Sheikh Nahyan attends AUS National Day celebrations

His Excellency Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, the United Arab Emirates Minister of Culture, Youth and Social Development, attended the main celebration of the 42nd UAE National Day at American University of Sharjah (AUS) on November 27, 2013. Organized by the Office of Student Affairs and the Emirati Cultural Club, this event is part of the week-long celebration of the UAE National Day at AUS.

The day’s festivities began with His Excellency taking a tour of the Etihad Art Gallery panorama in the Main Building, followed by the opening ceremony and welcome address. Entertainment for the crowd continued into the night and included a performance by Emirati scouts, poetry recitation, and traditional songs and dances. Other ethnic clubs, such as the Bahraini Cultural Club, also participated in these events expressing their cultural heritage.

AUS Community Services Department wins Sharjah Voluntary Award

The Office of Student Affairs at American University of Sharjah (AUS) held a ceremony on February 5, 2014 at the university’s Student Center to celebrate the Sharjah Voluntary Award won for the second time by its Community Services Department. The award was given to the department for its Hand in Hand project of renovating orphan homes in the emirate.

To qualify for the award, the Sharjah Voluntary Award Committee required the voluntary work to benefit the less fortunate in the community. The AUS Community Services Department’s Hand in Hand project has been working to improve the living conditions of these homes and support the orphans residing there.
AUS student volunteers are passionate about giving back to the community. Every year Community Services volunteers increase by 10 and devotedly serve the less privileged along with their schoolwork. Their service to humanity is without any expectation or appreciation, but doing good brings a smile to the face of the elderly, an orphan, or someone physically challenged or with special needs. Our opportunities for volunteerism and their passion for serving humankind create the difference. These are heroes of the AUS community that serve, give and make people in need smile. The Sharjah Government acknowledges voluntary work engagement at university levels.

Once again, after winning the Sharjah Voluntary Awards in 2010, AUS won the eleventh Local, seventh Arab and first Islamic Voluntary Awards in the educational institutions category from Sharjah Voluntary Awards. AUS was recognized for OSA Community Services’ Sixth Hand-in-Hand Project wherein we undertake renovation of houses of orphans and underprivileged families under the care of our partner, Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation. This was possible because of the commitment of our student volunteers. It was their efforts and the university’s community initiatives that we were recognized at a regional level. I wish to commend the Community Services Division for keeping up with our initiative of building and maintaining productive relations with the external community. AUS accepted this award in a ceremony held on January 16, under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, UAE Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS. We are proud of our volunteers and hope to keep them engaged in service to humanity.

I would like to welcome new freshmen and returning students to the spring semester. Wish you success in your academics and student life. Best wishes for a bright future for all the fall graduates.

Sheikh Nahyan attends... continued from page 1

Sheikh Nahyan attends... continued from page 1

their appreciation to the UAE.

“It gives me great pleasure to offer my sincerest congratulations to all on the wonderful occasion of the UAE’s 42nd National Day celebrations,” said Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Acting Chancellor of AUS. “We at AUS have always marked this occasion with great fervor and spirit. This year in particular our campus has come alive with numerous events celebrating the Emirates. On behalf of the entire AUS community, I would like to convey our best wishes to our leaders and to the people of the UAE.”

“As has been an AUS tradition for many years, various events are organized on campus to mark this special occasion. With the theme of this year’s National Day celebrations being ‘Spirit of the Union,’ we have focused on hosting activities that promote unity and patriotism,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

“As we take pride of our students’ work, we submitted our entry to various governmental organizations in a bid to win the title of ‘The Best University Celebrating National Day.’ I congratulate our great leaders and the people of the UAE on this occasion,” added Dr. Al Shehhi.

The celebration began on November 11, with a student campaign launched to gather National Day greetings and messages for His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE. Other activities included a traditional Emirati breakfast and lunch and a National Day Sports Festival organized by Student Athletics and Recreations Department.

Mohammad Al Thani, president of the Emirati Cultural Club, said, “National Day is a very dear occasion for all Emiratis. The celebrations are an expression of our love for our country and for our great leaders. We do hope that our events at AUS will be as successful as the National Day celebrations set across the UAE.”
AUS celebrates Omani National Day on campus

Over 150 people joined the American University of Sharjah (AUS) student-run Omani Cultural Club in an evening event commemorating the sultanate's 43rd National Day on November 24.

Welcoming the crowd gathered on the AUS plaza was Doaa Al Kathiri, the president’s club. The guests included AUS officials, students and outside visitors. “Here we are today celebrating our country’s joys and expressing with all dedication and belonging the love we have for our leader, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said,” said the chemical engineering junior, speaking in Arabic.

“Our march to continue what our ancestors built begins here,” she remarked, adding that “students are a country’s ambassadors who reflect its traditions and reputation” by demonstrating good ethics. She also thanked the university for its efforts in making the event come together.

Students then ran a fashion show showcasing the country’s traditional attire on a customized stage, which was decorated with colors of the Omani flag as well as a large cutout of the Sultan.

Attendees also enjoyed a poetry segment by guest performers Mohamad AlBadi and Faisal Al Farsi. Students acted in and directed a play and a traditional dance depicting Omani culture, which was followed by patriotic music performed by national singers Salah Al Zidgali and Khalid Al Faisali.

“We are trying to celebrate our country’s national day [in] our second country, the UAE, [by showing] that Oman has different districts, dialects and traditions,” said Al Kathiri in an interview.

The event was eye-opening to people discovering Omani culture for the first time. AUS mass communication and English literature senior Farah Nada said that she “really enjoyed the student play as well as the patriotic songs.”

“I know very little about Oman’s culture and customs,” she added, “and the event was a very entertaining introduction.”
The week-long Warm Hearts Campaign at AUS concluded on Sunday, December 29, and students used the funds raised to buy 400 blankets for Syrian refugees in Jordan. The blankets were sent to the Executive Office of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Al Qassimi, which will deliver them to the refugees.

Warm Hearts is a campaign organized by the Office of Student Affairs, as part of the popular Big Heart campaign, which was launched by Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher, to provide warmth for the Syrian refugees in Jordan. Warm Hearts was launched at the AUS Student Center where volunteers from the Syrian Cultural Club and Community Services Department at AUS collected donations from other students and bought 400 blankets with the money they raised.

Student volunteers were enthusiastic about this event and eager to help the Syrian refugees in Jordan. Hanan Kharab, an international studies major who participated in the event said, “As a Syrian, I feel it is my duty to help my community back home who have been living in this conflict for a few years now. A lot of kids and a lot of innocent people who have nothing to do with the issue are dying of cold, literally freezing to death. Although this is a simple event, it will aid them in a lot of ways, and they will be very thankful. I hope to be able to put smiles on kids’ faces in the refugee camps and I hope I will able to contribute to their warmth in this cold winter.”

“We have launched this campaign on campus to support Syrian refugees who are facing challenges of a harsh winter in refugee camps. We are very thankful to all kind-hearted AUS community members who contributed to the success of this campaign,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “From the proceeds, more than 400 blankets were turned over to the Executive Office of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Al Qassimi, Sharjah Supreme Council for Family Affairs, for shipping to refugee camps. I would like to especially thank our student volunteers and the Syrian Cultural Club for their efforts during the week-long donation drive,” she added.

privileged members of the community and for the project to have a great impact on community development and promoting a stronger society, as well as being a fulfilling experience for the volunteers. This edition of the Sharjah Voluntary Award is the eleventh locally, the seventh in the Arab world level and the first on the Muslim world level.

The winning AUS project is an initiative that began over two years ago with the aim of renovating homes of orphans in Sharjah. Beneficiaries of the Hand in Hand project are orphans under the care of Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation.

Student volunteers who participated in this project worked on it continuously in different stages. Prior to the actual project, the student volunteers initially raised money for building materials, decor items, furniture and contractor fees. The volunteers then engaged in cleaning, painting and decorating the house for a period of three weeks.

“It is very exhausting but it makes you feel that your efforts and exhaustion are transformed into a positive outcome. You see a new home; you see happiness in the eyes of its people when they witness how drastically their home was improved. All of this is done by the students’ efforts who were volunteering in the project,” said Duaa Zahi, a senior computer engineering student.”

“The Sharjah Voluntary Award is a well-deserved one for the university and our students. I commend the Community Services Department for its sixth successful Hand in Hand Project of renovating orphan homes, which is highly popular with our student volunteers,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “I wish to thank His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS, for vesting this award to AUS for the second time and to our partner, the Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation, for providing our students with volunteering opportunities. I would like to especially acknowledge our student volunteers for all their efforts and for a job well done!” she added.
Thirty-three students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) enjoyed a cultural visit to Singapore from January 27 to February 1, 2014. The students, who are part of Office of Student Affairs’ Student Multicultural Learning Program, represented eight nationalities.

The cultural visit started with a panoramic bus ride driving around famous Singapore landmarks including the Civic District, Padang playing field, the historic Parliament House, Supreme Court and City Hall. On the following day, the students visited Merlion Park, a major tourist landmark, and the Thian Hock Keng Temple, one of Singapore’s oldest Buddhist-Taoist temples, before driving past Chinatown. The group stopped by a local handicraft center and observed craftsmen at work. They then visited Little India.

The students continued their cultural expedition on a colorful journey into the history, lifestyle and unique characters of the Peranakan culture. The students walked through the Spice Garden to learn about the herbs and spices that go into Peranakan cooking.

A brief visit to a local Peranakan shop had students fascinated by the display of Peranakan costumes, embroidery, jewelry, porcelain, furniture and craftwork. The visit was followed by a traditional Peranakan lunch at local specialty restaurant.

Exploring the country’s rich flora and fauna, the students visited the award-winning garden attraction, Gardens by the Bay, featuring more than 500,000 plants; the Flower Dome, featuring nine different gardens from six continents; and the Cloud Forest, featuring orchids, pitcher plants and...
ferns from the highlands. Students enjoyed learning about different sea creatures in a visit to the Underwater World, and a visit to Singapore Zoo featured various mammals, birds and reptiles, including some endangered species.

On the entertainment part of the tour, the students took a ride on the Singapore Flyer to observe the beauty of the city from a height of 165 meters. Students took a cable car ride to reach Sentosa Island to enjoy various rides and shows. They also enjoyed a day-long visit to Universal Studios Singapore.

Addressing the students at the conclusion of the program, Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, said, “We have designed the Singapore trip to provide you with a rich cultural experience. I hope all these experiences add to your personal growth and development. I wish to thank you all for your interest in our programs and for your enthusiasm to explore other cultures. We wish to see you again in our programs.”

“Discovering a country such as Singapore was truly an amazing experience. The culture was very rich and exotic. The highlights of my trip included going to Universal Studios, zip-lining and visiting the Spice Garden. I encourage students to go on these trips, as one gets to expand their skills and knowledge,” said Meera Al Mulla, a senior chemical engineering student.

The AUS delegation was headed by Dr. Moza Al Shehhi and accompanied by Dr. Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations, and supervisors Virgilio Mateo Jr. and Raja Subramanya.
Over sixty students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) have handed a renovated home to a family under the care of the Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation (Tamkeen). Working under the Office of Student Affairs’ Hand in Hand project, the student volunteers assisted in painting, decorating, gardening and cleaning the house in the sixth renovation project of its kind. The renovation process started on December 8, and the home was returned to its residents on December 30.

The Office of Student Affairs’ Community Services Department mobilized its student volunteers and resources to ensure success in the project funded by Tamkeen and AUS community services. The students renovating the home belong to the Islamic Cultural Club, the Civil Engineering Club and AUS Community Services volunteers. In addition to the renovation, basic home furnishings were provided to replace the old and damaged ones.

“The Hand In Hand Project has always been an event I like to participate in since my freshman year, and it is very interesting to see how happy the families are when you impact their lives. I encourage other students to participate in this program as well,” said Christian Momah, Leadership and Community Services representative of the AUS Student Council. “This year the Student Council decided to participate in the project, and we got the children toys and gifts that they can use to learn and have fun at the same time,” he added.

“I would like to thank all contributors and AUS volunteers for supporting the Hand in Hand Project for the sixth time. Through their efforts and contributions, the renovation of a family’s house under the care of Sharjah Social Empowerment Foundation was completed,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

The ceremony was also attended by Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations; AUS and Tamkeen officials; as well as student volunteers and members of the Islamic Cultural Club.
AUS students show their allegiance in the National Day Sports Festival

As a tribute to the nation, AUS student-athletes gathered in the Sports Complex and outdoor fields to celebrate the 42nd UAE National Day. Although it was a busy time for many AUS students amid their preparation for midterm exams, many came out to celebrate this festive occasion to participate in a series of sports tournaments and fitness challenges.

The Student Athletic and Recreation Department (SARD) of the Office of Student Affairs conducted sports tournaments for men and women in three-on-three basketball, volleyball, and men’s cricket and soccer matches on November 26. There was plenty of exciting and dramatic action in the sports tournaments as the Leopards competed among themselves to claim the right to be the best on the day of celebration for the UAE.

The day of competition and celebration continued as the students made their way to the soccer field to participate in the fitness challenges. The fields had been transformed into an elaborate fitness obstacle course, many students looked on in amazement at the series of daunting tasks that had to be completed. After conquering obstacles such as the tire pull, the water jug carry, and hopping around in a potato sack while carrying a 5kg medicine ball, it was time to rally together for the parade.

In an act of allegiance to the UAE, the gathered students and staff marched towards the Sports Complex joyfully waving and wearing the nation’s flag.

The parade was led by Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Dr. Mohamed Helal, Director of Student Athletics and Recreation; and Dr. Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations. Dr. Al Shehhi graciously thanked all the AUS students in attendance for their participation in the day’s tournaments and challenges. She also applauded their heartfelt show of dedication and loyalty to the UAE. She gave special recognition to student-athletes that had recently represented AUS in the highly competitive tournaments in Rome, Italy.

During the closing ceremony, Dr. Al Shehhi, along with Dr. Helal and Dr. Taha, handed out the medals to the winners of the various tournaments.
AUS students among the UAE’s delegation to BUMUN 2013

Four students from the Student Leadership Program (SLP) at American University of Sharjah (AUS) were among the members of the UAE delegation to the 9th Annual Bahrain Universities Model United Nations (BUMUN), which was held in Al Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, November 28-29, 2013. The UAE’s delegation consisted of students from AUS, Zayed University and UAE University; and was sponsored by the UAE’s General Authority of Youth & Sports Welfare.

BUMUN is a Model United Nations for mainly university students in the GCC. It is a simulation education activity which focuses on civics, communications, globalization and multilateral diplomacy. Students take on roles as foreign diplomats and participate in a simulated session of an intergovernmental organization (IGO). They research a particular country within a selected committee and topic, take on a role as a diplomat, investigate international issues, and eventually pass resolutions for current global conflicts.

“It was a great honor to participate in the BUMUN 2013 as part of the UAE delegation. This conference was exceptional, and provided us with the opportunity to engage in discussions that covered real world issues. Throughout the sessions, we developed our leadership skills, diplomacy techniques and learned how to conduct constructive debates,” said Hamad Al Ansari, senior student majoring in finance.

“The Student Leadership Program participates annually in the BUMUN to develop our students’ skills in research, public speaking, negotiation and critical thinking. The BUMUN is an excellent platform for experts and students from universities in the region to meet, learn to adapt to the views of others and build a first step towards international unity and tolerance,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

AUS students volunteer in environmental awareness campaign

More than 20 students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) volunteered in an environmental campaign held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah. Organized by Sharjah Environment and Protected Areas Authority, the campaign was held on December 27 with the theme “Leave No Trace.” The initiative focused on environmental awareness and a clean-up drive of desert areas in Sharjah.

Students participated in the clean-up efforts and the placement of garbage bins in popular picnic areas in the desert. In addition, the students assisted in raising awareness about the causes of environmental degradation. The students distributed flyers about the Government of Sharjah’s efforts to protect the environment and the existing laws and corresponding fines for environmental offences.

“This is a timely campaign as many people take advantage of the good weather to sit outdoors or gather family members for a picnic in the desert. It is very important that we preserve the environment and leave no trace of harmful materials or waste behind,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “This is a good learning experience for our students and an excellent opportunity for them to express their social responsibility,” she added.

The students’ participation was arranged by Office of Student Affairs’ Community Services Office.
The second Manipal Sports Festival, held December 15-19 at Manipal University in Dubai, was a huge success for the 11 participating AUS sports teams. Of the 11 teams, four teams reached the semifinals, two teams won second place, and the men’s and women’s basketball, men’s table tennis and women’s volleyball teams won first place.

As it was the second tournament in three weeks for some teams like men’s and women’s badminton, table tennis, and men’s chess, it was yet another opportunity for these teams to grab attention with some solid performances. For men’s and women’s table tennis the results mirrored those that were put in for the BITS Sports Festival three weeks earlier as the women’s table tennis team again achieved second place and again the men’s table tennis team won the championship easily defeating Middlesex University in the finals.

For the men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball programs it was an opportunity to close out an already action packed Fall semester on a high note. In their first official action since the EuroRoma tournament a little over a month ago, all four teams performed really well to reach the finals of their respective tournaments, especially the women’s basketball team as it put up one of the most dominant defensive performances in the history of the Manipal Sports Festival. In a total of three games, the Leopards gave only 25 total points to their opponents, including in the championship game where they won by the overwhelming score of 70-2!

The men’s basketball team also performed well, winning all three of their games by at least 15 points to lift the trophy. Men’s and women’s volleyball did well as the men reached the final before falling to University of Sharjah to earn second place. The women did extremely well enroute to winning the championship, winning both of their matches 2-0 in overall sets after receiving a bye straight to the semi-finals.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, congratulated AUS student athletes who participated in the event. She said she was proud of the student athletes and all they have accomplished this semester not only on the court or field, but also off of it, maintaining a successful balance between academics and athletics.

During the closing ceremony, Dr. Mohamed Helal, Director of the Student Athletics and Recreation department, expressed how impressed he was with the overall performance of the AUS sports teams and gave credit to the coaches of the respective teams for the great job they have been doing to get the university’s program to this level.

Manipal University athletics coordinator Krishna Kumar gave special praise to the AUS Leopards as leaders in the university sports community and for their overall performance at the event.
Two AUS students compete in debating championship in Sweden


More than 100 universities, mainly from 12 European countries, participated in the event, including prominent institutions such as Manchester University, Stockholm School of Economics, London School of Economics, and the University of Helsinki. The debate championship was overseen by an elite adjudication team that will also be serving as judges in the upcoming European University Debate Championship 2014 and the World University Debate Championship 2014. The debate championship followed the British Parliament style.

The AUS Debate Team placed second in several rounds and finally ranked among the top 40 speakers out of 100.

“Overall, it was a great learning experience. We were able to practice our skills at the international level, and we weren’t disappointed with the results. It is our duty now to further the Debate Club to meet international debating standards and improve our competitiveness,” said Mamour Ahmed, a senior mechanical engineering student.

“Being part of such a prestigious competition and doing well despite the odds is an achievement in itself. We have networked with university debate clubs from across the globe and we have witnessed how a serious debate club goes about its business. This was an eye-opening experience, and I personally will make it my mission to contribute much more to the AUS Debate Club as an international debating force to be reckoned with,” said Tuqa Khalid, a junior electrical engineering student.

“The enthusiasm of our students is key to their achievements and learning experiences. Exposure to stringent competitions and meeting peers with the same interests are ideal circumstances for our students’ personal and professional development. Student Affairs extends its full support to future Debate Club events,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

The students’ participation in the international event was arranged by Office of Student Affairs’ Student Development and Organizations Department.

AUS students volunteer in National Day operetta

Students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) volunteered at the National Day operetta held on December 2 at the Sharjah Flag Island on the occasion of the 42nd UAE National Day. Entitled “The Story of a Flag — a Nation’s Dream,” the event was held Under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Sharjah, by the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority (Shurooq).

The hour-long operetta featured nine musical acts performed by renowned Emirati singers as well as over 750 local schoolchildren. The event was concluded with a spectacular firework display that lit up the sky to an awesome scene of color, sound and light that mirrored the Emirati people’s joy and happiness for their country’s achievements throughout the 42 years.

AUS student volunteers played a great role in helping the organizers make the event a huge success, by helping prior and during the event. The volunteers assisted the organizing team in the preparations before the event as well as in ushering and in many other tasks entrusted to them. The volunteers enjoyed the celebrations after accomplishing their tasks successfully.

Al Anood Dabbour, a sophomore in business management said, “It was an amazing experience for me to work and volunteer for such a well-organized and committed crew, I would definitely like to do it again if given the chance.”

Dr. Moza Al Shehi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs said, “In volunteering in events like this, our students learn the value of patriotism and unity as pillars of a nation’s success. I thank our students for their efforts and for supporting the celebrations of a very important day in Emirati history.”

The students’ participation in the event was organized by Office of Student Affairs’ Community Services.
Student lecture focuses on leadership for impact

The Student Leadership Program of the AUS Office of Student Affairs held an inspirational lecture entitled “Leadership for Impact: Experiences, Lessons, Reflections,” by Bilal Ahmed Maarouf, a senior student majoring in mechanical engineering, on December 17. Maarouf served as a peer leader in the 2011-2012 academic year. Due to his outstanding leadership qualifications, he was selected to serve as a team leader for two consecutive years.

Part of the AUS Student Lecture Series, Maarouf’s lecture reflected his personal opinion on significant attributes that modern leaders should acquire to leave an impact on their communities. His conclusion stated, “To lead your society with impact, you should first lead yourself.”

According to finance freshman Omar Ben Seddik, “The lecture by Bilal Maarouf was simply brilliant. His reception was special and made all the people in the hall eager to know more about him and his leadership journey. It was very interesting since we learned the true meaning of what a leader is, how beneficial and advantageous the leadership program can be and how citizens of different countries can form one peaceful community. He represented the AUS Student Leadership Program well and motivated me to be more involved and active in it.”

“The AUS Student Lecture Series encourages our students to share their life experiences and personal achievements with the AUS community to motivate, inspire and educate. They also greatly challenge and expand the worldviews of students and community members through discussions and dialogue about current local, regional and global issues,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

AUS students enjoy one-day cultural trip to Kuwait

Thirteen students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) enjoyed a one-day cultural trip to Kuwait on December 2, 2013. During the ten-hour tour, students visited famous landmarks and cultural sites. The students also visited famous shopping malls and experienced the food culture that Kuwait is well-known for.

“I am happy to say that the event ‘Kuwait in 10 Hours’ was a great success. Through the few hours with our fellow students in this trip, we were able to show them the beauty of our country and share with them our rich cultural heritage. We have all enjoyed the brief but very memorable day in Kuwait,” said Shahad Al Sharhan, President of Kuwaiti Cultural Club.

“The one-day cultural trip to Kuwait is a unique opportunity for our students to explore and learn about places and cultures that are unique to our neighboring countries. Brief cultural trips are an excellent way of spending quality time and having relief from the daily stresses of student life,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

The students flew out from Sharjah early in the morning and returned at night on the same day. The AUS delegation to Kuwait was accompanied by Office of Student Affairs supervisors Aisha Ali and Salima Dabowi. The event is organized by the Kuwaiti Cultural Club and the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Multicultural Learning Program.
AUS captures fourth consecutive title at the AUS Men’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition

For the fourth time in a row, the AUS men’s swimming team won the intercollegiate swimming title at the Fourth AUS Men’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition, which was held on December 15, 2013. Despite the dearth of annual swimming competitions, the Leopards have trained hard and stayed in top form, which was evidenced by their dominating performance during the competition. Organized by the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Athletics and Recreation Department (SARD), the event featured swimmers from AUS, American University of Dubai, American University of RAK, University of Sharjah and Manipal University. The Leopards won the gold in six of eight individual events. Khalil Sido, Tareef Tamim, Cian Richardson and Shady Waleed won gold in one event each, and Amr Mohd Ashraf won in two. The Leopards also placed first in the 4x50 team medley relay. The final results had AUS in first place with 134 points, University of Sharjah in second place with 88 points and American University of Dubai in third place with 30 points.

The closing ceremony commenced in the Sports Complex lobby where the Director of the Student Athletics and Recreation Department, Dr. Mohamed Helal, was on hand to deliver the welcoming address. During this time he expressed his gratitude to all the participating universities and SARD staff that helped make this event a success.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, congratulated the AUS swimmers for winning the championship once again. She also praised the team for its consistent performances and for maintaining such a high standard, both in and out of the pool.

The Leopards swim away with title at fourth AUS Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition

The Student Athletics and Recreation Department of the Office of Student Affairs organized the fourth AUS Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition on December 4, 2013. It was a great day for the AUS Women’s swimming team as they performed brilliantly to win the overall title. The event featured five races: the 50-meter backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle and 200-meter freestyle team relay. AUS played host to the University of Sharjah and the United Arab Emirates University-Al Ain for the annual event.

The Leopards excelled, finishing first in all of the five races. Cyndi Faber of AUS did exceptionally well finishing in first place in both the 50-meter butterfly and freestyle races. Danya Khafaja of AUS also put up an amazing individual performance winning the 50-meter backstroke and finishing second in the 50-meter breaststroke. AUS swimmer Sally Masoud finished first in the 50-meter breaststroke and second in the 50-meter butterfly.

The closing ceremony took place in the Sports Complex with the Director of the Student Athletics and Recreation Department, Dr. Mohamed Helal, presenting awards to the participating swimmers. During his address he thanked everyone who was involved in making the event a huge success.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, congratulated the AUS women’s swimming team and expressed her gratitude to the University of Sharjah and United Arab Emirates University for taking part in this year’s competition.

The final results had AUS in first place for the fourth time in a row, University of Sharjah in second place with the United Arab Emirates University placed third.
Five active students in the Student Leadership Program (SLP) at American University of Sharjah (AUS) attended a workshop entitled “Talent Leadership: A Proven Method for Developing Leaders and Future Leaders” lead by professor John Mattone on November 20, 2013, at the JW Marriott Marquis Hotel in Dubai. The event was organized by Innoverto, a high-profile training and events management company based in Dubai, UAE.

The workshop addressed the issue of development of future leaders and successful succession planning. Diverse topics were analyzed and presented such as the identification of potential leaders, the need to improve the strategic succession plan, the difference between performance and potential, the significance of objective assessment, the need to develop high-potential and emerging leaders and some research studies conducted in the UAE’s market.

Ahmed Taha, a chemical engineering junior, said, “From this workshop, I learned that one of the most important factors for the development of a new leader is that he needs to create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for himself. First, he must look inside himself and identify his own gifts and deficiencies. Next, the person is responsible for creating a plan that leverages his gifts and addresses his deficiencies. Finally, he should follow the plan every day and connect with it emotionally, believing that the IDP is his only way towards success in the future.”

“The SLP training sessions and workshops aim to improve our student learning and personal growth through organized professional supervision and support. The workshops grant the students the opportunity to interact with skilled people in various fields to inspire them and sustain their acquisition of necessary competencies which will develop their personalities and behaviors,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

SLCS runs successful relaxation technique workshop

Student Learning and Counseling Services (SLCS) received positive feedback from the 28 students who attended the Relaxation Techniques Workshop on November 20, 2013 and participated in progressive muscle relaxation as well as reflexology.

Different factors affecting an individual’s stress level include the physical environment, levels of social interaction, day-to-day work, major life events and decisions, basic daily functions, and something called call positive stress versus negative stress. Stress can be positive, as it is what keeps individuals from leading a sedentary lifestyle. However, the challenge is keeping the stress levels in the optimum range.

The consequences of long-term negative stress can sometimes be fatal; therefore, it is important to educate oneself on how to cope with and manage stress effectively. Medical conditions the arise due to stress include diabetes, hypertension, mood-related disorders and other ailments.

Stress can be positive or negative; it’s idiosyncratic, and a person’s reaction to stress changes over time.

Checklist for Stress Management:
• Are you managing your time well?
• How much do you exercise?
• Are you getting enough sleep?
• Are you eating well? A diet consisting of fruit and vegetables and lean meats is vital to manage your stress levels.
The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) at American University of Sharjah (AUS) hosted orphans under the care of Human Appeal International, Ajman and the elderly from Sharjah Old People’s Home for a day of entertaining activities in Ras Al Khaimah on December 7, 2013. Sponsored by the Cove Rotana Resort, Ras Al Khaimah, the activities were held at the resort’s compound and facilities.

Around 30 student volunteers from OSA’s Community Services joined the trip and assisted over 20 orphans and elderly in the activities. The children enjoyed the fun games and exciting activities in the resort’s Sphere Hall. The elderly were happy sharing their stories with the student volunteers and they expressed great joy in watching the children play and have fun. A short tour along the beach and picture taking followed. The event was concluded with a lunch and the distribution of gifts and giveaways.

“In this simple but meaningful event, we bring people together from various groups of our society. The contrast between the children and the elderly creates a unique opportunity for our students to gain experience in caring for both age groups on one occasion. We thank our students for sharing their time and efforts and to our sponsor for supporting this event that is truly memorable to our guests,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
Throughout Fall Semester 2013, resident students were active in a variety of events in their respective dorms and on campus.

November 11: A truly significant event was a Breast Cancer Awareness Event organized by CD Women’s Dorm and attended by some 75 residents. This rare function came at the most appropriate time as breast cancer has risen to become a dominant health issue.

November 13: UJ Men held a Team Spirit event in the dorm’s garden. This brought together some 88 residents to showcase the unique characteristics of their cultures.

November 19: AB Women’s Dorm in collaboration with the Student Residential Life Association had an unusual outing. 46 students traveled to Global Village. In addition to Global Village being an ideal place for any tourist, the benefits to residents of having time together are pretty obvious – chilling out, releasing stress and forming new friendships.

November 25: CD Men’s Dorm had a Table Tennis Doubles Tournament. The event was attended by 24 residents (12 teams) with the pairs battling each other until the winning team emerged.

November 26: 45 residents turned up for a cultural day event organized by GH Women Dorm in collaboration with the Student Residential Life Department and the Student Council. This function highlighted interesting aspects of life of residents from different cultural backgrounds in the form of food, music and dance as well as drama.

November 26–27: Female residents commemorated the 42nd UAE National Day in style in CDW and EFW dorms.

December 8: The much-awaited SRLD Seven-Aside Soccer finals were held at the AUS Sports Field four weeks after the knock-out round of the tournament. The event brought together some 40 participants in four teams and a good crowd of supporters.

December 9: EF Men’s Dorm staged a well-attended a Winter Night Out event attended by 50 residents showed up. The function highlighted interesting aspects of life of residents from different cultural backgrounds in the form of music, games as well as educational presentations.

In preparation for the Men’s Dorms graduating students’ farewell party, the Resident Idol initiative was again involved to prepare entertainment activities for the event. Over 30 participants volunteered to showcase their talent. In addition to the valuable service of providing entertainment, the volunteers also benefited by developing and sharpening their talents through the rehearsals and performances. At the same time, the sessions continue to serve as an additional opportunity to network and create friendships across dorms, courses and cultural boundaries.

December 10: A little into the second half of the semester, the Graduating Students’ Farewell Party for the Women’s Dorms brought together over 155 residents. The same event for the men’s dorms was held on December 16 and was attended by some 150 students. These two are flagship events in the SRLD calendar.

December 11: PQ Men’s Dorm Special Interests Groups (SIG) Multicultural Night function. This provided an opportunity for the residents to network and decide how they could pursue and finish projects of common interest.

December 23: The Edutainment Challenges for Teamwork and Leadership event organized by GH Men’s Dorm in collaboration with the Student Residential Life Department drew 35 residents.

December 30: The closing sports ceremony took place in the Women’s Welcome Center, where winners of the different tournaments and disciplines were awarded prizes.

There were also many other activities taking place in different dorms including:

- cooking class in GHW
- best room competition in the female dorms
- Zumba workout in EFW
- fun night in KLM
- awareness about smoking in CDW
- appreciation lunch for ideal and active students in EFW and CDW

It was a very eventful semester in which most, if not all, resident students have remained actively involved in diverse sporting, cultural and recreational activities. There is ample evidence of a growing awareness among the residents that university is more than just books, study and assignments. The zeal with which resident students are participating in the different functions in ever growing numbers demonstrates a clear understanding that far from being a distraction and a waste of time, such involvement makes university life much more exciting, productive and fulfilling.
Echoes

Echoes reflects student opinions about the services offered by the Office of Student Affairs. The section provides an opportunity for students to express their views and experiences with student extracurricular activities at AUS.

**Khalil Sido, Finance, Junior**
I am happy to be a part of the AUS men’s swimming team. We won the AUS Intercollegiate Swimming Championship for the fourth consecutive time and established that our swimmers control the pool in the university arena. By organizing such events, the AUS Athletics Department paves the way for promising swimmers from all over UAE to compete and sharpen their skills in the water. I am thankful to all who helped me in representing AUS with pride and in enhancing my swimming career.

**Jannah Al-Salim, Civil Engineering, Senior**
The AUS Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming Tournament each year gives us the opportunity to meet new athletes and swimmers from universities within the United Arab Emirates. Winning the first place is a reward to our team and our coach for all her hard work. This will motivate us to work and train harder. As a team, we will strive for national recognition while also remaining firmly committed to maintaining a strong GPA and meeting the requirements necessary for graduation.

**Mahmoud Tarrab, Management, Freshman**
It was a good opportunity to participate in the Manipal tournament for our team because we gained a lot of experience. We went undefeated winning all of our games. Also, I received the award for Best Player in the tournament, but I could not have done it without my teammates and without my coach. Finally, I want to thank everyone around AUS for supporting us and Inshallah, we can bring more wins in the year to come.

**Doha Tantawy, Accounting, Senior**
The AUS women’s basketball team participated in the second Manipal Sports Tournament, and the defending champion was able to retain its first place. The tournament was a great experience for our team due to its professional organization. I am very glad for being a part of it for the second consecutive year. Finally, I would like to thank my teammates for their huge dedication and our coach for her remarkable efforts to make this team better.

**Dalal Omran, Accounting, Junior**
The Manipal Sports Tournament was very successful. Almost all AUS teams placed in the top three in different sports. The women’s volleyball team won first place for the second year in a row. Hard work and team effort were key to this achievement, as every team member aimed for the gold medal from the beginning. It was a well-organized sports event, and we look forward to participating in such tournaments again.

**Fateh Alkej, Civil Engineering, Senior**
Manipal Sports Festival was a great success by all standards. As a table tennis player, winning this tournament was an important achievement for me. I met and challenged many skillful players from universities across the country. Thus, I would like to thank all the organizers of this competitive athletic event.

**Bassel Khanafer, Civil Engineering, Senior**
On the behalf of AUS football team, I would like to thank SARD for the organizing and conducting the National Day Sports Festival 2013. It was an outstanding experience to be a part of, especially for its cause in celebrating the birthday of the UAE. We look forward to more upcoming great events.
Rehan Ali, Mechanical Engineering, Senior
The National Day Sports Festival provided a great opportunity for young athletes to take part in the annual cricket tournament. Not only was the competition of a high standard but the event was thoroughly enjoyed by all involved. The National Day Sports Festival is an ideal way for AUS students to celebrate the history of the UAE.

Najla Al Moalla, Management, Senior
The trip to Singapore was very interesting and was organized perfectly. As a group, we had the chance to explore many outstanding places in the country, such as the Sentosa Island and Universal Studios. It was a great experience and I would advise all other students to participate in the future trips.

Tarik Alsilwadi, Electrical Engineering, Senior
The cultural trip to Singapore was probably one of the most memorable trips I’ve ever had. Between making new friends and visiting new places, it was definitely a great experience. The trip was well organized and the accompanying advisors made sure everyone was comfortable and was enjoying their time. I would really like to go on at least one more cultural trip with the OSA before I graduate.

Abdulla Bastaki, Electrical Engineering, Senior
The trip to Singapore enriched my cultural knowledge and enabled me to interact with people from different cultures and traditions.

Najla Alzarouni, International Relations, Senior
The Bahrain Universities Model United Nations (BUMUN) opened up a great opportunity to experience how the United Nations works. Through this experience, I was able to put what I learned in my international relations and politics classes into practice. Moreover, the BUMUN allowed me to practice being a delegate discussing important international issues, such as nuclear power.

Maha AlShehhi, Electrical Engineering, Junior
I had the absolute pleasure of participating in the Ninth BUMUN, a two-day Model United Nations Conference held in Bahrain. Along with two other AUS students and students from universities from all around the country, I was honored to represent the UAE Delegation. The conference was extremely beneficial in introducing how United Nations conduct their conferences.
The AUS men’s and women’s basketball and volleyball teams, and the men’s soccer team competed in EURO ROMA -13th International University Tournament held November 14–17, 2013 in Rome. The delegation was led by Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. It was an amazing experience that will go down in the history of AUS athletics as one of the most enriching, cultivating and memorable international sports tournament in which AUS has ever participated. For four days Rome was occupied by over 1,800 student-athletes representing 25 countries and 58 universities from all over the world.

For the Student Athletics and Recreation Department and the AUS student-athletes, the annual tournament is one of the most anticipated events of the academic year, as each team’s members dedicate themselves to a rigorous training regimen to be able to perform at their highest level. The tournament creates memories that extend far beyond the on-court or on-field action. It is an opportunity for AUS student-athletes to build their character as they immerse themselves into a different culture, encountering other people and student-athletes with whom they can share similar experiences. The tournament is a chance for AUS as an institution to show the excellence that we strive for through the spirit of competition.

As anticipated, the level of competition offered by the participating teams in the EURO ROMA-13th International University Tournament did not disappoint and probably exceeded the expectations of some. Four AUS teams reached the quarterfinals and the men’s basketball team put on an outstanding performance to advance to the semifinals, just falling short to the eventual champions, Vytautas Magnus University. The AUS teams rose to the occasion and put forth an effort that is to be commended. There is a new found motivation for our AUS student athletes to work even harder in order to raise the bar in next year’s international sports tournament.

“It was an overall invigorating experience, and I was extremely proud of how our student-athletes conducted themselves both on and off the field of competition,” Dr. Moza Al Shehhi said. She also expressed how impressed she was at the high level of competition and the valiant effort AUS displayed against some of the world’s best student-athletes. Furthermore, she expressed congratulations to Student Athletics and Recreation Department (SARD) for all the hard work and effort that was put forth in making the EURO ROMA-13th International University Tournament one to remember.

AUS Leopards excel in EURO ROMA-13th International University Tournament