

For Immediate Release



AUB business school's Samih Darwazah Center to boost innovation in the region

Beirut, Lebanon- 18/01/2011 - The American University of Beirut has boarded the worldwide "Innovate or Die" bandwagon with the opening of the Samih Darwazah Center for Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship at AUB's Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB).

"The OSB will be joining the worldwide select elite in the field of innovation and capacity building," said OSB Dean George K. Najjar, during the official opening of the center at the OSB Maamari Auditorium on January 14, 2011. "Our aim in creating the best practices for the future is to induce a paradigm shift and quantum leap, from incremental steps in progress to systemic renewal, establishing a culture of regeneration."

Najjar thanked all the Darwazah family members present-- whose gift had made the center possible-- as well as Dr. Marwan Muasher, AUB trustee, for acting as the bridge builder of the project.

The Darwazah Center is dedicated to the study of innovation and entrepreneurship in the region with a view to documenting and enhancing innovative practices in the business community. It seeks to generate reliable information to guide evidence-based decision making in this key sector that holds strategic importance in a knowledge economy. Its scope includes research, field studies, benchmarking, seminars and workshops as well as conferences all focused on the pivotal domain of organizational renewal and wealth creation through creative enterprise.

"Our parents turned 80 this year, and we saw nothing more befitting as a gift than this center, a beacon of transparency and good governance," said Said Darwazah, CEO of the Jordan-based Hikma Pharmaceuticals, which was founded by his father, Samih Darwazah, after whom the center is named. "We wish to pass on their legacy of excellence to the new generations and profile the future Arab leaders."

Samih Darwazah's story is a classic tale of a youth realizing his dream of establishing an industry. After graduating from AUB with a bachelor's degree in pharmacy in 1954, he worked various jobs until in 1977 he established a small factory in Jordan called Hikma Pharmaceuticals. Today Hikma has 12 factories in nine countries, spanning four continents, over 5,000 employees, a market capital of \$2.5 billion and a targeted revenue of \$1 billion.

Samih Darwazah, who is an ex-Jordanian minister of energy and natural resources, recounted his story to an AUB audience during the Salim Kheireddine/Al-Mawarid Bank

lecture held on January 13, 2011. In it, he noted how the values of openness, tolerance, and critical thinking-- which he had learned as a student at AUB-- have helped him in his success later on.

According to Said Darwazah, who is also a former minister of health in Jordan, his father's greatest traits included faith and an unwavering belief in the power of education, investing in people and human resources, helping students to achieve their goals and faith in the Arab person. "These are traits in common with AUB's vision, and yes, we can do it!" he added.

"The door is open to new challenges and possibilities in adapting our educational standards to fit the reality and needs of our changing environment," said Provost Ahmad Dallal. "We are at the doorstep of new fields of activity that will enrich our curricula and enforce our research capability."

"Production and transmission of knowledge are complementary and induce a positive impact on society as a whole," he added.

AUB President Peter Dorman said, "This step is a visionary service to both aspiring students and the region alike in sustaining innovation and entrepreneurship... Our outreach in consulting capabilities will expand in addition to the infusion of new dynamism and vigor to AUB and the region."

Dorman considered the philanthropic act in itself as innovative in providing for future generations from the donor's own alma mater, to enrich the ranks of AUB alumni leaders serving as prime ministers, deputies, central bank governors and corporate heads.

"The past 50 years did not see much innovation until very recently and what is success today can become failure tomorrow in the absence of innovation," concluded Najjar. "A great and much needed asset has been added to AUB, in line with our historic mission in making a difference and having results that speak for themselves."

An informal reception followed the inauguration and attendees were invited to the fourth floor of the OSB Building to view the premises and equipment of the newly-launched Darwazah Center.

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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 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of more than 7,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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 420-bed hospital.

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