

For Immediate Release



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The U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative Tomorrow's Leaders Gender Scholars Program at AUB celebrates the end of the academic year

U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Dorothy C. Shea and American University of Beirut (AUB) President Dr. Fadlo Khuri led an end-of-the-year celebration for 184 scholars of the United States Department of State Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Tomorrow's Leaders Gender Scholars (TLS) Program. AUB is a proud founding partner of the MEPI TLS program, a unique initiative to advance and deepen students' awareness of the impacts of gender inequality and how to affect changes to advance gender equality. AUB is committed to making education affordable and available to the best and the brightest students in Lebanon and the region.

Through the MEPI TLS program, participating AUB students are awarded a scholarship that allows them to join the university's growing and vibrant community of gender scholars across its faculties and programs. They are required to enroll in one gender studies course while attending gender workshops and lectures, writing papers, and completing a gender-relevant activity.

Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB President, highlighted AUB's journey towards gender equality on several levels, including the curriculum, the university leadership, student activities, and more. He said, "Thanks to the technical and financial support provided through the MEPI-Tomorrow's Leaders Gender Scholars Program, I think that AUB, while not having won the war on gender inequality... is at the end of the beginning, but there is a long way to go." He continued, addressing the students being celebrated saying, "We will only succeed with all of your continued engagement."

The U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Dorothy C. Shea, congratulated the students and challenged them to apply what they have learned moving forward. "Students, graduates, we have high hopes that you will carry out what you have learned right here in AUB, beyond these walls, into the future, wherever that may bring you." We know that, in addition to opportunities, many challenges will also lie ahead. And I am confident that you have the tools that you're going to need to succeed, no matter what life throws your way." Ambassador Shea said "we believe in

your ability to build a better future, which is why the U.S. government is investing more than \$70 million in the Tomorrow's Leaders undergraduate and graduate scholarship programs, as well as the Tomorrow's Leaders Gender Scholars and the Tomorrow's Leaders College to Work Pipeline.”

The closing ceremony also included a roundtable discussion with MEPI TLS scholars led by Dr. Blake Atwood, in which they shared their experiences participating in the program.

More on the MEPI TLS program at AUB

Since its inception in 2020, the MEPI TLS program has supported 441 scholars and gave them the opportunity to work closely with distinguished professors, experts, and activists at the university, while having their tuition fully covered by the MEPI program for a whole academic year.

Over the years, the program has had a great influence on the gender curriculum at AUB, which has undergone a significant transformation through the creation of new gender-focused courses across a wide variety of disciplines and the integration of a gender lens into existing courses. Course development efforts which have been focused on advancing the goals of the Women, Peace, and Security Act, as well as the Women Economic Empowerment agendas, and mainstreaming gender studies in STEM, have turned AUB's gender curriculum into one of the most dynamic and robust gender studies programs in the world.

Additional influences that the program has had at AUB are the increase in content related to gender issues published by the two major student publications at the university, Outlook and Watchdog Gazette, with MEPITLS scholars as contributing editors; as well as the “gender activity” required by the MEPI TLS program, which allows scholars to demonstrate great cooperative engagement that results in personal and community initiatives.

The influence of this program also stretches to reach AUB faculty members and their research efforts, as they take steady steps towards achieving gender mainstreaming in teaching and internal policies.

For more information about the program visit <https://bit.ly/3NyBSRe>

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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 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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