

AUB Teaching Excellence Award
Zeina Kanafani, MD

President Khuri, Provost Dawy, Deans, esteemed colleagues,

Standing here today, I am profoundly humbled and honored to accept the AUB Teaching Excellence Award. When I first embarked on my career as a physician, I never imagined that teaching would become a cornerstone of my professional life. Yet, here I am, and I am proud to be recognized in this capacity by AUB, an institution that has been my home for the last 32 years.

My journey into teaching was not planned, but deeply inspired by a remarkable teacher, my mother. She was a mathematics teacher for 39 years, dedicated to her craft and her students. I vividly remember the countless times former students would approach her on the street, expressing that she was the best teacher they ever had, someone they would never forget. These moments profoundly shaped my understanding of the impact a teacher can have.

It is indeed a privilege to touch the lives of students, to make a tangible difference as my mother did. I have learned immensely from my students; they challenge me, question me, and they have taught me as much as I have taught them, and for this dual journey of learning, I am eternally grateful.

To my students, present and past, thank you for entrusting me with your education. Your curiosity, zeal, and resilience inspire me every day. You are the reason I strive to better myself continually and the true reason I am standing here today, not just as a physician but as an educator worthy of this honor. You make all the challenges worthwhile, and I am tremendously thankful for each one of you.

I owe a significant part of my success to the medical education team at the Faculty of Medicine. To all of you, my second family, your unyielding support and collaborative spirit have been vital. I must extend a special thank you to Ruaa, who has been my right hand. Ruaa, your assistance, dedication, and advice have been indispensable, and I am deeply appreciative of your steadfast presence.

My family has been my anchor throughout this journey. To my mother, who has been not only a mother but also a sister and a friend, your enduring wisdom and example continue to guide me. I love you and I promise to give you a French translation of this speech later. To the rest of my family, your support allows me to pursue this passion with undivided attention. To my late father, I miss you dad and I hope I am making you proud.

Finally, ***my deepest gratitude goes to AUB, my alma mater, my sanctuary, my haven.*** For over three decades, AUB has not only been a place of work but a place that has enriched me personally and professionally. ***This institution has molded me into the person I am today, and for that, I am immensely richer.***

Receiving this award reaffirms my commitment to education and to our shared mission at AUB. I hope we can continue to inspire, to challenge, and to nurture the minds and hearts of those who will shape our future. Thank you once again for this incredible honor, I look forward to many more years of learning together. Thank you.