improving student life at AUB. "It is rare in the Middle East to have a large campus that can serve as a venue for student activities, but it is often as important to provide this kind of opportunity as it is to provide academic excellence in the classrooms; it is through student life that one makes lifelong associations with friends, teachers, and mentors that will last a lifetime."

Club President Laila Baroudi then outlined the club's achievements of the past year, such as establishing student lounges and sponsoring drama and music clubs. "Notably, we had something that has never happened before



President's Club on the Marquand House patio

anywhere else in Lebanon," she said. "An international athletics competition was held here with 500 students coming from six different universities to compete in a number of sports, and we were able to sponsor it because of your contributions." President Baroudi also expressed the hope that the club would continue to support AUB campus life as it has been doing for a long time.

AUB Professor of Arabic music Saad Saab's quartet played classical Arabic music throughout the evening.

Columbia professor: Sensationalizing honor crimes is politically dangerous



Professor Lila Abu-Lughod

Columbia Professor Lila Abu-Lughod warned, during a CAMES-sponsored lecture at the end of October 2010, that an obsessive focus on the so-called honor crime may have negative repercussions. Recognizing the positive legal or social reforms international and national campaigns might bring about, Abu-Lughod explained why people should be wary of classifying certain acts

as a distinctive form of violence against women.

An anthropologist with extensive research experience in the Arab world, particularly in Egypt, Professor Abu-Lughod outlined some troubling political effects of using this special cultural category to describe violent acts, drawing on her

ongoing research on the global enterprise of "saving Muslim women."

Drawing on her own ethnographic research, examining popular novels, human and women's rights reports, and scholarly works, Professor Abu-Lughod revealed that the concept of the honor crime uses fantasies of sex and violence subliminally to encourage simplistic thinking about civilizations, making it appear as if there were clearcut divisions between cultures. Imprisoning rural and immigrant communities in timeless cultures, the concept simplifies reality and distracts attention from very real and historically specific circumstances shaping women's and men's lives today.

Abu-Lughod concluded that talking in terms of honor crimes leads both scholars and activists to ignore important contexts for violence against women: social tensions, political conflicts, forms of racial, class, and ethnic discrimination; religious movements; government policing and surveillance; and military intervention.

Abu-Lughod called for careful studies of the social and political roles of global projects being conducted in the name of “Muslim women’s rights,” affirming that the easily sensationalized category, “honor crimes,” has the political effect of stigmatizing Muslim societies.

Professor Abu-Lughod is the Joseph L. Buitendyk Professor of Social Science at Columbia University where she teaches anthropology and gender studies and co-directs the Center for the Critical Analysis of Social Difference.

Ladies in Pink celebrate the holiday season

Members of the AUB Women’s Auxiliary rang in the holiday season early with their traditional Christmas lunch at the Gefinor-Rotana Hotel on December 11, 2010 celebrated with President and Mrs. Dorman and the singing of Christmas carols led by singer Shaker Helou. Retiring Women’s Auxiliary member Jacqueline Rebeiz was awarded a commemorative shield for her 35 years of service.

A major Christmas activity of the auxiliary is the annual donation of toys to pediatric patients, which took place this year on December 21 in the presence of Dr. Sami Sanjad, acting chair of pediatric and adolescent medicine at AUB. Many volunteers distributed gifts to the children and organized Christmas carol singing and games. A large cake and other refreshments were served.

Established in 1950, the Women’s Auxiliary has been run for the past five decades by volunteers, now known as the “Ladies in Pink.” The association’s purpose is to raise funds for needy patients, to support the AUBMC by providing medical equipment and services, and to help instill community awareness through various activities.

At the luncheon, Amal Najjar, association president,



thanked volunteers and contributors whose loyalty and support make possible the group’s activities. Donations during 2010 reached an unprecedented \$190,000,

About \$65,000, slated for needy adult patients, came from the Coffee Shop and the AUBMC Gift Shop. Another \$60,000 from the Bargain Box went to pediatric patients in need. The Nabila Firzli Emergency Fund provided needy Emergency Room patients with \$46,000. Two nursing students were awarded scholarships worth \$10,000, and student and hospital nurses received some \$2,000. Ambulatory patients garnered a \$5,000 donation.

The AUB 2011 Calendar: Cats on Campus



One of the many AUB cats

Campus cats are the focus of the 2011 AUB Calendar, recently released by the Office of Communications.

Featuring the picture of a mother cat and her kittens on the cover, the new AUB calendar is in full color, with an introduction by

Marwan El-Sabban, director of the Creative Media Unit, who considers cats an “integral part of the campus landscape,” and a history of cats on campus by editor Henry

Matthews who recounts how the story all began when a few volunteers started feeding cats that had fled the war, seeking refuge on campus in the 1980s. By the new millennium, cats were allowed to stay on campus receiving good care; an AUB Animal Welfare Club (AWC) had also been established by then.

The feline population eradicated campus rodents, snakes, and scorpions, sparing the University the use of poisons.

Cats slowly realized that they were safe in their new environment and became tame and friendly.

Matthews points out that international research indicates that companion animals such as cats help the elderly and the lonely to relax, can decrease blood pressure and can help in behavioral therapy for children. He narrates how kindness to cats spread beyond the campus, as members of the

AUB community established environmental and animal care associations. BETA, one of these associations, participated in AUB's first celebration of World Animal Day In October 2010.

Matthews writes that AUB, which takes good care of its

community, added a new dimension to its role by feeding and sheltering its cats.

The first yearly AUB calendar was the 2004 calendar.

Philemon Wehbe's musical legacy celebrated at AUB

Solo vocalist Nisreen Homeidan's singing brought to life songs from the Lebanese Musical Renaissance period (1975-90) in a concert commemorating the legacy of Lebanon's late composer, the famed Philemon Wehbe. The concert, held in the Assembly Hall on November 5, 2010, sponsored by the AUB Zaki Nassif Music Program, paid tribute to Wehbe's musical influence in the Arab world 25 years after his death.

On the program were 16 songs, 10 composed by Wehbe. Nisreen Homeidan was accompanied by five members of the Lebanese Music Band, which performed on the traditional oud, qanun, nay, violin, and percussions. Before her final act, Homeidan thanked the Zaki Nassif Music program for honoring Philemon Wehbe and for making the recital possible.

Philemon Wehbe (1916-85) never studied music, but was naturally talented. He worked closely with one of Lebanon's most reputed singers, Fairouz, and together, from 1959 they composed 28 songs.

Wehbe was among the country's first composers to spread Lebanese music in the Arab world. He worked with

several other artists, such as Sabah, Wadiah El Safi, and Melhem Barakat, who also went on to become icons of local music in their home country and abroad.

The Zaki Nassif Music program in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at AUB aims to preserve and promote the musical

heritage of Zaki Nassif and seeks to endorse excellence in the teaching of music through diverse activities. To this end, the program organizes concerts, competitions, seminars, and performances by professional musicians, and awards prizes and scholarships to students.



Nisreen Homeidan singing at Philemon Wehbe commemoration concert

UN's Michael Williams on Founders Day: 'If AUB did not exist already it would need to be invented' at Aub

The American University of Beirut's positive influence on its direct neighborhood and the world was highlighted during the University's Founders Day ceremony, held on December 6, 2010.

From its impact on the economic and cultural growth of its surroundings to its indirect contributions to the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and regional politics, keynote speaker Michael Williams, currently the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, lauded the University as a "sacred place" that promotes "dialogue and coexistence" not just in Lebanon but the region, as attested by the fact that at least 19 AUB alumni were involved in the drafting of the UN declaration and several Lebanese and regional senior

politicians and officials graduated from the University.

Following a formal procession of faculty members and senior administrators, AUB President Peter Dorman opened the ceremony, highlighting AUB's influence on its surroundings starting from the time of its founding in 1866.

"Beirut embraced the University not only for the opportunity it offered for higher education, but physically enfolded it as well, as Hamra, Ras Beirut, and Ain Mreisseh were first settled with villas and gardens, then shops, apartment buildings, and a tram line," said Dorman, in reference to how the neighborhood burgeoned following AUB's creation. "While we often reflect on the growth of AUB in terms of its academic programs, its students and alumni, its faculty and the research

they produce, the hospital and its doctors, no university can exist independently of the neighborhood and the city that together help to mold its inimitable character.”

It is in this vein, noted Dorman, that the theme chosen for this year’s student essay competition—which became a part of Founders Day in 1999—was “The evolving relationship between AUB and its surrounding neighborhood.”

Dorman then introduced the winner of the student essay competition: Daria ElSamad, a senior majoring in economics, who will receive \$750 for her winning essay, “The Space We Occupy: AUB’s Relationship to its Surrounding.” ElSamad’s name will also be immortalized in a plaque that hangs outside Assembly Hall. Ranked second and third respectively, were Tala Mukkaddam, a political studies major who will receive \$500, and May Chaker, a business major, who gets \$250.

In her essay, ElSamad highlighted AUB’s role in promoting Ras Beirut’s cultural, economic, and intellectual growth through the diversity and freedom of expression it embraces in addition to its strong humanitarian engagement within the country, even in the midst of the Lebanese civil war of 1975-1990. “It was a ‘safe haven,’ offering medical help and humanitarian aid in many forms, such as soup kitchens,” said ElSamad in her essay. “During and after the civil war, Ras Beirut . . . became. . . the closest the Arab world ever reached to [being] a liberal and open community, where pluralistic groups could coexist in relative harmony and peace.” ElSamad added that today AUB students and faculty are still contributing to the neighborhood’s economic growth through their consumer activities.

She invited students to widen their scope of impact, by targeting the neighborhood through academic outreach, field research, cultural involvement and social awareness projects. “I, for one, pledge to use the rest of my time in this University in this direction. I hope that many of my colleagues will do the same,” she concluded. Keynote speaker Michael Williams, currently the UN special coordinator and formerly a diplomat, senior advisor, writer, and researcher focusing mainly on Mideast and Asian issues, praised AUB’s positive role on promoting dialogue in the region and indirectly influencing world politics. “AUB has long been and remains an important center not only of study and debate, but also of dialogue and co-existence not only for Lebanon but the entire Middle East,” said Williams. “It provides an island—an almost sacred space—within Lebanon



Mr. Michael Williams and President Peter Dorman in AUB campus

for interaction and engagement between students of different backgrounds and origins, of different confessions and nationalities. In this sense, AUB captures, I believe, and embodies the very spirit of the United Nations.”

Williams then overviewed the relationship between Lebanon and the UN, including the nation’s current two-year term on the UN Security Council, UN agencies’ developmental and humanitarian work in the country, and progress made on the implementation of Lebanon-related UN resolutions. He also gave special attention to the late AUB alumnus and former professor Charles Malek, one of the main authors of the UN declaration.

No fewer than 19 AUB alumni were delegates at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945, added Williams, noting that three former AUB students were also among the first men and women to sign the UN Charter on behalf of their respective governments. “No other leading academic institution in the world can claim to have played such a central role in the creation of the United Nations,” he said.

“Much as we often say about the United Nations, if AUB did not exist already, it would need to be invented,” Williams said.

The UN special coordinator for Lebanon did not rule out the difficulties that Lebanon is facing, but noted, “Lebanon’s pluralism and diversity are also its defining characteristic and strength.”

In conclusion, he invited the AUB community to play “a critical role” in safeguarding the stability and unity of the country and contributing to its development. “You are the building blocks for the Lebanon of tomorrow. And we need more Lebanese in the vein of Charles Malek and the many other great Lebanese and non-Lebanese who have been educated in this wonderful institution,” Williams said.

AUB graduate wins Stars of Science prize

Young Arab engineers and scientists now have a chance to see their innovative ideas become reality through the widely popular pan-Arab TV contest, Stars of Science, which gives winners the chance to design and produce their ideas—such as

a combination garbage and recycle bin to encourage recycling and solar panels and ocean waves to generate electricity. A pair of swim goggles designed to measure heart beats won recent American University of Beirut graduate Hind Hobeika



(BE '10) a \$100,000 prize.

Selected from an initial pool of 7,000 applicants, she was declared third place winner on November 28, 2010 during the live finale of the program's second season. Her entry: Heart Rate Swimming Goggles.

The goggles work through an infrared sensor that measures the heart rate from the temporal artery next to the eye to allow the swimmers to monitor their own heart rate while training and either slow down or accelerate, depending on the target rate they set for themselves.

Initiated by the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science, and Community Development, Stars of Science is the first pan-Arab reality TV program to provide a means for young Arab innovators to present their ideas for scientific innovation and then see those ideas realized.

Hobeika found the experience culturally enriching and the hard work under pressure challenging

Hobeika heard about the contest through AUB's Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, where she studied mechanical engineering. A swimmer since five years of age and a member of AUB's swim team, Hobeika immediately thought of working up her idea of swim goggles that could measure a swimmer's

heart rate. "I set out to apply with only a piece of paper in my hand and no practical proof it would work," she said.

Following the initial recruitment in several cities across the Arab world, Hobeika was chosen as one of 27 candidates to travel to Doha for the final selection. A pan-Arab jury of 13 examined the candidates' scientific innovations and selected the final 16 candidates, who then executed their ideas in a specially designed workshop at the Qatar Science and Technology Park. Hobeika, with support from her project partner, Nadim Antakli (LAU '09, BS in marketing) successfully completed all four phases of the workshop, which included giving proof of concept, engineering the product, designing and refining the product, and exploring the product's marketability. Enrolled at the time in her final semester at AUB, Hobeika is grateful her professors supported her application and allowed her to complete her final courses on-line.

"The best moment I had was when I actually had the [goggles] in my hands. At the end of the design phase, when everything was assembled, I had a real product," Hobeika said. In addition to the financial award and the recognition she received, Hobeika said the program was rewarding on other levels as well. The only Lebanese to be selected among a pool of applicants from 11 Arab countries, Hobeika found the experience culturally enriching and the hard work under pressure challenging.

Hobeika's cash prize will help her launch and market her product. Now working at the mechanical engineering department of Dar Al-Handasah, she plans to focus on producing and marketing her prize-winning idea in the future.

AUB student wins Traders Trophy Lebanon competition

AUB student Mohamad Bassem Alwan won first prize in the first ever Traders Trophy competition held in Lebanon. Alwan will represent Lebanon in the Traders Trophy Worldwide to be held in April 2011 in Amsterdam.

The Traders Trophy competition, organized annually in various countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, is a worldwide competition involving virtual trading of equities. University students from all faculties participate, and the student who secures the greatest profit from the trading activity within a set period of time is declared the winner.

Traders Trophy's first Lebanon competition was held in three rounds in November 2010 with the participation of 180 students from universities across Lebanon. Twenty students qualified for the final round, which took place on November 26 at the Ecole Supérieure des Affaires. Alwan won first prize,

while another AUB student, Faisal Zaghoul, took third place in the competition.

When asked how he won, Alwan, who also took home LL2,000,000, said the key was "patience and taking things easy." He added, "It's mostly critical thinking that helped. AUB teaches us how to learn quickly. I only trained for four days before the competition."

Alwan knows the competition in Amsterdam is going to be tough, but he is training for it. The competition could not only land Lebanon the Traders Trophy Worldwide prize, it could also help him secure internships in well-established companies around the world.



Ayadina Christmas concert at Assembly Hall



AUB American
University
of Beirut
الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت

AUB Office of Communications
Post Office Box 11-0236
Beirut,
Lebanon

AUB New York Office
3 Dag Hammarskjold Plaza
8th Floor, New York, NY 10017-2303 USA

