

For Immediate Release



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AUB President delivers keynote speech at the 250th celebrations of Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons

On the occasion of 250 years of the founding of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, the university continues to host a series of events celebrating this historic milestone. May 12 and 13 served as a reunion weekend for the alumni of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, during which American University of Beirut (AUB) President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri was a keynote speaker at his Alma Mater.

On May 12th, President Khuri delivered a keynote visual speech under the title “The Long Road Home” to an audience composed of P&S alumni, Columbia University faculty and friends.

During his speech, President Khuri highlighted the history of AUB, from the founding of the university through modern times, while focusing on the history of the Medical Center, and the role it played as a savior for the peoples of Lebanon, the region and beyond, especially during critical times such as World War I, World War II, and the Civil War.

Dr. Khuri then spoke about the evolution of his career. He attended AUB as a sophomore, then earned his bachelor’s degree from Yale University, in New Haven, CT, and his MD from Columbia University, College of Physicians and Surgeons, in New York, NY, in 1989. Dr. Khuri spoke about his ultimate mentor and father, Dr. Raja Khuri, and the influence he has had on his life. He also spoke about the influence of two of his mentors at Columbia, Dr. Bernie Weinstein in Basic Research, and Dr. Tom Garrett in Clinical Medicine.

Dr. Khuri detailed to an enthusiastic audience some of the research he and his team carried out while at MD Anderson and at Emory University, focusing on the challenge of lung and head and neck cancer in terms of global incidence and mortality, outlining some of his group’s biologic and therapeutic discoveries particularly those targeting cell survival networks. Dr. Khuri reviewed some of the major research he and his team accomplished, reviewing work published in

several major scientific journals including work published in Nature Medicine (2000), the Journal of Clinical Oncology (2000, 2002, 2004, 2013), the New England Journal of Medicine (2007), Cancer (2000,2006,2011,2016), Nature Communications (2017), in addition to authoring the chapter on lung cancer in the latest two editions of Goldman-Cecil's Textbook of Medicine (2016). Dr. Khuri particularly praised the teams he has had the good fortune to work with at Emory Winship Cancer Institute, and he cited the growth in research trajectory at Emory University, placing it 14th among American universities in the last decade, and which helped lead it to occupy the 4th rank in growth of citations during Dr. Khuri's tenure as deputy director and most recently, as research dean of the medical school.

For the third and final part of his speech, Dr. Khuri spoke about the imperatives that led him to return to AUB, AUB's outstanding students, faculty, staff, and leadership team, and the development of AUB's strategic vision through 2030, which includes revised curricula, the new Campus Master Plan, and an AUB 2025 health vision. He concluded by highlighting the development of a global health sciences initiative, and outlining AUB's expanding community impact, especially with regard to the growing humanitarian crises in the region.

Dr. Khuri concluded his speech by thanking his family, especially his wife, for their continuous love and support.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 130 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

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