



Dear friends and colleagues of the AUB community,

The end of every academic year comes replete with exciting arrivals and inevitable departures, as well as many opportunities to cement success and continuity. This year is no different as momentum continues to build and as we further strengthen and reinforce the top quality leadership team that will help take AUB from strength to strength but we start with a story of hope.

A Miracle at the Medical Center



June 14, 2017 will forever be a historic date at AUB. On that day, the Children's Heart Center at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) joined the world's premiere heart centers by performing the first successful heart transplant for a pediatric patient in Lebanon or the Levant region. The recipient child who was 5 years of age, came off the ventilator within a few days, smiled at his mother, held her arm, and hope was thus renewed.

Dr. Issam El Rassi, Chief of Pediatric and Congenital heart surgery, led a team of pediatric cardiologists, pediatric intensivists, cardiac anesthesiologists, nurses in this groundbreaking operation, determined that "no child should die of heart disease in Lebanon or the region."

Dr. Fadi Bitar, the Director of the Children's Heart Center commented: "This landmark adds to the exceptional and unparalleled services that the center provides towards the betterment of patients with congenital heart disease in Lebanon and the region." This pervasive culture of giving is symbolized by the extraordinary generosity of the donor family, who offered the heart of their beloved dying child as a gift, so that another child could have a chance at life. Much credit also must go to the Brave Heart Fund, which has helped support the cost of life saving surgery for more than 3,300 patients.

Dr. Marianne Majdalani, the Chief Intensivist of the Pediatric and Cardiac Intensive Care Unit concludes: "We are privileged and humbled by the trust of the recipient and donor families. Our love and respect goes out to the donor's family; and our success is a direct result of the exceptional teamwork that our physicians, nurses, and allied healthcare providers deliver."

The operation and treatment were supported through collaborations that involve the Ministry of Public Health, Brave Heart Fund and AUBMC. Thus, even in the setting of the tragedy that befell the child whose heart saved another, a life begins anew for a child and their family.

From strength to strength

As many of you know the last several years have seen several major landmarks for the Faculty of Medicine and the AUB Medical Center, among them being the first comprehensive external review of the Faculty of Medicine in many years, as well as doing extraordinarily well on JCI accreditation, and continuing to rise in the rankings among top Arab and World medical schools. The presidential advisory committee which carried out the external review was chaired by Trustee Michael Collins with a distinguished cast of academic medical leaders including J. William Eley of Emory University, Philip Pizzo of Stanford University, and Judith Swain of UC San Diego. The committee pointed out some major strengths, such as the quality and outcomes of patient care, the visionary and mission-driven approach, recruitment of faculty, the quality of research. The major area of focus continues to be optimizing the patient experience. In light of these accomplishments, we have decided to renew the leadership of EVP/Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine Mohamed Hassan Sayegh for another term. Board Vice Chair for Medicine and Health Michael Collins remarked: "The high level review of the Faculty of Medicine by such

a stellar panel of outside reviewers validates the direction and the accomplishments of Dean Sayegh and his team, and helps further set a roadmap for the work to come.”



EVP/Dean Sayegh is committed to the pledge that AUBMC become synonymous with world-class care for all of our peoples, and helping fulfill our vision of establishing the first global health sciences campus in the region.

The Board of Trustees has unanimously supported our recommendations for EVP/Dean Sayegh’s re-appointment.

Among the many positive comments, those of Trustee Emeritus

David Bickers, who oversaw the launch and alignment of the Dean’s impressive vision, stated at the time of the Board, resonate well: “Dean Sayegh’s accomplishments in helping fulfill the goals of the AUBMC 2020 Vision in order to provide world class medical care for Lebanon and the Arab World are truly extraordinary, and will go down among the major accomplishments in AUB’s history.” As EVP/Dean Sayegh himself emphasized: “It is a privilege to have the opportunity to serve in this unified leadership team as we help build a medical school and a health sciences center that is research based, service centered and outstanding in every aspect.” Well done and congratulations to EVP/Dean Sayegh.

New arrivals

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Professor Mahmoud al-Batal , one of the preeminent scholars in Arabic Education, to the AUB Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Prof. al-Batal is internationally recognized for his leadership in pedagogy, pedagogical research and socio-linguistics and for co-authoring *al-Kitab* series, the most widely used Arabic textbooks for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. His extensive experience in teaching, research and service in Arabic language and culture at leading US universities spans the best part of the last thirty years, most recently at the University of Texas, Austin. His groundbreaking scholarship in Arabic language and pedagogy and his leadership qualities will help AUB achieve its vision to become a major regional and international center for teaching Arabic.



We are also pleased to announce that under the leadership of Dean Nadia El Cheikh and CASAR Acting Director Amy Zenger, we have successfully recruited Kenneth Seigneurie, a distinguished scholar, to the Edward Said Chair of American Studies. Dr. Seigneurie is Professor of World Literature at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia and his research interests include the relationship between literary culture and humanist thought in the West and the in the Arab world. Dr. Seigneurie is a

distinguished professor and an extraordinary scholar and his appointment will give new impetus to the synergy between the various centers and departments.

Among the other arrivals that I wish to mention are two new colleagues in AUB's New York Office who bring considerable skills and experience to this important but frequently unspotlighted corner of our operations. Executive Director of Advancement Jihad Mirza and



Communications Director Alison Freeland both joined us with strong pedigrees in academic advancement and academic marketing and communications respectively. Jihad has already come to Beirut several times, but they will both be here over the summer when they will get the chance to further explore this remarkable community and I am confident of their ability to place AUB more boldly on the map of North America.

On a related subject, congratulations to all those responsible for the two Golden honors, which AUB received in the [annual Council for Advancement and Support of Education \(CASE\) Circle of Excellence awards](#). Credit goes to the Office of Advancement, the Office of Communications, the Archives and Special Collections Department, AUB Press, Assistant Secretary of the University Ada Porter, as well as a host of essayists, researchers, and writers.

I want to close by wishing you a pleasant summer break. We will be back to you in one month.

Best regards,

Fadlo R. Khuri, MD
President
