Sheikh Sultan observes Student Council election

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council of the United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS, visited AUS Student Council’s election on May 16 at the university’s Student Center and observed as students voted to elect a new Student Council Board for 2012–2013.

The Sharjah Ruler praised the well-organized elections and the well-structured campaigns for the student elections.

On campus to inaugurate this year’s Arab International Women’s Forum (AIWF) Annual Conference, Sheikh Dr. Sultan took the time afterwards to observe the student elections which give students an opportunity to vote for leaders of their choice who voice their needs and work directly with the university administration.

He toured the elections area and was briefed on how the electronic election was conducted; he then asked to see the actual process and observed students participating in the elections as they voted in voting booths.

His Highness also expressed satisfaction at the level of student participation in the elections and the level of awareness students have of the concept and the objective of the election for the student council as well as the importance of... continued on page 3

Trip to Japan for AUS students

Thirty-five AUS students returned from a successful cultural trip to Japan, which took place from June 11 to 17. The trip was organized by the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Multicultural Learning Program. The students toured the Japanese cities of Tokyo, Kyoto, Chiba Ken and Shizuoka Ken.

The students stayed in Tokyo, the country’s capital and one of the fastest growing and most advanced cities in the world. With its skyscrapers and highly... continued on page 4
Spring 2012 ended with the annual appreciation of students for extracurricular participation. The spirit and rate of student participation in extracurricular activities was noteworthy. Our students attained success in different extracurricular areas. It was great to see two of our active students; Ghaith Khattab being awarded the President’s Cup and Fatima Tariq the Chancellor’s cup during the honors convocation ceremony this spring 2012.

Summers in AUS are times for purposeful engagement in out-of-class activities. Sports and fitness programs help with working out and remaining healthy and fit. Aerobics, swimming and circuit training develop endurance, skills and aids positive thinking. Organized indoor sports through residential life are a solace during summer as they develop sports competence, fill time, build friendships and serve as stress busters. Learning different cultures and traditions of your cohorts can be achieved through ethnic clubs, student multicultural learning programs and residential living. Community Service and the Student Leadership Programs have opportunities during summers; so check your emails for specific announcements. Student Affairs’ out of class support will be available throughout the summer. Engage and enjoy your summer.

The spring semester saw a large number of students graduating and the Student Residential Halls Department organized farewell events in the men’s and women’s residential halls. This semester the women’s residential halls held their event in the EF Women’s hall on April 24, with over 250 students attending while on the men’s side of campus, over 220 residents gathered for a memorable evening in CD Men’s hall on April 30. To ensure the event was entertaining, staff encouraged the students to form a ‘Similar Interest Group’ in the dorms appropriately named “Resident Idol.” The group identified students who took part in the farewell and showcased their talent. Among these top performers was Abdur Rahman Asaad, a student whose dance was appreciated so much that he went on to perform in other AUS student events. The other major activity finalized in May was the Inter-dormitory Sports Tournament. On May 8 over 100 winners came to the Women’s Welcome Center for the award ceremony. The last portion of Spring semester was a busy period in the residential halls, in some ways busier than the end of Fall semester, with some students checking-out for the summer and others checking-in for Summer Session. Nearly 1,000 students stay for the first summer semester and the Student Residential Life Department accommodates them in six of the 12 open dormitory buildings. The closed buildings go through an extensive maintenance during this period.
Sheikh Sultan observes.. continued from page 1

selecting the best candidates to represent them. He said the process is a vital one to ensure that the best candidates are elected, those who are able to convey students’ messages to the administration.

He also admired the electronic voting system introduced at the university eight years ago as an efficient system which facilitates speed, accuracy and transparency in the election process.

AUS Chancellor, Dr. Peter Heath thanked His Highness for the visit and the inspection of the election process and stressed that AUS administration is keen to meet the interests of the students and provide the best facilities to improve the students’ experience at AUS.

“We would like to thank His Highness for observing the students elections. His presence and support will encourage our students to participate much more in such activities,” said Dr. Heath on the occasion.

“I am very pleased and grateful that the Sharjah Ruler visited this year’s Student Council elections,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “This is the first time we have had the pleasure of hosting him during the elections and we were all extremely honored that he took the time to come. Our students were very excited.”

“The number of candidates vying for different positions and the number of students voting has continued to be impressive with 34 percent of all registered undergraduate students voting to fill council’s posts. Some 33 candidates competed to fill the 14 Student Council posts,” said Dr. Al Shehhi. “Last year, 30 candidates competed to fill 13 posts. The post of Student Organizations and Campus Services Coordinator was added this year,” she said as she applauded the increase in the number of candidates aspiring to take up leadership roles.

Students who aspire to be elected as members of the AUS Student Council Board are required to lead an active campus life as well as have good academic and social standing. Experience in serving on the executive boards of clubs and active participation in extracurricular events and activities is also essential.

“I would like to thank the AUS student body for the trust and the support they have given me and my new leadership team,” said Hamdan Mohamed Al Maamari, Student Council President-Elect for 2012–2013. “I want to assure everyone that I will work to the best of my capacity on behalf of the students, and I will encourage my team to do so as well,” said the mechanical engineering student.

The Student Council aims to initiate programs and projects that cater to the demands of the student body as well as promote leadership and teamwork. The Student Council election was organized by the Student Activities Office of the AUS Office of Student Affairs.

The 14 students elected on the Student Council 2012–2013 board are:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Hamdan Mohamed Al Maamari</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Waleed Mahmoud Hijazi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President for Public Relations</td>
<td>Sina Mohammad Ali Torabi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Executive Secretary and Office Director</td>
<td>Leen Husam Barqawi</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Ali Khalid</td>
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<td>Events and Activities Coordinator</td>
<td>Juman Ahmad Jijakli</td>
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<td>Athletics and Sports Coordinator</td>
<td>Julie Maha Doughan</td>
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<td>Communication and Media Coordinator</td>
<td>Suzanne Eyad Mahfouz</td>
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<td>Student Organizations and Campus Services Coordinator</td>
<td>Salbi Ohanes Babekian</td>
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<td>College of Architecture, Art and Design Representative</td>
<td>Habib Bitar</td>
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<td>College of Arts and Sciences Representative</td>
<td>Maram Saleh Dalab</td>
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<td>School of Business and Management Representative</td>
<td>Abeer Riyadh Sultan</td>
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<td>College of Engineering Representative</td>
<td>Mohammad Said Al-Saghir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievement Academy Bridge Program Representative</td>
<td>Mohamed Ali R.H. Al Dhanhani</td>
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populated suburbs, it still holds on to its ancient culture. The Tokyo tour included visits of cultural sites such as the Meiji Shrine and Imperial Palace Plaza. Students also had the chance to visit modern and technological locations such as the Tokyo Tower, Akihabara Electric Town and the Sony Building.

Travelling by the Nozomi bullet train, the students visited Kyoto, Japan's former imperial capital. Kyoto is host to the country’s major cultural attractions and is the seventh largest city of Japan. In Kyoto, the students had a traditional Japanese lunch and visited the Kinkakuji and Kiyomizu temples. The students also visited the “Golden Pavilion,” the historical residence of the “Shogun” or general, the highest military figure in ancient Japan.

From Tokyo to Shizuoka Ken, a two and a half hour bus ride took the students 2,300 meters above sea level to reach the Mt. Fuji 5th station. Mt. Fuji 5th station offers a commanding view of the Fuji Five Lakes and provides an observation point with unobstructed views of Fujiyoshida City and Lake Yamanaka. Mt. Fuji is Japan's highest mountain. On the entertainment side, the students visited Tokyo Disneyland in Chiba Ken.

"Now I understand that I should never miss a trip organized by AUS Student Affairs. The trip to Japan helped me become a more social person," said Saeed Al Noman Al Shamsi, a sophomore majoring in electrical engineering.

"This experience has taught us a great deal about the Japanese culture. The amount of respect the Japanese have for each other and for foreigners is unlike any other culture. Waking up every day to the same friends and going together as a group to diverse cultural and entertaining destinations was more than just fun; these were memories that will be cherished forever," said Zahra Al Fardan, a junior majoring in finance.

Addressing the students on the way back to the UAE, Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and head of the delegation said, “I thank you all for your cooperation during the trip. Your team spirit ensured the success of this trip. I am sure that you have gained a comprehensive insight of the various social, cultural and technological aspects of the Japanese society. I encourage you all to make use of these practical experiences for your personal and professional growth.”

The AUS delegation was accompanied by Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations, and event supervisors Virgilio Mateo Jr. and Raja Subramanya.
AUS students participate in Youth Leadership Conference in Prague

Students from the Student Leadership Program took part in the 24th International Youth Leadership Conference (IYLC) held recently in Prague, Czech Republic.

The conference proceedings focused on a cross-cultural exchange of ideas concerning the future of world leadership. The lectures conducted were interactive and included educational activities and social interactions using a number of related events. These included: ‘Simulation of the United Nations Security Council Emergency Meeting;’ ‘International Criminal Court Mock Pre-Trial;’ ‘Model European Parliament Proceedings;’ visits to foreign embassies and the Senate of the Czech Republic; group debates as well as panel discussions on international security, environmental sustainability, rule of law, responsible leadership and mass media.

“It was a week to remember. Our experience in Prague was great. We enjoyed our time, enhanced our knowledge and, literally, met people from all around the world. We were messengers of our own cultures and it felt great to represent our countries. If I was asked, I would do it again,” said Maram Dalab, a public relations major.

“I believe IYLC is one of the conferences that students must attend as it is an opportunity to dispel misconceptions westerners might have about Arabs and Muslims in general. At the same time, it is important for me, as an international relations student, to interact with people from different cultures and understand them as well,” said Aisha Almidfaa.

“The conference provided a platform for cultural exchange of ideas which made our participation significant as it helped enlighten other participants about our culture,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “Our students presented information about Ramadan, cultural norms and displayed their traditional clothing during the conference. Differences are the essence of humanity and understanding and learning to respect these differences is crucial for ever lasting peace and harmony in the world,” she added.

Second PepsiCo Youth Forum held

Students from the OSA’s Student Leadership Program took part in the second PepsiCo Youth Forum held from June 10–13, 2012. Youth delegates from across the UAE were brought together to discuss and develop solutions for creating a more sustainable and healthy future for their communities. The event included interactive workshops, speaker panels and discussion groups on topics related to health and wellness, environment and talent development under the theme: “Be the Change.”

From the 15 AUS students who participated in the forum, Fahmi Abufool, majoring in mechanical engineering, was selected to represent the youth in the ninth CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) Summit as an Ambassador for Human Sustainability.

“The PepsiCo Youth Forum gave me the opportunity to communicate with other youth in issues that interest me with regard to our social responsibility. Being selected as an Ambassador for Human Sustainability, I was given five minutes to recap what we had discussed and what kind of resolutions we had for some issues that concerned us. Not only did this chance boost my confidence, but I learnt how to communicate with the leaders of today,” said Abufool.

“This forum allowed students an opportunity to exchange experiences and ideas on how to become more involved in supporting sustainable communities. Youth of this region have so much potential. I am confident that with professional guidance AUS students will significantly impact their communities toward greater success,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
AUS students deliver inspirational lectures

Two engaging lectures were held at AUS earlier on in the spring semester. The first lecture was entitled “The Pearl: Queen of Gems” and was delivered by finance major, Adi Al Fardan. The lecture focused on the history, cultivation and unique status of pearls.

The second lecture was entitled “The One Million Dirham College Drop-out Experience” and was delivered by Hamzeh Al Fuqha, a civil engineering major who spoke about his experiences of dropping out of university and why he returned.

The AUS Student Lecture Series is organized by the Office of Student Affairs’ Student Leadership Program. Al Fardan discussed the creation and formation of pearls and the differences between natural and cultured pearls. He explained that natural pearls formed without any human intervention are very rare, while cultured pearls are formed in a pearl farm using human intervention.

Al Fuqha’s lecture focused on the importance of doing what you love to do in order to succeed. He talked about his real life experience when he received an offer to join a leading sustainable construction company in the UAE in 2010. What attracted him most to the opportunity was the fact that he was able to earn what professional engineers make in the third or fourth year of their career while only in his second year at AUS.

Al Fuqha was eventually promoted to Head of Estimation and Contracting and was dealing with contracts worth millions of dirhams. It was then that Al Fuqha took the decision to drop out of university. Shortly afterwards, Al Fuqha opened his own company, securing approximately AED 500,000 of initial capital investment. Despite his success, Al Fuqha felt there was something missing.

“After a lifetime worth of ‘experience,’ I knew what I needed most was the disciplined atmosphere of an educational environment,” he said. “So, I shut down my company and went back to AUS. I can’t say I regret anything. A year and a half from now, I will be a college graduate. My mind has been expanded beyond my wildest dreams,” he added.

“We launched the AUS Student Lectures Series this year to allow students the opportunity to share their knowledge and achievements to inspire and educate their peers,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “The delivery of the lectures aid students in developing their leadership abilities, focusing on communication and presentation skills. We received a great response from students and we will continue to conduct lectures next year. I encourage students who are interested in presenting to contact the Student Leadership Program,” she added.

Member of the Student Leadership Program joins UAE delegation at Canton Fair

Hamad Al Ansari, an active member of the OSA’s Student Leadership Program joined the UAE delegation at the Canton Fair in Guangzhou, China, earlier in the spring semester. Led by Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi, Minister of Foreign Trade in the UAE, the 60-member UAE delegation participated in seminars on topics such as UAE trade relations with China, and uncovered opportunities in renewable energy, halal food and agriculture.

The Canton Fair, which dates back to 1957, is China’s largest and oldest import and export fair.

“This trip was very beneficial as it brings many important personalities in the business sector in one place, where interesting and global ideas are discussed,” said Al Ansari, who is studying finance at the School of Business and Management. “The trip also contributed to my leadership skills as I was able to improve my professional communication with elite individuals from various sectors. The six-day trip provided me with the opportunity to learn from the experiences of today’s leaders and the challenges they go through.”

“Being part of a delegation led by Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi is an honor and an example of the accomplishment our nation has witnessed in developing successful leaders. The Office of Student Affairs and the Student Leadership Program continue to encourage students to get involved in leadership development programs both locally and internationally. Nurturing our students is our optimal goal, and our programs support students in defining themselves and understanding what they want to achieve,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.
AUS student makes it to the top three finalists in The Big Start Competition 2012

Nur Amer, a recent mass communication graduate, was declared one of the top three finalists of The Big Start 2012, a UAE-based student entrepreneurship competition that allows students to turn their business ideas into reality. This annual competition sponsored by Al Tamimi Investments had students undergo nine months of practical business skills training to get their business ideas fit for funding. The competition aims to cultivate, inspire and reward young people’s interest in entrepreneurship within the UAE.

The AUS Student Leadership Program announced the competition to students earlier this year and encouraged them to take part in it. Among 38 universities across the UAE, AUS placed first as the best performing university by number of submissions and third in terms of the number of students who registered. AUS was acknowledged during the closing ceremony of The Big Start competition on June 26, 2012.

“The Big Start has helped me put a dream of mine into focus and has allowed me to explore my options. I might not have won, but I now know all the right questions to ask, how to criticize my own ideas and my own work and that anything can be achieved if I put my mind to it. The journey has not been easy, but it has been worth it. I am now equipped with all the right resources and I’m not afraid to take that further,” said Amer.

“Today many students dream of owning their own business. Being an entrepreneur isn’t just about taking the risk but it is about believing in your idea and pushing it forward to make it a reality. Mapping your way and understanding the challenges ahead are crucial to any successful venture. Congratulations to Nur and we wish her luck in setting up her business,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Over 300 students participate in summer sports tournament

The Student Athletics and Recreation Department organized the Men’s and Women’s Summer Sports Tournament in various disciplines from June 24–July 4, 2012. Student-athletes competed in street ball, volleyball, swimming, badminton and table tennis while soccer and squash tournaments were conducted in the men’s category only.

Despite the hot climate, over 300 students participated in various events which gave them relief from academic stress and pressure. An increase in the number of participants was noticed in all team events which were fun and competitive. Individual events like badminton, table tennis and swimming were also held with good participation and enthusiasm.

After the final matches of various disciplines, the prize-giving ceremony was held in the Sports Complex on July 4. The ceremony was attended by Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organizations and Dr. Mohamed Helal, Manager of Sports Programs, Student Athletics and Recreation Department.

“I would like to congratulate all the winners in this summer tournament, and I want to compliment the increased number of the participants and the variety of sports programs this summer,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Also, Dr. Moza pointed out the importance of sports and extracurricular activities in the life of students and urged them to join different sports activities.

Before conducting the awarding ceremony, Taha expressed his sympathy for the loss of the beloved professor Dr. Ibrahim El Sadek, and the participants observed a silent prayer for the departed soul.
Hundreds of students from sports teams, student organizations, volunteer groups, university leadership programs and other student associations were honored at a special ceremony held on May 15, 2012 at AUS.

Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS, congratulated the winners on their success and thanked the students for their contributions to the university. “Your extracurricular achievements add value to your experience at AUS. You have enriched your lives, whether it be through community service, sports teams, or one of the many student clubs,” said Dr. Heath, addressing the students. “This is a wonderful event where we gather together to celebrate your achievements,” he added.

Luis A. Garcia, the Student Council President, also thanked the students for their contributions. Also present at the event were Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Provost; Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Salem Yousef Al Qaseer, Vice-Chancellor for Public Affairs; Cleve McDaniel, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration; deans and other senior university officials; faculty, staff members and students.

“This event is held to celebrate your achievements in the fields of athletics and extracurricular activities,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi. “I am aware that student life is highly challenging and demanding but you have balanced your academic achievements with your extracurricular activities. I would like to encourage all of you to keep engaging with the activities available to you on campus.”

In addition to the awards being given out, the audience saw student performances by the Jordanian, Indian, Emirati, Sudanese and Palestinian cultural clubs, as well as a breakdancing performance. In addition, Ali Al Sayed, co-founder of the comedy group Dubomedy, also performed a stand-up routine. The evening concluded with a buffet dinner.

Eight students received the Most Outstanding Active Student Award for their contribution and dedication in athletics, activities and community services throughout the academic year 2011-2012. The winners were Yahia Adel Al Sharif, Tareef Tamim Al Bassam and Aishwarya Shanker Ramakrishnan for their contributions in athletics; Mohammad Haidary, Mahmood Taha and Maha El Jechchi for their active involvement in activities; Ndella Deribe for her exceptional contribution in Community Services and Mohammed Hukan for his involvement with the Student Leadership Program.

Anam Shahid received the award for Student Employee of the Year, while Rehab Ibrahim Khawaqa, Hesham Ossama Daib, Naveena Sadasivam, Juman Ahmad Jijakli and Samuel Mark John received honorable mentions. The Palestinian Cultural Club and the Debate Club received awards for the Student Club/Organization of the year.

The winner of the Global Day Best Performance was the Palestinian Cultural Club, followed by the Indian Cultural Club and the Sudanese Cultural Club in second and third place, respectively. The winner of the Global Day Creative Award was the Emirati Cultural Club and the Global Day Teamwork Award (Performance) went to the Jordanian Cultural Club.

Additionally, awards for the Best Corner at Global Day were also distributed. In first place was the Qatari Cultural Club with the Bangladeshi Cultural Club and Iraqi Cultural Club in second and third place, respectively. The Global Day Creative Idea Award (corner) went to the Bahraini Cultural Club while the Global Day Teamwork Award (corner) was won by the Egyptian Cultural Club. AUS faculty and staff members Ali Khawaja, Dr. Jeffrey Michael Baker, Dr. Harris Mark Breslow, Dr. Bruce Maurie Gatenby and Anwa Al-Alami were also honored for their support to student activities.
As part of the Student Training and Workshop Series, the Student Leadership Program conducted the DISC analysis training. The workshop provided students with training opportunities to sharpen and develop their skills as well as prepare them for successful leadership.

Themed “Discover your Leadership Personality,” the workshop was intended to help students become better communicators, learn how to resolve and prevent conflicts, appreciate the differences of others and gain credibility to positively influence others.

DISC is a behavioral model that examines the behavior of individuals in their environment or within a specific situation. Based on behavioral variations in individuals, their general characteristics and unique value can be determined. DISC is used by consultants, coaches and trainers in an assortment of areas including human resources.

“The workshop armed me with knowledge that I am going to use forever. This training helps tremendously because leaders have to know how to deal with people. I learned many new techniques; first, how to analyze the personalities of the people I deal with and second, how to use the right phrases in order to communicate effectively with different personality types,” said Abdullah Sweileh, an accounting student.

“The workshop groups individuals according to the dominant features in their personalities. It also demonstrates how the weaknesses of each personality might affect individuals especially when dealing with people with opposite characteristics. The workshop helps students to analyze personalities, know more about their weak and strong characteristics, and helps them deal with all kinds of personalities no matter how sensitive or how bossy the other person is,” said Haya Raed Hasan, a computer engineering student.

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Understanding people's personality is a unique skill that everyone should learn to master. This training aids students in their day-to-day dealing with people and teaches them the tricks of effective communication. Also, the training clearly demonstrates that there is no right or wrong personality and people are different but they are predictably different, which makes us all unique in our own way. The Student Training and Workshop Series provides students with personal development to enhance their skills to become effective leaders,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.

Student Athletics and Recreation Department (SARD) organized the seventh AUS men’s and women’s Intercollegiate Racket Tournament at the AUS sports facilities from April 22–25.

University of Sharjah; Manipal University of Dubai; BITS Pilani Dubai; Middlesex University, Dubai; University of Sharjah; University of Wollongong, Dubai; Preston University, Ajman; Canadian University of Dubai; Birla Institute of Technology; and International Centre, Ras Al Khaimah, took part in the competition.

Badminton (men and women), table tennis (men and women), tennis (men) and squash (men) were the four disciplines in which various competitors worked hard to gain supremacy.

AUS, BITS Pilani, Dubai Campus; Manipal University; University of Sharjah; and University of Wollongong, Dubai, were the key title hunters in most of the disciplines. AUS secured first place in men's squash and won second place in men's and women's table tennis and was declared runner-up in men's tennis and badminton. After the final matches on May 25, a prize giving ceremony was held in the Sports Complex which was attended by Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organization, along with Dr. Mohamed Helal, Manager of Sports Programs, SARD, and others.

“I always advise our players to participate in such events and to compete with other players across UAE and internationally. Such events provide the player with more experience and self-confidence to develop his or her talents,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, speaking to the athletes. “I want to thank the efforts that SARD is putting towards organizing such successful events,” she added.
Students from the Student Leadership Program at AUS participated for the second time this academic year in the Startup Weekend Dubai, held under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Mansoor Bin Rashid Al Maktoum. The event took place at the IMAX Theater at The Meydan Hotel in Dubai.

Startup Weekend is a global network of passionate leaders and entrepreneurs on a mission to inspire, educate, and empower individuals, teams and communities.

The 54-hour event has participants pitching technology startup ideas and forming teams to compete for awards and cash prizes. Throughout the event, successful business leaders from the community mentor participants.

“Our students’ involvement in workshops such as Startup Weekend Dubai puts in practice their innovation and creativity. Participating in this event allowed students to interact with industry experts and share multidimensional insights on major aspects of entrepreneurship, innovations and business opportunities,” said Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. “We offer students these opportunities as a means to help them establish a culture that fosters creativity and innovation in communities.”

Around 15 AUS students participated in the competition.

“Mehnaty is a student-organization online database that has user friendly features in which students are connected to the companies in their preferred sectors,” said Hamad Al Ansari, a junior majoring in finance, whose group won the first prize at the event. “After connecting, they can view vacancies and stay up-to-date with market trends. This database helps students get a clear understanding of what to expect and what they are working towards. It also helps them set their goals and achieve them in a focused manner.”

“Mehnaty also provides students with a tool to stay connected and network in which it notifies them of international events worldwide and in their hometown,” added Al Ansari. “The system posts upcoming conferences, seminars and important lectures to build the students skills and provides them with great opportunities to face tomorrow’s ever-changing world.”

Hamzeh Al-Fuqha, a junior student majoring in civil engineering said, “Being part of Startup Weekend Dubai was a life-changing experience and an opportunity to be part of the Middle East’s entrepreneurial revolution! In 54 hours, we were asked to come up with a business idea, form and manage a team, create a solid business model, build a functional prototype and eventually work on convincing the judges of the uniqueness and viability of the business idea.”

“Startup Weekend Dubai was as much a chance for us to sell our ideas to the judges and the investors, as it was for us to challenge our potential and unleash the entrepreneur inside each one of us. Memories and lessons learned from this three-day event are priceless and truly a lifelong inspiration. The event is an experience that never ends and the experiences shared at this event should mean opening new windows for our generation,” he added.

The trip to the Startup Weekend Dubai was organized by the OSA's Student Leadership Program.
The Student Athletics and Recreation Department of the OSA celebrated its annual Sports Day on May 1 at the Sports Complex with participation from AUS athletes. The celebration marks the end of all competitive and recreational sports programs for this academic year.

The day’s activities started with the finals of the Sixth AUS Men’s and Women’s Interschool Tournament in volleyball, basketball, cricket and soccer. After the finals, participants assembled in front of the Sports Complex for the games.

In the interschool tournaments, the College of Arts and Science won in women’s basketball and were runners up in women’s volleyball and cricket. The College of Architecture, Art and Design won first place in men’s and women’s volleyball and secured second place in women’s basketball and third place in men’s basketball and soccer. The School of Business and Management were the champions of men’s basketball and soccer and placed third in men’s and women’s volleyball. The College of Engineering won in cricket and placed second in men’s volleyball and soccer. The College of Engineering also secured third place in women’s basketball and men’s cricket.

Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor, and Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, awarded the winners of the intramural and interschool tournaments. Also present were Munketh Taha, Director of Student Development and Organization; Dr. Mohamed Helal, Manager of Sports Programs; and Louise Abdul Rahman Garcia, President of the AUS Student Council.

Dr. Moza Al Shehhi congratulated the winners and AUS team members for their achievements and she encouraged more students to join the AUS sports teams.
Tips for the summer

Here are a few thoughts from Student Learning and Counseling Services on how to recharge and maintain your motivation throughout the hot summer semesters.

1. Sit down and just do it!

The best way to overcome procrastination and laziness is to sit down and just get started. No matter how many to-do lists you create, motivational articles and quotes you read, and how many times you tell yourself the task is too hard to do, it will only get done if you sit down and start.

2. Think Positively!

Make sure you are listening to yourself and what your ideas and beliefs are about your work and ability to get through the summer semesters. It is well-known that the power of positive thinking is powerful beyond measure. So start today and tell yourself for example, “I am going to have a wonderful day and excel during my presentation!” “I am so proud of myself for pursuing more courses throughout the semester. I can’t wait for the challenge!”

3. Spend time with family, friends and peers that inspire you!

It is known that collaborating with people that have the same or similar goals can be the best way to succeed in your academic and professional goals. Why not reach out to peers in your major you usually do not interact with during the fall and spring semester and have inspiring conversations and gatherings that will help pursue your goals this summer?

4. Take time to reflect!

Whether it is your first semester, your last, or you’re right in the middle of your college career – look at how far you’ve come? You may not even realize (until you make yourself reflect) how much you have accomplished and made wonderful progress. If you look back and see how much you have progressed, you will consequently get a surge of happy feelings and endorphins, which will help push you even further to do better this summer.

5. Make failure a positive experience!

Thomas Edison once said, “Many of life’s failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up.” Students, this summer, make it a point to never give up and know that any failure is a learning experience and a good sign of progress. Continue to recharge your motivation by learning and growing.

Other reminders:
- Stay hydrated, hydrated, hydrated!
- Make time for exercise! (20 minutes a day on the treadmill is good enough)
- Get enough sleep!
- Eat lots of grains, fruits and vegetables!

Visit the Student Learning and Counseling Services (SLCS) this summer!

Services are free, voluntary and confidential. Appointments may be arranged through the SLCS e-mail: LCS@aus.edu or by calling the administrative assistant at extension 2767, or by visiting SLCS (1st floor Student Activities Center Bldg., office A 208-A).
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.

Haseeb Taj, Civil Engineering, Senior

“The academic life at AUS is tough and the extra-curricular activities and tournaments organized by the Student Athletics and Recreation Department and OSA help the students a lot in order to refresh their minds. The intercollegiate racket tournament was one such experience in which we had a perfect result in squash. We won the tournament without losing a single set. It was an amazing experience in which I learned a lot and made many new friends. Thanks to our coaches and the OSA for organizing such exciting events.”

Fateh Tamam Alkej, Civil Engineering, Junior

“After a difficult semester of working hard and having intensive practice sessions with the table tennis coach, he decided that the team was qualified enough to compete in any high level competition. Therefore the university managed to organize the Seventh AUS Men’s and Women’s Intercollegiate Racket Tournament. The tournament is considered one of the biggest and strongest tournaments in the United Arab Emirates. It included different racket sports including table tennis. Eight universities and colleges participated in this specific racket sport. There were many talented players participating in the tournament and our team managed to place second. It was a great experience for the team and a motivation to move forward to keep succeeding in all the upcoming competitions.”

Duha Halami, Electrical Engineering, Junior

“Representing the AUS table tennis team in the AUS intercollegiate racket tournament was a good experience. The competition was between six teams from different universities. We reached the finals and placed second. This tournament made me get to know new players coming from different places. Also, we all gained experience from each other. This tournament encouraged me and my teammates to perform better in upcoming games.”

Hamad Al Kawari, Management, Senior

“During the sports day event my team and I played and were part of the interschool competition to represent the School of Business and Management. The competition between the teams was intense, and our toughest opponent was the College of Engineering, but we tried our best and won the tournament for the second year in a row. The event was so much fun, and at the end of the day we got to meet the teams that represented the other schools, played games and had dinner. I am looking forward to participating in the upcoming sports day; I also encourage other students to be part of it for it is a wonderful experience.”

Rima Baghdan, Interior Design, Senior

“I am an Interior Design student who is going into my final year at university. The inter-school tournament that occurred in Spring 2012 was an exciting tournament. The College of Architecture, Art and Design won the previous two years and so my team and I were ready to win a third cup this year. Teams this year were all tough and intense; and scores were very close in every game. However, finally, we came in second place in a close finish but I would say that overall it was a victory for all of us. We managed to all play spectacular games and push our limits in each game. Also, the organization was made well, as everything was scheduled and was followed as well. All of this was part of the sports day event that occurs annually. Hopefully, next year the College of Architecture, Art and Design will play just as well and aim for gold. We play not to win but to exceed our own expectations.”
Hisham Alayan, Chemical Engineering, Senior

“This year’s sports day event was an unforgettable experience. Winning our final volleyball match in the AUS interschool tournament on that day added nothing but joy and excitement to that event. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my colleagues and teammates, Coach Adel El Sati, and to all who contributed to the success of this event for making it a wonderful memory that will remain forever.”

Shahzada Haris Attique, Electrical Engineering, Senior

“Sports day is an event organized every year by the Student Athletics and Recreation Department. This event involves all kinds of sporting activities which attract students from all over the university to participate and unwind from their hectic routine. I personally have been associated with the cricket team for the past four years and I have taken part in these events as they are conducted in a very congenial manner. Mr. James is the swimming and cricket coach and has always played a major role in organizing such events. I would like to thank him as well as all the staff for organizing such events and would encourage them to continue doing so in the future. The sports day which was held on May 1 this year exhibited the commitment shown by the sportsmen thus encouraging them to do even better in the future. Therefore such events prove to be a good platform for sportsmen to prove their talent as well as enjoy themselves among their friends.”

Maged Shouman, Civil Engineering, Sophomore

“I don’t really know from where to start but the graduation farewell function organized by the Student Residential Life Department this time was more than what we students expected. The organization of the special gathering surpassed our expectations too. And the most exciting thing was the introduction and performances done by the Resident Idols. I was one of them as I was the one who gave the Residential Halls speech. Congrats to the Spring 2012 batch!”
Two AUS students win Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for Distinguished Academic Performance

Two AUS students won the 2012 Hamdan Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Award for the Distinguished Academic Performance. They were honored at an award ceremony held recently at the Dubai International Conference and Exhibition Center.

Loai Khalayli, a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering student, and Vidya Diwakar, a double major student pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations and Bachelor of Arts in Economics, won this year’s Distinguished University Students Award in the higher education category.

“This is the greatest achievement I have had so far. It is the sweet fruit of the many efforts and hard work I have been doing, especially in the last three years both academically and in community service,” said Khalayli. “This achievement has encouraged me so much; it has made me a stronger and a more confident person both academically and in extracurricular activities.”

The award, which aims to improve the quality of educational system, supporting all preparatory to higher education learners and the individuals and institutions entrusted with educating these learners through positive cooperation and competition, was established in 1998. Since then it has grown to be a vital catalyst in improving education locally, regionally and internationally.

“I am very honored to have won this award, it proves that perseverance does produce results,” said Diwakar. “It is quite an honor to represent AUS in such a big way and I would encourage others to do more than class work and to participate in such a competition, which improves their personalities and makes them well-rounded individuals.”

“People often ask me how do I manage taking a double major and still find time to do extracurricular activities,” continued Diwakar. “But it’s quite simple. It’s all about time management and prioritization. So if you manage your time well and have the right priorities, you can do well in school and you can also do well in serving the community and in other extracurricular activities.”

Prior to this award, both Khalayli and Diwakar had previously won the highly competitive Sheikh Khalifa Scholarship, which recognizes academic excellence, leadership potential, service to community, demonstrated talent in the field of study and participation in extracurricular and university activities.

“I would also like to thank His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum for supporting and recognizing excellent students. This award is one of the main driving motives for every student to excel and fulfill their potentials. Also, I would like to thank American University of Sharjah faculty and staff for continuously offering students great opportunities to grow and flourish in an increasingly competitive environment,” said Khalayli.