AUS celebrates cultural diversity at Global Day festival

Under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), Sheikh Sultan Bin Ahmed Al Qassimi, Chairman of Sharjah Media Corporation opened AUS Global Day festival on March 13, 2014.

Under the theme “Peace throughout the World” the 16th edition of Global Day was a celebration of the university’s multicultural campus and depicted how diverse ethnicities at AUS coexist and how students celebrate their own cultures as well as those of their peers. The two-day festival was organized by the Office of Student Affairs and featured a wide variety of cultural traditions, providing AUS students a chance to exhibit their cultures through traditional art, cuisine, dress and architecture. The

SLP delegation attends Al Maktoum College Academic Training Program 2014

Students from the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program (SLP) attended Al Maktoum College Academic Training Program at Al Maktoum College of Higher Education in Dundee, Scotland, February 9-March 7, 2014.

The program aims to challenge and expand all student participants’ intellectual skills to provide them with the knowledge and skills required for active leadership for the 21st century. Participating students included
VCSA Column

Discovering diversity

AUS is highly supportive of developing our students’ multicultural understanding, as we represent a small cosmopolitan city with about 80 nationalities that form the AUS community. To break cultural barriers, the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) has expanded opportunities for multicultural learning and interaction out of the classroom. Visits to heritage villages, historical monuments, cultural food festivities, ethnic club cultural learning interactive events, and local and international multicultural trips to China, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Spain, Los Angeles, New York, Switzerland, France, Kuwait and Singapore are all aimed to enable students to discover diversity. OSA’s multicultural activities are popular among students curious to learn and interact with their other cultural counterparts. Students enjoy cultural learning beyond the classroom and develop respect for other cultures through these activities. Students feel comfortable interacting with those from other cultures while they travel and live together for a short time, developing an understanding of their culture, lifestyle and traditions and, above all, learn to tolerate and accept them the way they are. I witnessed harmonious relations established between students, and even if language was a barrier, signs and gestures worked to communicate.

This break, students visited the Amish Community in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania and learned about their simple traditional lifestyle, history and beliefs. Traveling with the OSA Multicultural Learning Program is with a purpose and not merely for enjoyment. We are teaching students to thrive on differences and work together towards growth and development of a diverse society that is inclusive and celebrates cultural diversity. One experience of engaging in student multicultural activity is a lifetime memory to cherish.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

SLP delegation attends Al Maktoum College... continued from page 1

business administration students Sarah Al Sayegh and Fatima Al Qasimi; electrical engineering student Dalya Al Rayyes; and chemical engineering student Mariam Al Duhoori.

“The whole experience was very beneficial and interesting. I learned a lot about several topics that I did not previously know. I really enjoyed the trips, the lectures and the group discussions. One of my favorite aspects of the program was the female speakers. They were such an inspiration; they told us about their stories and the challenges they had to overcome. The leadership workshop was very beneficial as well. We learned everything we need to know about being a successful female Emirati leader,” said Sarah Al Sayegh, a fresh graduate in finance.

“Al-Maktoum training program has widened our horizon about women leadership and multiculturalism. Throughout the trips, we recognized how culture shapes people’s behavior and perspectives. Also, we became aware of our strengths as women leaders and how we can reflect these strengths in society to reach the UAE’s vision. I am now very optimistic about the future and hope that through my work, I can reach the level of trust that Sheikh Hamdan gave us,” said Dalya Al Rayyes, a fresh graduate of electrical engineering.

“We are very pleased with the outcome of Al Maktoum College Academic Training Program as it is an excellent program that focuses on leadership management with an emphasis on globalization. SLP students benefited greatly from the diversity of the sessions and the engagement in intellectual discussions guided by professionals in the fields of multiculturalism and leadership. Being away from home for five weeks and being exposed to a new culture is by itself a learning experience. We thank Al Maktoum College for offering our students the opportunity to be part of this wonderful program, and we look forward to future collaboration,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
The Office of Student Affairs (OSA) welcomed new students with a week of orientation activities and programs held from January 24 to 29, 2014. The activities were organized to help incoming students transition into life at AUS, become aware of the extracurricular offerings, and learn to participate in and adapt to life at the university.

OSA welcomed new students and their parents on the first day of orientation and answered their queries through its main student information desk. More than 200 orientation packets were prepared for that day, providing information on the services offered by AUS.

A group of returning students from various clubs and organizations comprised the new student orientation team and worked with the OSA staff to assist the newcomers. These students were selected according to their student life experiences and their willingness to help ease the transition of new students to university life.

The week-long open house activities in the Student Center included computer games, DJ music, movies and many other recreational activities. City tours to Sharjah and Dubai familiarized new students with the neighboring areas and points of interest. Around 50 students joined the Sharjah tour and 80 joined the Dubai trip.

The freshman reception dinner was attended by around 150 students in the presence of Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Dr. Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations; and other senior OSA and AUS officials. The gathering provided an opportunity for OSA administrators to interact with new students and introduce them to the non-academic services offered by OSA.

“You will learn from every corner of this university for your life and for your future. AUS provides you with a lot of learning opportunities in and outside the classroom. I encourage you all to seize these opportunities for your personal growth and development. The coming years that you will spend at AUS will surely be the most precious and memorable moments of your life and always remember that Student Affairs is here to make your university experience more meaningful and productive,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, in her welcome address during the dinner.
event also included live performances by AUS students.

“Global Day is a student tradition at AUS celebrating cultural diversity,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “The weeks leading to Global Day are full of excitement for our students as they prepare for this big event on campus. We see our students progress and transform their ideas and concepts into works of art. This is the time of year when we witness the best talents at AUS coming together on one platform,” she added.

“We have 34 nationalities presented at this year’s Global Day, with three participating for the first time: the Ethiopian, the American and the Italian clubs. Global Day is not just a cultural event; it is a rich practice field wherein our students learn the value of planning, team work, cooperation and time management while honing their skills in finance, budgeting, engineering, public relations, arts and other areas,” Dr. Al Shehhi said. She also expressed her gratitude to the event’s organizers and participants in making the event a success.

The event, which was open to the public, attracted a large number of visitors who were able to sample a variety of traditional food available at the Food Fair. The country pavilions, set up all across the AUS Main Plaza, depicted culture and traditions of various countries represented among the AUS student body including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Pakistan and Egypt, among others.

“This event gives me the chance to learn about the different countries and traditions my friends come from,” said Anum Fatima, a freshman computer engineering student. “Almost all the students take part in this festival; students not only work in helping set up clubs representing their cultures but they also help friends with their pavilions. This event truly brings the entire student body together as one,” she added.

Global Day was first held in 1998 with only eight student organizations and 400 students. Participants now include 34 student clubs and over 5,000 students from more than 92 nationalities.

The opening ceremony was also attended by Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Acting Chancellor of AUS; along with senior AUS officials, faculty members, students, media personnel and members of the public.

The annual Global Day is one of the most anticipated events with thousands of people attending every year.
SLP students take part in Climate Leadership Conference 2014 in California

Three students from the Student Leadership Program (SLP) at American University of Sharjah participated in the Climate Leadership Conference held in San Diego, California February 24-26, 2014.

The Climate Leadership Conference is not only an annual exchange for addressing global climate change through policy, innovation and business solutions, it is also considered a platform for powerful collaboration. Forward-thinking leaders from business, government, academia, and the non-profit community convene to share energy- and climate-related solutions, introduce new opportunities, and provide support for those addressing climate change in their operations.

“It was my first trip with the university, and for a pure academic reason, which made it memorable and beneficial in all aspects,” said Fatma Al Yousuf, a junior student majoring in both computer engineering and biology. “Going to the conference opened my eyes to a future full of inventions and ideas for a better climate. Big and small companies showed how they follow and create environmental laws. I was really motivated to be surrounded by professionals and to know that we can make a difference in the laws to protect our planet.”

According to Maha Al Shehhi, a junior majoring in electrical engineering, “The Climate Leadership Conference offered great insight into how the world is dealing with climate change. I was motivated to take a deeper look into how our climate is changing globally. I benefited greatly from the dozens of experts who attended the conference and suggested great solutions to facing climate change. I found the merging of the business, scientific, and academic worlds particularly interesting.”

“During the conference, SLP students tackled issues concerning climate change and understood how decisions made by governments and businesses can greatly affect our world. Students learned the importance of taking action towards climate change through various means of commitment. They got a chance to network and better recognize their role in contributing to the road towards reducing emissions,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

SLP students attend financial literacy workshop

The Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program, in collaboration with the Emirates Foundation for Youth Development, held a financial literacy workshop entitled Esref Sah on March 2, 2014 at AUS.

Twelve students attended the workshop and learned about various topics related to financing, spending and saving. The Esref Sah workshop is intended to build a national program that addresses the challenges young people face in managing their personal finances. Research has shown that young people around the world and particularly in the UAE often struggle to manage the wide array of sources of debt and often do not have sufficient knowledge to manage their future asset base. “Although I’m majoring in finance, the workshop extraordinarily benefited me. I learned what type financial personality I was, and how to improve my own dealings with financial issues,” said Khalid Al Naqbi, a junior majoring in finance.

“The Financial Literacy Workshop was organized under SLP’s Student Training and Workshop Series. It shed light on financial management, a skill that many of our youth lack these days. The workshop was an eye opener and students learned how to manage their current and future assets more wisely. We thank the Emirates Foundation for Youth Development and look forward to future cooperation for the betterment of our students and communities,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
In celebration of the cultural diversity at American University of Sharjah (AUS), the university’s Student Center was teeming with enthusiastic students at the Spring 2014 Club Fair on February 17. This semi-annual event, which features 68 participating clubs this semester, introduces students, especially freshmen, to the diverse ethnic and interest-oriented clubs present on campus.

The fair, organized by the Office of Student Affairs, does not only introduce freshmen to the student-led organizations at AUS, but it also gives the students who manage these clubs the chance promote their organizations and spread awareness about their visions and activities. Organized by the Office of Student Affairs, the event features a competition among participating clubs for the best club booth.

The Club Fair was inaugurated by Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Acting Chancellor, and Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, in the presence of other senior officials.

“This is a good start to the semester,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. “Our students’ enthusiasm is reflected in their creativity expressed through the various activities and exhibits on offer. The Club Fair provides an opportunity for our ethnic clubs to put their teams together and gather momentum for the upcoming Global Day which is in a month’s time. I thank our students for their efforts in making this event such a success,” she added.
Forty-three students from American University of Sharjah (AUS) visited New York on a cultural trip recently. Part of the Office of Student Affairs’ (OSA) Student Multicultural Learning Program, the student group comprised four nationalities. The visit started with a tour around the city’s famous landmarks, from Manhattan’s northern-most area, Harlem, to the southern-most point, Battery Park, and continued with a cruise around the Hudson River and the iconic Statue of Liberty.

The students also visited Central Park for a chance to walk along its fountains, monuments, sculptures, bridges and ponds. The group learned about the park’s design and history. After the walking tour, the students visited the Empire State Building and stopped by the well-known Rockefeller Center for an opportunity to experience the well-known Top of the Rock Observatory.

The group went to a performance of The Jersey Boys, an award-winning Broadway show. It also toured Radio City Music Hall, one of the greatest showplaces in New York. The stage door tour included a visit backstage and to the auditorium, stars’ changing rooms and other chambers of the renowned indoor theater.

During the trip, the students also visited the city of Philadelphia in the state of Pennsylvania. Here the students took a tour of the famous Liberty Bell, Constitution Square and Independence Hall. The cultural tour
included a visit to the Amish community in Lancaster County. Students enjoyed an authentic and organic Amish meal and explored Amish farms on board the traditional buggies. They saw first-hand the Amish way of living, which does not include the benefits of modern technology.

“This was a well-spent spring break for our students,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “I am glad to see how satisfied they are and how they improved their social skills and enhanced their understanding of cultural diversity,” she added.

“I found the trip to be very exciting as we explored so many unique places. OSA did an amazing job as the trip was well-organized and the overall environment was friendly. If given the opportunity, I would like to join OSA trips in the future as well as it proved a great experience,” said Mohammad Ejaz, a senior management student.

Fatima Binashour a sophomore chemical engineering student said: “Being part of the multicultural program for the first time, I was amazed at how well-organized the trip was. I made new friends, learned about another country’s culture, and also had a great time during this trip!”

The AUS delegation was headed by Dr. Al Shehhi and accompanied by Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations, as well as OSA staff supervisors.
Nine outstanding American University of Sharjah (AUS) students were awarded Active Student Scholarships at a special ceremony held at AUS recently.

The Active Student Scholarships are awarded to undergraduate students who display excellence in extracurricular activities, including community service projects, clubs and the Student Leadership Program. The awards were presented by AUS Acting Chancellor, Dr. Thomas Hochstettler. Also in attendance were Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and other senior officials.

“We at AUS value the importance of extra- and co-curricular activities because they add so much to the student experience. As a residential university and as a university that values all aspects of human development, and seeks to promote human development in all aspects, we are pleased and proud to be able to offer such excellent programs in the area of student activities,” said Dr. Hochstettler. “And we are pleased to be expanding those programs in ways that will continue over the course of time to serve students ever better and to make them ever better citizens of the world,” he added.

Dr. Al Shehhi congratulated the awards winners and said, “This semester we have received many applications for the scholarship. Competition has been stringent as many applicants are well-qualified for the scholarship,” she said. “This is a good indicator that many of our students understand how extracurricular activities complement and enhance their learning experience at AUS. These students have become highly competent and achieved exceptional results in their chosen fields of interest with activities. I congratulate all the winners and wish them success in their academic endeavors,” she added.

The scholarships for Spring 2014 were awarded to Student Clubs and Organizations members Nawshad Akther Chowdhury, Amr Alaa Abd El Aal and Muhammad A. Muzaffar; Community Services volunteers Nada El Hindi, Maissam Mustafa and Mariam Kamel; and Student Leadership Program participants Hanin Abbas Hazeem, Yasser Al Banna and Loay Farhat.

AUS debate team bags three trophies at debate competition

The Debate Club at American University of Sharjah (AUS) earned three trophies in the 2014 Skyline University Crossfire Debate Competition held February 19 at the Skyline University College campus. Students Tuqa Khalid, Rishabh Bafna, Husain Rangwalla and Nazla Anwar represented the AUS debate team and won the awards for the Best Overall Debating Team, Best Proposition Case and Best English Speaking Skills.

Students from seven participating universities debated in a unique format called “crossfire,” which consists of five rounds that allow sufficient argumentation and refutation for debaters. The motion was: “Social Media and Its Effect: Boon or Bane to Society.” Among the participating universities were BITS Pilani, Manipal University, Middlesex University and the University of Wollongong in Dubai.

“It is no surprise that our Debate Club has brought home more trophies to add to their long list of achievements. Our students in the Debate Club are known to be very active and enthusiastic in promoting their interests and in representing the university in various debate competitions locally and internationally. I congratulate the Debate Club for this great achievement,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

The students’ participation in the event was organized by the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Development and Organizations Department.
Eighteen AUS students receive athletic scholarships

Eighteen outstanding student-athletes at American University of Sharjah (AUS) were awarded athletic scholarships for Spring 2014 at a special ceremony held at AUS. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Acting Chancellor of AUS, congratulated the students and said, “The combination of scholarship with athletic activity is a growing program. We have more scholarships for student-athletes this year than we have ever had before. As student-athletes, you understand the importance of having a full life, and anything you can do to expand your experience and improve your leadership skills in different ways teaches you how to be a team member and how to contribute to the greater good. These are life lessons that you will use after graduation, and they will make you a better human being as you go forward.”

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, also congratulated the students on their achievements. “The partial athletic scholarship at AUS is a great program that is absolutely necessary in order to acknowledge and reward AUS student-athletes who have shown excellence in sports,” she said. “It is very important that AUS continues to show support and appreciation to student-athletes, as they are special people who have managed to find success not only in the classroom, but also out on the field of competition as well,” Dr. Al Shehhi added.

The recipients this semester were Ahmed M. S. Ewaida, Bassel Mohamad Khanafaer, Ahmad Charif and Mohamad Tayeh for men’s soccer; Mohammad Chohaybar Zidan Ghada and Yousef Mousa Yousuf Shatat for men’s basketball; Rehan Ali, Musaab Khalid Khan and Muhammad Anwar Khan Nasir for cricket; Vahid Farbod and Khaled Ahmed Amir for men’s volleyball; Mohammad Osama Siddiqui for men’s squash; Arun Varghese for men’s badminton; Ashley Ann Mansour and Hams Alwalid Nageib for women’s basketball; Shahdan Ibrahim Barakat for women’s table tennis; and Sally Masoud and Danya Khafaga for women’s swimming.

The scholarship program aims to encourage, improve and develop sports at the university and consists of a 50 percent tuition remission. The scholarship is granted on a renewable semester basis and aims to support the student-athletes who have limited financial resources and who demonstrate athletic excellence as well as outstanding sports qualities.
A series of student forums for representatives of student groups actively engaged in extracurricular activities were held during the month of February in the AUS Student Center.

Organized by the Office of Student Affairs (OSA), the forums were held in four sessions during which students raised their concerns about events and activities and improvement of university services and facilities, among other topics. Over 300 students participated in the forums and represented various student groups, including the Student Council, the Student Leadership Program, clubs and organizations, sports teams, Community Services, and the Peer Mediation Program.

The forums were attended by Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Acting Chancellor; Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; and other senior OSA officials. Dr. Hochstettler shared his thoughts with the Student Council members regarding the issues they raised. He also encouraged them to speak about both the positive and negative aspects of the student life in AUS.

“These forums strengthen the trust we want to build between the Office of Student Affairs and our students, we want to open communication channels that enable our students to raise their concerns and share their thoughts and views,” said Dr. Al Shehhi. “We also seek to assess the effectiveness of our programs in satisfying our student needs through these forums,” she added.

Student forums are organized every semester to give students the opportunity to discuss issues concerning student life and extracurricular activities at AUS. The forums also allow students to ask questions, propose ideas, and share thoughts and viewpoints about student services on campus.

Student-athletes from AUS took part in the Higher Education Sports Federation (HESF) karate and taekwondo competitions recently.

Five student-athletes represented AUS in the karate competition. AUS finished third overall in the competition, and for the first time had participants in each of the five weight classes, which allowed AUS the opportunity to earn maximum points as a team. The most impressive performance in karate was put on by AUS student-athlete Mahmoud Chohaybar Zidan, as he earned first place in the under 80kg weight class after being away from competition for eight years.

Representing AUS in the taekwondo competition was Majed Mohammad Al Marzoqi. A freshman at AUS, he also represents the UAE on the national taekwondo team. Majed dominated his opponents in the under 58kg weight class en route to a gold medal for the HESF competition.

Martial arts are rapidly gaining popularity in the UAE and there is no exception when it comes to AUS, as many student athletes have been training and practicing many different styles. The HESF competitions are a great way to measure where our student athletes are at in comparison to those from other universities.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor of the Office of Student Affairs extended her congratulations to the AUS student athletes who competed in the HESF competitions. “Promising results earned in the HESF karate and taekwondo competitions will definitely help propel the popularity at AUS even further as the teams continue to improve and attract some of the best student athletes not only on campus, but around the country and region,” said Dr. Al Shehhi.
SLP students take part in Alleem Business Congress

Twenty-four students from the AUS Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program (SLP) participated in the Annual Alleem Business Congress on January 21, 2014 at Radisson Blu Hotel, Sharjah. The congress was organized by the Alleem Business Center.

The Alleem Business Congress was a unique forum for business leaders, professionals and students to meet and work together in order to develop business strategies and discuss contemporary economic, social and environmental challenges.

“The congress hosted several key persons in business and academia who discussed the importance of project management, from where it first began during the Cold War till today, in countless fields that utilize project management to lead, control, plan and organize a team or for self-management,” said Mina Mazin, a sophomore majoring in economics. “The speakers in the three concentrated sessions emphasized that management and leadership complement each other. Also, I learned about the methods in which one could initiate a project in context of its risks, challenges and goals. I am now aware that project management is a vital skill to execute tasks in the long run because it teaches individuals to sustain their true vision.”

“The Student Leadership Program participates yearly in the Alleem Business Congress as we believe it is a significant platform for students to meet and interact with professionals in the field of leadership. This year, students got a chance to learn about real-life business cases analyzed by experts and based on the market’s best practices. We thank Dr. Rashid Alleem for his continuous collaboration with the Student Leadership Program and look forward to future opportunities for our students,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

AUS cricketers claim Invitational Cricket Series in Malaysia

The Leopards of American University of Sharjah (AUS) defeated Sunway University in an exciting final to win the Invitational Cricket Series held by Sports Network Solutions (SNS) at the SSU Club Cricket Ground in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia recently.

Batting first, AUS accumulated a total of 214 runs with Hammad Hussain scoring 72, and being ably assisted by Ahsan Aftab, Mohammed Umar Shaikh and Mohsin Rashid Sheikh. In reply, Sunway University batsmen found it difficult to face the fierce bowling attack of Fazal Rehman – with three wickets and a run-out – Muhammad Nasir, Syed Hussain, Musaab Khalid Khan and Faizan Aqeel Rahim. Aided by some spectacular fielding, the Leopards bowled out Sunway University for a paltry total, winning the final by a mammoth 161 runs.

Hammad Hussain of AUS was declared the Man of the Match while Umar Shaikh won the Batsman of the Series award. The Leopards were presented with the winning trophy and medals while Sunway University received the runner up trophy from SNS officials. Dr. Mohamed Helal, Director of AUS Student Athletics and Recreation Department, was also present on the occasion.

In her message on the occasion, Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, congratulated the players on their great success and appreciated their hard work and dedication throughout the season. She said that such international achievements bring honor not just to the students but to the university as well.

The series had begun with AUS playing against the TPCA cricket team, which the Leopards won by nine runs. Elected to bat first, AUS openers Umar Shaikh and Hammad Hussain once again gave the Leopards a flying start.

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Peer leaders adopt freshmen during new students’ orientation

The AUS Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program (SLP) took an active role during new student orientation held on January 24, 2014. Peer leaders “adopted” new students and will continue to orient them throughout the semester.

Peer leaders’ main role is to ease the transition of incoming freshmen into university life. Each peer leader is required to adopt 2–5 freshmen and to mentor them on coping with university life. Not only does this program benefit new freshmen, but it also provides current students with opportunities to develop and enhance their leadership skills. Before meeting with freshmen, the Student Leadership Program trained the peer leaders to deal with the needs of freshmen in order to help improve their university experience. Peer leaders also encourage new students to enroll in the Emerging Leaders Program to begin their participation in the Student Leadership Program.

“Starting university is an important phase in our lives, and with the help of the Student Leadership Program I was able to improve this phase for many new students. My peer leader was the main reason I wanted to participate in this program. By being in the SLP, I have improved my leadership and communication skills, which ought to help me through the coming years,” said Abdullah Afify, a sophomore majoring in electrical engineering.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my experience as a peer leader. It reminded of the challenges I faced during my first semester at AUS. Being able to help new students overcome similar challenges makes me happy! I like to think of this experience not only as a way to give back to AUS but also as a way to build my character and self-confidence,” said Shahed Qamhiya, a junior majoring in international studies.

“The Student Leadership Program provides students with programs that engage them in real-life situations such as the Peer Leadership Program. We are happy to see that our peer leaders are responsible, respectful and capable of solving problems. Being part of the Peer Leaders Program aids students in developing their skills in leadership, communication and conflict resolution. This is a one-year program, and we encourage students who are interested in being part of the program next year to register early in order to guarantee a space,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani encourages youth to follow their dreams

The AUS Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program organized an inspirational lecture by AUS alumnus, His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdullah Al Thani, Chairman of the Department of Statistics and Social Development, on February 11, 2014. The talk was entitled “Follow your Dream.”

The Reach Out To Asia (ROTA) brand ambassador is the first Qatari to climb Mount Everest and his expedition in May 2013 aimed to raise $1 million for ROTA’s education projects in Nepal. According to Sheikh Al Thani, his mountaineering expeditions aim to raise awareness and charity about various social issues.

A part of the AUS Student Lecture Series, Sheikh Al Thani’s lecture also reminisced about the effort it took to achieve his goal of climbing Mount Everest. According to him, the key to success is being well prepared and planning for the future.

Mennat Khaled Khalil, a sophomore student majoring in international relations, said, “I found Sheikh Al Thani’s lecture extremely motivating. Inspired by his remarkable achievements and challenges, I learned that nothing is impossible as long as one is prepared, determined and is willing to work hard and sacrifice.”

Zahra Al Fardan, a finance senior, said, “Hearing about Sheikh Al Thani’s story at the beginning baffled me; I kept thinking why would a person voluntarily want to go through so much hardship just to reach one goal. By the end of the lecture, it hit me: it is because that one goal would be worth it. I learned that the worst obstacle in following your dreams is your own self-doubt. This is a real life example of how much you can accomplish when you believe in yourself. This taught me that all your hard work and efforts will pay off, and one day, you will be standing giving a speech about how you reached your dream goals.”

“A simple but powerful message to believe in yourself was the highlight of the talk by His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani. Speaking from his own personal experience, Sheikh Al Thani surprised the audience through his willpower and willingness to beat all odds and climbing Mount Everest. Climbing Mount Everest is no small goal, it is a true example of self-determination and hard work. We thank His Excellency Sheikh Mohammed Al Thani for his encouraging talk and wish him continuous success,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

AUS hosts ceramics exhibition with Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services

The AUS Community Services Department held a ceramics exhibition featuring ceramic work done by children under the care of Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services (SCHS) at the AUS Student Center on February 12, 2014. The featured pieces were crafted by 16 children with special needs from SCHS.

The exhibition also displayed handmade jewelry made by the children and featured a live demonstration to show the process they follow in making the ceramics and handmade jewelry, all for sale at the exhibition.

“In partnership with Sharjah City Humanitarian Services (SCHS), we continue to reach out to the community to raise awareness about humanitarian issues. OSA and SCHS join hands in many projects that strengthen our ties and provide volunteering opportunities for our students,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

“The ceramic exhibition we hosted on campus is aimed at enlightening the society’s youth that children with special needs are equally creative given proper attention and guidance. These children receive special care but they are just like any of us who have their own talents, skills and strengths. I very much admire the ceramic work on display; it is an expression of these children’s creativity,” she added.
The Student Athletics and Recreation Department (SARD) of the Office of Student Affairs (OSA) held the New Student Athletics Orientation for Spring 2014 on January 28, 2014, at the Sports Complex.

The New Student Athletics Orientation offers an action-packed environment with dynamic demonstrations from current AUS student-athletes and fun-filled games that quickly break the ice between new students through friendly competition. This semester’s New Student Athletics Orientation provided all of that and more as the newest members of the AUS family entered the Sports Complex to find out exactly what SARD is all about.

Dr. Mohamed Helal, Director of Student Athletics and Recreation Department, welcomed and thanked the students for their attendance. Dr. Helal spoke about the sports and fitness programs offered at AUS, in addition to the variety of sports facilities offered. Furthermore, the new students were given valuable information on how they could have the opportunity to represent the university at the intercollegiate level.

Shortly after, two entertaining demonstrations were put on by members of the AUS men’s soccer and basketball teams. A creatively choreographed soccer freestyle routine featured an amazing display of quick dribbling and fancy footwork, while members of the AUS men’s basketball team showed some their high-flying acrobatics in a rim-rattling dunk show. The new students were then given the opportunity themselves to be a part of the action when they were called upon by the AUS coaches to participate in a few fun-filled games. The event also included registration for the sports teams and a tour of the Sports Complex.

Although Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor of the Office of Student Affairs, could not personally attend, she conveyed her gratitude and well wishes for new students joining AUS for the spring semester and said she hoped that they would have a cultivating and invigorating experience during their time here at AUS. Dr. Al Shehhi also encouraged the new students to take full advantage of all that SARD and the other OSA departments offer.

New Student Athletics Orientation introduces athletic programs

MBTI! The popular psychometric test

What is MBTI? That may be the first question that comes to your mind. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment is a psychometric questionnaire used to help people to understand how they perceive the world. The test helps to understand what personality type one has. There are 16 different personality types.

ENFJ: The Giver, who has extroverted feeling with introverted intuition.
ESTP: The Doer, who has extroverted sensing with introverted thinking.
ESFJ: The Caregiver, who has extroverted feeling with introverted sensing.
ENTP: The Visionary, who has extroverted intuition and introverted thinking.
ENTJ: The Executive, who has extroverted thinking and introverted intuition.
ESFP: The Performer, who has extroverted sensing with introverted feeling.
ENFP: The Inspirer, who has extroverted intuition with introverted feeling.
ESTJ: The Guardian, who has extroverted thinking with introverted sensing.
ISFP: The Artist, who has introverted feeling with extroverted sensing.
ISTP: The Mechanic, who has introverted thinking with extroverted sensing.
ISFJ: The Nurturer, who has introverted sensing with extroverted feeling.
INTP: The Thinker, who has introverted thinking with extroverted intuition.
INTJ: The Scientist, who has introverted intuition with extroverted thinking.
ISTJ: The Duty Fulfiller, who has introverted sensing and extroverted thinking.
INFJ: The Idealist, who has introverted feelings with extroverted intuition.
INFP: The Idealist, who has introverted intuition with extroverted thinking.

Interested in knowing which personality trait you fall under? Just walk in to Student Learning and Counseling Service in the Student Center, First Floor, or for appointments call ext. 2767.
For the Student Residential Life Department (SRLD), Spring 2014 is already an eventful and memorable semester. The first day of the semester, January 23, will be particularly memorable to the 213 freshmen who joined the university and settled in the dorms for the first time. The inevitable anxieties of being in a new place were alleviated by the attentive staff and volunteer residents who were on standby to welcome the new residents and their parents.

Formal orientation sessions were also lined up to ease the process of settling in. These were on February 3 and 5 for the women’s and men’s dorms, respectively. As is now the tradition, the sessions, which were led by the SRLD director and involved other OSA departments, covered a whole array of issues that affect students’ lives in residence including safety and security, rules and regulations, sports and activities, counselling services, student leadership, mediation and other issues.

As resident safety is a primary concern, fire drills were held February 10-12 and covered all dorms.

Resident Assistants (RA) and Desk Assistants (DA) who serve to provide peer guidance in the dorms had their training session on February 4, marking the beginning of their employment contracts.

On February 19, individual intra-dorm indoor sport competitions covering a variety of disciplines were launched with over 900 residents registering. These ran until March 2, with the dorm winners proceeding to the inter-dorm stage of the tournaments. Running parallel with the individual competitions were the field/outdoor and team activities, basketball, badminton, tennis and soccer. The flagship of the team games, seven-aside soccer, involved a total of 160 players in 16 teams – two from each of the men’s residential halls. 

Aside from the sporting activities, the residential halls have also been active in other areas. Many have permanent campaigns such as raising awareness of AUS as a nonsmoking campus and of the dangers of smoking, as well as water and power saving, multicultural living and responsible citizenship to foster desirable behavior and help students integrate with fellow residents.

In addition, most dorms were able to organize quite a variety of worthwhile activities, some quite unique and exemplary of the creativity that SRLD management is promoting.

Notably, AB Women had a welcome party for freshmen on February 20, a trip to Global Village on February 26 and a cleaning awareness running from March 16 to 23.

CD Women held four events as follows: a sports night on February 17, a welcome party on February 26, a Special Interest Group (SIG) session for SBA students on March 25 and a movie night on March 26.

EF Women held SIG sessions, a cooking class, a gathering by majors on February 2, 25 and 28, respectively as well as a talent show on March 26.

GH Women had an SIG introductory session, a cooking class and a movie night on February 20 and March 25 and 26, respectively.

On the men’s side, AB Men held an SIG event and a multicultural night and talent show on February 26 and March 25, respectively.

CD Men organized a resident student get-together on February 25 while EF Men had a sports day on March 25.

MN Men also held a multicultural and social night on March 5. PQ Men had an SIG event on March 26.

CD Women organized 60+ Earth Hour on March 29 to encourage students to take charge of their eco footprint and to make the switch to energy-efficient lighting.

It is heartening to observe that resident students have remained fully engaged in a wide range of activities outside of academic pursuits, which undoubtedly brings balance to their lives and a more fulfilling university experience. SRLD is thankful to all who are helping the department play its facilitating role to the full.
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.

Mohammad Osama Siddiqui, Senior, Mechanical Engineering
It was a great honor for me to be one of the recipients of the AUS Athletic Scholarship for Spring 2014. I would like to thank my coaches for their immense support and would also like to acknowledge the excellent facilities provided by our university. My experience at AUS has been nothing short of amazing, and accolades such like this motivate you to perform at your best when representing AUS.

Arun Varghese, Senior, Management
I am honored to be part of the few students who have received the prestigious Athletic Scholarship from AUS. It has encouraged me to strive harder and has also motivated my team. The scholarship has also given more meaning to an inspiring quote: I shall celebrate my winnings, but not rest on my laurels.

Shahdan Ibrahim Barakat, Sophomore, Visual Communication
I really appreciate the university's efforts to provide and support all the student athletes. I am also honored to be one of the students awarded a scholarship for being on the table tennis team, and I would like to thank everyone who supported us and are still supporting us.

Hams Alwalid, Junior, Chemical Engineering
I would like to take this opportunity to say that I am very thankful for the Athletic Scholarship. Getting the scholarship encouraged me to excel at all times and to stay at the top. Special thanks to the department and all the hard work they do to make such resources available for athletes. Knowing there is such a reward for athletes encourages each team member to work hard and it creates confidence, maturity and harmony.

Majed AlMarzooqi, Freshman, Mechanical Engineering
As a member of the AUS taekwondo team, I participated in the Higher Education Sports Federation (HESF) Taekwondo Competition, which was held at UAEU. It was an awesome feeling when I won all the matches against other universities to become the champion. It’s an honor for me to be the first AUS student to participate in the HESF Taekwondo competition, and I hope that this sport will become more popular in all UAE universities, especially AUS.

Fazal Rehman, Senior, Mechanical Engineer
The cricket team had some great action in the SNS-SCA Invitation T20 Cricket Series in Malaysia. This tour will definitely encourage the team members to set a renewed target and raise the level of their cricketing skills. Many thanks to Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, for providing the cricket team this opportunity to compete on the international scene.

Shurooq Al Ali, Sophomore, Electrical Engineering
You always have expectations about a new experience but let me tell you something, travelling to New York with the best group, both the students and the organizers, to the best country and having an organized schedule was the greatest experience of all.

Raudha Al Ghurair, Junior, Architecture
The trip to New York proved to be one of the most fun, entertaining, and character-building experiences I have had the chance to participate in. We saw a lot, learned a lot about the culture and, most importantly, ate a lot of delicious food.

Nawshad Chowdhury, Senior, Chemical Engineering
I would like to thank everyone for considering me as a deserving candidate for the Active Student Scholarship. This award adds to the various cherished moments I share due to my involvement with the Bangladeshi Cultural Club, which has become an integral part of my student life at AUS.
Amr Alaa Abd El Aal, Senior, Civil Engineering
During my years at AUS, I have managed to participate in most of the community service events as well as being elected as the executive assistant in the Egyptian Culture Club. It has been a long, exciting journey. And I hope that I can fulfill my work at AUS.

Muhammad Aqdas Muzaffar, Junior, Finance
Receiving the Active Student Scholarship was an overwhelming feeling. However, there was a lot of hard work behind it and I am glad that it finally paid off. Ambition and determination has got me here and I believe it will take me further, too. I am proud of the fact that I have been able to fulfill my duties as the president of the Debate Club, Activities Coordinator of the Advertising Club, orientation team member, Community Services Volunteer and a member of the cricket team.

Omar Ben Seddik, Freshman, Finance
The First Global Forum for Youth Leaders on Drug Use Prevention in Abu Dhabi is the perfect opportunity to get involved in combating drug addiction. Since the participants were from all around the globe, the combination of our different cultural and educational background helped us to move a step forward in this war against drug abuse.

Fatma Al Yousuf, Junior, double major in Computer Engineering and Biology
Breathtaking, mind-blowing, and great new friendships, this sums up my amazing first and, hopefully not last, experience at the annual Climate Leadership Conference in San Diego, California, through the Student Leadership Program. Chances like these come once in a lifetime and I’m glad I was lucky enough to grab on to one of them.

Sarah Abdelbary, Junior, English Language/Translation
Joining the Student Leadership Program is by far one of the best decisions I have ever made. It not only built my confidence and my leadership skills, but has also inspired me to help others and give back to the community. This is how I always wanted to leave my mark. If I had to give future leaders advice, it would be to inspire, aspire and make a change.

Loay Farhat, Junior, Mechanical Engineering
I am glad that I participated in the Global Forum for Drug Use Prevention in Abu Dhabi. It was a life changing experience where I made many new friends. I truly wish the whole world could have experienced what I have experienced in this marvelous week.

Hassan Muhsen, Freshman, Civil Engineering
It was a pleasure to be one of the new residents in AUS and to attend the new residents’ orientation. The orientation was comprehensive so that it didn’t only cover the residential life, but also all the units of the Student Affairs (OSA) (clubs, sports, leadership program).

Amani Al Zaabi, Junior, Biology
I was able to learn many things about the AUS dorms after attending the orientation. I found out about the rules and regulations as well as the facilities. I was able to ask questions and my worries were diminished after speaking with the supervisors. I also learned that there are activities held at AUS dorms among girls including sports, cooking activities, barbeques and more.

Daniyal Ali Chohan, Freshman, Electrical Engineering
The orientation was a nice and an informative session for new students like me. We were briefed on the rules and regulation of the dorms, which was good to know. The heads of different departments were friendly, helping and informative. Every head gave us a decent amount of information regarding their department.
Eleven students from the Student Leadership Program (SLP) at American University of Sharjah (AUS) participated in the First Global Forum for Youth Leaders on Drug Use Prevention held in Abu Dhabi February 10-14, 2014. The forum was held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Presidential Affairs; and in partnership with the Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific. The National Rehabilitation Center (NRC) in the United Arab Emirates organized the event.

The forum aimed to open up new channels of communication between young Emiratis and their peers from around the world. The sessions and workshops provided the participants with the necessary skills and scientific solutions to combat the disease of addiction, to lead a healthier lifestyle, and to inspire those around them to do the same.

“This was an event that I will never forget. Filled with memories, laughter and fun, this forum taught me how to be a leader in my own community, how to build up my self-esteem and confidence and, most importantly, how ‘I can’ and ‘I will’ build up my dreams,” said Maria Hakim, a junior student majoring in biology. “Youth from all around the world were hand in hand with one goal and that is preventing the use of drugs. We functioned as one person and not as separate individuals. Furthermore, we learned how to communicate and deliver our messages clearly. I now know that my voice is important and must be heard if I want to change the world. We, the youth, are the leaders of the future and we will change the world.”

“The Student Leadership Program continues to provide our students with enriching opportunities locally, regionally and internationally. The Global Forum for Youth Leaders on Drug Use Prevention brought together people from all walks of life and increased awareness about the danger of drugs. We are confident that our students will take what they learned and pass it along to their peers and communities,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.