Coming from a literary family, Karim Maksad (BE, expected ’17) made a bold decision to break with tradition and become a chemical engineer. Both his parents, now deceased, were journalists. His father was the owner and publisher of Meshwar Magazine, and his mother, an author and poet.

Growing up in Choueifat, Karim knew from the outset that he would end up at AUB. It was the only place he applied and he wasn’t interested in going anywhere else. His single-mindedness paid off as the “Karim Karagulla Scholarship” is supporting his chemical engineering studies at AUB.

Karim makes the most of his time outside of class as well—going to the gym, swimming, and participating in club activities. He is also planning on joining the Red Cross.
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Great Expectations

Dear MainGate readers,

In 2016 we will commemorate the 150th anniversary of AUB’s founding in 1866. AUB’s story is one of continuous innovation, transformative impact, and institutional resilience. This year will be a unique opportunity to reflect on the distinguished history of the University, to celebrate our achievements and those of our extended global community, and to articulate our ambitions for the future.

Join the celebration:

• **Tell “My AUB Story”:** Go to www.aub.edu.lb/150 and submit a 30-second video about your most treasured memories at AUB.

• **Recognize the “History Makers”:** Submit nominations of individuals who represent the best of AUB through their lives and work. Request a nomination form from myaubstory@aub.edu.lb.

• **Legacy Families:** Tell us about families that have multiple generations of AUB graduates. Submit the names of family members, years they attended AUB, a photo and up to 150 words about the family to myaubstory@aub.edu.lb

• **AUB Love Stories:** Submit 150-word stories and a photo of couples who met at AUB to myaubstory@aub.edu.lb

Collecting dates: November 2015 - July 2016

January 25, 2016, will be a momentous day in our history: the inauguration of Fadlo R. Khuri, AUB’s 16th president, and the launch of the 150th anniversary celebrations. Be on the lookout for updates!

Ada H. Porter, Editor
maingate@aub.edu.lb

Abbr.

ACS
American Community School

AUB
American University of Beirut

AUBMC
American University of Beirut Medical Center

CAMES
Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies

CAMS
Center for Advanced Mathematical Sciences

CASAR
Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud Center for American Studies and Research

CCCES
Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service

FAFS
Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences

FAS
Faculty of Arts and Sciences

FEA
Faculty of Engineering and Architecture

FHS
Faculty of Health Sciences

FM
Faculty of Medicine

HSON
Rafic Hariri School of Nursing

IC
International College

IFI
Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs

IOEC
Ray R. Irani-Oxy Engineering Complex

KSA
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

LAU
Lebanese American University

LDEM
Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management

NCC
Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures

OSB
Sulíman S. Olayan School of Business

PSPA
Department of Political Studies and Public Administration

REP
Regional External Programs

SPC
Syrian Protestant College

WAAAUB
Worldwide Alumni Association of AUB

The pages of the MainGate are printed on 100 percent postconsumer fiber paper and the cover is 30 percent. It is printed using web offset process with attention to clean-air operations. Lane Press gets 98 percent of its electricity from sources other than greenhouse gas-producing carbon fuel. Inks are bio-derived and low in volatile organic compounds.

Please recycle this magazine. If you prefer to subscribe to the online version of the MainGate, please email maingate@aub.edu.lb
Inspiration

Student life, the liberal arts, AUB personalities past and present

Published & Produced

Exhibits:

Written Word:
A collection of essays and articles on Middle Eastern politics and history; a new take on Confucian political thought; the success of early AUB grads in the United States; personal reflections on an adventurous life.

Early SPC Graduates in the United States

Why early SPC Graduates had a leg up in the United States

AUB’s New President Fadlo R. Khuri

Building on a father’s legacy of resolute leadership

Tag Tour

Looking in on Outlook

Face to Face

Anis Abdallah (BS ’84), keeper of the crown jewels—AUB’s emerald green campus

Staff News

A fond farewell to an AUB original: security guard and campus sage Abou Haytham

Student News

Two outstanding MBA students meet global shakers and movers
The work of Mona Fawaz (BAR '95) and Ahmad Gharbieh (BDG '01) is included in an exhibit entitled “The City in The City” at the Sursock Museum (October 9, 2015-January 11, 2016). This group exhibition brings together recent work by artists, designers, and researchers concerned with mapping and exploring contemporary Beirut. The Sursock garnered international press when it re-opened in October after a seven-year renovation.

MUSIc FROM An UNkNOwn SOURCe

AUB Art Galleries and Collections in collaboration with the Goethe Institute

Agam Polke: Music From An Unknown Source

AUB's newly renovated Main Gate was officially inaugurated with a ceremony and a plaque on October 21. The restoration of this iconic AUB landmark was made possible by a generous gift from Karam G. Doumet (BA '74, MA '76), Honorary Consul for Ecuador to Lebanon. A special exhibition “AUB’s MainGate” was on display in the Malhas Common Room in West Hall from October 20-23, and will be remounted for AUB’s 150th celebrations in 2016. Keep a look out!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT.

Last August, Mohammad Qayoumi, PhD (BEN '75) left his job as president of San Jose State University in California to become chief adviser to the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

In September AUB launched the Global Compact Network Lebanon as part of the United Nations Global Compact initiative, to help create a strategic policy initiative for businesses committed to aligning their operations with universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption.

THE ARAB NUDE: THE ARTIST AS AWAkENER

Exhibition and conference at AUB Art Galleries
(Opens February 11, runs through August 1, 2016)

International Conference at AUB Art Galleries
March 11, 2016

Conference with the participation of: Hala Auji, Saleem Al-Bahloly, Nadia Bou Ali, Elka Correa Calleja, Silvia Naef, Nadia Radwan, Kirsten Scheid and others.

Artists in the exhibition: Daoud Corm, Georges D. Corm, Kanaan Dib, Moustapha Farrouk, César Gemayel, Gibran Khalil Gibran, Marie Hadad, Sophie Halabi, Yousif Huwayyiik, Mahmoud Moukhtar, Leon Mouradoff, Abdel Kader Naeb, Omar Onsi, Khalil Saleeby, Habib Serour, Rashid Wehbi, and others.

Project curated and organized by: Octavian Esanu and Kirsten Scheid
**Written Word**

1. **Democracy, Culture, and the Grip of Arab History: Essays Honoring the Work of Iliya Harik** (2014, CreateSpace) edited by Elsa Marston Harik and Denis J. Sullivan. This is a collection of essays and articles on Middle Eastern politics and history. It explores in-depth topics such as the tension between sectarianism and citizenship, Lebanese electoral law reform, and the “Arab Spring.” It also examines the views of Iliya Harik, PhD (BA ’56, MA ’58) on human rights, liberty, and democracy in culturally diverse societies. Contributors include Charles Butterworth, Emile Maalouf, Sami Ofeish, Robert Bianchi, and Nafhat Nasr.

2. **Classical Confucian Political Thought: A New Interpretation** (2015, Princeton University Press) by Loubna El Amine, PhD (BA ’04). The intellectual legacy of Confucianism has loomed large in efforts to understand China’s past, present, and future. While Confucian ethics has been thoroughly explored, the question remains: what exactly is Confucian political thought? Classical Confucian Political Thought returns to the classical texts of the Confucian tradition to answer this vital question. Showing how Confucian ethics and politics diverge, El Amine argues that Confucian political thought is not a direct application of Confucian moral philosophy. Instead, contrary to the conventional view that Confucian rule aims to instill virtue in all members of society, El Amine demonstrates that its primary aim is to promote political order.

3. **Strangers in the West: The Syrian Colony of New York City 1880-1900** (2015, Kalimah Press) by Linda Jacobs, PhD, a New York-based scholar and author who served AUB as a trustee. This is the never-before-told story of the Arab immigrants who settled in New York City, beginning in 1880. They came primarily from what was then known as “Greater Syria”, and settled in tenements on the lower west side of Manhattan, founding an Arabic-speaking enclave just south of the future site of the World Trade Center. Arriving in the New World with little more than their resourcefulness and business acumen, these immigrants quickly built a thriving “colony” that was the cultural and economic center of the Syrian diaspora in America.

4. **Weavers** (2013, Christopher N. O’Sullivan, Houston) is a poetry collection based on her life philosophy: “You are given a loom, the warp are your life values, the weft are your unique experiences, the knots are your decisions.” Rose-colored Glasses is a memoir. O’Sullivan’s poetry, fiction, essays and memoirs have been published in magazines, anthologies, and online. [In the 1950s, she helped found AUBMC’s Pink Ladies, a volunteer women’s auxiliary that raises funds and spirits! (see MainGate, Summer 2015, Inbox pg. 4).]
In the late nineteenth century, some thirty graduates from Syrian Protestant College (as AUB was then called) were among the first wave of immigrants to the United States. Not only were SPC graduates equipped with a formal western education far beyond that of most of their immigrant compatriots, but they also had a leg up in their ability to adapt to their new home having had intense contact with Americans and American education. Beyond the education itself, all the graduates who came were fluent in English, which was a huge advantage. They served their community not just in the professional capacity of doctor, journalist or businessman, but also informally as interpreters, spokesmen, and interlocutors.

America’s first and largest Syrian colony was located on the lower west side of Manhattan between the Battery and Cedar Street and the Hudson River and Greenwich Street, just south of the future site of the World Trade Center with Washington Street as its main artery. Most of the graduates settled in New York. The trickle of immigrants that began in the 1880s became a flood in the 1890s, when thousands of Middle Easterners left home to attend the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, also known as the World’s Fair. Many of them stayed. By 1900, there were about 2,000 Syrians living in New York City (three-quarters in Manhattan and one-quarter in Brooklyn) and thousands of others living all over the United States.²

**Immigrants from the First Class (1870)**

Two of the five members of the Syrian Protestant College’s first graduating class of 1870 went to America. Like thousands of other Middle Easterners, they fell under the spell of “gold fever” and joined the stampede to the World’s Fair. The Presbyterian missionary H.H. Jessup noted in one letter that 300 Syrians of his acquaintance had left in a single month, and he particularly mourned the departure of two SPC graduates: Na’oum Moghabghab, of the first class, and his younger brother Faddul (BA 1886). Jessup wrote, “Faddul will soon be leaving for America to the Chicago exposition. It is a sad result of years of training and a period of service [as a native pastor] . . . Na’oum will follow later.”³

The two brothers became interpreters and guides at the fair (attesting to their fluency in English), and after the fair closed in November, Na’oum traveled around the southern states for several years as a lay preacher, giving talks about the Holy Land to church congregations. Faddul took the northeast as his territory, traveling from New Jersey to Maine giving illustrated lectures on the Twenty-third Psalm dressed in shepherd’s garb, and claiming to have been a shepherd in Lebanon. He was the subject of a best-selling 1904 book by

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1 The terms “Syria” and “Syrians” of course refer to the late nineteenth-century “Greater Syria,” not the present-day country of Syria.

2 By 1900, there were Syrian communities in every American state and territory.

3 H.H. Jessup to J.S. Dennis, 21 June 1892.
William Allen Knight *The Song of Our Syrian Guest*, and the author of his own 1907 exegesis on the Twenty-third Psalm *The Shepherd Song on the Hills of Lebanon*. Na’oum returned to the Middle East, becoming a civil servant in Cairo, but Faddul continued to travel and lecture around the eastern United States, even after marrying and starting a family in Boston. Ibrahim G. Kheiralla from Bhamdoun, also a member of the first graduating class (he is the handsome man second from right in Figure 2), took a unique life path.4 Like so many of his educated compatriots, he went to Cairo to do business, eventually partnering with another SPC graduate, Anton F. Haddad (BA 1882). Kheiralla clearly had a fertile and scientific turn of mind. He invented a half dozen different devices (including a flying machine and a device that prevented ships from sinking) that the partners had hoped in vain to bring to market. Kheiralla began to study with a Persian merchant in Cairo who was a follower of the Baha’i faith and soon converted to Baha’ism himself. Haddad followed suit two years later. Haddad left for the United States in 1892 to try to sell one of Kheiralla’s inventions, and Kheiralla joined him later that year, but neither succeeded. Haddad returned to Syria, but Kheiralla settled down in Chicago, becoming a Baha’i preacher and a “mystical healer.” He was handsome and charismatic and attracted a group of American followers who apparently provided support. He was the first Baha’i missionary in the United States, the foundation of a movement that now has 150,000 members, but he was also instrumental in causing a schism in the American Baha’i movement (Haddad repudiated him), and his supporters drifted away. He continued to live, preach, and write in Chicago until his death on a visit to his daughter in Beirut in 1923.

Like other poor tenement dwellers, members of the early Syrian colony in New York suffered disproportionately from illnesses such as cholera, tuberculosis, and yellow fever and saw their infants and children die in tragic numbers. Unlike other such communities, however, they had an unusual number of well-trained doctors as well as two pharmacists, all of whom graduated from SPC. Graduates who set up medical practices in New York in the nineteenth century included David H. Sleem (BA 1879; MD 1887), Ameen F. Haddad (BA 1884; MD 1888), Nageeb G. Barbour (MD 1887), Abdul-Masih Mussawir (BA 1887; MD 1891), Risq G. Haddad (BA 1890), and Raschid S. Baddour (MD 1893). All were able to pass their licensing exams and gain acceptance into the New York medical society immediately upon arrival. Several earned second or third degrees at American universities, attesting to their excellent training and their fluency in

---

4 See blogpost on Kheirallah at www.kalimahpress.com/blog/.
English. With the exception of Sleem, who moved to Alaska in 1904, all had decades-long medical practices in New York.

**Journalists**

There were many journalists and would-be journalists in the early colony and not all were college graduates. Anyone who was literate in Arabic and had dreams of writing could publish a newspaper. Only a few newspapers lasted more than a year, but Abraham Arbeely and his brother Nageeb founded a truly groundbreaking newspaper, *Kawkab America*. Launched in 1892, it was not only the first Arabic newspaper in the United States, but it included a page of English articles written by Nageeb or Abraham. No other Syrian published anything in English until the second decade of the twentieth century. For sixteen years, through a constant exchange between readers and editors, the newspaper helped guide members of the Syrian diaspora through the thorny issues of assimilation and acculturation, while promoting their business success. The Arbeelys also ran the Oriental Press, which published the first Arabic books in the United States, including an Arabic-English primer written by Abraham Arbeely in 1896.

**Businessmen**

Most Syrians in the United States were in trade. They began as peddlers of notions, Holy Land goods, or textiles and then set up businesses as wholesalers, importers or manufacturers of these goods, either as sole proprietors or in partnership with other Syrians. Several SPC graduates followed this path, including the Kisbany brothers from Kafra Shima—Selim (BA 1886) and Amin (BA 1891)—who emigrated together in 1892, probably to attend the Chicago fair. Back in New York, they peddled for a few years and then, joined by their brother Najeeb, set up as importers of oriental goods. They eventually went their separate ways, Amin to return to the Middle East and Najeeb and Selim to continue in business together. They entered a short-lived partnership with David Fuleihan and his brother Naoum, importing and wholesaling laces. Finally Selim went into partnership with Anthony Asha to manufacture yarn, while Najeeb became the sole owner of an importing business, which he moved from New York to Florida in the 1920s.

David A. Fuleihan, another SPC graduate (BA 1885), came to the United States to attend the Chicago fair. He first partnered with his classmate Joseph Affimus, who had earned a second degree in civil engineering from Union College in Schenectady, New York, in 1891. They set up a concession at the fair selling oriental goods, moved their booth to the New York Exposition after Chicago, and finally went to Antwerp world’s fair together in 1894. After that, Affimus returned to the Middle East, while Fuleihan went into partnership with several of his Moghabghab cousins selling oriental goods in Philadelphia and Washington, DC, until his brother Naoum arrived in New York in 1905. “Fuleihan Brothers” was founded that year. The two brothers sold oriental goods together and then went into a short-lived partnership with the two Kisbany Brothers as noted above. Fuleihan Brothers, however, persisted until 1922, when Naoum went off on his own, and David went to work for F.M. Jabara and Bros., linen manufacturers and importers, with factories in Portugal, Italy, and China. At his death, David set up a scholarship at AUB for descendants of the Fuleihan family.

**Although they [SPC graduates] were a relatively small minority in the Syrian diaspora, their impact was greater than their numbers would suggest.**

Najib A. Moghabghab, a member of the same family of Moghabghabs as Na’oum and Faddoul, graduated from SPC in 1898, and immigrated to the United States to join his cousin Salim and Salim’s wife Nabiha in managing a chain of high-fashion women’s clothing stores, called “Madam S. Moghabghab.” They had stores in posh hotels in Miami, Atlantic City, and Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, stores which survived well into the 1930s.

The legacy of SPC graduates in America is a neglected aspect of its early history. Their presence reminds us that not all of the early Syrian immigrants were peasants or paupers, despite the almost universal perception by the American press to the contrary. Although they were a relatively small minority in the Syrian diaspora, their impact was greater than their numbers would suggest. The Presbyterian missionaries who founded SPC hoped that a western educational institution would change the Middle East—which it certainly did—but the graduates who immigrated undoubtedly influenced the character of the Syrian diaspora, which ultimately changed the face of New York and America.

-Linda K. Jacobs, PhD, is the author of *Strangers in the West* (Kalimah Press, 2015), the story of the first Arab immigrants to settle in New York City.
Leading, Changing

On President Fadlo R. Khuri’s agenda: dialogue, collegiality, focus and debate.

**First things first: who is your favorite Lebanese musician?**
Fairouz is my favorite singer, and her son Ziad Rahbani, is my favorite musical genius. Of the new bands, I like the very creative Mashrou’ Leila.

**You studied at AUB for a year in the early 1980s. Who stands out as a mentor during your time here; someone who influenced your outlook, your career path, your research?**
I had many excellent teachers during my time at AUB, and a particular favorite was Marius Deeb in Civilization Sequence, who encouraged me to look deeper into classic texts. However, my greatest mentor was always my late father, whose influence on me endures to this day. He was a rare individual of surpassing talent and character, whose work and accomplishments grow more admirable by the day. My focus on scientific discovery to improve the health of individuals derives to a significant degree from Raja Khuri’s mentorship and inspiration. My desire to impact the lives and health of the most disadvantaged elements of society springs from the idealism and activism I absorbed on the AUB campus.

**What’s keeping you up at night?**
What keeps me up at night is my belief that AUB is the most regionally impactful university in the world. There’s no institution of higher education anywhere that influences its region the way AUB does. But we face some challenges. Tuition is a hot button topic. We need to be affordable for the best and brightest of Lebanon and the region. We need a fair and equitable settlement of the agreement with the Workers and Staff Syndicate of AUB to support our outstanding faculty. We need to build a collegial culture that’s been missing a little bit at AUB, without losing any of the palpable sense of excitement on campus.

**What needs to be done to accomplish this?**
There are a number of steps we can take. We need to decelerate the rise of tuition by increasing AUB’s endowment and revenue streams beyond tuition and by continuing to build our financial aid program. We are towards the end of a five-to-six-year plan that raised tuition but more than doubled financial aid.

It’s also vital that we champion the return of tenure to AUB for the first time in 30 years. Tenure will help attract the very best scholars and position AUB as a world-class research institution, laying the framework for the design of a two-track faculty system for teachers and researchers where both are equally valued and rewarded.

We also have to reach beyond this country for our students, faculty, and staff in order to be a truly global university. This involves more than recruitment and philanthropy; it requires strategic alliances with great universities and great corporations that can offer some things we don’t have. I don’t mean we’re going to make AUB more corporate, but if a start-up or a large company can help us provide solutions and influence, we’re open to all strategic alliances. I want to build relationships with public and private high schools in Lebanon and the region in a strategic and mission-oriented manner. We should be leading and changing the discourse about education, research, and service in the Arab world.

And, of course, we need to take the opportunity provided by AUB’s 150th anniversary to reflect on and celebrate the tremendous history and achievements of this great and unique university.
Continuing our conversation, let me ask you about your vision for AUB in terms of shaping events in the region. When I left here in 1982, there were three great universities in Lebanon, of which two, AUB and Université Saint Joseph, contributed disproportionately to the creation of knowledge in the Near East. It would be arrogant to say that things are the same today as they were then. Lebanese University has become a serious research university, and LAU is very significant, as are Notre Dame, USEK (Holy Spirit University of Kaslik), Beirut Arab University, and University of Balamand, which I am really impressed by. These are all major players and allies in the best sense, more than they are competitors.

Still, 45% of new knowledge in the academic vein in Lebanon is produced by AUB. So we are enormously influential in Lebanon, the Arab world, and beyond. Our engineers have built many of the major cities in the Arab world. Our physicians have healed and cared for many of the sick patients in the region. Our schools of agriculture and health sciences are thought leaders. Our business school, which is our youngest faculty at 15 years old, has taken an innovative approach in many things, including the intersection between business and ethics. And, of course, our oldest college, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, is the beating heart of liberal thought in the Near East. It’s hard to think of a major scholar in the last three-quarters of a century who hasn’t had an association with AUB. Same for some of the more progressive political leaders, even some radical political thinkers on the right and the left. So we have enormous impact that continues today.

We cannot isolate ourselves from the unpleasant features of our society and only cherry pick the best of Lebanon and the Arab world. We need to push forward solutions for the greater good of the country and the region: enduring and sustainable environmental, economic, educational, and societal solutions.

How do you define collegiality?
To me, collegiality means not just listening to your colleagues when you don’t agree with them, but supporting and thinking through their point of view. That’s a challenge in this part of the world where people feel so passionately about one side of the debate because of the immediacy of that debate: it can impact your electricity, your education, your life. And I understand that.

But true collegiality is a very powerful enabler of real discourse. People want to get up and give their opinion freely without fear of being constrained or rebuked or embarrassed. I would like to see us do a lot more talking and considerably less shouting. If we don’t do it, we and the great alliance of remarkable over-achieving Lebanese research institutions, then who will?

You have asked the faculty to provide a “safety net” for AUB students. What kind of safety net will you provide? What values do you aspire to model for the faculty and staff of AUB?
I’d like to model accountability, work ethic, transparency, and commitment; qualities that are abundantly present on campus. But I’d also like to model a culture of forgiveness. People shouldn’t be afraid of making mistakes. The greatest discoveries have been counter-intuitive. We can foster this fearlessness here as an example to society. We have an opportunity to be gentle and supportive of one another—to demand rigor, of course, but also to be forgiving.

I am determined to help build confidence, resources, and trust on this campus so that our exceptionally talented students, faculty, staff, and alumni can come up with more high-risk, high-reward discoveries without being undermined by fear of failure.

How does being an oncologist prepare you to lead a university?
The framework of an oncologist is to try and make things better in challenging situations and not only be compassionate but create a lasting bond with patients. This is why I enjoy my work: the science and the healing, the transformation of science into better healing and care.

The same qualities apply as a university leader. I love the interactions with students, faculty, and staff, even the contentious interactions. When you’ve dealt with issues of life and death and you’ve made peace with the fact that you’re doing your best with each individual patient, you sleep better at night. You know you’ve done what you can.

I used to criticize my father, half-jokingly, because every day during the Lebanese Civil War, he saw the end of
the war just around the corner. But I’ve inherited that eternal thoughtful optimism from him and from the work I’ve done as an oncologist. The fact that you can help extend life or make an ending more merciful and the remaining time more valuable for an individual and their family, it empowers you to always believe there is a solution.

**How important is AUBMC to the region today?**

Former AUB President John Watertbury once joked with me that he had a picture of the presidents of Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, and the only one smiling was the president of Princeton, because he didn’t have a medical school to worry about. Having a medical school commits you to the ideal of caring for even the most unfortunate people in society when they show up at your door. But it also empowers you to innovate and discover through science. And, in my view, it really tunnels into the grand vision of a university making a social, economic, and societal impact. So a great medical center is fundamental if you’re going to be a great university.

AUBMC was once a truly great medical center, and it is becoming great once again. That’s been the hard work of several generations of leaders. Our physical infrastructure had become very difficult to update, so the Board of Trustees made a brave decision and put tremendous resources toward physical infrastructure and recruiting faculty, alongside very generous support from donors, and those aspects are going well.
The remaining part, which is the most difficult, is the transformation of culture. We have superb physicians and nurses here. But the culture in Lebanon and the post-war culture at AUB had become more of a solo, limited-partnership style of practice. And now the very difficult task is to blend that into a true unified faculty. That hasn't really been fully accomplished anywhere in the world. What we need to do to really serve the region is develop an efficient global group practice that’s very focused on addressing and solving the health crises of the region. Lebanon alone does not need a 600-bed hospital; the Arab world does.

What do you say to student protests over tuition? How will your administration address them?
I am inspired by the idealism and the intellectual and political activism that the students have always shown on this campus, now as ever before. I have repeatedly reached out to the students to indicate that I agree with them that we need to become affordable for most Lebanese and other aspirants who want to obtain the best liberal education in the Arab world. We must aspire to be more intellectually elite than we are economically elite, in order to remain faithful to our goal of being highly effective change agents in a society that is crying out for just such leadership. I would like to see the student representatives committed to real dialogue and encourage them to avoid unrealistic solutions, even if that means bringing up some options that are tougher in the short term, such as increasing utilization of the very favorable student loan program AUB has secured in collaboration with many Lebanese banks. This would relieve some of the pressure on their parents and would show that they are willing to bear some of the burden for their own education. I did this when I was their age so I am not asking them to do something that I didn’t do myself. I urge the students at AUB to be well represented by serious colleagues whose goals are to make the institution better and more inclusive, and I am genuinely encouraged by what I see with so many bright, committed, and transparent young people on campus whose motives are unimpeachably good.

Where do you and your wife like to go on holiday?
We just came back from Cyprus. I love it because it fulfills our two requirements: I like quiet, and my wife likes the sea.

When you’re looking back in ten or fifteen years, what do you hope to see? I don’t look back very often—maybe that’s a fatal flaw. But I’d like to see AUB be much healthier economically, socially, environmentally, in a more stable region. I would like to see us not lose any of the vibrant campus debate that has always characterized the University, but also see it become more focused, so people can take risks and have vigorous debates about the topics of the day while being more inclusive. So, for example, I’d like see real serious discussion addressing all of the students’ needs, not just tuition: mental health, physical health, job opportunities. I want real dialogue about the stress that our undergraduate and graduate students, and indeed our faculty and staff, are under. Universities tend to be pressure cookers, and we tend to shy away from addressing this. Young people are under pressure because they feel only as good as their next exam or their next paper. We need to help develop a healthier culture of achievement.

I’d also like to see our faculty, students, and staff come up with short, medium and long-term economic solutions to problems that seem to plague this part of the world. I don’t want to shy away from doing risky, cutting-edge science and liberal arts. We’re really poised to make a huge difference. Where we’ll be in ten or fifteen years? Hard to tell. But it won’t be for lack of trying. Onward and upward!

-N.Q.
An AUB Education? Priceless!

All hail AUB donors! Since 2007-08, AUB has more than doubled its financial aid support per student. Read more about it in the latest Contributors Report.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL APPLICANTS</th>
<th>TOTAL RECIPIENTS</th>
<th>AVERAGE SUPPORT/STUDENT</th>
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The figures above include only funding administered by AUB’s Financial Aid Office (FAID). AUB administers funding from several other sources, including work study programs, USAID, MEPI/OSP and other federal grants, etc. When those dollars are added, total financial assistance was $45,335,931 in 2015.

In total, it breaks down like this in 2015:

- Financial Aid administered by FAID: $27,706,884
- Financial Aid, other activities (USAID, MEPI, FM, HSON, AUBMC): $7,352,284
- Financial Aid by departments (stipends, GAs): $8,236,053
- Financial Assistance by departments (grants and donations): $2,040,710
- Financial Assistance: employee benefits and student loans: $9,317,244

By the Numbers

By the Books

Course: MEST 317S: Political Ecology and Social Change Focus on the Arab Region

SYLLABUS

Political ecology concerns the roots of social conflicts over use of environmental resources. It seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding of the winners and losers when it comes to distributing these resources. Students in this graduate level seminar will examine some of the Arab region’s most critical environmental issues, as well as the ways in which civil society organizes around them. This course supports the Asfari Institute of Civil Society and Citizenship’s mission to promote a strong Arab civil society through education.

CLASS EVALUATION

Because of the seminar nature of the class, students will have ample opportunity to interact and discuss issues together. Each student is responsible for presenting at least two readings, in addition to those already assigned, on a topic inspired by the course materials, and for leading a class discussion. Student discussions have thus far covered: irrigation and neoliberalism in Morocco, water resources conflict in Jordan, fracking in Algeria, and climate change influences in the uprisings in Egypt and Libya. Students also read a text of their choosing and write a paper exploring a political ecology issue.

INSTRUCTOR’S BIO

Dr. Rania Masri is the associate director of the Asfari Institute of Civil Society and Citizenship at AUB. She holds a PhD in forestry from North Carolina State University and a master’s in environmental management from Duke University. Throughout her career, she has worked to bring a holistic, interdisciplinary lens to the environmental sciences. Her academic research and publications focus on ecological sustainability, environmental politics, and social movements.
Tag Tour

“The Outlook newsroom is always as busy as it looks in the photo. We are constantly meeting to share our crazy ideas and observations. We don’t just talk about Outlook in the newsroom; we also share observations about campus and our personal lives, or just chill, chat, and laugh.”

-Dana Abed
Outlook Editor-in-Chief

01 Outlook’s to-do list, updated during the weekly board meeting. All senior and junior editors pitch ideas and create a to-do list.
02 Dana Kambris, associate editor, and
03 Tala Ladki, editor for the life section, are polishing articles on a Friday afternoon, when most of the editing is done.
04 Two iMacs and three PCs are mostly used for Photoshop and Adobe InDesign.
05 These are previous issues. Whenever an issue comes out, it goes up on the board.
06 The workspace: meeting or no meeting, this is where the editors gather to discuss and exchange ideas, make decisions, and design the layout.
07 Dana Abed, editor-in-chief;
08 Razan Mneimneh and
09 Mohammad Chammah, Outlook’s detail-oriented copy editors.
10 Laudy Issa, the news editor, who is aware of every little happening on campus.
11 Zine El Abidine Ghebouli, an Algerian, jokingly referred to as the international representative on the board. He’s slowly learning to understand the Lebanese accent...
When Anis Abdallah (BS ’84), AUB’s grounds manager, arrived on campus 25 years ago, AUB was physically fragile, its most hallowed structures in mortal danger. The campus grounds—palm trees, cedars, pines, and shrubs—were left to grow wild and fend for themselves.

“Things were a mess,” says Abdallah. “The war was just ending. And we had to patch up, prune, and redesign everything.” For the first few years of his tenure, Abdallah reigned in the sprawl of foliage and brought a sense of order to neglected spaces.

These days, threats to campus greenery are more environmental, specifically irrigation-related. “Unfortunately, the wells we irrigate with have become more saline,” says Abdallah, “and for some plants that’s unhealthy.” Walk around campus and you might notice leaves covered with black spots, a side-effect of a hypersaline water supply.

As a remedy, Abdallah has begun adding water from public reservoirs to the irrigation system. “Adding domestic water from government sources lowers salinity,” he notes. “We also plan to use reverse osmosis on the system and add rainwater.”

Equally important to his strategy is the move away from exotic trees and plants to native ones, which are more adapted to the local climate. “Native trees live better here and they reflect the culture of the area.”

Abdallah, like the trees he plants, is a local. “I grew up in Hamra and was a student at International College.” After graduating from AUB with a bachelor’s of science in agriculture, he went on to work in landscaping in Mount Lebanon, but soon heard of an opening at the University. “I heard they needed a landscape architect, so I applied.”

Today, he oversees roughly 60 personnel as the keeper of AUB’s cherished campus grounds, and, not surprisingly, he is still happy to go to work every morning. “I like my job. I work with nature and I’m out in the sun.”
Interviewing Suleiman Ali Salman, a.k.a. Abou Haytham, is difficult, if done on campus. Every two or three questions I ask, a passerby interrupts me, so they can greet him. I can’t finish a sentence before a professor, a student, a groundskeeper, or campus policeman walks by offering a handshake and a hearty smile. Clearly, Abou Haytham, a campus fixture and keeper of the peace at AUB since 1988, is beloved.

When, after 27 years of service to AUB, professor and chairperson of the Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management Salma Talhouk announced Abou Haytham’s retirement in a letter to faculty, she sparked an outpouring of appreciation of far more breadth and depth than I could capture in a few paragraphs. Renowned chemist and former acting president of AUB Makhlouf Haddadin told of the time Abou Haytham protected him when a student skirmish turned violent back in 1993. Former President John Waterbury spoke of his gentleness and perennial good humor. And many others spoke of him with equal warmth and affection.

For me, Abou Haytham radiates dignity. When we sit down to speak, I can’t help but sit up straight and adjust my collar. Had he not gone into security, he would no doubt have been a successful diplomat.

For the course of our conversation, he speaks to me about his approach to work, life, and people. “The most important thing is having good relationships. Good relationships create a good atmosphere,” he says. “No matter who you’re with, a professor, a visitor, or an employee, you respect that person.”

Good security is more diplomacy than force, he advises. “We deal with people diplomats, not aggressively, and that’s why we’re respected.”

Abou Haytham, in his own singular fashion, manages to make everyone he comes into contact with, including myself, feel ten feet tall. As our conversation winds down, I wish he would stay so I could bask in the glow of his charm. In this man, AUB has truly lost someone special.

-E.E
AUB Launches Pro-Green Diploma

This fall, AUB, along with the Lebanese American University (LAU) and the American University of Cairo (AUC), began offering an online degree for postgraduate students and mid-career professionals looking to break into the field of green technology. The program teaches students how to analyze the efficiency of solar systems using software tools, estimate the effect of building design on energy use, and developed irrigation schedules, among other skills. The ultimate focus of the course depends on students’ chosen specializations: buildings, water, or energy.

Several years in the making, the idea for a Pro-Green diploma was born in 2011 when Dr. Ehab Abdel-Rahman, vice provost for research at AUB, came to Dr. Nesreen Ghaddar, endowed Qatar chair in energy studies professor and director of the Munib and Angela Masri Institute of Energy and Natural Resources, with the idea for a joint degree in green technology. Ghaddar, Abdel-Rahman, and Dr. George E. Nasr, dean of LAU’s School of Engineering, put together a proposal for the European Union’s (EU) Tempus Programme.1 The proposal initially called for in-person program, but logistical challenges pushed the partner institutions to move the program online.

Students complete the program on Moodle, an open-source e-learning platform. “Students can draw from the expertise of 40 plus faculty members offering courses in their specialties,” says Ghaddar. Faculty upload their lectures to the platform for students to watch at their convenience, and students can schedule Skype meetings with professors. According to the program’s website, enrollees can complete the 18-credit program at their own pace, as long as they do so in three years.

The program’s launch comes at time when demand for green technology skills is high and growing. “The region needs professionals in this area,” says Dr. Ghaddar. The entire region, but especially the Gulf, is moving towards sustainable infrastructure, and countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE are investing heavily in that space. Therefore graduates, with skills in LEED certified construction, solar energy systems, and sustainable water treatment will likely be in high demand as well.

Summer AI Program

For five days this past June summer students from different backgrounds from all over the Middle East descended on AUB to learn about game theory, natural language processing (NPL), and deep learning, among other subjects. They came to AUB for the first annual Artificial Intelligence Summer School.

AUB FEA Professor Mariette Awad organized the event to raise awareness among the region’s students about the exciting developments in different areas of artificial intelligence. “The goal is to disseminate, to make students aware of it and excited about it,” Awad commented.

To fund the event, Awad turned to the IEEE, the world’s largest professional association for technology advancement, and the Artificial Intelligence Journal, a premier publication in the field of AI.

During their five day stay at AUB, students listened to lectures from six speakers from around the region, including Awad herself, on a variety of AI-related topics. Dr. Yelena Mejova, a scientist in the Social Computing Group at Qatar Computing Research Institute, discussed the “Language of Politics on Twitter,” explaining how one can apply NPL tools to massive amounts of Twitter data to capture trending political sentiments.

All of this year’s speakers came from the Middle East region, something Awad hopes to change when organizing the event for next year. “If the funds are available, I want to make the AI Summer Program more international in 2016.”

1 The Tempus Programme supports modernization and cooperation among higher education institutions in the EU’s surrounding area.
Senior OSB MBA students **Faten Abdel Ahad** and **Shireen Makarem** (expected degrees, 2016) enjoyed a whirlwind trip to New York City October 12-16. Winners of the Darwazah Center for Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship sponsored **2015 MBA Finance Competition**, they attended the prestigious ABANA (Arab Bankers Association of North America) conference on women in finance chaired by the co-chair of AUB’s Board of Trustees Hutham S. Olayan who is the president and CEO of Olayan America. These two promising students and potential business world leaders also met with executives from Bloomberg, BlackRock, Morgan Stanley and Olayan America.

What was it like to mingle with the elite of the international business community? “It was an experience that was eye-opening and intense in its core. We had the chance to participate in compelling conversations with senior executives at leading global financial institutions. Through candid conversations and panel discussions with diverse groups of female investors, asset managers and entrepreneurs, we are now more confident regarding advances in building new, more inclusive partnerships and sustained initiatives that will better support female leaders in the business arena in the Middle East, North Africa and the United States.”
Discoveries
Research, the arts, and current events

The Origins and Future of AUB’s Green Campus
The path to a full-fledged arboretum and botanic garden

The Truth About the Tell
A young grad gives us the real scoop on an archaeological dig

Discovery/Rediscovery
The Saul Rosenberg Collection at Jafet Library

R + D
Mostafa Hammoud: A PhD student is cracking the code of magnetic reconnection

Pursuits
FAFS Assistant Professor Lamis Jouma on childhood obesity; OSB Professor Yusuf Sidani’s MOOC on the value of a strong work ethic

Quiz
Presidential match-up

Under Discussion
Professor Najat Saliba, head of AUB’s Task Force on Solid Waste Management, speaks out

AUB Spaces
Parsing the particulates in Dr. Alain Shihadeh’s lab
The Origins and Future of AUB’s Green Campus

The Past

When Daniel Bliss founded AUB in 1866, one of the first things he did was plant the trees that would define the campus’s boundaries. “Not far from twenty pounds sterling...were expended last spring in planting trees upon the property at Ras Beirut and building temporary walls for the purpose of defining boundaries...,” wrote Bliss.

By 1903, administrators had woven campus greening into the University’s broader mission statement. “We cannot afford to postpone the systematic and intelligent development of our magnificent campus in the direction of gardens, tree planting, botanical gardens...”

Though there was some vegetation on campus, like the large prickly-leaved oak near the Lee Observatory and several large carob trees, the area was mostly a sparse, rocky outcrop.

Transitioning to a green campus was difficult. The ground was harsh, “holes had to be chiseled out of solid rock for the trees to be planted,” wrote one Outlook reporter in 1953. A leading figure in that transition was AUB Professor of Chemistry W. A. West. West collected acorns and planted them in various parts of campus. He also introduced the Arizona cypress trees in 1923. “Anywhere you see a Judas tree or a Viburnum shrub you can be sure that it came from a seedling which I dug with my own hands in the mountains, and brought back to Beirut in my knapsack,” said West.

West not only spread campus greenery, but curated it: “It is not generally known that I am responsible for cutting down about as many trees as I planted. Had this not been done, the sea would now be invisible from many parts of campus.”

Campus’s landmark trees arrived at different times by different means. In 1911, alumnus H. Glockler brought the large eucalyptus tree located north of Assembly Hall from Jerusalem in a biscuit tin. Former AUB Treasurer G. Stewart brought seeds from California and Australia in the early 1900s. And someone planted the large fig tree outside Medical Gate in 1931.

In the early 1930s, an abundance of water supplied from the campus well facilitated tree planting. This allowed the grounds committee to diversify. To the drought resistant evergreens, they added a collection of flowering, water-loving trees. Former AUB Grounds Committee Chairman Dimitrios Serlis brought several hundred young pine and cypress trees from Palestine and imported seeds and trees from Italy.

In the 1960s, Grace Kirkwood, landscape architect and wife of former AUB President Samuel Kirkwood, designed many areas on campus. She, along with George Battikha, a former municipal director of parks and gardens, made the campus grounds more cosmopolitan, planting trees and shrubs imported from China and South Africa. We lack written records of campus management during the civil war. Mr. Rubeiz managed the campus until the late 1980s, until Anis Abdallah, the current grounds manager, took over.
Decades later, in 1991, late AUB Professor Charles Abou-Chaar would capture the international “nature” of the campus in an *AUB Bulletin*: “Of the big and beautiful trees on campus one may mention the stately Australian Grevillea and Queenslands’s Brachychiton with its smooth green stems. Not forgetting of course the beautiful Jacaranda of Brazil, or the Tipu tree of Bolivia, the Coral tree of South Africa, or the Lebbeck tree of tropical Asia.

There are the Acacias and Eucalyptus of Australia, Dombeya and Poinciana from Madagascar, Bombax, Purging Cassia, Bauhinia and several species of Ficus including the Banyan tree, the Bo tree, the Rubber Tree and the Benjamin Tree all from India. The Apple Blossom Cassia comes from Indonesia, the Redbud from West Asia and South Europe. And of course Lebanon’s Cedar and the numerous Oaks, Cypresses, Palms and Pines are all represented.”

The transformation of AUB’s campus into a full-fledged arboretum and botanic garden is long overdue. In 2013, the AUB Arboretum and Botanic Garden Committee (AUBotanic) came into being, with committee members coming from various academic and administrative units. The committee has embarked on the challenging task of locating every tree and shrub, preparing labels and narratives for them, organizing plant tours, and developing a design, management, and fundraising strategy that ensures the continued maintenance and development of AUB’s campus.

AUBotanic will officially launch the AUB Arboretum and Botanic Garden during the University’s 150th celebrations, with special events to be held the third week of April, 2016. If you are interested in playing a part in the launch or support the development of AUB’s green campus in anyway, please contact Professor Salma Talhouk at ntsalma@aub.edu.lb.

-Salma Talhouk, professor, Department of Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management.
Discoveries

An excavation like Tell Burak is less like Lara Croft and more like Holes. It’s hot, it’s dirty, and it’s somewhat desperate. But, it’s also blissful. This is my third season with the Tell Burak excavation, which is an archaeological tell (or mound) located south of Saida on the coast. So far, I’ve witnessed mystical curses, trowel injuries, and Phoenician pottery.

AUB, Tubingen University, the German Archaeological Institute (DAI) and the University of Mainz have been digging at Tell Burak since 2001. Dr. Helene Sader, Dr. Jens Kamlah and Dr. Aaron Schmitt direct the site; Iron, Bronze, and Ottoman age civilizations all tilled the land here.

For the last three years, I’ve been involved in digging up Iron Age infrastructure, including houses and a city wall. We are trying to understand how the site was built and its purpose.

Our Schedule
We’re on site for four weeks at a time. We stay at a hotel in Tyre and commute by car to the site daily. If you’re from the area, you can go home on the weekends.

An Interesting Piece of Information
While you’re digging, it’s difficult to understand what exactly is going on. Interpretations continuously fly left and right. Real clarity comes after the dig is done when you can sit down, look at all the documentation and come up with plausible conclusions.

Want To Know What An Archaeological Excavation Is Really Like?
Here’s an insight to our day (with some behind-the-scenes notes!):

5:15 am – Wake up.
5:45 am – Drive to site. (It takes about 25 minutes–we drive quite fast.)
6:15–9:30 am – Excavate.
9:30–10:00 am – Breakfast Break. (We almost always eat Mankoushe.)
10:00 am–1:00 pm – Excavate.
1:00–2:00 pm – Lunch Break. (We usually just make sandwiches, but sometimes the staff surprises us with falafel or pizza.)
2:00–5:30/6:30 pm – Documentation. (Here is where we write down everything we did, and do what needs to be done with finds, like washing/counting/marking.)
6:30 pm – Drive back to hotel.
7:30 pm – Dinner. (Our cook likes to experiment...)

After dinner, we’re free to do as we please, but mostly we’re too tired to do anything.

The People
On these kinds of projects, where we all live together, you’re inevitably stuck with each other. Mental and physical exhaustion strip away people’s social masks. Personality clashes and cultural misunderstandings are unavoidable. But we work around such issues. You can make great friends, but you can also get a sense of the kind of people you might not get along with. I think this is one of the most interesting parts of the entire experience.

Syrian workers help us dig. We learn from them too. We’re exposed to lots of different kinds of people.

Things That Make You Question Your Sanity
You very frequently clean dirt off of dirt. Instead of saying “I forgot how to speak English”, you say something like, “I forgot how to sandwich.”

There have been instances of hysterical laughter for no reason whatsoever.

Main gossip topics include who may or may not have stolen the brownie.
Discoveries

How A Dig Is Like A Spa Treatment
A dig can be very luxurious, if you’ve got the right attitude:

In need of exfoliation? The mix of dirt and sunscreen on your skin provides the perfect base!

We’re lucky enough to walk through an avocado plantation to reach the site. Those trees are quite low and the avocados often hit you in the face. BOOM: instant facial!

Sometimes you get stuck with having to work in an area that’s very closed off and doesn’t allow for any wind (or air for that matter) to come through. Did somebody say “sauna”?

Fun Stories: The Curse of The Skull
This season was a fruitful one. One of the teams found a fragmented human skull (cool, right?). But here’s the catch: it was found in the “dump”, that is to say, the ancient people’s trash. Not one bone from the rest of its body was found in the entire context and it was a child’s head. (What?!) And for the rest of the week, both team members experienced a series of injuries like burns, major cuts and knee sprains. Coincidence?

How We Do What We Do
The season begins with a goal, like tracing the extension of a house. We work in teams in different areas of the site. Teams sometimes compete with each other. We all have our “dig-houses” where we eat and work. We dig according to contexts, a specific feature that can be anything from a wall to a layer of dirt.

We make sure to document everything we’ve done and found; this includes marking important pieces and storing them for later study. Every context is interpreted separately and then in relation to other contexts. Our ultimate goal is to finish excavating the site and gain insight into the civilizations that once stood there; Phoenician, in the case of this dig.

The dig changes you on a personal level. You learn a lot and you always want to do better. The more experience you have, the more responsibility you earn on site. It’s terrifying, but also amazing. I learned to think more critically. I faced a completely new set of circumstances. With every scrape of your trowel, every hit with your hand-pick, you work towards something greater. Keeping this in mind makes it easier to work, while the sun burns up the back of your neck. Everyone has a common goal, everyone is going through the exact same thing.

You leave the dig wiser. You deal with people you wouldn’t normally deal with. You meet people with amazing minds and stories. You get to create your own stories. And who wouldn’t find trowel flipping to be a great party trick? I’d recommend this to anyone and everyone willing to do it. I’ve done six digs so far and I’m looking forward to the next.

-Ashley Naim BA ’15

How Discovery/Rediscovery

Born in Brooklyn in 1912, Saul Rosenberg (MD ’39) was determined to become a doctor despite the virulent anti-semitism that prevented him from studying in the United States or Europe. AUB gave him a superior education, lifelong friends, and allowed him to travel throughout the Middle East. His three children, Hallie, Deborah and Hiram, all raised in Connecticut, and fed a rich diet of colorful stories, decided to donate their father’s carefully preserved mementos from his AUB years to Jafet Library.

The Saul Rosenberg Collection includes:
- 5 oil paintings
- 2 letters from Rosenberg (to his family)
- Rosenberg’s passport
- Almost 1,500 photographs
- Photo albums containing nearly 1,500 photographs taken between 1932-38

Do you have treasured AUB memorabilia, photos or books you would like to entrust to Archives and Special Collections?
E-mail asc@aub.edu.lb
Research focus: My focus is magnetic reconnection: the breaking and reconnecting of oppositely directed magnetic field lines in a plasma, which is a state of matter that exists at very high temperatures. Magnetic reconnection happens in the solar corona: the atmosphere of the sun. This phenomenon gives rise to solar flares, coronal mass ejections (CMEs), and magnetic storms, like the kind that upset satellites and electro-communications by destabilizing earth’s magnetic field. These reconnections happen during intervals of 10 minutes to one hour.

In March 2015, NASA launched the Magnetospheric Multiscale Mission (MMS), a spacecraft dedicated to studying this process by orbiting Earth, passing directly through nearby magnetic reconnection regions, and observing events up-close.

In the solar corona, the dynamics are governed by plasma, electrons and ions. Plasma can be treated as two fluid equations, as if we had a fluid of ions and electrons. Thus I am using OpenFOAM, open source software for computational fluid dynamics, to develop code that simulates the kind of magnetic reconnection phenomena observed by MMS in the solar corona.

Biggest discovery to date: I am still in the process of building the code. The code that I’ve developed so far gives me reconnection results at a time scale of about 88 days, I need to get that down to between 10 minutes to one hour. I want my code to generate data that resembles that gathered by MMS.

Implications for research: If I could get my code to match MMS data for time, I could use it to generate data. And if we could do that, we wouldn’t have to spend tons of money to collect such data via spacecraft like MMS.

As far as the significance of magnetic reconnection, it is responsible for triggering solar storms which disrupt GPS signals and radio communications, and even force planes to fly at low altitudes to avoid excessive radiation.

How I got here: I’ve been at AUB since 2010. I finished my bachelor’s at Lebanese University. Then I became a graduate assistant so I could afford to study at AUB. My current adviser, Dr. Mounib Eid, was on my master’s thesis committee. I told him I wanted to continue my PhD at AUB. He told me about the magnetic reconnection topic. He said he didn’t have a ton of information on it and suggested I try to build a code to simulate it.

What I’ll remember most about AUB: Once you enter campus, you relax. Bliss Street has lots of traffic, but not inside AUB. I also have the key to the Department of Physics, so I can go there at 3 am and do research.

Best moment of the day: In the morning, because I’m alone and I can relax. There’s no pressure, like in the afternoon when I’m in the lab and teaching.
Obesity is a serious public health problem that affects children and youth worldwide. Studies have shown that obese youth are three to four times more likely to grow into obese adults compared to non-obese youth, as well as more likely to suffer from cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other chronic diet-related diseases.

In Lebanon, obesity among children and adolescents has increased significantly over the past decade; however, only limited studies have explored their dietary intake, including water and beverage consumption, in relation to the increasing obesity trends.

A group of researchers, at the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences at AUB, including Dr. Nahla Hwalla, Dr. Farah Naja, Dr. Lara Nasreddine, and myself, Lamis Joumaa, are currently conducting a nationally representative cross-sectional study to explore the socio-demographic, dietary, and lifestyle correlates of obesity and to provide evidence-based intervention strategies and recommendations that could curb the escalating prevalence of obesity among Lebanese youth. This national study has been ongoing since December 2014, and is expected to be completed by the end of 2015.

I just wrapped up a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on success skills. The course focused on giving students the skills they need to reach their career goals and emphasized the importance of work ethic. The idea for the course came from Edraak, an initiative of the Queen Rania Foundation. Edraak finds, as I do, that the region suffers from a lack of work ethic; many believe success can only be achieved through personal connections (wasta in Arabic). The reality, however, is that the most people achieve success through hard work.

The director of Edraak, Nafez Dakkak, sent a film crew to AUB. In total, they filmed about 28 sessions, including my own lectures, as well as interviews with businesspeople. I lectured in modern standard Arabic, fusha, but the interviews are in different dialects. Students can access the materials via the EdX platform.

This first run was a great success. We had around 39,000 students register for the course, and unsurprisingly, given MOOC completion rates, around 3,000 finishers. I reached more students in four weeks, than I had in the past 15 years, and am now in talks with Edraak to do another MOOC on leadership.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT.

Chair of AUB’s Department of Sociology Sari Hanafi was recently recognized for his work with the Abdul Hameed Shoman Award for Arab Researchers. The award was founded in 1982 to recognize research that leads to an increased awareness of cultural and scientific research in the region.

In a statement, the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) said a team of researchers led by Professor Najat Saliba measured the rate of microscopic airborne particles and found that the sandstorm that hit Beirut in September greatly increased air pollution.
Quiz

Presidential Trivia
Match ‘em up!

1. Born in Walla Walla, Washington
2. An avid bird watcher and amateur photographer
3. Also served as president of San Francisco State University
4. The longest serving president of AUB
5. Born in Souk el-Gharb, Lebanon
6. Married to Daniel Bliss’s granddaughter, Mary William Bliss
7. Served as president of three universities
8. The son of a former US Secretary of State
9. An amateur lyric tenor
10. His mentor and father served as dean of the AUB FM
11. His son became a famous basketball star/coach
12. Founded the Daniel Bliss Society

For more on AUB presidents visit: http://www.aub.edu.lb/president/Pages/history.aspx

Key: 1. Calvin H. Plimpton (1984–87) AUB, Amherst College, SUNY Downstate Medical Center
5. F - Bayard Dodge (1923–48)
6. A - Calvin H. Plimpton (1866–1902)
11. C - David S. Dodge (1996–97)
Under Discussion: AUB Tackles Lebanon’s Trash Crisis

Professor Najat Saliba, Head of AUB’s Task Force on Solid Waste Management, speaks out:

The trash crisis of late has primarily affected Beirut and Mount Lebanon, areas serviced by the waste management company, Sukleen. Saida and other municipalities employing local companies have so far managed to sidestep the problem, but, in reality, it’s a national issue.

As background, Sukleen was taking unsorted trash at the source and dumping it in a landfill in Na’ameh, south of Beirut. Though the Na’ameh site satisfied international requirements for a landfill, it was only supposed to be a temporary dumping ground. Unfortunately, political gridlock forestalled a permanent solution.

Eventually, 12 years after it was initially set to close in 2003, the residents of Na’ameh and its surrounding villages became fed up and started blocking Sukleen’s trucks from dumping this past summer. Though the Ministry of Environment is ultimately responsible for solving this issue, we believe we can help.

Thus, we’ve created the AUB Task Force on Solid Waste Management aimed at addressing Lebanon’s trash crisis. The task force includes individuals with a wide range of expertise across the spectrum of disciplines associated with waste management, such as air, soil and water pollution, solid waste management, chemistry, public health and inflammatory diseases. We have been meeting periodically to assess the trash crisis and possible solutions. We affirm that any solution must incorporate the 3R’s (reduce, reuse, and recycle), and include organic composting, as well as dumping in sanitary landfills. Controlled incineration should be a last resort. Solutions should present a balance of environmentally beneficial, feasible, cost-effective, and socially sensitive practices.
Planning for a Resolution: A Progress Report

For a more detailed look at its plan, MainGate spoke to other members of the Task Force. They’ve sketched out a preliminary assessment of available waste disposal, weighing the pros and cons of each. They are looking at how different disposal methods affect the environment in terms of air, water, and soil quality.

First, among the methods they assess, is open dumping, whereby trash is discarded in an open waste disposal site. This causes toxic emissions, contamination of water supplies via leachate (when water leeches trash particles as it passes through them and carries them into wells and streams), and contamination of soils via similar dynamics. Then, there are landfills. These are the same as open dumps, but buried, and come with the same set of unwanted side effects; however, they can be made more attractive if lined with plastic and clay to prevent toxic seepage into the surrounding environment.

Finally, there are incinerators, which burn waste at high temperatures and can pollute in multiple directions, if unregulated.

The task force believes recycling should play an integral role in any waste management solution. They have prepared a roadmap for how solids, organics, and other types of materials should be sorted and processed at different levels of jurisdiction, from the municipality to the district.

Yet there is one key question that needs to be answered before the details of a final plan are worked out: How willing are Beirutis to sort their garbage? If meaningful sorting can be accomplished at the household level, that would reduce costs and open up a different set of options. Saliba and her colleagues don’t have a definitive answer yet, but Dr. Sawsan Abdurahim, associate professor and chair of the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health at AUB, is conducting surveys and focus groups to find out.

Saliba, Rami Ollaik, another task force member and professor of beekeeping at AUB, and others have been meeting with Agriculture Minister Akram Chehayeb to discuss his own plan and the task force’s work. Ollaik describes these meetings as “very productive,” citing the task force’s work as “a backup of Chehayeb’s plan by AUB from a scientific perspective.” According to Ollaik, Chehayeb and the task force envision a multi-phase solution to the trash crisis, involving the use of landfills.

Ollaik hopes to run through a few trash collection test routes prior to the passage of any legislation addressing the issue. If the task force can help execute a few test cases, than its recommendations will hold more weight. However, to prepare such test cases, he explains, “government funds must be released to municipalities,” so that they can pay workers.

Ultimately, Ollaik sees the task force’s role as that of government advisor and mediator between Minister Chehayeb’s team and those protesting government inaction. “AUB has a reputation as an independent body,” says Ollaik. It appears that both sides agree with Ollaik, as a roundtable featuring representatives from the protest movement, the government, and AUB is in the works.
AUB mechanical engineering Professor Alan Shihadeh’s lab is split between the Science Research and the Irani Oxy Engineering buildings (IOEC) on lower campus. Several important discoveries were made here, including that in the course of a single smoking session, waterpipe tobacco smokers inhale large doses of toxicants, including many cancer-causing ones. Shihadeh and his colleagues demonstrated that these toxicants penetrate into the bloodstream, impair the function of the central nervous system, and damage lung and aortic cells. These findings and others led to advisory warnings from the World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States. Such discoveries don’t happen every day, but the churn of research in the lab is constant. “We’re doing policy-driven research on the science of airborne particles,” says Shihadeh. “We trace the birth, atmospheric transformation, inhalation, and, finally, the health effects of these particles.” Shihadeh’s team draws on engineering methods to develop and build scientific instruments that enable much of this work.

One of Shihadeh’s favorite pieces of equipment in the lab is a home-built oxidation flow reactor, which looks like a stainless steel box with tubes and wires. He and his team use it to recreate the kind of chemistry in the atmosphere that creates the haze enveloping the city of Beirut on sunny days. “It allows us to generate in a few seconds the equivalent of a day’s worth of photochemistry, so we can study the nature of that haze under controlled conditions,” he explains. “What we learn will help us predict how well different air pollution control strategies can work.”

The Aerosol Lab Vaping Instrument (ALVIN), which generates electronic-cigarette (E-cigs) aerosols, is another lab favorite. “E-cigs are an increasingly popular, and rapidly evolving method for inhaling nicotine, and ALVIN allows us to re-produce human puffing patterns in fine detail. Using it we can study what is in e-cig aerosols, and understand how the e-cig may be regulated effectively to protect public health.”

Unlike Shihadeh’s earlier labs, the space at IOEC was specially-designed for his team. “We ended up with a really nice space. There’s a quiet space for work that doesn’t have noisy instruments, and, well, a space for everything else.”
Wellness
AUBMC 2020, health, and medicine

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Check Up:

Improving Outcomes Among Premature Babies

Q. What is your role and the role of your division here at AUBMC?
A. I'm the head of the neonatology division. We care for newborn infants, whether they are premature or full-term babies born with congenital abnormalities that need surgical correction. We take care of newborn babies with conditions like heart disease, and we assume the care of these babies pre and post-surgery. We care for babies as premature as 24 weeks. Our survival rate is good for 24-week-old babies and we are working towards having rates similar to those of developed countries in the West.

Q. What are some of the obstacles to achieving better outcomes?
A. We have come a long way over the last 15 to 20 years. Training is important. Unfortunately, we have a high turnover of nurses. Our nurses are good and they get recruited by hospitals in the Gulf. Expertise is critical. To have a majority of senior nurses is very important for a highly specialized unit. If the patient is very sick, we provide one-to-one care; the nurse is assigned to one single baby. You can't find that elsewhere. Our results are impressive. I have no doubt that we have the best unit in the country.

Q. How expensive is neonatal intensive care? Can poorer families afford such care?
Intensive care is expensive due to the high level of technology and expertise involved. In addition, many governmental and private insurers don’t cover the cost of neonatal intensive care, and very few provide good coverage.

To offset these costs for poor families, five mothers who had premature babies in our NICU decided to launch the Neonate Fund in December of 2011. So far the Fund has provided 247 families with financial support. The Neonate Fund spent $3 million so far on helping babies. It is an important program supporting the mission of the institution in improving patient outcome and satisfaction.

Q. How can pregnant women avoid giving birth prematurely?
A. The causes for 40% of premature births are unknown. You can find families with a history of preterm birth. Researchers are actively trying to figure out what triggers spontaneous preterm labor and delivery. It is important to note that 75% of admissions to the NICU are late preterm, between 34 weeks and 36 weeks plus six days of gestation. Many are delivered by cesarean section, which can be prevented in many situations.

Q. What are some of the risks premature babies face?
A. Being preterm puts the baby at multiple risks, involving different organs and the baby as a whole. The complications are different, depending on the gestational age of the baby. At less than 32 weeks, complications increase, and at less than 29 weeks, the risk of brain bleed (intraventricular hemorrhage) increases significantly. The retina is also underdeveloped in the very premature and may develop abnormally, potentially leading to retinal detachment and blindness. That’s why we have a pediatric ophthalmologist examining our babies during their stay in the NICU and on follow up.

Q. What about the families? How do they usually handle such a situation?
A. Prematurity is quite a stressful situation for the family, not only financially, but emotionally. Families go through an emotional rollercoaster, which is why we have psychologists and social workers on staff. We are a multidisciplinary unit. If the baby is not doing well, we hold a multidisciplinary meeting with the family, explaining their baby’s condition and what we’re planning. I think this is the only hospital that has an open unit policy, so parents can be with their babies 24/7, which is very comforting for them. They are only asked to step out during nurses’ shift changes. The parents know they are part of the team. We are very transparent with them when it comes to making decisions.

Q. Do you attend these meetings also?
A. Yes. We are three neonatologists. We are there with the nurse manager, the baby’s nurse, and the fellow. It’s a stressful environment. Our job is to advise parents on the best course of action for a sick newborn. It’s a very rewarding job, especially knowing that you helped a family through tough times and seeing how satisfied families are to have healthy babies.

Q. What are some new programs at the NICU?
A. We are launching our hypothermia program whereby we cool babies below their body temperature. Total body cooling may help prevent neurodevelopmental issues in babies who were moderately to severely deprived of oxygen during birth. We acquired a machine for this purpose; a team from the United States is
coming to train our NICU nurses and doctors on it. So beginning January 2016, the inaugural baby will receive this treatment. This will be a first for Lebanon.

Dr. Lama Charafeddine, a member of the division, started the early intervention program in 2014 in the NICU for high-risk babies, especially premature ones. We encourage mothers to make skin-to-skin contact with their babies as this has proved helpful. We encourage breast milk. It’s the best by far. We follow the NIDCAP system (Neonatal Individualized Developmental Care and Assessment Program). NICU nurses train on this program, learning to assess babies’ needs. This is individualized care for every high-risk baby.

The graduates of the NICU will soon have the Developmental Care and Follow-up Clinic under Dr. Charafeddine’s directorship. It will allow us to follow babies leaving the NICU in a multidisciplinary way, offering them a range of services in the same location, and thus promoting optimal development.

Q. What about registries. I’ve heard you are working with the Ministry of Health on establishing the National Birth Defect Registry. Is that right?

A. Yes. We work closely with the Ministry of Health. We have just established the National Birth Defect Surveillance System. Birth defects are a major cause of neonatal mortality. Many of these are preventable. Health education regarding this subject is very important. We got a grant from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States to establish this registry. We trained personnel in 120 hospitals in Lebanon on identifying and diagnosing birth defects and created a birth defects manual in Arabic, English, and French that is also available online.

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The prestigious annual International Emergency Medicine Leadership Award of the American Academy of Emergency Medicine honored Amin Antoine Nabih Kazzi, MD (BS ’83), AUB FM professor of clinical emergency medicine, by renaming the award the Amin Kazzi International Emergency Medicine Leadership Award in recognition of Dr. Kazzi’s exceptional contribution to the international development of emergency medicine.

Hiba El Hajj, MD, AUB FM assistant professor of medicine in the Departments of Internal Medicine/Experimental Pathology, Immunology and Microbiology has been awarded the L’Oréal-UNESCO for Women in Science Levant and Egypt Fellowship Program Award. Dr. El Hajj has had a unique career path combining her scientific talents in two fields, parasitology and oncology.

Congratulations to the following AUB alumni who were named “Top Doctors 2015” by Baltimore Magazine: Raja Ayash (BS ’69, MD ’73), Salim Rizk (BS ’83, MD ’87), Ziad Mirza (BS ’83, MD ’87), Victor Khouzami (BS ’70, MD ’74), Elias Ghandour (BS ’81, MD ’85), Elias Shaya (MD ’84), Maen Farha (MD ’82), David Nasrallah (BS ’76, MD ’82), Alan Shikani (BS ’76, MD ’81), Sarkis Aghazarian (BS ’77, MD ’81).
Another First in the Country

This past August, a multidisciplinary team at AUBMC performed a Trans-catheter Aortic Valve implantation (TAVI) through the trans-apical approach on a 90-year-old patient who is doing well. This was the first time the procedure was performed in Lebanon. TAVI is an advanced, new procedure, involving the insertion of a bioprosthetic via catheter into a native, diseased aortic valve. A less invasive and feasible alternative to traditional heart surgery, TAVI is performed on a beating heart and does not require a full opening of the chest wall and the diversion of blood through a heart-lung machine to achieve artificial cardiac arrest.

Candidates are usually high risk patients with aortic stenosis who can't undergo conventional open-heart surgery. In most patients, going through the artery of the groin to the heart is feasible. But in patients where leg arteries leading to the heart are severely narrowed, the medical team chooses an alternate route.

Deputy VP/Dean and Interventional Cardiologist Dr. Ziyad Ghazzal said, “AUBMC pioneers in healthcare by providing patients with cutting edge procedures that could improve their chances for a better outcome. Dr. Mounir Obeid, cardiothoracic surgeon who was also on the team said, “With TAVI, patients who cannot tolerate the classic surgery for aortic valve replacement are opting to obtain relief of their symptoms with a less invasive procedure.”

Reigning in Substance Abuse

AUBMC’s Department of Psychiatry has launched the Dr. Agnes Varis Healing Program for Substance Use Disorders (SUD) to treat all forms of addiction. The program, established with a generous gift from Dr. Agnes Varis’ trust, is designed to address the country’s growing substance abuse crisis. “The growing crisis we are directly observing as medical professionals among all age groups and social/economic classes and regions in Lebanon motivated us to initiate such a program in the department,” said Dr. Farid Talih, assistant professor of psychiatry and director of the Inpatient Psychiatry Unit at AUBMC.

Substance use disorders describe a problematic pathological overuse of one or more substances (legal or illegal), leading to clinically significant impairment or distress. Substances involved can range from nicotine and alcohol to cannabis or other recreational drugs, as well as prescription medications (sedatives, sleeping pills, pain medications). Behavioral addictions such as gambling or internet/video game overuse might also become problematic and require treatment.

The SUD program provides intensive outpatient care for individuals and groups, extending over a four week period. Case officers conduct an initial assessment before offering a treatment plan. “The program aims at raising awareness, promoting prevention, and reducing stigma toward SUD, and will provide any needed drug or alcohol testing on premises,” added Dr. Talih. Learn more: sud@aub.edu.lb.
Fighting Thalassemia

There are many beautiful things endemic to Lebanon, like Cedar trees, Phoenician ruins, and the Mediterranean. Unfortunately, there is also thalassemia, a genetic disease carried by 3 to 4% of Lebanese. Sufferers produce low levels of hemoglobin—the oxygen-carrying protein in red blood cells—leading to anemia. Scientists distinguish between three variations of the disease based on the severity of anemia: thalassemia minor, thalassemia intermedia, and thalassemia major.

Without treatment, the disease can be fatal. Patients with moderate to severe forms of thalassemia require repeated blood transfusions, which, in turn, cause a buildup of iron in the blood that is damaging to organs like the heart and liver. Even patients with mild to moderate forms who do not require transfusions can develop life threatening complications, such as blood clots.

Fortunately, Professor of Medicine, Hematology and Oncology and Associate Chair for Research at the Department of Medicine at AUBMC Ali Taher, MD (BS ’82, MD ’86) has made significant strides in combatting the disease by working with regional and international experts to pioneer diagnostic and treatment options and develop awareness campaigns. In 2012, Taher, supported by clinical investigators from Europe, Asia, and the United States, published a randomized, double-blind trial confirming the power of the drug, deferasirox, to treat iron overload in the liver among thalassemia intermedia patients. The trial has since led the United States’ Food and Drug Administration to approve deferasirox as a means of reducing iron among this patient population.

Back in Lebanon, Taher treats patients with iron chelation and blood transfusions at the Chronic Care Center (CCC), a treatment center he helped found along with former Lebanese first lady Mona Harawi, that tackles chronic conditions like thalassemia and diabetes in children. The cost of treating a thalassemic patient ranges from $4,000 to $37,000 yearly, averaging about $10,000, roughly Lebanon’s per capita GDP; however, the CCC is able to provide 700 patients with free transfusion and chelation care annually, according to Taher’s estimate.

Equally important have been Taher’s efforts to raise awareness among carriers of the disease. Thalassemia is inheritable; only the offspring of two carriers can develop the disease. Thus, Taher has worked hard to push for greater screening and awareness among Lebanese. The CCC registers all new cases, forming a database against which at risk couples can check themselves. The CCC’s efforts, along with a World Health Organization-backed awareness campaign Taher helped launch in 1994, have helped push down thalassemic births rates dramatically in Lebanon, from 40 annually to between 2 and 3, with none recorded so far in 2015.

Yet, according to Taher, the wave of migration from war-torn parts of the Middle East to Europe and the United States presents a new challenge to stemming the spread of the disease. Policymakers and medical practitioners in countries like Italy and Spain where migrants are arriving have not made thalassemia awareness a priority. Still, Taher, recognized within the medical community for his outstanding contributions to the study and treatment of thalassemia, remains hopeful as he continues to work with public health officials and scientists from those and other European and Middle Eastern countries.
The Diana Tamari Sabbagh (DTS) building, an L-shaped structure hugging John Kennedy Street, is in the throes of a massive, top-to-bottom renovation. Since its inauguration in 1975, DTS has served a dually important purpose as the teaching grounds for first and second year medical students and the heart of AUBMC’s biomedical research efforts. For a long time, it remained the region’s largest research facility.

The renovation plan comes as part of AUBMC 2020, an ambitious initiative that will push the Medical Center forward on various fronts, including education, research, facilities, partnerships, and, of course, patient care. “We embark on renovation to bring a modern state-of-the-art feel to our medical center and maintain a leading role in driving the latest technology combined with the fast-growing advances,” says Executive Vice President for Medicine and Global Strategy Mohamed Sayegh, MD.

For DTS and its residents, this means the creation of “centers of excellence”—collaborative state-of-the-art laboratories—focused on stem cells and cancer. It also means the reorganization of lab, office, and lecture space. Two new lecture halls are being built from the ground up in the basement—they will host an incoming medical class of 120 students by 2017—and another smaller graduate students’ lecture hall is being built on the fourth floor. Meanwhile, a completely refurbished anatomy dissection lab opened for students this fall.

Taking a key role in managing the renovation is Dr. Samira Kaissi, director of biomedical research development at the Faculty of Medicine. She has served alternatively as organizer, manager, and go-between among the various constituencies affected by the overhaul, which include students, faculty, and the surrounding community.
In political terms, she falls somewhere between party whip and speaker, marshalling consensus, enforcing discipline, and acting as spokesperson for the building’s occupants.

She keeps them informed with emails that are sometimes encouraging, sometimes commanding, and sometimes cheeky. Warning of the impending chaos of a move from the fourth to the third floor she writes: “Do not let my cheerful attitude fool you. This will not be smooth; it will be crazy. And I guarantee you that friendships will be lost and new enemies forged before we are done. We will hate and yell at each other (I know I started awhile back). It is normal in stressful situations. I recommend yoga, prayer, meditation, or ‘soft’ drinks until the move is done.”

Kaissi is just one of a small army marshalling the 12,400 square meter renovation. Beirut-based design firm Bawader Architects, whose principals are all AUB graduates, was brought on to render the blueprints for each of the building’s four floors; Trust Contracting is doing the actual construction. And finally, Mr. Hisham Ramadan, senior project manager with the Facilities Planning and Design Unit, makes sure the trains run on time, keeping the architects and contractors on schedule.

The renovation introduces custom designed spaces for specific hi-tech equipment, like the cell sorter, technically known as FACS-SORP (fluorescent assisted cell sorting—special order research product): a product that can sort individual cells based on their surface markers. It can be used for cancer, viral, and autoimmune disease research.

New technology and labs help with recruiting, which is key to the 2020 Vision. “It’s helping us with the reverse brain drain efforts,” says Kaissi. Total faculty at DTS has increased by more than 50% since 2009, and more than doubled in the areas of microbiology, immunology, human morphology, and physiology; many are hyper-specialized in sought-after areas such as induced pluripotent stem cells, proteomics and genomics.

Other great successes include the expansion and upgrade of DTS’s Animal Care Facility (ACF) and a first in the region central store for reagents, like enzymes, antibodies, kits, tissue culture. The ACF, used to house research animal models like mice and rats, now has 52% more holding rooms, ventilated caging systems, X-ray irradiator, small animal ultrasound, and blood pressure monitors. Meanwhile, researchers can acquire reagents from the in-house storage center at lower costs than before.

Open workspaces, which began in 1950s Germany and are currently trending worldwide among all types of organizations, but especially those placing a premium on creativity, are also an important feature of the new DTS. “We decided to move toward shared space not just because it’s more operationally efficient, but because we also hope it’s going to make the culture more collaborative,” says Kaissi.

According to the design blueprints for the renovation, Kaissi is spot on. Since 2009, dead space in the building has been reduced by more than half from 38 modules to 16, and is set to reach zero by the end of the renovation in 2017. Meanwhile, the number of labs, offices, and animal care facilities has increased dramatically.

We decided to move toward shared space not just because it’s more operationally efficient, but because we also hope it’s going to make the culture more collaborative

Some doctors, such as Hiba El Hajj, an assistant professor at the Faculty of Medicine, sing the praises of the new design. El Hajj moved from a fourth floor lab she shared with Oncology Professor Ali Bazarbachi to the stem cell center of excellence on the third floor where she studies acute myeloid and adult t-cell leukemia. “It’s better equipped. There are more culture facilities and the instruments are more conveniently located,” says El Hajj, who, by her own estimation, spends between 12 to 14 hours at DTS most days.

Others, especially those who’ve been working at DTS the longest, are more critical of the renovation process, and Kaissi is the first to acknowledge this. “We’re going against people’s resistance to change,” she explains, adding, “people have become very comfortable with their spaces and it’s difficult to prove the value of dramatic change.”

There is also the worry that shared equipment will be less well cared for. “Some don’t want to share labs and don’t like the idea of new people coming in and changing everything. I can empathize. If someone new came and did another renovation ten years down the line, I might feel the same way.” And everyone, Kaissi included, acknowledges the challenges of working through the constantly churning din of construction.

In spite of these challenges, Kaissi remains optimistic and keenly excited about the new research frontiers the renovation will enable. “The Genetics Center of Excellence, which is still just concrete now, is very promising. The field is growing logarithmically,” she says, stressing the potential for research on genetic diseases endemic to Lebanon and the Middle East. She is particularly interested in searching for a genetic explanation for high rates of breast cancer among Lebanese women.

Beyond the hopes and frustrations, the renovation has inspired nostalgia and a reckoning with the building’s history. The building, whose construction was funded primarily by Palestinian businessman Hasib Sabbagh (BA ’41, DHL ’03) and named after his wife Diana, will no longer house relics. Kaissi, for her part, tends to wax sentimental about this topic: “The new floors are beautiful, brand new, clean. But now it feels like we just arrived.” She wonders out loud: “Will students know of our history?”

She is not sure of the answer to that question, but she is doing everything she can to make it a “yes.” Looking ahead to the end of the renovation in 2017, she hopes to gather what remains of the old equipment it housed for a museum, the “Museum of History of Medicine and Research in the Middle East.” “We have a tentative location and a plan for it, but we’re looking for donors.”

But for now the museum remains on the backburner, as the renovation, which began as an infrastructure upgrade and has since grown organically, is ongoing, moving floor-by-floor, transforming, reorganizing, and driving AUBMC biomedical research towards the future.
Sahteen
Mtabbag Simach—Fish layered with rice and raisins

Nawal Nasrallah is a cookbook author and noted authority on Middle Eastern cuisine. For the history of this dish, visit: http://nawalcooking.blogspot.com/2015/07/aromatic-spicy-fish-dish-with-yellow.html

INGREDIENTS:

RICE
• 3 tbsp oil (such as canola)
• ½ tsp turmeric
• 2 cups rice, (If aged variety, such as basmati, wash and soak for at least 30 minutes before cooking
• 3½ cups water
• 1½ tsp salt
• 4 cardamoms pods, kept whole
• 1-inch cinnamon stick

RAISIN MIX:
• 1 medium onion, chopped
• 1½ tsp curry powder
• 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
• ¾ cup raisins
• 1 tsp crushed noomi Basra (dried lime)
• 1 tsp coriander seeds, crushed
• ¾ tsp salt
• ¼ tsp black pepper
• ½ cup chopped parsley
• 2 tbsp hot water

FISH:
• 2 pounds salmon, skinless boneless fillet, cut into 6 strips
• 1 tbsp honey
• 1 tbsp yellow mustard

PREPARATION:
Rice: In a medium heavy pot (preferably non-stick), put all the rice ingredients, cover and boil for 7-10 minutes on high heat, until all visible moisture evaporates. Reduce heat and let it simmer for 20 minutes. Fold rice gently 2 to 3 times while simmering to allow it to fluff.

Raisin mix: In a medium skillet, sauté onion in oil until translucent, about 5 minutes. Stir in turmeric and curry powder in the last 30 seconds. Add the rest of the raisin-mix ingredients, and stir and cook for about five minutes. Keep warm.

Fish: Preheat the broiler. Line a shallow baking pan with aluminum foil, and drizzle it with half a tablespoon of oil. Arrange the fish pieces on the pan leaving space between pieces. Brush them with half the mustard and half the honey, drizzle with the remaining oil, and sprinkle with salt.

Broil the fish for 5 minutes, then turn over the pieces, brush them with the remaining mustard and honey, and let them cook until surface is crisp and golden, about 5 minutes, or until flesh is flaky when poked with a fork. Immediately, spread the rice on a big platter, arrange the fish pieces on the rice, and spread the raisin-mix between and around the fish pieces.

Makes 6 servings.

GOOD FOR YOU? An expert weighs in...

Marie Claire Chamieh, PhD, LD – Lecturer and Practicum Coordinator, FAFS

Mtabbag Simach, is very similar to the popular Middle Eastern dish “Siyyadiyeh.” The main ingredients of salmon and rice make this dish a good source of Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals. The recipe is low in cholesterol and saturated fat, and rich in vitamin A, folate, and potassium. Vitamin A is crucial for a strong immune system and for good vision, and folate is an important vitamin, particularly before and during pregnancy. Potassium is essential to heart function and plays a key role in muscular contraction. Mtabbag Simach is a meal rich in many nutrients, all of which are necessary for optimal health and disease prevention. A serving of one cup of rice and a 90-gram piece of salmon (palm size) provides 525 calories of which 23% comes from proteins, 42% from carbohydrates, and 35% from healthy fats such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids. This dish contains turmeric and curry which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Parsley contains flavonoids, which act as anti-cancers that can protect cells from damage. Furthermore, honey is believed to have antibacterial properties, as well as antioxidant properties that protect brain cells and help in memory boosting. Enjoy!
Impact

Regional impact, advocacy, and policy initiatives

Taking Research out of the Lab: Lasers, Proteins, Biofuels, and Fraud
Alternatives to infrared lasers, new hope for leukemia patients, microalgae for super foods and fuels; bad news for counterfeiters

Beyond Buffed Architecture
Karim Najjar applies innovative design to schools for Syrian refugees

A Ball of Energy
Sajed Medlej is a University Scholarship Program scholar with intellectual curiosity, compassion, and determination to spare

Greetings to the New President of WAAAUB
A conversation with Wafa Saab, the new president of WAAAUB
Taking Research Out of the Lab: Lasers, Proteins, Biofuels, and Fraud

From cone shaped lasers to systems that out-smart devilish counterfeiters, AUB faculty take their research out of the lab and into our lives.

At this year’s Kamal A. Shair Central Research Science Laboratory Conference, the focus was on research with “real world” applications. Projects spanned the fields of physics, biology, chemistry, and engineering, and impacted the worlds of forensics, cancer, energy, and laser technology.

Professors Michael Kazan and Madi Charbel from the Department of Physics are developing a technology with the potential to dramatically reduce the cost of producing infrared lasers used for medical applications, like examining tumors.

Conventional lasers are currently made from expensive crystal. But Kazan and Charbel have found a way to emit laser light using cheaper amorphous materials, like glass, that don’t have the same rigid atomic structure as crystals. They’ve achieved this using cones.

“When a wave of light reaches the apex of a cone, it diffracts and leaves the surface as coherent light” [light that doesn’t spread out, but focuses like a laser],” says Kazan, adding “the material doesn’t matter, only the [cone-like] structure.

On the medical side, Dr. Hiba El Hajj and her team at AUB’s Faculty of Medicine have figured out a way to significantly prolong the lives of patients with two types of Leukemia, acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and adult t-cell leukemia (ATL). “leukemia is a poor prognosis disease,” says El
Hajj. Once the disease appears, it is often too late. But El Hajj has found a way to significantly prolong the lives of patients of both diseases by treating them with a combination of arsenic and another agent: interferon in the case of ATL and retinoic acid in the case of AML.

Meanwhile, in the green energy space, Professor Abou Jawdeh has identified several species of microalgae— unicellular organisms that can make oil from sunlight and CO2—native to Lebanon that show potential as super foods and fuel sources. The oil microalgae produces can be burned as a biodiesel fuel.

Though his research centers on turning microalgae into a biofuel, Abou Jawdeh is quick to highlight its other potential uses, including as a protein supplement, medicinal agent, and cosmetic tool. Marketing microalgae outside the energy industry is essential to offsetting its high cultivation costs, since it does not yet break even as a biofuel. If cost and production efficiency barriers can be overcome, the algae could have an enormous potential impact on Lebanon’s energy sector (see MainGate, Winter 2015).

Finally, in the murky world of forensics, Professor Antoine Gauch in the Department of Chemistry has developed a patented Smart Counterfeiting Optical System (SACOS), a device that can consistently and accurately distinguish even the most sophisticated fraudulent currency from the real thing. Current common practice involves bank tellers and customs agents shining UV light on sensitive documents or money to check for florescence. If it glows under the light, then they assume it’s the real thing. But sophisticated fraudsters can now create documents using UV dyes similar enough to those used by currency and passport printers, meaning they can fool a customs agent holding a UV flashlight.

“Valuable papers, like passports and money, are usually made of cotton and cellulose, which is an ideal medium for visualizing phosphorescence at room temperature.”

“When a wave of light reaches the apex of a cone, it diffracts and leaves the surface as coherent light.”

“This treatment works to degrade the specific onco-protein in both types of leukemia that is responsible for the transformation of normal cells into malignant ones,” explains El Hajj. The treatment protocol, already adopted by Iranian doctors and set to be adopted by others where leukemia is endemic, extends the lives of patients significantly. “There are patients still alive after five years, something not possible with any of the previous treatments,” El Hajj notes.

Former AUB President Peter Dorman gave a talk on the challenges of the US higher education model in the Middle East at The Charles W. Hostler Institute on World Affairs at San Diego State University on October 27.

Sadiq Al-Azm’s (BA ’57) a leading scholar and public intellectual has been awarded the 2015 Goethe Medal, which honors luminaries who have performed outstanding service for international cultural relations.

AUB ranked second (following King Abdulaziz University) among Arab universities in the 2015-16 Times Higher Education World University Rankings’ list of the 800 best universities around the world.
Beyond Buffed Architecture

The combination of an award-winning architect, student interns and out of the box concepts equals comfortable, environmentally friendly schools built by refugees in the Beqa’a

Given the type of projects that Assistant Professor of Architecture and Design Karim Najjar is usually involved in, you would not have expected him to dream up something as prosaic as the Nasma (gentle breeze in Arabic) project. Najjar-Najjar Architects, a firm run by Najjar and his brother Rames, usually bids on competitive projects for cutting-edge developers, like a research and design center in Austria, a high-end ski resort in Lebanon, or a corporate headquarters in the Jordanian desert.

But they’ve put such work aside for Nasma. No broad sweeps of buffed steel. No walls of glass overlooking picturesque valleys. It’s not what Najjar refers to as “architecture as a luxury product.” These are single-story buildings made mostly of local materials, relying on the sun for warmth and the earth for coolness. These are schools for Syrian refugee children.

The first jolt to Najjar’s sensibilities came a few years ago when he saw a group of AUB students running a clothing drive for Syrian refugees. Seeing this, he recalls, “I felt humbled.” He admits that he had never really been much involved in humanitarian or civic activities, but he began to wonder how he, as an architect, might lend a hand to the mounting problems facing Syrians in Lebanon.

He began to think of ways he could help children like the boy his teenage daughter met in Hamra: “She said the boy was looking at a sign. One of her friends asked what he was doing. ‘I’m reading the sign so I won’t forget how to read,’ the boy said. That wasn’t what prompted me to create Nasma, but it certainly pushed the work forward.”

Once he got the idea to build student-friendly, inexpensive schools more than a year ago, he invited some of his students to intern with him over the summer to study relief structure design using low-cost materials. “It was like a seminar that was held in our office. The students were very motivated and came up with fantastic ideas,” he says. With these in hand, Najjar arranged for Sawa4Syria, a local NGO working with Syrian refugee youth, to take the students to visit refugee schools in the Beqa’a. The teachers there spoke of three major problems: poor air quality, noise from other classrooms, and poor lighting. These issues were in addition to the problems posed by the climate of the Beqa’a—very hot summers and very cold winters. “Creating adequate learning conditions,” Najjar realized, “is far more challenging than creating housing units. School structures require larger areas than simple shelters, and also a high level of good environmental conditions.”

As the group continued working on the structures, Najjar became immersed in other complications; the challenges of dealing with municipal governments and other Syrian-focused NGOs, and the safe storage of equipment and supplies. “We were a little frustrated when we faced the reality and soon discovered that relief work is one tough business with a lot of competition and money involved,” he recalls.

Najjar realized they needed to build a prototype to garner support. That’s where his former student Ahmad Nouraldeen (BAR ’13) came in. Nouraldeen was working in Stuttgart on a year-long fellowship with Transsolar Klima Engineering’s Academy. He proposed using Nasma as his personal project at the Academy. Transsolar loved the idea, so he got to work.

Nouraldeen and Transsolar brought something new to the project. While Najjar focused on using inexpensive
local materials, Transsolar wanted to increase the emphasis on building “climatically responsive structures.”

Nouraldeen collaborated on the project from Germany for a year. Then Transsolar agreed that he should return to Lebanon—it was time to take the project off the drawing boards. By this point, Nasma had evolved significantly. The Nasma school classroom was complex, but not expensive, and didn’t require great engineering skill to build.

It was more than just a comfortable, affordable, environmentally-friendly building made from local materials. Thick, breathable walls stuffed with natural insulation kept the heat in during the winter and out during the summer. Underground tubing brought cool air into the classroom, and the six windows and a skylight provided light and warmed the room.

Natural light, warmth from the sun, coolness and fresh air channeled through the earth, the school was ready to go. But where to build the prototype? Nouraldeen had the answer. His father owned a farm in the south. Syrian refugees worked the land.

He began to wonder how he, as an architect, might lend a hand to the mounting problems facing Syrians in Lebanon.
“The studies, the simulations, the design. We had to transform it into action on the ground,” says Nouraldeen. “First I had to convince my father. Then get the refugees to help build it. But after the first stone was laid, the rest was easy.” Enthusiasm for construction never waned, even in the face of superstorm Zina.

“The participation of the refugees was crucial,” Najjar says. “They gave invaluable input during the construction phase. There was a sense of ownership and they were very motivated.”

With a finished prototype, Najjar began showing off the facility, looking for collaborators and funders. A representative from the Qatar Foundation toured the site over the summer. “It was a really hot day, so we went into the building,” Najjar says. “It was like there was an AC on, it was so cool—the cooling function was really working.”

Following his success with Nasma, Najjar began working with AUB’s Community Development and Projects unit of the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS), which, according to Director Rabih Shibli, has been engaged in Syrian-refugee relief efforts for several years. CCECS developed the Ghata project, an inexpensive structure made from portable, local materials for housing, schooling, and other uses.

“If [children] don’t learn to read and write, then they are lost and cannot build their future.”

They also employ AUB students on a volunteer basis who work directly with Syrians living in informal settlements. These students built a structure next to West Hall on AUB’s campus to call attention to their efforts, as well as several schools and a women’s vocational center alongside the Kayany Foundation, which helps educate refugees. (The Kayany Foundation, directed by Nora Joumblatt, operates with support from the Malala Foundation. Read more in the spring 2014 MainGate.) “Karim [Najjar] came to us with his project,” Shibli says, “and we’re seeing how to make it fit in with our environment. My job is to reach out to people with brilliant ideas at AUB and help them. We are upgrading our system with solar heating and air cooling that are based on Karim’s principles.”

If all goes according to plan, Najjar’s collaboration with CCECS and Kayany will pay off soon. “Currently we are giving consultancy services to AUB-CCECS for improving learning conditions at a school that is now under construction. The school will be operated by Kayany. So far Rabih Shibli and I have agreed to apply the concept for the next school. We are expecting to implement it next year,” says Najjar.

Reflecting on Nasma’s current status, Najjar summarizes his vision. “Children are the key issue,” he says. “If they don’t learn to read and write, then they are lost and cannot build their future.” Regarding Nasma’s contribution to alleviating the Syrian refugee crisis, he says, “I believe that architecture is about mastering challenging tasks.”

-N.B.
Sajed Medlej (BE, expected ‘18) has a lot of energy. He is a University Scholarship Program (USP) scholar studying mechanical engineering at AUB. One of 200 promising students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds offered full scholarships to study at AUB through the United States Agency for International Development’s USP program, Medlej is also a sciences tutor, mentor, organ donor advocate, future drug awareness campaigner, and aspiring physicist. Since arriving at AUB in the fall of 2014, he has thrown himself wholeheartedly, not only into his studies, but also into the community service and volunteer work that USAID encourages in its scholars.

Every Wednesday afternoon during his freshman year, Medlej walked southwest from campus to the Nasma Learning Center on Sadat Street where he tutored 8th and 9th graders for three hours in chemistry, math, biology, and physics. “I built close friendships with the students there. Lots of students don’t get proper attention from schools. I gave them attention and helped them appreciate learning for its own sake.” Plus, according to his own account, he achieved results: “three of the five failing students I taught started passing.”

Medlej also participated in an awareness campaign for the National Organization for Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation (NOD), a Ministry of Health-affiliated non-profit promoting organ donation, and lobbying parliament. He and his fellow volunteers set up a stand in the Forum de Beirut exhibition center, flagging down passersby and registering them as donors in NOD’s database. “We got about 15 people over two and a half hours,” says Medlej.

Back on campus, Medlej focuses on developing his engineering skills and building a strong foundation in his true love, physics. He and his classmates built a Lego robot to compete in a robot sumo competition, which his team won. He also built a microcar, but describes its performance as “average.”

For Medlej, a mechanical engineering degree is merely, in his words, “a passport to physics,” a subject he became interested in as a junior at Abbasiya High School in Tyre District. Ironically, he was motivated by his teacher’s incompetence. “I had a bad experience learning physics in 11th grade. Either the teacher didn’t grasp the subject well, or didn’t know how to communicate it to us.”

So Medlej turned to the Internet, specifically YouTube, learning physics from instructors all over the world. “I didn’t stick to the program of my high school. I learned about quantum physics and other topics taught in college-level physics courses,” he says. “I had this idea that you had to understand physics to understand how everything works. If you understand it, you understand chemistry, biology.”

His career goals remain fuzzy for now. He is contemplating a PhD in physics, but he is not sure where and or how to pay for it. He is also interested in other subjects, like psychology and sociology. “I’m going to do an internship abroad, if I cope well, I will study physics abroad.”

Meanwhile, another volunteer activity is on the horizon at the drug awareness NGO non-profit Skoun, which raises awareness of drug addiction and rehabilitates addicts. Skoun is on the cusp of finalizing its next campaign, and Medlej, though busy, plans on being involved.
Greetings to the New President of WAAAUB Wafa Saab

Q. How would you explain to current students what WAAAUB is?
A. WAAAUB, the Worldwide Alumni Association of the American University of Beirut, represents AUB alumni around the world and strengthens ties between them. Our aim is to engage alumni in advancing and supporting our university’s goals and educational, research, and service mission, while fostering the educational, career, and socio-cultural interests of our alumni. We also work to preserve and promote the rich heritage and values of our alma mater.

Q. How does WAAAUB plan on doing that?
A. WAAAUB is growing its global network of 60,000 living alumni and 62 alumni chapters through alumni volunteers elected to its leadership bodies. WAAAUB provides alumni with opportunities to connect through social, cultural and artistic events, outdoor recreation, reunions, career networking, and continuing education programs. Going forward, we have plans to develop and promote the chapter base to eventually include all 102 countries that our alumni presence spans, to reach out to all our alumni with innovative communications strategies, and to unite all AUB alumni under the same umbrella.

Q. Why did you run for president?
A. I have always been involved in WAAAUB; I formerly served as the president of the EMBA chapter. Belonging to WAAAUB is the best way to give back to AUB, to our community and to our region. I am a firm believer in the value of AUB as an institution that has marked the history of Lebanon and beyond. My decision to run for the presidency is the result of wanting to be actively engaged in ensuring the solidarity and sustainability of an institution that will continue to serve my children, their children, and future generations.

Q. How do you manage to balance the presidency and all your other jobs?
A. It’s very simple . . . I create time. I’m a true believer in the saying “If you want something done, ask a busy person.” It’s all about time management, and prioritizing, but most importantly, it’s about being passionate, and I have a passion for all the “work” that I do. Tinol is my family’s business and the AUB alumni are my close friends. You always create time for family and friends!

Q. Many fresh graduates are leaving the country, how do you think WAAAUB can influence or contribute to that situation?
A. Over forty percent of our alumni body is composed of young graduates. Last June our alumni base grew by more than 1,700 young people. We all know that an AUB education is a gateway to the future and our alumni do stand out in every discipline. Nevertheless, Lebanon is facing a difficult economic situation and we are aware that job opportunities are sadly lacking. WAAAUB provides alumni with networking opportunities, together with career, mentorship and coaching programs that we hold in partnership with AUB and various stakeholders.

-Maya Wakim is the Beirut editor for Outlook, and in her third year as a media and communication student.
AUB Everywhere

Alumni lives in action, WAAUOB and chapter news, every day and extraordinary class notes, and unexpected revelations

Pioneering through Resilience

Huda Zoghbi, MD (BS ’76): a pioneering medical researcher who gets it right

WAAUOB Events and Announcements

Newly elected chapter presidents; legacy ceremony; WAAUOB networking

StandingOUTstanding

Mohamed Watfa (BEN ’02) is a technology innovator with a serious social welfare agenda

The Reveal

Nidaa Aboulhosn (BS ’94) creates images that illuminate society’s fault lines

WAAUOB Around the Globe

Alumni mix and mingle

Class Notes

Introducing Class Correspondent (CC) Dina Daher Al Challe (BA ’98); Updates from CCs Samir Traboulsi (BEN ’73) and Rihab Ouri (BBA ’80)
Alumni Profile

Pioneering through Resilience
Ashley, dark-eyed and cherub-faced, stares from her place atop Huda Zoghbi’s, MD (BS ’76), bookshelf. She is 35 five years old, but looks 16, an enviable side effect of an otherwise devastating neurological disorder known as Rett Syndrome. Ashley may not know it, but her existence helped spur the discovery of the Rett Syndrome gene. She was a patient of Huda Zoghbi’s, who, inspired by her story, dedicated 16 years of her professional life to finding the genetic cause of Ashley’s suffering. The journey ultimately led Zoghbi to MECP2, a protein she describes as “an orchestral conductor” for many critical neuropsychiatric functions.

Rett Syndrome is deceptively painful, especially for sufferers’ families. Unlike many other developmental disorders, patients may not show signs of delay until they are two or three years old. Then, as the condition takes hold, seemingly healthy girls retard cognitively and physically. “I was fascinated that they’re born normal and they can do all the normal things a normal two-year-old girl would do. But they would lose all that.”

Zoghbi sheared her path to discovery at a time when gene mapping required daring and grit. There were no genome sequencers. Instead, Zoghbi had to navigate her way through the genome using only her wits and her will. She offers an analogy: “Imagine you came to Houston and you want to find Huda Zoghbi, but there’s no map. There are four million people here, many buildings. You don’t even know I’m in the medical center. You just know I exist and that I’m in Houston and you have to find me.”

One the reasons Zoghbi had to start with such a wide area is because Rett Syndrome strikes sporadically; it doesn’t travel down any traceable line. Armed with the tools of molecular biology, Zoghbi had to go gene-by-gene, covering about one fully distinct region of DNA every six months. Today, her entire sixteen-year quest could be completed in a week.

“Would I do it again? Yes, because I love working on Rett Syndrome. But it’s insane. After 16 years, your career could be killed if you have no results.”

Today, her career is no longer under threat. In fact, you could safely say she is a star, having received countless accolades large and small for her work.

She heads the Jan and Duncan Neurological Research Institute located in the northwest corner of the sprawling Texas Medical Center, a towering postmodern building shaped on one side like a double helix. Inside, on the top floor, Zoghbi plus 19 carefully chosen investigators work to solve the mystery of crippling neurological disorders that strike at the heart of identity, diseases like Alzheimer’s, autism, bipolar, and epilepsy.

“After Rett Syndrome, the leadership at Texas Children’s Hospital wanted me to do the same thing for other pediatric neurological diseases. So, I articulated a vision for tackling neurological diseases better.” That initial vision would call for a new building and 20 specialized faculty at a cost of $300 million.

Funding for research at the Institute now pours in from a variety of sources, including the National Institute of Health, charitable foundations, and drug companies. “There’ve been many new disease gene discoveries here, some quite surprising. We found treatment for a terrible form of epilepsy that can cause 300 seizures a day, bringing the number of seizures down dramatically.” Just this past October, researchers at the institute published an article in the journal Nature on the potential power of deep brain stimulation to improve learning and memory in mice afflicted with Rett Syndrome.

Despite her awesome success, Zoghbi betrays no signs of arrogance. In tracing her life’s path, she is quick to acknowledge the roles of fate and chance. She recalls fondly her teenage years in Lebanon. She loved literature, especially Jane Austen and her character Elizabeth from Pride and Prejudice: “She was real, emotionally strong, thoughtful, even assertive in a way, but not aggressively so.”

Her journey to America came after a tumultuous first year of medical school at AUB at the start of the civil war. “I was a commuting student so I slept in a tiny room in the ladies room of the Basic Sciences Building. It was almost a closet, but you had to sleep where there were double walls.”

It was around this time that she met her husband, the renowned cardiologist William Zoghbi. “William and I were walking on campus, holding hands, when a bullet flew between the
two of us. We were both sure that the other was hurt, but found we were both fine. So we ran back indoors. But I was still happy in spite of events like that. I was living in a bubble with other students and amazing professors.”

The bubble burst when her younger brother was hit by shrapnel and her family sent her to stay with family in America, a journey she had believed and hoped would last months, but ended up lasting decades. She grudgingly left Beirut and arrived in the United States on its bicentennial, July 4, 1976. “I started hearing explosions, and started crying again thinking I was back in a war.”

She slowly came to grips with the permanence of her stay, as the months wore on and the situation in Lebanon continued to decline. In October of 1976, she enrolled as a late entry at the historically African-American Meharry Medical School, later spending sub-internships at Stanford and Emory, before ultimately settling at Baylor College of Medicine.

“Build relationships,” she advises on the keys to her success and ability to overcome the odds, “first, with those who know more than you. Once you’ve done that, appreciate them. You can’t payback but can pay forward by taking on the mentoring role yourself.”

Both her mentors and mentees attest to her qualities as both a clinician and a friend. Marvin Fishman, MD, professor emeritus section chief at Baylor, and one of Zoghbi’s mentors remembers her as a standout colleague. “I’ve never heard anyone have a negative comment about her. She’s not looked upon as a competitor, but a collaborator. She’s not holding back from her advisees to protect herself,” says Fishman.

Wei-Hsiang Huang, a postdoctoral research fellow at Stanford, remembers her accessibility, which struck him, given her stature. “I was waiting at the bus station when a car pulls next to me. It was Huda. She passed by and picked me up and we talked about science in the car,” recalled Huang.

Zoghbi, an AUB trustee, sees great promise in the University and its new leader, Dr. Fadlo Khuri. “We have all the pieces in place, wonderful faculty, great students, and great leadership. Fadlo is a scientist, a scholar, a great University manager.”

Ultimately, she hopes the University will return to its prewar diversity, as she believes “diversity fosters intellectual growth.” She counsels AUBites to find their passion, so that work doesn’t feel like such, and she stresses resilience in the face of life’s many hurdles.

As she bids your MainGate correspondent farewell, she requests a mention of all of her titles, but not so she can trumpet them. She simply doesn’t want to offend any of the institutions she works with and admires. And so on that note, here they are: Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; Director, Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute at Texas Children's Hospital; Professor, Baylor College of Medicine. Add two she would modestly reject, role model and superstar.

-E.E.
WAAAUB Events and Announcements

Legacy Ceremony
Rania Dibbs (BS ’87, MD ’91), Estephan Rustum (Computer Science, FAS), Jurji Rustum (BS ’82, MD ’86)

At the Legacy Ceremony in West Hall’s Bathish Auditorium on September 1, AUBites welcomed the newest members of the AUB family.

Career Networking
On October 8, a speed career networking event for business students and alumni took place in the OSB lounge.

WAAAUB Quiz Night
Quizzards (wizards!): Rola El Rassi (BS ’04, MS ’08), Khaled Mehanna (former student) and Patrick Saab. 10/20/15
Q. When and why did you first become interested in digital technologies?
A. When I was around seven years old my older brother was given a PC (Tandy 2000) as a birthday gift. It didn’t take me long to realize that this invention was the beginning of a whole new era that would reinvent the way businesses are run and how we live our daily lives.

Q. Tell us about your innovative work on environmental and educational issues: wireless energy transfer for electric cars, ‘shared’ computers to provide technology to underserved schools, and the founding of the International School of Innovation.
A. Everyone knows that air pollution from auto emissions would be greatly reduced by the widespread use of hybrid electric cars. The success of the electric car will depend on how easy it is to recharge its battery. If you are running out of energy while driving on the highway, there needs to be a nearby wireless energy access point that your car can detect in the same way that your laptop detects WiFi. My innovation will use communications technologies to connect and start the energy transfer, charging your car as you drive, while also charging your debit card. When parked, your batteries’ stored excess energy will be returned to the power grid, while crediting your bank account.

Concerning my invention of ‘shared’ technology and the founding of International School of Innovation (ISI), both were inspired by the reality that too many students do not have the right resources to realize their potential. Shared offers every student their own virtual desktop computer for the cost of one-tenth of a normal PC, with additional interactive features. The technology is fully patented and I am working with NGOs to make it available for free in developing countries. Establishing the International School of Innovation (ISI) is my greatest and most challenging achievement. I feel that now is the time to create a technological infrastructure that will enable Lebanon’s future generations to innovate, and I think ISI is a baby step towards that end.

Q. In 2012, you were chosen out of 7,000 inventors as the second place runner up on the MBC reality show “Stars of Science” for Shared technology. How did that show impact your life?
A. It gave me credibility as an innovator, but more importantly, being part of “Stars of Science” made me aware of the tremendous talent we have in the Arab world and the promising future we can achieve if we all work together. In the next 10 years, I think ubiquitous computing will touch the life of nearly every person on the planet. The potential benefits are mind boggling and brain enhancing. But like many of the great advancements in human history, it is not without risks!

Read Mohamed’s entire interview online...
Nidaa Aboulhosn (BS ’94) is an artist working with photography, video and animation. Her work ranges from metaphor-driven image sequences to explicit investigations of sociocultural matters. She is interested in cultural and natural traces and is drawn to the elusive transformation of the mundane into the ineffable. Extracting fragments from everyday life, Aboulhosn filters the “real” through the lens of the absurd and the humorous in an attempt to reconstruct a tangential mode of perception through pattern and association.

Aboulhosn’s current video project, Deluge is a lament inspired by seeing her homeland “desecrated by blatant materialism and corruption.” The images represent the barrage of construction sites, machinery and laborers, mostly refugees who have lost their own homes. In her visual poem “To Build Itself Ruin or Wonder,” the photographs contemplate the significance of our endeavors amid our physical artifacts. The images portray human presence and cultural vestiges, centering on the fractured, the incomplete and the obscured. In 2008, Aboulhosn created a series of images entitled Conatus, a Latin term that refers to the will to live. The artist has always been inspired by the Lebanese people’s ambition and strength regardless of adverse circumstances. This body of work reflects upon that resilience.

Aboulhosn grew up in Lebanon and moved to the United States twenty-some years ago. She now divides her time between Phoenix, Arizona and Beirut, Lebanon. She holds a BS in environmental health from AUB, and an MFA in fine art photography from the University of Arizona. Her work has been exhibited in galleries and museums worldwide, including the Phoenix Art Museum, the UNESCO in Beirut, Prague Photo Festival in the Czech Republic, and the City Cultural Center Gallery in Belgrade, Serbia.

Learn more: www.nidaaaboulhosn.com
WAAAUB Around the Globe

Visit the WAAAUB website at www.aub.edu.lb/alumni to find a chapter near you and to learn about upcoming events.

**United States**

- **Baltimore**
  - DINNER DANCE
  - Country Club of Maryland
  - Towson, MD
  - 10/17/15

- **Houston**
  - MIX & MINGLE
  - Mary’z Lebanese Cuisine
  - Houston, TX
  - 9/13/15

- **Michigan**
  - SCHOLARSHIP LAUNCH DINNER
  - Scholarship Launch Dinner
  - Arab American National Museum
  - Dearborn, MI
  - 10/10/15

- **Indiana**
  - PICNIC
  - Eagle Creek Park
  - Indianapolis, IN
  - 9/7/15

- **New York**
  - TALK
  - The Lebanese on the Titanic,
  - Dr. Josyann Abisaab (BS ’84)
  - Debs Center,
  - New York
  - 9/30/15

- **North Carolina**
  - OUTDOOR FUN
  - Halloween Picnic
  - Farmer Ganyard
  - Cary, NC
  - 10/31/15

**Canada**

- **Montreal**
  - OUTDOOR FUN
  - Apple-picking
  - Les Vergers LaFrance
  - St. Joseph-du-Lac, QC
  - 9/27/15

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Toronto
MIX & MINGLE
Joey Eaton Center - Dundas Square
Toronto, Canada
10/29/15

UK Chapter
MIX & MINGLE
Jak’s Bar
London
9/29/15

Middle East
Jordan
RECEPTION
Club of Jordan
9/19/15

Professional Chapters
Health Sciences
NETWORKING EVENT
WAAUW Clubhouse
10/29/15

Save the Date!
150th Anniversary Celebrations
Reunion 2016
July 8-10, 2016
A historic all-class reunion to celebrate AUB's 150th Anniversary

www.flickr.com/groups/aub
Class Notes

It’s easy to submit a class note and share your news! Email: maingate@aub.edu.lb or submit a class note AND update your information with AUB by logging on to the online community at alumniconnections.com/aub/

1940s

Raouf Sa’d Abujaber (BBA ’46)
Last May, Raouf traveled from his home in Jordan to accept a doctor of humane letters degree from Washington College where his sons Ziad and Marwan earned their degrees in economics. A leading figure in the Christian Arab community, Raouf is known as a pioneering business leader, a distinguished historian of Jordan and the Middle East, and an advocate of interfaith dialogue. The 90-year-old Abujaber urged the Class of 2015 to work hard and persevere. He further advised them to “make honesty a golden rule of your life, keep an open mind, and never stop learning.

Elias (Lee) Husni (BA ’47, MD ’51) writes: “I am grateful to AUB for my career and accomplishments in the field of vascular surgery—over a hundred publications in journals, books, two films, and over 20 scientific exhibits and lectures all over the world, including at my dear AUB. It was, and probably still is, one of the best medical centers in the world, if not the very best. I am also grateful to have established a scholarship fund for needy students. May God bless AUB and everyone devoted to it.” [lee.husni@gmail.com]

Karim Wade Nasser, (BA ’48, BS ’49) has established scholarships for needy and deserving students at AUB, Lehigh University in Pennsylvania, Kansas University in Kansas, and the University of California, Berkeley. Karim is married to Dora Nicolas Dagher (BA ’48). Together, they have five children and nine grandchildren. Their children, all graduates of the University of Saskatchewan, have degrees in medicine, law, business and nutrition. Karim recently received a citation from the Canadian Society for Senior Engineers. The following is an excerpt: “Dr. Karim (Kay) Nasser is an exceptional engineer. He is a professor emeritus recognized by his students and his peers as an outstanding teacher in the Department of Civil and Geological Engineering at the University of Saskatchewan. Kay has received many accolades for his contributions to the profession for his work in concrete technology and his exemplary generosity in helping to assist deserving and needy students at the University. He has received the Engineering Achievement Award of the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan (APEGS), a Fellowship Award of the Canadian Society for Civil Engineering, the Rotary Golden Wheel of Excellence Award for commerce and industry, the APEGS Brian Eckel Distinguished Service Award, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.”

In September, the Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH) Foundation recognized Avedis Khachadurian (BA ’49, MD ’53) at their 2015 global summit in Pasadena, California. A pioneer in the field of FH, Khachadurian continues to influence students, educators, and clinicians from his post as professor emeritus at Rutgers University.
I950s

Rima Nasir Tarazi (BA ’54) writes, “I congratulate our alma mater on its new president. I wish him all success during these difficult moments in our region. The state of affairs in the world calls upon our educators to reflect on how to bring up a new generation of leaders committed to the welfare of humanity and not the lure of power. After I retired from volunteering, I continued to serve on the Board of Trustees of Birzeit University and on the Supervisory Board of the Edward Said National Conservatory of Music, a landmark organization in the cultural landscape of Palestine. Three years ago, I completed editing and publishing my music compositions under the title, “Songs of Freedom and Hope” (now in the Jafet library). I continue to perform some of my songs with my sister-in-law, soprano Tania Tamari Nasir, and a group of friends. I am blessed with seven grandchildren—five girls and two boys. Sama, the eldest, just started at Toronto University. She and Sari are members of the Palestine Youth Orchestra. I would certainly love to hear from friends and colleagues.” [rima_tarazi@hotmail.com]

Lois Snavely (BA ’56) Born in India in 1924, Lois already had a large family—three daughters and an infant son—by the time she graduated from AUB. A high school teacher for many years, she taught at the American School Foundation in Monterrey, Mexico and at Loris High School in South Carolina, United States. She taught history, archaeology, psychology, and art. Lois also loved to travel and visit historical sites and art museums. Now 91, she lives in Pennsylvania near one of her daughters, two grandchildren—she has five—and her one great-grandson. For over 60 years, Lois was married to Ernest Snavely (1921-2008), who was part of AUB’s Department of Agricultural Engineering faculty from 1953-56.

I960s

Victor H. Nassar (BA ’60, MD ’64) writes, “I am thoroughly enjoying my retirement and sharing my life with my wife Jane. I divide my time between watercolor painting, gardening, reading and music. Our two grandchildren, Melanie and Haytham, are our pride and joy and add spice to our life. The Atlanta Chapter is vibrant and keeps the AUB community active and connected. We’ll miss Fadlo and Lamia Khuri, and we wish them all the success as they embark on their journey at the helm of AUB.” [vnassar@yahoo.com]

Hikmat Nasr (BS ’61, MS ’65) and Julia Saad (BBA ’64) write, “My wife and I met at AUB. We planned our wedding for December 3, 1966, which turned out to be the date of AUB’s centennial celebration. Because most of our guests were tied up with the festivities, we had to postpone our wedding date until December 10. We left Lebanon for the United States. I studied for my PhD at the University of Wisconsin, while Julia worked in the Registrar’s Office there. We then returned to AUB, where I was assistant professor until 1976. After a four years in Mexico, followed by 20 years at the World Bank in Washington, DC, we are happily retired in the DC area. During our tenure at the World Bank, we served in Bangladesh and Pakistan for about seven years. We hope that all our classmates and friends are in good health. Thanks, AUB for everything you have done for us.”

Yusuf Abul-Hajj, PhD (BS ’62, MS ’64) was recently named a fellow of the American Chemical Society, an acknowledgement of a career dedicated to advancing chemistry. He was recognized for his groundbreaking research in steroid carcinogenesis; he identified aromatase as a breast cancer inhibitor and disseminated his research as senior editor of The Journal of Medicinal Chemistry. Yusuf is a professor of medicinal chemistry at University of Minnesota, having earned his doctorate at the University of Wisconsin.

Mu’taz Habal (MD ’64) was recently honored by the American Society of Craniofacial Surgery after 25 years of service as editor-in-chief of The Journal of Craniofacial Surgery, the specialty’s premier journal. Craniofacial surgery has since grown to include several specializations. Dr. Habal is the director of the Tampa Bay Craniofacial Center, in Tampa, Florida. [mbhabal@gmail.com]

Saleem S. Kiblawi (BS ’65, MD ’69) After completing a pulmonary fellowship at Indiana University, Saleem joined that university’s Faculty of Medicine, staying on for eight years. He then moved with his wife, Balkis, and son, Shafee, to ARAMCO, where he worked as a pulmonary specialist, and later, as chief of internal medicine. During this period, he and his wife had a second son, Ramzi. After retiring from ARAMCO in 2003, Saleem returned to AUBMC as deputy chief of staff, becoming chief of staff. He reorganized AUBMC’s Quality and Accreditation Office, successfully leading their effort
to regain Joint Commission International (JCI) accreditation in 2007. Saleem retired from AUBMC in 2012. Currently an independent JCI consultant, he lives with his wife in Beirut. [sskiblawi@gmail.com]

Janice J. Terry, PhD (MA ’66) has a new book out: *William Yale: Witness to Partition in the Middle East, WWI–WWII*, (Rimalbooks). She is professor emeritus at Eastern Michigan University and an adjunct professor at Marietta College, Ohio.

Nabil Zok (BA ’66) writes, “In June 1966, I was probably the only graduating student who was already a husband and a father. I now have a son who is a 50-year-old father of two boys. In the interim, the most fascinating achievement has been for my wife Samya and I to become the parents of three sons: Rassem, Sarmad, and Nabil Jr., and subsequently, the very happy “Teta” and “Jeddo” of seven grandchildren; four boys and three girls. So, we thank God for his blessings. [nabilzok@yahoo.co.uk]

Paul R. Wineman (MA ’67) was born in Hollywood, California, and graduated with a bachelor’s in communications from the University of Washington in 1958. Paul worked in Beirut until 1983, when he returned to Southern California to run his own company. In recognition of the positive impact AUB had on his life, he paid for three graduate students—members of his college fraternity, Phi Kappa Psi—to study at CAMES. All three students work in the Middle East and Africa. Paul believes that “one makes a living by what one gets, but makes a life by what one gives.” He lives in Marina del Rey, California. [PWin903611@aol.com]

Saifuddin Kassir (BA ’68, MA ’71) writes: “Thanks for your keen interest in trying to keep the AUB alumni together. I am a retired secondary school teacher. I am also a translator, translating books from English into Arabic. I have published more than 15 titles since 1992. I collaborate with the Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, translating many of their publications. I have been a volunteer board member with the International Arbitration and Conciliation Board since 2009, I have also belonged to the Arab Writers’ Union based in Damascus since 2011.” [saifuddin.kassir@gmail.com]

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Ameen Mahdi Al Husseini (BEN ’71) writes: “Can you imagine that 44 years ago we were handed our diplomas! Too bad the graduates of ’71 never had a commencement ceremony! That year AUBites had a strike for 13 days and Squat 16 was threatening to occupy campus! We had to stay on campus till dawn! We thought that year would be the most turbulent in AUB’s history. But we were wrong. The civil war was definitely more turbulent!!! Hoping we can all to wake up to the realities of the Middle East and try to build nations instead of multimillion dollar companies!!!” [ameenale@hotmail.com]

Michigan, and two doctorates from the University of South Carolina and the University of Texas respectively. Mohammed is the inaugural Weston Fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the founder of the Watsif movement of moderate Islam. Tufts University recently honored him with the Dr. Jean Mayer Global Citizenship Award in recognition of his pioneering work to encourage dialogue and find alternatives to extremism.

1970s

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Bassam Mohyeddine Barghouth (BEN ’73) has extensive experience managing and partnering in several contracting, investment, and trading companies in Lebanon and Oman. He has many cultural, philanthropic, educational and business concerns, mainly in Lebanon and Oman. Bassam served as the Honorary Consulate of the Sultanate of Oman for five years and as secretary of the Construction and Finance Committee of the Al Awqaf Council. He is currently the elected chair of the Administrative and Finance Committee of the Higher Islamic Council of Dar al-Fatwa in Lebanon, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Al Makassed Al Islamiah Organization, a board member of the Lebanese Spanish Friendship Association, and chairman of the board of Social Halls at the Khashoukji Mosque in Beirut. Bassam and his wife Iman Khalil Hibri have four children.

Adib Bassatne (BEN ’73) With his degree in civil engineering, Adib gained extensive experience in construction before moving to the oil sector in the Middle East, Europe and the Far East. He is currently a board member of the following international companies: BB
hamid najm (BEN ’73) is chairman and CEO of Cedar’s Premium Food & Beverage, s. a. l., a company he founded in 2006 in Zakroun, North Lebanon. Cedar is Lebanon’s largest juice producer and has distribution in Iraq and other Arab countries. In the mid-1970s, Hamid was MENA regional manager for RC Cola International in Columbus, Georgia, United States. He returned to Lebanon and created the Pampa juice brand in 1982, which became a market leader by 2002. Hamid was a shareholder in Coca-Cola Lebanon until 2005.

Joseph Daher (BEN ’79) writes: “I hope AUB continues to be a melting pot for all of Lebanon’s and the Arab World’s cultures and affiliations. AUB has helped hundreds of thousands of students succeed and prosper, lead major institutions, and influence politics, economics, and society in a major way. I wish AUB’s new president much success in his mission to lead this great university to new heights. As alumni, we remain proud of our heritage. AUB’s legacy is to promote freedom of expression, tolerance, diversity, and different schools of thought. It exemplifies an image of Lebanon that we all aspire to see.” [JKDaher@almabani.co]

Lina Naoura Alkotob (BBA ’79) worked for 11 years with the Syrian Lebanese Commercial Bank, rising to become head of its internal audit department. In 1991, she married Dr. Suhail Alkotob, a neurosurgeon. They have two children, both students at AUB: their daughter Shifaa who at age 22 is a second year medical student, and their son Ezzuddine, age 21, and in his last year in computer and communications engineering. Lina taught in Al Hada International School, in Ta’if for four
“Having both my kids at AUB, enabled them to share my dreams, and this continuity has led to the realization of those dreams. Memories of AUB never fade. I am very fond of my university and my education.”

Lina Naoura Alkotob (BBA ‘79)

Aziz Stephan (BEN ’79) is chairman and CEO of Stephan Contracting, a general contracting company based in Beirut. He is also CEO of Green Top International in Doha, Qatar, a general contracting company specialized in the construction of power substations. Aziz currently resides in Lebanon with his wife Viviane Tarabay (BSN ’85) and his three children Kristina (BEN ’12), Carla (BS ’13, MD expected ’17) and Caline. And soon transformed it into one of the top printers in Beirut. In 1995, he became sole proprietor. His success allowed him to semi-retire in 1998 at the age of 45. To pursue his dreams, he went from teaching scuba diving to climbing mountains in Nepal, Tibet, and, Tanzania. He climbed all 6,000 meters of Mt. Kilimanjaro. He’s visited Kenya, Tanzania, Senegal, South Africa, Japan, China, Thailand, Indonesia, Maldives, India, Europe, and the United States. He currently helps teach advanced diving at the National Institute for Scuba Diving at Zaitunay Bay. He is very involved in yoga and meditation. Rami says he is still young at heart. He feels more like 26 than 62. A devoted supporter of AUB, he donated a study carrel for the handicapped at Jafet library. He is also a strong supporter of the Lebanese Philharmonic Orchestra.

Maggie Damaa Baroud (BBA ‘80) is married to Nadim Baroud (BEN ’79), a mechanical engineer. The couple live in Jeita, Lebanon. For the past 18 years Maggie has been a jewelry accessories designer exhibiting in Europe, the United States, and the Middle East. Her daughter and son are also AUB graduates.

Baraah Moiffak Saadi (BBA ’80) writes: “Hello everyone. I miss you all. I am presently working at Al Bayader School in Beirut as a teacher/librarian. I am also responsible for the Recycling Club. Our school won the Greenest School Award as part of an intramural competition sponsored by Bank Med. What I miss most about AUB is the beautiful campus!”

Samira Osseiran Watson (BBA ’80) In 1983, Samira got married and moved to the United States. She lived in different states, including Hawaii where her daughter Monica was born. Monica is now a manager at a Washington, DC marketing firm. Samira currently lives in Virginia and works in Washington, DC. A regional Middle East Program manager in Customs and Border Protection at the US Department of Homeland Security, Samira has almost 30 years of experience in the public sector. Her job has taken her to several countries in the Middle East, including Lebanon where she works with local customs authorities on border enforcement issues. After retirement, Samira plans to move to Florida and spend more time in Lebanon visiting friends and family. “AUB, and the many friends I made there, will always be a
Josyann Abisaab (BS ’84) is an emergency physician at the New York Presbyterian Hospital and faculty member of the Global Emergency Medicine Division at Weill Cornell Medical College, where she led the Division’s medical training and capacity building effort in the Middle East. She is a fellow at the Francois-Xavier Bagnoud (FXB) Center for Health and Human Rights at Harvard University, and has conducted human rights research and advocacy in the Middle East with a focus on the Syrian refugee crisis. Josyann organizes international conferences on emergency medicine and the refugee crisis in the Middle East. She also serves on the International Lebanese Titanic Society’s steering committee and frequently lectures and blogs about Lebanese passengers on the Titanic. She credits AUB for her strong foundation in academic freedom and integrity, critical thinking, and social responsibility. “Some of my favorite classes at AUB were CS 202 where I learned about the monotheistic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Also, in Ecology 202, I got to create a human protective chain with my classmates around a millenary olive tree to save it from being uprooted”. She lives with her husband Michel in New York City. They have two daughters, Allegra (17) and Tess (14).

Josyann Abisaab, BS (’84)

Josiane Fahed-Sreih, PhD, (BBA ’84) is associate professor of management in the Department of Management Studies at Lebanese American University’s (LAU’s) School of Business. She is the founder and the director of the Institute of Family and Entrepreneurial Business at LAU and chairperson of the Department of Hospitality Management and Marketing. [jsreih@lau.edu.lb]

Bassam Hammud (BBA ’84) was recently promoted from service manager to department manager in financial accounting at Saudi Oger in Riyadh, KSA.

Nicolas E. Chammas (BEN ’85) was appointed president of MIT’s Alumni Association. He is the Association’s first non-American president. Nicolas earned a master’s degree in civil and environmental engineering at MIT, and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is chairman of Elie D. Chammas & Company Holdings, vice chairman of Cedrus Bank, and president of the Beirut Traders Association. At MIT, he founded the Club of Lebanon and an educational council for Middle East Arab countries. Nicolas brought many business opportunities to the region by helping to launch a pan-Arab MIT Enterprise Forum chapter. He has been recognized for his dedicated service to the MIT Alumni Association with the George B. Moran ’20 Award and the Harold E. Lobell ’17 Distinguished Service Award.

Nicolas E. Chammas, BEN (’85)

Soha Hmaidan (BBA ’88, MBA ’07) completed the leadership development program at the Center for Creative Leadership in Greensboro, North Carolina last summer. She has been working at AUB for the past 16 years and is now senior director of advancement services. In 2007, Soha earned a master’s degree in business administration, specializing in human resources and organizational behavior at AUB. She is also a Certified Professional in Human Resources and Compensation (CPHRC). She advocates for gender equality and women’s rights through her Facebook page “Ladies First.” Soha and her spouse, Ghassan Chehayeb have two children, Rayan and Tala. They live in Beirut. [shmaidan@aub.edu.lb]

Soha Hmaidan, BBA (’88, MBA ’07)

Nader El-Bizri, PhD (BAR ’89) is chair and a full professor in AUB’s Civilization Studies Program via a joint appointment with the Philosophy Department. He is also director of the Anis Makdisi Program in Literature, and coordinator of the graduate program in Islamic Studies at the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES). El-Bizri previously taught at the universities of Lincoln, Cambridge, Nottingham, the London Consortium, and Harvard, in addition to being a researcher at The Institute of Ismaili Studies in London, and at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris.

Nader El-Bizri, PhD (BAR ’89)
Hanan El Chemali Tcheroyan (BA ’89) writes: “This year was very special for me. My son entered AUB as a mechanical engineering student. I am so proud of him, and so proud that AUB still holds the highest accreditations, making it appealing to the best students of Lebanon and abroad! In a word, I’m still very proud to call myself an AUB alumna :)”
[tcheroyanh@icloud.com]

Adel Mamhikoff (BS ’89) has joined Novantas Inc., a leading financial services advisory and technology solutions firm as managing director. He is based in Toronto, Canada.

Bassem Nasri, PhD (BS ’89) presented a paper co-authored by Dr. Pablo Collazzo Yelpo from Vienna University at the 29th Annual International Society of Franchising Conference (ISOF 2015) held last June at the University of Oviedo, Spain. The paper is titled “Franchising in the Middle East-Focus on Saudi Arabia & UAE.” Bassem obtained an MBA from City University London, and a doctorate in business administration from Grenoble Ecole de Management. He currently runs a private franchise development and consulting business based in Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. He leads a regional Certificate in Franchise Management executive education program.
[bassem.nasri@gmail.com]

Rami Deoubk (BEN ’91, MEN ’93) received the 2014 Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) InterRegs Standards & Regulations Award in recognition of his research, analysis, and development of system safety processes and standards. He was honored as the 2015 “American Arab Professional of the Year” for his outstanding accomplishments in the technology field by the American Arab Professional Network. A staff researcher at General Motors Global Research and Development Center in Warren, Michigan since 2000, Rami received his PhD in electrical engineering and computer science from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Nawar Tayyan (BS ’92, MD ’96) has been in Houston, Texas for the past 19 years. He runs a private cardiology practice. Married with four children, his oldest child is now 16. He sends best wishes to all.
[ntayyan@hotmail.com]

Dany Mansour (BEN ’94) After graduating from AUB, Dany embarked on a career in electrical engineering, specializing in power generation and taking a special interest in environmental issues. Dany’s professional life takes him back and forth between the GCC and Lebanon. He is happily married to his wife Mary. They are the proud parents of two boys.

After living in New York for 13 years, Maha Jaber Younes (BGD ’96) moved to Abu Dhabi in 2011. She is now the art director of the UAE National Symphony Orchestra, and serves as the chair of the PTA at Gems American Academy, the school her two children attend. [maha.j.younes@gmail.com]
Dina Daher Al Challe (BA ’98) graduated with a degree in political studies. She taught French for eight years in Lebanon before moving with her family to Montreal, Canada in 2008. She and her husband Walid Al Challe have two daughters: 11-year-old Zoya, nine-year-old Layane, and a son, Khaled-Noah, born in 2012. Dina has been working in provincial government since passing Quebec’s civil service exam. Longing for a career with more flexibility, she enrolled in a graduate degree program in communications and public relations at McGill University. She writes: “It wasn’t easy to start a new life away from Lebanon and our big extended family, to leave behind all of our memories. But now we are fully integrated into our adopted country. We feel at home away from home. The immigration experience taught us to live with a heart divided between two worlds and adapt our traditions to a new reality. We embraced the best of both cultures and we are teaching our kids to be proud of both of them. The ongoing process of learning and taking up daily challenges is something we appreciate deeply.”

Hagop Jatalian (BEN ’02) and Aline Baghdassarian (BS ’02, MD ’06) were married on July 4 in Bethesda, Maryland. They currently reside in Richmond, Virginia. They were happy to share their big day with many friends and AUB alumni, including: Mohamad El-Fakhani (BS ’01, MD ’06) and his spouse Maha Mrayati (BS ’04, MS ’07), Elie Abu Jawdeh (BS ’02, MD ’06), Razmig Kratlian (BS ’99, MD ’10), Karim Farah (BS ’02, MD ’06), Antoine Wadih (BS ’02, MD ’06), Maya Barake (BS ’02, MD ’06), Ara Baghdassarian (BBA ’71, MBA ’83), and Varouj Mavlian (BBA ’67).

Reem el-Garhy (BA ’04) writes, “I came to AUB as a transfer student from the American University of Cairo. Leaving all my friends behind, I was devastated at first. But, I have to admit that my experience at AUB one of the best I’ve ever had. The campus is so memorable, with its beautiful natural setting—such remarkable scenery to greet me every morning! Thank you for giving me an unforgettable college experience.”

Rasha Fakhreddine (BA ’09) After graduating from AUB with her degree in education, Rasha taught for six years at IC, before fulfilling a lifelong dream by launching her own “edutainment” center for kids. In the heart of the Beirut, Clemenceau area, Super Me is a multipurpose educational center designed to empower kids in a fun, safe, discovery-filled, and eco-friendly setting. [rasha@supermebeirut.com]

Stephanie Feghali (BAR ’09) received a master’s degree in Architecture Management and Design from IE School of Architecture and Design in March 2014. She writes, “Check out our website www.lab-square.com and follow us on FB, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest and LinkedIn.”

William N. Watfa (BS ’06) earned his MD in 2011 at the University of Balamand in Lebanon. Following a one-year residency in general surgery, he joined the plastic surgery residency program at St. George’s University Medical Center in Beirut. At present, William is completing a two-year fellowship program in breast oncoplastic and transgender surgery at the Lausanne Hospital University Center in Switzerland. [williamwatfa@gmail.com] and [william.watfa@chuv.ch]
Ghina Mahmoud-Halabi (MS ‘09, PhD ’15) The first person to receive a PhD in astrophysics from a Lebanese university, Mahmoud-Halabi is now a research associate at the prestigious Institute of Astronomy at the University of Cambridge. Her research in theoretical astrophysics and stellar evolution has gained international attention. She credits the mentorship of Professor Mounib el Eid, the support of the Lebanese National Council of Scientific Research, and the vision of AUB’s Physics Department and the FAS Dean’s office, which promoted collaborations with universities in the United States and Europe, and enabled her to participate in numerous conferences around the globe.

“...organized, lead, and participate in numerous conferences and seminars related to taxation, public governance and female leadership and empowerment. She writes, “The wide experience I acquired at AUB helped me to keep up in today’s competitive environment.” [manalasn@yahoo.com]

Manal Abdel Samad Najd, PhD (MBA ’09) With her MBA in finance, Manal was elected as a lifetime member of Beta Gama Sigma, the International Honor Society for Collegiate Schools of Business, in 2010. In 2014, she received a doctorate in law from Paris I-Pantheon, Sorbonne with very honorable distinction and unanimous congratulations from the jury. Manal still heads the VAT Legislation and Tax Policies Department at the Lebanese Ministry of Finance. Since fall 2009, she has been a part-time instructor at Saint-Joseph University in Beirut, teaching courses in leadership, management, public finance and taxation. Dr. Najd continues to organize, lead, and participate in numerous conferences and seminars related to taxation, public governance and female leadership and empowerment. She writes, “The wide experience I acquired at AUB helped me to keep up in today’s competitive environment.” [manalasn@yahoo.com]

Hisham Chreih (MA ’10) has held the position of project manager at Tarjamat Translations, an online translation agency located in New York, since October 2014.

Farah Saad (BS ’11) writes, “I completed my master’s degree in cellular and molecular biology, and am now a second year PhD student at McGill University doing research in cellular epithelial cancer at the Institut de Recherche Clinique de Montréal. I deeply miss the AUB campus and hope to visit soon. I made my best memories and friends there.”

Bilal Al Najjar (BA ’14) writes, “I graduated with a degree in public administration. My courses were mainly in public policy and public management, with a focus on the latter. I’m currently working at the Erbil branch of oil field services company Baker Hughes as an account manager. I concentrate on sales, marketing and daily operations.”

Mohamad Melhem (BEN ’14) is currently pursuing a career in the music industry. He has completed a course at Berklee College of Music and is planning on enhancing his production skills at dBs Music, Berlin. Mohamad has released two singles on iTunes. [www.facebook.com/mqubeficial] [msm30@mail.aub.edu]

Firas Mourad (BEN ’14) writes, “I graduated from AUB in electrical and computer engineering and have been working for a bit more than a year in Abu Dhabi. I am in my second year of a master’s program in systems and control engineering at Université Joseph Fourier in Grenoble, France. Hopefully, I will be able to go on for a PhD when I finish. AUB was a great part of my life, and hopefully will stay as such. One common thing to all AUB graduates is that they never get over AUB, and reminiscing about our time there is a recurrent activity.” [mourad.firas@gmail.com]

Ziad Yamut (BA ’14) Though Ziad enrolled in AUB in 1986, it wasn’t until last year that he earned a degree in public administration. Forced to abandon his AUB studies to help his family during the civil war years, the hardships he encountered did nothing to dampen his spirits. Working as an FEA library assistant is only the beginning for Ziad, who devotes as much time as he can to his passion for the arts. “The fine arts and performing arts refine your being . . . when you sing, draw, sculpt, and photograph, you find yourself connected with creative ideas that take you away from the physical, materialistic world.” His motto is, “Be yourself no matter what they say.” [zy02@aub.edu.lb]
In Memoriam

Fuad Sami Haddad (BA ’44, MD ’48) passed away on October 9 in Beirut, where he was born in 1924. Trained in neurosurgery under leading neurosurgeon Dr. Wilder Penfield at the Montreal Neurological Institute (McGill University), Haddad returned to Beirut in 1954 as the first fully trained neurosurgeon in the entire Arab world. He was a regional pioneer in this new specialty. Haddad taught at the FM for nearly six decades, was chair of the department of surgery for many years, and finished his distinguished career as emeritus professor of neurosurgery. During the difficult years of the Lebanese civil war, he tirelessly and selflessly cared for the flood of patients pouring into AUBMC. He is survived by his wife Aida Nasir (RN DiplM ’56), his six children: Georges (MD ’85), Suhayl (MD ’86), Fadi (MD ’88), Nabih, Labib (BS ’88) and Janane (BS ’94), and 14 grandchildren.

Mamdouha El-Sayed Bobst (BA ’47) passed away on September 10. Born in Tripoli, Lebanon in 1925, she earned a post-graduate diploma from the University of Birmingham, UK, and a master’s degree in public health education from University of California, Berkeley. A true visionary, Bobst dedicated her life to healthcare and education advocacy in the Middle East and North America (MENA). Following her graduate studies, she went to Libya with the World Health Organization (WHO), advising the newly independent government on public health issues, and championing the need for hospitals and nursing programs. This led to a post with UNICEF, and then to the United Nations, where she became one of the youngest serving delegates to the UN General Assembly. In 1961, Mamdouha married pharmaceutical executive Elmer Holmes Bobst who shared her passion for public health, education, and social justice. The Elmer and Mamdouha Bobst Foundation is one the most significant benefactors in AUB’s history. Their transformative donations have enhanced all areas of concern to the University, most notably medical care, research, and facilities. A member of AUB’s Board of Trustees and International Advisory Council, Bobst was also a benefactor of New York University, NYU Langone Medical Center, Princeton University, the Animal Medical Center, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and the American Cancer Society, among other institutions and organizations. She is survived by her brother Farouk; her sisters May, Nada and Salma; nephews and nieces Mazen Kamel, MD (BS ’79), Rima Kamel Al Abbas (BS ’80, MS ’82), Douha El-Sayed Ead, Haitham Kamel (BEN ’84), Toufic El-Sayed, Sana Jadir, Lina Jadir, PhD; Nadine Farah Soulier, and Randa El-Sayed Haffer (BA ’90) who is a trustee of AUB and serves as director of the Bobst Foundation.

Anis Srouji (BA ’49, BSCE ’50) passed away on May 11 at the age of 87. Born in Nazareth, Palestine, Srouji attended a Catholic Parish School before moving to Lebanon with his brothers to join the Quaker Society of Friends high school in Brumanna. He worked for a brief time in Syria before returning to Nazareth, where he enjoyed a long, successful career as a civil engineer. His legacy includes projects at significant landmarks throughout Palestine. He worked extensively on residential housing, schools, and churches, including the St. Joseph Greek Catholic Church, the convent of the Sisters of St. Mary in Nazareth, the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, the church of St. Peters in Kfar Nahoum (near Tiberias), the Pilgrims House attached to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, the Peace Mosque in Nazareth, and on renovations at the Church
Alumni

Abdulaziz Al Bahar (BA ’53) passed away on September 23 at the age of 84. He was a Gold member of the AUB 1866 Society, a distinguished group of regular donors to AUB, and a co-founder of the AUB Alumni Club in Kuwait in 1954. After earning an economics degree, Al Bahar returned to his home country of Kuwait and worked in various government departments, including public works, housing, and planning. He was the first director of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) and the cofounder the Commercial Bank of Kuwait, where he oversaw a vast expansion as head of its administrative board from 1963 to 1977. The Emir of Kuwait entrusted him with the establishment of the Kuwaiti Company for Trading, Contracting and Foreign Investment. He cofounded the Kuwait Insurance Company and led the Administrative Board of the National Industries Company in Kuwait. An erudite, broadly cultured man, Al Bahar strove to engage Kuwaiti youth in the banking sector. His example will continue to inspire future generations throughout the Middle East. He is survived by his children: Adnan, Iman, Ebtesam, Ahmed, and Maha.

Ahmad Shafiq Al-Khatib (BS ’56, MA ’58) Born in Palestine in 1926, Al-Khatib passed away on June 13. He was an Arab linguist, a lexicographer, an educator, and a humanitarian. A promising medical student whose studies were interrupted by the 1948 Nakba, Al-Khatib turned to teaching, which became a lifelong passion. In 1964, he joined Librairie du Liban Publishers as a technical adviser and soon became head of their dictionaries department. It was in that capacity that his works in lexicography, translation and scientific writing became known throughout the Arab World and internationally. His English-Arabic dictionaries for science, engineering, medicine, and agriculture remain standard references. A sought-after authority on the history and principles of Arabic translation and technical writing, Al-Khatib enjoyed guiding the process of coining new Arabic scientific terms. He received many honors throughout his life, including the Joseph Zaarour medal for excellence in scientific research, and recognition from UNESCO and Saint-Joseph University. Al-Khatib is survived by his wife Shirine Irani (BA ’58), and three sons: Hani (BEN ’83), Ziad (BS ’83, MD ’86), and Ramzi (BEN ’85). The family named an AUB bench in his honor.

Wafa George Assaf (BBP ’58) passed away at the age of 77 on August 2, 2014 at his home in La Jolla, California. He was born at the American University of Beirut Hospital and attended International College. Growing up on the shores of the Mediterranean, Assaf was an accomplished track and field athlete, swimmer, and lifeguard. He served as assistant director of athletics at AUB from 1958 through 1960 when he started his banking career, joining Bank of Beirut and Arab Countries. In 1973, he joined Chemical Bank of New York when it acquired Rabiya Bank and entered Lebanon. Assaf met his wife Nancy Corbin when she joined the AUB library staff as an assistant university librarian in 1968. They were married the following year, and their sons Kamal and William were born in Beirut. The family relocated to La Jolla, California in 1975 where Assaf worked for Bank of America, first in its International Banking Office, and later moving to the California Division as a branch manager assigned to several different branches. He retired in 1992. He was a great advocate for Lebanese culture and cuisine, making annual trips to Lebanon to see his family and friends in Monsef and Beirut. He is survived by his wife Nancy, his sons Kamal and William, a sister Amal Assaf Madany, a brother Talal Assaf, and a granddaughter.
Alumni

**Mona Takieddine Amyuni**, PhD (MA ’70) passed away on September 23 in Beirut at the age of 82. Amyuni received a PhD in literature from the Sorbonne, and was a long serving faculty member at AUB, and a senior lecturer in the Civilization Studies Program (CVSP) at the time of her death. She was an influential teacher whose love for literature, mythology and history inspired generations of students.

**HE Elias Skaff** (BS ’75) passed away on October 10 after a long illness. He was elected to the Lebanese parliament as head of the Popular Bloc in the eastern Bekaa Valley in 1992 following the death of his father HE Joseph Skaff. HE Elias Skaff was reelected for Zahle’s Catholic seat in 2001 and 2005. He was a participant in the National Dialogue in 2006 and served as a minister in several governments until 2009, including minister of industry in 2003 in the government of Rafic Hariri, minister of agriculture in 2004 and 2005 in the Omar Karmi government, and agriculture minister in the cabinet of PM Fouad Siniora. Born in Cyprus on October 11, 1948, Skaff spent his childhood in New Zealand with his mother. He returned to Lebanon at the age of 16 and graduated from AUB’s Faculty of Agriculture. He was a devoted AUB alumnus, a dynamic member of the FAFS External Advisory Board, and a preeminent philanthropist whose support of education in rural areas, and founding of charitable institutions will have lasting impact in the Bekaa, Zahle, and Lebanon. He donated a substantial tract of land to establish a branch campus of the Lebanese University in Bekaa to encourage young students to stay and receive their education in their home towns. HE Skaff is survived by his wife Myriam Gebran Tawk and their two children Joseph and Gebran.

**Farouq Abawi** (BS ’76) passed away on September 1 at the age of 66 in Ohio where he and his family have been living for the past eight years. One of the top students at AUB, Abawi was on the Dean’s list throughout his studies. He received a PhD in animal science and nutrition from the University of Nebraska, where he also proved to be an exceptional student, holding a 4.0 grade point average. Farouq met his wife Amina at AUB, and they were married in Beirut while they were both still students. A professor at the University of Guam for 20 years, Abawi had returned to AUB to teach at FAFS from 1985-88. He is survived by his wife Amina, his children Suleiman, Arzo and Farina, and ten grandchildren.

Friends

**Jean-Marie Cook**, former chair of the English Department, passed away on October 18 in Gordonsville, Virginia where she spent summer vacations on her farm. Born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1932, she was a graduate of Middlebury (BA ’54), Radcliffe (MA ’55), and Harvard (PhD ’60). Cook came to Beirut with her husband, linguist and English Professor Daniel Cook in 1963. She stayed on as an English professor after his death in 1987, weathering wars and disruptions of all kinds in a country she thought of as her true home. After her retirement in 1999, Cook remained active in university life where she continued to exert influence as an exacting editor of AUB’s magazines, newsletters, and invaluable references such as *Great Scholar Teachers* (2000) and scores of honorary degree programs prized for compelling profiles of the honorees. Cook was a feisty, adventurous spirit who remained vigorous until her recent, brief battle with cancer. An avid lifelong learner and teacher, she was known as a gracious host, and an athletic skier, sailor, walker, and swimmer. She is survived by two stepsons, Tom and John Cook and several nieces and nephews. Cook also leaves behind a thousand friends who will have to imagine Beirut without her powerful presence. MainGate will miss her.
In Memoriam

The sun's last lingering rays now glisten
Across old Ocean's placid breast;
The birds grow silent while we listen
As one by one they seek their rest;
The mountains, proud in all their glory,
Reflect the splendour of the sea,
And with their battlements so hoary
Stand guard o'er SPC

The day's hard tasks are left behind us,
The morrow's are still far away,
And bonds of friendship closely bind us
As gently fades the light of day.

About the Campus now we gather,
Firm friends for evermore to be,
For friendships are not made to wither
That grow in SPC

Our voices mingle with our laughter
To swell the glad and joyous note;
There are no cares in our hereafter
As down life's stream we gaily float,
For well we know, come care or trouble
The man to win will surely be
He who has taken care to double
His strength at SPC

Amid the glories that surround us,
Glories of Earth and Sea and Sky,
The chiefest splendour shed around us,
Though not apparent to the eye,

Is one which sets our hearts abating
As if with some wild melody
As spirit voices keep repeating
"you're sons of SPC"

So in this solemn evening hour
We consecrate our lives anew,
Determined to use all our power
In doing what we find to do
With all our heart, mind, strength and soul
So that we evermore may be
Worthy of SPC

Henry W. Glockler (BC 1912)
Aleppo, 1915

We Remember

Fawzi N. Abu Jamra  BA '54, MD '58
Alberto Guilo Vincenti BS '57
Georges Sayegh BA '59
Walid Awwad Atwa BS '62, MD '66
Nabil Fouad El Khoury BBA '62, MBA '65
Basile G. Nafpaktitis BS '62, MS '63
Makram Abdul Baki BEN '67
Karim Alamuddin BA '70
Labib Toufic Farhat BEN '78
Hassan Yassin BS '05, PhD '13
Judith Barratt Former student, 1969-72
Ralph W. Deblois Friend
William S. Flash Friend
Faten Hamama Friend
Enaam Mabsout Friend

Sunset Glow

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Henry W. Glockler (BC 1912)
Aleppo, 1915

In 1911, alumnus
H. Glockler brought the large
eucalyptus tree located north of the
Assembly Hall from Jerusalem in a
biscuit tin.

Read more in “The Origins and
Future of AUB’s Green Campus.”
A lot has happened in the last 150 years.

1866 - 2016

Stay tuned for major celebrations during AUB’s 150th anniversary!