Sharjah Ruler attends AUS Club Fair

Colorful stalls festooned with national flags and posters greeted His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), as he inaugurated the university’s Spring 2017 Club Fair at the Student Center on February 6, 2017. Present at the opening ceremony were AUS Chancellor Dr. Björn Kjerfve; former AUS Chancellor Dr. Winfred Thompson, who was visiting campus; and a large number of AUS students, faculty and staff.

The two-day event featured 75 ethnic and interest-oriented clubs with four new clubs being added this semester: Electrical Engineering Club, American Academy of Environmental Engineers and Scientists, American Institute of Graphic Arts and the Kenyan Cultural Club.

Inside the Student Center, various colorful stalls sporting national flags, posters, multimedia displays and music were set up and many students wore Voices of Hope held at AUS for the first time.

Campus cultural diversity highlighted at annual Global Day

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), the university concluded its annual Global Day on March 24. One of the most anticipated events at AUS, Global Day was inaugurated on March 23 by His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Thani, member of the Sharjah Executive Council and

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Volunteerism at AUS

Student Affairs creates extraordinary opportunities for community service in order to embed the value of volunteerism in our youth. Our focus on this practice supports the UAE President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan’s declaration of 2017 as the Year of Giving. Not only are our students joining volunteer programs, they are encouraging others to join. As of March 2017, a total of 1,632 students were registered with our Community Services division and more than 500 volunteers are continuously participating.

Through their volunteer work, our students give back in a number of ways and serve from an hour to several hours per week. Listed here are some of our most popular projects:

• American Sign Language (ASL). A group of 20 students have been teaching ASL to other students three times per week for an hour throughout the year.

• Farm Harvest. Fifteen students were engaged in the process of organic gardening and packing the resultant produce for on-campus farm harvest sales, which proved very popular. The proceeds will be used for a charitable cause.

• Fun Day. Fifty-five students led a plethora of activities on campus for 53 children from the Child Protection Centre, Sharjah Social Services and Human Appeal International, Ajman.

• Hand in Hand. Held in collaboration with Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services, our eighth home renovation project drew more than 105 volunteers to repair the house of an underprivileged family in Sharjah.

• Trip To Kidzania. Thirty-eight student volunteers paired up with 19 orphan children for a day of fun in collaboration with Human Appeal International, Ajman.

• Toy Stories. These workshops started in Fall 2015 with the aim of creating a few hand-made toys to donate to orphanages around the city. At the first workshop this semester, more than 250 students, most with no sewing experience at all, made 125 soft toys.

• Happiness in Small Packages. Fifty-nine students distributed basic food items to more than 390 families. Our volunteers learned to value what they have because they saw that many people are deprived of the basics.

• Volunteerism in Nepal. During Spring Break, 17 volunteers helped renovate a school in Besishahar, Nepal, where they also lead programs in English, mathematics, and arts and crafts.

I thank all the student volunteers for their dedication and efforts in giving back. I also thank the AUS community for their direct or indirect contribution towards volunteerism initiatives implemented by Student Affairs. Together we shall work towards strengthening our volunteerism activities.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi
Dean of Students
Chairman of the Sharjah Department of Statistics and Community Development. The opening was attended by Dr. Björn Kjerfve, AUS Chancellor, along with other senior university officials.

Each year, Global Day showcases the cultural heritage of the many nationalities represented at AUS by turning the university campus into a festival of culture and color. Set up across the AUS Main Plaza were ethnic stalls and pavilions depicting cultural heritage of 35 countries, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Armenia, Pakistan, Lebanon, Bangladesh, Palestine, Libya, India, Sudan and Egypt, among others, giving visitors a taste of the truly multicultural nature of the AUS campus. Visitors were also able to sample a wide variety of traditional food in the outdoor food court.

Organized by the Office of Student Affairs with the assistance of more than 1,000 AUS students, the two-day event also included colorful indoor cultural performances in the university’s Main Auditorium as well as on an outdoor stage, giving students a chance to share their talent and traditions through dance performances and skits.

“IT is the time of year when our students take pride in their cultural identities. As early as December last year, our students started planning for their pavilions and rehearsing for their performances,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students. “Global Day is a grand event at AUS through which our students are able to expand their understanding of cultural diversity and multiculturalism, hone their planning and organizing skills, learn from team building activities, practice leadership
skills, learn the value of volunteerism and the opportunity to socialize and network with their peers,” she added.

“This year, we will experience the event in a new perspective as country pavilions are now centrally located in the campus plaza. This is an outcome of our efforts to enhance the cultural experience and promote sustainable events,” said Dr. Al Shehhi.

Heba Afana, a third-year student majoring in marketing and a member of the Palestinian Cultural Club, expressed her pride in the various cultures comprising the student body and stated that this is the time of the year when students get to express themselves through their cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

The first AUS Global Day was held in 1998 with eight student organizations and 400 students. Since then, the event has grown manifold with this year’s Global Day witnessing the participation of a lively and dynamic student body that comprises approximately 6,000 students from more than 100 nationalities.
Numerous issues pertaining to health, social, environmental and safety concerns were highlighted at the annual Awareness Day, held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Muhammad Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), at AUS on March 6, 2017. The event, organized by the Community Services Division of the Office of Student Affairs, hosted 24 governmental and private organizations and was attended by members of the AUS community, students from schools across the UAE, and the public.

"With everyone’s hectic day to day living, we forget about the many aspects in life that are vital for our safety, health and well-being, social engagement and environmental responsibility," said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students. "We hold the annual AUS Awareness Day as a reminder and an eye opener for the AUS community and our guests about the many issues that impact the quality of life, the society and the environment. We share the same objectives with our partners from various governmental and private organizations who joined us in this event to reach out to as many people as possible."

"Through various presentations, displays, tests, checkups and one-on-one consultations, we were able to send the message across more effectively. It is our aim to make people aware of preventative measures that will enhance the quality of their lives, support a stronger society and promote environmental conservation," she added.

With booths and banners set up at the university’s Student Center, the participating organizations educated attendees about topics ranging from health issues, such as the effects of smoking and driving safety, to volunteering opportunities for those interested in giving back to the community.

Dubai Blood Donation Center also hosted a blood drive for attendees. Staff encouraged people to donate blood as it saves lives, is good for their blood circulation, and is completely safe.

"Today is about raising students’ and the public’s awareness of various issues. Having the blood donation at the Student Center also allows students the opportunity to give back to the community as well as understand the benefits of donating blood,” said Shatha Aymann, an environmental science sophomore and active Community Services volunteer.

The participants at the event included Albayt Mitwahid, American Center for Psychiatry and Neurology, Big Heart, Consumer Protection Department, Department of Economic Development, Dubai Blood Donation Center, Dubai Corporation for Ambulance Services, Dubai Police – General Department of Criminal Investigation, Emirates Strategic Planning Association, Environment and Protected Areas Authority, Human Appeal International – Ajman, Noor Dubai Foundation, Protection of Child Rights, Red Crescent-Sharjah, Road and Transport Authority – Dubai, Sharjah City Municipality, Sharjah Civil Defense, Sharjah Electricity and Water Authority, Sharjah Police, Sharjah Project for Oral and Dental Health, and the University of Sharjah College of Dentistry.
Leopards shine at AUS Intercollegiate Racket Tournament

The AUS Men’s and Women’s Intercollegiate Racket Tournament witnessed exciting matches of skill and determination among 12 men’s teams and 12 women’s teams in its 12th edition held March 13 and 14. Badminton and table tennis competitions were conducted for both men and women, and a squash tournament was held for the men’s teams. The AUS men clinched first place in squash and badminton, and second place in table tennis. The AUS women placed second in badminton and table tennis.

Along with AUS, participating teams came from the University of Wollongong in Dubai, BITS-Pilani Dubai, Manipal University, Skyline University College, Canadian University Dubai, Emirates Aviation University, Ajman University of Science and Technology, Success Point College, Amity University Dubai, University of Sharjah, City University College of Ajman.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students, expressed her happiness in the increase in participation this year and congratulated the AUS teams for their achievements. “It’s great to see so many new universities and new faces getting involved in racket sports and AUS is determined to continue its efforts for the development of such sports in the collegiate sports arena.”

During the closing ceremony and prize distribution, Dr. Mohamed Helal, Director of Student Athletics and Recreation, awarded medals and trophies to the winners, as well as certificates of appreciation to the participating universities. The tournament was organized by Student Athletics and Recreation.

Success Story | Zulfikar Shahpurwala

My name is Zulfikar Shahpurwala and I am an active volunteer and student employee at Community Services. I am currently a sophomore but my relationship with community service and love for volunteering began in my first semester at AUS. I had come from India to study at AUS and was like a fish out of water with no friends and no clue of what to do or what was happening around me.

The one refuge I found in this unknown land was Community Services, which I just happened to stumble upon one day in my first semester. The administrators and the volunteers were so friendly and welcoming that I kept going back every time I missed home. As I spent more time there, I began to know more about their initiatives and started getting involved in them.

The American Sign Language (ASL) and Toy Stories initiatives were my first volunteering experiences and since then, my volunteering profile has increased in terms of hours and initiatives. AUS Farm and Greenhouse initiative, Hand in Hand, Food for the Needy, ASL and Toy Stories are some of the initiatives I have been actively volunteering for since I joined AUS.

I was often asked why I would prefer spending time volunteering rather than going out with friends and what do I get in return. The answer was very simple: volunteering was not just an extracurricular for me; it was a part of my life at AUS by my second semester. Today, we live in a society where we try to take as much as we can from it but seldom or never do we give back anything in return. Community service gives me the opportunity to give back to society and that is my reward, too. I do not require a certificate to confirm my participation in volunteering because the feeling of being able to make a difference, however small it may be, is all that matters to me while volunteering.

These two years with Community Services have been a very humbling experience for me and I attribute most of my success and growth at AUS to being a part of it. These people let me be a part of their family and constantly supported me. I am forever grateful to this family and hope to continue volunteering with Community Services throughout my AUS life to constantly improve and develop the community around us.
AUS student volunteers renovate a house for an underprivileged family

An underprivileged family in Sharjah received some much-needed help from a group of American University of Sharjah (AUS) students. More than 200 students helped renovate a house for an underprivileged family with a child who suffers from autism on February 19–March 5, 2017. As part of the university’s Hand in Hand initiative, the house, located in Sharjah, was renovated over the course of two weeks, and handed over to the family. The project was an initiative of the Community Services division of the AUS Office of Student Affairs, in collaboration with Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services, and is the eighth renovation project completed under the Hand in Hand initiative.

The project was completed after 36 hours of hard work with the volunteers working daily shifts from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. on the renovation of the house, which included furnishing, painting, cleaning and decorating. The AUS community contributed both through manual labor and donations, as the initiative was funded through sales of used books and donation tickets on campus. The project was also sponsored by Al Majal Media and Ghaith Initiative.

The official hand-over of the house was attended by Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students; senior AUS officials and volunteers; officials from Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services; and representatives and volunteers from Al Majal Media and Ghaith Initiative.

Zulfikar Shahpurwala, a student volunteer, said, “Giving back to the community has always brought contentment to my heart, and helping a family in renovating their house has brought a sense of satisfaction words cannot describe. The smile and excitement on the faces of the children and their parents is all the reward we as volunteers need.”

“This is a truly proud moment for AUS as the students were able to provide the fundamental necessity of a safe shelter to a family in need, strengthening the notion of community welfare and its increased importance in today’s society,” said Dr. Al Shehhi.

On another humanitarian note, AUS student volunteers also hosted a Fun Day on campus for children from the Protection of Child Rights, Sharjah Social Services Department, and Human Appeal International, Ajman. The volunteering team comprised more than 50 AUS students who participated to make the day memorable for the 53 children involved. The activities included painting and coloring, a movie and games by the Build A Bear Foundation. At the end of the event, all the children were given hampers filled with gifts. The event was sponsored by Pizza Hut and the Build A Bear Foundation.
Five alumni from American University of Sharjah (AUS) graduated from the month-long Al Maktoum College of Higher Education Academic Training Program 2017 on February 24.

Forty-seven students from 11 universities, namely Cairo University, Qatar University, Kuwait University, University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia, Abu Dhabi University, University of Sharjah, College of Islamic and Arabic Studies, Zayed University, Higher Colleges of Technology, UAE University and AUS, took part in the training program.

The main focus of the Al Maktoum College Academic Training Program (ATP 2017) was to challenge and expand participants’ intellectual abilities and provide them with the knowledge and skills required for active leadership for the 21st century. The AUS delegation 2017 consisted of Khulood Al Jaberi, mechanical engineering; Maryam Jaroor, civil engineering; Amal Kamber, finance; Hessah Al Samahi, mass communication; and Hessa Aljanahi marketing.

The ceremony was attended by the heads of each of the universities and was officiated by His Excellency Dr. Thani Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment.

“Graduating and receiving another certificate of completion just after two months of my graduation meant a lot to me; I have accomplished an interesting mission. This program was not only a new experience away from my family and friends, it was an eye-opener as far as new topics and new challenges are concerned. It was a great way to learn new things, be more independent and confident,” said Al Samahi.

According to Kamber, “Al Maktoum College Training Program was a prospect that not only provided me with educational benefits but also gave me the chance to broaden my horizons in various areas. The experience and knowledge that I have received from this program was distinct and exceptional, and opportunities such as these do not come around often. I believe that exposing myself to a different environment allowed me to learn and adapt to a new culture as well as gave me the chance to teach others about my own culture, which is something that is so important in today's multicultural world. Building on this, getting to know people from cultures that are so drastically different than my own taught me the value of looking for similarities and recognizing differences without allowing them to become barriers. Life lessons such as these are ones that can never be taught in a classroom, but rather are learned through active life experiences.”

“This is a wonderful program where students experience leadership development and get a better understanding about cultural diversity. We are very delighted with the outcome and reviews received from students who took part in this program in the past few years and we look forward to future collaboration with Al Maktoum College,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students.

The Al Maktoum College is held under the Patronage of His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and the Minister of Finance and Industry of the United Arab Emirates. While at AUS, the students were a part of the Student Leadership Program.
AUS Leopards win top honors at the Seventh AUS Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition

The women’s swimming team of American University of Sharjah (AUS) won top honors at the Seventh AUS Women’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition held at the university’s Sports Complex on February 27, 2017. The AUS Leopards fought off tough competition from teams belonging to the University of Sharjah (UOS), American University in Dubai (AUD), Manipal University Dubai (MUD) and the United Arab Emirates University-Al Ain (UAEU) to emerge as victors.

The competition featured five races that included 50-meter backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle and 4x50-meter freestyle team relay. The Leopards excelled in three events, with Danya Khafaga doing exceptionally well and winning first place in both the 50-meter butterfly and the freestyle races. Maryam Al Shazly secured silver in the 50-meter backstroke and bronze in the 50-meter freestyle. Rawan Salah fought well in the 50-meter breast stroke to receive the silver medal. The AUS team defeated the competition to emerge winners in the 4x50-meter freestyle relay.

University of Sharjah and United Arab Emirates University-Al Ain won second and third places respectively in the competition.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students, congratulated the AUS women’s swimming team on their success and expressed her gratitude to all participants. She stressed the importance of organizing such competitions for women in the region and promised that AUS will continue to provide more opportunities to women student athletes by organizing similar intercollegiate competitions in the future.

Voices of Hope held at AUS for the first time

To inspire students through lectures and panel discussions with professionals and experts from various industries in the UAE, American University of Sharjah (AUS) held a special event entitled Voices of Hope. The event, a campaign by MBC Al-Amal, was held in association with INJAZ UAE and the AUS Student Leadership Program, yesterday, February 8.

The event was introduced by Mariam Farag, Head of CSR at MBC Group, followed by a short brief on INJAZ by Sulaf Zu’bi, CEO of INJAZ UAE.

Representatives from Crescent Petroleum, Marriott International, Bukhash Brothers, MBC Group, M Squared Events and DEWA shared their success stories with the audience.

MBC Al-Amal is a CSR initiative of MBC designed to spread awareness of different career options through speaking events at leading universities across the region. The event invites high-caliber leaders from growing industry organizations to share their success stories and shed light on their career path development.

INJAZ UAE connects corporate volunteers with students to prepare them for the professional world, using interactive, experiential and practical mentoring services. At the conclusion of the event, certificates from INJAZ UAE were given to all the attendees.

A division of the AUS Office of Student Affairs, the Student Leadership Program offers a wide range of opportunities that develop students’ leadership, personal and communication skills and fosters ethical leadership qualities.
Seventh consecutive win for AUS at Men’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition

Nine major UAE universities vied for the title at the Seventh American University of Sharjah (AUS) Men’s Intercollegiate Swimming Competition held at AUS on February 28, 2017. The AUS Leopards retained the title for the seventh consecutive year after defeating rivals University of Sharjah with a convincing margin in a challenging competition.

Events included the 50-meter freestyle, butterfly, backstroke and breaststroke; the 100-meter backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle; and the 4x50-meter freestyle relay. AUS accumulated 107 points, followed by University of Sharjah in second place with 88 and American University in Dubai in third place with 43 points.

AUS swimmers brought home a number of medals. Talmir Ishmukhametov secured two gold medals in the 100-meter freestyle and 100-meter backstroke while Ahmed Eladl won the 50-meter butterfly along with a silver in the 50-meter breaststroke. Taher Arafa won silver in the 50-meter backstroke and bronze in the 50-meter freestyle. Amr Mohamed won silver in the 50-meter freestyle and bronze in the 50-meter breaststroke. Mehmood Abdul Salam won the bronze medal in the 100-meter backstroke. AUS swimmers won first place in the 4x50-meter freestyle relay in a closely fought race against University of Sharjah and American University in Dubai.

Other participating universities were University of Wollongong in Dubai, Amity University Dubai, New York University Abu Dhabi, Skyline University College, City University College of Ajman and Canadian University Dubai.

Congratulating the winners Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students, said, “Moments of great motivation in sports don’t have to just come before, during or after a game. They can happen in moments of honor or award. It’s time like these that sports inspire, motivate and energize all of us. It is crucial for our athletes to meet with others across the UAE to gain more experience and enhance their talent.”

AUS students take orphans out for a day of fun!

Thirty eight students from American University of Sharjah’s (AUS) Office of Student Affairs took orphans out for a day of fun on February 18, 2017, as part of an event organized recently by Community Services in collaboration with Human Appeal International.

The daylong event featured a visit to Kidzania in Dubai, a renowned amusement and hands-on learning center for children. The student volunteers paired up with the 19 orphans and accompanied them throughout the day for fun and learning activities. The students were delighted to step into the roles of guardians and felt immensely enriched by this heartwarming experience.

“It was a blissful experience with the wonderful kids—they were a pleasure to be with and I truly hope to continue and contribute to such initiatives that enable us to connect with them,” said Ajith Roy, a finance major.

“It is a unique experience for our students to play the role of guardians to orphans for a day. All student participants expressed self-fulfillment after the event. This one-day event expands our students’ values of benevolence, caring and nurturing. This is a mutually beneficial initiative wherein our students and the orphans interact to learn and care for each other,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students.

In addition to playing the role of a guardian, the volunteers were also responsible for the overall well-being of the children.
Fifty-nine student volunteers participated in the American University of Sharjah (AUS) Community Service division’s Food for the Needy campaign held in Ajman on March 14, 2017. The students spent their evening distributing basic food items like rice, oil, sugar, tea and milk to over 394 families through Al Ihsan Charity Association, Ajman.

The volunteers began by segregating and categorizing the different food items and then packing them into one parcel for each family. Once the preparation was done, the volunteers met and interacted with the families and distributed the food parcels to them.

The campaign was held in collaboration with Al Ihsan Charity Association with the support of Al Ghaith Initiative and donations from the AUS community. Following the distribution of food parcels, the volunteers were taken for a tour of the medical and charity sectors of the Al Ihsan complex, which was a very educational experience for the volunteers.

Student volunteer Salma Abdelfattah said, “This is a wonderful eye-opening experience as it creates an awareness on how many people depend on contributions that are given to them and are in constant need of help.”

According to Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students, “Through this campaign, we want our students to understand the plight of the underprivileged and learn to appreciate the very basic necessities in life. These volunteering experiences provide our students with the opportunity for self-reflection and the guidance they need in leading positive and productive lives.”

Three students from the Student Leadership Program participated in the 20th World Business Dialogue held in Cologne, Germany, on March 6-10, 2017. This year’s topic was “Facing Change: Transforming Industries for Tomorrow.”

“Participating in the 20th World Business Dialogue was an incomparable and unforgettable experience,” said Mohamad Daher, a senior electrical engineering major. “The workshops, company sessions and panels during this conference enhanced my knowledge about changes the fields of business and science will face in the future. This experience also gave me the opportunity to get in contact with CEOs of reputable organizations and businesses. Basically, it was a learning opportunity from a new perspective and exploring through multifaceted sessions and workshops with various subjects such as artificial intelligence, transformation in transportation and energy and sustainability.

“The Student Leadership Program has been participating in the World Business Dialogue since 2012. Every year, our students come back with unparalleled knowledge experience and networking,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students.

“The topic of the conference changes every year to discuss a contemporary business issue by bringing experts and students together. The topic this year was very important as organizations and firms constantly change and adapt their processes and services to survive in our volatile and ever-changing economies and societies,” added Dr. Al Shehhi.
An action-packed spring for Student Residential Life

Mid-way through Spring 2017 is an opportune time to reflect on what has been taking place in the Student Residential Life since our last issue of Insight.

In late January, Student Residential Life teamed up with Judicial Affairs to conduct introductory sessions for freshmen on the dorm rules and regulations and the Student Code of Conduct in general.

On February 19 GH Women had a Similar Interest Groups (SIG) gathering to discuss health matters and the importance of a healthy breakfast. On February 21 more than 30 students gathered in the Women’s Welcome Center for another SIG meeting to discuss issues pertaining to their common majors and related academic concerns. The following day, the Student Residential Life Association (SRLA) in collaboration with Student Residential Life, organized a trip for 85 students to Global Village.

The intra- and interdormitory sports competitions culminated in finals held March 5-8 in the Sports Complex with an awards ceremony rounding off the tournaments. Hundreds of students participated in the traditional individual and team tournaments of table tennis, billiards, badminton, swimming, chess, volleyball, basketball and soccer, as well as newer ones such as WII and PS4.

On March 7 IW Women screened Fences on movie night, while KL Men screened a subtitled spy movie on March 13, the same night EF Women had their SIG cooking class. Still on the same day many female students also gathered in the Women’s Welcome Center for a new initiative to raise awareness on finance issues, especially budgeting, and planned ways of buying clothes and groceries.

Twenty-nine students participated in the Drawing and Painting SIG initiative this semester with the exhibition of their artwork opening on March 14 in the Women’s Welcome Center. This exhibition continued through March 23, with viewers judging the pieces and an awards ceremony on March 26.

On March 14, PQ Men residents staged a cultural learning night featuring an exciting line-up of activities such as puzzles, tug-of-war, and ball games, among many others.

The semester has been eventful with many students involved and benefitting physically, socially and intellectually.

Students attend SCCI Leadership and Entrepreneurship Series

Around 15 students from the AUS Student Leadership Program (SLP) participated in the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s (SCCI) Leadership and Entrepreneurship Series held March 6, 2017 at the SCCI headquarters in Sharjah. This event focused on leadership, entrepreneurship and capacity building of the UAE youth with emphasis on the topic “Our Youth I Our Future: Business Global and Best Practices in the UAE.”

Rahsi Shafana, a junior majoring in economics, said, “The Leadership and Entrepreneurship Series was a great initiative to bring together students from across the region, business leaders and university representatives to discuss the issue of youth unemployment and employability, and how to make a collective effort to do something about the issue. It was great to hear from the various speakers, and understand the issue from their perspectives.”

“We are delighted that our students benefited from this opportunity. The topic of leadership and entrepreneurship is of great interest to them, and taking part in this series also shed light on a common concern among students, which is unemployment,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students.
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.

Ibrahim Ibrahim, Senior, Architecture
OSA has been a great support to our mission of finding intersections between entertainment and academia. It also helped form a spirit that drives students to become more inventive and welcomes more interaction, which in turn forms a healthier learning environment.

Ahmad Al Fardan, Senior, Chemical Engineering
I thought living in the dorms would make me feel homesick, but I was wrong. The supervisors were like fathers to me in the sense that they guided me when I needed guidance. The students were like brothers to me in a way that felt like they were family.

Danya Khafaga, Senior, Finance
The success of the AUS women’s swimming team could not have been achieved without hard work of all the team members. From nourishing new recruits with great potential, such as Maria Kanaan and Rawan Salah into becoming amazing swimmers to training the existing team to constantly improve, all students are welcome to join regardless of their skill level and experience.

Merna Elmedany, Senior, International Economics and International Relations
My experience at the 20th World Business Dialogue was intense and full of inspirational, controversial and advanced sessions about various industries that are facing change. The setting of the conference allowed its participants to engage academically and socially with one another; thus, benefiting from each other’s experiences. I absolutely loved it.

Sameed Bashir, Junior, Mechanical Engineering
Life at AUS wouldn’t have been so sweet if I hadn’t participated in clubs. Working in clubs isn’t only about events, it’s more about the friends you make, and the positives and negatives that you face and learn how to tackle.

Sirak Berile, Junior, Chemical Engineering
The most rewarding part of living in dorms is having a place of your own and the dorm setup does a good job of providing students with a sense of independence and responsibility. Living in the dorms is one the highest aspects in having a complete university experience and it goes without saying that this is a once-in-a-lifetime experience to have under your belt.

Ahmed Mohamed Eladl, Sophomore, Chemical Engineering
The Seventh AUS Men’s Intercollegiate Swimming competition is lately becoming more popular among the other universities and thus more competitive. I am satisfied by my team’s performance as we topped the podium for the seventh consecutive time. Thanks to AUS and its athletics department for hosting such events for college students where they can get great exposure, assess their capabilities, and make changes accordingly.

Asad Hussain, Junior, Finance
Even though the Model UN is a simulation, during those five days I felt like I had the weight of the entire world on my shoulders. The conference exposes you to a world beyond yourself and then shows you how hard it is to bring even a speck of change at the international level. Bearing such responsibilities, the experience taught me patience, resilience, cooperation and diplomacy.
My name is Aamna Noor, and I am graduating this semester. I have played volleyball competitively while at AUS, and over the last four years I have tried very hard to balance academics and athletics. I was nominated to the Beta Gamma Sigma Honor's Society for my academic and extracurricular achievements. I have a 3.57 GPA and have received the Dean's List and Chancellor's List awards.

This is the story of how I joined the volleyball team. In high school, I played lots of different sports and I decided to continue playing volleyball when I joined AUS. At first, I wasn’t a very good player and I only collected balls for the first semester. No one used to take me seriously and for a while I used to go home every day, cry and want to quit, but somehow I always managed to go to practice the next day. I learned later that the coach does that to all beginners to make sure that they’re really committed to the team. They have to learn how to prioritize and decide that if this is something they really want, then they need to be willing to sacrifice and dedicate themselves to it.

Learning this concept was very difficult for me. When I was in high school I never had to truly work hard for anything. In fact, I was naturally good at studying and always got high grades. But when I started playing volleyball at the university level, I encountered a problem. I felt like I was at a plateau, that I was good but not good enough and I wasn’t getting any better. Another problem was that I played well in training but I couldn’t perform under pressure in games. This is when I had to make a decision. Is this something that I want and am willing to commit to? Or am I going to give up?

First I decided that I wanted to improve. I wanted to do this for myself and not for anyone else. I wanted to prove that I could commit to something and achieve it. I wanted to be able to go home every night and honestly tell myself that I did my best. As long as I did my best and didn’t leave anything behind I would be happy with myself even if I wasn’t in the starting six and even if I didn’t win any tournaments.

Achieving this was a two-step process. To start, I had to be willing to give 120 percent every day to the physical training. I had to eat healthy, hydrate enough, sleep properly and put in extra time at the gym. I also learned the importance of time management. Once I made the effort to achieve my best physical condition, I had to work on my mental condition. Like I mentioned, I was very nervous and insecure on the court and I couldn’t perform well under pressure. Any sport is 50 percent mental and 50 percent physical, so if you doubt yourself even a bit then you will lose. This very difficult to overcome. The only thing that I can tell you is that you have to believe that you’re the best. What helped me do that is getting advice from the older players. It also helped me to know that I’m at my best physical state so that I am good enough. All I had to do was believe it. Once you develop confidence and you start to believe in yourself, you can truly conquer anything. It was only at this point that I became a very good player and a valuable asset to the team.

Throughout my experience on the team, I was the only player at all spiker positions. This taught me how to be a flexible player. In the same way, you have certain skills that you can adapt to any position, even though they are all slightly different. You can do this with all skills in your life. Don’t think that you can’t do something simply because you’ve never done it before. You should always be willing to learn.

Volleyball taught me the meaning of committing to something and seeing it through. It was the first thing in my life that I had to work for, so it taught me the importance of hard work and committing to something and sacrificing whatever is necessary to achieve it. Once you know that you can apply this kind of dedication to a sport, then you can also apply it to any other area of your life. If you only remember one thing from this story, let it be this: if you believe in yourself you can conquer anything that you want in life.
For the second year in a row, a delegation from American University of Sharjah (AUS) secured the Outstanding Delegation award at the National Model United Nations (NMUN) in New York City, held March 19-23, 2017. The eight-student delegation from the AUS Student Leadership Program was recognized for the award during the concluding ceremony held in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations headquarters.

The AUS delegation represented San Marino in six different committees. Ahmad Azari was assigned in General Assembly 1, Ayesha Ali and Mohd Atallah in General Assembly 2, Lobna Abouelleil in General Assembly 3, Asad Hussain and Uzma Ahmed Din in High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), Moza Alshamsi in United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), and Manal Machou in International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Ahmad Azari was appointed the chair of his committee in GA1 while Manal Machou was selected the chair and rapporteur for Security Council B.

“The NMUN has helped me solidify my interest in politics, international relations and diplomacy,” said Lobna Abouelleil, a sophomore majoring in international relations. “Having to cooperate, negotiate and lead a bloc of approximately 60 delegates to come up with a resolution was challenging, but fulfilling and exhilarating. Moreover, in the theme of international relations, I got to meet students from all over the world and interact with global personalities which further helped shape my experience at NMUN and make it a memorable one.”

“This recognition is another great achievement for our university, which came about with the dedication and commitment of our students. Through intensive training workshops and research, the AUS delegation was fully prepared to utilize its diplomacy skills and succeed at NMUN. I congratulate our students for a job well done,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Dean of Students.