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President’s views: On regional diversity, recruitment, and competition in the Middle East

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Legends and Legacies

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Alumni Profile

*Taking the Pulse of the Moment* Doctor, blogger, and public health activist Zied Mhirsi (MPH ’06) takes revolution live in Tunisia

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by Rami G. Khouri
Key lessons from an extraordinary year in Arab history

Look to the Land
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“Don’t forget,” says Professor Rami Zurayk, “that the Tunisian revolt began in Sidi Bouzid…and what filled Tahrir Square were hundreds of thousands of people displaced from the land.”

Springtime for Women
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Education for Citizenship
by Marwan Muasher and Muhammad Faour (BS ’77, MA ’79)
Students in the Middle East need to be taught how to think, not how to behave.
Over the fall President Dorman fielded questions from students, alumni, and friends of AUB on diversity, recruitment, and competition from new universities in the Middle East. Questions for the president? Email maingate[at]aub.edu.lb

How does the 2011 incoming class compare with previous years in terms of regional diversity?
Increasing regional diversity has been a goal of the University for many years and we’ve been making great strides. In the past ten years, the percentage of students coming from outside Lebanon has almost doubled for both undergraduates and graduates to 25 and 15 percent respectively. This is not yet where we want to be, but the numbers are moving in the right direction. Fortunately, this year, we also saw a dramatic increase in the number of applicants from outside the Arab world compared to last year. We hope this trend continues as the efforts of our relatively new Office of International Programs start to gather momentum.

Was the application rate different from past years?
We did see a slight decrease in the number of applications compared to previous years, but this did not adversely affect the quality of our incoming student body. We were able
to accept more applicants while keeping roughly the same cut-off scores.

How have the changes in tuition fees impacted enrollment?
The new fee structure, which charges students on a per-credit-hour basis up to 15 credits, only applies to the new incoming class, which was pretty much the expected size, with around 1,600 new undergraduate students. That is about the same number of students as entered AUB last year. Most of the new students are taking 15 courses as they all usually do, so they are subject to a higher fee scale.

Has AUB increased student aid this year in response to the new fee structure?
Absolutely! There has been a major positive impact on financial aid. [Financial] aid packages have been increased across the board, with the minimum package now 20 percent, where it used to be 5 percent. The average financial aid package has jumped from 20 percent of tuition fees to 50 percent. We have also signed agreements with two banks (with more to come) to extend low interest educational loans with very favorable conditions which are now available to all students, regardless of major.

Many people are asking how AUB is facing up to competition from institutions of higher education in the Gulf.
I believe competition is the wrong word. For one thing, most of our current students are Lebanese—80 percent graduate from Lebanese high schools. Many of the students from outside the country are also of Lebanese origin: their parents send them back to us because they want them to have an AUB education. The Gulf certainly has some very good home grown universities like Sharjah University and the University of the United Arab Emirates, but they simply do not compete directly for the same population of students as we do; nor do the branch campuses of other American universities in the GCC. These universities are usually attended by indigenous students and the children of expat employees, or they have very large scholarship programs and recruit from all over the world. In terms of faculty research output, AUB has the highest rate of publication per faculty member of any institution of higher education in the MENA region and the GCC.

Moreover, the distinctive value of AUB is that it is very much a university that is shaped by its native culture, by Lebanon, and by the region broadly speaking. It is located at the center of a vibrant city in terms of culture, politics, language, foreign interaction, business, tourism, and natural beauty. In these respects AUB is hard to beat. I also believe that great universities thrive on direct interaction with their environment. Compare AUB with the gated communities that have been built in the Gulf or Saudi Arabia: lavish to be sure, but also somewhat physically isolated from the political and cultural scenes in which they exist.

But has AUB lost students to those institutions who traditionally came here from the Gulf, students who were important in AUB’s history?
In the 1960s and 1970s the Arab proportion [of the student body] was closer to 50 percent. At that time the USAID program brought cohorts of students from Iraq, Turkey, Cyprus, Egypt, and many other countries to AUB—a wonderful influx of diversity. While we would love to see that breadth of diversity again, we must also realize that students all over the Arab world now have multiple educational options to choose from close to home. Gulf residents in particular have the means to send their children almost anywhere in the world—and they do. Our own efforts to recruit students must focus on our distinctive strengths: strong professional schools, a vigorous liberal arts foundation based on American curricula, an unparalleled historical legacy, and the best faculty in the region.
The political, social, and economic repercussions of the events of the past year are bringing widespread change even to countries that have not experienced social turmoil. As a historic center of research and learning in the Middle East with thousands of alumni living and working in the region, what is AUB’s role during this period in history? For this issue we’ve spoken to faculty and alumni throughout the Middle East and North Africa to hear their unique perspectives on events during the last 12 months (see Rami G. Khouri’s article “The Citizen and History Return to the Arab World”). Consider what opportunities these historic transformations might present (“Springtime for Women in Lebanon,” page 36, and “Education for Citizenship,” page 40), and learn about some of the ways in which AUB is engaging with these movements that are transforming millions of lives (read about the Issam Fares Institute’s “Arab Uprisings” project on page 31).

We also reached out to two very different alumni who are outspoken, hardworking activists: doctor/ blogger Zied Mhirsi (MPH ’06) in Tunisia and Mansour El-Kikhia (BA ’72), who has lived in exile from Libya for nearly 30 years, but is newly optimistic about the future of his country.

It’s a bird’s-eye view of our involvement in events that will inform the work and lives of our university and regional community for years to come. We look forward to continuing the conversation and receiving your ideas and feedback.

Ada H. Porter
Editor, MainGate
At AUB, 2,910 students received financial aid in 2010–11. Can you help one more?

If it were not for her mother and the Abdul Malik Al-Hamar Scholarship, Mona Harbali would not be at AUB. “She worked 12-hour days after my father passed away four years ago and insisted on registering me at AUB—the best university in the Middle East—even though we had no idea how we would pay for it,” Mona remembers. She says receiving a scholarship lifted a huge burden from her and her family. In her final year at AUB, Mona is enjoying the courses she is taking while earning her undergraduate degree in food science and management, the opportunity to meet students from different backgrounds, and the facilities at the Charles W. Hostler Student Center.

Hear more: www.aub.edu.development/scholarship_initiative

To speak to someone about supporting financial aid, contact us at giving(at)aub.edu.lb.

Supporting Students of Today and Tomorrow

Can you help support an AUB student?

See what’s possible!
AUB Joins the Running

Several AUB groups took advantage of the annual BLOM Beirut Marathon on November 27, 2011 to raise money for charity. AUBMC’s Brave Heart Fund (here in red t-shirts) participated for the ninth year in a row. With 2,200 runners on the 10 kilometer and 42 kilometer courses, the BHF managed to raise enough money from students, staff, and the community to pay for ten open heart surgeries.

The BHF team was the largest of 52 participating NGOs and included national champions Sonia Hanna and Elga Trad, as well as Lebanese desert runner Ali Wehbe, who assisted with the race despite an injury.

Participating for the first time, Ibsar gathered a team of 42 faculty members, staff, and students to run and walk the courses in support of a greener environment.

AUB’s CCECS recruited 25 volunteers to the event to help the BHF and Ibsar sell tickets, distribute t-shirts, help at the Expo Marathon, hand out water, and cheer on participants. Najat Saliba, director of Ibsar, summed up the prevailing spirit: “At the marathon, you feel part of a much bigger cause, a cause that combines all charities present at the marathon.”
Founders Day Essay Contest 2011: In light of AUB’s historic legacy as an institution that fosters social advancement, what role can our University play in this region during the time of the Arab Spring?

Senior political science student Aliaa Elzeiny, who won first prize in the essay contest, had the following answer.

An Egyptian, an Arab, an AUB Student

On December 17, 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire to protest the harassment that was inflicted on him by a Tunisian municipal official. Bouazizi died from his injuries, but his sacrifice encouraged those living in the Arab world to call for political reform. This 26-year-old gave Tunisian youth the courage they needed to chant Abu al-Qasim al-Shabi’s verse: “If, one day, a people desires to live, then fate will answer their call.” Soon afterwards, the people of Egypt took to the streets, declaring that “the people want to change the regime.” The Arab awakening had begun. The citizens of one country after another, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, began to demand freedom, democracy, and social justice.

AUB’s mission statement is closely aligned with the objectives of the Arab protest movements. Our mission statement is clear: “The University believes deeply in and encourages freedom of thought and expression and seeks to foster tolerance and respect for diversity and dialogue. Graduates will be individuals committed to creative and critical thinking, life-long learning, personal integrity and civic responsibility, and leadership.” Thus, our University should continue in its historical endeavor to produce graduates, who as citizens of the region, are committed to the pillars that underlie the Arab uprisings.

My personal awakening began during the fall 2008 semester, which is when I enrolled in the freshman PSPA class, “Introduction to Political Science.” Everyone in this class referred to me as the “Egyptian representative,” because every comment I made on the course material would begin with “In Egypt...” I always spoke of the glory days of Egypt but I rarely spoke about reality. As an Egyptian student who graduated from the Egyptian educational system I accepted the authority’s discourse that—I now believe—aimed at a deceptive sense of nationalism that guarantees submission to authority. As Muhammad Faour wrote in Foreign Policy magazine, in Egyptian social studies textbooks, “[the word “authority” prevails ... compared to [the] use of the word “citizen” (81 percent versus 47 percent, respectively), [and this is] a clear indicator of state dominance over citizens and its efforts to create an education that perpetuates the system.”

I now realize that I had been spoon fed information, which I came to know by heart, but rarely questioned. With every course that I completed at AUB, and in every discussion in front of West Hall or on the stairs of the main gate, I began to grasp the bigger picture. I realized that I should be open-minded, reflective, and self-critical. My country needs educated people who can promote much needed change and reform. My country needs people who can promote active citizenship, civic engagement, and social responsibility. It is when we are truly engaged within our communities that we become aware of the problems that our communities face. Only then do we learn what we need to do to improve our communities.

Soon after arriving at the American University of Beirut, I learned that I had a voice and started to blog.
believed that, as an Egyptian woman, I should claim my right to speak up. On June 12, 2010, I blogged about Khaled Said, the 28-year-old man from Alexandria, Egypt who was brutally killed by Egyptian officers. That day I blogged:

Khaled was in an internet cafe when two police officers came in; they wanted to search the people in the place abusing the Emergency Law... He refused to be searched and then was beaten to death. The police officers that are supposed to protect citizens brutally killed the citizen.

Probably soon enough we will find an official spokesman on TV condemning this young man, Khaled, for something he did not do. Then, to distract us further from this inhuman and unjust act, a football match will be held. Soon enough, the masses will fall asleep and Khaled, like thousands of Egyptians who died because of a clueless authoritarian government, will be forgotten. And we all walk numbly in this vicious circle.

I was wrong. Today, I realize that, in our own ways, "we are all Khaled Said." Khaled became the symbol of the Egyptian revolution; he became the cause in Tahrir Square. Khaled was born on January 25, 2011 and he shall live through the change that is created by the youth of this region. Through the Arab awakening, we are breaking this vicious cycle so that “[We] may have life and have it more abundantly.”

AUB provides its students with classroom experiences and on-campus interactions that promote critical thinking, which enables AUB graduates to become active members of their communities. It is through combining the power of knowledge, the hope for change, and the will for action that we—as AUB students and graduates—can help to transform the Arab spring into an eternal Arab summer.

This was the American University of Beirut’s gift to me. After four years of education, I can proudly say that I am Aliaa Elzeiny. I am the Egyptian Arab young woman who has lived through the Arab awakening. I am the political science student who learned at AUB how to bring about change, freedom, and social justice.

“Next to my user name on Twitter, everyone is supposed to write a short bio, and I thought, what can I write in 160 characters, that says something about me, something interesting enough for people to follow me, and read my tweets? I wrote; ‘Egyptian blogger, studies political Science in AUB, ADORES Beirut & thinks writing your BIO in fewer than 160 chars. is absolute MADNESS or really SAD!’ But I think I will add—since I am not limited by word count—an optimist, a believer, and an Arab.”

Twitter(at)aliaaelzeiny
Blog: aliaaz.blogspot.com
Tomorrow’s Leaders
They started coming in fall 2008. There were just five that first year: two from Yemen, two from Palestine, and one from Egypt. There are now 45 of them from 11 countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Although they come from throughout the region, this diverse group of young men and women are united by a strong bond: they have all been singled out as “tomorrow’s leaders.”

Launched by the US State Department as part of its MEPI (Middle East Partnership Initiative) in 2006-07, the Tomorrow’s Leaders Scholarship Program provides four-year scholarships to economically disadvantaged students from the Arab world, enabling them to study at one of three universities in the region: AUB, the American University in Cairo (AUC), and the Lebanese American University (LAU). In addition to earning undergraduate degrees, MEPI students are also required to spend a semester at a US university, do community service, and complete internships both in Lebanon and in their home countries. At AUB, it is the responsibility of program coordinator and PSPA lecturer Randa Antoun, PhD, to keep track of the growing number of MEPI scholars on campus. It’s not easy. In fall 2011, for example, in addition to the 37 MEPI scholars enrolled in a dozen different academic programs at AUB, eight students were in the United States: at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware; Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania; the American University in Washington, DC; and Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Antoun is not complaining though. She is especially encouraged by the enthusiastic response to the program from some of the current MEPI scholars.

Aliaa Elzeiny, who penned the winning 2011 Founders Day essay (see page 8) and grew up in Alexandria, Egypt, is one of those scholars. She says she loves everything about AUB—especially the fact that “it enables me to have very interesting classmates from all over the world and thus very interesting and stimulating class discussions.” An appreciation for AUB’s diverse student body is

**TOP 10 Got time between classes? A look at where students end up with a minute to spare.**

1. It is my shift at the stand outside the women’s dormitory on campus, collecting donated clothes for the Red Cross. —Rania
2. I’m signed up for the student work study program, so now I’m helping organize the month’s events at AUB. —Crystelle
3. I rush to meet my friends at the cafeteria; it’s our only time to stock up on energy! —Fadi
4. I actually go to the first couch I can find and take a power nap! —Mark
5. I’m stationed at Jafet Library. I have a desk set up there where my belongings await me. —Cyma
6. As you can see, we all gather outside West Hall to meet regularly, traditionally with popcorn! —Hussein
7. We rehearse in West Hall, Auditorium A. —Chris (member of an aspiring band)
8. With my laptop, I study before recitation at an OSB study room. —Joanne
9. I’m a member of the Entrepreneurship-club; we meet to help students understand the concept of entrepreneurship in the business world. —Layana
10. I pop by the CCECS office. I’m a regular volunteer. —Marwa
something that many MEPI scholars share. Yemeni-born Farea Al-muslimi, who expects to graduate in fall 2012, describes AUB as “a very diverse and dynamic place. I have met so many amazing people and learned from its environment more than I have learned from my classes.”

Amani Al Qubati, who is from Yemen and is the daughter of an AUB alumnus, credits AUB’s diversity for “making me a different person.” She admits, however, that she found it hard to adapt to living on her own when she arrived at AUB three years ago because of the cultural differences between Yemen and Lebanon. Marah Aqeel, who attended the Friends School in Ramallah before coming to AUB, initially found it a bit overwhelming too, but now enjoys the whole experience. She hopes to continue her academic studies at AUB after she completes her BS in nutrition. Al Qubati and Al-muslimi both plan to return to Yemen. Aliaa Elzeiny is also looking forward to returning home next summer. As for the future of the MEPI program, Antoun says that although AUB would welcome more MEPI scholars, there are currently no plans to extend the program beyond the current year.

**Abundant Education**

What do you do when faced with the challenge of creating a brand new university, complete with a liberal arts curriculum, out of nothing? Send for AUB of course! This is exactly what engineering contractor Kamil Saadeddine of the Arab Supply and Trading Company (ASTRA) did when he was asked by Prince Fahd...
Bin Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, governor of Tabuk, to open the first private English speaking university in the kingdom’s remote northern region.

Knowing what a challenge the project represented, Saadeddine had delayed initiating it for almost a decade before hitting on the bright idea of contacting AUB’s Office of Regional External Programs in 2006. In so doing he instantly tapped into the vast pool of knowledge that AUB represents. As consultations got under way it became clear that hands-on expertise was required, along with extensive consultations between Beirut and Tabuk. In 2008 two AUB professors were appointed to the key roles of president and provost of the fledgling Fahd Bin Sultan University (FBSU).

Rachid Chedid, (AUB professor of electrical and computer engineering), was the first to take up the mantle of president in 2008, alongside Ahmed Smaili (former AUB mechanical engineering professor) as provost. At this time FBSU was a single computing college without academic credentials, a proper curriculum, the requisite academic and ancillary personnel, and all the other programs that are required for a successful university. Chedid and Smaili worked 15-hour days, seven days a week, to establish new colleges of business and engineering. In constant consultation with colleagues back in Beirut, they took on the task of designing laboratories, libraries, a medical center, classrooms, and recreational facilities; not to mention establishing the curricula, catalogs, and manuals, and hiring faculty and recruiting students. “This was at a time when 70 percent of the students [entering FBSU] did not have high school science certificates,” Chedid explains.

Designed by AUB’s Ghazi Ghaith (chairperson of the Department of Education) and drawing on AUB’s liberal arts model, a foundation year program was launched in 2007. Since then, student numbers have climbed from 400 to over 1,000; in June 2009, the first batch of graduates from FBSU was awarded their degrees.

“Another major problem we faced was how to budget,” says Chedid. “We had no system, no template, no financial officers, or software. We had to start from scratch to create cost centers and operational procedures.” On top of this came the search for faculty members. How does one convince professional personnel to...
take up a position in an untested institution in a remote location? It was the toughest assignment Chedid had undertaken as a REP consultant.

Ahmad Nasri (AUB professor of computer science) took over from Chedid as president in 2010. In tandem with Provost Abdallah Luyizzak, (AUB professor of mathematics), he is institutionalizing FBSU's academic programs and regulatory systems as well as overseeing the introduction of an EMBA program. An immensely successful two-year bridging program for technical students working towards bachelor’s degrees, which was initially expected to attract 50 applicants, is currently hosting 200 students. There are new technical exchange programs and memoranda of understanding with various European universities in the push to improve research standards. An arts faculty is in the planning stages.

"It is a very demanding job," says Nasri. "In the beginning we were involved with everything from housekeeping, to security, to establishing discipline, laying down rules and regulations as well as all things academic. We needed to maintain REP’s impact and develop FBSU's image further."

In summer 2011, FBSU received accreditation from the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Higher Education, the first private English speaking university in Saudi Arabia to do so. Abdul Hamid Hallab, chairman of the FBSU Steering Committee and former director of REP, says, "I feel very good about the success of the university. It has become a quality university with quality students and hopefully this will continue. This is at the heart of what REP does."

Commenting on FBSU’s recent accreditation, George Farag, acting vice president of REP, says "This is another step as we move towards elevating the quality of education in the region by fulfilling AUB’s motto, ‘That they may have life, and have it more abundantly.’"

—M.A.

From the Faculties
FAS

The Said Legacy
Eight years after his death, Professor Edward Said’s commitment to cultural understanding between the United States and the Middle East lives on at AUB. Said long urged the University to create a program in American studies and offered to be a visiting professor at the newly established CASAR. To honor his memory and to ensure that his vision and educational mission would continue, the Board of Trustees announced the Edward Said Chair of American Studies in spring 2004.

Each year, a professor is selected to occupy this position and contribute towards a better understanding between the Arab and US worlds by engaging in research, conducting seminars, and offering a lecture to the university community. For the 2011-12 academic year, CASAR welcomed Marwan Kraidy, professor of global communication at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania and an expert in media and culture, as the Edward Said Chair of American Studies. Kraidy is teaching two seminars on music videos as tools for social and political communication and on comparative media systems. In addition to the fact that CASAR's American studies program matches
with his research interests, Kraidy has used Edward Said’s work for years. In his first book *Hybridity or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (2005) he compares what he calls “Early Said” and “Late Said” works. “For us who work on issues of culture and politics, Said is one of these figures whose opinion matters,” explains the professor. “To be associated with Said’s name today is very exciting.”

Despite the strong interest in Edward Said, Kraidy finds it is being at AUB that has been the most rewarding aspect of the experience. “In some ways, it combines the best of both [Arab and US] worlds: local tradition plugged into international circuits of conferences and publications. That is very difficult to achieve.”

The daily interaction with students on campus, intellectuals and activists, journalists, and writers has been a wonderful opportunity for Kraidy to reconnect with intellectual life in Lebanon and the Arab world after being away from the region for 20 years. “One of the things I like most about AUB is that there is a Faculty of Arts and Sciences where intellectual work is esteemed for its own value. There is an appreciation for the whole liberal arts tradition, which broadens one’s horizons and deepens one’s appreciation for the arts, for literature, and for the [subjects] that you need, not necessarily to make a lot of money in your life but, to lead a good life.”

To Kraidy, “AUB students are politically and culturally aware, very engaged with some issues, and typically more aware of global issues than American students. The graduate students here are super. They compete with any master’s students I have had at any university.” One of the PhD students Kraidy supervises at the University of Pennsylvania is an AUB graduate. He hopes to recruit more AUB students for graduate study in the United States. Keen on maintaining his involvement with AUB, particularly with CASAR, the media studies program, and IFI, Kraidy sees that part of his responsibility is to strengthen the intellectual ties and the flow of people between AUB and the United States. “Intellectual work does not recognize national boundaries and my hope is to contribute to broadening and deepening exchange.”

**Probing the Roots**

Hiba Khodr, assistant professor in the PSPA Department, is researching the effects of the Arab Spring on policymaking in the region. She told *MainGate*:

“I consider the current 2011 revolutionary uprisings in the Arab world to be the most dramatic political movement since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. While these changes are opening the door for region-wide political reform, uncertainties about their outcomes and impact on policymaking internally and externally remain. Although we don’t know what the final outcome will be, it is clear that this uprising has forced a major paradigm shift that will inevitably lead to changes in the mechanism of policymaking in the Arab world as well as the types of stakeholders who might participate in that process. It is this paradigm shift that I believe has opened a policy window in the region.

“Prior to these events, the public was almost completely missing from the public policy arena and transparency on many policy issues was lacking. In addition, the political process in many Arab countries, which is often based on extreme secrecy, was monopolized and the rights of citizens to understand the nature and aims of internal and external governmental moves were mostly neglected. These conditions will not survive in the post-uprising arena.

“I am researching the newcomers to the circle of public policymaking post uprising. I want to find out who these people are. After all, they too—and not just the ones who initiated these changes—will have a big hand in determining how these changes unfold in the Arab world.”
FAFS

Food Protectors

As one of the seven founding partners of the UNESCO Chair for the Safeguarding and Enrichment of Cultural Food Heritages, AUB will play a key role in future scientific research into protecting and promoting local food products and traditions in an increasingly globalized food market.

Inaugurated in October 2011 during a workshop at the University of François Rabelais, France, the chair will help to pool resources and foster academic exchange around food heritage and tradition, hunger, and malnutrition as well as facilitate north/south knowledge transfer.

The idea for the UNESCO chair evolved from a meeting of scientists from France, Brazil, India, Morocco, Niger, China, and Lebanon in 2009 under the auspices of the European Institute for the History and Culture of Food. It was further developed in cooperation with UNESCO’s University Twinning and Networking Programme (UNITWIN) that encourages the transfer of knowledge across borders. These chairs and networks have a dual function as think tanks and as bridge builders between policymakers, the academic world, civil society, and local communities. Seven hundred fifteen UNESCO chairs and 69 UNITWIN networks exist in 131 countries.

As the world’s population exceeds seven billion, food security and malnutrition have become predominant concerns for world governments. According to Rami Zurayk, FAFS professor and an AUB representative on the UNESCO chair, “This is a crucial moment for coordinating research and education efforts and for establishing cooperative relationships. [Being involved in this initiative] will keep AUB at the forefront of international research efforts [in this important area].”

FAFS Dean Nahla Hwalla also attended the inaugural meeting in October as a representative from the region. The FAFS contribution to the strategic plan for the chair is a research project entitled “Mediterranean Traditional Diet: A Threatened Cultural Heritage and Healthy Lifestyle.” The project, which will assess changes that have occurred in the traditional Lebanese Mediterranean diet within the scope of a threatened cultural heritage, will be further developed under the auspices of the chair.

—M.A.

FEA

Cold Drinks, Hot Fridge

What started as a community grant and a final-year project for four AUB undergraduates has yielded the first solar refrigerator of its kind in the region and the first solar cooling system to be manufactured in Lebanon. A small team of students and supervisors from the departments of Electric and Computer Engineering and Mechanical Engineering collaborated in a Coca-Cola-funded project to perform a technological transfer of solar refrigeration. The concept, originally invented in India, was taken one step further by the AUB team, which designed a smaller, lighter, cheaper, and more environmentally friendly product: the new refrigerator uses electronics to provide the compressor motor with a high starting current thus eliminating the need for...
a storage battery. This battery-free design is much more sustainable as well. Not only do lead acid batteries pollute the environment and cost four times as much as charge controllers ($200 versus $50), they also have to be periodically replaced and require annual maintenance. One of the largest refrigerator manufacturers in Lebanon is currently testing the model for adaptation for the market.

—S.J.S.

HSON

Serving with Honor

In honor of its achievements as an accredited program that has graduated generations in nursing, the HSON was invited by the 90 year-old Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Honor Society to establish the first such society in the Middle East. The society’s mission is to support learning, knowledge, and the professional development of nurses for better health worldwide. The society celebrates the achievements of undergraduate nursing students, graduate students, alumni, clinicians, educators, researchers, and administrators who have contributed to the development of nursing in a clinical, leadership, or research role. In the society’s first induction ceremony in January, 61 new members were recognized and presented with
certificates as leaders in nursing. Associate Dean of the Case Western University School of Nursing Professor Marilynn Lotas, the invited speaker, concluded the ceremony with her lecture, “Childhood Hypertension: Anatomy of a Health Disparity.”

The AUB School of Nursing Honor Society’s founding board is composed of founding president and director of HSON Professor Huda Abu Saad Huijer (BS ‘71), founding vice president and Clinical Assistant Professor Chris Abbyad, Assistant Professor Myrna A. Doumit (BS ‘88, MPH ‘96, Diploma ‘01), Associate Professor Mary Arevian (BS ‘69, MPH ‘79), and Dina Madi (BS ‘87, MA ‘02) from HSON. Because these trainees become trainers in their home institutions, this program is reaching many more people than just the participants themselves. As nurse educator Zeinab Thawabteh from Hebron University explains, previous participants have contributed immensely to improvements in the health care system in the West Bank. For operating room nurse Ibrahim Al-Ghrouz, the program was an opportunity to observe procedures and surgical operations that he and his colleagues normally only hear about, such as laparoscopy. He says, “We hope to develop the system in the West Bank based on what we observe and learn here. We hope to implement as much of the international standard methodology [seen at AUBMC] as our capabilities allow.”

The program first started in 2006 following an agreement between AUB and Dr. Joseph Tamari, president of the Medical Welfare Trust Fund (established by the late Hassib Sabagh, BA ‘41, honorary doctorate in humane letters, ’03). It is overseen by an AUB coordinating committee: Dr. Ghazi Zaatari (chair), Dr. George Araj (coordinator) and FHS Professor Rima Afifi.

For information on joining the chapter, please contact Chris Abbyad cw07(at)aub.edu.lb.

—S.J.S.

**Roads for Life**

A ceremony and a press conference were held in October at HSON to celebrate the graduation of the first 20 doctors sponsored by Roads for Life—the Talal Kassem Fund for Post Accident Care, in the Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) course. The fund is named for Talal Amer Kassem, a 17 year-old IC student who died after being struck by a car as he crossed Raouche Street in Beirut.

The ATLS course, which is offered at AUBMC in association with the American College of Surgeons (ACS)—Lebanon Chapter, teaches a systematic, concise approach to the early care of trauma patients. More than 500 people die annually in Lebanon due to traffic accidents, a figure the ATLS training could help reduce. “Roads for Life—the Talal Kassem Fund will sponsor the training of 130 doctors from various regional hospitals from across the Lebanese territory,” said Zeina Kassar Kassem (BA ’92, MBA ’97), president of Roads for Life, as she addressed the graduates. “I sincerely hope...you will put this knowledge into practice to help trauma patients throughout Lebanon.” Kassem attended the International ATLS meeting in San Francisco and she plans to work with ACS and AUBMC to bring two other courses—Advanced Trauma Care for Nurses (ATCN) and Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) to Lebanon. The ATCN course is dedicated to emergency nurses and the PHTLS is dedicated to rescue teams and paramedics such as the Lebanese Red Cross and Civil Defense.
Welcome to the World
AUBMC is now home to a new state-of-the-art neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) that includes not only all the essential equipment that Dr. Khaled Yunis (BS ’75, MD ’80), head of the Division of Neonatology, and his colleagues need to care for newborns, but also targeted resources for parents of newborns as well. Although AUBMC has had an NICU for many years, this new 21-bed facility offers patients and their families many more resources and a wider array of expert services. For example, the new NICU provides more room for each patient and his/her family and includes a parent transition room where parents can spend time at the NICU with their child. This gives them the opportunity to get answers to their questions and to learn how to care for their child under the watchful supervision of trained NICU staff nurses before their baby is discharged.

Dr. Yunis stated that “the mission of the NICU has been and will continue to be to deliver the best and most up-to-date quality care. We are dedicated to the wellbeing of the babies in our care and to their families.”

AUBMC Director of Strategic Planning and Communications Rana Alley explains that the goal is to provide patients with more options. “What we are offering here and at all AUBMC facilities is patient-centered care—care that is structured and delivered to ensure that patients get what they need.”
Unraveling Systems
AUBMC establishes a Multiple Sclerosis Center, the first in the Middle East

One of Dr. Samia Khoury’s (BS ‘80, MD ‘84) most memorable birthday presents was a “mouth-painted” card from a patient in her 20s. The young woman had one functioning limb and could only paint by holding the brush between her teeth. She lived in a nursing home and campaigned for the right of patients to study at university, which she herself attended on a stretcher. She was Khoury’s first multiple sclerosis (MS) patient and the one who prompted her decision to specialize in the disease. Khoury says: “I loved neurology. I loved the brain, and then I discovered immunology, which is just as complicated as the nervous system; so I liked the idea of bringing these two systems together and that is why I went into MS.”

Recently appointed as director of the Abu-Haidar Neuroscience Institute (AHNI) and professor in the Department of Neurology, Khoury works collaboratively with Dr. Bassem Yamout in the new AUBMC Multiple Sclerosis Center, which is the latest in a series of centers of excellence that AUBMC is planning to set up. She comes to AUB from Harvard Medical School where she has been professor of neurology since 2007.

An expert who has researched MS for over 20 years, Khoury brings vast knowledge to the center. Working between Harvard and AUB she hopes the new center will boost understanding of MS regionally and yield valuable research insights into how the disease works and how to treat it.

“In Lebanon we don’t have that much data. I know we probably have about 1,200 MS patients according to sources in the Ministry of Health. Our sources [only] come from those who are diagnosed and known to be taking medications,” Khoury explains. “We are hoping to create a registry for Lebanon and the Middle East. We need more studies to show if response to treatment is different in our population, if there are other risk factors, and if the progression is different.”

What is Multiple Sclerosis (MS)?
MS is a chronic disease that affects the central nervous system, which includes the brain and spinal cord. It is an autoimmune disease where the immune system reacts against components of the nervous system, targeting primarily the myelin covering the axons. The axons are part of a neuron (nerve cell) used to transmit and communicate information to other nerve cells that are covered by myelin, which is analogous to the rubber insulation covering an electrical wire. Successful communication between nerve cells requires intact myelin. Typically neurological signs and symptoms occur where there has been myelin damage.

Facts about Multiple Sclerosis
- About twice as many women as men get MS. Although it can happen at any age, most people get it in their 30s.
- About 30 percent of MS risk is attributable to genetics. Multiple genes increase the risk; those linked to MS are immune related genes which reinforces the idea of MS being an immune mediated disease.
MS researchers have known for some time that low levels of Vitamin D appear to play a role in MS. “One of the things we have noticed among people in Lebanon and the Middle East is very low levels of Vitamin D in spite of it being sunny. This could be either because they are avoiding the sun or there is some genetic factor that inhibits their ability to produce Vitamin D because it’s the skin that produces it.”

“Another thing we and other people have noticed is that the incidence of MS both in Lebanon and the region appears to be more like the northern European rate than what would be expected for the latitude of this area. Last year we had an MS symposium, and people from Kuwait reported that they think the rates are increasing. I don’t know if this is a real increase in incidence or the result of better diagnosis, but the rates are quite high in Saudi Arabia and in Kuwait. Iran too has published a lot on MS.”

A recent paper published by Yamout based on clinical trials and comparing the demographics of local patients suffering from MS to patients in the United States found the same percentage of patients, number of females, and age at onset in both populations.

MS develops in the form of intermittent attacks normally referred to as exacerbations or relapses. “If we treat early and aggressively with appropriate medication we hope to prevent progression,” Khoury explains. “In my other MS center in the United States we studied 1,700 patients in a longitudinal study. We looked at the rate of progression compared to previous data and found that when patients are treated, we are able to shift the curve in the beginning, but as the disease progresses they don’t recover quite as well. Within 20 years the disease becomes progressive, meaning that patients slowly accumulate neurologic deficits without having attacks anymore so they just get worse.”

• Seventy percent of MS risk comes from the environment such as exposure to different viruses at different times. The immune system responds and shapes itself in different ways, so different exposures at different stages may shape the immune system in such a way that it may predispose an individual to react to self antigens.
• No specific viruses cause MS; however one virus, EBV (Epstein-Barr Virus), has been linked to MS. This is the same virus that leads to mononucleosis and, depending on whether you get the infection in childhood or adolescence, it can affect the risk for MS. So while EBV itself is not a cause of MS, it can contribute to the risk.
• Another environmental factor that scientists think can contribute to MS is low Vitamin D level. There is a lot of information in animal models showing that low Vitamin D is deleterious and high Vitamin D can cure induced disease in mice. In MS there is a linkage between geographic areas of high incidence and the lack of sunlight. So the northern hemisphere, especially northern Europe, is an area of high risk, while closer to the equator, the risk is lower. However, there may also be a link to viruses and to the genes of northern European people as well.
• The first signs of MS differ. Although any neurological symptom can indicate onset of MS, the most common symptoms are blurry vision in one eye, numbness, weakness, and instability.
• MS patients have multiple lesions in different areas of the brain and spinal cord so depending on the location of the lesions, the symptoms are different for different people.
• The disease never goes away, so treatment is ongoing. A small percentage of patients have a benign form of the disease, which means that they do not accumulate disability over time. The problem is that patients with benign disease cannot be identified ahead of time. It is only after they have had the disease for 10-20 years that we can identify them.
• No standard rate of progression exists for MS, but in 80 percent of patients the disease starts with the relapsing remitting form, which means that they have attacks or episodes of neurologic symptoms. Some people totally recover in the beginning, but as the disease progresses they don’t recover quite as well. Within 20 years the disease becomes progressive, meaning that patients slowly accumulate neurologic deficits without having attacks anymore so they just get worse.
• Fifteen to twenty percent of MS patients have a primary progressive form of MS so they don’t have attacks. They just progress from the beginning. Those with primary progressive disease tend to have disease of the spinal cord; they have weakness in one leg that gets worse, and then it involves the other leg in a slow progression.
• About 50 percent of patients suffer from depression. The way the disease affects the neurotransmitters makes depression worse, and some of the medications like Interferon can worsen or induce depression.
• In general MS does not shorten lifespan. There is a seven-year difference in lifespan compared to controls, but those patients with very advanced disease may die as the result of infections.

—M.A.
to the right and so we are really able to prolong the period in which they live without progression.’’

The problem is that treatment is expensive and until recently was difficult to come by. As a result of intensive research, more medications have become available in recent years with six approved treatments now on the market and several more on the way. One, Copaxone, is not available in Lebanon. There are three types of Interferon, a drug called Tysabri given intravenously by infusion, and an oral medication called Gilenya that is brand new but costs $3,600 per month. In Lebanon Interferon treatment is the most common and costs $1,000 per month. The Ministry of Health covers MS patients without insurance for Interferon and sometimes covers Tysabri.

‘‘A lot of our research now is focused on biomarkers to try to figure out how benign patients are different from malignant ones (see box) and how to predict [the different] responses to treatment,’’ Khoury explains.

‘‘It would be good to have a biomarker that could tell us whether the disease is active or under control without having to do an MRI every time. For 20 years I have been taking blood samples from MS patients and looking at different immune functions to see if they differ. We have actually found that one of those, interleukin 12, is elevated in patients with active disease and that it correlates with enhancing lesions found on MRI.’’

Other new methodologies such as proteomics (study of protein structures and functions) and looking at gene arrays now allow researchers to carry out more effective ways of screening for biomarkers. Data analysis has also improved tremendously in the last few years.

The AUBMC MS Center only recently opened its doors and is still not fully operational. A dedicated lab research space has just been secured. In January another physician joined the clinical team that includes nurses, a pharmacist, a practice manager/research person, a psychologist for support groups, and physical therapy advice and facilities. ‘‘Because the brain is plastic and can be reorganized, we use physical therapy to reeducate the nervous system so you reduce the deficit following an attack,’’ Khoury explains. ‘‘We also use standardized measures to quantify progression, including measuring the time it takes to walk eight meters, which allows us to calculate the ambulation index. We test hand function serially with a Nine Hole Peg Test and we test cognition, so we measure regularly to make sure every aspect of our patients is properly assessed.’’

—M.A.

**FHS**

**Transforming Lives**

FHS Dean Iman Nuwayhid’s enthusiasm barometer is at an all time high these days following the excellent news that FHS has received a $9 million scholarship award—the largest in its history—from the prestigious MasterCard Foundation Youth Learning Program, a youth focused research project studying the current political transformations in the Arab world. This panel of scholars from varying disciplines examined how best to describe and understand this extraordinary period in Arab history, which has been branded with many terms.

**A Generation on the Move: Insights into Conditions, Aspirations and Activism of Arab Youth**

AUB-IFI and the UNICEF Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa launched their collaborative report shedding light on the changing issues facing the region’s young men and women.

**The Economics of Food Security in Lebanon**

As a prelude to the establishment of food security programs at FAFS, the faculty invited SOAS professor Jane Harrigan, a political economist and consultant to the World Bank and FAO, to present a lecture on the economics of food security in Lebanon.
will be awarded in batches of 15 per year over the next four years. A careful selection and orientation process will ensure that the students (some of whom may not have ever visited Beirut) will make a smooth transition and adjustment to life at AUB. Nuwayhid stresses that this will be a learning curve for everyone, including FHS, which will appoint personnel dedicated to liaising with the students and their communities in order to better initiate them into their new lives. “This is not merely financial aid,” Nuwayhid stresses, “It is a whole socio-cultural educational experiment which is part of our mission and what we have always advocated. It will include family support, community work in the summer, possible adjustments to our curriculum and a research component to monitor and evaluate the program over the next four years. We believe this will not only be transformational for students, but also for us as a faculty to be able to better serve the needs of the whole population of students and through a relevant educational experience, promote health of all communities in Lebanon.

OSB Legacy of Trust
At the launch of AUB’s corporate governance program in 2005, OSB Dean George Najjar declared that “corporate governance is simply at the heart of business leadership.” With the recent inauguration of the Rami Makhzoumi Chair in Corporate Governance at OSB, AUB took a major step forward to increase its capacity in this important area.

The chair is endowed by Fouad Makhzoumi and his wife May Naamani (Pharm ’75 and a longtime member of AUB’s President’s Club) in memory of their son, Rami Makhzoumi, who passed away in April 2011 at the age of 33. As an entrepreneur in the business world, Rami was known for maintaining the highest ethical standards, stressing accountability and governance in his work. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Fouad Makhzoumi said, “Rami flourished with responsibility, bringing passion, vision, ambition, and great humanity to his administration.”

Executive chairman and chief executive officer of Future Pipe Industries Group (FPI), a conglomerate with specialized subsidiaries throughout the world, Fouad Makhzoumi has been an active donor to AUB since 1988. Founder of two charitable and humanitarian foundations, the Future Millennium Foundation in the United States and the Makhzoumi Foundation in Lebanon, he is a firm believer...
in free education for all. Makhzoumi explained that he was “immediately taken by the idea of setting up a chair in corporate governance” and expressed his “trust that this chair will serve to promote and develop Rami’s beliefs” and “his principles of listening, selflessness, and clarity of goals.” In addition to promoting best ethical practices, the chair will also supervise the publication of a book commemorating Rami Makhzoumi’s vision.

Once they had decided that they wanted to establish a chair devoted to promoting transparency, disclosure, and accountability in Rami’s name, the couple was in no doubt that AUB was, in Fouad Makhzoumi’s words, “certainly the most appropriate house to welcome the chair.”

—S.J.S.

Measuring Confidence

Byblos Bank and the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business have launched Lebanon’s first comprehensive consumer confidence index. It provides invaluable information for economic and business researchers, policymakers, and local and international analysts about an especially important component of the Lebanese economy: household consumption, which accounts for almost 80 percent of the country’s Gross Domestic Product. The Consumer Confidence Index measures the sentiments and expectations of Lebanese consumers concerning both the national economy and their own financial situations. Calculated monthly, the index is based on face-to-face interviews with a representative sample of 1,200 adult men and women living throughout Lebanon.

OSB Assistant Professor Philippe Zheib, PhD, who has been involved with the project for many years, notes that the index confirms certain expectations demonstrating, for example, that consumer confidence in Lebanon is significantly affected by political events: The Doha Agreement in May 2008 had the greatest impact on consumer confidence between July 2007 and September 2011. The index also reveals some surprises. It turns out, for example, that while there is no difference between males and females, consumers aged 21 to 39 years have a higher level of confidence than those in the older age bracket.

Evolution of Consumer Confidence
These are just a few of the photos featured at the Nature Captured exhibition in 2011. As part of the Nature Captured initiative, sixty boys and girls under the age of 17 were trained to take photographs, write testimonies, and share their views on how nature manifests itself in their lives. The workshops taught the children valuable digital media skills as well as unconventional ways of expressing themselves. For most of them, this was the first opportunity ever to present their lives and concerns to the outside world. The Nature Captured workshops and exhibition resulted from the coalition of AUB-IBSAR, the Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures at AUB, and the Coca-Cola Foundation. Proceeds from the sale of the photographs will enable the Nature Captured team to buy cameras for Lebanese youth. Contact the Ibsar administrator at 961-1-374 374 or through www.ibsar.org.
Inside the Gate
views from campus

www.aub.edu.lb/maingate | MainGate Winter 2012
Nametag: Wassim Itani, PhD, Electrical and Computer Engineering, projected 2012

Life before PhD: Before joining the PhD program in the ECE (Electrical and Computer Engineering) Department, I worked as a partner systems engineer for EMC2 in Dubai and Riyadh where I gained invaluable technical experience.

What matters most: Although cloud computing offers significant advantages in terms of flexible data storage and processing, there are security and privacy challenges that discourage its use. My research in security protocols will hopefully encourage the adoption of cloud computing in areas in which privacy is particularly important such as finance, government, health care, and even military applications.

Research: Under the supervision of Professors Ayman Kayssi and Ali Chehab, I am designing and implementing a set of security protocols for ensuring the privacy, integrity, and legal compliance of customer data in cloud computing architectures. These “PasS” (Privacy as a Service) protocols allow for the secure storage and processing of users’ confidential data by leveraging the tamper-proof capabilities of cryptographic coprocessors. The goal is to provide users with maximum control to manage the various aspects related to the privacy of sensitive data by implementing user-configurable software protection and data privacy mechanisms.

10 am Tuesday, 10 am Saturday: On Tuesdays at 10 am, I am at the Bechtel Engineering Building probably discussing ideas with colleagues, sketching a new protocol design, running a computer experiment, or working on a research paper. On Saturday morning I enjoy singing and playing music with the boys at home or visiting some of the interesting outdoor places that we are blessed to have in Lebanon.

Most admires: I have always been enthusiastic about mathematics (the queen of sciences) and its pioneers. I am greatly fascinated by the work of Al-Khawarizmi, who paved the way for modern algebra and algorithms; Fermat and Euler for their great contributions in number theory; and Galois, who invented the most influential theory in abstract algebra before he died at the age of 20. These great figures share an absolute fondness for science and eagerness to serve humanity.

Why this topic interests me: I find working on a timely solution for a real world problem that enhances the privacy of millions of people around the globe meaningful and challenging.
Arabized Musical Notation (AUB Press, 2011) by Shafik Jeha

Arabized Musical Notation relates the story of how Professor Edwin Lewis, one of the founding faculty members of the Syrian Protestant College where he was a professor of chemistry and geology for 13 years (1870-82), modified the system of western musical notation to fit Arabic music (and, more specifically, church music). In this volume, Shafik Jeha explores technical issues, such as how musical notation was adapted to correspond with the right-to-left direction of Arabic musical texts, and also the reaction of Arab composers to the introduction of this revised method of notation. The book was awarded third place in the book design competition at the 2011 Beirut Arab International Book Fair.


This edited volume illuminates some of the important aspects of the relationship between poetry and history, which is a topic that has received relatively little attention—until now. It includes contributions from scholars in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Lebanon and pays special attention to the work of renowned Palestinian poet Mahmud Darwish. The papers were originally presented and discussed at an international conference at AUB in January 2008 sponsored by the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES) and the Department of Arabic and Near Eastern Languages.

Did TV networks overdo it by airing bloody scenes of Qaddafi’s death?

Asharq Al-Awsat’s October 27 headline said it all. “While one cannot dispute the news value and vital role the pictures played in documenting this historic event, questions are being raised about whether the media exceeded ethical standards by endlessly broadcasting ‘horrendous scenes of a bloodied (former Libyan leader Muammar) Qaddafi at the hands of rebels last week’.”

Ethicists often raise these questions when media cover wars, conflicts, or scenes of bloody battles. How can the media be ethical under pressure of deadlines, and when they’re unable to deploy their news teams in conflict zones, as has been the case in Syria? How can one verify the authenticity of pictures and video clips sent to news organizations or posted on-line?

Panelist Hoda Abdel-Hamid, a roving correspondent for Al Jazeera’s English TV channel told me how difficult it was to authenticate information from pro- and anti-Qaddafi sources. Misleading claims couldn’t be ignored by reporters whose job it was to provide the proper context and frame the issues in a way that helped the audience understand the story.

The Egyptian revolution that began on January 25, 2011 has also tested media ethics. For example, state-run TV chose to broadcast misleading coverage of unfolding events by airing footage of peaceful streets when chaos ruled. That decision led then Nile TV reporter Shahira Amin to resign when her bosses asked her to distort the facts.

For Philippe Massonet, global news director at Agence France-Presse, there have been many occasions when he has been reminded of that old adage that “truth is often the first casualty of war.” Massonet admitted it was difficult to get the truth from warring factions on many fronts in the Middle East/North Africa region. “For a journalist, there’s a simple first principle: trust your own eyes.”
Several months ago, under the auspices and leadership of Provost Ahmad Dallal (see article on page 31), the Issam Fares Institute initiated an AUB-wide effort to research the full dimensions and ongoing consequences of the Arab citizen revolts that erupted across the region in December 2010. We knew that our biggest challenge was also our unique comparative advantage: how to match the multidisciplinary talents of dozens of research professors across AUB’s faculties with the continuously unfolding events in Arab countries where three regimes had been toppled, a few others were being challenged on the streets, and others yet were trying to preemptively hold off the reform demands of millions of angry citizens?

It was clear from the first weeks of the Arab citizen revolts in Tunisia and Egypt that we were witnessing much more than merely the overthrow of long-serving dictators. The changes underway across the region included new forms of activism and empowerment by ordinary citizens, new forms of political mobilization, a total collapse of old barriers of fear and intimidation, and a wide range of demands for structural changes in how countries were governed. Men and women across the region made clear their demands for their citizen rights, real constitutional reforms, and greater social justice. It was clear also from the varied vocabulary that people used to describe the unfolding events that we lacked a consensus on what was actually happening. Was this a revolution? An Arab spring? A revolt or rebellion? A more broad Arab awakening? An uprising or intifada? Or perhaps a combination of all of these?

Over a year later, we can look back with a bit more clarity on the events that were unleashed on December 17, 2010 when Mohammad Bouazizi in the provincial Tunisian town of Sidi Bouzid to protest his mistreatment by local police and officials. The lone, desperate, and ultimately fatal protest of one 24-year-old young man initiated the greatest transnational sequence of upheavals in the modern Arab world. It now seems that he did this for one important reason that helps us to grasp the varied, continuing scenes of protest and change across the region: The feelings of vulnerability and humiliation that Bouazizi experienced were, and continue to be, widely shared by several hundred million other Arabs in most of the region’s 22 countries.

At the heart of the AUB research initiative is the attempt to identify the many separate elements of this powerful sense of vulnerability and humiliation and to understand how those elements interacted to spark the sort of mass public political action we have witnessed recently. This is why IFI’s research project includes political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, educators, economists, health and medical experts, and agriculturalists. A key lesson we have learned to date is that it is wrong to simplistically claim that people are rebelling because of a single issue such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, or lack of democracy.

When Bouazizi could no longer absorb the mistreatment he received at the hands of two local representatives of his government, he reacted with a forceful yet fatal gesture that was both protest and self-assertion. Bouazizi reacted harshly to his predicament because within the span of just two hours on that mid-December day, he experienced the near-total lack of rights and respect that many Arab men and women feel is their condition vis-à-vis their state authorities or the ruling elites in their societies. First the police overturned his
vegetable cart and confiscated his scale and produce, and then the governor’s office refused to hear his complaints about the police’s actions. The Tunisian state’s message to its citizen-son was clear and emphatic: You have no rights, especially no right to a redress of grievance.

Recalling this aspect of Mohammad Bouazizi’s tragic life and death helps us understand the events of the past year and also clarifies why citizens continue to revolt and challenge their governments in several Arab countries. Even when they know that they are likely to die—as thousands have died and continue to die in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Syria, Bahrain, and Yemen—men and women go out into the street to march, shout defiant slogans, and sing protest songs. They do this because the prospect of continuing to live as citizens without rights or respect is no longer bearable for them.

Even the countries in transition from authoritarian to democratic systems, like Egypt, Yemen, and Tunisia, still show deep-rooted strains of the state’s abuse of its power to mistreat its citizens. For example, over 10,000 Egyptian civilians have been hauled into military courts in the past year in a massive show of disrespect for citizen rights that even tops some of the abuses of the Mubarak government. Not surprisingly, Egyptians and other Arabs continue to take to the streets to protest and challenge the way that power is exercised in their country, while also expressing themselves through the series of elections and referenda that are part of the transition process to more democratic and accountable governance systems.

This highlights the key lessons of the past extraordinary year in Arab history: The sentiments of individual, ordinary men and women matter. They can be translated into collective action in some circumstances. That action can lead to political change that includes new democratic governance systems. The process is by nature messy, erratic in its advances and regressions, slow, and ideologically effervescent with many different forces playing a role in public life, from Islamists and Salafists and armed forces and liberals. The most important element in this epic process of building stable societies and decent nations that are well governed is, in the end, the individual citizen, who often endures abuse for decades on end, but one day can endure no more and stands up to assert the right to life, dignity, and liberty.

As political conditions start to change across the Arab region, they do so inconsistently, causing observers in the region and abroad to feel much perplexity about what is actually going on and what is actually changing. Such perplexity is natural when one day’s sense of imminent democratic transformation suddenly changes the following day into a relapse into military-dominated rule; when the specter of secular politics fights for space in the public arena with powerful Islamist movements; when the promise of national identity and unity is perpetually challenged by the powerful pull of narrower sectarian and ethnic identities; or when young men and women activists lead the street demonstrations that topple dictators, but secure no meaningful role in the elected parliaments that follow.

Many other such dichotomies define much of what is going on throughout the region, causing many to feel pessimistic about the future. I view these events instead as indicating that hundreds of millions of once passive Arabs have discarded their docility and re-entered the realm of normal national life, and, most importantly, of defining their own history. As citizens express themselves in public and engage in political contestation, they shape their national values and policies. They rediscover both their worth and capabilities as human beings and their sense of hope for a better future that they can help shape.

In fact, we are witnessing at one level the resumption of history in a region where history-as-the-handiwork-of-citizenship was essentially frozen across the Arab region from the mid-1940s until December 18, 2010 in rural Tunisia. We do not know how things will evolve or where political systems will settle, but we do know that whatever happens will be the result of a new dynamic in which millions of citizens engage each other to shape

We lacked a consensus on what was actually happening. Was this a revolution? An Arab spring? A revolt or rebellion? A more broad Arab awakening? An uprising or intifada?
the new political order. That new order might look disappointingly like the old order in some countries, but even so it will have been the consequence of a contested public sphere—and once contested, it will remain accessible for future political engagement and change. We are unlikely henceforth to experience presidents-for-life and frozen national development in Arab countries.

This also reflects the birth of politics-by-citizens across much of the Arab world. Men and women from all quarters of society now speak their mind in public, fearlessly challenge authority or opposing groups, and engage in multiple arenas to capture their share of political power. This happens on the street (peacefully or violently), in the mass media, through digital social media, in elections, throughout neighborhoods, and in backroom deals. What we have recently witnessed in Tunisia is the best case scenario: A transitional government held credible elections that elected a transitional parliament and spawned a coalition government and an elected president that will collectively define a new permanent constitution.

Just as Tunisia triggered the current wave of Arab citizen revolts, so does this country also point the way to the future to which most Arabs aspire. Following the first free election after the overthrow of the former dictatorship, the Islamist Ennahda Party that won 40 percent of the seats announced it would form a coalition government with one of the secular progressive parties. Rashid Ghannouchi, the long exiled leader of the party, sounded like Thomas Jefferson when he declared: “We will continue this revolution to realize its aims of a Tunisia that is free, independent, developing, and prosperous in which the rights of God, the Prophet, women, men, the religious, and the non-religious are assured because Tunisia is for everyone.”

Weeks later, the newly elected Tunisian president, former dissident Moncef Marzouki, said that, “I have the great honor of becoming the first president of the first free republic of the Arab world.”

These clear messages from among the Arab world’s leading Islamists and secular leftists set in motion one of the critical elements that should shape the new Arab political cultures that are being born month by month: pluralistic and accountable electoral democracy that is open to all and reflects the principle of the consent of the governed.

Such dramatic change will not happen in every Arab country, but the pressures for reform and greater political rights and accountability of power are evident across the entire Arab world, even in the conservative monarchies. Some, like Bahrain, have clamped down hard on demonstrators, while others, like Jordan and Morocco, have provided limited political space for reform—forced to respond to their own citizens who have lost their fear and have demanded substantive constitutional reforms. Two striking developments in this respect are evident in Jordan. The first has been the public demand that the intelligence department stop meddling in everyday citizen affairs including the media, education, parliament, and other fields. The second is the public call on the monarch himself to clarify land registrations that opposition figures claim reflect corrupt practices. For the public in Jordan to speak out about the monarchy’s and the intelligence department’s actions is a stark reminder that something powerful is changing across the Arab world as ordinary men and women demand to live in societies governed by more transparency, accountability, and equity.

It is difficult to say very much with certainty about where the Arab world is heading, but as new political and governance rules are taking root in some Arab countries, probably the most heartening aspect of this process is that the new rules are more often being written or guided by the citizens.

—Rami G. Khouri

The author is director of the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut and a widely published syndicated columnist and author.
Road Map to Revolution

The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI) in partnership with the Office of the Provost launched its multi-year Arab “Uprisings” research project with a panel discussion entitled “Understanding the Arab… Spring? Uprising? Revolution? Awakening? Citizen Revolt?” As the title suggests, the panel was charged with triggering ideas, suggesting ways to define this dynamic process and to help identify the preliminary critical characteristics of this historic transformation.

Panel Participants

Rabab Al-Mahdi, assistant professor of political science at the American University in Cairo (AUC), Egyptian activist, and the coeditor of Egypt: The Moment of Change

Rami Khouri, director of the IFI, editor-at-large of the Daily Star newspaper, and internationally syndicated political columnist and author

Fawwaz Traboulsi, AUB lecturer, writer, historian, and author of A History of Modern Lebanon

Tarek Mitri, IFI senior research fellow and former Lebanese minister of culture and minister of information
Inaugurated by Provost Ahmad Dallal, who said it was both “an opportunity and an obligation” on the part of AUB to initiate such a program, the panel was chaired by IFI Director Rami Khouri, who invited the members “to examine the nature and significance of the Arab revolution in order to help frame IFI’s next set of activities concerning the topic.” The panel not only raised many questions and put forward suggestions; it also challenged certain myths that have already sprung up around the nature and form of the uprisings. Highlights follow.

The need to re-examine the term “Arab Awakening” described by Al-Mahdi as insulting. It suggests that the region has been in a collective coma and has only suddenly discovered human dignity and democracy. Instead more attention should be given to precedents including the waves of mobilization among Arab populations in recent years as evidenced by people taking to the streets during the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, against the second Iraq war in 2003, against the 2006 Lebanon war, against the 2008 war perpetrated on Gaza, and in the form of various recent labor protests demanding workers’ rights across the region.

The need to challenge the glib use of terms like Arab Spring, Jasmine Revolution, Arab Autumn and Winter which are all careless, short hand references that fail to place these momentous movements in their proper and historical contexts alongside other significant uprisings including the 1848 European Revolutions and the Prague Spring. Current trends in the region are underestimated and caricatures are insulting.

The need to confront the Time Magazine version of events promoting the influence of Facebook and Twitter revolutionaries while disregarding the crucial role played by the rural and urban poor in capturing and controlling the physical spaces that accommodate the theater of rebellion. Not enough recognition has been given to the courageous role played by those who held the line on multiple fronts and in various locations, including, for example, in Suez and Alexandria in Egypt, and continue to do so in the face of brute force, violence, and extreme danger.
Forensic examination of the slogans—The People Want to Overthrow the Regime and Work, Freedom, Bread—to reach a true understanding of the forces that have coalesced to drive this rebellion and reflect the situation in the region today: the world’s highest percentage of young people and of youth unemployment, flawed economic policies, the failure of the state, corruption, repression, denial of dignity, and collective and individual humiliation, and by extension what happens if and when regimes are vanquished.

Whose democracy is it anyway? A critical examination of the nature and context of an Arab democratic process that extends far beyond procedural democracy and elections. What are the broader demands and how can they be achieved? What are the triggers for, the barriers to, and the realities of an Arab democratic state? Where does commonality lie and how do differences emerge?

The battle has only just started: the dictators may have gone but in many ways the situation remains unchanged. Let’s not be fooled by the narratives being propagated in the media. The forces of repression and the interests of overseas actors are still very much in the frame. A revolution does not take place in one year—or three. It requires long-term commitment, along with the means and the strategies to prolong it. History is littered with examples of movements that ran out of steam. The danger lies with the forces of repression trying to diffuse the potency of what has been achieved by suggesting that post elections it is time to “get back to normal” when it is “the normal” that triggered the force for change.

The nature of the state. Abandon the refrain ma fi dawli (there is no state) and critically examine the current realities of the state in its various incarnations—hereditary monarchy, hereditary secular regime, etc—to understand the nature of the existing Arab state: how to confront it and how to improve it. Drop the slogans and start plotting the road map to democracy. Democracy has been preached for long enough. Now we have to develop it for ourselves by understanding its meaning and how to apply it in our context. What does the reconstruction of the Arab state mean and how do we achieve it?

Islam versus the rest—bogeymen or revolutionaries? Smart operators or legitimate actors? It is time to thoroughly address, put into context, deconstruct, and challenge the myths and realities behind political Islam. Confront the fatuous bikini versus hijab debate and throw down the gauntlet to Islamic parties and require that they deliver realistic policy outlines and socio-economic programs. Stop making Islam the bogeyman and start to pursue constructive debate on a realistic level.

External Realities—the international and regional “lines in the sand” that include the “no go” zones: the “Oil Zone” and the “Israeli Security Zone” remain inviolable. Confront attempts to impose the status quo ante through various means including, for example, ongoing support for the Egyptian army and the prevailing ambiguity as to how to deal with Bashar Al Assad and Ali Abdullah Saleh.
“One could describe it as oxymoronic,” says Rami Zurayk. “We are called the Fertile Crescent—where agriculture evolved—and at the same time we are among the world’s largest food importers. This paradox is difficult to understand.”

Professor of landscape design and ecosystem management, civil society activist, blog supremo, and passionate campaigner for a better deal for the small farmer, Zurayk sees a clear link between the Arab Spring and food security. His latest book, *Food, Farming and Freedom: Sowing the Arab Spring*, encapsulates his thoughts on the subject. Zurayk draws a direct line between the demise of agriculture in the Middle East and Tahrir Square. “Don’t forget,” he points out, “that the Tunisian revolt began in Sidi Bouzid, a rural town, and what filled Tahrir Square were hundreds of thousands of people displaced from the land.”

According to Zurayk’s analysis, food insecurity arises from myriad causes, among them structural problems related to ecology, population growth, drought, and changes in diet. Combine these with the way the global food regime favors large-scale trade and regional specialization over local production and add the fact that four huge companies control 80 percent of the trade in essential commodities, and you get a sense of the scale of the problem. Consider also that large surpluses from subsidized farming flood local markets and are sold at a lower cost than locally produced food and the extent of the problem becomes even clearer.

Another set of considerations, Zurayk says, arises from the fact that Arab countries have not invested wisely in agriculture, and neither their policies nor political frameworks are conducive to the sort of food democracy from which the rural population can derive empowerment and maximize food production. “We are not talking about closing ourselves in here and everyone having a beehive on his balcony,” he says, “but because of policies in the region the real potential for farming has not been developed.”

Zurayk attributes this failure to develop appropriate policies partly to ignorance and partly to politicians’ penchant for a “rent” economy, which applies particularly to the real estate boom in Lebanon. Regionally, the situation is more often exacerbated by the oil “curse,” the easy oil income that discourages investment in the productive sector.

A third set of constraints arises overseas. “We are under political pressure from the winning side of the

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**Look to the Land**

How do we overcome the structural challenges of drought, productivity, ecological limitations, population, and diet change? How do we confront and overcome the ills created by an over globalized food regime?
Cold War, i.e. the economic policies of the Washington consensus,” Zurayk explains. “Their neo-liberal policies combined with structural adjustment factors brought about neglect of the local agrarian sector while strengthening the global food regime. When you are told that you cannot produce enough to compete with global markets and that you need more technology and to specialize in perishables, that becomes a policy. Such policies were taken on by the politicians who in the best case scenario are ignorant and, more plausibly, are here to plunder the countries they rule in order to accumulate their own wealth.”

Faced with this situation Zurayk is calling for more and better research. “How do we overcome the structural challenges of drought, productivity, ecological limitations, population, and diet change? How do we confront and overcome the ills created by an over globalized food regime? I am stressing this because it is the essence of what AUB does.

“In this region, you find countries that are in the top ten in the world for unequal land distribution. Here 50 percent of agricultural land is owned by 10 percent of farmers and the remaining 50 percent is shared by 90 percent. Research shows that if farmers own the land and have secure tenure then they improve production. And we know for sure that small farmers produce 80 percent of the food consumed in the world, while agricultural policies tend to favor global trade and corporate production over these small farmers. But when land is sold off for urban expansion it is the poor who sell first, thus becoming landless poor. Can anyone tell me what you say to a hundred million displaced farmers?

“We need to find a way forward from here and preferably through an Arab integrated plan whereby for example—money from oil surplus would support small farmers in Sudan,” Zurayk continues. “We are not advocating a return to the roots but a return of the land to those who can work it. And here the role of institutions such as AUB is tremendous in studying policies that effectively use people and science to strengthen the agrarian space and improve sustainability while maximizing/optimizing production and creating better local employment opportunities. As long as we are still in crisis management mode we cannot go forward. People need to reach their potential not just to survive but to evolve to attain freedom.”

—M.A.
Is it finally time to get serious about women’s rights?

While it may be “springtime” in the Arab world, increasingly a matter for debate, the seasons march relentlessly on in Lebanon. Here the most seasoned women activists know from experience that meaningful change seems to emerge “suddenly” only after years of dedicated struggle and painstakingly developed relationships.

Many of the same women who played prominent roles in the still very transitional movements that toppled heads of state across the region in 2011 have been pushing for progress for decades, and their mothers and their mothers’ mothers before them, despite only fleeting recognition from newspapers and history books. In a sharp deviation from the Arab Spring, however, Lebanon’s female activists want to build the state up, not tear it down.

Although they won the vote in 1952, Lebanese women are still subject to a myriad of discriminatory practices. The appearance of freedom (mini-skirts everywhere) obscures more nuanced realities in a country with 18 officially recognized religious sects and 15 separate court systems that rule on personal and family law issues.
“Whereas Lebanon and the Lebanese try to promote themselves as open-minded and not as repressive of women, the reality is that the society, in general, does not respect and value women as equal citizens,” says Zeina Zaatari, PhD (BA ’94), a Lebanese activist and the regional director for the Middle East and North Africa at the San Francisco-based Global Fund for Women (www.globalfundforwomen.org).

Zaatari investigated the topic for Freedom House in 2005 and reported that Lebanese women, for instance, cannot pass their nationality to their children or to their foreign-born husbands; whether Muslim or Christian, they struggle to divorce and often cannot manage it at all; and they can go to prison for electing to have an abortion. The circumstances confronting women who are Palestinian or refugees of other nationalities and foreign domestic workers are even more dismal.

The bright lights of so-called revolutions in neighboring countries have not done much to remedy, or even illuminate, these trenchant inequalities, but anticipation of a ripple effect endures—whether for good or ill.

Turmoil in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain has thrust the issue of women’s rights into the spotlight, albeit a secondary one and only belatedly, but revolutionary women in Lebanon—only some of whom are Lebanese—labor in the background. They are activists and academics, attorneys and donors, poets and politicians, and NGO founders and members of feminist collectives.

They are working locally and globally, organizing conferences to strengthen the ties binding feminists around the world, funding economic and social initiatives for rural women, encouraging young women to pursue work in traditionally male fields, creating safe spaces for discussion and reflection, taking to the streets (on occasion), and refusing to take “no” for an answer from parliament.

Even those women who share common vocabulary when it comes to “rights,” “freedoms,” and “democracy”—i.e., not “Islamic feminists,” another story entirely—do not speak with one voice. Their observations may sound pessimistic, even embattled, but their attitudes are decidedly hopeful if only because they share the conviction, at times their only consolation, that—in the words of veteran Iranian activist Mahnaz Afkhami—they are on “the right side of history.”

The lessons of history, particularly, preoccupy Afkhami and her friend and colleague Lina Abou Habib (MPH ’85), a longtime Lebanese activist and founder and executive director of the Beirut-based Collective for Research and Training on Development—Action (CRTD-A).

Afkhami, former secretary general of the Women’s Organization of Iran prior to the 1979 revolution, and Abou Habib need only point to the current circumstances of women in Iran, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia to illustrate their reasons for skepticism. Is the Arab Spring something new? Or is it nothing more than a mirage that will ultimately dissolve to reveal yet more incarnations of what for Afkhami, in particular, is a depressingly familiar political landscape? She’s lived in exile in the United States for more than 30 years.

“Whereas Lebanon and the Lebanese try to promote themselves as open-minded and not as repressive of women, the reality is that the society, in general, does not respect and value women as equal citizens.”
—Zeina Zaatari (BA ’94)
The debate is significant and intransigent in Lebanon due to the particular nature of the state here and also the political balance of power in the wider region. As designed by the French during the Mandate period at the beginning of the 20th century, Lebanon’s sectarian system invested tremendous power in the religious groups that still claim to represent the interests and will of their respective constituencies.

“The heart of what makes a state a state, which is its capacity to govern on behalf of its citizenry, to legislate, to protect, was already compromised and most particularly it was compromised in the area of family law,” says Suad Joseph, a professor of anthropology, women, and gender studies at the University of California, Davis, and general editor of *The Encyclopedia of Women and Islamic Cultures*.

Family law may be the most resistant to amendment, says Rose Shomali (BA ’68, MA ’85), a Palestinian poet, writer, and activist, while pointing to the glimmer of change in Saudi Arabia. “They didn’t agree to women driving their cars, but they agreed that they can be nominated and elected at the local and national levels [in 2015],” she says. “This shows that it is easier for women to be in the political arena than it is to alter family law.”

Joseph calls Lebanon’s women’s movement one of the most proactive in the region—“in many ways”—but points out that after more than a half century of trying, women have not yet been able to persuade parliamentarians to pass a civil personal status and family law that would apply equally and fairly to all Lebanese women—one that would naturally undermine the influence of religious bodies in society.

Regardless of their political persuasions, Lebanese agree that such a change would be revolutionary, but they now know it will take more than a revolution to accomplish it. The 2005 Cedar Revolution, a precursor to the Arab Spring, melted away after it ended Syria’s military occupation.

Afkhami neatly sums up the obstacles facing non-religious, democratic movements in Lebanon and elsewhere: “[Islamists and other religious authorities] have messages which are simple, clear, and specific and the message has the backing of the holy text. Our side, the feminist side, the democratic side, the human rights side, is splintered into small groups; they haven’t really worked together; they don’t have political parties or well-organized unions.”

Through the Women’s Learning Partnership, the Washington, DC-based organization she founded in 2000 and continues to lead, Afkhami works around the world to “build the spaces where it’s possible to experience democratic interaction, to discuss, challenge each other, negotiate, build consensus, and to try and come to an agreement, and if they don’t come to agreement, to try to respect the diversity that is there.”

In Lebanon, young women activists have succeeded in carving out similar spaces. Yara Chehayad, a member of the feminist collective Nasawiya, says that the media has been far more receptive to their campaigns and that they have seen evidence of changing mentalities. “People start hearing about us and understanding that there is a huge difference between being a woman and being a feminist—men can also be feminists.”

> “Education is one area in which Lebanese women have made consistent gains. They are among the most literate in the region and have equal access to primary and secondary schools, and even university.”
> —May Rihani (BA ’69)
in AUB’s Computer Science Department, she represented Beirut in parliament, starting in 2000 as one of only 17 women to serve in parliament since the first election of a woman parliamentarian in 1992. “One of the things that I always kept in my head is that I should succeed for the sake of all women so I would be a good example that would encourage everybody to vote for women in the future,” she says.

While in parliament, Jalloul made it a priority to encourage young women to consider careers in information and communication technology. She also created a software program, IKRAA, to assist them in improving both their Arabic language and ICT skills, for which UNESCO gave her a creativity award in 2009.

A general observation made by Mahnaz Afkhami applies here: “We mustn’t forget that for a lot of people to just see the image on television of a female speaking at the podium in parliament gets a little girl to think, ‘I could do that too.’”

In the three years since Jalloul left parliament, however, there is little to indicate that a sea change has occurred. The current parliament has only four female representatives, down from six in 2005 and the 2011 cabinet lacks any women. Feminists are pressing for the imposition of a female quota.

“It should be an honest quota,” Jalloul says. “It shouldn’t be a quota that will push women out, a quota where they put the names of women at the end of the electoral list, and then only the top [men’s] names are approved. Many politicians say, when it comes to women, that Lebanon does not distinguish between its constituents in the constitution, so how can we impose a quota system? It’s against the Lebanese constitution. But when you look at the laws, you see so many things that discriminate against women, and they don’t talk about those things.”

Just a few months ago, women activists suffered a typical setback when parliament failed to pass a bill designed to protect women from domestic abuse and marital rape after the country’s highest Sunni authority decried the bill as an “attack on the family.” Despite the defeat, feminists say they consider the level of intercommunal debate that took place during discussions in parliament as a form of progress.

“It is a lobbying success when you make everybody contribute to the discussion of the law,” says Marie Rose Zalzal, a human rights attorney instrumental in drafting the bill. “The second step is to make it official.”

History has shown Lebanon is vulnerable to trends in neighboring countries so the Arab Spring, or whatever name it ultimately assumes, may yet leave a mark. The role model invoked by both Alkhami and Abou Habib, however, is Morocco, which they consider to be a leader when it comes to women’s rights. Even though the country has thus far not experienced revolution, a major revision of the constitution took place in June 2011, in the shadow of the Arab Spring: International gender-related laws now take precedence over their national equivalent. It is difficult, however, to imagine this watershed moment occurring were it not for the preceding 20 years of incremental progress. “The reform of the family law, followed by the reform of the nationality law, followed by lifting all the reservations on CEDAW [Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women]”— Abou Habib ticks off the achievements. “Morocco has been a magnificent example of reforms pushed by women themselves.”

Afkhami credits the Arab Spring and the direct participation of women on the constitutional council for Morocco’s landmark amendments. “Since they’re all Muslim majority countries, if one of them is able to do one thing, then activists can use that as a precedent. Morocco is much ahead of Egypt, let’s say, without a revolution, but we have to realize also that without the revolution in Egypt, this kind of reform in Morocco would have been impossible. It’s also interaction between the two sets of events that generates this kind of pressure for change.”

Even in the aftermath of regime change, assassination, and war, this renewed faith in the potential for change may be the most revolutionary fruit of the Arab Spring.

—S.M.
Looking beyond the euphoria of the moment requires changes not only to the political structure and individuals—electoral law, constitutions, leaders—but also serious and sustained changes to the countries' educational systems.

Education for Citizenship in the Arab World

Any romantic notions in the West that the 2011 Arab uprisings could create instantaneous democracy in countries that have succeeded at toppling their leaders are already shattering. In the absence of strong political parties and viable civil society structures in most of the Arab world, these uprisings are proving to be only the first step in a process that will not follow a clear path and will take years to unfold. Much trial and error will take place and the region will experience multiple ups and downs before stable political and economic systems take hold. The challenge of replacing both leaders and regimes with ones that follow democratic norms is huge and certainly not automatic. As the Arab world starts this long transformation, a self-evident but often ignored fact is that democracy will thrive only in a culture that accepts diversity, respects different points of view, regards truths as relative rather than absolute, and tolerates—even encourages—dissent. Without this kind of culture, no sustainable system of checks and balances can evolve over time to redistribute power away from the executive. Nor can a mechanism be developed to check abuses by any state institution. As the first phase of the uprisings gives way to nation building after decades of authoritarian rule, people in the Arab world will discover that their societies are not equipped with the skills and values needed to accept different, pluralistic norms of behavior. Looking beyond the euphoria of the moment thus requires changes not only to the political structure and individuals—electoral law, constitutions, leaders—but also serious and sustained changes to the countries' educational systems.

The current education reform efforts in the region heavily focus on such “technical” aspects as building more schools, introducing computers to schools, improving test scores in mathematics and sciences, and bridging the gender gap in education. While necessary and important, the reform’s current emphasis misses a basic human component: Students need to learn at a

*Education for citizenship* encompasses *education about citizenship* and *education through citizenship.* Education about citizenship is simply minimal civics education that provides knowledge and understanding of history and politics. Education through citizenship teaches students through involvement in civic activities inside the school, such as voting for the school council, and outside the school, such as joining an environmental group in the community. Education for citizenship covers the aims of both of these approaches... These values of citizenship are central to the human development approach and underpin the most common national goals of citizenship education in many countries: to develop the capacities of the individual and promote equal opportunity and the value of citizenship.
very early age what it means to be citizens who learn how to think, seek and produce knowledge, question, and innovate rather than be subjects of the state who are taught what to think and how to behave. These attributes are essential if the region is to move away from its traditional reliance on “rents” in the form of oil and outside assistance, and toward the kind of system that empowers its citizens with the requisite skills to build self-generating, prosperous economies and achieve a quality of life that can come through respect for diversity, critical thinking, creativity, and exercising one’s duties and rights as an active citizen.

**Citizenship Education**

**A Key Element of Education Reform**

Education for citizenship plays a key role in education reform by promoting most of the twenty-first-century skills and the European Union’s “key competences for lifelong learning,” namely: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competences, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and cultural awareness and expression. Education for citizenship also contributes to reforming the classroom environment and nurturing a democratic culture in the entire school among students, teachers, and administrators. To apply this approach to citizenship education, administrators and teachers of all subjects should develop their own competence in citizenship skills through in-service and professional development programs. In many parts of the United States, for example, citizenship education programs go beyond teaching about American history, institutions, and the constitution; students are also provided with opportunities to practice such civic skills as problem solving, persuasive writing, collaboration, and consensus building, as well as communicating with public officials about issues of concern. Developing and nurturing these skills requires a teaching and learning approach that emphasizes open discussion and active learning that has been shown to be far more effective than the didactic, lecture-based approach. This effectiveness was confirmed in the two largest-scale international studies, which found that the classroom climate most conducive to high levels of civic knowledge is characterized by openness to discussion of political and social issues.

Furthermore, in a classroom environment that fosters collaboration, creativity, and cultural sensitivity, young people learn to be able to live not only within the confines of their own local community or nation-state, but also in other parts of the world.

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between states, minority rights, popular uprisings, and rapid improvements in information and communication technologies. In the United Kingdom, for example, the issue of how young people can be sufficiently prepared for these challenges is an “urgent consideration” for education policymakers and practitioners. Researchers and activists assert that citizenship education plays an important role in education reform. It “motivates and inspires young people, because it is relevant to their everyday lives and concerns.” By giving students a sense of empowerment to change their society, the impact of citizenship education on learning performance is expected to be significant. Without citizenship education, attempts at education reform will be missing a key twenty-first century competence, namely civic competence, which also contributes to the development of most competences required for lifelong learning.

Young people today need to be both national and global citizens in order to expand their capacity to compete in an interdependent world and a globalized economy. This requires education reform to have specific learning goals and innovative delivery methods and practices, with an explicit component of citizenship education. This component encompasses a set of core learning outcomes, skills, values, and dispositions that can apply to most, if not all, Arab countries. This set should qualify as universal and applicable to various social settings. Each country can add to this core what it deems relevant and useful in its particular case. For example, the notion of multiculturalism is not relevant to all Arab countries and should therefore be avoided as a core concept despite its importance at the global level. Although the contextual factors within each country inevitably affect the curriculum of any particular citizenship education program, by twelfth grade a student in any Arab country should be able to analyze and reflect on his multiple identities; the structure and functions of the national political system and other international systems; legal and moral individual rights and responsibilities; notions of power, privilege, equity, and social justice; diverse belief systems and ideologies; global themes and structures; and national, regional, and global contemporary issues and events. To compete in today’s globalized world, it is crucial for young Arabs to possess a set of core skills that are nurtured, in part, through citizenship education in schools. The capacity to think independently and creatively, communicate effectively, analyze and observe change processes, and respond to challenging situations will separate the winners from the losers in the global competition. Young Arabs need a school that develops and nurtures an interactive, respectful, and culturally sensitive climate in classrooms. In such a climate, ample opportunities are presented for students to get involved in decision making at school and in the community and to engage in national and global issues. Furthermore, a variety of performance assessment strategies should be applied to test these and other problem-solving competencies.

In addition to knowledge, skills, and school climate, citizenship education in Arab countries should aim to develop appropriate social and political values and dispositions, which are important determinants of behavior. Belief in human dignity, individual freedoms and equality, responsibility, and concern for the common good through public service are the type of universal values and dispositions imparted by citizenship education programs and the school climate that promotes such values.

—Marwan Muasher, Muhammad Faour

Marwan Muasher (AUB former student) is vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment, where he oversees the endowment’s research in Washington and Beirut on the Middle East. Muhammad Faour (BS ’77, MA ’79) is a senior associate at the Carnegie Middle East Center, where his research focuses on education reform in Arab countries.

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Edwin Rufus Lewis, who was forced to resign from the Syrian Protestant College in 1882, was once described by a student as “a free man in thought and action” who “did not believe in religious manifestations, although they were among the conditions of the College. He did not mind drinking wine with food nor absenting himself from prayer sometimes.” Many of those associated with the SPC at that time and in later years felt that it was these personal attributes and not the controversial commencement address that Lewis gave in 1882 that antagonized senior college officials and led to his forced resignation.

Like his fellow founding faculty members, Lewis was a man of many talents. Although he spoke no Arabic when he joined SPC, he mastered it quickly and authored books in Arabic on chemistry, geology, and music; he is credited with helping to establish SPC’s geological collection and was a gifted musician. Despite his many talents, it was the commencement address that he gave in 1882—in Arabic—that would earn him everlasting fame at the College.

Entitled “Knowledge, Science and Philosophy,” the address was an exhortation to college graduates to become lifelong learners and to keep up with the many discoveries being made by contemporary scientists such as geologist Charles Lyell, Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur, and Robert Koch. Although there is no indication that Lewis had any intention of being provocative, some faculty members objected to his mention of Darwin. Founding SPC President Daniel Bliss noted in his personal diary that Lewis’s speech was “much out of taste: an apology for Bible Truth and an acceptance as science of unproved theories.” Although the reaction to his speech was strong, reaction to the news that the Board of Trustees had met and accepted Lewis’s resignation on December 1, 1882 was even greater: it prompted four other faculty members to resign and led to student demonstrations on campus. (See “Darwin and the Evolution of AUB,” MainGate, fall 2009.)

Lewis returned to the United States in May 1883. In addition to being a very successful private practitioner in Indianapolis, Lewis also spent four years at Wabash College as a professor of chemistry and mineralogy (1884-88), and six years (1900-06) as an examiner and specialist with the US Pension Bureau in Washington, DC. He died in Indianapolis in 1907.

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1 As quoted in Shaik Jaha, Darwin and the Crisis of 1882 in the Medical Department, American University of Beirut Press, 2004, page 35.
2 She died in Syria on April 11, 1878.
3 It also earned him a mention in Provost Ahmad Dallal’s recent book Islam, Science, and the Challenge of History. Dallal notes that one of the two major contributors to discussions of Darwinism, Shibli Shumayyil, was a student at SPC and that the Darwin scandal “left its marks” on him (page 165).
4 The address, which Lewis gave in Arabic, is sometimes translated as “Knowledge, Science and Wisdom.”
5 Jaha, page 41.
Beyond Bliss Street
alumni profile

Taking the Pulse of the Moment

When he left his native Tunisia to enroll in AUB’s public health master’s program, Zied Mhirsi (MPH ’06) didn’t realize he’d also be receiving an education in revolution. He arrived in Beirut a mere four months after the assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and later joined crowds commemorating the one-year anniversary of the mass demonstrations that ended the Syrian occupation of Lebanon. For Mhirsi, it was a rehearsal of sorts.

“Unlike all of my friends, when those things started happening in Tunisia, I was so comfortable,” he recalls. “And that’s why I had banners, because I learned in Lebanon that when you go to a demonstration, you have to have banners.”

Mhirsi’s emergence from the crowd, however, had less to do with the banner he hoisted (“Yes, We Can”) than his awareness of the pressing need to communicate the revolution’s aims to international media and his ability to contribute—as a public radio broadcaster and an early adherent of new media platforms like blogger (in French) and Twitter (in English), as a doctor specializing in public health, and as a graduate of AUB and former faculty member at the University of Washington. “I speak English as well as I do because of AUB,” he says.

When journalists from all over the world descended on Tunisia to witness the revolution, Mhirsi and his peers in the digital underground were perfectly positioned. For a while, everyone wanted to talk with them—The New York Times, 60 Minutes, CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera English, Australia Channel 9, ETV (South Africa), and many others. “It was very intense, and then after the Egyptian revolution happened and the eyes of the world shifted,” he says, “not a single person was writing about Tunisia and we decided we should write about the revolution ourselves.”

He partnered with two friends to launch Tunisia Live (http://www.tunisia-live.net/), the country’s first English-language news website. “There was no way we could have started Tunisia Live before the revolution because media was censored,” he says. “Ben
Ali would have stopped it right away.”

He would know. Prior to Ben Ali’s downfall, Mhirsi says, the president himself ordered Mhirsi’s show on social media off the air. “Because it aired to a group of people that were living underground on the web,” he speculates. Usually the regime didn’t have to intervene directly, he says. People, himself among them, censored themselves.

The pervasive fear generated by the dictatorship’s mostly invisible presence evaporated, strange as it may seem, when the regime began firing on the crowds with live bullets—“in a country where no one has seen a gun in his whole life, except for maybe the time that somebody fired a hunting gun in 1963,” Mhirsi explains.

Where the new Tunisia is surreal, the old Tunisia, the one he grew up in, clearly remains very real to Mhirsi. When he talks about it, he slips into the present tense. Born in Tunis, he spent his childhood in Nabeul and Bizerte; he returned to the capital to attend high school, and then to train as a doctor.

The son of a small business owner and a French teacher, Mhirsi joined the Tunisian Medical Student Association and other networking organizations that awarded him grants to travel to about 30 countries before he enrolled at AUB on a scholarship. The contrast between his craving for freedom and change and the static nature of life under a dictator couldn’t have been more dramatic.

“I always wanted to travel,” he says. “That’s one of the reasons I’m doing public health; you’re not stuck in a clinic where you see the same patients every day.”

One of his AUB instructors, Jihad Makhoul, now chair of the Department of Health Promotion and Community Health at the Faculty of Health Sciences, commented especially on Mhirsi’s eagerness to learn and self reflect. “He is a very reflective person and was able to look critically at himself and his training,” Makhoul says. “That is not something that medical doctors trained in our part of the world usually engage in.”

Nor do they usually prepare food for their colleagues, says Virginia Gonzales, senior technical specialist and Mhirsi’s colleague at the University of Washington’s International Training and Education Center for Health where he went to work after completing a Fulbright scholarship in epidemiology and health systems. “He’s very engaging and just very nurturing in that way,” she says. “And he would make me a great cup of coffee. . . . I come from a Latin American country; my roots are there and this is the way we take care of people.”

For Mhirsi, taking care of people is a vital part of the revolution. He makes a living as a grant-funded public health consultant, but five days a week, he hosts a public health show on Tunisian radio. Only a minority of his fellow citizens speak English but a majority smoke and suffer from chronic health problems, so he shares frequent tips on how to quit smoking and talks about maternal and child health, reproductive health, HIV, and TB—“most of these issues are ones that we rarely talk about in Tunisia.”

He rehearsed for this role too in Beirut, says Jocelyn Dejong, an associate professor at FHS. “I remember his lively contributions to the course on reproductive health and HIV based on his experience in Tunisia and the region,” she says. “He was very frank about some of the problems he had seen.” Mhirsi himself credits that class and others with giving him the opportunity to practice raising difficult issues in a culturally sensitive way.

On the radio show, Mhirsi says, “I also share experiences and tell them about the rest of the world, because people here don’t travel a lot. They don’t realize that people don’t smoke any more. ‘People who are poorer than you, they don’t smoke; people who are richer than you, they don’t smoke either.’”

He receives emails from radio listeners who tell him that they have drawn enough strength from the show to wait longer until they smoke their first cigarette of the day.

“I explain that if you stop, it’s very likely you’re going to start again, but you need to celebrate every moment.” Every moment of freedom—he might easily have continued—the freedom you never thought was possible.

—S.M.
It’s your Reunion!

June 29–July 1, 2012

Whether you graduated from AUB five years or 50 years ago, it’s time to come back to campus and connect with your classmates and all that you remember about AUB.

For details of all the Reunion celebrations, check out the Reunion 2012 website at

www.aub.edu.lb/alumni/reunion

If you are interested in joining the Reunion Planning Committee and/or helping to locate lost classmates, please get in touch. And keep on the lookout for monthly Reunion 2012 updates in your email inbox.

Questions/further information?
Email: reunion(at)aub.edu.lb
Phone: Beirut :+961-1-738009; New York: 212-583-7662
Samir Makdisi (BA ’53, MA ’55), professor emeritus of economics, is a member of a family long associated with AUB. His father, Anis Makdisi, for whom the Anis Makdisi Program in Literature is named, taught Arabic literature and was chairman of the department for many years, and his son Karim currently teaches in the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration. He has held prominent positions both inside the University (department chairman, deputy president, founding director of the Institute of Money and Banking) and outside, serving as Lebanon’s minister of economy and trade and as a consultant and board member of many regional and international economic and financial organizations. In 1998 he was awarded the AUB medal, and in 2009 he was named distinguished senior fellow at AUB’s Issam Fares Institute.

MainGate: When did you arrive at AUB and what were your first impressions?

Samir Makdisi: I attended IC and at the time graduating students moved automatically from IC into the freshman class at AUB. As my father was then professor of Arabic literature at AUB, attending this University was an expected, natural move.

When you made the transition to AUB, did it live up to your expectations?

On the whole, yes, perhaps because I did well in my studies and perhaps because I was interested in national and regional political issues. AUB was known then for its politically active student body, especially supporters of the Arab and Syrian nationalist as well as Marxist parties.

Where did you complete your graduate studies and what did you do after graduation?

After completing my PhD in economics at Columbia University, my first position was as an assistant professor of economics at AUB. Shortly after I returned to Beirut, however, I was approached by a senior staff member at the International Monetary Fund...
IMF) who was on a recruiting mission in the region. He suggested I consider joining the fund in Washington, DC. When the IMF offer came, I consulted the AUB president at the time, Norman Burns, who happened to be an economist. He advised me to accept the offer and to stay for two years to gain valuable international experience and then return to AUB. The two years turned into ten. After much deliberation my wife Jean and I decided we wanted to raise our children in this country. We returned to Lebanon and AUB in 1972.

**What were your impressions after you returned to AUB?**

The political engagement of the student body had evolved. During my first years at AUB, students had been largely focused on Arab issues; when I returned in 1972, the atmosphere had changed. The students had become much more drawn to Lebanese-specific issues and especially the impact of the Palestinian conflict on the country. Remember, that was just two or three years before the outbreak of the civil war.

**Where did you teach most of your classes?**

When I first joined AUB after Columbia, the Economics Department was located on Clemenceau Street, but when I returned in the 1970s the department had relocated to Ada Dodge Hall, its present premises. Classes were held mostly in Nicely Hall, as they still are.

**What do you think your students would most remember about your classes?**

Well, you’d have to ask them. Many of my former students are still here. I would like to think I have succeeded in engaging and inspiring them in class. I [still] carry out research work with a few of them—and serve with them on research and other committees.

**Strive for what you believe in, whatever the challenges might be.**

Are any of them working with you on your current project, the two-part (two-book) study of democracy and development? Oh, yes. The first book was published last year—Democracy in the Arab World: Explaining the Deficit. We are working on a sequel: “The Transition from Autocracy to Democracy in the Arab World.” Of the 14 researchers engaged in the project, three happen to be former students: two are abroad, Atif Kubursi (McMaster University, Canada) and Raed Safadi (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). The third, Simon Neaime, is at AUB.

**Tell us about some of your experiences at AUB during the war.**

Except for a year at Georgetown University and a short period at the IMF in the 1980s, I was here throughout the war period. AUB suffered in a number of major ways including the tragic assassination of two deans in 1976 and the president, Malcolm Kerr, in January 1984; the voluntary or forced departure of some faculty members; occasional class disruptions; and so on.

However, despite these conditions AUB managed to survive, and, on the whole, remained a relatively safe haven, carrying on its academic programs. To many, if not all faculty members, it was in Lebanon’s national interest that AUB should survive and help sustain the liberal nature of its educational system.

I cannot expand in this short interview on various important events that took place during the war, but I would like to recall two specific events.

First, early on in the war period, the faculty learned that the Board of Trustees was considering “mothballing” the University because of the prevailing war conditions and their financial and other implications. Being greatly concerned, members of the various faculties met and appointed a committee, of which I was a member, to meet with the president of the University to argue against such a move and suggest ways to support the continued functioning of the University. For whatever reason, the BOT’s consideration of “mothballing” did not materialize.

Many faculty members, including me, felt it was part of their national duty, as civilians, not to leave Lebanon despite receiving offers to join institutions abroad. In retrospect, I wonder if this was a correct evaluation of our role. And would we have taken the same decision had we been able to foresee the longevity of the war? Maybe not, but I guess there is no point in retrospective speculation.
The second event is the founding in 1984 of the Institute of Money and Banking, later renamed the Institute of Financial Economics, which I was able to bring about with the financial support of five Lebanese banks and the encouragement of Samir Tabet, then university provost. The MA in money and banking introduced in 1984 was later restructured as an MA in financial economics. The program has since attracted a relatively large number of graduate students and the IFE has been engaged in various research projects.

In 1992 you joined the Lebanese cabinet. Can you tell us something about the circumstances of your appointment?

My appointment came as a surprise to me. In May 1992, I left for Washington, DC to attend a meeting at the World Bank. I learned about the appointment only when my plane landed in DC and I called my late brother-in-law, Mansour Armaly, who had heard of it on the news. I should mention, however, that I had been for many years engaged in public economic policy advising.

What can you tell us of your appointment as deputy president?

Because of the ban on travel to Lebanon imposed on US citizens from 1984 to 1998, the administration in Beirut and the University Senate periodically met with the president, who resided in New York, and members of the Board of Trustees either in Cyprus or Damascus. It was during a meeting in Damascus in January 1993 that I was approached, without any prior warning, by then Trustee David Dodge and President Fred Herter, about my assuming the position of deputy president of AUB, succeeding Ibrahim Salti, who, after a number of years in that position, resigned to return to the Faculty of Medicine. Both men urged me strongly to accept the position effective February 1993. Ultimately I agreed to serve as deputy president, thinking this responsibility would be for one or two years. As it turned out, I remained deputy president for over five years.

Could you say something about changes at AUB between the time you taught after returning from Columbia and today?

Prior to the civil war many of the Lebanese academics trained mostly in the United States wanted to come back to Lebanon, despite offers received elsewhere. Joining AUB meant being at the premier academic institution in their home country, where they planned to reside, and at a time when university tenure, for those who made it, was available.

My impression is that after the war and for a number of reasons, the link between Lebanese academics and their wish to return to AUB has become much weaker. For one thing the world is now much more open, with a more integrated global academic market. For another, the civil war and the unsettled post-war political situation have negatively affected the expectations of many of them regarding the future of the country. In short, it seems to me that the passionate engagement of pre-war academics with Lebanon and AUB generally no longer exists to the same degree.

During your many years at AUB, what were some of the notable changes you witnessed?

Growing diversifications of academic programs, (new institutes, schools, academic activities), intensified contacts with outside institutions and organizations thanks to the communications revolution, and also growing competition from educational institutions at home and in the region. These changes should spur AUB to keep upgrading its academic infrastructure and offerings and improving the quality of its instruction and research.

What impact did AUB have on Lebanon and on your life?

Among others, I would like to point out two things. First, AUB is a place of diversity, at both the student and faculty levels, more so perhaps in the pre-war than in the post-war period. This amounts to cultural enrichment, a widening of one’s horizons.

Secondly, AUB has generally been characterized by a liberal environment, a necessary element of any intellectual endeavor, of the pursuit of one’s academic and research interests, as well as the expression of one’s personal convictions. To AUB’s credit, its liberal education and atmosphere have had an important bearing on the country’s generally tolerant cultural environment despite the emergence in recent years of various non-liberal political groups.

Do you have anything you would like to say to your former students?

Strive for what you believe in, whatever the challenges might be.

—J.M.C.
Chosen to lead initiative to establish a “literary institution” in 1862

The “Prof” who was a member of the Board of Trustees for 40 years

Leading surgeon and designer of campus buildings

Lectured and wrote Arabic textbooks in medicine, astronomy, and chemistry

Developed University Library and Archaeology Museum

How well do you know our founders?

Who’s who? See answers on page 62.
FAFS Chapter | The FAFS Chapter hosted a conference on water resources and irrigation, an agricultural and food industry exhibition, and a gala at the Bristol Hotel. During the dinner the chapter honored Abdul Hamid Hallab, PhD (BS ’56), Anwar M. Battikhi, PhD (BS ’67, MS ’69), Hikmat Nasr, PhD (BS ’61, MS ’65), Jihad Douglas, PhD (BS ’83, MS ’85), Salah Abu-Shakra, PhD (BS ’57, MS ’59), Dr. Thurayya Arayssi (BS ’86, MD ’90), and Wafaa El Khoury, PhD (BS ’80, MS ’83).

Recently Elected WAAAUB Medical Chapter

Dr. Ahmad Husari (BS ’82, MD ’86), President
Dr. Alain Sabri (BS ’88, MD ’92), Vice President
Dr. Umayya Musharrafieh (BS ’81, MD ’87), Treasurer
Dr. Abdallah Adra (BS ’83, MD ’87), Secretary
Member at Large:
Dr. Imad Uthman (BS ’82, MPH ’84, MD ’88)
Dr. Ghassan Nawfal (BS ’83, MD ’87)

Oman | The Oman Chapter’s annual gala, Grand Hyatt Muscat, November 3. President Dorman and Secretary General of the Council of Higher Education in Oman, Salem Al Maskari

Kuwait | Kuwait alumni joined FHS Dean Iman Nuwayhid (MD ’84) and colleagues at the Regency Hotel to discuss recent events and future initiatives at the faculty.

Abu Dhabi | The AUB Abu Dhabi Alumni Sports Team participated in the inaugural 10 kilometer ADNIC Yas Run on the Formula One Grand Prix Race Track at Yas Marina Circuit. More than 450 AUB alumni and friends dressed all in white gathered at the Aloft Hotel-Abu Dhabi to celebrate a raucous “White Night Party.” The chapter organized a large musical concert at the Al Jahili Theater of the Armed Forces Officers’ Club & Hotel. “En Fa Mi” included classical favorites and Christmas carols.
Recently Elected
WAAAUB Germany Chapter

Abdallah Bou Saleh (BEN ’06), President
Nabeel Sulieman (BEN ’05), Vice President
Jamal Ghassan Bazzi (BEN ’08), Treasurer
Rana Rafic Siblini (BA ’02, MA ’08), Secretary

Member at Large:
Elie Anis Touma (BEN ’82); Manal Chatila (BS ’04, MS ’06);
Hans Bastian Hauck (MA ’04); Rachid El Assir (BEN ’03);
Bilal Issam Khaddaj (BEN ’03); Zeina Matar (BA ’79);
Aida Rebeiz Sayegh (BS ’87, TD ’88)

Philadelphia/Delaware | Alumni gathered at the home of chapter treasurer Hanan Saab (BS ’77) in Chalfont, Pennsylvania. First row, left to right: Ihab Younus (BS ’97, MS ’99), Sarah Abboud (BS ’99, MSN ’07), Hanan Saab (BS ’82, MPH ’84), Asma Ghannam (BS ’82), Houri Puzantian (BS ’96, MS ’01), Maya Khezan (BS ’08, MS ’10). Second row: Marouf Hoteit (friend), Vera Akruk (friend), Suzan Juraydini (BS ’84), Amal Abu Suleiman (BA ’82, MA ’89), Marylin Sutton Loos (MA ’56), Mona Al-Mukaddam (BS ’01, MD ’05), Myriam Kozaya (friend), Rabih Moussawie (BA ’99, MBA ’00). Third row: Elie Ghanem (BS ’01, MD ’05), Abdulshakoor Tahliak (BS ’76), Aref Aref (BS ’61, MS ’63), Samir Akruk (BS ’65, MS ’67), Jihane Hajj Al-Rabady (BS ’02), and chair of the WAAAUB Chapters Committee Nasri Kawar (BS ’56, MS ’59) The chapter celebrated AUB’s 145th Founders Day on December 3 with a gathering at Nasri Kawar’s home in Downingtown, PA. First row, left to right: Najwa Shoujaa, Ramzi Kawar (BS ’01, MD ’05), Elias Melhem (BS ’84), Lina Melhem (BS ’85), Lamis Shibel, AUB Director of Alumni Relations Eva Klimas, Suzan Juraydini (BS ’84), Aref Aref, AUB Associate Director of Development Joe Manok (BS ’03). Back row, left to right: Ahmad Shibel (BBA ’98), Elie Ghanem (BS ’01, MD ’05), Samir Akruk (BS ’65, MS ’67), Nasri Kawar, Hanan Saab (BS ’82, MPH ’84), Elias Atallah (BBA ’57), and Suad Kawar

Baltimore | Alumni met at the Lebanese Taverna in Harbor East Left to right: Ramzi Namek (BEN ’90), Rabih Jabbour (BS ’93), Eman Sbaity (residential AUBMC, 2005-10), Maen Farha (MD ’82)
Michigan  | 12 13 Michigan Chapter Halloween dinner at Habib’s Restaurant in Dearborn, Michigan.

Montreal  | 14 The Montreal Chapter celebrated the holidays with a Christmas lunch at Varges Restaurant in Montreal. Robert Kouri, chair of the advisory board at McGill University, and his wife Joan Kouri were guests of honor.  | 15 The chapter kicks off the winter season with a bowling event at the AMC Pepsi Forum in Montreal.

Ottawa  | In collaboration with the Canadian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Ottawa Chapter presented a lecture at the Monterey Inn Resort by Clovis Maksoud, professor of international relations and director of the Center for the Global South at American University in Washington, DC.  | 16 Left to right: chapter treasurer Elias Abou Hamad (BBA ’80), Nada Hamade (BA ’99), chapter president Elias Absi (BS ’75), Professor Clovis Maksoud (former student), and chapter board member Jihad Abdel Nour (BS ’77, MD ’80) | The Ottawa Chapter celebrated the holiday season with a Christmas Party on December 9 at the St. Elias Center in Ottawa. Alumni participated in a night of dancing, karaoke, and music.  | 17 Left to right: Lina El-Esber (BE ’02), chapter secretary and Nada Hamade (BA ’99), chapter vice president

WAAAUB

Attention AUB Alumni!

On February 1, 2012 the call went out to all alumni to put forward nominations for the 2012 WAAAUB Alumni Council elections. As per the WAAAUB bylaws revised in 2011, council members will then elect the members of the WAAAUB Board of Directors and Standing Committees. All WAAAUB leadership will take office on July 1, 2012.

If you or a friend would like to run in the 2012 Council elections, please send your name, year, and degree information to nominations-committee(at)waaaub.org. The deadline is February 28, 2012.

Write to us today. Your participation will ensure the continued success and future path of your alumni association.
WAAUUB Summit | WAAUUB held the 2011 Alumni Summit at the Intercontinental Hotel in New York City. 🎉 Friday evening reception for alumni and Daniel Bliss Society members

WAAUUB President Nabil Dajani (BA ’57, MA ’60) and President Dorman 🎉 FM Dean Mohamed H. Sayegh (BS ’80, MD ’84) presenting the AUBMC 2020 Vision 🎉 WAAUUB Board Member Nadim Maluf (BEN ’84) and Vice President Genane Maalouf (BBA ’98) 🎉 AUB Board of Trustees Chairman Philip Khoury (former student) and Shake Ketefian (BSN ’63) at the Future of Higher Education panel 🎉 AUB Provost Ahmad Dallal (BEN ’80) and Fawaz Habbal (MS ’73) at the education panel

The summit featured networking roundtables on medicine and health care 🎉, innovation and entrepreneurship 🎉, the international non-profit sector 🎉, and finance. 🎉 Dr. Marwan Rafaat (BS ’99, MD ’03), Dr. Ghaleb Daouk (MD ’84), Dr. Karim Saab (MS ’04, MD ’08) 🎉 Roundtable participants 🎉 Dima Al-Khatib (BS ’89) and Firas Maksad (BA ’02) 🎉 Dr. Adel Afifi (BA ’51, MD ’57), center, was presented with the WAAUUB Distinguished Alumni Award by Nasri Kawar (BS ’56, MS ’59), left, and President Dorman, right.
Beyond Bliss Street
class notes

Summer Program for AUB Alumni Children (SPAAC)

July 2–27, 2012
Details available on www.aub.edu.lb/rep/cec/spaac or by email: alumni(at)aub.edu.lb

Deadline for registration
June 3, 2012

1940s
Elias S. Srouji (MD ‘44) is a retired professor of pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma. He grew up in Nazareth where he practiced medicine until 1967. His book, Cyclamens from Galilee: Memoirs of a Physician from Nazareth, published by iUniverse (ISBN 0-595-30304-8), has been described as a richly textured and engrossing historical narrative of the Middle East during the last century from the perspective of a Palestinian man who became a dedicated physician, health care educator, and humanitarian.

1950s
Ibrahim Touma (BS ’57) is retired and married to Viviane Zreik, who received a degree from Saint Joseph University in 1972. They have two children and live in Montreal, Canada. [touma(at)sympatico.ca]

1960s
Nazih Shammas (BEN ’62) is an environmental engineering consultant and author of 15 books on the subject.

Mona Asfour Saba (BA ’53) writes, “My husband Robert Bahij Saba (BA ’52, BS ’53) and I met at the chapel singing with the AUB Choir under the leadership of Professor Arnita in the early fifties. I was a biology major and Bahij was an engineering student. He played the drums and sang with “Cecil and the Boys,” a group made up of two Sabas and two Asfours: Cecil, my brother; Tony, my cousin; and Bahij’s cousin Fawzi—all AUB students. “Cecil and the Boys” played at all the AUB parties and dances. In my senior year, I was elected president of the Women’s Society Organization and Bahij was elected president of the Engineering Student Society. We spent many hours meeting at the Milk Bar in West Hall and at Uncle Sam’s on Rue Bliss. Dating was always en groupe, which was no obstacle to our growing closeness. Having met at the AUB Chapel, we married there a year after graduation in 1954 (possibly the first and only AUB couple to be married there). AUB was well represented in the wedding as my maid of honor was my sister Huda (Mrs. Kamal Khoury) and bridesmaids were Wynn Weidner (BA ’54), Dale Penrose, Dalal Asfour (Mrs. Jacques Sawaya), Mona Maasri (BA ’54), and Selwa Jureidini.

Bahij and I enjoy visiting the AUB campus and walking down memory lane whenever we are in Lebanon. We are very proud of our alma mater. May it continue to “have life and have it more abundantly.”
1971 he earned his doctorate at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Shammas and his spouse Norma have two children and live in Pasadena, California. [N.Shammas(at)ShammasConsult.com]

Rita Simonian (BA ’62) writes, “To my great sorrow I lost my dearest husband, Vartkess Balian, in August 2008 to colon cancer. Vartkess was a Penrose Scholar in 1957 and an athlete who played basketball on the AUB varsity team. He was also a champion sprinter winning many trophies including the Dean’s Trophy. My husband and I were happily married for 47 years. We had two boys. Sevag is a successful businessman, owner of Haverford Homes (which he started with his father), a husband, and father of four. Our second son, Raffi, is a US diplomat who now heads the US team for global negotiations on bio and renewable energy.”

Samir R. Akruk (BS ’65, MS ’67) is in private practice in internal medicine on the campus of Saint Mary Medical Center in Langhorne, Pennsylvania. In 1977 he received his doctorate from the University of Georgia and in 1983 he earned his MD from Mexico’s Universidad Autonoma Benito Juarez De Oaxaca, Escuela De Medicina student ’65) writes, “My memoir An Alpha-1 COPD love story has been published and can be purchased from Amazon.com. The third chapter, “Barbie’s Story,” contains my still vivid recollections of AUB during the school year 1962-63. I would love to hear from anyone who reads my book or who remembers me back then. [seeverett1(at)mac.com]

Y Cirugia. He is currently the vice president of the WAAAUB Philadelphia/Delaware Valley Chapter. Akruk and his wife Vera Bahou-Akruk live in Southampton, Pennsylvania. They have two children, Ramsey and Viola.

Sally Everett (former student ’65) writes, “My memoir An Alpha-1 COPD love story has been published and can be purchased from Amazon.com. The third chapter, “Barbie’s Story,” contains my still vivid recollections of AUB during the school year 1962-63. I would love to hear from anyone who reads my book or who remembers me back then. [seeverett1(at)mac.com]

Hisham H. Tabbara (BEN ’79) is a vice president of Saudconsult, one of the oldest and largest engineering firms in the Middle East. He is based in Jeddah. He writes, “In 1978, I was a third-year engineering student when I happened to be standing near some recently poured concrete at the base of a street lamp near the Bechtel Building. I immediately engraved my name and the date. After 33 years it is still there. Last year I showed it to my daughters who were delighted to see what I had done. They took pictures of it and we talked about how long it will last. I won’t disclose the location unless I am asked to reveal it… which I will gladly do.” [cohiba6666(at)hotmail.com]

Amer Anis Bibi (BA ’72) is managing partner of Alamer Packaging Industries LLC in Dubai, UAE, where he lives with his wife and three boys. [amerbibi(at)gmail.com]

Eyad Abushakra (BA ’77) is a journalist, political commentator, and author. He has worked at Asharq Al-Awsat in London since 1979.

Abushakra earned an MA in 1981 from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London where he also carried out PhD research. He is married to Hanan Bu-ghanem (BS ’85). They have a son, Furat, and live in Old Malden, Surrey, United Kingdom.

Nadim Khouri (BS ’79; MS ’82) recently moved back to Beirut to serve as deputy executive secretary at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. In 1989, Khouri earned a doctorate in agronomy from the University of Massachusetts, and in 1995, he earned a master’s from the Rural Economics Department of Wye College, United Kingdom. He and his wife Hoda (Haddad) Khouri (MS ’80), who until recently was a biologist working on the 1,000 Genomes Project at the National Institutes for Health, are both graduates of AUB’s FAFS. They have two daughters: Lina (28) lives in New Jersey and Maya (26) lives in Beirut. [nadimkho(at)gmail.com]
MainGate Winter 2012 | www.aub.edu.lb/maingate

Beyond Bliss Street

class notes

Jeffrey Hayes (MA ’81) writes, “When I was doing my MA (English Language/Applied Linguistics), I got to know Sue Gatzek, who was an operating room nurse at AUH. I proposed on a bench just below the green oval overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, and we were married 8/8/1981 in Virginia. We have five children, Mariam (29), Sarah (27), Ramsey (24), Danny (21), and Laura (16), and just started grandchildren (three so far). Our first date was to Al-Basha, by IC gate (no longer there).” [jeffandsuehayes(at)hotmail.com]

Munther Wadih Antoun (MA ’82) has served as the principal of the National Evangelical School in Nabatieh since 1975. He earned his doctorate in education from Saint Joseph University in Beirut. Antoun is married to Ghada Khoury. They have four children, all of whom are AUB graduates: Jumana (BS ’97, MD ’01), Rula (BEN ’02, MEN ’05), Rudina (BAR ’09), and Wadih (BEN ’11).

Ghinwa Jomaa (BBA ’82) writes, “Rarely has AUB cancelled its commencement exercises, but that is what happened in June 1982. A three-year dream of mine fell apart and could never be recaptured. Soon after the end of the invasion, AUB arranged some job interviews for me and I joined forces with several local and international banks in Lebanon. Because of my AUB degree, I was always given preferential treatment over other job applicants. Being an AUB graduate has been a cornerstone and major asset in my entire career for the past 29 years. Nowadays, I am a senior credit manager at Arab Finance House SAL. I am also a mother of three daughters: Ghada (who is an AUB student), Kamar (an LAU student), and Zeina (an IC student). Ghada is expected to graduate in June 2012. I look forward to seeing her receive her diploma at the AUB commencement. For me, this will be a dream come true.”

Nadim Karam (BAR ’82) is a principal at Atelier Hapsitus. In 1989 he earned a PhD in architecture from the University of Tokyo. He and his wife Kaya Mussack have three children. They live in Ashrafieh, Beirut. [nadimkaram(at)hapsitus.com]

Ashraf Almurdaah (BBA ’87) is a vice president at US Bank. He is also an adjunct associate professor of business and economics at Los Angeles City College and a frequent instructor of money and banking at the University of California, Los Angeles Extension. In 1990 he earned his MA in economics from the University of Kansas. Almurdaah and his wife Dania Atrouni have two boys, Karim (11) and Rami (9). They live in Los Angeles. [Almurdaah(at)aol.com]

Luay Hajjar (BS ’83, MD ’87) earned his general surgery certification in 1992 and became a colorectal surgery fellow at the Cleveland Clinic in 2001. He currently works in Saudi Arabia as consultant surgeon/medical director and medical services administrator with Mutabagani Health Services.

May (Hajj) Mohty (BS ’83, MD ’87) is a clinical assistant
professor at the University of Arizona Medical School and at Midwestern University School of Medicine in Arizona. She is also the director of urgent care at CIGNA Healthcare of Arizona and a pediatric hospitalist at Scottsdale Healthcare.

Salwa (Nabhan) Smith (BAR ’87) is a member of the faculty of the Applied Communications Department at Higher Colleges of Technology in Sharjah, UAE. She is currently teaching interior design to young Emirati women.

Badriyah EL-Daw (BSN ’91, MA ’97) is a nursing director at Global University. In 2008 she earned her doctorate in special education at Saint Joseph University. She is married to Dr. Yasser Abdallah and they have a son named Adam (pictured). The family resides in Beirut. [bdaw(at)gu.edu.lb, badriyadaw(at)yahoo.com]

Aziza Sabra (BS ’91, MS ’92) is an accredited interpreter and translator who earned a diploma of interpreting and translation from the University of Western Sydney. She and her husband Mohammad Dweib, who earned a BS in 1990 from Amman University, have a daughter named Saniya. They live in Sydney, Australia.

Antoine Saliba (BBA ’92) earned an MBA at the...
University of Massachusetts in 1998. He and his wife Rima Makari have two children, Rasem and Joy. [arassem(at)hotmail.com]

Rula Haddad Kalifa (BS ’94, MPH ’96) writes, “By way of history, I come from a long line of AUB graduates. My father Fuad Said Haddad (BA ’57, MA ’60) immediately returned to AUB upon receiving his doctorate from the University of Chicago. He became a professor and the long-time registrar of AUB (until 1995). My two brothers, Said Haddad (BS ’94, BBA ’96) and Ghassan Haddad (BS ’96, MD ’00), attended AUB as well as other aunts, uncles, and cousins! I was born at AUBMC and lived on campus for over 20 years. I earned my AUB degrees from FHS. I am currently the director of the Center for International Patients at the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC). I am responsible for identifying initiatives worldwide that will enable the delivery of superior patient care. My department is also responsible for caring for international patients seeking care at UCMC. I have recently been elected the president of the WAAAUB Midwest Chapter.” [rula.kalifa(at)gmail.com]

Makram Abdel-Malek (BA ’97) received an MBA from Lebanese American University in 2003. Currently the business development and HR manager at Jubaili Bros., Abdel-Malek is single and lives in Choueifat. [makram.abdelmalek(at)jubailibros.com]

Elie Antoine Awwad (BEN ’97, MEN ’99, PhD ’11) is a part-time lecturer at AUB in civil engineering. Awwad’s father Antoine retired in 1997 from AUBMC’s Supply Department. His brother Fares Awwad (BS ’91) earned his AUB degree in biology.

Fadi Majzoub (BEN ’97) received his MBA from the University of Wales in 2011. He is the sales and marketing manager at Profiles RH LLC in Dubai, UAE. Having recently entered into a partnership with the largest consultancy firm in North Lebanon, Majzoub will soon leave Dubai and return to Lebanon with his wife Hania and their two sons. [fadimajzoub(at)gmail.com]

Omar Fattal (BS ’95, MD ’99, MPH ’01) completed his psychiatry residency at the Cleveland Clinic in Ohio in 2005. He is an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at New York University and the unit chief of the Latino inpatient psychiatry unit at Bellevue Hospital. In addition, Fattal has his own private practice in New York City. His interests are cross cultural psychiatry and telepsychiatry. [omar.fattal(at)gmail.com]

Ziad Hamoui (BS ’00, BBA ’02) recently appointed the interim president of the Borderless Alliance, a nonprofit organization that advocates free movement of people and goods across West Africa. (www.borderlesswa.com) This is a private sector initiative supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the West Africa Trade Hub with support from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), L’Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine (UEMOA), and the World Bank. Hamoui is also the marketing coordinator of the executive committee of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) in Tema, Ghana. CILT is an international institution that promotes the art and science of logistics and transport.

Sani Z. Yamout (BS ’94, MD ’98) and Stephanie L. Andrus (MBA and an MD from the State University of New York) were wed January 7 in Lake Placid, New York. The wedding ceremony was officiated by Akram Talhouk (BS ’87, MD ’82). After completing his residency in general surgery at the Mississippi Medical Center in Jackson Mississippi, Yamout joined the Women and Children’s Hospital of Buffalo, New York where he will be completing his fellowship in pediatric surgery this June. Andrus will be completing her residency in pediatric medicine at Cohen Children’s Medical Center in Long Island, New York. The couple is planning to move to New York City where Andrus will be the pediatrics chief resident in her program and Yamout will start his practice as a pediatric surgeon.
Hamoui recently launched the branch’s website cilt-tema. webs.com

**Rania Knio** (BBA ’00, MBA ’02) is a senior quality specialist and lead auditor at Khatib & Alami. She is responsible for the training, implementation, and maintenance of ISO 9001 series quality management system standards for the company. Knio lives in Beirut with her husband Assem Chalal, who earned a degree in engineering in 1996.

**Mireille Andre Akl** (MS ’02)

has recently worked as executive assistant to HE Jean Oghassabian in Lebanon’s Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR). She has held a number of managerial positions related to rural and urban development, translated international reports and AUB/IBSAR research studies, organized workshops, conferences, training programs and expositions, and worked as a lecturer. In addition to her own research studies, Akl has been a counselor and editor-in-chief of two national biodiversity reports submitted through the Ministry of Environment of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal. Akl earned her doctorate in international agrobiodiversity from Sant’Anna Scuola Superiore (SSSUP) in Pisa, Italy. Akl also has certifications in human resources management, professional management, and a five-year agricultural engineering diploma from Université Libanaise Faculté d’Agronomie (ULFA). [miroakl(at)yahoo.com]

**Nabil Najjar** (BEN ’99, MEM ’02) and Connie Athans are proud to announce the birth of a baby boy. Christopher was born on May 27, 2011 in Athens, Greece.

**Fouad Zablith** (BBA ’02, BS ’03) is a researcher at the Knowledge Media Institute of the Open University in the United Kingdom, where he earned a PhD in 2011. He earned an MS in 2007 at the British University in Dubai jointly with the University of Edinburgh. Fouad and his wife Rania live with their daughter Emma in Milton Keynes, United Kingdom. [fouad(at)zablith.org]

**Manal Elfakhani** (BS ’03, MS ’07) is a doctoral candidate in nutrition with a minor in molecular biology at Texas Woman’s University in Denton, Texas. She plans to defend her dissertation in May 2012 and then join her husband, **Wael Jabr** (BS ’98, MS ’00), in Calgary, Canada where he is an assistant professor at the University of Calgary. Elfakhani and her husband have two children: Lana (4) and Sarah, who is an infant. [melfakhani(at)gmail.com]

**Khodr El Harakeh** (BEN ’05) is a regional project manager at W. R. Grace & Co. In 2011 he earned an MBA in business strategies at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, United Kingdom. El Harakeh recently married **Marwa Halawi** (BEN ’11). They live in Dubai, UAE. [elharakeh(at)gmail.com]

**Racha Abou Chacra** (BS ’07) was recently promoted to environmental expert at Khatib & Alami Consolidated...
Malak Bourghol (BBA ’07) has been marketing and communications officer at HSBC Bank Middle East, Ltd. in Lebanon since January 2010. Her former positions at HSBC include personal banking adviser and premier relationship associate.

Vanessa Ghossoub (BS '07) is owner, head dietitian, and fitness coach of Svelte Healthy Living, which she founded in 2009. This health center offers a wide range of programs and services including yoga, private and group fitness classes, Louis-Paul Guitay’s cellular stimulation therapy, dietary advice, catering healthy foods, and neuro-linguistic programming for weight loss. Ghossoub is a single professional focused on her career and the development of Svelte. She lives in Lebanon.

Linda Hammoudi (BA ’07) and her husband will celebrate their sixth wedding anniversary on April 15, 2012. She writes that she is blessed with two children, Louay (4½), and Leona (1½). The family lives in Dawhit, Aramoun.

Aya Jammal (BA ’07) writes, “I’m currently the editor-in-chief of U Magazine Lebanon at Promoprints SAL. In 2008, I earned my MA in international law at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.”

William (Mac) Mc Clenahan (MA ’07) is owner of Saifi Urban Gardens and Saifi Institute for Arabic Language located in Gemayze, Beirut. He and his wife Rana Dirani have a new baby boy named Rayan. They enjoy their life in Beirut.

Mohamad Mozhar Mikati (BBA ’07) and Farah Baroudy Mikati (BS ’07, MS ’10) are happy to announce their marriage on July 7, 2011 in Tripoli where they currently reside. The Mikatis met during their second year at AUB, which will always be their special place.

Jacqueline Nahas (BBA ’07) was recently promoted to marketing communications lead at WaveMark, Inc. She formerly served as business unit marketing coordinator at Abela Freres in Lebanon.

Najeh El Sadek (MPH ’07) is the first UN dispensary physician to be granted a P3 or professional level post in Yemen. He helped to formulate and implement the first national strategy in Yemen for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. In 2005, El Sadek was awarded the United Nations Development Program’s…

Time Flies  |  How well do you know the founders?  
Answers from page 50.

1 Daniel Bliss (1823–1916) founded the SPC, which opened in Beirut on December 3, 1866. Over his 36 year presidency, Bliss composed Arabic textbooks in moral and natural philosophy and saw enrolment grow from 16 to over 600 students.  
2 David Stuart Dodge (1837-1921), a trustee for 40 years, named the Ada Dodge Memorial Hall in memory of his daughter. He also gave the SPC land for two athletic fields, the observatory, and its equipment.  
3 George Post (1838-1909), professor of surgery, medicine, and physiology, produced the first Arabic concordance of the Bible, and designed several campus building.  
4 Cornelius Van Dyck (1818–1895) published more than twenty Arabic textbooks on geography, navigation, natural history, and mathematics, which were long used in Syrian schools. In 1865, he translated the Bible into Arabic.  
5 Harvey Porter (1844-1923) served as professor of history from 1870-1914 and professor emeritus thereafter. He was instrumental in the development of the Archaeological Museum and the University Library, to which he donated 1,400 manuscripts.
RECENTLY HONORED

Krikor Satamian (BA ’64)

A renowned actor, director, entertainer, and comedian, Satamian was honored last October with a Golden Jubilee celebration by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) in Los Angeles where he is the director of the AGBU Ardavazt Theater Company. Following his graduation from AUB, Satamian attended the London School of Film Technique and the Bristol Old Vic Theater School where he later taught. Returning to Lebanon he served as an AUB lecturer in drama from 1968-76 and as artistic director of the AGBU Vahram Papazian Theater Group. He then accepted a position as resident director of New York’s famous off-Broadway company, Colonnades Theatre Lab. An avid member of the AGBU since early childhood, Satamian rejoined the organization in 1978 as its national artistic director. He founded AGBU theater companies in Boston, Detroit, New York, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles and was the artistic director of the AGBU Ardashad Theatre Group, as well as the producer and anchor of the AGBU- Spotlight Armenians TV program in New York City. In 1988, Satamian was appointed artistic director of the AGBU Western District and permanently relocated to Los Angeles. To date, Satamian has acted in 85 productions and directed 75 plays and three operettas.

Mahmoud El-Solh (BS ’69, MS ’72) Last October, El-Solh received the Award of Distinction from the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CA&ES) at the University of California, Davis (UCD). El-Solh is director general of the International Center for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA). He earned his doctorate from UCD in 1978. El-Solh was recognized as an outstanding alumnus for his commitment to increasing food security, alleviating poverty, and promoting sustainable agricultural systems in the developing countries of western Asia and northern Africa.

Jose Zaglul (BS ’71, MS ’73) An AUB trustee since 2007 and president of EARTH University in Costa Rica, Zaglul was recently awarded two honorary doctorates: from the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (NUBIP) and Chatham University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Appointed EARTH University’s first president in 1989, Zaglul has developed a global reputation as a visionary in education for sustainable development. He has been instrumental in positioning EARTH as a unique international institution that promotes core human values and a commitment to an economically and environmentally sustainable future along with a world-class scientific and technical undergraduate education.

Suheil Muasher (BS ’72, MD ’76) is a world renowned authority on in vitro fertilization (IVF) and an infertility specialist practicing in northern Virginia and Washington, DC. He was recently awarded two distinc-
class notes

Beyond Bliss Street

10 years of service on ASRM boards and committees and the ASRM Star Award, which is a peer-nominated award given to ASRM members who have made presentations at the society’s annual meeting for at least 10 consecutive years. Muasher is an associate professor of OB/GYN at Johns Hopkins University Medical School, a clinical professor of OB/GYN at George Washington University Medical School, and a professor of OB/GYN at Virginia Commonwealth University. He opened the Muasher Center for Fertility and IVF in March 2004.

Muasher previously served as a medical director of Eastern Virginia Medical School’s Jones Institute.

Gladys Mouro (BS ’76) has an MSN from the University of Pennsylvania and an honorary doctorate from Muhlenberg College. The recipient of numerous awards and honors, Mouro has been elected director-at-large of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing for the term of 2011-15. This is the first time someone from the Middle East has been elected to this post. In her many years at AUB, Mouro held several high level positions in nursing services at the Medical Center and was instrumental in AUB’s achievement of the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Magnet Recognition®. She is an elected member of the WAAAAUB Alumni Council and the author of An American Nurse Amidst Chaos (1975-1998): The Story of the American University Medical Center During the Lebanese Civil War.

Habib Dakik (BS ’85, MD ’90) is the recipient of one of the most prestigious awards in the Arab world: the Abdul Hameed Shoman Award for Young Arab Researchers. An AUB professor in the Department of Internal Medicine’s Division of Cardiology, Dakik was honored for his research in the medical sciences. His main research interests have been in risk stratification of patients with acute myocardial infarction and in advanced cardiac imaging techniques in the evaluation of patients with coronary artery disease. Dakik is internationally acclaimed for his work in nuclear cardiology. Dakik completed his residency and fellowship training at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas. He is a fellow of the American College of Cardiology and a member of the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. His numerous international awards in clinical research include the Society of Nuclear Medicine Fellowship Award in Cardiovascular Nuclear Medicine; the Baylor College of Medicine, Department of Medicine Clinical Research and Cardiology Excellence in Clinical Research Awards; and the International Conference of Nuclear Cardiology Young Investigator Award.

Kamal Itani (BS ’81, MD ’85) The World Lebanese Cultural Union, which is associated with the Department of Information of the United Nations, has recognized Itani for his professional achievements. Itani is chief of surgery at the VA Boston Health Care System and professor of surgery at Boston University and Harvard Medical School.

Mohamad Alameddine (BS ’96, MPH ’98) received the 2011 Graduate Literary Award in Health Services, Policy and Management from the Society of Graduates of the University of Toronto’s Department of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation. He earned his doctorate at the University of Toronto, where he worked as a senior research associate and director of international development at the Faculty of Medicine. Alameddine is currently an assistant professor at AUB in FHS’s Department of Health Management and Policy.

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- Questions? Contact maingate(at)aub.edu.lb.
Revolutionary Road

When Mansour El-Kikhia, PhD, (BA ‘72) left Libya in 1980 to enroll in a US doctoral program, he didn’t immediately realize he’d gone into exile. It wasn’t in his nature to go quietly. Now chair of the Department of Political Science and Geography at the University of Texas, San Antonio and an internationally renowned lecturer and columnist, El-Kikhia has spent more than 30 years assailing the Qaddafi regime even as he became more and more convinced that it would endure. The toppling of the dictator also overturned his expectations about the region and what his role in shaping its destiny might be. In conversation with MainGate, Professor El-Kikhia looks back on his days at AUB and shares his thoughts on what the future may hold.

When the Arab Spring began, did you anticipate a ripple effect in Libya?

No. I tell you, the revolution would never have spread to Libya had it not been for the instability of the regime. The regime, had it played its cards right, would still be in power today, but it never allowed opposition to emerge and when it did emerge in a real sense, they didn’t know how to deal with it.

What does it mean to you to be a member of the El-Kikhia family in particular? They were powerful before the rise of Qaddafi, no?

I wouldn’t say it’s a powerful family, I’d say it’s an old family. My family was never wealthy, but you know it earned the respect of people precisely because we spoke up and because the regime could not buy us.

After Libya became independent in 1951, it survived on the export of scrap metal found during World War II. There were so many tanks lying around that it became a source of wealth for the country. They gathered it and shipped it to Europe. One of the government officials who was close to the king was able to get them to pass a law that limited the gathering of that stuff to a certain number of companies, which they owned. Now they didn’t do very well, so this guy comes to my father and says: “We would like to borrow your name. Just join us in the company and we will give you monthly income from this. You don’t have to do
anything, just lend us your name.” My father kicked him out. [Qaddafi] wanted to borrow my name. It isn’t for sale. So in essence, the strength of my family has been doing what is right, speaking up. I always saw it as a national prerogative: We should speak up, even if it means our death.

**How is it that you came to AUB and majored in political science?**

When I was a kid I went to public school in England and I spoke French, English, Italian, and Latin, but I forgot my Arabic. I had the opportunity to come to the United States even then, but I preferred Lebanon because it was close to home. I went to the national college in Choueifat for two years; then I did O-levels and I got into AUB. It was one of the best universities in the Middle East. I loved Lebanon very much. I liked the openness, the people, the food, the weather. I loved the afternoon breeze coming off the Mediterranean.

Believe it or not, I was very good in engineering and then I had this professor and he told me, it’s a waste, because I always spoke up. I was fascinated with global affairs, not so much local politics as much as international politics. He says to me, “It’s a waste. There are so many engineers, but we don’t really have political scientists.” He was my mentor and I believed him. Maybe I shouldn’t have, but I did.

**You were a student at AUB just a few years before the Lebanese civil war broke out. Had you anticipated anything like it occurring?**

I was there when the civil war broke out. I remember that night very clearly. The war shattered me the image of Lebanon.

It’s funny, when I think about it. In front of AUB, there used to be Faisal and there was the Uncle Sam café and there you’d find the communists with the socialists with the Muslim Brothers and they’d all be engaged in this dialogue. There was this phenomenal sense that you’d have all these different points of view and they’d actually talk to each other. So for me it was really a shock to see this war take place. It was not a war of ideology; it was a war of religion.

Libya, if it wants to survive, must separate church from state. One deals with morality and one deals with immorality. Leave the morality at home; let’s deal with politics. And this is the truth of any Arab country, any country in the world.

**Who did you study with at AUB? How did your time at the university shape your way of thinking?**

My stay at AUB was phenomenal, but what I learned was not in the classroom. I wasn’t a very good student. I had many great professors—Kamal Salibi, Yusuf Ibish, Dr. Hananîyeh, Ibrahim Ibrahim, Hanna Batatu—one of the most knowledgeable individuals you could ever find—but my knowledge came from the environment that AUB provided for me: the freedom of exploration, asking, talking, meeting different people, seeing different nationalities. You can read a book anywhere in the world but the treasure gained from this interaction, you can’t measure in money. AUB created the mold for me to place things into, to compartmentalize things and I think the mold still stands.

I paid attention to how the world was shaped while I was at AUB.

US society, really, not only asks of you but demands of you to conform. AUB taught me not to conform.

**Have you taken anything from the example of other dissidents who’ve returned to their countries of origin after long periods in exile?**

Not really, because I know where I stand. I participated in the revolution, over the long haul, but this is the revolution of the young.

My major concern since the beginning of the revolution is to ensure that whoever comes is qualified to lead.

Ultimately, I’d like to see a democratic system that allows for Libyans, regardless of race, gender, ethnic origin, color of skin, or sexual orientation, to participate equally. Human rights are indivisible to me, just like freedom is indivisible. Libyans need to have something to aspire to and a good framework for a good political system is one of these things they should aspire to achieve. Let’s have a framework that allows a Muslim to be a Muslim, a Christian to be a Christian, a Jew to be a Jew, a Hindu to be a Hindu. Let’s give women freedom. You think we men have had it tough? You can’t imagine how tough women have had it, for not only 40 years but over 40 centuries.

**What role do you see yourself playing in the coming year?**

My major concern—and this is what I’m watching very clearly and very carefully—is what kind of constitutional framework is set up [in Libya]. I’d very much like to be involved in the process of writing that constitutional framework. And if the opportunity presents itself, I will run for office.

—S.M.
ALUMNI
Rachel Dziechiolska Rotkovitch (DIPLM '40)

passed away last September at her home in East Providence, Connecticut at the age of 96. Born in Poland, Rotkovitch traveled to the Middle East as a young woman and quickly found her calling as a nurse. Shortly after graduating from AUB, she became director of nursing at the King Fouad Hospital in Alexandria, Egypt, where she frequently appeared at the side of King Farouk. She traveled to the United States to earn a BS in nursing from Washington Missionary College (now Union College) and a master’s in nursing administration from Columbia University Teacher’s College where her innovative contributions to the nursing field are commemorated in the Nursing Hall of Fame. Rotkovitch pioneered a new professional nursing model in which one nurse is responsible for the total care of the patient to replace the disjointed team approach that was common at the time. Rotkovitch was director of nursing at Long Island Jewish Hospital, vice president of nursing at Yale-New Haven Hospital, and a consultant to the US Surgeon General for eight years in the 1970s and 1980s. Her husband Aizik predeceased her. She is survived by her daughters, Irit Librot and Alona Rotkovitch, and several grandchildren.

Elias Costandi Bordcosh (BEN ’69) passed away last June at the age of 64. He was born in Jaffa, Palestine. After being forced to leave Palestine in 1948, Bordcosh and his family moved first to Broumana before settling in Beirut. With his degree in civil engineering, Bordcosh set up the first desalination plants in the Arab world in Oman and Saudi Arabia before immigrating to the United States. He worked for the Los Angeles Water Department and the University of California at Irvine as director of facilities at the Engineering School, which has a memorial plaque in the Henri Samueli Building in his honor that reads, “Without his dedication, care and integrity this building would not be possible.” Bordcosh was diagnosed with lung cancer in October 2010. He is survived by his three children, Lana, Samer, and Lulwa, and his two sisters Leila and Rima Bordcosh. He will be remembered for his wonderful sense of humor, impeccable management skills, vibrancy, love, loyalty, courage, and wisdom.

Michel Jurayj (BA ’47, MD ’51) died suddenly at the age of 85 while traveling in Moscow. In 1960 he performed the first lung surgery done in Saudi Arabia in Dhahran at the Aramco hospital where he met his wife Anne, an American nurse. Jurayj practiced as a cardiovascular surgeon in Chicago for over 45 years, retiring in 1996. He is survived by Anne, their three children, six grandchildren, and his four siblings who live in Kosba, Lebanon.

Wadi Yusuf Nassar (BA ’52, MD ’56) died on November 6 from complications from prostate cancer. He was born in Jifna, near Ramallah, in 1932. In addition to AUB, he attended Rashidya and Birzeit Colleges in Jerusalem. Nassar joined the Jordanian Army as a major and commanded the 4th Field Ambulance Unit. During that time he was also head of the medical support unit for the film crew of David Lean’s Lawrence of Arabia. He met and married his beloved wife Gwen in 1968 and was appointed consultant ENT specialties.
Nassar was also a local magistrate, a justice of the peace, an active Rotarian, and trustee of the Manchester Council for Community Relations. It was his work in community relations in Manchester that led to his appointment as Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire in 2005.

Nassar will be remembered for his leadership and generous guidance. He is survived by two children: Dr. Greg Nassar, head of clinical audiology at Trafford General Hospital, and Victoria, a deputy district judge and successful barrister in the United Kingdom.

Farid Joseph Elias (MD ’72) passed away last June in New Stanton, Pennsylvania. He was born in 1939 in Ouyoun El Wadi, Syria. As chief resident at the AUB Hospital, Elias developed many new procedures to overcome constraints presented by the Lebanese civil war. In 1977 he immigrated to the United States where he developed a national reputation in bariatric surgery. He was an innovator in gastric bypass surgery, which he performed for the first time in 1979. Elias is survived by his wife of 42 years, Linda (Tommy) Elias; three children, Michael Joseph Elias, MD, Lillian Elias Marsh, and Ramsey Elias; four grandchildren; and one sister.

Nour Dajani Shehabi (MS ’76) passed away last September after a struggle with pancreatic cancer. She graduated from Beirut University College with a BS in food and nutrition before joining the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences at AUB, where she earned her master’s in rural sociology. She went on to earn a doctorate in development and planning at Syracuse University in 1984. Shehabi then returned to the Middle East to work in Jordan as the director of health, education, and social development at the Ministry of Occupied Land Affairs. In 1994 she joined UNESCO’S regional office in the Middle East and played an increasingly active role in the organization until her untimely death last September. In 1988 she married Asem Shehabi, a professor of pathology at the University of Jordan. Shehabi comes from a family of AUB graduates, as her three older brothers are all alumni: Wael Dajani (BEN ’55), Mazen Dajani (BBA ’58, MA ’69), and Amer Dajani (BEN ’63).

Suzana Mitri Omran (BA ’98) passed away four days before her 39th birthday, on September 23, 2011, at her home in Cohasset, Massachusetts. Suzana and her husband Mohamad (BBA ’97) were featured in MainGate’s “True Love, AUB Style” in fall 2011 (pages 35-6). Omran received her BA in sociology and anthropology. She was a beloved pre-school teacher, a devoted wife, and mother of three young daughters: Sireen, Leila, and Samar. She will be greatly missed.

We Remember

Alumni and Students

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Program/Year</th>
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<td>Fady H. Thaalby</td>
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<td>Lama Abou Ajram Hatoum</td>
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This lovely sculpture attributed to the Lebanese artist Mouazzez Rawda (1906-86), a painter and sculptor, is nestled in the Nicely Garden. Do you remember the installation? Email maingate(at)aub.edu.lb.
Receiving multiple copies of MainGate? Save paper and let us know—we'll send one copy to your home or business. Contact the editor: maingate@aub.edu.lb

AUB athletics program, 1962. Do you see yourself in this 50th reunion class? Email maingate@aub.edu.lb.