

AUS | CONNECT

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI AFFAIRS



2,740 Alumni Join His Highness in Celebrating the Fifth Alumni Reunion Dinner



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi coming in along with Trustees Hamid D. Jafar, Riad T. Sadek, and Maroun Semaan, Chancellor Peter Heath and Vice Chancellors Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Mr. Salem Al Qaseer

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of the American University of Sharjah, urged AUS alumni to become an inspiration to society through their good deeds as well as shining examples of the positive values of AUS. His Highness Sheikh Sultan also thanked the alumni for finding the time to travel back to their alma mater to attend the fifth Annual Alumni Reunion Dinner held at the University's Main Plaza on February 23, 2012.

Organized by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, the annual reunion dinner is a major event for alumni who convene at AUS from all around the world; this year's dinner was attended by over 2,700 alumni.

At the dinner, His Highness welcomed back graduates from the last 15 years and said, "I am grateful to each of you for finding time to travel back to Sharjah. I know that it takes considerable time from your busy work and family schedules, along with effort to make the local and international travel arrangements. But I am sure that the rich experiences of this evening will revive the excitement that you felt as a student in constantly pushing new intellectual frontiers."

"Fifteen years ago in 1997, AUS was still getting started as the initiation of a vision with only a dozen pioneer faculty members and some 250 students. Today, our alumni cover the globe in their quest to build and innovate in whatever career they chose. Most of you have come to hold key positions of influence. Please remember that you should provide in your careers a shining example of the positive values of AUS and be an inspiration to society through good deeds," added His Highness.

The ceremony started upon the arrival of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, with an address by Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor who greeted the Ruler of Sharjah and the alumni. "The alumni among us tonight, who keep up with the University through their very active Alumni Association, are well aware of the great developments at AUS. In the intervening year since we last came together, we have proceeded with the task of forever strengthening the academic programs under the continuous guidance of His Highness," said Dr. Heath.

"The AUS community, our alumni, students, faculty, and staff have created a proud tradition for 15 years to take on the odds, to work harder than the competition, and to turn



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi inaugurating the ceremony with Trustees Hamid D. Jafar, Riad T. Sadek, and Maroun Semaan, alumnus H.E. Eng. Salah Salem Al Shamsi, Chancellor Heath and Vice Chancellor Mourtada

dreams into solid reality. The “can do” ethic is the hallmark of AUS. As AUS moves closer towards its goal of becoming a premier university among elite peers, we too will continue to do everything within our power to ensure success for our most important product - you, the AUS alumni,” concluded Dr. Heath.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, also celebrated, on behalf of all AUS alumni, the return of His Highness to his alma mater. She reminded the audience that, “Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi has recently been called the ‘conscience of the nation’ for his unique input into many of the critical issues faced during the past four decades of the UAE’s history and for contributing in leading in the development of higher education and invigorating cultural heritage to perform new tasks of the globalized world.”

“His Highness not only conceptualized what AUS could become when there was little more than sand where we now convene, but guided the University through every step along the way to AUS’s rapid rise to excellence,” Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah added.

Alumnus Musbah Abu Jarad, Vice President of AUS Alumni Association (AUSAA), also addressed the gathering, speaking on behalf of the AUSAA President and the alumni. His Highness also inaugurated an exhibition organized by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs with the support of Sharjah Museums, for renowned artists Dr. Najat Meky and Ismaeil Al Refai entitled Art through University and Community Dialogue. The acclaimed Emirati artist, Dr. Meky, dedicated three monumental paintings (3 m x 5 m each) to His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan in appreciation of his pioneering efforts in preserving the fine arts in Sharjah’s museums and in celebration of the Sharjah Ruler’s return in good health.

On the occasion, AUS alumni presented His Highness with a special book entitled The Arabian Antiquities of Spain,

which depicts the architecture, sculpture, and paintings of al-Andalus.

The evening also saw 14 alumni win scholarships to attend graduate school at AUS in the fields of their choice. Winners of the scholarships were: Waleed Anwar, Rawad El Haj Ali, Nader Aly, Rashed Kabbara, Yousef El Haj, Fida Al Salamin, Samah Hajj, Rida Aref, Osama Darraj, Eman Al Raeesi, Taha Dahraba, Tamer Al- Deek, Abdulrahman Abbas, and Kamal Saadeddin.

Alumna Ahlam Kaddoura won a 2012 model Mitsubishi Lancer offered by The Construction Machinery Center, as the winner of a contest to determine the most active alumnus or alumna involving her fellow alumni in activities of the AUS Alumni Association. The following sponsored the other raffle prizes: RAK Airways, Xclusive Yachts and Rotana Centro.

The dinner was also attended by alumni leaders who have attained distinction in their young careers, including Salah Al Shamsi, former Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Chairman of Liwa Investment Holding; Sheikh Khalid Bin Saqr Al Qassimi, Chairman of the Sharjah Public Works Department; Yousuf Al Bastaki, Vice President of EMAL; Sheikh Mohammad Faisal Al-Qassimi, AUSAA Founding Board President; and Sheikhha Azza Al Nuaimi, AUS Alumni Association President.

Also present were AUS trustees Hamid D. Jafar, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Crescent Petroleum; Riad T. Sadik, Chairman of Al Habtoor Leighton Group; and Maroun Semaan, President and CEO Petrofac International Ltd. Other invitees included Dr. Amr Abdul Hamid, Advisor to His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah for Higher Education; Ahmed Ismail, Chairman MAF Dalkia; Walid Al Hashimi, CEO of Sharjah Holding; Faizal Kottikolon Chairman, the KEF Company FZC; and Shabana Faizal, Managing Director, the KEF Company FZC; senior university officials, graduates, staff, and faculty members.



AUS alumni celebrating the Fifth Alumni Reunion Dinner



His Highness with AUSAA Founding Board President Sheikh Mohammed Al Qassimi and alumnus H.E. Eng. Salah Salem Al Shamsi in the presence of Chancellor Heath, Vice Chancellor Mourtada, as well as representatives of the AUSAA Board, Abu Dhabi Chapter, Dubai Chapter, and Events Chapter



AUS alumni celebrating the Fifth Alumni Reunion Dinner



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi with Trustee Hamid D. Jafar and Chancellor Peter Heath along with UAE-based artist Ismail Al Rifai inaugurating the exhibition



His Highness addressing the audience in the presence of Chancellor Heath, Vice Chancellors Mourtada and Al Qaseer



Vice Chancellor Mourtada with alumna Ahlam Kaddoura, winner of the 2012 model Mitsubishi Lancer offered by the Construction Machinery Center



A winner receiving an air ticket sponsored by RAK Airways in the presence of Chancellor Heath



An entertainment band playing at the Fifth Alumni Reunion Dinner



AUS alumnae at the Alumni Reunion Dinner



His Highness enjoying the light show with Trustees Hamid D. Jafar, Riad T. Sadek, and Maroun Semaan, alumnus H.E. Eng. Salah Salem Al Shamsi and Chancellor Peter Heath



The light show on the AUS Main Building



The three monumental paintings (3 m x 5 m each) dedicated to His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi by UAE artist Dr. Najat Meky



AUS alumni at the Fifth Alumni Reunion Dinner



Abdullah El Shazly and Rami Gaber awarding winners of the Alumni Sports Tournament

Sharjah Ruler Inaugurates AIWF Annual Conference at AUS



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi inaugurating the AIWF conference with Chancellor Peter Heath, Vice Chancellor Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Mrs. Haifa Al Kaylani, and other UAE officials

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), expressed satisfaction at the University hosting the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) Annual Conference this year. His Highness made this statement after the opening ceremony of the AIWF conference held at the University's Main Auditorium on May 16.

"I am very happy that this conference is taking place in the emirate of Sharjah; an emirate that is distinguished by its constant efforts in the betterment of institutions pertaining to the family,"

said the Sharjah Ruler. His Highness said that over the last 25 years, Sharjah has constantly worked at enhancing and developing institutions dedicated to future generations. He also thanked Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Chairman of the AIWF and the conference organizers, for their efforts and wished them success.

Themed "Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change," the two-day conference brought together Arab and international global leaders to AUS, which



Part of the audience

is renowned as one of the leading centers of academic excellence in the Arab world.

During the conference, eminent guest speakers and high profile participants examined the role of women and youth as drivers of change in emerging economies. In addition to exploring strategies to implement policy recommendations already identified at AIWF's 10th anniversary conference held in London in May last year, the conference identified enablers for job creation in the region and other emerging economies around the world, taking the unique opportunities presented within the region to help shape future Arab policy, reinforcing the message that gender equality is absolutely vital to sustainable development in the future Arab world.

AUS Chancellor Dr. Peter Heath said in his opening remarks: "I wish to thank the AIWF for the opportunity to work together to find ways to include women and young workers more fully into the private sector as the way forward. AIWF's networking of women entrepreneurs for our national development is more than timely. Many deem it a necessary step." He said that promoting women's entrepreneurship seeds broader and deeper economic progress. "There isn't any way we can increase prosperity and stability throughout the region unless women are full partners in the community, the country, the region, and in the world economy," he added.

The opening session was also addressed by Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, AIWF Chairman, and alumna Noura Al Noman, Director General of Her Highness Sheikhha Jawaher Al Qassimi's Executive Office. "If we are to achieve gender equality in the region, the Arab community must embrace a sustainable development policy and strategy with a rights-based focus on the Arab world's most precious resource - its people, and especially its women and youth," said Al Kaylani.

In her presentation, Al Noman spoke of the different initiatives and organizations led by Her Highness Sheikhha Jawaher Bint Mohammed Al Qassimi, the wife of the Ruler of Sharjah. "The common denominator between all of these organizations which employ more than 2,000 staff to serve the emirate of Sharjah and beyond isn't only the great role they play in developing society; but also the fact that they are all led by women leaders from Sharjah," said Al Noman. "His Highness' conviction that the education of women should be reinforced by entrusting them with the running and operation of leading organizations is most visible in Sharjah and in Her Highness' organizations," she said.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, said: "It is my firm belief that our deliberations during the Forum's next two days will conclusively demonstrate just how solid the pioneering foundations



Dr. Afnan Al-Shuaiby, Ms. Chiara Corazza and Ms. Ameera Binkaram during the "Innovators & Entrepreneurs in Emerging Economies" panel



AUS Alumna Dana Al Fardan along with Mark Carwardine and David Applefield of the *Financial Times*

of Sheikh Dr. Sultan, empowering women and the youthful professionals have proven in building a new Arab Renaissance and this is only normal for such an enlightened Ruler and a well-read scholar and author in his own right."

The conference sought to identify and promote factors that have the potential to create real opportunities for women and youth in the Arab world to better their futures. Plenary sessions included "Women's Contribution to Public Life," "Empowering SMEs: Economic Development and the New Arab World," "Linking Education & Stable, Sustainable Socio-Economic Development," "Innovators and Entrepreneurs in Emerging Economies: Reaching a New Level of Entrepreneurial Excellence," "Developing Youth: The Role of Governments and the Private Sector," "Hidden Potential: New Perspectives on the Role of Women and Youth," and "How Are Students and Young Entrepreneurs Leveraging Technology and Social Media to Promote a Sustainable Future?"

The conference, organized by the AUS Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) and the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) in collaboration with the World Bank and MENA OECD Business Council, continued until May 17. The opening was attended by AUS trustees and numerous government officials, international delegates, senior AUS officials, prominent alumni, faculty and staff members, as well as members of the public and the national media.

Since its inception, AUS has played a formidable role in providing a forum to highlight and discuss important issues pertaining to gender studies. This

significant event crowns the University as a regional hub for women's studies. The University regularly hosts national and international symposia that focus on issues related to academic studies on women's empowerment and growth. It also played a pioneering role in the creation of the UAE Gender and Women's Studies Consortium, the last meeting of which drew renowned scholars from 70 universities across the world to AUS.

Known for its academic excellence and multicultural campus life, one of the core aims of AUS has been the active promotion of women's rights. More than just offering its students a minor in women's studies, AUS faculty members manifest the values of women's empowerment that the University encourages among its students. Well known for their active organization of forums on feminism and women's leadership and their robust academic research, AUS faculty continue to author and edit books, monographs, and research papers, and have carved a distinct niche for themselves in the field.

Such encouragement has resulted in many of the University's female students and alumnae setting standards of excellence in numerous fields, both at home and abroad. From winning laurels for their innovative industrial designs to being lauded at international film festivals for their poignant and sensitive portrayal of local women's issues, AUS students have been celebrated for their work. The University's faculty, students, and alumnae are committed to becoming the harbingers of positive change for the empowerment of women, not just within the UAE but in the region and beyond.



Mrs. Nicola Ehlermann-Cache, Mrs. Nadereh Chamlou, Dr. Nasser Saidi, and Dr. Shaikha Al Maskari during the "Empowering SMEs" panel



H.E. Tahani Abu Daqqa, Mr. David Arkless, Mrs. Nadereh Chamlou, and Professor Yomn El Hamaky during the "Developing Youth" panel

Chancellor Heath's Arab International Women's Forum Address



Your Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, Founder and President of the American University of Sharjah, AUS Trustees, Arab International Women's Forum, Founder Chairman Mrs. Haifa Al Fahoum Al Kaylani, Distinguished Guests,

Welcome to the American University of Sharjah. I first wish to thank the Arab International Women's Forum for the opportunity to work together to find ways to include women and young workers more fully in the private sector as the way forward. AIWF's networking of women entrepreneurs for our national development is more than timely. Many deem it as a necessary step. The women entrepreneurs in this room are proof that women are doers and achievers, thinkers and innovators, leaders, and problem-solvers. And we need each and every one of you to lend your entrepreneurial skills and energy to meeting the current economic challenges. Promoting women's entrepreneurship seeds broader and deeper economic progress. There isn't any way we can increase prosperity and stability throughout the region unless women are full partners in the community, the country, the region, and in the world economy. How quickly we innovate and how intelligently we use innovations will decide how efficiently we compete and how viable we will be in competing with the nations that have been industrialized for longer periods of time.

The Gulf countries have instigated impressive programs to create skills and place young workers in the private sector. The preamble of our AIWF conference today calls for building stronger, more economically viable communities through greater inclusion of all social sectors, though especially women. Talent is universal, but opportunity is not. Women are still saddled with unfair and untrue assumptions that they are less capable of starting and running businesses. We are prying open the doors of opportunity for more people to walk through. Making women a focus of national policy is not only the right thing to do -- it is also the smart thing as well. It is crucial that women and youth are given the essential tools; training and hands-on-experience that will ensure that they are workforce-ready. Plenary sessions today will explore the importance of education, leadership training, capacity building, and self-development for our young globally minded citizens, who will be the ones to transition our respective economies from "emerging" to "fully emerged."

I wish to emphasize the transformative leadership role that women will play over the next few decades — as entrepreneurs, innovators, and leaders in politics, culture, and academia. The AIWF has long recognized the need to cultivate more female business leaders and at all managerial levels. I note that AUS is especially equipped to achieve this goal as a global institution that was founded as the first co-educational and co-residential university in the Gulf. AUS is committed to developing the careers of women at all levels — from senior administrators, to middle managers, to those just starting out with the University. There are a growing number of women in all tiers of the AUS administration, and on our board of Trustees. The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs has a successful program in placing young women and men with suitable companies. The UAE and the region are certainly on a journey — and we are getting better as we are getting stronger. Thus, creating a climate that promotes women's success demonstrates business acumen.

The AIWF conference will explore how women can turn their entrepreneurial dreams and innovations into successful businesses that generate income for themselves and their families, create jobs, expand markets, and fuel progress in their communities. Public-private partnerships can make use of a reservoir of untapped potential. By creating networks of support, we can build locally driven and locally supported organizations that do bring about lasting change.

Our aim is to unleash the potential of Arab women entrepreneurs and business leaders. When you leave here after two days of intensive deliberation, I hope you will carry with you expanded networks to use along your skill and energy, to contribute to the growth and progress of your communities!

Dr. Peter Heath
AUS Chancellor

Vice Chancellor Mourtada's Arab International Women's Forum Address



Your Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, Founder and President of the American University of Sharjah, AUS Chancellor Peter Heath, Arab International Women's Forum, Founder Chairman Mrs. Haifa Al Fahoum Al Kaylani, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,

Al salam alaikum wa rahmatu Allah wa Barakatuh

We host the Arab International Women's Forum 2012 themed "Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change" with great anticipation and clear evidence that our continued efforts in capacity-building under the aegis and with the support of His Highness are paying dividends.

Our marquee convocation marks the eleventh anniversary of the AIWF, an organization whose time "has come" and one that has steadfastly catalyzed long-overdue social and economic change, and in-depth, throughout the fabric of the society. For the first time since 2007 the Forum is being held within GCC, rather than in Europe or in the US.

AIWF's growing impact is confirmed by its collaborative endeavors with the League of Arab States, the European Commission and European Parliament, the United Nations organizations and agencies, (I wish to mention the OECD), the World Bank, the Arab British Chamber of Commerce in UK, the multitude of chambers of commerce and women's business councils throughout the Arab world and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office--to mention but a few of the AIWF's partners.

Our 2012 Conference thus builds on the outcomes achieved during the milestone tenth anniversary of the AIWF held in London--though with broader horizons clearly in sight for the eleventh annual Forum.

From the perspective of historical context, it is not coincidental that we convene at the American University of Sharjah, in the Emirate of Sharjah. His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, founded AUS to "seed" an inclusive society with trained leaders and skilled and innovative professionals of both genders.

Higher education thus joins institutions specifically designed and envisioned by His Highness for empowering and advancing the well-being of women and young professionals in the early years of their careers.

The Emirate of Sharjah and His Highness himself through personal daily attention in spite of his very busy governmental schedule are widely recognized for bettering the day-to-day living of all social sectors and for initiating change that will render greater social and economic equanimity as its long-term strategic goal.

Let us also bear in mind that the advancing of all social sectors, and especially women, pays great dividends for Gulf society and the Arab world. It almost goes without saying to all those present today that self-realized personalities of all backgrounds and social categories, in their own turn, repay the investment in their skills many times over in their contributions to the economy and to the country. This enlightened capacity-building renders the likes of Sharjah, the UAE, and its neighboring Gulf countries far better places to live.

This past January commemorated the 40th anniversary of accession of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi to the rulership of Sharjah. These four decades have seen breath-taking developments at home and abroad in culture, heritage, the arts, and science, on many fronts, as well as the great participation of citizens of both genders in the rapidly expanding private sector and capacity-building initiatives of all sorts in the Emirates. Sharjah has received awards as the cultural capital of the Arab world for its many museums and universities and is widely recognized for blazing the way for women in leadership in business, science, engineering, and the arts. In short, Sharjah through the vision of His Highness has established itself as a tolerant society steeped in its values and mindful of its culture where talents in many forms are nourished for the benefit of businesswomen, artists, and scientists alike.

Her Highness Sheikhha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qassimi, the wife of the Ruler of Sharjah, and the Chairperson of the Sharjah Supreme Council for Family Affairs, who as our mentor constantly reminded us of how supportive our beloved Ruler is of all her initiatives and undertakings, has also stood at the forefront with the continuous encouragement and guidance of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, to support and encourage women through the Sharjah Women's Council, the Sharjah Supreme Council for Family Affairs, and the Sharjah Ladies Club, to name just a few of the proactive venues channeling constructive and effective change.

We are delighted and honored, Your Highness, that you have taken time in your many-fold governmental duties to see the quintessence of your ongoing long-term trajectory of opening the floodgates of talent "of all and for all" materialized here today.

It is my firm belief that our deliberations during the Forum's next two days will conclusively demonstrate just how solid His Highness's pioneering foundations of empowering women and the youthful professionals in all walks of life have proven in building a new Arab Renaissance--and this is only normal for such an enlightened Ruler and a well-read scholar and author in his own right.

It is now my privilege and honor to introduce you to Chancellor Peter Heath. Chancellor Heath has served at the helm of AUS for four years, after coming to us as Provost at the American University of Beirut. I can personally attest that he has encouraged the promotion of many women to executive positions across the University and supported them in countless less visible ways as you may read in the *Financial Times* report, which Mark Carwardine and David Applefield were kind enough to share with us today. He has been especially supportive of my efforts to develop and build partnerships with the community and private sector and those of my dear colleague, Vice Chancellor Moza Al Shehhi, who is a mentor and role model for AUS students.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah
Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs
& Professor of International Studies

Welcoming Remarks by the Arab International Women's Forum Founder Chairman



Significant events in the region in the last year have afforded us all a unique opportunity to face up to the challenges of a new era and to examine the Arab world from a new and exciting perspective, exploring the potential and future ramifications of change within the region with a view to securing the partnership of women and youth – and indeed, all Arab citizens.

In the last decade and a half, Arab women have taken on prominent roles as decision-makers, participating in their economies and societies as professors, university deans, businesswomen, journalists, judges, lawyers, ministers, media figures, bankers, doctors, and financiers.

The number of women holding ministerial-level positions and other roles in public life has especially increased during this time, and the number of women choosing entrepreneurship over traditional employment has also grown impressively year to year.

Women represent 50% of the SME enterprise sector, and the Boston Consulting Group estimates place wealth held by women in the MENA region at \$500 billion, while MEED estimates the wealth held by women in the Gulf region at \$385 billion.

However, to put these achievements and figures into perspective, women are still underrepresented in key sectors, including the sciences, sport, media, education, religion, medicine, engineering, and law, and gender barriers continue to restrict women's impact on the region's key institutions.

Like their counterparts in Europe, Asia and the Americas, women in business in all Arab countries still struggle with access to finance and networking opportunities, skill building, specialized training, and integration of advanced technology and marketing trends. Societal norms and conservative traditions still exert pressure on women in the Arab region, as they do in many other regions in the world, in many cases limiting opportunities for education, employment, or participation in public life.

If we are to achieve gender equality in the MENA region, the Arab community must embrace sustainable development policies and strategies with a rights-based focus on the Arab world's most precious resource - its people, and especially its women and youth.

More can and should be done in the region to enhance women's access to quality education, offering girls the opportunity to

excel in the sciences, engineering, and mathematics, and to respond to the needs of future employers by providing women with skills in IT, foreign languages, and business administration.

The Arab world's greatest challenge for the critical decade ahead is to counter rising unemployment and create jobs for the next generation and AIWF believes that this can best be achieved by promoting entrepreneurship, empowering young business owners, and creating the best possible environment for SMEs to grow and create jobs.

Although Arab governments have been largely successful at incentivizing and enabling the private sector to support women's integration in the workforce, there is still a lot to be done to overcome the challenges and barriers to entrepreneurship for women in the region.

We are calling on GCC governments, regional development groups, and the Arab private sector to work together to establish and support investment funds that will benefit women in business, to support cross-border networking initiatives, and to form a regional network of investors.

The MENA region has the disadvantage of having one of the highest unemployment rates of all regions globally and job creation is, now more than ever, a top regional priority. One in every four young people living in the MENA region is unemployed.

Youth unemployment rates are especially and extremely high in countries such as Yemen at 50%, Algeria at nearly 46%, and Iraq at 43.5%. Of Libya's 6.5 million people, approximately one-third live in poverty. With more than 75% of young job seekers coming from Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Algeria, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia, these countries are under immense pressure to create the most jobs, and across the board, unemployment is still disproportionately high among women.

Substantive issues such as endemic youth unemployment cannot be solved overnight, but AIWF has seen first-hand that the support of global corporations in training, recruiting, and developing a viable workforce has a profound impact on the integration of Arab graduates and entrepreneurs into the regional and global markets.

Arab corporations, governments and development organizations must commit to promoting public-private partnerships and funding concrete initiatives to diversify Arab economies beyond oil and other traditional exports, renewing investment in academic infrastructures and the Arab knowledge economy, improving labor laws and policies, promoting a range of Arab-led programs to develop entrepreneurship and innovation, and encouraging private sector development and foreign investment to steer young graduates away from a preference for jobs in the public sector, which remains the primary job creator in the Arab world (especially in the GCC). Now more than ever, we can see that gender equality and equality of economic opportunity for all citizens are key to successful, inclusive and sustainable development for the MENA region, and that Arab women are key engines of social progress and economic growth.

Ultimately, we must create and showcase Arab talent as role models that will inspire the next generation. By actively promoting women's successes in the MENA, highlighting their accomplishments in the media, honoring their achievements and encouraging valuable experience exchange between successful Arab businesswomen and young entrepreneurs, we can effectively break stereotypes and challenge the barriers that are denying Arab women a prominent voice as engines of economic growth in the region.

Mrs. Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani
Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum

Alumna Noura Al Noman's Arab International Women's Forum Keynote Address



Your Highness, Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, and President of this esteemed University, which is welcoming us today for the 11th iteration of the AIWF annual conference. AUS Chancellor Peter Heath; H.E. Haifa AlKaylani, Chairperson of the Arab International Women's Forum, Distinguished guests, my fellow AUS alumni,

It is especially auspicious that this 11th session of the AIWF annual event is being held at the American University of Sharjah, an institution which is itself very young and yet has achieved so much in such record time as to position itself as the herald of leadership, of successful entrepreneurship, and of all efforts that are channeled to build the capacity of our youth, as well as develop their full potential. The very title and theme of today's forum "Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women & Youth as Drivers of Change" is reminiscent of the fast-paced trajectory of the University we are in, a University that has four women on its senior staff, namely Dr. Moza Al Shehhi the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah the Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; Dr. Cindy Dutshke the Director of Institutional Effectiveness; and Ms. Frances Barton who is in charge of special projects. All this has occurred with the personal support of His Highness the President of AUS.

Indeed, His Highness and Her Highness Sheikhah Jawaher Bint Mohammed Al Qassimi, have always espoused the empowerment of women and the youth hand in hand and considered this to be a natural process. I wish to quote her highness as having so often reiterated that as she approached some of her initiatives with deliberate speed and care, it was His Highness who would urge her and encourage her to steadily move forward on those various fronts that I shall outline and share with you a bit later during the course of my presentation.

I wish to mention here that the same process of natural support and empowerment of women that we witness in this academic institution is manifest in the Sharjah Businesswomen Council which is being led by my dear colleague and friend Ameera bin Karam who in addition to her duties in ably leading the businesswomen council is known to all across the UAE and beyond by virtue of her unwavering support of the cause of the Pink Caravan under the Friends of Cancer Patients umbrella. Ameera is herself a keynote speaker in this forum and I am sure her remarks will speak for themselves.

It is now overdue for me to share with you the thorough initiatives and social development strategic planning of the person who I consider a role model, a mentor, and a powerhouse of care for grassroots community progress and development, Her Highness Sheikhah Jawaher Bint Mohammed Al Qassimi. It wasn't just recently when she became a young grandmother of, Mariam, Ahmed and Alya that Her Highness started thinking of the youth. It was more than three decades ago when she looked around in Sharjah for an epicenter that would serve as the nucleus for the young women and children, both to nurture their talents and provide them the safe haven for their multifaceted interactions. The Sharjah Ladies Club was opened in 1982, as the first ladies-only club of its kind in the UAE. With a private beach, an Olympic sized pool, tennis courts, a full-fledged gym, a shooting arena, an

arts center, a ballet studio, a fitness center, an ice-skating rink, a nursery and day care center, a spa, a beauty boutique, and a fine dining restaurant, the club was established to provide young women and children with a center for creativity and leisure.

Sharjah's devotion to serving the family and the community does not exclude any part of the family unit. Thus the creation of the Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services is yet another sign of the advanced and deeply rooted care and concern for the family as a whole. As an organization that is more than 33 years old, the City aims at providing education, care, training, and rehabilitation to children and adults with special needs, regardless of the level of disability and yet within the limits that it allows. In addition, it aims at educating the public on disability issues in the hope of preventing future disabilities and bridging the gap between the disabled and the rest of society. Led and administered by Her Excellency Sheikhah Jameela Bint Mohammed Al Qassimi, today the City serves more than 2000 people with special needs.

I had briefly mentioned the Friends of Cancer Patients when introducing women leaders in the UAE, and this is again another initiative created by Her Highness Sheikhah Jawaher in 1999 as a health promotion organization educating the public on cancer prevention. Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Sawsan Jafar and her dynamic board, FOCP's role has grown since then to include treatment of cancer patients at the various medical authorities and centers in the UAE. To date, FOCP has treated more than 750 patients, and has achieved this through donations from the community over the past 11 years. FOCP has also worked at an advisory level to a number of government entities and health authorities by creating and designing leading national health campaigns. The most recent achievements being the Pink Caravan, a breast cancer campaign that successfully collaborated with the Ministry of Health, Dubai Health Authority and Abu Dhabi Health Authority by spreading awareness and screening 15,000 women and men from the remote and rural regions of the UAE over the past 13 months. FOCP strives to represent the voice of cancer patients by continually pushing for improved cancer control policy based on the evidence.

The common denominator between all of these organizations which employ more than 2000 staff to serve the emirate of Sharjah and beyond isn't only the great role they play in developing society; but also the fact that they are all led by women leaders from Sharjah. His Highness' conviction that the education of women should be reinforced by entrusting them with the running and operation of leading organizations is most visible in Sharjah and in Her Highness' organizations. And recently, Her Highness has turned attention and resources to another organization which had influenced her life as a child, and has the potential for shaping future women leaders – the young women and girl guides and scouts association. Having been chosen by Her Highness Sheikhah Fatma Bint Mubarak, wife of the late UAE president Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan to be the President of the UAE association; Sheikhah Jawaher has taken on this role with the same passion she has approached all of her projects. Through this organization, Her Highness intends to promote community service among children and youth, as well as teamwork, leadership skills and appreciating other cultures. She believes that these will be the nurturing mothers, directors, ministers, ambassadors, parliamentarians and scientists of the future.

Alumna Noura Al Noman
Director General Of The Executive Office Of Her Highness Sheikhah Jawaher Al Qassimi

American University of Sharjah and *Bee'ah* Sign Agreement for Gulf Ecosystem Research Center



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi overseeing the signature of the agreement between H.E. Salim Al Owais and Chancellor Peter Heath in the presence of H.E. Sultan Al Mualla, Mr. Khaled Al Huraimel, Provost Thomas Hochstettler, Vice Chancellors Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Salem Al Qaseer, Saeed Al Shamsi and Rami Gaber

Under the patronage of His Highness Dr. Sheikh Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of the American University of Sharjah (AUS) a collaboration agreement has been signed to establish the "Gulf Ecosystem Research Center" with an endowment of AED 30 million, which will bring to the region the very best environmental research, resources, and faculty to help position Sharjah as the center for environmental change, thought, and leadership.

The agreement highlights the partnerships between AUS and *Bee'ah* to apply the frameworks and foundations for the Gulf Ecosystem Research Center, and serves as an affirmation of the vision of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan to support the education and culture of future leaders about the importance of a sustainable environment in the UAE and the Middle East.

Present at the signing ceremony was H.E. Salim Al Owais, Chairman of *Bee'ah*, the Middle East's leading and award-winning integrated environmental and waste management company; H.E. Sultan Al Mualla, Director-General of Sharjah Municipality; and Mr. Khaled Al Huraimel, Chief Executive Officer of *Bee'ah*, along with Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor; Dr. Thomas J. Hochstettler, AUS Provost; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; and Mr. Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs.

"Through the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan, Sharjah has long been the center of educational and environmental innovations, and we are already at the forefront of this positive change," commented H.E. Salim Al Owais.

"The establishment of the Middle East's first environmental research center will present yet another stepping stone in our partnership with AUS to link together professors, students, as well as the best minds in the industry, to address the fundamental environmental issues in our region," said Al Owais.

Dr. Peter Heath stated that "AUS is very excited about further solidifying our already on-going relationship with *Bee'ah* by establishing this research center. The center will become a focus for investigating ways to improve the environment in Sharjah and the UAE while at the same time it expands the research capacity of both AUS and *Bee'ah*. This is a very exciting project."

"We, within the teaching and research faculty of AUS, are delighted at the prospect of a close partnership with *Bee'ah*," said Dr. Thomas Hochstettler.

"Only positive results can come of this innovative collaboration between Sharjah's two most advanced organizations in the field of environmental affairs," added Hochstettler.

"The Gulf Ecosystem Research Center will allow the innovative advances in community-based environmental studies to be combined with in-depth training of students in environment concepts based on a strong value foundation, to provide a diversified curriculum of AUS," said Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah as she thanked *Bee'ah* for their generous contribution and their far-sightedness to partner with higher education to enrich the AUS programs and benefit the community.

According to the agreement, the research center aims to become a globally acknowledged multi-national research hub, enabling Sharjah to lead environmental change through knowledge-sharing and exchange of information, and to create a global network of environmental research institutions while assisting in best practices in environment related research.

The center's main objectives include strengthening regional environmental policy development through enhanced partnerships between various accredited institutions, creating a highly accessible source of information and knowledge on environmental topics, and positioning the environmental research center as an accredited institution in the industry.

It will grant researchers in the Middle East and around the world the ability to propose new ideas for research topics, and will form a platform to enable them to work on data and information concerning the region and its climate, through a network of linkages with other research institutions and initiatives in order to empower knowledge sharing that could aid environmental sustainability.

This is not the first project established with the University. *Bee'ah* has already established links with AUS, creating a collaboration platform to introduce opportunities for research and development, recruitment and internships, sponsorship and lectures, recycling programs as well as events and functions.

Sharjah Ruler Receives US Ambassador at AUS

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qasimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS) received at his office on campus on February 28, His Excellency Michael Corbin, Ambassador of the United States of America to the UAE.

His Highness briefed Ambassador Corbin on the University's history and its academic programs as well as on the on-campus facilities, and its current and future plans. He also briefed him on new developments planned and underway.

Ambassador Corbin thanked the Sharjah Ruler for his hospitality and praised the reputation that AUS has achieved across the region. He said that as an example of American educational system in a rapidly changing Arab world, AUS had no equal. He also expressed gratitude to the entire university team for a "truly inspirational first visit to AUS."

The meeting was also attended by Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS, as well as other senior officials of the university and the US embassy.



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi on the occasion of US Ambassador Michael Corbin's visit to campus along with Chancellor Heath, Provost Hochstettler, Vice Chancellors Mourtada and Al Shehi, Deans Al Assaf, Rush, and Richards and Mr. Al Shamsi

AUS MBA Program Ranked Best in Gulf by *Forbes* Middle East

The MBA program offered by AUS was ranked as the best among those offered by private universities in the Gulf region, according to a study published recently by *Forbes* Middle East.

The program ranks second best among private universities offering MBA degrees in the entire Middle East and North African (MENA) region, according to the same study.

"The high ranking of our MBA program by *Forbes* is not a surprise to us, but comes as a logical crowning of the series of achievements by AUS in general and its School of Business and Management in particular," said Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor.

Programs of the University's School of Business and Management recently earned international accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International). The new AED 90-million, state-of-the-art SBM building was opened soon thereafter, Dr. Heath added.

The six criteria used by the study to assess the top 37 private MBA programs in the MENA region included accreditation, number of majors, length of the program, cost, minimum GPA requirements and availability of academic advisors.

Meanwhile, in an interview published on the occasion, Dr. Heath told *Forbes* Middle East that AUS maintained an educational standard equal to that of renowned US universities. He attributed the University's success to the support of its president, its Board of Trustees, and the dedication of its faculty and staff.

Forbes also quoted AUS MBA graduate Mishal Kanoo, Vice President of the Kanoo Group, as saying that AUS had given him "the ability to consider different investment viewpoints and distinguished business policies." Another MBA graduate, Nadia Kamali, Head of the IT Department at Dubai World, described the AUS faculty as "excellent and always there to take care of me."

Alumna Hind Seddiqi: A Family Business Affair

Hind is a role-model for Emirati women in the workforce, breaking with tradition to become the first female family member to join the corporate office of Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons as the Vice President of Marketing and Communication. Hind attained a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communications at the American University of Sharjah in 2005.

In looking back at your upbringing and education, who or what influenced you to want to excel in business?

Home, school, and a circle of friends. These three factors shape anyone's belief system in life. Work and success are part of life as well. Ever since I was a child, I was taught that you must do at least one productive thing per day; otherwise, your day is a complete waste. This is the same belief I carry with me whenever I do anything. In work, at home and even when I travel. If you always have it in your mind to achieve something positive then it becomes part of your day-to-day routine and you'll see the results in every aspect of your life.

What were some of the areas that you had to give the greatest attention to in mastering the unwritten rules of business at Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons?

Leadership and responsibility, these two traits are integral in the business world. Without these two qualities advancement becomes impossible. Inquisition is also important; one should always be interested in the business he or she is in. You should ask questions to learn, you should discuss matters in order to understand why things are done the way they are. These things are not part of any training program; this is a personal effort one should take in order to advance and succeed.

How has your major in Mass Communication equipped you to effectively deal with interpersonal communication and with specific skills to reach larger audiences or markets?

What I learned from majoring in Mass Communication has helped me a lot in work, especially that now I look at things from a different perspective. We were always taught to look at things from the eyes of the public. Coming into the family business with this in mind helped me a lot with reworking the corporate image of Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons. The positive feedback and reactions we have received with the various changes carried out by using this theory have proven to be very successful. Some people always say what you learn in books will never work in real life, and that theories are nothing like reality. I disagree with this school of thought. I believe that the theories you acquire in school, if well understood, are extremely logical and can be implemented. Implementation of these theories differ from business to business and the success will be visible only if the theory was applied correctly.

This year's AUS Business Forum and Career Fair featured top women executives from prominent family businesses, the Al

Jaber Group and Al Gurg Group, who spoke of experiences in turning challenges at work into opportunities. In your experience, what are possible challenges for alumnae in the workplace that might be turned into opportunities?

On a personal experience level, the challenge I faced was in bringing new thoughts and theories on handling the business to a 50-year-old management system, which was still following traditional methods. Traditional methods in some areas are still the best, but there are other areas in the business that always need to evolve especially in a very competitive environment such as the UAE. That is why it is very important to update our information. Unfortunately people in the UAE don't read a lot of books or magazines, but in order for anyone to catch up with the market trends and changes, it is integral that they read and stay in the loop.

What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages of being a female top executive in the Gulf?

These days it is not very strange to see top female executives in the Gulf. Thanks to the pioneering females before us who took up this challenge in a time that might have been far more difficult than today. Women, like H.E. Sheikh Lubna Al Qassimi, the Minister for Foreign Trade, and Mrs. Raja Al Gurg, Managing Director of Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, paved the way for women today. The recognition we are receiving from the media and the government is also very encouraging and makes it easier for females to be in senior positions.

I believe that the advantages and disadvantages for a male and a female in the same industry are similar from a business level, if both are fully capable and responsible. The only difficulty a woman might have is to balance life between work and family, because her presence at home is as integral as her presence at work. Men have the same responsibility, but unfortunately society might think it is okay for men to be less involved at home but not women. I wouldn't call this a disadvantage on a woman's part; it is more of an extra effort, because it can be achieved.

Family owned businesses seem to be a hallmark of the Gulf. Would you comment on any trends that you have noted in the adaptability of family businesses to the ups and downs of business cycles?

As long as the environment inside the company is strictly professional and revolves around the growth and success of the business, I believe family businesses can flourish for

many years. But as soon as emotions get involved, the family business collapses. It has been proven that in many family organizations, the business collapses as the third generation brings personal matters into the business. As long as the company is strictly professional and has competent members working in it, it can survive any business cycle.

How have you expanded the market share for luxury watch brands for Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons?

By positioning Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons as the leading watch retailer in the region.

In many cultures, a watch is a treasured heirloom to pass on from father to son or from mother to daughter. Does Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons retail a high prestige watch with distinctive Emirati symbols that could become an heirloom kept in families for generations? If so, what do you recommend?

Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons works very closely with the principles in Geneva to produce special UAE editions of watches, which are exclusively sold at our stores and only for the UAE market. Some pay tribute to Sheikhs, some to certain local events, and some to a certain Emirate. Our clients can relate to these themes and cherish the limited edition watches and consider them as heirlooms.

Fortunately enough, our clients have a very good knowledge about watches and they have very specific tastes when it comes to choosing watches, which are considered as investment pieces. The effort Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons makes in educating the public about watches has proven to be very successful as our clients today know a lot more about watch movements, how they work, how much time it takes to produce, etc. With this type of



information the client has more of an advantage when they buy watches, as they choose wisely and come to realize that their choices are great investment pieces that will always retain value and most of the time increase in worth.

Why is Italy one of your favorite travel destinations? It may be worth recalling that the southern half of Italy and most of Spain were settled by Arabs during the Middle Ages. Have you felt any subtle cultural affinity with the Italians or the Spaniards that may suggest a shared heritage, centuries ago? If so, in what ways?

Yes, there are so many things in Italy and Spain that

show a shared heritage. Many words they use are of Arabic origins; their concept of family is also very similar to Arabs. I personally enjoy Italy because it is very rich with history. I am fond of visiting historical areas that are also very closely related to arts. The great buildings and art that you see in old historical venues overwhelm me with an appreciation for the hard work and determination they had to achieve it.

You seem to represent the "new" Emirati woman by seeking advancement in the business world. From your experience, what are the top qualities of success that you would advise the alumnae and female students of AUS to cultivate?

I am doing what I believe is the normal thing any working individual must achieve, and that is to be completely responsible, professional and, strive to be the best. The advice I would give the alumnae is to work in a field they believe in and are passionate about. Do not try to be something you are not, because you will never excel. Be passionate about your career and that is when you will be successful. Do not venture into anything because you heard about someone's success in it. Finally, dare to do something only if you feel you can bring positive change and advancement.

Sharjah Deputy Ruler Inaugurates AUS Business Forum



His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Salim Bin Sultan Al Qassimi inaugurating the AUS Business Forum along with Trustee Hamid D. Jafar, Chancellor Peter Heath, Vice Chancellors Nada Mourtada-Sabbah and Salem Al Qaseer, and other officials

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, His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Salim Bin Sultan Al Qassimi, Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, opened the third annual AUS Business Forum at the AUS Main Building on March 12. Themed "Turning Challenges into Opportunities," the event was attended by leading executives from the GCC. The Forum, which engages business leaders, academics and industry leaders, is designed to initiate a platform for business and investment opportunities in response to the ever-changing business environment in the GCC.

The opening ceremony was attended by Sheikh Salem Bin Abdulrahman Al Qassimi, Director of the Office of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah; Salem al Owais, Advisor at the Office of the Ruler of Sharjah; AUS Trustee Hamid Jafar, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Crescent Petroleum; Mohammad Diab Al Mosa, Advisor at the Office of the Ruler of Sharjah; Salem Yousef Al Qaseer, AUS Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs; Ali Shuhaimy, AUS Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management; Cleve McDaniel, AUS Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration; and AUS deans and senior officials.

"The Forum is a special gathering of eminent men and women whose presence today fulfills an important purpose for this university: the sharing of bold, creative ideas by some of the finest minds with a receptive audience on matters relevant and current. Whatever your field of interest may be, you can find something of value at one of the panel discussions at the Business Forum," said Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor.

"His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah envisioned that science and education must regain their rightful place in the advancement of our society, and it is for this reason that the University continues a bold, collaborative strategy of networking the AUS community with the private sector to fulfill the needs of the UAE," said Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs. "The Forum, in its third year now, is one of the University's key channels utilized to identify and address contemporary topics in a manner to provide a 'formula for the future' that brings together leading industry experts from various sectors, with farsighted governmental leadership, along with leading academic scholars. With the global economy's current challenges, we feel that the Forum achieves a much-needed triangulation between academia, governmental agencies and the private sector," she added. The AUS Business Forum 2012 featured keynote addresses by AUS Trustee Hamid Jafar, Chairman of the Board and CEO of Crescent Petroleum, and Homaid Al Shemmari, Executive Director of Mubadala Aerospace.

"Today's sessions will be a great learning experience for all of you students, recent graduates, and alumni. I hope that it will spark a set of ideas and enthusiasm in you that will grow into successful careers that will benefit you, your families, and society at large," said Mr. Jafar. "As you embark on this pursuit of suitable career paths for your future, I implore you to also take a leadership role in educating your communities on better uses of available resources. Abuse of resources is challenging our environment and jeopardizing our future-that is why I am asking you to be ambassadors for a sustainable future as you pursue your future."

"Human capital development is the most important challenge in the UAE. That is why it gives me great pleasure to participate in this Forum because this is one of the best ways to address this challenge," said Mr. Al Shemmari. "We as business leaders and government entities need to partner with educational institutions like AUS to find ways to develop the required human capital."

The event featured six panels including a keynote panel, which addressed the Forum's theme, "Turning Challenges

into Opportunities." Keynote panelists included Raja Easa Al Gurg, Managing Director of Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group; Fatima Obaid Al Jaber, Chief Operating Officer of Al Jaber Group; and Badria Al Mulla, President of International Emirates Management for Quality (IeMQ). Other panels featured prominent speakers from the UAE, KSA, and Qatar discussing the topics Family Business and Entrepreneurship, Urbanism and Construction, Energy, Business and Media.



His Excellency Sheikh Abdullah Bin Salim Bin Sultan Al Qassimi presenting a token of appreciation to Mr. Homaid Al Shemmari in the presence of Trustee Hamid D. Jafar, Chancellor Peter Heath, Dr. Easa Al Bastaki, Mrs. Raja Easa Al Gurg, Mrs. Fatima Obaid Al Jaber, Mrs. Badria Al Mulla, and Vice Chancellor Salem Al Qaseer



Prominent keynote speakers Mrs. Raja Easa Al Gurg, Mrs. Fatima Obaid Al Jaber, Mrs. Badria Al Mulla, Dr. Easa Al Bastaki, and Chancellor Peter Heath during the inaugural panel



Chancellor Peter Heath and Vice Chancellor Nada Mourtada-Sabbah inaugurating the Career Fair in the presence of Mrs. Rawya Abu Hijleh, Mr. Yassine Otmani and Mr. Ahmed Halabi

The University's annual Career Fair was held parallel to the AUS Business Forum. The Fair provided the AUS community with the opportunity to meet with scores of different local, regional, and international private, semi-government and government agencies interested in recruiting AUS students and graduates as either full-time employees and/or interns. "The Career Fair is truly a gateway to opportunity. It interfaces the AUS laboratory, where our students acquire skills and knowledge, and the world of business, where these skills and knowledge are put to use. Graduating seniors and alumni have the wonderful convenience of interacting with a multitude of company officers ready to hire suitable candidates. Many local and multinational companies participate in the Career Fair, most from the United Arab Emirates but many from other countries as well," Dr. Heath added.

Eighty prominent businesses participated in this year's Career Fair, including Crescent Petroleum and SAP Middle East as gold sponsors; L'Oreal, Unilever, Petrofac, National Petroleum Construction Company, Cummins and DEWA as silver sponsors; and Al Sayegh Media, Hewlett Packard, Chalhoub Group, Philips, Shell, Procter & Gamble, Dolphin Energy, Arabtec Construction, SABB, Technolous Integrated Solutions, ADNOC, Tyco Valves, and Alstom as bronze sponsors.

The Career Fair was organized by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs at AUS as part of the University's commitment to provide its students and graduates with opportunities to locate appropriate jobs and prepare them to be integrated within the labor market. Both events attracted a large number of students, alumni, guests, and faculty members.



Top: Chancellor Heath and Vice Chancellor Mourtada along with AUS alumnus H.E. Mishal Kanoo, Mr. Jerome Drosch and Mr. Yassine Otmani at the AXA Insurance booth

Middle: AUS alumnus H.E. Mishal Kanoo, Mr. Patrick Chalhoub, Ms. Noor Sweid, Ms. Zeina Tabari, and Dean Malcom Richards in the Family Business & Entrepreneurship panel

Bottom: Mr. Ali Jaber, Mr. Abdul Latif Al Sayegh, Mr. Malcolm Wall, Mr. Mohamad Mourad, and Dean Mark Rush during the Media panel



Chancellor Peter Heath at the Career Fair interfacing with DEWA officials





Mr. Fahed Al Raqbani, Mr. Marwan Al Serkal, Mr. Ziad Makhzoumi, and Dean Peter Di Sabatino during the Urbanism & Construction panel



Chancellor Peter Heath visiting with the Habtoor Leighton Group



Chancellor Heath speaking to officials from Schlumberger



Mr. Mustafa Abdel-Wadood, Mr. Jerome Drosch, Dr. George Naufal, Dr. Ismail Genc, and Chancellor Peter Heath during the Business panel



Alumni and senior graduates at the HP booth



Chancellor Peter Heath with officials from Procter and Gamble



Dr. Fred Moavenzadeh, Dr. Geoff Nesbitt, Mr. Ali Bin Harib Al-Muhairy, Mr. Fahad Al Qahtani, Mr. Rachid Ouenniche, and Associate Dean Hany El Kadi during the Energy panel



Chancellor Peter Heath with officials from Tyco



Chancellor Heath visiting with officials from Dolphin Energy

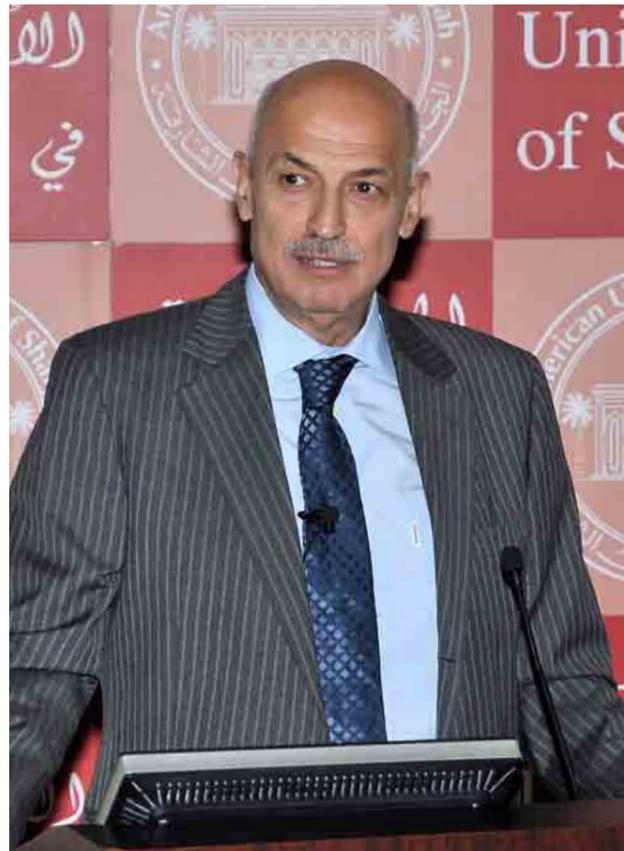
PepsiCo to Establish a USD 4 Million Scholarship Fund at AUS

Saad Abdul Latif, Chief Executive Officer of PepsiCo Asia, Middle East and Africa (AMEA) announced the establishment of a USD 4 million scholarship as he was delivering a lecture entitled "My Path at PepsiCo and Lessons Learned along the Way" to students, alumni, faculty, and staff at AUS in February.

Based in Dubai, Abdul Latif, who has led the business since September 2008, oversees all PepsiCo food and beverage businesses which generate more than AED 22 billion (US\$6 billion) in annual revenues. Prior to his current post, he led PepsiCo's South Asia, Middle East and Africa business for five years.

"I first walked in to the PepsiCo office in Dubai in 1982. Over the years I have been with the company, I have learnt many valuable lessons. These lessons have helped me get to where I am today," he said. "I would like to urge everyone to always take the initiative; when an opportunity presents itself, grab it and don't let it go. I would also advise you to go where others do not dare to go. Often in life, the biggest risks will often give you the biggest rewards," he said during his lecture.

Touching on some specific lessons learnt, Abdul Latif urged his audience, comprised of students, alumni, faculty members, as well as senior university officials, to be proactive in their personal advancements and to take advantage of all available opportunities.



In addition to advice pertaining to success in the corporate world, Abdul Latif also spoke about the many important charitable initiatives that PepsiCo is involved in. These include programs such as Tomooh that has placed over 5,000 students in higher education through grants and scholarships. Other initiatives Abdul Latif is involved in include PlaNet Finance and the Arab International Women's Forum.



Part of the audience



Chancellor Peter Heath and Vice Chancellor Nada Mourtada-Sabbah along with Mr. Saad Abdul Latif and his spouse, and Mr. Firas Hammad

As CEO of the company's AMEA Division, Abdul Latif is responsible for a territory that spans more than 90 countries and is home to more than 70 percent of the world's population. A 30-year PepsiCo veteran, he has held a wide range of international roles in the corporation's food and beverage businesses since joining the company in 1982.

Abdul-Latif holds an MBA from the American Graduate School of International Management in

Arizona and a BA in Public Administration from the American University of Beirut.

The lecture was part of the AUS Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series, in collaboration with the AUS academic units and the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs. It was attended by Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS; Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, Provost; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, as well as other senior university officials.



Chancellor Peter Heath presents a token of appreciation to Mr. Saad Abdul Latif

Renowned Artists Donate AED One Million Worth of Artwork to AUS



Vice Chancellor Nada Mourtada-Sabbah with artists Mohammed Al Qassab, Mona Al Khaja, Mohammed Fahmi, Ihsan Al Khateeb, AbdulKareem Al Sayed and his spouse

The American University of Sharjah (AUS) received a collection of paintings donated by acclaimed artists in the UAE during their visit to the University on April 1. The venture was initiated by Dr. Najat Meki donating paintings to AUS in recognition of the University's role in supporting cultural creativity across the arts, literature, and sciences within the larger community. The artists donating paintings to the AUS art collection included: Abdul Rahim Salem, Najat Meki, Mona Al Khaja, Ismail Al Rifai, Mohammed Al Qassab, Mohammed Fahmi, Abdel Qader Al Mubarak, Ehsan Al Khatib, and Obaid Suroor.

The paintings were received, on behalf of the University, by Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs and Mr. Salem Al Qaseer, AUS Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs. This current project came about through collaboration with the Office of Public Affairs, the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, and the College of Architecture, Art and Design at the American University of Sharjah, as a continuation of the theme "Art through University and Community Dialogue."

Furthermore, the paintings were given in an initiative to enrich the art collection at AUS and for art to continue to flourish within the University culture.

"The painting gifts speak to the bond between our University and community leaders in all walks of life,

in line with the directives of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS," stated Mr. Al Qaseer as he gratefully welcomed the artists' delegation.

Vice Chancellor Mourtada-Sabbah remarked, "Part of the University's mission is to cultivate the fine arts, literature, and sciences within the Emirates. All creative innovators need similar-minded people to share their often avant-garde ideas and techniques of artistic expression, and to inspire one another in pushing their individual talents forward. The University is committed to enabling students and alumni to further their skills in the arts and sciences through interacting with established experts like the acclaimed artists in the UAE and the GCC."

During their visit to AUS, the artists thanked the University's leadership for channeling the latest in scientific and artistic know-how to enhance the networking of professional and alumni artists, which in turn helps students and alumni establish themselves in the art world of community by networking academia as a font of creative enterprise with creative artists, writers, and scientists in the UAE community. They also remarked, "Not only does AUS encourage the arts, but that its striking buildings are ideal for permanently displaying the collection."

AED 5 Million Endowment Fund Sets Up "The ADIB Scholarship Fund" at AUS

Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank (ADIB), a top-tier Islamic financial services group, has signed an agreement with the American University of Sharjah to establish "The ADIB Scholarship Fund" with an endowment of AED 5 million. Students from all faculties, with distinguished academic performance, will benefit from the Fund.

The agreement was signed by Mr. Tirad Mahmoud, CEO of ADIB and AUS Chancellor Peter Heath in the presence of AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah at ADIB Headquarters in Abu Dhabi.

Commenting on the agreement, Tirad Mahmoud, ADIB's CEO said "We, at ADIB, believe that education is the best investment one can make, and we are committed to raising levels of knowledge and qualifications of the community. We aim at encouraging more students to pursue a university education as the bank goes beyond financing tuition fees."

Dr. Peter Heath expressed his gratitude to ADIB for supporting the educational mission of the University and their willingness to partner with higher education programs to benefit the community.

"This generous contribution will actively contribute to AUS's mission of graduating the best and the brightest trained workers, to build a viable human resource pool for the UAE and beyond," he added. "We are especially grateful to ADIB for this generous contribution and we look forward to continue avenues of mutual collaboration."

AUS Vice Chancellor, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah thanked ADIB for their generosity and commented, "The UAE increasingly prepares the caliber of manpower necessary to direct its



Mr. Tirad Mahmoud along with Chancellor Peter Heath and Vice Chancellor Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah

future development through leading institutions of higher education. The generosity of ADIB will contribute considerably to providing opportunities for the very best students to pursue their education at the AUS."

Every scholarships granted by "The ADIB Scholarship Fund" will be available to all students from different majors, as long as they maintain excellent academic marks and do not have the financial capacity to complete their higher education.

Influential Alumnus Encourages Social Contribution by Giving to AUS



Vice Chancellor Mourtada in a souvenir photo with alumnus Bachar Ghadri while presenting the cheque to Mrs. Rawya Abu Hijleh

AUS alumnus Bachar Ghadri contributed AED 50,000, on behalf of Nadia Taylor, Co-founder and Director of TNA Australia, to the Alumni Scholarship Fund, during his recent visit to the University, in an effort to encourage AUS constituencies to raise philanthropic awareness within the community.

Bachar graduated from AUS in 2002, with a degree in electrical and electronic engineering. He has been the General Manager of TNA Middle East, since 2009, after being promoted from regional sales manager.

TNA is a leading global supplier of integrated food packaging solutions with over 6,000 systems installed across more than 120 countries. The company provides a comprehensive range of products including spraying, distribution, seasoning, weighing, packaging, metal detection and verification solutions, plus promotional and cutting equipment. TNA's unique combination of innovative technologies, extensive project management experience and 24/7 global support ensures customers achieve faster, more reliable and flexible packaged food products at the lowest cost of ownership.

He emphasized that TNA Australia's main objective is philanthropic initiatives, which raises the importance of spreading a culture of philanthropy and enhancing the societal fabric with a heightened sense of Corporate Social Responsibility. "The recipient of this scholarship should bear in mind that s/he should support a needy person in the future, in appreciation of what s/he received. The concept

of giving back should be a mind-set, not an obligation if you truly believe in it," highlighted Bachar.

The gift was received, on behalf of AUS, by Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, who thanked alumnus Bachar Ghadri for his contribution and Nadia Taylor's wide-spread philanthropic actions. "This contribution speaks to the rising awareness among our alumni of the needed culture of philanthropy, which is creating ripples in the effort to build the fabrics of society by having such capacity building exercises arising from among the alumni. Alumnus Bachar initiated this contribution by inspiring TNA Australia to give to AUS, with the genuine purpose of helping his fellow alumni and most especially financially challenged bright students who are in the quest for education," remarked Vice Chancellor Mourtada.

Bachar initially insisted that Vice Chancellor Mourtada and the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs not publicize this gift. However, in a recognized need to share such contributions with fellow members of the AUS community and the various constituencies of AUS, Bachar allowed this donation to be announced. As a graduate of AUS, who appreciates the excellent education he received, Bachar wants to encourage and emphasize the sense of social contributions for those, who in spite of their intellect found themselves challenged financially and to allow them to avail themselves of the excellent education at AUS that he himself remains grateful for.

AED One Million Endowment Fund to Set Up the "The Moafaq Al Gaddah Scholarship Fund"



Chancellor Peter Heath and Vice Chancellor Nada Mourtada-Sabbah along with Mr. Moafaq Al Gaddah, his daughter alumna Jumana Al Gaddah, and his son Ahmed Al Gaddah

The American University of Sharjah announced the establishment of "The Moafaq Al Gaddah Scholarship Fund" following a visit by AUS Chancellor Peter Heath and AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah to Mr. Moafaq Al Gaddah's, Chairman of Moafaq Al Gaddah Group of Companies (MAG), with the presence of his daughter Jumana Al Gaddah, a 2009 marketing and management graduate of AUS.

Moafaq Al Gaddah Group was established in 1978 in Abu Dhabi. Since then the MAG Group has evolved to become a powerful and vibrant organization embracing more than fifty companies and branches covering almost every country in the world and employing over 2000 personnel. The activities of the group cover different sectors including: commercial, real estate, service, and industry.

The Moafaq Al Gaddah Scholarship Fund has been established with a generous contribution of AED 1 million by Moafaq Al Gaddah Group, which will contribute to enriching the educational mission of AUS to promote academic excellence irrespective of the financial background of the students.

"An individual enjoys contributing for the sake of benefiting the society and to support ambitious individuals who are keen on developing their capacity-building experiences. Moreover, giving is meant to help others with part of what God has granted him," said Mr. Al Gaddah.

"The gift of giving is a series that should continue to encourage others to give, as well as to build a coherent and supportive society, which is based on helping each other. In this way we will have built

a community raised on the concept of giving and formed social unity among the people," he urged. He also added that "when you support one student, you would have supported the whole family, because this student in turn will be able to support others in the future."

Dr. Peter Heath expressed his gratitude to Mr. Al Gaddah for his active support of the educational mission of the University and his willingness to partner with higher education to benefit the community. "We are very grateful for this generous contribution from a far-sighted business leader who is well known to be supportive of the common good as well as the well-being of our students, and who himself is such a successful self-made businessman who is so keen to give back to society and cares about the social welfare," he added.

AUS Vice Chancellor Mourtada-Sabbah thanked Mr. Al Gaddah for his generosity and commented that "the UAE increasingly prepares the caliber of manpower necessary to direct its future development through leading institutions of higher education. The generosity of Mr. Al Gaddah will allow the most talented students to avail themselves of the excellent education that AUS offers."

Dr. Lydia Kostopoulos, A Multicultural and Multilingual Alumna

You have taken the “road less traveled” in comparison to many of your AUS classmates in pursuing the rigors of four graduate degrees in political science and related fields. While you were at AUS, what prompted you to pursue such promising postgraduate fields as Security, Peace, Development and International Conflict, at three different European universities?

I must admit that I did not start out aiming to take the “road less traveled” but after taking my first step leaving the US and moving to the Middle East, it changed me forever. Three weeks after arriving in Sharjah and having just started classes, 9/11 happened and it was an eye opening experience for me seeing how my classmates felt about US foreign policy and with each year in college I became more and more interested in post 9/11 conflicts especially in the Middle East. I graduated convinced that I needed to develop my skills in the conflict resolution route and applied for a multidisciplinary Masters degree between Austria and Spain. I chose it because it had alternative teaching methodologies, which included peacekeeping simulation classes with the military and other conflict related courses which challenged me to my fullest. My personal academic evolution within the security field led me to international security policy and terrorism. I chose to study in Italy because the program offered a strong methodological background and gave me the flexibility to grow on my own and academically explore my interests internationally through research periods abroad.

Since you have studied in Italy, Spain, Austria, Russia, the US and China, you would seem to qualify as the alumni with the most diverse cultural experiences. How does living in such a wide variety of cultural settings sharpen your understanding of how the world operates?

Back in the late 90s when I was a high school student in South Texas studying at a specialized medical high school to prepare me for a career in medicine, I never thought that my educational career path was going to change so dramatically, or that I was going to be pursuing it in two separate continents. Nor could I have fathomed that in the following decade I was going to be studying and working in several foreign languages that I couldn't even speak at the time. Learning languages has really helped me reach a deeper level of interaction and understanding with others; as there is so much to be said about how a language can frame perspectives of the world around us. Something that I have taken with me from every cultural experience was that there are many ways of looking at the world and they are not better or worse but different and understanding the reasoning behind the different perspective can make the world of a difference. As in politics, many times heads of governments criticize the actions of other governments without taking into consideration the economic constraints, national interests, linguistic dynamics, and cultural sensitivities that may come into play in a conflict.

You have a wealth of experience in the methods and technologies of identifying peoples and areas of potential conflict. Your experience also involves advising on the most up-to-date security arrangements and even running statistical analyses of large databases to seek patterns of potential unrest. With such a wide range of expertise, what would be your most ideal sort of job?

The world of political science statistical methodology has grown tremendously over the past decade and especially in the security field, namely with geospatial abduction



analysis. Data mining and managing large and complex sets of data has become more and more in demand from several sectors (politics, economics, banking, advertising, public opinion, intelligence, etc). Although data management and analysis expertise have many uses, my ideal job would be one where I could use these skills to contribute something positive to society, namely in a field I am most passionate about: international security. Considering my professional background and language skills as well as how much I enjoy multinational workplaces, a multinational governmental organization would be the most ideal workplace for someone with my skill set and interests.

It would seem that education runs deep in your family, since I recall both your parents are also professors. You have also taught at universities in Spain and in China. What were the most rewarding aspects of teaching?

My teaching experience includes multinational students coming from a wide range of cultures and linguistic backgrounds, which on occasion made it challenging in the classroom setting due to language barriers. From my modest teaching experience I have found that the most rewarding aspects were getting students interested and curious about the world and about politics and how it affects them and the world around them. In class the most rewarding moments have been the pleasantly surprising critical comments and analysis towards the end of the semester when the students feel most comfortable in the classroom and most confident with the material. It's an incredible feeling to see some students transform from knowing and caring very little about the international political scene, to being aware, critical, and concerned about events that happen around the world.

Some social analysts contend that the world is heading towards a single global society with shared laws and agreed upon human rights. Would you agree or disagree with the assessment that countries are seeking ways other than armed conflict to resolve differences? Please share with our readership your reasons.

As an academic my first response would be, who are these social analysts, what institutions do they represent, what data have they used and how did they measure it. Considering how

many countries there are in the world today with very different cultures, histories, languages, and value systems I don't think it is fair to say that everyone has the same definition of what 'human rights' is nor the same approach to law and justice. From a social perspective, however I would be more inclined to partially agree that more and more culinary, musical, and lifestyle commodities seem to manifest themselves in a similar fashion throughout many countries (Food (ex: McDonalds), Lifestyle (ex: Twitter), Clothing (ex: Addidas), Pop Music (ex: Lady Gaga), Hollywood movies (ex: Titanic, etc). Much of this is quite dependent on the dissemination of this very information at the local level and can vary on the country based on the citizens' access to the internet and the financial ability to purchase commercial commodities [worth mentioning is a decent level of human security as a prerequisite].

In terms of countries avoiding armed conflict in efforts to resolve differences, I do agree and think that countries do attempt to pursue diplomatic options. But just because countries would like to settle things in an amicable fashion and avoid any unnecessary collateral damage it does not mean that things work out at the negotiating table; even if the parties agree to the pre-negotiating terms prior to getting to the negotiating table. With the pursuit and protection of national interests as the primary end goal, should they be threatened however, armed conflict seems to remain a convincing option for coercive diplomacy in achieving these ends.

You are among a few AUS alumni who have authored a published book. Now that your first book is in print, can you look back and say that there were satisfying aspects of writing? To have finished a book certainly must feel like a monumental accomplishment. Although it is difficult to anticipate what experiences will come your way in future years that would be worthy of other books, are there any topics that you consider would be sufficiently interesting to write about?

It truly was an incredible feeling to have authored a published book and I feel happy to have been able to contribute in my own way to the public opinion literature on security and counter terrorism policy. In the past three years I have lived, studied, and worked in five countries across three continents and noted many curious observations about the way we live today and how globalization has affected us. Inspired by this, I am actually already working on my second book which deviates from the security realm and focuses on the modern economic and political situation during the 21st century so far; and explores the challenges my generation is facing on several fronts with the backdrop of the evolution of technology and its impacts on our globalized society. Albeit brief, my experience living and working in East China has given me much food for thought in many of these respects.

Did your interdisciplinary degree in International Studies at AUS, which covers most of the social and cultural disciplines,

provide a multidisciplinary orientation in your combining political science and other fields like sociology, psychology or anthropology in profiling suspected political activists in subversive networks?

My studies at AUS opened my eyes to new perspectives and ways of thinking not to mention a new way of life living in a foreign country. I likewise learned a lot from the various backgrounds of my different professors as well as a tremendous amount from my fellow peers. Having classmates from the entire spectrum of the broader Middle East was a priceless experience which has helped me better get to know the different cultures and better understand different perspectives in the region. When profiling suspected political activists, I have found that it is best to gather as much information as possible and try to understand the activist/activist group's perspective based on its values, intentions, methods, goals, etc. and create a tailored profile instead of using a cookie cutter profile model and try to fit in individuals or groups.

You now have considerable educational background and work experience in such social sciences as political science, sociology, anthropology and economics. What vocations in the social sciences would you advise juniors or seniors at AUS to consider? Why?

These days there are more opportunities than ever to combine and mix various interests and career paths, so I would advise students to think first about what they want out of their career and identify what career goals they have, then doing their research and asking around for advice on how best to achieve that goal and set a plan. Some things to take into consideration when thinking about a career are:

- What kinds of working hours are they interested in (travel, deadline based, online work, 9-5, flexible hours).
- What languages and cultures would they like to interact with. In a globalized world political science, sociology, anthropology, and economics majors have to think about the broader impact of their job and career.

More importantly, I would recommend that students pursue careers where they feel that they can grow and be fulfilled. Be it in politics as a diplomat, in a bank as a political risk analyst, in a university as a professor, in journalism as a political reporter, or even in art as a political artist. I would recommend students work towards what they think will make them happy personally and professionally and let things evolve on their own, people change, times change and so do careers and being flexible, motivated and able to move on with your new aspirations I think is the most important thing to think about. Some lucrative political science jobs include: intelligence analysts (political/economic), political risk advisors, political advisors, political liaison officers, or diplomats.



Alumna Dr. Lydia Kostopoulos with her students at a university in China

AUSAA Council Elects its Second Board



Vice Chancellor Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah in a souvenir photo with the new AUSAA Board officers: Ahmed Al Jbori, Budoor Al Amoudi, Abdullah El Shazly, Ahmed Al Reyami, Ahmed Al Naqbi, and Melissa Bayik

American University of Sharjah Alumni Association (AUSAA) held its second election on May 26 to elect representatives to the Association's Board.

The election, which was administered by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs (ODAA) is yet another significant milestone in the Association's life. After a quorum was established, the following officers were elected by the members of the AUSAA Council to represent the next phase of the AUS Alumni Association and the 7000 graduates of the University for the next two years:

The new elected officers are:

Alumnus **Ahmed Al-Jbori**, '05 SBM, President;

Alumna **Budoor Al-Amoudi**, '05 CEN, Vice President;

Alumnus **Ahmed Al Reyami**, '08 CEN, Executive of the Council;

Alumnus **Ahmed Al-Naqbi**, '02 CEN, Treasurer

Alumna **Melissa Bayik**, '04 CAAD, Executive of Administration

Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor, congratulated the newly elected members and wished them success in fulfilling their responsibility of taking AUSAA to greater heights of excellence, distinction and achievement.

"I am pleased at the great sense of professionalism and collegiality. This shows the dynamic role the AUSAA plays in that it regularly involves several thousands of its members in its governance and in various activities," said Dr. Heath.



Vice Chancellor Mourtada in a souvenir photo with AUSAA Council members Jawaher Qayed and Amira Ballaith



A souvenir photo of the AUSAA Council and AUSAA Board



Vice Chancellor Mourtada with AUSAA Council members Vivian Ibrahim, Sevinj Keyaniyan and Mahmoud Kelli



Vice Chancellor Mourtada with AUSAA Council members Bishr Challah, Ali Abou Khamseen and Salah Zaben

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, expressed her satisfaction at the high level of participation and involvement of the University's graduates in this election where a number of outstanding candidates competed. She also thanked the AUSAA Council members for taking time out of their weekend to take part in the second elections of the Board, especially as many came from overseas.

"AUS alumni leaders, as the University's youngest ambassadors, continue to play an important role in enhancing the reputation of AUS in the region and beyond. You, our educated alumni, will take the necessary improvements for society when it comes to your turn in assuming the mantle of leadership," said Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah.

Ahmed Al Jbori, AUSAA President-elect, "thanked his fellow council members for the confidence they entrusted him with and pledged to commit every effort to leading the AUS Alumni Association to the highest spheres of excellence and fulfillment."

Dr. Heath and Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah also expressed their sincere gratitude to members of the previous AUSAA Board under the leadership of AUSAA President Sheikhha Azza Al Nuaimi for their accomplishments during the past year. These members were: Musbah Abu Jarad, AUSAA Vice President; Karim AbouAjram, AUSAA Executive of Council; Ahmed Al Jbori, AUSAA Treasurer; Melissa Bayik, AUSAA Executive of Administration; Abdullah El Shazly, Director of Institutional Advancement; and Sheikh Mohammed Faisal Al Qassimi, Founding AUSAA President.

Former AUSAA Executive of the Council, Karim Abou Ajram Shares his Thoughts

Would you please tell us briefly about yourself?

My name is Karim Abou Ajram and I am originally Lebanese with a Venezuelan nationality. I have lived in the UAE for the past 20 years. I graduated from AUS in 2005 with a Bachelor's degree in Design Management and in 2012 with an EMBA degree. I am also very proud to say that I have been a very active alumnus in the AUS Alumni Association for the past 5 years. Moreover, I am working in the branding and marketing communication fields.

What were your responsibilities as the AUSAA Executive of the Council?

The Executive of the Council is responsible for managing the official communications for the AUSAA Board, the regional Chapters, and alumni members. The Executive of the Council works in cooperation with the Director of Alumni Affairs and is responsible for identifying and recommending alumni volunteers for the association's events and activities.

Why were you interested in serving on the board?

In order to serve my alma mater, its community, and further elevate the reputation of AUS regionally and internationally. I also wanted to act as a positive catalyst for advancing our association in order to accomplish the objectives of the AUS Alumni Association as it continues to support its alumni and the regional chapters with their ongoing events and activities.

What did you accomplish during your tenure on the board?

With the help of the Board, I was able to accomplish many goals which included privilege programs for alumni, helping Alumni connect/network with each other, establishing, activating and supporting chapters, design and marketing and increased the number of AUS alumni serving their alma mater.

How has AUS inspired you in your life?

It has inspired me to become part of a community of young, aspiring, and successful individuals where lasting friendships are formed.



What should AUS alumni expect from its new AUSAA board?

They should expect guidance of course but more importantly constant and consistent support for their ideas and endeavors in order to serve our alma mater. If alumni are content then they would be willing to give back more to AUS.

As a former executive of the council of AUSAA, what would you like to tell our alumni?

Serving your alma mater can also serve you in ways you can't imagine!

"Charity Events and Column Writings Bring Pleasure to My Life" Says Alumna Reem Mohamed Abdulla



In a job, the person has to learn how to communicate well with his/her colleagues as that is the main obligation in any job. Also, it is necessary to be calm under pressure, as often when a job is close to a deadline some people can breakdown. Being a team player is very important in my position as well. Competition is healthy, but learning to be part of a team is the trick.

You are a Columnist at Sail e-Magazine. What issues and trends do you address in your writings?

I started writing in Sail e-Magazine in January 2011. During that time, I concentrated on social issues in the UAE and human nature. Through the column I aim to explore issues in society and discuss emerging new trends. I also discuss issues such as: education and creativity, turning dreams into reality, negative culture, and creativity in advertising, innovation, and more.

In your experience, what are possible challenges for alumnae in the workplace that might be turned into opportunities?

Being open to new ideas and adapting to the environment that you are placed in is a key factor. The will to learn, to spend long hours, and to sacrifice for the sake of learning shapes your knowledge curve. Many people graduate from university in the belief they will be managers on the first day of their jobs. However, in reality that is not the case. They are put in a test environment to prove the survival of the fittest theory. The person emerging from that test will reap the reward. What all graduates need to bear in mind is that they have to be hard workers, learn from their surroundings, and adapt to their environment.

You seem to represent the "new" Emirati woman by seeking advancement in the business world. From your experience, what are the top qualities of success that you would advise the alumnae and women students of AUS to cultivate?

I believe every woman can create a difference if she wants to. As an Emirati woman, I am in a race with myself for improving myself and my skills. Helping in a cause is very important; however, every cause needs to mean something to the person partaking in it. This cause needs to add value to the person and make him/her feel satisfied. That is the reason why I take part in many initiatives, charity events, and the column writings. My advice to every AUS alumnae and student is to participate in everything that pleases them, to follow their dreams and to stand up for a cause they believe in. A woman should not feel intimidated because of gender, religion, or race as no one can hold her down except for herself. She needs to stand up tall, dust herself and try again if she fails, because in the end she will succeed.

Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines?

I am an Emirati, who graduated from AUS with a bachelor's degree in mass communication in 2008. My experience lies mainly in corporate communications, PR, and social media. I work in Noor Islamic Bank as a marketing and corporate communications officer. I am also the marketing director of Think Up GCC (www.thinkup.ae), which is the first talent and PR agency that is slanted towards representing Emirati and GCC nationals and is fully owned/ run by Emiratis. I am also a columnist for "Words, Observations & Ramblings" in a monthly magazine called Sail e-Magazine (sailemagazine.com)

In looking back on your upbringing and education, who or what influenced you to study Mass Communications?

I have been always interested in the media and how it shapes our views and opinions. Also, I like to explore how the media drives the way we think about the outside world and how it makes them think about us. Having said that, I enrolled in the mass communications program at AUS to further my research and knowledge regarding media studies. Since creativity has always been a driving force in my life, I chose to study advertising in addition to mass communications. The way advertising campaigns were generated always intrigued me, and I wanted to be behind the scenes.

Describe your typical business day in your position as a Marketing and Corporate Communications Officer at Noor Islamic Bank?

I handle the bank's product development, product design, and collaterals. In addition, I handle the advertising campaigns, branch branding, and online marketing and advertising. On a daily basis we interact and negotiate with event planners, public relations, and media agencies. I also manage corporate events such as branch inaugurations, MoU signings, and conferences.

What were some of the areas that you had to give the greatest attention to in your current position?

Corporate Partners in Focus: Al Sayegh Media



Mr. Abdul Latif Al Sayegh with alumni Rosette Younis, Rasha Salman, Heba Al Nabulsi and Hussain Abdulla working at Al Sayegh Media

In the effort of appreciating our Corporate Partners, *AUS Connect* conducted a special report on Al Sayegh Media, a centralized home for all media and communication solutions residing under one umbrella. Mr. Abdul Latif Al Sayegh, CEO of Al Sayegh Media took a few moments out of his busy schedule to speak to us about the privileged relationship between his organization and AUS.

Please tell us briefly about Al Sayegh Media; where did the idea of it come from and what is the vision of the company?

The idea of Al Sayegh Media started in 2010, by observing where media was heading. Media is very much evolving and I have been monitoring closely where technology is taking us and how far technology is going to reach. The media industry was entering a confused period and this is where the transformation is happening, from traditional media to the new form of media, which I would call the "future media." The vision I have is to become one of the leading local agencies that can take the market to another era.

The market was hungry for the services we offer because when Al Sayegh Media started, none of the services we offer existed. For many years, local clients wished they had a local agency which understood local consumers, rather than just having global solutions "copy-pasted" onto the local industry. We listened to those demands, and assembled a passionate team of local professionals balanced with international talents from some of the world's leading agencies. Today, Al Sayegh Media employs around 50 people. We pitch renowned clients as we have many integrated services. To me, the future of Al Sayegh Media looks very bright. We can see ourselves growing at a good pace as we are trying to raise the awareness of a new media in the Arab world.

Al Sayegh Media seems to offer a centralized home for all media and communication solutions under one umbrella.

How would you describe the future of partnering Al Sayegh Media with AUS in various initiatives?

For any organization to grow, it needs a supply of good talent, who will move the organization into the future. AUS is an excellent academic partner to organizations as it has supplied us with the right talent at the right time and has been very supportive to us. We are hoping that we will continue to work hand in hand with AUS by contributing in terms of where the industry is going, and keep the university consistently up to date about the requirements of the industry over the years, in order for the students to be well-prepared and be ready to join the market as soon as they graduate. I have to emphasize that this type of partnership is a must, as we from the industry are keen to get certain criteria and this can be done by helping in the development of these talents. I am very confident that this is still just the beginning of our partnership with AUS.

Al Sayegh Media currently employs 6 AUS alumni and has hosted a number of AUS interns. Through your interactions with AUS graduates, what qualities distinguish them from others and how has their AUS education helped in the advancement of Al Sayegh Media?

I admire the qualities of AUS alumni as they are well-prepared to face the industry, are very determined to enter the market, they show speed in delivering what is required and their teamwork skills have emanated from their academic learning. AUS graduates seem to always be ready for what is next. Workers are like products; they come with a lot of specialized functions and it is the organization's opportunity to utilize these functions based on their needs in order to contribute to the advancement of the company. I am very pleased with the AUS alumni working at Al Sayegh Media, and I still believe that there are areas which we can enhance as AUS supplies talents that are greatly needed by the market.

AUS ALUMNI WORKING AT AL SAYEGH MEDIA

Rosette Younis
Head of Social Media

Heba Al Nabulsi
Deputy Head of Social Media

Sharina Lootah
Accounts Executive

Hussain Abdulla
Social Media Coordinator

Rasha Salman
SEO Executive

Amr Al Chelati
Motion Graphics Expert

The services that Al Sayegh Media offers reveal that it is a combined digital/traditional media agency. Is social media a real complement to traditional media or is it simply an alternative to the traditional media forms, especially after the events across the region?

I believe that social media is a new platform, and we as users have to decide how to use it. I

would say that today, there are a lot of people who just look at social media as a main drive for their business. While digital media is the future, the region needs about five years to evolve from traditional to digital, so we are making that transition as smooth as possible.

Moreover, it is clear that technology is evolving, so social media is a must to use. In other words, media is going social and digital and the drive is the technology and the new mind set of people about what is the easiest way to communicate with one another. Social media is a lifestyle that you cannot avoid. Social media will not really replace traditional media; it is the norm of where media is heading. For instance, in the past, there were advancements in the way you store your data, from floppy discs to USBs and so on. It is a normal cycle in the advancement of the life of media, and people should not resist it because it is happening. Users should prepare themselves for that change in the evolving trend of traditional media as they cannot deny its existence. A few years back, it was your choice to use social media but nowadays it is what defines people due to the high number of technology users and that is a fact. You have to utilize it in a way it benefits you and others.

What advice would you give AUS students studying media?

My advice to AUS students is to take advantage of the excellent education they are getting at AUS. Don't just take your internship because you have to; utilize your internship to learn about what is out there. Don't let any organization underestimate your talents and even when you join companies, don't work for the sake of securing a job, but build a career by being serious about what you are doing. I believe in giving them opportunities. I believe in offering them the right working environment and giving them the chance that every individual deserves to prove himself/herself. At Al Sayegh Media, we welcome graduates who are willing to be recognized and be part of the organization. Show us how hungry you are for a career not a job! We don't fill a job opening, but we create a job opening for the right person!

AUS Alumni Shaping the Industry as Visionaries at Al Sayegh Media

A proudly Emirati-owned company, and one of the UAE's premier media agencies, Alsayegh Media, currently employs six AUS graduates in diverse specializations spanning social media, search engine optimization, public relations, client service, and video /audio production.

The two organizations established their relationship after acknowledging that they shared the same philosophy of blending world-class standards with a distinctive UAE flavor.

CEO of Alsayegh Media, Abdullatif Al Sayegh pointed out that "Our mutually beneficial relationship with AUS stretches far beyond the current graduates, as we have also accommodated a number of AUS interns during academic breaks. We envision that some of them will eventually return as full-fledged employees, as we have been highly impressed with their caliber. By giving them a fast-track experience in our various departments, they learn in six weeks what might have taken them six years to learn in any other environment."

Each one of the AUS alumni at Alsayegh Media has a fascinating backstory on how they made the company their professional home. Some had prior exposure to the agency through internships, and subsequently joined permanently immediately after graduation. Others took an exploratory journey through a few organizations, before choosing Alsayegh Media as the ultimate employer. But one theme that is common in all their stories is that the AUS Business Forum and Career Fair was pivotal to opening their eyes and minds, regarding their options in the employment arena.

Mr. Al Sayegh added that "we have all been students before, and we understand that it can be a massive shock to find yourself all alone, floating in the vast sea of employers. So in tandem with AUS, we try to smooth the transition. We don't believe there's any such thing as "the outside world" which is separate from university, because it's all intertwined: even as an employee you're still learning all the time, because education is part of life – not just students' lives."

Rosette Younis is an AUS alumna who has excelled at Alsayegh Media. Her meteoric rise has seen her ascend to become Head of Social Media in just a short period. "My ambitions were always high, but the AUS Career Fair elevated them even further because I realized I could aim for the top in any organization I chose, and not just limit myself to the conventional choices," she remarked.

Another AUS alumna, Engineer Rasha Salman Sulaiman concurred, adding, "It's always a marvelous feeling to meet fellow AUS alumni when you're now each other's clients or colleagues. It drives home the impression that AUS graduates are excelling in various industries, and their pedigree has not gone unnoticed by employers."

Amr Al Chelati, a passionate motion graphics expert at Alsayegh Media and AUS alumnus, summed it up best when he said, "My AUS experience was the ultimate foundation for a high-flying career. In many ways AUS's cultural diversity, liberal thinking and hands-on experience was a twin reflection of what Alsayegh Media embodies."

Business Leader Delivers Inspiring Lecture at AUS



Chancellor Peter Heath presents a token of appreciation to Dr. Talal Abu Ghazaleh



Dr. Talal Abu-Ghazaleh, Chairman and Founder of Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Overseas Corporation (TAGOCorp), delivered an inspiring lecture entitled 'TAG: A Life Journey Blessed by Suffering,' at AUS on March 15.

"It is my privilege to introduce Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh who will share his remarkable experiences with us," said Chancellor Peter Heath. "Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh has given new meaning to the word 'flexibility' for carving out a viable niche in providing what is needed in managerial consulting for an ever changing-market".

In his lecture, Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh talked about his humble beginnings as a Palestinian refugee, living in southern Lebanon and striving to achieve greatness.

"In this life, there are many struggles and people face a lot of problems. To me having a problem or failure is not a problem in itself, it becomes a problem when you give up and get out of the race," said Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh.

He encouraged his audience, to look at the blessings that come through the sufferings they have to endure. "As a 10-year-old child in Lebanon, I used to walk four hours every day to and from school. One of the reasons I feel so well today at 75 years of age is because of that. Walking those four-hour walks made me better, healthier, and stronger and that is a blessing."

In his comments in the visitors' book, Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh thanked the Chancellor and the students for their warm hospitality and praised the University for its achievements. "This excellence could not have been achieved without the vision and leadership of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah," he said. Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh added that he

had learned a lot from the leadership of the Sharjah Ruler. Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh has earned some of the highest awards for distinguished service, such as the Presidential Shield bestowed by the Republic of Lebanon, the Decoration of the Republic of Tunisia, the Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur of France, the Coat of Arms of the Kuwaiti Association of Accountants and Auditors, the International Lifetime Achievement Award of Dubai, to mention just some of those honors. These and other awards were garnered from different countries for very different sorts of activities.

Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh is also a natural educator; his corporate divisions have published guides, books, and research articles on how to deal with the situations they have successfully mastered. He is currently President of the Board of Directors of Arab States Research and Education Network and was the past Chairman of the Afro-Asian Knowledge Society Council- Egypt.

Based in Amman, Dr. Abu-Ghazaleh founded TAGOCorp in 1972, it is an international professional services group, employing over 2,000 professionals and operates out of its 71 offices in the Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan, India, Cyprus, Russia, and China. It has representative offices in Europe and North America and non-exclusive strategic alliance agreements with various networks and individual firms thus enabling it to choose a firm best suited to its clients' needs in virtually every country in the world.

The lecture was part of the AUS Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series, held in collaboration with the AUS academic units and the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs. It was attended by a large audience that comprised students, alumni, faculty members, as well as Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, AUS Provost; Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs; Dr. Olin Cleve McDaniel Vice chancellor for Finance and Administration; and other senior officials.

Industry Leader Delivers Engaging Lecture at AUS



Mr. Riad Kamal addressing the audience

Eminent industry leader Riad Kamal delivered an engaging lecture entitled "Facing Challenges in Hard Times" at AUS on December 6, 2011, in the Main Building on campus.

Kamal, who is the Founder and Executive Chairman of Arabtec Construction and CEO of Arabtec Holding, spoke about the numerous projects that Arabtec has been involved with since its inception. He briefed the audience on the history of the company and its work on landmark projects such as the Burj Khalifa and Burj Al Arab in Dubai and the Emirates Palace Hotel in Abu Dhabi among various others that have earned international recognition. As one of the largest employers in the country, with over 40,000 workers on its payroll, the company's reputation has travelled well beyond national and regional boundaries.

Addressing the packed hall, Kamal said that facing challenges is something that we all confront in our everyday lives. "We are going through hard times today. But in order to succeed you must have passion for what you do. Joy comes through passion," he said.

"You must start small and build your way up," he said addressing the students. "You have to be successful at each stage of your journey. You must maintain your focus on where you are heading, and on your plan. And you need to be patient. You are not going to become a manager in two years. Take your time and take one step at a time," he added.

The lecture, which was held as part of the Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series in collaboration with the College of Engineering, was followed by a lively question

and answer session. The event was attended by Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS; Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, AUS Provost; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; Mr. Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs; Dr. Cleve McDaniel, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration; Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; as well as other senior officials, deans, faculty members, staff, students, and alumni.

Kamal, who graduated as a civil engineer from Imperial College, University of London, and holds a master's degree in structural engineering from the same institution, began his civil engineering and construction career in London in 1966.

In 1974, he moved to Dubai and started his own construction company. Thirty years later, it became the first private company in the UAE to go public. Today, Arabtec Construction is one of the five largest contractors in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region and specializes in building and civil engineering works. It is a household name in the construction industry in the Gulf.



Chancellor Peter Heath along with Mr. Riad Kamal and his daughters

Ambitious Emirati Businessman Speaks to the AUS Community on Successful Business in Challenging Times

Business leader Mr. Hussain Sajwani, Chairman of DAMAC, delivered an engaging lecture entitled "Successful Business in Challenging Times" at the American University of Sharjah (AUS) on Thursday, May 3, in the Main Building on campus.

AUS Chancellor, Peter Heath, welcomed Mr. Sajwani on campus and praised the services of his company. "Hussain Sajwani is a self-driven UAE national and an ambitious entrepreneur who has proven his capability to transfer business vision into corporate reality and to provide the leadership that is necessary to maintain its continuity and growth," said Chancellor Heath.

A graduate of the University of Washington with a degree in industrial engineering and economics, Sajwani is the founder, owner, and chairman of the DAMAC group of companies based in Dubai. He is also amongst the most influential UAE nationals, as he was ranked among the 100 most influential people in the Arab world in 2007.

In his charming lecture, Sajwani addressed an audience of over 80 students, professors, and alumni, and shared the reasons Damac survived the recent economic crisis. "We saw the crisis coming, so we prepared for it and we immediately took action from a wise prediction and anticipation of the crises to minimize its effects on our company," remarked Sajwani. "To be successful in challenging times you need to be ahead of the game. You need to be brave and not worry about making mistakes because everyone makes mistakes," he said as he encouraged his audience, to look at new opportunities even in the most challenging times.

Sajwani then went on to give valuable tips on how to be a successful leader in business and in other areas of life. His tips includes loving work as a hobby, knowing customers and the people you serve, knowing the business in details, knowing how to deal with people of all kinds, knowing how to manage crisis as well as perseverance. "Don't ever give up; every business goes through difficult times, so when times are hard, keep trying," he said.



Sajwani also briefed the audience on the history of his own organization and said that "you need to think as an entrepreneur even if you are an employee as this will help you to be more creative at providing solutions because you should be able to move fast as we live in the supersonic age."

Vice Chancellor of Development and Alumni Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, noted the University's dedication to increasingly refine the expertise of students and graduates, as they continue to interact with the most prominent specialists in their respective majors. This gives them inspirational lessons from successful figures in the community, which are applicable to both their personal as well as their professional lives.

The lecture, which was held by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs as part of the Chancellor's Distinguished Lecture Series in collaboration with the AUS academic units, was followed by a lively question and answer session. The event was attended by Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS; Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, AUS Provost; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; as well as other senior officials, deans, faculty members, staff, students, and alumni.

Construction Leader Inspires the AUS Community on the Lessons He Gained From Life



Chancellor Peter Heath presents a token of appreciation to Mr. Philippe Dessoy

He then talked about job opportunities for civil engineers generally and specifically with BESIX. "We are always looking for professionals to work in any of, what we call, job families. We have project-based job families such as project development, project management, project execution and project support. We also have a corporate-based job family, which is mainly corporate function," said Dessoy.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs welcomed Mr. Dessoy on campus and said that "the Career Advancement Lecture Series is organized by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs to bring to AUS a number of high profile and leading business experts to allow AUS Graduating Seniors to connect and interface with high-powered professionals of their respective fields."

Dessoy has helped spur BESIX into becoming one of the most competitive foreign firms in the region. Big contract wins in the last few years have helped the firm's reputation grow, as both a single main contractor and within a joint venture. The latter includes work on the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest structure, an AED500 million deal with Arabtec to build the Downtown Burj Dubai residential towers, and winning the \$797 million contract to build the Doha Convention Centre with Midmac in 2009.

One of the most recognized experts in the construction industry, Mr. Philippe Dessoy, General Manager of BESIX, the largest Belgian group operating in the construction of buildings, delivered an engaging lecture on lessons gained in the university of Life to the American University of Sharjah (AUS) community on May 6, in the Main Building on campus.

Addressing an audience of over 150 students, professors, and alumni, in his lecture entitled "Leadership in the Construction Business: Lessons Gained in the University of Life," Dessoy took his audience on a professional journey of learning from early childhood learning to on the job learning and the lessons he had learned throughout his career.

"The form of learning from primary to higher education is structured and formal, but as soon as you leave university and get into the job market, then everything changes, everything is new. It's not the same way of learning as was in university," said Dessoy. "Regardless of the new environment, you still need to learn, and this learning depends largely on you. That's the University of Life. If you pay attention, you will succeed."

Founded in 1909, the company itself has recorded regular and impressive growth, covering all fields of construction. Dessoy was instrumental in expanding Six Construct's activities in the Middle East to where it is today. As well as having a key part to play in the development of the region's flagship projects, he is also responsible for all the operations of BESIX Group in the GCC, mainly Oman, the UAE, Qatar, and Bahrain. Dessoy is a 1983 civil engineering graduate of Brussels University, Belgium.

The lecture, which was held by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs as part of the AUS Career Advancement Executive Lecture Series in collaboration with the AUS academic units, was followed by a lively question and answer session. The event was attended by Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; as well as other senior officials, deans, faculty members, staff, students, and alumni.

“Honesty, Credibility and Transparency are the Base of All Relationships,” Says Samir Abdulhadi



Alumnae in a souvenir photo with Mr. Samir Abdulhadi

As part of the American University of Sharjah’s mission to integrate the classroom and practice in the private sector as a means to best strengthen our alumni and students’ skills, a delegation of 12 students and alumni visited Mr. Samir Abdulhadi, Vice Chairman of the Board of Khatib & Alami, at the premises of Khatib & Alami (K & A) in Sharjah on April 23, with Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs.

Abdulhadi discussed the importance of teamwork and collective management for a successful business with the visiting group. “Successful management in any organization should take into consideration a professional attitude, teamwork, as well as a collective management,” remarked Abdulhadi. “Friendly, amicable, and jovial relationships are an absolute must among employees themselves. I look at all my colleagues as either brothers/sisters or sons/daughters. Many employees have been with the company for more than thirty years. That, of course, is due to strong personal relationships, in addition to the professional atmosphere,” he added.

“It is extremely important to build all relationships, internal and external, on basic values such as honesty, credibility, and transparency,” he emphasized as he advised the delegation to be transparent and honest with themselves before being honest in their jobs.

Abdulhadi also briefed the group on the role of Khatib & Alami, which is a multidisciplinary architectural and engineering consulting company, offering clients an integrated approach towards the ever increasing need for

concrete and reliable project delivery systems. Moreover, in-house expertise and recruitment of the brightest young minds has enabled meeting the challenges of a rapidly evolving environment. The firm provides its consulting services in architecture, planning, structural, electrical utilities, mechanical, transportation, environmental, telecommunications, industrial and process engineering, geographic information systems (GIS), and information technology (IT).

Vice Chancellor of Development and Alumni Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, expressed her gratitude to Mr. Abdulhadi for his support of the American University of Sharjah and his encouragement in building a close relationship between the two organizations, which especially serves AUS’s educational mission. “The University is committed to enabling students and alumni to further their skills in their fields through interacting with established experts like Mr. Samir Abdulhadi,” she remarked.



Alumni in a souvenir photo with Mr. Abdulhadi at the Khatib & Alami premises

Abdulhadi is a veteran of the Middle East construction sector, joining the multi-disciplinary Lebanese architectural and engineering consulting corporation in 1972 as Gulf area manager. In 1977, he was appointed general manager, and in 2000 he became a member of the board of directors, before being elected in 2003 as chairman of the executive committee of the board. Abdulhadi has been a major influence on the UAE’s constructed environment, with his firm emerging as one of the leading consulting engineering firms in the region.

The delegation included the following alumni Firas Hammad, Rasha Hammad, Firas Audeh, Feras AbuDaqqa, Rawad ElHaj Ali, Alauddin Sharif, and Roweena Albanna in addition to the following students Khalid Kaddoura, Abdulla Al-Rahmani, Mohammad Kouseh, Bayan Kattan, and Nahid Khalifa.

Human Resources Expert Speaks to AUS Students on the Art of Succeeding During Challenging Times

Mr. Abdul Hakeem Al Mushtaghal, Vice President of Human Resources at EMAL, the state of the art aluminium smelter complex supplying the world with high quality metal, engaged AUS senior students in a roundtable discussion on Sunday, May 27, on campus.



In his lecture entitled “The art of succeeding in challenging business times,” Al Mushtaghal addressed about 25 AUS students about the pre-employment and post-employment criteria required when starting a career. “Human resources, our people, are our biggest asset as they are the ones who will generate value and create a high value-adding, sustainable business that meets our stakeholders’ expectations,” he emphasized.

Al Mushtaghal also briefed the audience on the latest projects of EMAL, which makes it one of the largest industrial ventures in the UAE outside oil and gas and one of the key projects leading the diversification of the UAE’s economy.

The discussion was attended by Vice Chancellor of Development and Alumni Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, who emphasized the University’s keenness on refining the skills and capabilities of students and graduates, as they continue to engage with significant

experts in their respective majors. Such interactions give them inspiring lessons, to both their personal as well as their professional lives, from prominent figures in the community.

The lecture, which was held by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs as part of the “AUS Career Advancement Executive Lecture Series” in collaboration with the AUS academic units, was followed by a lively question and answer session.



Students attending the discussion

Media Pioneer Speaks to the AUS Community on Changing Media Landscape



Dean Mark Rush and Professor Mahboub Hashem present a token of appreciation to Mr. Abdul Latif Al Sayegh in the presence of Provost Thomas Hochstettler

44 One of the Arab world's most distinguished media pioneer, Abdul Latif Al Sayegh, Chief Executive Officer of Al Sayegh Media, delivered an inspiring lecture entitled "Media is Evolving: New Opportunities on the Horizon," at AUS.

Addressing the packed hall, Al Sayegh said that "in media we have two choices: evolve, or become a fossil in history. Al Sayegh Media has evolved from a one-man dream into a media hub of over 50 ambitious talents. Our main thrust is always towards attracting inspirational candidates who can shake up the industry. That is why we have been synergizing with AUS for the Career Fair and internships of various students".

Al Sayegh briefed the audience on the history of his own organization, Al Sayegh Media, which he founded in early 2010, as he entered the even more exhilarating world of digital and social media. Al Sayegh Media serves the entire region with unique world-class services like website development, mobile application development, social media management, SEM services, event management, videography and photography, branding and marketing, media planning/buying, as well as media consultancy.

"Our partnership with AUS has yielded several success stories, one of whom is our Head of Social Media: Rosette Younis. She is an AUS alumna who heads a team of five professionals - four of whom are AUS alumni. She embodies what we seek in a new employee: passion, drive, attitude, creativity and speed. We don't believe in just filling an opening - if you are talented enough, you will create new openings," added Al Sayegh.

He encouraged his audience, to look at new opportunities in the media sector as media embarks on a thrilling ride. "It is no longer survival of the biggest, but those with the greatest hunger and thirst for innovation. If this matches your character, then Al Sayegh Media matches your ambitions," emphasized Al Sayegh.

Vice Chancellor of Development and Alumni Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah noted the University's dedication to increasingly prepare the manpower necessary to direct the future development of the UAE by refining the expertise of students and graduates in both theoretical and scientific fields, and practical and applied theory, as they continue to interact with the most prominent specialists in their respective majors, including media pioneers in the UAE and the Gulf region.

Al Sayegh had been selected to manage an enormous portfolio of media assets for the Government of Dubai. The UAE's largest media corporations and the most diverse in the region he headed, included three daily newspapers, eight radio stations, the region's largest printing press, the region's biggest distribution company, an outdoor advertising company, the UAE's most active event management company, and three major television stations (including MTV and Nickelodeon), among many other ground-breaking projects.

Moreover, in 2007, Al Sayegh was recognized as "CEO of the Year" by the CEO World Forum. In 2008, he was awarded the accolade of being one of the "Top 25 Most Influential Personalities in the Arab World", by *The Times* newspaper.

The lecture, which was held by the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs as part of its "AUS Career Advancement Executive Lecture Series" in collaboration with AUS academic units and, was followed by a lively question and answer session. The event was attended by Dr. Thomas Hochstettler, AUS Provost; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; Dr. Mark Rush, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Mahboub Hashem, Head of the Department of Mass Communication, faculty members, staff, students, and alumni.

Alumnus Ahmed AlQedrah Assesses Oil Reserves at Shell

Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines?

First of all, I would like to thank the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs for giving me this opportunity to share my short professional journey with all of you. It's a great pleasure and an appreciated effort indeed.

My name is Ahmed AlQedrah, I am 26 years-old and I come from the UAE. I earned a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from AUS in 2008. I was fortunate to work at Dubai Exports, Government of Dubai, from August 2008 until March 2011. Then in April 2011, I joined Shell Exploration & Production International Limited, when I decided to progress with my career by discovering a new scope of business. I got cross-posted to Muscat, Oman in October 2011 for my first international assignment with Shell.

I also have voluntary roles such as a Section Director in the Society of Petroleum Engineers in the Northern Emirates. Away from work, I scuba dive, write poetry, ride horses, and enjoy life in many diverse ways.

On a typical day in your position at Shell Exploration & Production, what do you do? What did your role at Dubai Exports entail?

My current role at Shell, as a reservoir engineer (a specialty within the petroleum engineering field), includes evaluation of potential oil and gas reservoirs, optimizing hydrocarbon production by choosing and implementing proper recovery schemes, minimizing uncertainties to decide on the characteristics of the future wells to be drilled based on subsurface variables, and to estimate the remaining hydrocarbon reserves in the reservoirs. Since it is too dark to see what is under the surface of earth, the key skill to succeed in this role is to be creative and to manage uncertainties.

At Dubai Exports, our mandate was to increase Dubai exports of all industries except oil, gas, and tourism. I essentially wore two hats: my technical role included the responsibility to guide and consult local manufacturers. Any manufacturer who operated in the UAE was within our scope. We had to be ready to provide consultancies and support to make them more competitive in the international market. On the other hand, I also had a marketing/international business role to make "Made in UAE" visible in the foreign markets by providing support for manufacturers ready to export their products internationally. This role involved a great challenge and diverse communication efforts with local businesses and with officials of other countries. Key skills for this job were being flexible to work with all backgrounds and levels of people, in addition to the ability to think outside of the box and to capture opportunities quickly.

What part of your current job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?

The greatest satisfaction is that I learn something new every day! I meet new people from all over the globe and learn a lot about the places they come from.

Some of the challenges that I found common in both jobs include the immense responsibility of giving a bright image of your company and country when working in international organizations. Not only do you represent your company; but also your family, university, and most importantly, your country!



Another challenge is being flexible enough to work outside your comfort zone with different levels of people from labor to top senior officials, each of whom comes from a different background. Also sharpening my technical skills and staying up to date with the advancements in my field is another challenge. Finally, there is balancing between continuous travels for work and maintaining the relationships with my beloved people back home.

How did studying at AUS help prepare you to be successful in this profession?

I could write a separate article just to answer this question! Apart from providing appropriate competitive education in chemical engineering, AUS -without noticing it at that time- truly sharpened all the skills I needed to succeed in almost any job! Communication skills, economics, project and time management, business focus, efficiency, and many more skills were unobtrusively underlined within the curriculum.

I proudly and thankfully should mention here that Dubai Exports got my resume from ODAA and surprised me with a call for an interview.

What specific goals, including those related to your profession, have you established for your life?

Of the many things that make me proud is that I contributed in raising the UAE flag in some countries for the first time at international fairs. In the food sector for instance today, one can find "Made in UAE" chocolates in Paris, mineral water in London, and camel milk in Europe.

On the career side, I participated in "Dubai Government Excellence Programme" and was recognized as the Excellent New Employee of the Dubai Economic Department. I managed to climb the career ladder from operational to managerial roles and now I'm specializing in petroleum engineering through a structured development program at Shell.

How do you determine or evaluate success?

Very few would remember the horse that won second place, even when the rider spent enormous efforts in training and preparing for the race. Results against your key performance indicators are all that matters at the end.

If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why?

Yes. I can't complain about the life I live today, and I'm optimistic about the life I'm planning to have in the future.

From what you have been able to observe in the UAE job market, what advice would you give new AUS graduates who are in the process of finding their first positions or are just beginning their careers?

First impressions count! Be confident and remember that you're backed-up by the strong positive reputation of AUS. CV presentation is vital. Start with a job whenever you can, try to avoid staying jobless in every possible way.

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indicators are all that matters. We all should fall in order to learn how to rise again.

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Where Are You Now? Joumana Al Gaddah: "My Father Has Always Been My Inspiration"



Please tell us more about Moafaq Al Gaddah (MAG) Group of Companies and what it is like working in a family business environment. What do you consider to be the most challenging aspect about working in a family business today?

MAG Group is one of the largest companies in the region and has a leading and reputable position among the biggest groups of companies. The activities of the Group cover different sectors such as commercial, real estate, service, and industrial sectors. Working within the family business is very beneficial and exciting especially since there are times when I require flexible working hours. In order to attend to volunteer activities, such as volunteering at the Ro'yati Family Society twice a week as a class teacher for Islamic lessons and giving lectures to students in several Dubai schools on Monday mornings, having flexibility is very important. However, in spite of having some advantages working in my family business, there are also some challenges associated with it. The most difficult challenge is when my father, Moafaq Al Gaddah, owner and chairman of MAG Group, gives me a new task to do. Sometimes it might be hard for me because I might not have the adequate skills to perform the new job, but in the end it will always be a new learning experience for me.

How has your management philosophy evolve as you have gained more experience?

My management philosophy is developing as I involve myself more in the working atmosphere at MAG Group. The Group has a very competitive and challenging market environment, which always encourages me to adapt to the market needs of the customers. And within such an environment, my skills, ideas, visions, and perspectives have to constantly evolve to become a strong strategic partner and a talented mentor within the group in order to succeed.

What advice would you give your fellow AUS alumni and new graduates?

I encourage them to learn as much as they can on their own. The real education that they will get is going to come from their own exploration during their career paths. You can't expect people, even your family members, to hand it over to you, especially in family businesses. There are a lot of things that you will learn from your professors, but you should always learn from external sources as well, because ultimately, you will really learn from your own experiences.

Tell us briefly about yourself – your education and work experience.

My name is Joumana Al Gaddah and I come from Syria. I graduated from AUS in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, marketing and management concentration. Since I was young, my father has always been my inspiration; he always took me with him to his work and gave me minor tasks to do such as highlighting listed numbers on some papers. But now and because of his continuous support, I have a real job with huge tasks in his company, Mowafaq Al Gaddah Group of Companies (MAG Group), as the owner representative and marketing director.

Professor Mahboub Hashem Represents the Region Three Times in Prestigious NATO Conference Among Many Other Accomplishments



Professor Mahboub Hashem with Prince Fahad bin Faisal Al Saud, Chief Executive Officer and Founder of Da Qingdom, LLC. Riyadh and Dr. Karl-Heinz Kamp, Director of NATO Defense College Research Division, Rome

American University of Sharjah (AUS) Professor, Dr. Mahboub E. Hashem, Head of the Department of Mass Communication and a professor of communication at AUS, represented the region at the prestigious "NATO and the Arab Spring Conference" organized by the NATO Defense College Foundation in cooperation with the Istituto Affari Internazionali, in Italy three times in a row.

The conference attracted an extremely discerning audience and considerable media interest as well as a number of excellent speakers from Europe, the US, and the Middle East, which offered particularly relevant and thought-provoking insights into the major changes expected to occur in the Arab world following the events of the Arab Spring.

About Dr. Hashem..

Dr. Hashem has been at AUS for the past 10 years and founded the Department of Mass Communication (MCM) at AUS and chaired it for six years. Prior to that, he chaired the Department of English, Mass Communication, and Translation at AUS. He has been teaching a variety of communication courses, skills, and performing business consulting activities for over 25 years in several countries, including the US. He earned a PhD in Communication from Florida State University, Tallahassee, USA. Dr. Hashem has studied several languages such as Arabic (native), English, French, Persian and Latin.

Dr. Hashem also attained the position of managing editor of the Global Media Journal (GMJ)-Arabian edition. He emphasized his gratitude to AUS Chancellor Dr. Peter Heath for granting him a course release to have the time for managing the journal, which is published in 15 languages. In addition to serving on the GMJ advisory board, he serves as an editorial board member on several journals and other various publications.

Dr. Hashem at AUS...

As part of enhancing the mass communication curriculum, Dr. Hashem stated that two new 300-level courses will be introduced next fall. These are Social Media for Mass Communication and Strategies for Creative Content. The Department of Mass Communication is also looking into creating a media center on campus so students can have hands on practice in what they are studying. The media center will consist of newsrooms so students can practice gathering news to be published in a newspaper or magazine, or broadcast on television, cable, or radio.

Prior to joining AUS, Dr. Hashem served as the Director of Graduate Studies of the Department of Communication at Fort Hays State University in Kansas, USA. Additionally he worked as a business and communication consultant, referent, public speaker, trainer and/or lecturer for the Governor's Gifted Institute of Ohio, and numerous institutions, television stations, churches, clubs, and schools. He also served as Vice President and President of the Kansas Speech Communication Association, Chair of Administrative Affairs of the College of Communication and Documentation at the Lebanese University, and chair to numerous committees and programs at international, national, regional, and local conventions.

Dr. Hashem and his Research...

His areas of research and teaching interest are new information technology and social media effects, intercultural/interpersonal communication, organizational communication and leadership, theories of mass media and research methods.

Dr. Hashem has written books, chapters in books and encyclopedias, and periodical articles. He has also delivered numerous papers at national and international conventions as evident in his extensive resume, and served as a panel member on a variety of topics including: public speaking, effective presentational skills, effective communication skills, effective intercultural communication skills, verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors of politicians, judges, business leaders/CEOs, and interviewees, education, leadership and organizational skills, total quality management, building and maintaining successful relationships with media and constituents, effective communication skills, intercultural/organizational diversity skills, consulting skills, media effects and society, new information technology (NIT) effects on youths, and a host of other issues.

Dr. Hashem Beyond AUS...

It is worth mentioning that Dr. Hashem has a son, Joseph, who is currently studying Accounting at AUS and a younger son, Paul, who is planning to study medicine in the USA. Aside from work, Dr. Hashem enjoys cooking as well as swimming and walking to stay fit.

Alumni Spotlight: Mahmood Mian Shines at the Kanoo Group



Alumnus Mahmood Mian receiving an award from Habiba Al Marashi, Chairperson of Emirates Environmental Group at the Arabia Corporate Social Responsibility Award

About me...

My name is Mahmood and I am from Pakistan. My family moved to the UAE when I was in grade 8 and I completed high school at the Pakistan Islamia Higher Secondary School, Sharjah. I was never a serious or studious student. Sports and mischief ran in my blood. I was a back bencher and would study just before the exam, but I always passed my finals. One fine day I was taken for a tour around AUS by our then neighbor, Atif Khawaja, who is also an alumnus. From that day on, everything at AUS fascinated me: the buildings, teachers, ambience, beautiful palm trees, sports complex... and as if I was in Alice in Wonderland I told my inner self that one day I would be there as a student.

My education...

Education at AUS was very different than conventional institutions. Professors are very lively and interactive. They kept all the students on their toes and were very involved; however, they were always very kind to go through all our questions over and over if not in the classroom then in their offices, even beyond office hours.

When we talk about education at AUS, it is not limited to books and classrooms. AUS is an institution that nourishes one's social, physical, and intellectual personality. It provides the students with the facilities

and environment beyond their imaginations, which is there to enhance and strengthen the foundations that are indispensable to the practical life beyond the AUS boundaries.

Speaking of social education, studying with over 50 different nationalities gave us an opportunity to learn about the different cultures of all those countries, their local dress, their food, and their norms. Global Day is one fine example. I can very well relate this to my work and it is really very helpful and beneficial when dealing with our international guests!

Finally, speaking of the physical education I received, the state of the art sports complex and the expensive equipment with personal trainers made me the captain of the AUS cricket team for almost two and a half years. I was the second captain, who laid the foundation of the AUS cricket ground and nets. All this education has shaped me and enabled me to compete in the outer world.

My work experience...

After I graduated, I was offered a job in Daimler Chrysler but before I could sign that, an opportunity was offered to me to do Marketing Research in Japan on the used automobile industry, and without much thought I opted for Japan. After finishing my year and a half contract in Japan, where I was also able to learn Japanese quite well, I went back home to Pakistan

to help my father in his construction business. That project took me two years, but then again it was a very good learning experience for a person with a business background.

Later, I came to Dubai and worked for H.E. Sheikh Tariq bin Faisal Al Qassimi for two years and now I am working at the Kanoo Group as a personal assistant to the Deputy Chairman Mr. Mishal Kanoo.

With Mr. Kanoo, officially I am merely his personal assistant. However, one may think that a personal assistant means just to keep the diary of your boss, but in the Kanoo Group every day is full of challenges and excitement. The Kanoo Group has been in business for the past 120 years and is widely and diversely expanded. My director is also my former teacher; he takes me to meetings, conferences, and seminars where I can learn and build on my current knowledge and experience. I get to meet people of various business backgrounds and from different places. I can confidently say that working at the Kanoo Group is the place where the ideas for future significant business are born.

The most challenging aspect in my job...

The most challenging aspect is the dynamics of the business and having the information of our numerous joint ventures at our fingertips. Just imagine you are walking with your boss and suddenly there is a need for certain information, or try to visualize a scenario when your boss is on another continent and requires information urgently. It may be easy if you are single and work for a small company, but married and blessed with a very lively child who is full of surprises, it is not. So I take full advantage of technology and I always try to be prepared and ahead of time, as this is the nature of my job.

Studying at AUS ...

AUS doesn't only make you a bookworm, but also shapes your social, interactive, and intellectual personality with critical thinking. My job requires dealing with people from a variety of statures and different ethnic and cultural background, and thanks to AUS I feel very confident while dealing with them. AUS made me proactive rather than reactive, I am confident and my approach is positive and with my homework done ahead of time I have a propensity to get good results for the Kanoo Group.

The experience I gained from working at The Kanoo Group...

If I have to write about my experiences at the Kanoo Group, it could very well be either a book or an empty page. It would be a book because every day is a

learning experience full of excitement and challenges. And an empty page because, because every day I feel I have just started from the beginning as I learn new things and I realize how ignorant I am and there is still a lot to learn.

My goals in life...

The most important goal in life for me is to be honest and work with integrity maintaining my pride and keeping my job. Keeping your job at times or rather at many times honesty can cost you a job. Sometimes you say something or your observation is contrary to your boss, and what he thinks is right, and according to you his decision is awfully wrong. So then you have to make a decision, either to sell your conscious-mind for a raise or promotion or be honest in your job and advise him/her according to your best understanding and interest of the company. But then again, there are always moderate and diplomatic ways to communicate your ideas and that is what AUS helped me gain throughout my studies.

My advice to AUS alumni and new graduates...

Like everyone, I do have some regrets and among the biggest is that I wasted so much of my time. I wasted time not utilizing my free electives at university, I took them as an opportunity to score a high grade and just to increase my GPA, but trust me the only person who cares about your GPA is you.

To my fellow students...

Don't take anything for granted. His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS is working hard on building the reputation of AUS throughout the region for its academic excellence and multicultural campus life. The faculty at AUS is at the disposal of the students; learn from them as much as you can to gain knowledge and utilize their services now, because trust me they all are as good as consultants, scientists, and philosophers.

So my fellow students use your time at AUS wisely, as knowledge is the key to a prosperous life.

To my fellow alumni...

Always be in touch with each other, and be active at the social gatherings, like the annual Alumni Reunion dinners and Ramadan iftars arranged by ODAA. These events are organized for a reason and that is where we may benefit from each other and share our experiences, for as they say "experience can never

AUS Students and Alumnae Represents AUS at SaloneSatellite Milan 2012

Unprecedented in the Middle East, eight students and alumnae from the College of Architecture, Art and Design (CAAD) exhibited their original furniture designs at the prestigious SaloneSatellite in Milan, Italy, from April 17-22, 2012.

Moreover, *Core 77*, a significant, internationally recognized online design magazine, thoroughly covered CAAD's work and the efforts exhibited by the alumnae, students, and faculty at SaloneSatellite in Milan with an exclusive and detailed article.

SaloneSatellite is one of the most significant gatherings of promising international young designers and design schools in the world, and CAAD was the first and only design school from the Middle East that was invited to participate. After a very competitive selection process, CAAD was invited to join approximately 700 young designers and 18 international design schools for this year's event.

The SaloneSatellite brings together the most promising young designers from all over the world with business people and talent scouts who gather in Milan to visit or exhibit at the event. Many of the prototypes presented at previous shows have gone into production, and many of the designers who debuted at the Satellite have since become important names.

"We are proud to bring this overwhelming international attention, which indicates that our students are actively encouraged to apply their special talents," said Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS. "The way we teach is the way they work," he added. "AUS is pleased to be recognized internationally for the quality of its architecture, design and art programs and for partnering with regional and international entities."

"AUS uniquely represented a multinational educational community that was genuinely reflected in the cultural diversity of our participating students. They represented not only their University, but the whole region," said



Dr. Peter Di Sabatino, Dean of CAAD. "This furniture fair and design week in Milan is the most important annual design event globally; and the selection process for SaloneSatellite is extremely competitive. I am very proud of the students and faculty from the College of Architecture, Art and Design; they have done excellent work," he said.

The eight pieces selected from CAAD are all designed by women (by coincidence, since AUS is a co-educational institution) of Middle Eastern heritage, with some of the furniture being highly influenced by specific traditions, practices, and context. The students are Rasha Dakkak, Sarah Alagroobi, Maha Habib, Noor Jarrah, Ghenwa Soucar, Heba Hammad, Danah Al Kubaisy, and Marwa Abdulla Hasan. Their works come from courses taught by Bill Sarnecky, Assistant Professor in Architecture, and Amir Berbic, Associate Professor in Design.

"After teaching beginning furniture design for five years at AUS, I teamed up this past semester with Amir Berbic to teach a new course entitled Form, Furniture and Graphics. Students in the course were encouraged to explore the potentially reciprocal relationship between two-dimensional graphics and three-dimensional form. Four of the eight pieces traveling to Milan for the exhibition emerged from this course," said Sarnecky.

"In some examples of student work, typographic patterns became a skin for the piece of furniture, while in others; the form of letters was the shaping element. Students from both the architecture and design department enrolled in the course and the unique conditions of the course resulted in a hybrid between 2D and 3D design," added Berbic.

Palestinian Rasha Dakkak, reflects a desire to shape visual culture in a way that best represents the Arab modern identity through her work entitled "Veto." The table's form is derived from a cross-sectional transformation of the Arabic word *la* (meaning refusal, denial, or disbelief) into *kalla* (indicating strong disapproval, protest, or objection). The concept was inspired by the dissent expressed in the Arab world during the Arab Spring uprisings.

The concept behind Emirati Sarah Alagroobi's project "Amal's Prayer Chair" originates from her desire to aid her late grandmother and mother who struggled to pray in the prostrate position. According to Islamic tradition, those who cannot physically endure prostration may pray in a sitting position. The typographic pattern on the skin of the chair is derived from the Arabic letter *kaf* and refers to the "The Throne" (Ayatul-Kursi), a powerful verse in the Holy Quran. The verse states: "His Chair doth extend, over the heavens and the Earth..." This chair rocks to aid in the act of praying.



1.



2.



3.

1. *De-lamination Table* by Ghenwa Soucar, '11
2. *Phoenician Reading Table* by Noor Jarrah, '14
3. *Veto* by Rasha Dakkak, '11
4. *The Thinker* by Maha Habib, '12
5. *D-Bench* by Danah Al Kubaisy, '11
6. *Amal's Prayer Chair* by Sarah Alagroobi, '13
7. *Mesh Table* by Marwa Abdulla Hasan, '11
8. *Candelabra* by Heba Hammad, '10

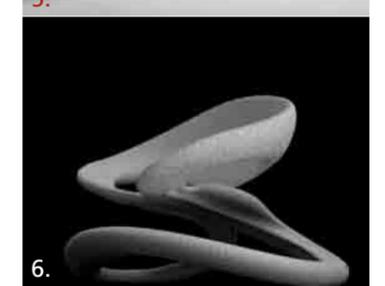
Maha Habib's "The Thinker's Chair," was inspired by Rodin's masterpiece "The Thinker." The arching support compels a person to sit in a similar fashion as The Thinker, whose uncomfortable and tortured pose suggests a difficult intellectual struggle. The weaving pattern of text on the surface responds to grid lines established by the wood laminations, and refers to Dante's Divine Comedy, Rodin's original theme for the sculpture.

In her entry entitled "Phoenician Reading Table," Noor Jarrah is inspired by the Phoenician alphabet, one of the earliest forms of writing. The table surface engraved with Phoenician letterforms provides a base for Latin script emerging from a new, "modern" tablet. The tablet ultimately supports a book in the open reading position.

Syrian Ghenwa Soucar's entry entitled "De-lamination Table" consists of four layers that appear to delaminate like a flexed deck of playing cards. Each of the four layers consists of three laminations of red oak that were steam bent, then glue laminated to lock in the final form.

The polycarbonate panels of Heba Hammad's table entitled "Candelabra," originally responded to the ritual of burning candles. The cells of the panels would define pathways for the resulting wax trails. During the design and construction process, the piece evolved into a celebration of its own existence as a minimalist and transparent object.

Danah Al Kubaisy, from Saudi Arabia, explores eruption as a formal quality in "D-Bench," and the deregulation of a rational ordering system along its length. The piece consists of 36 3mm-thick hand-shaped aluminum bars



6.



7.



8.

fastened with machine screws to a welded aluminum tube frame. The piece was sandblasted after fabrication and assembly.

Starting with a triangular unit, Bahraini Marwa Abdulla Hasan's "Mesh Table" gradually transforms from a 2D surface pattern toward relief and ultimately into 3D form. A combination of chiseling and hand-held routing with jig and template were used to achieve the pattern condition on the wood.

The selection of the work exhibited at SaloneSatellite reflects the academic vision and institutional goals of the College of Architecture, Art and Design at AUS, which support a culture of design excellence, opportunism, entrepreneurship, and leadership in both the creative culture and the creative economy. Design faculty and students at CAAD have a history of making, in applied and aesthetic contexts that contribute significantly to the regional and international material culture.

"All the AUS students received offers to produce their work, but no decision has been made yet, as these works are the property of the students," said Dean Di Sabatino. "We kept the contact information of these manufacturers for the students to assess the offers in more detail."

Alumna Sheikha Hend Al Qassimi: A Fashion Multi-Tasker

Sheikha Hend Al Qassimi graduated from AUS in 2005 with a degree in Architecture and Design Management. In the last few years, the businesswoman, mother, artist, designer, and editor has been leaving her mark in the region.

Please introduce yourself in a few words and explain what guided your interests in design?

I am a typical girl from Sharjah, born and bred. So naturally, I grew up with books and creativity all around me. My father is a medical doctor by profession, but pursued a career in business and the medical industry. My mother, a former school principal, is an inspiration, as is her mother before her. My family has always supported education and achievement, and I aspire to be on their level by doing the best I can do for humanity and myself.

By starting a successful company in design you have put your AUS education to good use. Did the general courses required of all undergraduates provide good knowledge of cultures worldwide to draw upon in the styles you craft?

AUS was an experience like no other. I studied at five universities after graduating from AUS with a degree in Design Management, and AUS has, by far, been the richest and most rewarding of them all. The level of professionalism rivals the PhD programs at many reputable universities.

You established your design firm a year after graduation. Did you work for another firm prior to venturing out on your own in order to gain experience and insight into how business works? What actually spurred you to establish your own company as opposed to joining an already established design firm?

After graduation, I joined HSBC Bank's main headquarters in Dubai as an executive trainee. We had weekly courses, and that was a fantastic real life experience for me. They truly invest in their employees via educational training. My colleagues there, though they guarded their positions jealously, were humble and generous with their time and advice. I hold them in high esteem, and highly respect them for being the first bank in the UAE that stood true to their slogan: the world's local bank.

My first solitary venture was with Heart In a Box Flowers and Chocolate Shop in Dubai, opposite Al Zahra Hospital, which now also offers soft toys, pets, balloons, cakes, and other delights. We now supply to several different emirates. I later began my fashion labels Medici, The Little Prince and The Little Mermaid, which are all based in the UAE. After that, I recognized a market for fashion shows and events, which led me to the establishment Paris New York London Events Company, which hosts a series of fashion shows and events in the UAE, to which later I added the publishing and

distribution license as well. The latest jewel to this crown is *Velvet Magazine*, a high end luxury fashion magazine distributed throughout the GCC and which provides a platform for a new generation of Middle Eastern designers.

I initially started *Velvet Magazine* as a means of promoting our fashion shows and the designers we were endorsing at the store. But I soon realized it could serve as a platform to provide positive role models to young men and women throughout the Middle East. It's a fashion, health, beauty, and lifestyle publication with a cosmopolitan appeal. My hope is to reach readers across the region and beyond. I have always been a bookworm and enjoy writing. I write for several well-reputed Arabic newspapers in Qatar. I also aspire to have a book published soon as well, but that is all in the pipeline.

You seem to have a strong creative impulse. Does your inner personality seek outlets for your creativity in designing clothing, housing or even in artistic painting? Do you have a mental picture of what you want to design or paint first, or do you see where your creative instincts take you?

As an artist, I specialize in oil paintings, embroidery and mosaics in addition to fashion design. Artistic tendencies however, do not have an 8 to 5 working day. In terms of paintings, I create images that communicate powerful meanings, deep thoughts, or simple beauty. I sell all my paintings for charities. Lately, I have been directing all my charity work towards the Somalia Crisis. Every year 800,000 children die there, and it hurts me deeply how little the media and public do to relieve their plight. In painting I find the desire to make a difference and take the reins in capturing beauty in motion.

Do traditional Gulf themes inspire you to add up-to-date flourishes to render distinctive design statements for our part of the world?

Tradition always rings a high note with me, I was raised by my grandmother and so I strongly believe 'old is gold'. As a wise leader once said, "Once we forget our yesterday, we lose our identity," the late Sheik Zayed Al Nahyan. Once we deny ourselves and the acknowledgment of our roots, we become weeds, and gone would be our proud long historical shoots and trunks that withstood the Portuguese and the English, which makes us so proud to be who we are. Future generations recognize the winners and survivors, and we live to learn.



Designs from alumna Sheikha Hend Al Qassimi's Medici fashion line



Do you see distinctly Gulf styles in city design, domestic architecture, commercial architecture, furniture, and in artistic painting? If so, would you characterize how the regions own cultural values and aspirations are being expressed?

People here lean towards the classical style, which is what they are comfortable with and accustomed to. The young generation is more adventurous and more forward thinking; they have taken a different path towards Spanish, Mexican, Japanese and more exotic extremes that are on the rise. I find architecture in this region a delight for onlookers--even the odd and bizarre houses call for recognition. I admire the creative spirit and unity in which everyone loves the glorious construction of homes in their different forms and structures. That is an admirable spirit that adds to the different elements that make life here such a cosmopolitan mix.

Can you envision ways that the AUS Alumni Association could help aspiring artists among its members find ways to display their artwork? For example, should the AUSAA sponsor an annual art fair or an art gallery downtown or near the campus?

Thank you for bringing this up. Actually, I am working in coordination with Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, AUS Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, in doing some work to create an Art Pavilion that launches from AUS and travels around the world. It is a very exciting project, and we invite all artistic designers to take part in it. This aims to show the world the colorful varieties of the art schools that have made the UAE their home.

If fellow alumni would like to see your lines of apparel, is there a catalogue, a web site or a nearby retail store that they may visit? If so, what boutiques in Sharjah and Dubai would offer the most complete line of your designs?

I have taken a back seat with regards to my fashion design and apparel, as I needed to focus more on *Velvet Magazine*. The *Velvet* events support aspiring designers, many of whom are AUS graduates and well established in their career path already now. Polka Dot Cat, by Rana Jamsheed, is one successful designer that sells all over the Middle East, UK, and USA. My fashion styles can be viewed on www.velvet.ae, along with the many other designers that I support, salute, and cover in the magazine. *Velvet* has led to meeting many interesting people, celebrities, charity heroes, and successful people that we shed light on in every issue of the magazine. It made me proud and I am honored to be able to express a cultured, modern, moderate voice through the magazine.

What is your advice for other alumni interested in starting their own businesses? What are the prospects for women running their own firms in the UAE or Qatar?

Be fearless in pursuing your dreams. We read and hear inspirational success stories all the time, the weak sheep copy and may succeed, but the innovative leaders make their own nest atop the mountain.

Alumni Working at AUS

Paula Doyle

Director of Human Resources

Paula Doyle heads a department that assists in creating an environment where people can develop their career in order to realize their full potential. "Our people are our greatest asset" says Paula. "As they grow and develop their careers, this, in turn, will help AUS develop and reach its goal of becoming the leader in higher education in the region," she adds.

Paula has more than 25 years experience in the Human Resources field. Shortly after leaving college with a degree in Human Resources and Industrial Relations, she began her career with the Wellcome Foundation [now Glaxo SmithKline Beecham], a multi-national healthcare provider, working her way up to take on management roles within Europe and the UAE. She joined AUS in 1999 and says she is proud to have helped with AUS's successful growth and development.

Taking the opportunity of developing her career further, Paula completed the MBA degree program at AUS, which, she says, helped give meaning and context to all her years of experience in HR. "It provided me with a clearer strategic focus regarding HR and how it can contribute to the University's bottom line," she remarked.

Paula's HR strategy for AUS continues to be career development. "I get great satisfaction in assisting staff in reaching their potential," she says. "Recently, we introduced an online pilot training for AUS staff. This gives more staff the opportunity to explore alternative career options." Her main challenge over the next five years is ensuring that AUS retains its talented staff strength that can help the University grow and achieve its strategic goals.

Discussing the role of HR in the Gulf region, Paula says the profession has evolved since she first came to the UAE 1998, but then again the entire country has evolved. "At that time, the job of an HR Manager was considered to be administrative only. But now people realize that HR involves different specializations such as recruitment, compensation and benefits, employee relations, and so on." The Gulf region's multi-cultural



society is also beneficial to organizations, she says, pointing out that AUS has more than 90 different nationalities. "It's proven that the more diverse the workforce, the more successful an organization can be. As the world becomes a smaller place, many multi-nationals see the value of a multi-cultural workplace." Describing herself as a people-centered person, Paula advises that people entering the field of HR should be patient, good listeners, pay attention to details, and have the ability to develop relationships with people. She also cautions that the job entails making tough decisions involving people's lives and careers.

Looking to the future Paula says her goal at AUS is to encourage staff to become engaged in the organization. "So many organizations are not running at their full potential as they have not yet learned how to engage their employees. AUS is a great organization and has a great future; I want our staff to feel they have a say in that future and that they feel responsible for its success!"

Alumnus Majid Al Qaseer: A Dedicated Investigator



knowledge or skills a person has he/she cannot get a job done perfectly by himself/herself. Also the research techniques I learned from some of our courses at AUS helped me a lot in doing my investigations since it is an important part of my job. Finally, the activities I participated in such as Global Day and other events helped in improving my skills and confidence in interacting with people from different backgrounds and in different positions.

What specific goals, including those related to your profession, have you established for your life?

Currently I aim to attain a high rank in a short period of time by successfully completing a master's degree in a related field, and joining well known organizations, institutes, and associations that will enhance my communication, presentation, and intellectual skills.

How do you determine or evaluate success?

I evaluate success by setting a goal, planning the steps to achieve it, implementing the plan, and meeting the goals whether they are set by my supervisors, my fellow workers, or me. I raise my voice with the people who believe that "success is not a destination, it's a journey, and it's the direction in which you are travelling."

Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines?

My name is Majid Obaid Al Qaseer, I graduated from AUS in 2009 with a bachelor degree in mechanical engineering. Currently I work at Dubai Police in the General Department of Forensic Science and Criminology as a Firearm and Tool Mark Examiner.

On a typical day in your position at the Dubai Police, what do you do?

I spend the day either in the forensics lab analyzing and examining physical evidence related to firearms and tool marks collected from crime scenes or at crime scenes collecting evidence that we examine in the lab.

What part of this job do you find most satisfying? Most challenging?

In our field, every day we face something new. With each case we discover a new technology that has been used, which makes us do more research and learn more about the field. Therefore you can't stop at a point and say, "I reached the top or I know everything". So the job makes you improve your skills and knowledge and stay updated.

How did studying at AUS help prepare you to be successful in this profession?

First of all, we learned how to work in teams. This is important for many jobs, but especially for my current line of work, because no matter how much

If you could do things all over again, would you choose the same path for yourself? Why?

Yes, but with more effort, because in my opinion a successful man should not be satisfied with his achievements; instead he should always seek to improve.

From what you have been able to observe in the UAE job market, what advice would you give new AUS graduates who are in the process of finding their first positions or are just beginning their careers?

I would like to encourage them to apply to the biggest companies in the UAE with high confidence. All the effort they have put in to their studies and the pressures they were exposed to during University will allow them to work for any company in any type of environment successfully.

Maha's Vintage Boutique: "Old Fashion is the New Fashion"

Alumna Maha Abdul Rasheed, the founder of Dubai's most popular vintage boutique, Bambah, graduated from AUS with a bachelor's in business administration, as a marketing and management major. Offering an exquisite treasure of vintage fashion from the 1930's to the 1980's handpicked from around the world, Maha has been a vintage collector for quite some time. She has picked up pieces from Tokyo, Paris, London, New York, Amsterdam, and more, so you can imagine the collection she has acquired!

Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines?

My name is Maha, I come from Egypt, I'm 26 years old and I have a strong passion for vintage. I am a marketer by profession and I grew up with a very high entrepreneurial spirit. I've been living in Dubai for almost 15 years now and I've had the chance of visiting numerous countries around the world, landing on almost all seven continents. I started my career in a leading advertising agency, where I got a better understanding of building and managing brands.

Why did you decide to open a vintage store and how did you come up with the name Bambah Boutique?

Bambah is a stand-alone destination boutique for ladies vintage fashion and accessories. The whole idea of Bambah is a fun place where people can just come in and have a good time and explore some unique vintage pieces at very affordable prices. The collection is all handpicked from around the world and is, of course, in pristine condition. The styles and designs are extremely exclusive as there is only one of each piece, so you are guaranteed a unique look. The collection is also very reasonably priced which makes it easier for customers to experiment with pieces and have fun buying them.

I have always had a passion for vintage. I have been a collector for almost seven years now and I'm always traveling around the world and hunting for unique pieces that you are unlikely to find in conventional shopping areas. I would always go through my mother and grandmother's pictures from the old days and long for their styles and fashion. I started collecting a while back and then I decided that Dubai could do with a one-off vintage boutique. I felt like shoppers here needed a nice change from the current shopping scene and needed more options to shop from; and hence the idea of Bambah was born. I was also encouraged when the concept of vintage started to be widely accepted in the region and Dubai in particular.

Bambah means 'pink' in Egyptian Arabic, and was a term used in Egyptian TV in the 1940s to express happiness.



What do you like most about vintage items and how and where do you find your unique pieces?

To me, vintage is more than just a collection of clothes and accessories, it's more about a lifestyle and how you style yourself. What I like the most about vintage is the exclusivity of wearing it. Because it's unique in nature, you will be guaranteed that no one else will be wearing the same piece, which gives you an edge over the crowd. I also like how vintage will always enable you to make a statement and express who you are. Whether it's a jacket or a scarf or a piece of jewelry, you will always make a bold statement by integrating something vintage into your outfit. I also like the 'adrenaline' that you get when shopping in vintage stores. You never know what to expect and what you can find, so you are always on the lookout for that spectacular piece, and you are shopping without expectations, which helps in broadening your creativity when shopping and putting an outfit together – there are simply no rules or limits in what you can or cannot wear.

My vintage pieces are sourced from all over the world. I've been collecting vintage fashion for many years, even before I decided to start a boutique in Dubai. I enjoy traveling and handpicking pieces myself – every piece has a story and a special bond between us. I would say most of my collection is sourced from cities like Amsterdam, London, New York, and Tokyo.

There is a criterion on how I choose my pieces and, of course, first and foremost I look at the condition that the piece is

in. I personally try everything on and make sure that the items are in pristine condition before I buy them. In terms of styles, I never restrict myself to anything in particular; everything and anything is welcome because at the end of the day, people have different tastes and styles and I'm sure every piece will be appreciated.

How did your AUS education help you start your own business?

My years at AUS have definitely helped me start and run Bambah on a day-to-day basis. Being in a classroom with very smart people from diverse backgrounds has enlightened me so much. I learned to understand different cultures and appreciate different styles, opinions, and personalities. The curriculum also taught me a lot about running the business itself – managing budgets, marketing research, understanding the consumer, and positioning the brand in the mind of your customers. Being involved in both study tours – to the US and Hong Kong and Japan was also an added bonus because that is when I learned about adapting your business to various situations and catering

business, arts and culture, philanthropic, and visionary fields in the UAE. The Emirates Woman team thrives constantly to seek out, recognize, and celebrate the incredible and inspirational women that make the UAE the success story it is – from those running billion-dollar companies and the most creative of entrepreneurs, to heart-felt humanitarians and women moving mountains in their quest to achieve incredible things.

I am over the moon with my award! I feel very proud of Bambah and myself, as I was not expecting to win at all. I'm honored and extremely thankful to everyone who voted for me. Winning this award gave me a great boost and confidence and has already encouraged me to explore new ideas and will definitely push me into more exciting ventures.

Who is your favorite fashion icon?

Two of my style icons from the past are Souad Hosny and Jean Patchett. I like the way they are both very feminine and very confident in their styles. Nowadays, I find Penelope



to different needs. I also understood how the big giants conduct business and how I could apply their methods to my small business where applicable.

Tell us more about winning the Visionaries category at the Emirates Woman 'Woman of the Year Awards 2011.

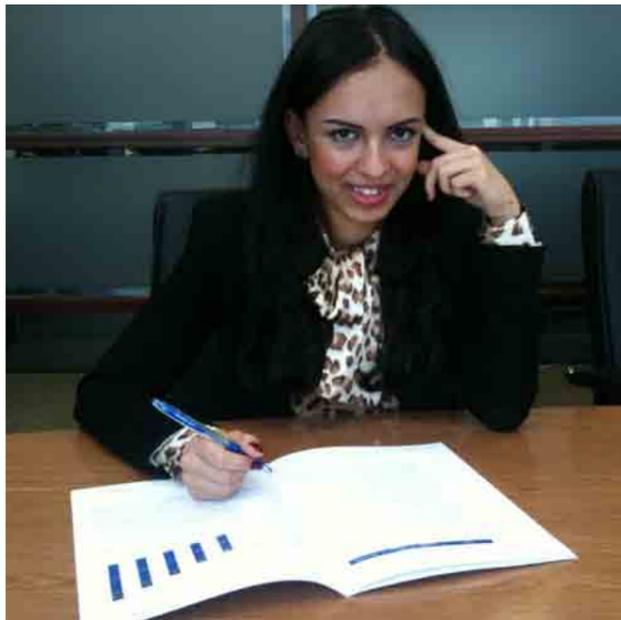
The Emirates Woman, 'Woman of the Year Awards' is the region's most prestigious, glamorous, and inspiring annual event. It has four categories: Achievers, Artists, Humanitarians, and Visionaries. In its sixth year, the Emirates Woman, 'Woman of the Year Awards' continues to honor and celebrate the achievements of women in the

Cruz to have a very influential style; she is very elegant. She also mixes and matches different designers, labels, styles, and looks which make her style truly unique and unexpected.

What advice do you have for AUS graduating students and alumni who want to become entrepreneurs?

'Go For It!' If you have a unique idea with a great business plan and you've done your research, don't hesitate and just go for it. Opportunities only come once, and you have to always take the risk. Don't let people bring you down or change your mind, and always have faith in yourself.

Samah Ragab Encourages Graduates to Make Wise Use of their Time



How did studying at AUS help prepare you to be successful in this profession?

AUS trained us to work and deliver challenging projects and assignments under time constraints. I feel that every day at AUS was like a competition between my classmates and I as to who would have the best performance in the course. Not only were our final grades dependent on exams, but at least 30% was determined by a project that aimed to test our understanding of the course and our ability to put the material we studied into practice. Accordingly, I believe that AUS, in general, provided us with similar conditions to what we face when we start working, so that we are aware of the challenges and we are trained to handle them efficiently.

Could you please share with our readers the experiences you have gained from working at NBK Capital?

NBK Capital has allowed me to build effectively on the knowledge that I acquired at AUS. I can proudly say that I'm quite happy to be part of such a prestigious organization, where the work environment is friendly, and where I learn something new every day. Working at NBK Capital has helped me gain a better understanding of the stock market, and more importantly enhanced my Excel skills in developing financial models for companies, and translating company performance into conclusions and recommendations for our investors regarding whether they should buy, hold, or sell a specific stock.

What specific goals, including those related to your profession, have you established for your life?

I believe that through my job, I have learned to realize the value of time more than before. Due to this factor, I have become more punctual and have developed a sense of urgency so that I finish the tasks that are expected from me promptly and with minimal mistakes.

What advice would you give your fellow AUS alumni and new graduates?

I would advise AUS alumni and new graduates to make wise use of their time and not to despair if they're not able to find a good job easily. They need to be optimistic and I'm sure if they have the required knowledge and skills then they will find their dream job.

Tell us briefly about yourself – your education and work experience.

I graduated from AUS with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a double concentration in finance and accounting. I did a brief training in 2007 at EFG-Hermes where I got some exposure to their brokerage services. In 2009 I had an internship at HSBC in the retail division, where I gained an understanding of their daily dealings with customers and how the system was updated accordingly after each transaction. In mid-June of 2011, I started work for the research department at NBK Capital, the investment banking arm of the National Bank of Kuwait, and have been working with them ever since.

Describe your typical business day in your position at the NBK Capital.

I work for the real estate and construction sector in the research department at NBK Capital. My job requires me to be up to date with the major events that are happening in the MENA stock markets, with a special focus on the companies we cover. So each morning, I have a quick look at local and regional newspapers and the Dubai Financial Market, Abu Dhabi Exchange and the Kuwait Stock Exchange websites to keep track of important disclosures by the companies. We publish reports about these companies regularly, discussing the financial implications of major events such as new projects, acquisitions, or quarterly financial results, and adjust our estimates for the future performance of these companies accordingly.

AUSAA Abu Dhabi Chapter Ongoing Activities

AUS Alumni rally in a Karting Race...

The AUSAA Abu Dhabi Chapter organized a thrilling karting tournament for around thirty-six alumni at Al Forsan International Sports Resort in Abu Dhabi in March 2012.



Compete in a Paintball Tournament...

Twenty alumni competed in a paintball tournament that was also organized by the AUSAA Abu Dhabi Chapter at Al Forsan International Sports Resort in Abu Dhabi in April 2012.



"Shadow" Fellow Alumni...

As part of their Professional Development events, the AUSAA Abu Dhabi Chapter introduced recently a "Work Shadow Day", where two alumni working at Deloitte Abu Dhabi "shadowed" two recent AUS graduates in an effort to help them learn more about real professional life, within the industry in which they are specialized.



... and Enjoy a BBQ Day Out

The AUSAA Abu Dhabi Chapter organized a fun day out for thirty alumni at the Eastern Corniche Abu Dhabi in December 2011, through which they enjoyed a barbeque, a football tournament and card games.



Sidrah Shaikh: “The Exhibition Was an Opportunity to Give Back to AUS”



A designer at Herman Miller Dubai and an interior design alumna, Sidrah Shaikh managed the Herman Miller exhibition entitled “Purposeful Design, A Journey through Ergonomic Excellence of Herman Miller Seating” which was housed in the College of Architecture, Art and Design from December 2011 to February 2012.

What is the nature of your job with Herman Miller Dubai? Do you handle design, marketing, sales, or combinations of these tasks?

The primary purpose of my job is to support the Herman Miller team in Dubai in the design and preparation of office interior layouts, specification of products, sales presentations, and support of the tender process. I work directly with potential and existing clients, and where appropriate with dealer personnel and the architecture and design community, to ensure the team achieves or exceeds volume goal assignments.

How did your undergraduate education in CAAD prepare you for your current job responsibilities?

I graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Interior Design from CAAD. The program included well-structured design and planning courses with the added knowledge of design management, which constructively helped me understand the design business and practical aspect of the field. With great instructions from highly capable design studio professors at CAAD, I felt well prepared to step into the working world of design.

Briefly, describe the product line of Herman Miller Dubai? What distinguishes the product line of Herman Miller from other avant-garde office furniture designers and distributors?

Herman Miller is one of the world’s largest office and healthcare furniture manufacturers and is recognized as an industry leader in design innovation and manufacturing for the environment.

The name Herman Miller had become synonymous with “modern” furniture. Working with legendary designers George Nelson and Charles and Ray Eames, the company

produced pieces that would become classics of industrial design.

We’ve collaborated with some of the most outstanding designers in the world, including Alexander Girard, Isamu Noguchi, Robert Propst, Bill Stumpf, Don Chadwick, Ayse Birsel, Studio 7.5, Yves Béhar, Doug Ball, and many talented others.

Today, in addition to our classic pieces and new designs for the home, Herman Miller is a recognized innovator in contemporary interior furnishings, solutions for healthcare environments, office, home, learning and related technologies and services. A publicly held company headquartered in Zeeland, Michigan, we have manufacturing facilities in the United States, China, Italy, and the United Kingdom and sales offices, dealers, licensees, and customers in over 100 countries.

What enticed so many visitors to see your exhibition on Herman Miller Seating, which ran between December and February? What did the visitors find revealing about the design process shown in its many stages and complexities?

Purposeful Design, the exhibition, focused on the design culture and heritage of Herman Miller ergonomic seating products. The exhibits followed through a time-line journey of task chairs, where each of the nine heritage line chairs were presented with details of its Design Story, Product Story, Designer, and Sustainability. The range started from the very first ergonomic task chair, Ergon by Bill Stumpf in 1976, through to the latest cutting edge design and ergonomic chair, Sayl by Yves Behar.

The exhibition also showcased informative product and designers’ videos that added another layer to this rich journey of design culture. Exhibition visitors also benefited from design process drawings, sketches, and prototype images, along with actual samples of suspended chair



Alumna Sidrah Shaikh (second from right) with officials from Herman Miller Dubai at the exhibition opening

backs and parts, to reflect product details and material composition.

The exhibition was organized in an environment that enabled the visitors to touch and feel the product and have a truly interactive experience.

How was the concept of an art installation inviting the visitors into the design space and process conceptualized? How did you assemble the wide variety of behind-the-scenes drawings, photographs and various sorts of prototypes to convey the complex step-by-step process of design?

The main purpose of the art installation was to showcase prototype parts of chairs, which were suspended to reveal their design details, material compositions, and form. The exhibition space allowed this suspension to be seen effectively by the visitors and the curiosity generated by the nature of their form attracted a lot of intrigued students.

We had approached our team in the UK and US offices to collate graphics and data. We also communicated with the designers of the chairs who generously shared with us design process images and drawings for this exhibition.

Innovation in ideas or designs is at the heart of any university as a “marketplace of ideas.” What does the success story of Herman Miller have to teach us at AUS?

By taking this initiative, Herman Miller has put forward its heritage and successful research knowledge of over 30 years, to students and faculty, with the intention to further educate the young design community of the region, about our values and mission. At the same time, the exhibition aimed to open the minds of the future designers towards designing and practicing responsible, sustainable, and lasting solutions for our living environments.

Herman Miller works hard to create and keep relationships, with customers, designers, dealers, suppliers, contractors, and our community. Strong relationships are part of civility at Herman Miller. Herman Miller’s collaboration with AUS has been strengthened by this successful venture, where we as manufacturers of responsible design products, have reached out to talented young designers of the future.

AUS prides itself on partnerships between education and established firms in the private sector. How did your

collaboration with Dr. Mona El-Mousfy, Assistant Professor of Architecture, come about?

I was an interior design student of Professor Mona and had a great learning experience under her. Additionally, I had worked as her assistant on several occasions during and after graduation. Working with Professor Mona taught me the practical aspects of the design field and exposed me to future opportunities. It was a huge learning curve in my post-graduation career and with this Purposeful Design Exhibition, it was an opportunity to give back to the educational institute and communicate to the upcoming designers about what it takes to develop innovative, research-driven design, showcased through a journey of creativity and commitment that went into the making of Herman Miller products.

Like so many of the creative arts, interior design education would seem to be enhanced by students and young alumni collaborating with AUS faculty. What would be some ways that the CAAD faculty could actively involve their students in commercial design off campus?

I believe as students we learn best when we are exposed to the practical, business side of the field, parallel to our education, and this can be achieved by involving students in site visits, lectures/seminars by practicing architects/designers, encouraging participation in design competitions, internships, etc. Collaborations such as this exhibition have been successful in reaching out to students of this region and educating them in a different way.

If you would envision a “Gulf style” of office furniture, what would be some of the themes emphasized? Would they be ergonomic?

Emerging design and styles in furniture are becoming more and more focused on people, rather than product. We believe ergonomics is critical, because in an ideal economy, people who perform at their best make all the difference. In addition, iconic design and branding is something manufacturers feel the need to incorporate in furniture to survive in the Gulf market specifically. Sustainability and environmental sensitivity is also something that has been a powerful part of furniture design. I believe the Gulf style, as such, would be one set by educated customers and designers, who not only appreciate aesthetics but are also looking out for sensitive and intelligent design.

5 Minutes With ... Alumna Eman Al Yousuf



About me...

My name is Eman Iqbal Al Yousuf. I graduated from AUS in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. I always had a passion for math and chemistry, since I was in school. I was honored to join AUS in an important step to fulfill one of my dreams of becoming a chemical engineer who serves her country and adds to its success. During my education at AUS, I learned the key elements of success. I got help and support from faculty members, staff, and my fellow colleagues from day one until the day I left campus to seek other successes in my career and personal life.

Working experience...

My first working experience was at DUBAL (Dubai Aluminum) as an intern for two months, an experience that was very informative and challenging.

After my graduation from AUS, I started looking for a career within my major in chemical engineering. Being an AUS alumna, finding a job was not a problem. However, I faced a turning point in my life when a business opportunity came up. I learned during my four years at AUS to take advantage of chances and seek the best of any situation life may present. Therefore, I started a business in high-quality stationery and office accessories, Prints Design, which is one of a kind in the UAE and Middle East. With the help of my family and especially my father, Iqbal Al Yousuf, President and CEO of Al Yousuf L.L.C., Prints Design is now one of the leading businesses when it comes to high-end stylish stationery.

Prints Design today has two showrooms; one in Mercato Mall and another in Mirdiff City Centre and there are more to come. We deal with many international famous brands such as; ACME, Fabriano Boutique, Marimekko, Tombow, Fabre-Castle, Sakura, GrandLuxe, KCK, Casio, Reosler Paper, GoPalm, Moof, and more.

Our products are known for their excellent quality, stylish colors, and uniqueness. Moreover, we are a member of the Emirates Environment Group providing recycled and green stationary that suits all creative needs.

Soon we will be launching the first and an exclusive Emirati greeting cards line including cards designed by Freej Cartoon, Shaabiat Al Cartoon, Amal Murad (famous abaya designer) and Emirates Environment Group.

My Book...

I have been writing since primary school; they were simple story imitations of many novels that I was keen on reading. Books were always my best and closest friends as they opened thousands of worlds in front of my eyes. To me, reading is more than just a hobby, it is a way of living, by which life gets a special meaning and depth.

I love reading books by authors such as: the Bronte sisters, Agatha Christie, George Bernard Shaw, Paulo Coelho, Victor Hugo, Mark Twain, and many more. I also enjoy reading books by Arabic authors like Tawfiq Al Hakeem, Ghada Al Samman, Yousif Idrees and poets such as Ilia Abo Madi, Badr Shakir Al Sayab, Abo Al Qasim Al Shibbi, and many others.

I recently published my first book, *Wujooh Insan* (Human's Faces), which is a collection of 14 different short stories. The stories target different characters' lives through snapshots. They go deep into a human's soul, and ask philosophical questions about our existence, happiness, dreams, and ambitions.

None of the characters in the stories have names as I believe that we are only different from the outside. We may be different in terms of our names and looks, but we are not different when it comes to how we think, react, and face our fears and challenges.

I have published some of my stories in Arabic magazines such as *Kul Al Usra*. I have worked as a reporter and a columnist, as a side job to being the managing director of Prints Design, such as in Wazzup youth magazines, and I recently published an article about feminism and women's literature in the *Dubai Al Thaqafiya* magazine.

Human characters inspire me a lot. I believe that this complicated living soul is a miracle and that we have great potential and can fulfill whatever we want if we are strong enough to wake up and start achieving our dreams. I like writing about both philosophical and social aspects of life and I tackle those moments when we figure out who we are and what we really are here to do.

Future plans...

I am working hard to achieve success both in my career and in my writing. I would love to publish more stories that would add to Arabic literature and create new methodologies in Arabic short story writing. I thank God for all his great gifts, my family for their support and for always being there to have me believe in myself, AUS for putting me on the right path of success and for creating the person I am today, and for all my friends, work colleagues, and readers.

Mourning the Loss of Our “Mathematical Magician”

Leaving behind a legacy that goes far beyond any degrees, awards, and academic achievements, Dr. Ibrahim Sadek was one of a kind. He was nothing short of an ideal teacher, advisor, researcher, son, brother, and uncle. As my father's youngest brother, we grew up knowing three things about *Amoo Ibrahim*: that he was a professor who loved math, that he had worked in the US and had received numerous awards for his accomplishments and the third, that he was fun. The last, we quickly but surely found out on our own.

As his niece, something I never quite understood about him was how he was always so calm, cool, and collected and was consistently joking and laughing. He gave us the impression that he was never stressed out, impatient, or over worked. Unlike most of us, he had the talent of never letting the little things in life get to him. He was a big picture kind of man with no expectations from anyone but himself. Taking absolutely everything with the grace of an innocent child who acknowledges not what could go wrong in a situation, but only how to enjoy the moment, he was no different with his students than with me, and that is no doubt why he was immensely loved.

Unlike any other family member's death I have experienced, I actually found out on blackberry messenger before anyone from my family had a chance to call me. Like a celebrity in life and in death with thousands remembering him with tears and a fond smile, he positively affected so many people's lives beyond our family circle. A significant indicator of this was how crowded the mosque was after his burial. The Sheikh apparently drew similarities to Friday prayers with the colossal crowd of students, family, friends, and colleagues all wanting to pay their respects and bless his soul.

I never in my life heard him utter a harsh word, roll his eyes in disapproval, or immerse himself in judging and gossiping about anyone. Never. He was the epitome of who you would want to be on your best day. With a permanent smile on his face at all times, it was as though he knew a secret. As though he knew that there was a time limit to everything. And that the ultimate solution to the biggest of problems in life was knowing that these so called problems would ultimately be solved and soon pass. He lived by the philosophy that everything in this life is temporary and so why taint it with negativity, judgment, and disregard, particularly when you have the option of spreading happiness and positivity.

When people came to him with any conflict or worry, he was always armed and ready to solve it - tackling any problem no matter how large or small as though it were a textbook equation. His approach was always the same - that every problem, be it mathematical or not, had a solution. The challenge was finding that solution by multiplying and breaking down the factors to the remaining right figure that would lead you to the ultimate answer. Unfortunately for us, there is no solution to the problem we are faced with in losing such an unbelievable man.

Known by many as Associate Dean of the American University of Sharjah, to me and my brother and sister, he was simply our favorite *Amoo*. Teaching us lessons about



life's trials and achievements he had a habit of making every issue seem like it could be solved within a matter of seconds, like it was no big deal. More often than not, and to many more than just his family - he was that magician. By profession, many know that he had a way with numbers, and sitting down with him for a few seconds one would quickly see that he also had a way with words. Never failing to make people from all walks of life smile and feel like that were important and worth his time, our *Amoo* was a diamond in the rough. The tweets, facebook messages, emails, texts, and phone calls that have been going on since his death are a mere fraction of how many lives he touched and his influence and loss has proved nothing short of a ripple effect.

Perhaps an occupational hazard was that he had an elephant's memory, as they say, with the charming skill of remembering everyone's name. Usually first and last names of his many students, AUS staff, and even our childhood friends he had met only once and usually for a few minutes. You would think that he remembered everyone's name because they had left such a huge impression on him but that wasn't the case. He remembered their names because he knew that it mattered and that it would make them feel that they mattered. It was an unrehearsed authentic concern for everyone around him. Acts one imagines only angels having the skill and patience to master.

Although never experienced firsthand, he had a distinct and highly unconventional teaching method. In fact, when I first moved to Dubai I met many people who would ask me if I was related to him and then ask me if I sang as well as him. It didn't take me long to learn that this was a clear reference to his far from professionally serious renditions of *Um Khaltoom* in between intense calculus and differential equations - a tactic to keep students alert, interested and

most of all smiling. Although I never had the pleasure of taking calculus with him or any other higher level of math for that matter, I did have the honor of having him sit by me and explain 4th grade algebra in the most charming way.

I still remember the long wooden dining room in Riyadh to this day and trying to tackle $9y=25$. I can still hear his voice as he leaned over me to explain it and sooth my frustrations, "So ammo you see this y , haram, he's jealous of the other side so you have to either give or take away 9 from both sides of the equal sign to keep both sides happy."

I now know that it was a basic and fundamental law of algebra – to keep both sides of the equation balanced. He pleasantly explained it all in the way that a 4th grader would understand. Equations in the 4th grade quickly became simple - a matter of justice and fairness, something I understood.

Hating conflict, confrontation, disrespect, and disregard, I grew up knowing he would be fun and always engage in interesting conversations with me. When I was 7 and obsessed with ballet, he would mention that he too had studied ballet to get me to laugh. Soon enough I was 21 and graduating college, and he would ask about where I had applied for my masters and offer advice if I asked, never forceful with his suggestions. Then before I knew it I was 29 and I was getting married. He had such a talent in never upsetting everyone and so made sure that he attended my wedding and left early the next morning in order not to miss AUS registration the very next day. He always did whatever he could for both of his families.

I remember moving to Dubai and having dinner with him on many occasions where our meal would be interrupted by a student stopping by our table to shake his hand, greet him and thank him for this, that or the other. A course dropped, added, or simply to say hi. I used to tease him and ask how many students he had paid to pass by the restaurant and offer him these compliments to which he would laugh and shrug as if to say "I have no idea." He was a celebrity by any definition. Admired, respected and followed, even having his own facebook fan page. Ever so modest in his achievements and how well loved he was, there was no denying the turn out to show respect and say goodbye to this remarkable human being.

Always asking about my sister he would make me show him the latest pictures and videos of her two sons. He was so good at keeping a connective thread with us and our lives dismissing the notion of possibly asking us any superficial questions out of habit. He would always ask about my brother Karim and his latest achievements in medicine and then murmur, "That's so good. Hamdillah hamdillah" once I updated him on his latest accomplishment, particularly now that he is working at Mass General Hospital at Harvard. We always felt that he was proud of us no matter what our latest news was and simply happy to see us happy, as if that was enough.

I felt and still feel proud to carry the same last name as him and he has left behind a legacy of funny jokes, muddled and always entertaining language skills, and that ever so caring smile that will be remembered for many years to come. Through his death I vow to emulate his overly positive approach to life, his openness to anything and everything new, and his genuine care and love for everyone from his family to the cafeteria staff who served him lunch everyday. There is a perpetual and eternal hole at The American University of Sharjah, Dubai and most of all in my family. The epitome of genuineness and an undeniably charming sense of humor, Ibrahim Sadek was simply, unforgettable and his memory lives on beyond the four walls of any classroom or campus.

How we will live on without him is a problem with no solution in sight, and so, we must handle it as he would want us to. With a smile and appreciation of all that has passed and with a promise to try our hardest in everything we aim to achieve in life.

It is simply undeniable that his academic value cannot be ignored, and that his human value will never be replaced.

Sara Walid Sadek
Dr. Ibrahim Sadek's niece

We Want You To Stay In Touch!

The AUS Office of Development and Alumni Affairs is keen to stay in touch with all of our alumni. We hope that you will take the opportunity to tell us about what is happening in your lives. Had a promotion at work? The joy of a new addition to your family? A major move across the globe, or a minor move around the corner? We want to know and share your news with your AUS friends and colleagues.

AUS Connect is a wonderful way to stay in touch with your fellow alums, teachers and mentors. It is also a great way to show our friends in the community how proud our wonderful alumni are making us.

Send us an email. Our address is ODAA@aus.edu We look forward to hearing from each and every one of you.

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