



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Beirut: Monday, September 4, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American University of Beirut marks a new era of recovery and progress on Opening Day

The American University of Beirut (AUB) welcomed Chairman of the Board of Trustees Philip S. Khoury and several of the university's trustees, as well as its deans, leadership, faculty, staff, and students to its 158th Opening Day ceremony, a symbolic testament to the institution's resilience and commitment to excellence. AUB President Fadlo Khuri delivered a compelling speech, highlighting the university's remarkable journey and its pivotal role in shaping the future of Lebanon and beyond, as the university's 2023-24 academic year commences.

"This year, after four years of conjoined crises that have plagued Lebanon, we can confidently state that the American University of Beirut has not merely started to recover. It has started to flourish," Khuri declared.

He highlighted several notable achievements, starting with the consistent growth in faculty and staff numbers across the campus and the AUB Medical Center (AUBMC), contributing to the university's vibrant community. Khuri also stated that the allocation of \$165 million over the last several years to support the decoupling of the university finances from the rapidly devaluating Lebanese currency has allowed AUB's faculty and staff to anticipate secure futures in both their careers and retirement.

AUB's commitment to research and educational excellence is further exemplified by the record numbers of research and educational grants received over the past three years, enabling the education of exceptional graduate and undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds.

"Our student community is more economically diverse than it has been in more than five decades," Khuri said, adding that with over 20% of students educated for free, AUB's dedication to accessible education and diversity remains unwavering. "One quarter of our faculty and almost one in five of our students at AUB are international, a number that is certain to climb as our Mediterranean and AUB Online ambitions grow."

He also stated that this fall term, incoming student numbers and quality are the strongest they have been since 2019, with around 2,000 new freshmen and sophomore students, and over 110 medical students launching into their chosen course of study at AUB. "Our academic programs are world class, and it will be a top priority for us to ensure that our future graduates continue to enjoy substantive career and post-graduate opportunities," Khuri emphasized.

Expanding its footprint beyond its iconic campus in Beirut, AUB is set to inaugurate its first-ever twin campus in Pafos, Cyprus in two days, on September 6. AUB Mediterraneo will launch with its first cohort of undergraduate and graduate students, and with a goal to reach 2,000 students by 2035. "Our first ever permanent university branch outside the cozy confines of Ras Beirut will develop into a European base to complement our home in Beirut," Khuri said.

Khuri added that AUB's acquisition of the Keserwan Medical Center, the university's first community hospital, "will help expand our national health capacity and enable AUB to better serve the people of our home nation." With plans to double the bed capacity over the next decade, AUB aims to provide world-class, AUBMC quality medical care to Northern Lebanon.

Addressing the issues of citizenship, nationhood, and accountability in Lebanon and its neighboring countries, Khuri emphasized the importance of citizenship education. He highlighted that AUB will be placing effort in reinvigorating discussions around this within its faculties and schools, as well as centers and institutes. "That is part of our obligation to our citizen-students and to our mission."

As AUB embarks on the latest phase in its journey, Khuri called on the community to "empower those who trust and depend on us, one citizen at a time."

ENDS

For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar, PhD

Interim Director of the Office of Communications
Director of News and Media Relations

T +961 1 37 43 74 Ext: 2676 | **M** +961 3 42 70 24
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 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.

Stay up to date on AUB news and events.

aub.edu.lb | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)