

For Immediate Release



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Three winners at AUB GHI's

Global Health Change Makers pitch competition

In celebration of its fifth anniversary, the Global Health Institute (GHI) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) organized the Global Health Change Makers' pitch competition. The event brought together students from universities of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to present their project ideas related to Global Health and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through a 5-minute pitch for a chance to win seed funding.

Seven competitors coming from different countries in MENA including Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates and others were shortlisted to the final stage and participated in the competition that was held at AUB.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Shadi Saleh, GHI founding director, spoke about how GHI adopted the UN SDGs through its programs and initiatives in order to help create a world that is healthier, more sustainable, and resilient. Dr. Saleh pointed out that this event promotes positive outcomes by giving the necessary support for youth development and providing opportunities to young people, the change makers, for a future with equality, safety, and health equity.

The presented pitches were scored by a jury panel consisting of five judges including Dr. Najat Saliba, member of the Lebanese Parliament; Jessica Azar, TV host at MTV Lebanon; and Dr. Lama Moussawi, director at the Center for Inclusive Business and Leadership (CIBL) at AUB, associate dean for research and faculty development, and associate professor at AUB. The jury panel also included Nour El Arnaout, division manager at the Global Health Institute at AUB; and Dr. Rihab Nasr, director of the Cancer Prevention and Control Program at the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI), professor at AUB, and founder of AMALOUNA NGO.

Competing students were evaluated based on the jury panel scoring of each pitch presentation and the assessment of the students' submitted concept notes that included project objectives, methodology, outcome indicators, relevance to global health and SDGs, implementation

timeline, and dissemination/visibility plan. Each pitch presentation was followed by a five-minute Q & A session during which the competitors addressed questions raised by the jury panel. Three students won the competition. Zeeshan Zulfiqar from the Gulf Medical University, United Arab Emirates won first place for his project titled “Prevalence and Determinants of Non-Communicable Diseases and Potential Barriers in Utilizing Healthcare Services Among Laborers in Ajman, United Arab Emirates,” with a seed funding of \$5000. Sara El Koussa, from the Lebanese American University, Lebanon won second place for her project titled “Cancer Com,” with a seed funding of \$3000. Abdurrahman Chikaire Umar, from the Gulf Medical University, United Arab Emirates won third place for his project titled “Impact of Exposure to Heat on the Physical, Social, and Mental Health and Coping Strategies Among Construction Workers in Ajman, United Arab Emirates,” with a seed funding of \$2000.

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For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD
Interim Director of the Office of Communications
Director of News and Media Relations
Mobile: (+961) 3-427-024
Office: (+961) 1-374-374 ext: 2676
Email: sk158@aub.edu.lb

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor’s, master’s, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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