



**AMERICAN
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OF BEIRUT**

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The Qatar Scholarship-Education Above All program marks the graduation of 62 AUB students

The Qatar Scholarship-Education Above All program at the American University of Beirut (AUB), a LEAD scholarship program, celebrated the graduation of 62 AUB students of diverse majors and specialties. The graduation ceremony was attended by AUB President Fadlo Khuri, Ambassador of Qatar in Lebanon Ibrahim Ben Abdelaziz El Sahlawi, Director of Strategic Partnerships at the Qatar Fund for Development Rowdah El Naimi, as well as members of the AUB community, the graduates, and their family members.

In his address, Khuri emphasized the importance of such a scholarship and thanked the state of Qatar, the Qatar Fund for Development, and the Education Above All Foundation for extending their support to Lebanon and AUB. “With 400 students under its umbrella, the Qatar Scholarship – Education Above All program creates a unique and welcoming community that reflects the civic values that AUB stands for, as well as its mission for excellence,” he said. “Its alumni are already contributing to the global community, and we are proud of them as representatives of AUB and its pursuit of knowledge and making a positive impact in immediate environments and beyond.”

“Today is all about celebrating learning in all its forms, celebrating excellence, celebrating achievements and success, and, most importantly, celebrating free minds that flourish from AUB to the world,” Khuri added.

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Ambassador of Qatar in Lebanon spoke about the partnership that this program builds. He said, “400 scholarships have been offered to obtain bachelor’s degrees for Lebanese, Syrians, and Palestinians. It is a program that enriches their research experience and educational journey at the American University of Beirut.”

He also spoke about how the State of Qatar stands by Lebanon and its people, “not only through material commitments and financial support but also through deep and sustainable partnerships that promote quality education and capacity building.” He said, “Crises may come and go, but knowledge always remains. Therefore, we, in the State of Qatar, are committed to investing in the future, by investing in education.”

“We are proud of our partnership with one of the oldest universities in the region, the American University of Beirut. It's rich history and academic excellence make it a natural and valuable partner to enhance youth opportunities for growth and prosperity. Today, you are standing here as a real result of this partnership, and we are confident that you will be ambassadors of knowledge, progress, and positive change in your societies and the world,” Ben Abdelaziz El Sahlawi added.

In her speech, Al Naimi addressed the students highlighting that the graduation being celebrated “is a joint success, and that is a motivation for us to continue our efforts. Your higher education is a valuable investment in your future and the future of your countries. It is the tool that enables you to change the world for the better. With your knowledge and education, you can face challenges, shape societies, and build economies.”

She continued, “Qatar Fund for Development is committed to supporting education as part of our continuous efforts to achieve sustainable development. These are not just goals, but deep commitments towards our brothers in the beloved country of Lebanon, and I assure you that the Fund will continue to provide the necessary support to Lebanon, in cooperation with our regional and international partners, in its endeavour to overcome the current crises.”

Talal Al-Hothal, director of Al Fakhoora, a program of Education Above All Foundation, who could not be present at the ceremony, remarked, “Although

unable to attend the ceremony, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to our graduates. Their achievements today, through the Qatar Scholarship, mark the power of dedication and education.”

He added, “The Education Above All Foundation advocates for quality education, particularly in socio-economically challenged regions. This program aims to empower our youth, encouraging them to contribute actively to their community's development and reconstruction. This graduation represents a stepping stone to greater goals and the beginning of a journey towards a world marked by mutual understanding and prosperity. With the skills and knowledge gained from AUB, our students are ready to create positive change and uphold the AUB legacy of excellence. As they embark on the next chapter, we are confident in their resilience and commitment to make a significant difference.”

The ceremony continued with a video that highlighted the activities and achievements of this scholarship for the past two years. Dr. Joseph Costantine, scholarship director, then addressed the audience in a motivational speech titled “Hope Exists Here” where he shed light on the difficulties that these graduates faced and survived “You are the students that survived a global pandemic, and you are the generation that helped put this city together after it was shattered on August 4th. You looked through the rubbles and you made sure that you can never be broken!”

The ceremony also included a presentation by finalists of the ACE Talks Competition, a contest of public speaking organized by the Qatar Scholarship – EAA program at AUB. The finalists: Abdel Kader Atrach, Sara Ghanawi, Lynn Kammoun, and Andrew Philips presented brief talks about modern education at AUB and what this means to them. They were then ranked through live online voting by the audience.

The event also featured a musical interlude led by student and scholar Tamara Khouri in collaboration with the Zaki Nassif Program at AUB. The graduates were then asked to the stage for a group photo with the AUB president, ambassador of Qatar in Lebanon, Qatar Fund for Development director of strategic partnerships, AUB Provost, AUB deputy provost, and director of the scholarship, after which awards for graduates with the highest GPA and Most Qatar Connection participation were handed out, along with the ACE Talks awards. The ceremony concluded with a reception.

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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 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 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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