

For Immediate Release



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AUB Administration signed the new “Collective Labor Contract” with the Workers and Staff Syndicate

The American University Beirut (AUB) Administration signed the new Collective Labor Contract with the workers and staff syndicate on May 17, 2016. The agreement came as a result of traditional negotiations that take place biennially between the AUB Administration and the Syndicate Council to update an existing agreement with work and condition demands from both parties.

The syndicate council, composed of 12 members who represent workers and staff from AUB and AUBMC, works with the University administration with the aim of arriving at a rewarding work environment and a high degree of harmony between the University and its non-academic employees and workers. Every two years, all members of the syndicate – 3,500 today – are asked to engage and vote on a list of demands and proposals that are sent by the syndicate council to the administration. A series of negotiations then follow and a new, amended agreement is signed and registered at the Ministry of Labor.

This year, four items were agreed upon: A transportation allowance increase by LL2,000, effective July 1; a scholarship increase by 13% for elementary, middle school, and high school education, starting the next school year (2016-17); a raise in life insurance; and adding Annunciation Day to the official public holidays observed by the university. The syndicate council will also be modifying its

internal bylaws, adding a new article authorizing it to appoint a Council of Delegates representing all departments of AUB.

The last collective labor contract officially expired on June 30, 2015 but its terms remained valid until a new contract was signed this year. The delay in arriving at a new agreement was due to changes in the AUB administration.

The new agreement was signed by AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri, President of the Workers and Staff Syndicate George Jurdi, and Secretary of the Workers and Staff Syndicate Abbass Hariri. Present were members of the negotiation committee, chaired by Senior Adviser to the President, Dr. Makhluif Haddadin, in addition to members of the administration and the Syndicate Council.

In his address at the signing, President Khuri referred to the budgetary challenges that the new AUB administration was faced with. Khuri assured, however, that the administration remains committed to the continued support of the staff as a key component of the University, vital to its prosperity.

“Despite the difficult living and economic conditions affecting the country and the region, we are committed to ensure the wellbeing and viability of our workers and staff at AUB,” said President Khuri.

President of the Syndicate George Jurdi in his turn thanked the committee and in particular its chair, Dr. Makhluof Haddadin, for collaborating a series of intense, respectful, and efficient negotiations. Jurdi also called for close collaboration toward further financial support for staff and proposed scenarios that could facilitate achieving that goal.

“The achievement today is an important one and we will work together on achieving more,” Jurdi told us. “Throughout history, AUB has always been the first employer to accommodate for its staff in the face of any economic shocks. It has always been a charitable, non-profit organization that strongly believes in the motto engraved outside the syndicate’s office, on the AUB main gate wall ‘That

they may have life, and have it more abundantly.’ This is the true essence of AUB and we will help the University to maintain that essence.”

The Syndicate Council submits its next list of suggested amendments in April 2017 to begin a new round of negotiations with the administration starting June 2017 and arrive at a ratified new contract the year after.

ENDS

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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 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,500 students. AUB currently offers more than 130 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 420-bed hospital.

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