

# AUSconnect

## AUS is Determined to Become the Best, Says Sharjah Ruler



"The American University of Sharjah has succeeded in distinguishing itself in the field of higher education and is determined to achieve its goal of becoming one of the best universities", said His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, Founder and President of American University of Sharjah.



"AUS has succeeded in distinguishing itself in the field of higher education and is determined to achieve its goal of becoming one of the best universities", said His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, at a special meeting held with a delegation from the AUS Alumni Association (AUSAA), June 4 on campus.

"We, at AUS, have achieved the academic standing of similar distinguished American institutions and are racing against time to become the best. We have reached, if not surpassed, many institutions of higher education that are much older than us,"

the Sharjah Ruler said. "Since its inception, AUS had always planned to limit its admission numbers in order to focus on the quality of education it can provide," he added.

His Highness said that the University was constantly striving to better itself and toward that end, and with limited support from the government of Sharjah, it channels all its profits back into the University by providing financial aid to students, improving facilities, recruiting the best faculty, etc. He thanked the alumni delegates for their efforts and said that the University was very proud of its pioneering students.

# AUS Alumni Association Constitution



At the by-laws signing ceremony, Chancellor Peter Heath also thanked the delegates for their contributions toward making their alma mater one of the best in the region. “The AUSAA is one of the most organized associations in the region and has the potential to become the best,” he said. Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, also thanked the alumni for their hard work and commitment in drafting the constitution and by-laws of the association.

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan joined the delegates in signing the official constitution and by-laws. He also approved the creation of the AUSAA Council and Founding Board. The newly established founding board will consist of five members who will serve as the executive arm of the AUSAA Council.

The 29-member delegation comprises members of the association’s Committee to Implement the Founding Process (CIFP), including all members of the Constitution and By-Laws Review Committee (CBRC), which drafted the constitution and by-laws approved by the AUS Board of Trustees at its last meeting in February. These founding documents will serve to guide the AUSAA in its many endeavors. The formation of the AUSAA Council and Founding Board completes the building of the formal structure of the association by its membership. The association labored diligently through a number of steps this past academic year to create a fully operative alumni organization in the UAE and establish chapters in neighboring countries.

The Sharjah Ruler later met with three newly appointed senior officials of the University. Dr. Thomas John Hochstettler the University’s Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah was appointed as Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, and Professor Peter A. Di Sabatino the School of Architecture and Design’s (SA&D) new dean.

His Highness also attended a special luncheon held in honor of the graduating class of Spring 2009 and congratulated the graduates for their success. “I would like to congratulate you all on your tremendous success and wish you the very best in all your future endeavors,” said the Sharjah Ruler. “AUS for its part, will continue to improve its academic standing to become one of the best universities in the world,” he added.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah also addressed the luncheon and congratulated the students on their achievement. “As you embark on your careers, you carry both the privilege and the responsibility of serving as our future ambassadors to the world. AUS will become further known through you as its representatives wherever your feet may take you. Those who came before you, along with the AUS faculty and staff, created the reputation of AUS. It is your privilege to further enhance the flame of eternal learning lit at the American University of Sharjah by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al-Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, and President of AUS,” she said.

Chancellor Heath, along with Hamid D. Jaffar, Member of the AUS Board of Trustees, and Chairman of Dana Gas, later distributed laptops to the top students from each major. The generous gifts were sponsored by Dana Gas. The event was also attended by other senior University officials, AUS alumni, faculty, students and their family members.



# and By-Laws Signing Ceremony





# US Ambassador Visits AUS

US Ambassador Richard Olson visited the American University of Sharjah on April 28 to meet with the alumni. He addressed AUS alumni and students on prospects for the Gulf region under President Obama's administration, which assumed the reins of power three months earlier. The change in US policy signals significant changes that may have implications for business, government and the broad social policies in the region. As the up-and-coming leaders of the region, it is vital for AUS alumni to know about possible changes as soon as possible, and especially within the informational economy that now binds the Gulf together into a single geo-political-economic region. The lecture was followed by an open dialogue between AUS alumni and ambassador Olson. The visit, which included US Consul General Paul Sutphin, began with a tour of the AUS campus, and ended with a reception at the Chancellor's residence.





# Four AUS Alumni Honored at Cityscape Dubai

Four graduates of the School of Architecture and Design (SA&D) were named joint winners of the Young Architect Award at the 2009 Cityscape Awards for Architecture in Emerging Markets held in Dubai.

All four of the projects shortlisted in this year's Young Architect Award competition were completed by alumni of SA&D. The AUS alumni and the projects for which they were honored are Momna Arshad (The Perforated Skin, Deira Dubai, UAE), Reihaneh Ramezany Mahonaky (Dubai Polymorphic Hotel), Tahereh Rajabi (Parametric Dubai: Emerging Poly.Morphi.City: Bani Yas Scaffolding), and Ahmed Hosny (Parametric Dubai: emerging.poly.wi.phi.city). All four alumni were members of the Class of 2009.

"The recognition of four very recent graduates from the School of Architecture and Design at AUS with the 2009 Young Architect Award from Cityscape represents another sign of continued excellence and of engagement with the broader design community. It signifies the distinction of the program, the University, the faculty and, of course, the students. We all share in congratulating these four young architects and designers as they move forward into their careers and into the larger world," said Peter Di Sabatino, Dean of SA&D.

The Cityscape Awards reward excellence in architecture and design from the emerging regions of the Gulf States, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, South America and South and East Asia and Latin America. The awards are designed to recognize and reward architects and their entries that have shown outstanding designs, performance, vision, and achievement in key emerging market and project areas.

## AUS Alumni Attend Workshops Held at Yale University

**Five members of the founding board of the American University of Sharjah Alumni Association (AUSAA) recently travelled to Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, and New York City to attend special workshops conducted by leading experts with extensive experience in the area of university advancement.**

The five-member AUS alumni team, which comprised Sheikh Mohammed Al Qassimi, Issa Ali Al Issa, Anita Akkawi, Firas Hammad and Kawthar Al Suleimani, had worked with other alumni leaders earlier in the year on drafting the constitution and by-laws of the association. The AUSAA leaders were accompanied by Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs and Dana A. Abu-Aisha, Alumni Coordinator.

The purpose of the training was for these members to function as an executive arm and to build AUSAA on a solid foundation and help realize its full potential in the years to come. The association plans on launching new projects this upcoming year, including the creation of regional chapters throughout the GCC. It will operate much like its American counterparts at Yale and Princeton, which are especially active in engaging the alumni at their respective universities. Alumni have assumed significant roles in building the impressive endowments of these two Ivy League institutions.

The experts conducting the workshops included two senior partners from the US-based firm of e-Advancement: Eustace Theodore, immediate past president of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and former Director of Alumni Relations and former dean at Yale University; and Daniel White, formerly Director of Alumni Relations at Princeton University. The AUSAA team members' participation in the workshops was sponsored by Etihad Airways.



# AUS Board of Trustees Approves New Appointments

His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), chaired the meeting of the University's Board of Trustees on, June 8, 2009, on campus.



Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS, indicated that the Ruler of Sharjah had expressed his satisfaction at the progress made by the University. Dr. Heath said that the board approved the appointment of Dr. Thomas John Hochstettler as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah as Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; and Professor Peter A. Di Sabatino as Dean of the School of Architecture and Design (SA&D). It also approved awarding rolling contracts to 14 faculty members. In addition, three faculty members were promoted to the rank of professor, four to associate professor, and two were promoted to senior instructor.

The Chancellor said that the board also passed a resolution expressing its appreciation to His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah for his endowment of the AUS Technology Park. It also reviewed various issues pertaining to the University's strategic planning, including the next steps to be taken with regard to the establishment of the AUS Technology Park, the branding strategy currently underway, as well as plans for further development of the University.

Dr. Heath also noted that the board's Finance Committee approved the construction of a wellness center on campus for use by campus residents.

The board welcomed the appointment of two new members to the Board of Trustees: Dr. Ali Abdullah Al Shamlan, Director-General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS) and former Minister of Higher Education in Kuwait; and Riad T. Sadek, Chairman of Al Habtoor Leighton Group. The board bid farewell to Mr. John R. Petty, Chairman, TECSEC, Incorporated, Virginia, USA, and thanked him for his valuable contributions as a member of the board.

Members of the AUS Board of Trustees are: His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah, and Chairman of the Board and President of AUS; Dr. Ali Abdullah Al Shamlan, Director-General of the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences (KFAS), Kuwait; Dr. MaryAnn Baenninger, President, College of Saint Benedict, Minnesota, USA; Mr. Joseph L. Brand, Senior Partner, Patton Boggs LLP, Washington, DC, USA; Professor Lord Alec Broers, Member of the British House of Lords, UK; Dr. Anthony George Coates, Director of the Museum of Biodiversity, the Bridge of Life, Republic of Panama, and Senior Scientist Emeritus, Smithsonian Institution; Mr. Abdul Jalil Yousuf Darwish, Chairman of UAE Enterprises Group; Dr. Leroy S. Fletcher, Regents Professor Emeritus, Thomas A. Dietz Professor Emeritus, Texas A&M University, USA; Dr. Roderick S. French, Chancellor Emeritus, AUS; Dr. Peter Heath, AUS Chancellor; Mr. Hamid D. Jafar, Chairman and CEO, Crescent Petroleum Company, Sharjah; Dr. Cornelius Kerwin, Interim President, American University, Washington, DC, USA; Baroness Onora O'Neill of Bengarve, CBE PBA FMedSci, Member of the British House of Lords, UK; Mr. Riad T. Sadek, Chairman of Al Habtoor Leighton Group; and Mr. Maroun A. Semaan, President and CEO, Petrofac International Ltd., Sharjah.

The meeting was also attended by the following AUS vice chancellors: Dr. John Mosbo, Academic Affairs; Salem Al Qaseer, Public Affairs; Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Student Affairs; George DeBin, Finance and Administration; Ali Shuhaimy, Enrollment Management; and Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Development and Alumni Affairs.



# Alumnus Rashid Al Nuaimi Donates One Million Dirham to the AUS Scholarship Fund

His Excellency Sheikh Rashid Bin Humaid Al Nuaimi, Chairman of the Ajman Municipality and Planning Department, has donated AED 1 million to the American University of Sharjah (AUS) Pioneer Scholarship Fund. This was announced by Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor, at the University's Board of Trustees meeting held, June 8.



"The American University of Sharjah has played a great role in my life, and I am pleased to have this opportunity to express my appreciation by contributing to its ongoing growth and improvement," said Sheikh Rashid, who is an AUS alumnus with a degree in business administration. His generous donation will create new scholarships for deserving AUS students.

"It is truly gratifying to see that our graduates are recognizing the contribution that AUS is continuing to play in the development of human capital in the Gulf region," said Chancellor Heath. "The donation His Excellency Sheikh Rashid Bin Humaid Al Nuaimi has made is great evidence of the significance of the ties between the University and its alumni." Chancellor Heath said that the fund will help create new scholarships for students who wish to join the University or continue their higher education but need financial support.

The Pioneer Scholarship Fund, which was established in recognition of the University's 10th anniversary, is intended to function as a matching grant program, whereby His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS, will match donations made by private contributors and groups to create scholarships for students who excel in academic pursuits and are in need of financial assistance.

## Where Are You Now?

**Budoor Al Amoudi:** I graduated from AUS in Spring 2005 with a bachelor of science degree in Computer Engineering. After graduation I worked as a software analyst in Thuraya Satellite Telecommunications and was promoted to Business Intelligence Architect. My job is to gather and analyze accurate and timely data to help meet business requirements and support management decisions. It requires good analytical and problem solving skills and keen attention to details in order to prevent the generation of inaccurate reports. Also, I am currently pursuing a Masters of Business Administration at AUS. This particular program has added high value to my job capabilities as it helps me look at things from a non-technical viewpoint.



# Yusri Al Dwaik Pioneer Scholarship Fund Established at AUS

**AUS announced the establishment of the Yusri Al Dwaik Pioneer Scholarship Fund to support the education of deserving students in the Arab world. The scholarship is funded by Amjad Al Dwaik, Ayman Al Dwaik, Areej Al Dwaik and Lina Al Dwaik, in honor of their late father, Yusri Al Dwaik.**

The Al Dwaik family's AED 5 million gift to AUS aims to ensure that all talented Arab students (with priority given to Palestinians) have access to the high standard of education offered by AUS in the fields of business and management, architecture and design, the arts and sciences, and engineering. This endowed scholarship will provide assistance for students who excel academically but who are financially unable to avail themselves of the excellent education offered at the University. This generous donation will be matched by AUS.

AUS Chancellor Dr. Peter Heath expressed his "gratitude for this generous contribution allowing AUS to continue with its mission of graduating the best and the brightest trained workers to build a viable human resource pool for the UAE and beyond." He said that it is "necessary to train financiers with Middle Eastern, Western and Asian perspectives and experience, so

as to more fully comprehend the individual needs of these regions for capital investment. It is through such generous contributions as that provided by the Al Dwaik family that the major teaching and research institutions can be sufficiently expanded so that the prosperity of the Gulf will continue."

Amjad Al Dwaik said that "His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, has given so much to the UAE and the Sharjah community, and has contributed so profoundly to education in the Arab world that we all need to share in appreciation of His Highness's vision and endeavor to continue the vision for generations to come." He added that he looks forward to contributing toward developing the human capital in the UAE and the Arab world through contributing to this world-class university.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, said "The UAE increasingly prepares the caliber of manpower necessary to direct its future development through leading institutions of higher learning. The generosity of the Al Dwaik family will contribute considerably to providing opportunities for the very best Arab students to pursue their university education at AUS."



# AUS Establishes Khalaf Ahmed Al Habtoor Chair in International Relations

AUS announced the establishment of the Khalaf Ahmed Al Habtoor Chair in International Studies as a result of a generous AED 15 million gift given by Khalaf Ahmed Al Habtoor, Chairman of Al Habtoor Group of Companies. This is the first endowed chair in the University's College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

"This endowed chair in international relations indicates Mr. Al Habtoor's strong commitment to academic excellence in higher education in the UAE and throughout the Gulf," said Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS. "Generations of students will benefit from this gesture, which is a wonderful vote of confidence in the University and its future. This endowed chair will be a cornerstone for our efforts to develop world-class research and teaching at AUS," he added.

"The liberal arts create the requisite understanding of how we must deal with the ever-changing social and cultural settings that are endemic to modern living," said Al Habtoor. "It is people who must be trained and motivated to work together in teams to meet new challenges and find innovative solutions that work best for the society as a whole." Widely known for his writing on numerous subjects in the local media, Al Habtoor

is a recipient of a number of national and international honors including GCC Economic Pioneer for the Year 2008, Businessman of the Year 2007, and Gold Medal winner of the Red Crescent Society.

"The Al Habtoor Chair of International Relations will allow the best in professional education to be combined with in-depth training of students to address social and political questions of our society," said Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor of Development and Alumni Affairs. "The holder of the chair will be an internationally renowned scholar and educator skilled in the social disciplines."

International studies at AUS comprise offerings in political science, anthropology and the humanities, such as philosophy and history. The University offers a Bachelor of Arts in International Studies with concentrations in international relations, international economics, Arab studies in a global context, and Western studies.

The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs is responsible for the endowment of research and teaching chairs at AUS.

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## AUS Professor Wins Arab Fund's Prestigious Distinguished Scholar Award

A professor of physics from the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) has been declared the winner of the prestigious Distinguished Scholar Award given by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, based in Kuwait. Dr. Nasser Hamdan, Professor, Department of Physics at AUS, won the award for the academic year 2009-2010 for his research project entitled "Electronic Properties of Organic Semiconductors for Low-Cost Solar Cells."

"I am very pleased to have won this prestigious award. The grant will help me tremendously in conducting my research next year. I am grateful to the Arab Fund for this great honor. I would also like to express my appreciation and gratitude to my colleagues at AUS for their support and encouragement," said Dr. Hamdan.

The award comprises a grant of US \$50,000 as well as travel expenses to the US to conduct research. Dr. Hamdan will use his sabbatical in 2010 to expend the grant. He will spend his sabbatical at Western Michigan University as well as conduct research at the Advanced Photon Source Synchrotron facility at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.

Dr. Hamdan has also received grants of \$10,000 each from the US Department of Energy and the US National Science Foundation to aid his research.



# AUS Hosts Kanoo Lecture on Family Business

A large audience comprising faculty members, students, University officials, and members of the public attended an engaging lecture entitled “Family Business: Challenges and Opportunities” delivered by Mishal Hamed Kanoo, Deputy Chairman of the Kanoo Group, held on, May 11.

10 | Highlighting the nature and dynamics of a successful family business, Kanoo said that broadly speaking, such enterprises carry out almost 70 percent of economic transactions conducted globally and that percentage is even greater in the Gulf region. “One of the reasons I lecture on family businesses at universities and other forums is that I don’t want to see such businesses fail as they have a significant impact on our economy,” he said. Speaking about his own family business, the Kanoo Group—one of the oldest and largest independent family-owned group of companies in the Gulf region—Kanoo said that it was established in 1890 and has successfully implemented “succession planning” since 1966. Kanoo said that succession planning is one of the key issues in family-run businesses, as was the difference between ownership and management. He said that unfortunately, a lot of family-run enterprises still do not differentiate between the two, and one sees a lot of confusion and conflict as a result of this.

Kanoo indicated that family enterprises range from small mom-and-pop stores to huge brand entities such as Cargill, Levi-Strauss, Mars and numerous others. He said that regionally there were two dozen or more big family businesses that have been in existence for the past few decades and have made a name for themselves.

Kanoo will be teaching a course in family business at the AUS School of Business and Management (SBM) in the fall 2009 semester. He is a frequent speaker at conferences in the Gulf and is also well-known as a columnist who writes on a wide range of topics that deal with how social issues mix with business perspectives. Chancellor Peter Heath, also spoke on the occasion and welcomed the distinguished guest to the University. He also presented the speaker with a memento on behalf of AUS. The lecture was also attended by other senior University officials.



## Where Are You Now?

**Noor Hadi:** I graduated with the Class of 2007 with a BS in Computer Engineering and a minor in Applied Mathematics. I then headed to Canada to pursue a Masters Degree in Applied Mathematics at the Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario. I worked as a teaching assistant while pursuing that degree which I completed in January 2009. Currently I am working as a research assistant in the Computer Science Department at Wilfrid Laurier University. I plan to pursue my PhD at the same university.

# Our Region Will Continue to Generate Growth and Development Over Time, Says Abraaj Founder and CEO

**“The UAE will continue to generate growth and development over time because its fundamentals are sound,” stated the founder and head of the region’s largest private equity firm at a special lecture entitled “Private Equity in the UAE and the Region,” held on, April 30, at the Main Building.**

Arif Naqvi, Founder and Group Chief Executive Officer of Abraaj Capital Limited, one of the most prominent private equity firms in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (MENASA) region, said that three important factors ensured that this region would continue to feature as one of the most promising areas of growth in the world. “Our favorable demographics, that is our population; our hydrocarbon based liquidity; and our governments’ reforms and diversification plans, are the three significant factors that will help sustain the promising future envisaged for this region,” he said.

“The MENASA region will be the second fastest growing region in the world over the next five years,” he noted. It has a combined GDP of US\$ 3.2 trillion, growing at five percent per annum and had a population of 1.6 billion people. What made this region dynamic, he said, are the significant cultural, political, and economic synergies that have led to strong intra-regional trade links, labor mobility and investment opportunities. He said that there was no doubt that this region had been affected by the current global financial crisis. “We have all been affected by the crisis. And we will have low growth as a result. But the situation is nowhere near as bad as it is made out to be,” said Naqvi. “Speculation of economic and financial prospects of a country by traders based in other regions is normal when one allows one’s bonds and products to be rated and this should not lead to alarm,” he added.

Today the world is linked in more ways than we can imagine and it is well nigh impossible for any country to remain unaffected and respond individually to global challenges. Both giant corporate entities as well as national economies will face difficulties and ‘stresses’ in the future and therefore it is important to



have a joint strategy. Emerging markets, such as the MENASA region, is where we see growth taking place as a result of various factors, including joint initiatives.

The lecture, which was organized by the School of Business and Management (SBM), drew a packed audience, comprising senior University officials, faculty members, students, members of the community and the media. Dr. Peter Heath, welcomed the guest to the University and briefed the audience on the many accomplishments of the speaker such as being designated a New Asian Leader by the World Economic Forum (WEF) from 2003 to 2004; being recognized as one of the 50-most influential people in the private equity industry by Private Equity International (PEI) magazine in June 2007, and one of the 50 people who will change the course of private equity.



# The Spring 2009 Com



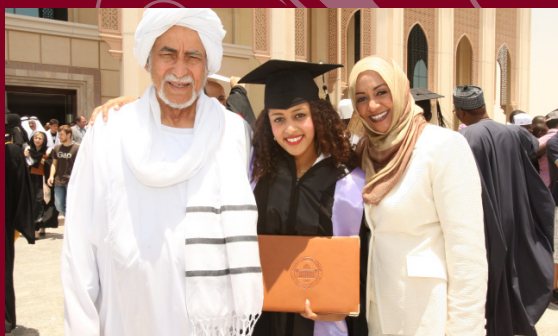
Your graduation from the American University of Sharjah is something you look forward to with great anticipation and pleasure. It is the culmination of several years of hard work, which will be recognized as you walk across the stage during the ceremony to receive your certificate and congratulations from your dean, department chair, and relatives.





# Commencement Ceremony

While you look forward to embarking on your professional career, entering an exciting new phase or continuing your academic studies and research, commencement is more than just a ceremony. It contains tradition and protocol that is passed down through generations. It plays one of the greatest roles in a person's life and moves them from student to professional.





# AUS Announces Senior Appointments

Chaired by His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the Board of Trustees of AUS approved new appointments to three senior University positions. Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS, said that the board approved the appointment of Dr. Thomas John Hochstettler as Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah as Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, and Professor Peter A. Di Sabatino as Dean of the School of Architecture and Design (SA&D).

**Dr. Hochstettler** recently completed his fifth year as President of Lewis & Clark College in Portland, Oregon, USA. He has a broad background in higher education that spans financial and strategic planning, institutional and academic development, fund-raising, and scholarly research and teaching as a historian. He was a teaching and research fellow in the department of history at Stanford University from 1978 to 1980. He subsequently served in various senior positions at Stanford University, Bowdoin College, and the University of Houston System. In 1996, Dr.



Hochstettler joined Rice University as associate provost and adjunct lecturer in history. From 1998 to 2004, he served as vice president for academic affairs and visiting professor of history at Jacobs University (previously International University Bremen, Germany).

Dr. Hochstettler earned a bachelor's degree in history from Earlham College in 1969 and a year later earned his master's degree in history at the University of Michigan. He received his PhD in history from the University of Michigan in 1980. Throughout his career, Dr. Hochstettler has made presentations on early modern German and European military history and German-US educational cooperation and European postsecondary education. His scholarship extends to contemporary higher education topics including enrollment management, technology, and liberal learning. He has had various publications and given presentations on topics in international education reform. In 2004, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* published his paper "Aspiring to Steeples of Excellence at German Universities," which explores the difficulties in applying the liberal arts education model to the German higher education system.



**Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah** was one of the pioneer faculty members who joined AUS when it opened its doors in 1997. She was subsequently elected President of the AUS Faculty Senate, and served as the Chair of the Department of International Studies for three years, successfully overseeing its accreditation. She was appointed as the Assistant to the Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs in 2007.

Professor Mourtada-Sabbah was promoted through the ranks at AUS from Assistant Professor to Full Professor of Political Science and International Studies. She is the recipient of the AUS Excellence in Teaching Award and the AUS Excellence in Service Award. Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah received a BA with distinction from the American University in Beirut where she was the recipient of the Penrose Award for the most outstanding qualities of leadership, scholarship, and contributions to the University as a whole as demonstrated by a graduating student. She holds a PhD in Public Law with distinction from the University of Paris II. She has held visiting professorships at major universities and research institutions in the US and Europe, including the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies at American University in Washington, DC; the University of California at Berkeley; the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; the Congressional Research Service (Library of Congress); the University of Paris Law School; and the Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (Sciences Po.)

Her books include *Le Privilege de l' Executif aux Etats-Unis*, *Is War a Political Question*, *Globalization and the Gulf* and *The Supreme Court of the United States and the Political Question Doctrine*. Some of her many articles have appeared in the *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review*, *White House Studies*, *Maghreb-Mashrek*, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Revue Pouvoirs*, *Revue Internationale de Droit Compare*, *Annuaire Francais*

*de Relations Internationales* and *Revue du Droit Public et de la Science Politique en France et a l'Etranger*. Professor Mourtada-Sabbah was the founding Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Social Affairs*, a peer-reviewed quarterly journal of AUS, for which she initiated the English-language section nine years ago.

Professor Mourtada-Sabbah has been invited to lecture at Johns Hopkins University (SAIS), Georgetown University (CCAS), Washington Center for Strategic Studies, the American University in Cairo, American University (AU), Science Po, the United Nations, NATO, The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR), the Dubai School of Government, the Emirates Institute of Diplomacy and The Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House).



**Professor Di Sabatino** was professor and department chair at the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, USA. Prior to that, he served for over 11 years as a faculty member at Woodbury University in the School of Architecture and Design. He has been a visiting professor at the Politecnico di Milano, Italy, and a visiting professor and consultant at both the National Institute of Design, India, and the Creative i-College, India.

Di Sabatino is a licensed architect and has practiced in a variety of firms. Prior to re-establishing his own practice, he was the director of design at WET Design, where he oversaw all design-related activities of the firm, and led a comprehensive, interdisciplinary group of designers from the fields of architecture, landscape design, environmental design, product design, graphic and media design, illustration, and fine arts.

He earned his bachelor's degree in economics with a concentration in fine arts from Franklin and Marshall College in Pennsylvania in 1980. He received his Master of Architecture degree from Washington University's School of Architecture in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1985. He has been awarded the Adobe Achievement Award, and twice received the Presidential Certificate of Appreciation from the American Institute of Architects, Los Angeles Chapter. Di Sabatino is a member of the Professional Council Advisory Committee for the Graduate Design Department at California College for the Arts, and has served as a member of the Board of Directors at the American Institute of Architects.

Throughout his career, Di Sabatino has created, presented, and moderated a variety of panel discussions and presentations. He has been invited and served as guest critic/juror at various schools of architecture and the American Institute of Architects, and as a panelist for the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. He was also invited to participate in the Aspen Design Summit and to help develop the International Design Conference at Aspen.

## Sharjah Ruler Discusses Plans to Set up AUS Technology Park with Team from Royal Engineering Academy



His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah, met at AUS, May 3, with a delegation from the Royal Academy of Engineering and discussed plans to set up the AUS Technology Park. The delegation, led by Professor Lord Alec Broers, Member of the British House of Lords, UK, and Member of the AUS Board of Trustees; also included Philip Greenish, CEO of the Royal Academy of Engineering; Hermann Hauser, Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering; and Dr. Chris Elliott, engineer and lawyer.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Hamid D. Jafar, Chairman and CEO, Crescent Petroleum Company, Sharjah, and Member of the AUS Board of Trustees; Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of AUS; and Mr. Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs.

Chancellor Heath, in a statement after the meeting, expressed satisfaction with the meeting organized by Professor Lord Alec Broers. He said that the meeting was extremely productive and helped determine the next step in the development of the park. The team from the academy was visiting AUS to help plan the vision and implementation of the technology and research park.

Greenish was also here to discuss the signing of an agreement with the AUS College of Engineering (CEN) for faculty exchange between the two institutions.



# Sharjah Ruler Attends

**His Highness Shekh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS, attended the second Annual AUS Alumni Reunion held at the University's main plaza February 26. The event was also attended by Dr. Peter Heath, as well as senior University officials and faculty members.**

His Highness welcomed the seven hundred alumni attending the event and expressed his happiness at the strong bond that has emerged between the University and its graduates over the years. "It is a pleasure to see all of you, the sons and daughters of our University, at the second Annual Alumni Reunion Dinner," said His Highness. "Today, you are members of a stronger and more active alumni association. The AUS Board of Trustees has recently approved a permanent constitution and by-laws for a new AUS Alumni Association. This new constitution will support the ever-increasing size and ambitions of our University," he added. "As graduates of AUS, you are our representatives

across the world – the finest testimony to the growing reputation of AUS in the UAE and across the region. The University will spare no effort to support you," concluded Sheikh Dr. Sultan. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Peter Heath, also welcomed the alumni back to their alma mater. "Only a few months ago, when I first arrived at AUS, several groups of alumni stopped by my office to welcome me to 'their' University and to explore ways of how best to take the Alumni Association to increased levels of activity and involvement. Six months later, I stand before you today very impressed with what we together have accomplished," he said.

"Together we drafted the permanent constitution and by-laws documents that have just been officially approved by the AUS Board of Trustees," he informed the audience. "These documents will guide the next stage of development of the Alumni Association in support of our rapidly growing alumni body," he added. Dr. Heath also mentioned a few of the various other milestones achieved, such as the establishment of the





# AUS Alumni Reunion

Alumni Scholarship Fund; the holding of seven evening iftars and dinners, sponsored by leading figures of industry, which allowed hundreds of graduates to reconnect with each other and their University; the creation of a new office of Corporate Relations within the scope of the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs; the launch of the foundation of a Kuwait Alumni chapter, soon to be followed by similar overseas chapters throughout the GCC; as well as plans to set up a new website for alumni.

"These are a few among the many efforts being undertaken on your behalf by a newly revitalized Development and Alumni Affairs effort," said Dr. Heath. "We are pleased to have you on campus tonight for what promises to be a most stimulating and enjoyable evening," he added.

Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Assistant to the Chancellor on Development and Alumni Affairs, also addressed the gathering. "You are the pioneering graduates who

met the standards of excellence as the university took form. After a decade of fast-paced growth with the establishing of impeccably high standards and a student body to match, AUS enters the second decade of its young yet remarkable history with sights set far and wide," she said. An ambitious outreach campaign has also been planned that will ensure the University's leadership role for generations to come, she added.

During the dinner, the Alumni Association presented Sheikh Dr. Sultan with a copy of *In Absentia*, a book of photographs by Tarek Al-Ghusein, a renowned artist and Associate Professor in the School of Architecture and Design, as well as a photograph by the artist. The event also included an exciting raffle draw which saw seven lucky alumni winning prizes including a Mitsubishi car donated by Heavy Machinery Center and Al Naboodah Travel as well as six airline tickets.





# His Highness Addresses AUS Alumni

Dear AUS Alumni,

Welcome back to the place we would like you to think of as your second home, the University that nurtured your educational skills and helped prepare you to continue your education for life.

Today we celebrate our second Annual Alumni Reunion Dinner. Whenever something is done for a second time, it becomes a 'tradition'-- so this annual gathering now is the first official AUS alumni tradition, an event you may rely upon in the years to come. It is a pleasure to see all of you, the sons and daughters of our esteemed University.

As a result of the events of the past few months, you are today members of stronger and more active alumni association. As you know, much has happened since the arrival of Dr. Peter Heath at AUS less than a year ago. Perhaps first among these many accomplishments, the Board of Trustees recently approved a permanent Constitution and By-Laws for a new AUS Alumni Association. This new constitution will build upon the contributions of the first AUS Alumni Association to support the ever-increasing size and ambitions of our University.

These founding documents allow alumni relations to move to the next level of support so critical to AUS's future. Alumni volunteers who worked on the Constitution and By-laws Review Committee developing the new Constitution sit among us tonight. I thank you for your great efforts and for the long hours of work under the guidance of Dr. Nada Mourtada. The documents that you developed will serve the University and all alumni well.

Tonight I am pleased to inform you that Dr. Peter Heath and Dr. Mourtada have appointed a group to assist in the next phase of the founding process. This group is called the Committee to Implement the Founding Process (or CIFP). This committee will assist the development office



in establishing an Alumni Council that will lead to the first elections under the permanent Constitution.

Members of the CIFP also are present tonight, and I personally thank you for your willingness to serve the University and the Association in this critical role. The Alumni Association looks forward to this new exciting phase of its continuing development.

New chapters of the Alumni Association will be formed, so that the Alumni Association as a "home away from home" will continue to serve as a base of support for our graduates wherever they may be in the world. There will be many opportunities for you to become active in the AUS Alumni Association. We look forward to supporting all of the ways you will find to help build your powerful and effective Association. As you do so, you will be helping to build a more powerful and effective University.

As graduates of AUS, you are our representatives across the world -- the finest testimony to AUS's great and growing reputation in the UAE and across the region. The University will spare no effort to support you; we will stand at the centre of your evolving interests and commitments.

Welcome home, dear sons and daughters of AUS.



# Chancellor Heath's Address to Alumni

Your Highness, Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah, and President of AUS:

Dear Graduates of the American University of Sharjah: I am delighted to welcome you tonight to the second Annual AUS Alumni Dinner. Only a few months ago, when I first arrived at AUS, several groups of alumni stopped by my office to welcome me to "their" university and to explore ways of how best to take the Alumni Association to increased levels of activity and involvement. Six months later, I stand before you today very impressed with what we together have accomplished. Allow me mention just a few of the milestones we together have achieved in my whirlwind introduction to life at AUS.

Together we drafted the permanent Constitution and By-Laws documents that have just been officially approved by the Board Trustees. These are founding documents that dramatically and effectively expand the reach and scope of the Alumni Association. They were developed by your fellow alumni working in a group called the Committee on the Review of By-laws and the Constitution. These documents will guide the next stage of development of the Alumni Association in support of our rapidly growing alumni body. In these same months, we organized seven evening Ifars and dinners, sponsored by leading figures of industry, whose contributions we very much appreciate. These occasions allowed hundreds of graduates to reconnect with each other and their university. We also established the Alumni Scholarship Fund, a fund to which each of you is contributing by your attendance tonight. In addition, an advisory alumni committee, the Committee on the Implementation of the Founding Process, was established to help launch the newly formed Alumni Association. We look forward to further enhancing our ability to provide mutual support for one another and for our Alumni Association.

Taken as a whole, we find ourselves on the eve of a wonderful new era of alumni relations at AUS, one that promises significantly increased alumni participation and support for the University as it moves forward. In order to improve ties with industry to the benefit of all alumni in their careers, we have created a new office of Corporate Relations within the scope of the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs, under Dr. Nada Mourtada's direction. Job opportunities are being sought and agreements signed with firms to provide internships for AUS students and alumni – such as the one with Al Habtoor Plant in Koz, Dar Al Rokham and others yet to come.

AUS is rapidly becoming the major University in the region. So my own schedule naturally includes trips outside the UAE. These trips naturally often include an important alumni focus. Recently, for example, I visited Kuwait with Dr. Mourtada to lay the foundation for the launch of the Kuwait Alumni chapter. This is the first of many trips I will make to create new chapters



throughout the GCC. In a related development, we have appointed an IT alumni task force to develop a new website for alumni. They will also find an effective way to replace the impersonal email address now in use. This new address template will create a more professional-looking address, one that will allow you to use your AUS email address throughout your career easily and efficiently. Moreover, the Alumni Contact

Directory that you recently received in hard copy will soon be available on line. I urge you to update your information and inform us of others who have not had the opportunity of being listed. Hopefully this and other steps will facilitate the interaction among all alumni and with your Alma Mater, the critical first step to building a cohesive and lasting alumni organization. A new issue of *AUS Connect* is available in your alumni packet tonight. We encourage you to let us know of your news to share with your classmates and others. These are a few among the many efforts being undertaken on your behalf by a newly revitalized Development and Alumni Affairs effort. I would like to thank the members of the CBRC who I will name now for all their outstanding contributions to their University. Their efforts in developing the AUS Alumni Association's founding documents under the guidance of Dr. Nada Mourtada and US consultants of e-Advancement will be remembered for a very long time. I would also be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the many alumni volunteers present tonight who helped sustain the prior Alumni Association over the last decade. You provided the foundation for this next critical step in the evolution of your Association. Thank you for your continuing help and support.

We look forward to the work of the CIPF as the new steps in your Association begin to take shape in all of the ways envisioned by the new Constitution. There will be many opportunities for volunteer leadership in the months and years ahead. We encourage each and every one of you to get involved. The new Association is committed to building an organization in which everyone's effort is needed and welcome. We are pleased to have you on campus tonight for what promises to be a most stimulating and enjoyable evening. Welcome back to AUS!

Now it gives me great pleasure to welcome to the podium the individual who first envisioned this University over a decade ago, who brought this vision to fruition, and who remains today the main supporter of AUS's academic mission, His Highness, Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Member of the Supreme Council, Ruler of Sharjah, and President of AUS.



# Welcome AUS Alumni

*Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah*

Your Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of the American University of Sharjah, distinguished guests, AUS alumni, colleagues and friends;

Welcome to the second university-wide reunion of the AUS alumni.

This year marks a new phase in the life of the American University of Sharjah. Our new Chancellor Dr. Peter Heath came to AUS with a long and distinguished career of scholarship and administration in the Middle East, and is as much at home in the Gulf as he was in Beirut.

I look out tonight to an audience of many familiar faces that instantly rekindle memories of an education set to the highest standards at the very onset of AUS under the vision and leadership of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammed Al Qassimi. You are the pioneering graduates who met the standards of excellence as the University took form. After a decade of fast-paced growth with the establishing of impeccably high standards and a student body to match, AUS enters the second decade of its young yet remarkable history with sights set far and wide.

Far be it for AUS to rest on its laurels and past achievements. The first "whirlwind" six months of Chancellor Heath's tenure saw the consolidation of a new



Alumni Association under a new organizational charter developed by a young but forward-looking and dedicated group of graduates. Chapters of the Association are in the process of being established throughout the GCC and elsewhere --that is, wherever AUS alumni gather. An ambitious outreach campaign has been planned that will ensure AUS's leadership role for generations to come. Joint ventures in career workshops, internships and seminars have already begun as a new day has dawned in university-industry relations.

We look forward to working together to provide multi-faceted support to your alma mater. Welcome back to AUS!



# News and Views from our Alumni - Samya Ayish and Ahmed Kaoud



**Ahmed Kaoud:** I am an AUS alum who graduated in 2005 as an architect. Since then, I have worked in two companies: Halcrow and P&T. During my time at AUS, I was an integral part in the establishment of the Palestinian Cultural Club, and I also established its first music band. It could be my big “obsession” with Palestinian music that led me to play the “mejwez”, which is a traditional Middle Eastern instrument, very popular in Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon.

**Samya Ayish:** I am also an AUS alum who graduated in 2005 as a multimedia designer. Since then, I have been working for CNN. I am currently pursuing my masters degree at Sharjah University in Mass Communication and New Media. In the interim I have been working on some film scripts, hoping that one day you will be able to watch them on the big screen. During my years at university, I was part of the Palestinian Cultural Club, and was also part of the singing band, which I continued to perform with even after my graduation.

**Ahmed:** I am now an architect at P&T, which is an Asian company, specialized in architectural projects worldwide. I am responsible for designing and drafting, in addition to meeting with clients and supervising reports of finished projects. Usually my working day starts at 8:30, and I continue working until around 6:00 p.m. At that point I go back to my family and enjoy the rest of the day.

**Samya:** My working day is a little bit different, since we have a baby. Therefore, one day I might work from home, another day, I could go to work and leave the baby at his grandparent's house, and on a third day I could be attending my graduate classes. My major responsibilities at work include doing video stories, supervising interns training at the office, and doing some web design work.

**Ahmed and Samya:** We think that our University has enriched our experience in life, whether it be social or professional. Being a student at AUS in general, gave us

the motivation to be part of the active life, since it created that challenge that makes you want to accomplish more and more. Furthermore, being students in the School of Architecture and Design put us under tremendous pressure, but gave us golden lessons on how to be on time, how to be creative, and how to deal with challenges one faces. We think that AUS is developing itself through its programs, and although this University has created a good image in the UAE and the region, it does not stop there. The University keeps moving forward by introducing new programs, and hopefully one day we will see a graduate program in SA&D that we, as designers, can be part of.

Ahmed and Samya: Enjoy your day, as if you will die tomorrow, and work for your ending, as if you will live forever.

Ahmed is not very good about reading although I keep pressuring him to do so. The only books he reads are the ones related to architecture, but I think the most memorable book he will never forget is the Arabic book by Ibn Katheer *The Beginning and the End*. Samya reads a lot, sometimes I can't sleep at night because she keeps the lights on. The book which I felt was great for her is *My Enemies* by the late Syrian writer Mamdouh Edwan. As for movies, we can never forget the movie *The Good Shepherd* which we saw together after we got married. Though it was long, it shows you the hidden issues behind what they call the empire of the CIA.

Our advice to you is never stop the dreams that you had at AUS, but rather, try to adapt them to your new life. Ahmed loves to play music, but the day-to-day responsibilities make him stop sometimes, but because he loves his music he can adapt it to his free time. Samya, had dreams to make films, and being a filmmaker, she still has those dreams. However, she chose parts of that dream which are suitable to her life especially with our little baby, Ghazi.

Believe us, those days you are living now are the best days of your lives. There is not much responsibility, life is not complicated, and if it is only about projects then the matter is easy. Life outside the University walls is hard. So if you are aiming for uniqueness, you should first try to reach it during your stay at university, because life might not give you that opportunity.

It would be so for many reasons: First: AUS has a wide variety of programs available with concentrations in new specialties. The number of nationalities on campus enriches the experience of newcomers. Also, the activities environment you will find at this university is so unique that you will never find it anywhere else. And although the fees that you pay at AUS are a little bit high compared to other universities, there is a guarantee that you will get your money back when working after graduation, as AUS



# Dr. Sultan Center to Become World's Premier

Dr. Sultan Al Qassimi Center for Gulf Studies will soon become the premier center for research that scholars and historians around the world will turn to when studying the Gulf, said His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of American University of Sharjah (AUS), addressing the opening session of an international conference entitled “The Gulf in Modern Times: People, Ports and History” on March 17, at the Dr. Sultan Al Qassimi Center for Gulf Studies. The conference, held by AUS, was co-sponsored with the Middle East Institute of Columbia University in New York; Columbia University's Gulf/2000, a major study and documentation project of the Gulf states; and the Dr. Sultan Al Qassimi Center for Gulf Studies.



“Even though the Dr. Sultan Al Qassimi Center for Gulf Studies is only two years old, it will soon become the most important center in the world,” said the Sharjah Ruler. “We have three million pages of documents from English and other sources in our archives, and we are constantly increasing this number. We have most of the documents pertaining to Gulf studies from the French, German, and English archives as well as all of the Hague documents. Our archives also contain important documents relating to the

region from the Delhi and Mumbai archives in India. I myself have been working for the past 15 years on the Portuguese archives. So as I said, this center will occupy a very important place in the future where documents, books, and maps on the Gulf region are concerned,” he added.

His Highness also briefed the visiting scholars on various aspects of the physical and political history of the Gulf region. “The Gulf was called by many names in the past, including Sea of Persia,

# Center for Gulf Studies, says Sharjah Ruler

Arabian Gulf, or Persian Gulf. I really like to call it the Green Gulf," he said. "After their arrival, it was the British who were the first to conduct a survey of the region. Unlike other foreign powers, the British maps and documents changed the names of the Gulf depending on who these documents were addressing. In some maps it is the Arabian Gulf and in others the Persian Gulf," he said.

Concluding his address, His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan thanked the delegates for coming to the conference and hoped that their stay in Sharjah would be a fruitful and pleasant one. Over 40 leading scholars from littoral states, as well as Europe and the US, attended the three-day conference.

The opening session of the event was also attended by Abdul Rahman Al Jarwan, the Advisor at the Sharjah Amiri Court; Obaid Al Qaseer Chairman of the Sharjah City Municipal Council; Dr. Amr Abdel-Hamid, Advisor to His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah on Higher Education; Ali Al Merri, Director General of Dr. Sultan Al Qassimi Center for Gulf Studies; Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor of American University of Sharjah; Dr. Mamdouh Sami, Chancellor of the University of Sharjah; Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs, AUS; Dr. John Mosbo, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, AUS; Ali Shuhaimy, Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management, AUS; as well as other senior University officials from AUS, Sharjah University City, and the Government of Sharjah.

Addressing the opening session of the conference, Dr. Peter Heath said that this conference was taking place at a timely moment in the history of American University of Sharjah. "Currently, as part of its strategic planning process, AUS is carefully scrutinizing how best to chart its progress toward developing substantial programs of basic and applied research. We are active in seeking the resources—human, financial and institutional—that we will need to support centers of excellence and their research programs. We are also actively working to identify strategic partners for this endeavor here and abroad. With the Center of Gulf Studies right next door to us, it is natural that in the years to come Gulf studies will become one of our points of research focus," he said.

"Our new emphasis on research occurs at a timely moment. The research environment in the UAE

overall is presently undergoing a transformation. His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi has developed an ambitious project to create a number of high-quality research institutes in University City. Similarly, projects aimed at increasing the capacity for research and development are occurring in other Emirates. And just this past year, the UAE Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research launched the National Research Foundation, which has an annual program for funding individual and group research projects. In addition, a number of AUS faculty members this year have received a total of over two million dirhams in research grants from the Emirates Foundation," the chancellor added. Gary Sick, Executive Director of Gulf/2000, Columbia University, also addressed the opening session of the conference and thanked His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan for his patronage and support. He said that one of Gulf/2000's aims was to bring people from around the world together and he hoped that this event would do just that. He also hoped that the papers presented at the conference would take shape as the project's fifth publication.

Convener and Deputy Director of Gulf/2000 Dr. Lawrence Potter said that Columbia University is a great American institution of higher learning, and it was fitting that its first collaboration in the region was with AUS, which set high standards for academia in the region. "I hope this connection we are establishing will prosper and lead to exchanges of students and faculty in the future," he added.

"We are particularly pleased to co-host a conference with Columbia University on the ongoing importance of the Gulf, its people and its maritime orientation," said Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, AUS, echoing reciprocal sentiments.

A dozen commissioned papers on the Gulf in the 19th and 20th centuries were presented and fully discussed by the participants at the event. The first day was devoted to examining the historiography of the Gulf from the point of view of Arab, Persian and Western writers. The second day focused on the port cities of the Gulf, which have played a critical role in its history and in connecting it to the outside world. The final panel was an exploration of Gulf identity and what it means, as discussed by both academic experts and students from AUS.



# AUS Career Fair 2009 Establishes AED 2 Million Pioneer Scholarship Fund



Under the patronage of His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Mohammed Bin Sultan Al Qassimi, Crown Prince and Deputy Ruler of Sharjah, His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Ahmed Bin Sultan Al Qassimi, Chairman of the Sharjah Commerce and Tourism Development Authority, inaugurated the American University of Sharjah's (AUS) Career Fair on April 6, at the University's Sports Complex

The annual event was organized by the University's Office of Development and Alumni Affairs and brought together local, regional, and international companies, with 68 corporate sponsors and private, semi-government and government organizations keen to recruit AUS students as full-time employees and/or interns.

Chancellor Heath indicated that the AED 1 million generated from corporate sponsorship of the 2009 Career Fair will be used to establish a Pioneer Scholarship Fund. The funds will be matched with another AED 1 million through the generosity of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, Ruler of Sharjah and President of AUS. The Pioneer Scholarship Fund was established in recognition of the University's 10th anniversary, and functions as a matching grant program whereby His Highness matches donations made by private contributors and groups to create scholarships

for students who excel academically and are in need of financial assistance.

"This fair is an important event for us," said Chancellor Heath. "Bringing to campus representatives from the leading corporations and research institutions in the Gulf marks the culmination of months of intensive effort. Students welcome the chance to explore directly the nature of various career paths. They benefit from the overview of professional opportunities that are assembled in this fair," he added.

"And we very much welcome our participants from the business and public sectors. This event enables them to meet and to interact directly with our graduating seniors...AUS's approach to education is to foster the development of well-rounded individuals who are able to solve problems and who assume their responsibility to become productive members of the wider community.

We believe that such individuals have much to offer to any corporation or governmental entity in that they use their knowledge and skills to further the mission and values of any enterprise that they join," said Chancellor Heath.

Some of the 68 organizations participating at this year's event included Mubadala, Masdar, Crescent Petroleum Company, Al Habtoor Engineering, Sharjah Golf and Shooting Club, Olayan Finance Group, Al Khorafi Group, General Electric (GE), Petrofac, Al Fardan Group, and many others.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, said that almost 1,000 AUS students from the GCC and beyond will graduate this year in business, communication, engineering, architecture and design, as well as in the full spectrum of the arts and sciences. "These graduates combine the best in academic and multicultural backgrounds to realize immediate success in the Gulf business context. We have found that the AUS Career Fair accrues dividends well in excess of the investment in the day's activities... and are pleased to have so many of the leading corporations in the region on the AUS campus to bring this collaboration between industry and university to fruition as a mutually beneficial partnership," said Dr. Mourtada-Sabbah. "This event is very helpful as it provides students with an opportunity to meet with a whole host of potential employers all present at one venue. It also gives us an idea of what the market is like and what skills are in demand," said an AUS student visiting the fair.

Mohamed Khamis, School of Business and Management alumnus 2007, commented, "As a graduate of AUS I am proud to take part in the Career Fair and offer assistance to our fresh graduates in finding the right job. AUS has provided the marketplace with qualified and talented graduates over the years, and we at KPMG are always excited to bring as many as we can on board."

Maher Al Khalidi, a graduate of the School of Architecture and Design, stated, "I have the pleasure of attending this fair both as a graduate of AUS and as a representative of the architecture firm SHAPE. AUS continues to play a major role in such challenging economic times, making positive contributions and bringing opportunities together on its campus. Aside from business networking opportunities, the Career Fair helps build a society of proactive members and encourages a 'Let's do it' culture."

Rami Jaber, a graduate of the College of Engineering, said, "As an alumnus of AUS I believe that it is particularly important to maintain a connection on a personal level to help future graduates better understand what to expect from today's markets." Ali

Al Suwaidi, a graduate of the School of Business and Management, said this event will help both companies and students communicate and interact to explore work environment challenges and opportunities.

Present at the opening ceremony along with Chancellor Heath were Dr. John Mosbo, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs; Dr. Moza Al Shehhi, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; and other senior University officials including deans and faculty members as well as a steady flow of students from all AUS schools and colleges.

### **A few participants commented as follows:**

"Being a leading business development and investment company in Abu Dhabi, Mubadala is always looking to hire top quality graduates and AUS is a natural place for us to find these talents," **Dr. Zuheir Jarkas, Senior Advisor for Learning at Mubadala.**

"Al Rokham L.L.C. Al Habtoor Marble was founded in 1975 and headquartered in Jebel Ali Industrial Ali, where our stockyard and office space is spread over 200,000 square feet. Over the years we have managed to not only become the longest marble and stone specialist in the country we are also recognized amongst our peers as the utmost professionals and as leaders in our field. We have executed the most prestigious projects in the UAE, such as Burj Al Arab, Emirates Towers, Emirates Palace, Atlantis and Dubai airport. Accordingly, we are very glad to participate in the American University of Sharjah Career Fair and we will support the university through the training of students," **Dr. Kasem Al Arouk, General Manager, Al Rokham L.L.C. Al Habtoor Marble.**

"The career fair is a good arena for young graduates to open up their interests as it provides them with lots of thought and exposure. We thank you for this opportunity to meet young graduates and also thank you for all the arrangements and your time and effort. We hope to be a part of future career fairs and wish all the AUS alumni the best for their future careers"

### **Crescent Petroleum Team.**

"It gives the Grand Millennium Dubai great pleasure to be associated with the career fair organized by AUS. Our mission is to be among the top 10 leading city hotels in New Dubai Area and we are going to achieve this by focusing on our strategy among which our HR strategy is to build relationships with the community in order to receive fresh talent, develop and retain them to become future leaders in Grand style" **Lida Mosadegh, Marketing and Communications Manager, Grand Millennium Hotel, Dubai.**



# Asala Performs at Special AUS Concert to Generate Funds for Scholarships



Asala Nasri, the celebrated singer acclaimed throughout the Middle East and wherever Arab speakers have ventured, performed a benefit concert at University City Hall, Sharjah on Friday, May 29.

She sang her repertoire of top hits to a packed-house audience of 1500. Sixteen musicians accompanied Asala from Damascus, Cairo and other cities. AUS seniors about to graduate, alumni, and parents were thrilled at the performance.

The evening event was organized by the Alumni Association of AUS to generate funds for scholarships. Indeed, all revenues from the concert went to the AUSAA Scholarship Fund.

The concert benefited from sponsors who have joined into a strong business/industry partnership with AUS to further quality education.

First among them, Mr. Ali Al Fardan, Vice Chairman of Al Fardan Group, sponsored the performance of Asala and her team. The Sharjah Theatre Group also helped coordinate the event. Du, The Kanoo Group, and the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry provided generous sponsorships. All stated that it takes a whole community to provide state-of-the-art education for its most worthy students.









# News and Views from Our Alumni - Khalid Mezaina

*1. Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines (this is a free “space” including hobbies and anything else you would like to share about yourself)?*

My name is Khalid Mezaina, I am an Emirati who graduated from AUS in 2006, majoring in Visual Communications. I am currently working at the Sharjah Biennial. Outside work, I focus on enhancing my talents as an illustrator/artist by taking part in local and/or international exhibitions to get my work noticed. Other interests I have include: music, comic books and carrying a sketchbook with me wherever I go, to sketch memories I never want to forget.

*2. What is the title of your current position and what are your current responsibilities? A little more broadly, what does a typical work day schedule look like?*

At the Sharjah Biennial, I am the in-house graphic designer and I am responsible for various design tasks. I am also the Artists-in-Residence program coordinator. The program helps visiting artists to successfully produce their projects locally. Also, during the period of getting the Biennial show up and ready, I was the volunteers' coordinator (finding students from various colleges to assist us with setting up the show) and the project's coordinator for certain art projects. So as you can see, a typical work day is never the same since everyday brings something new.

*3. In a few words, how would you describe the value that your AUS education has brought you in general and to accomplishing the goals in your current position? What role do you see AUS playing in the UAE as the university adds more graduate programs and possibly some doctoral level courses of study?*

I'm happy to say that my education at AUS was beneficial to me since I am confident that my ability to distinguish between what makes a good design and what doesn't is pretty accurate. My education has allowed me to grow as a designer and to use my knowledge to help create good designs. It also prepared me to work in an office environment and to get my work noticed in the real world. As a university in the UAE, I think AUS

is playing an integral role as a leading educational institution in the Arab world. Therefore, by adding more graduate/doctoral level courses, it will help push its integrity even further as a university with high standards. It also provides a good education closer to home for many Arab students, instead of having to travel abroad in order to get high caliber education.

*4. What is your motto in life?*

Never give up on the good times!

*5. What was the most memorable book that you recently read? And what film has made the most lasting impression on you?*

Book: *All My Friends Are Superheroes* by Andrew Kaufman. Film: *Central Station* written and directed by Walter Salles

*6. What advice you would like to give to fellow AUS alumni?*

Make sure to be in a field you're passionate about and have no regrets. The key to a satisfied life is to do what makes you happy, and to be around people and in an environment that makes you happy.

*7. What advice would you give to current AUS undergraduate and/or graduate students?*

Never forget to follow your passion and make sure to be in a field in which you are happy. Study what you're passionate about and you'll never regret it. And while studying – find who your real friends are, and together, make it an experience you'll never forget!

*8. If you were to recommend an AUS education to other members of your community that would be because....*

It's a university with a strong education system in the UAE.

# AUS Graduate Engineering Student Draws Praise for her Artwork

A graduate student in the electrical engineering program at AUS is drawing praise and appreciation for her first painting exhibition currently on show in the Rotunda of the AUS Main Building. Entitled "The Spark," the exhibition was on display between September 13 -17, 2009.

The exhibited work comprises 10 paintings of the artist Maryam Shabafrooz, with more than half of them featuring women in various poses. "The poses in my paintings are the most important thing to me," explained Shabafrooz. "All of the subjects that I have painted are real women," she added. The exhibition consists of work done in a variety of mediums including charcoal, color pastel and acrylic.



Shabafrooz, who hails from Shiraz, Iran, received her bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from Shiraz University. After working for almost two years in Iran, she decided to pursue her master's degree in electrical engineering at AUS.

She started painting professionally after her graduation and



participated in two group exhibitions in Iran in 2007. She developed her craft by learning new techniques in Iran. Her first painting, called La Pieta, inspired by Michelangelo's famous work in Rome, is also on display at the exhibition.

According to the artist, the motive behind the exhibition was to gain recognition and seriously pursue a career in art. "I want to learn from other artists and start connecting with the art world,"





# AUS and SCCI to Set Up New Center to Develop HR in the Country



AUS and the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) will work together to establish a new center for the training and development of human resources in the country. The two organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to that effect, on April 20, at a special ceremony held in the Main Building on campus

The agreement aims to see the two organizations working together to establish the Sharjah Training and Development Center, with the SCCI providing and allocating facilities and training equipment for the center while the School of Business and Management (SBM) at AUS undertaking all training and development. "This is the first time that an agreement of this nature has been signed in the UAE," said Dr. Peter Heath, at the signing ceremony. "I am very pleased and would like to thank the SCCI on this special occasion. This MOU will result in a host of mutual benefits for both our organizations. However, I would just like to emphasize three points among them: it provides us with a great opportunity to place our commitment in the development of human resources in the private sector of the emirate of Sharjah as well as the UAE; our faculty will greatly benefit in interacting with professionals and gaining knowledge of 'real world' problems in the region; and hopefully our students will benefit through opportunities of internship and other employment," added Dr. Heath.

"Training programs today have acquired great importance as a result of the fast development witnessed in the education sector and the important role these programs play in supporting economic and comprehensive development in the region," said Ahmed Mohammed Al Midfa, Chairman of the Board of Directors, SCCI. "That is why we were keen to have this strategic partnership with one of the most important academic institutions in the region for providing the means for individuals in the various business sectors in the Emirates to improve their skills and enhance their potential. This agreement

comes as a result of our belief in the role education plays in overcoming challenges that may hinder economic, social and environmental development. It compliments our agreements and initiatives in the field of human and leadership potential as the main factor in our vision which aims at strengthening the business and investment communities in the Emirates," he concluded.

The aim of the new center will be to offer training services to individuals and specialists from the corporate sector in technical and administrative fields, develop business leaders, foster the labor capabilities in the emirate of Sharjah, and enhance its reputation as a center for business and culture. It will provide a wide number of training services, including courses and programs conforming to international quality standards; consultancy services and programs addressing the needs of the business community in the emirate; and public courses on non-business topics offered to members of SCCI as well as the business community throughout the country.

The MOU was signed by Chancellor Peter Heath and Ahmed Mohammed Al Midfa on behalf of their respective organizations. Also present on the occasion were Hussain Mohammed Al Mahmoudi, Director-General of SCCI; Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs AUS; Maryam Saif Al Shamsi, Assistant to the Director-General for Human Resources and Financial Information, SCCI; R. Malcolm Richards, Dean of SBM, AUS; and Nada Mourtada-Sabah, Assistant to the Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, AUS; as well as other senior officials from AUS and SCCI.

# AUS Announces Winners of Prestigious Sheikh Khalifa Scholarships

American University of Sharjah (AUS) announced the names of four outstanding students who have been declared the recipients of the prestigious Sheikh Khalifa Scholarships at a special awards ceremony held recently at the University. Ali Shekofti, Rami Alotaibi, Reem Amer and Aya Waly El Din Sabry were announced as winners of the scholarships. The scholarships, which were launched in March 2007, are a financial award provided to juniors and seniors for study at AUS.

These merit-based awards, which are awarded annually, recognize academic excellence, leadership potential, service to community and talent both in the student's field of study, as well as in extracurricular activities. Each college/school submits candidates to the Office of Academic Affairs, and from this applicant pool a university committee selects students from each college/school to be awarded a scholarship. The scholarship funds come from the revenues of a Dh.10 million donation by His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, to AUS during a visit to the Sharjah University City in 2005.



## News and Views from our Alumni - Melissa Bayik

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I graduated from AUS not only with a BS, but also with the confidence to cope with life's challenges and the strength of having an alumni body behind me. I am fortunate enough to be leading a career that inspires me everyday. Being a graphic designer, I love the balance of being both an artist and working in the corporate world. Bringing my passion for design, art, interiors, retail, and fashion to my work makes my job a real pleasure!

For the past three years, I worked in a leading global brand agency: The Brand Union. My job was to make brand strategies to life, and my most notable work included developing The Harbour Hotel, Counter Culture Deli Café, and Tango brands. Recently, I changed paths to venture out on my own as an independent designer, putting together designs and branding projects for clients and agencies.

My educational experience was both inside the classroom and outside, where I took advantage of the extra-curricular opportunities. Stepping out of my comfort zone and learning to fail and pick myself up again, gave me the courage to pursue my aspirations. I received an outstanding educational experience that is tailored for the region. I got the opportunity to appreciate Islamic art and history, and along the way, made beautiful friendships that will last me a lifetime. In the future I would love to create Arabic calligraphy!

As AUS continues to grow, building more graduate programs and introducing doctoral level courses, it will bring thought-leadership, research, and innovation in the UAE to a whole new level. It will persevere to contribute to the nation's ongoing development while maintaining its position as the most prestigious university in the Gulf.

Finally, I am very proud to belong to such a strong international network of alumni. Just like a second family, we should look out for each other and connect so that we can grow more powerful, strengthening the University's reputation, which in turn benefits us. As for the students today, I encourage them to be curious, get involved and have fun! It's okay to make mistakes. Take this time to experiment, learn and discover, and make the best out of your education.



# AUS to Provide Executive Training for Bukhatir Group

American University of Sharjah (AUS) and the Bukhatir Group, one of the leading business entities in the country, signed a contract for a six-month executive education course to be conducted by faculty from the AUS School of Business and Management (SBM) for a select cohort of managers from the Bukhatir Group. The signing ceremony took place on May 14 at the AUS campus.

Dr. Peter Heath, signed the contract on behalf of the University while Salah Bukhatir, Vice Chairman and CEO of Bukhatir Group, represented the business group. The course will focus on leadership skills and management techniques needed in today's business world. "Our university has always believed in responding to and serving the needs of the business community," said Chancellor Heath. He said that this agreement will further strengthen the bonds between AUS and industry. Salem Al Qaseer, Vice Chancellor for Public Affairs; R. Malcolm Richards, Dean of SBM; and Nada Mourtada-Sabah, Assistant to the Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs; were also present on the occasion.



## News and Views from our Alumni - Weaam El Ataya

*1. Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines (this is a free "space" including hobbies and anything else you would like to share about yourself)?*

I am a graduate of International Studies, currently pursuing a career in public relations. I enjoy painting, writing poetry, traveling, and shooting.

*2. What is the title of your current position and what are your current responsibilities? A little more broadly, what does a typical work day schedule look like?*

I am an Account Executive at Gulf Hill and Knowlton, Abu Dhabi. On a typical day I focus on media relations, collateral development, and other components of corporate communications. I am also the Director of the Abu Dhabi office for the UN organization: US Federation for Middle East Peace, a nongovernmental organization. One of my objectives is to collaborate with local organizations that promote awareness of women's issues, youth, and peace initiatives.

*3. In a few words, how would you describe the value that your AUS education has brought you in general and to accomplishing the goals in your current position? What role do you see AUS playing in the UAE as the university adds more graduate programs and possibly some doctoral level courses of study?*

AUS has helped me become well rounded, academically and socially. It has a multi-cultural student body and provides strong and diverse academic programs that allow students to adapt to almost any organization or corporation globally. I believe AUS has the potential to fulfill its destiny in becoming a leading educational institution regionally, locally, and globally.

*4. What is your motto in life?*

One will never know what they are good at unless they challenge themselves. Have no doubt in your abilities.

*5. What was the most memorable book that you recently read? And what film has made the most lasting impression on you?*

The most memorable book I read was *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khalid Hosseini, which tells the story of life in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion, the struggles and the perseverance of hope and the strength that one develops under these circumstances. The film that definitely made the most lasting impression on me was *Slum Dog Millionaire* it was absolutely brilliant and reflected the simple yet magnificent truth of life in the slums of India.



*6. What advice you would like to give to fellow AUS alumni?*

Pursue careers that help you grow in every aspect.

*7. What advice would you give to current AUS undergraduate and/or graduate students?*

Have a clear focus on your career path, by experimenting, researching, visiting firms, doing internships and training programs because they definitely benefited me in defining my career goal.

*8. If you were to recommend an AUS education to other members of your community that would be because....*

It is the best quality of education that will equip you for the competitive corporate world we live in.

# Engineering Open Day Enhances AUS Outreach Efforts

Students, academics, and representatives from the engineering industry attended a day-long College of Engineering (CEN) Open Day held at AUS yesterday, April 28, at the Main Building on campus. The keynote address at the opening session was delivered by Riad T. Sadek, Chairman of Al Habtoor Leighton Group and one of the UAE's leading figures in the field of engineering.



"We must show commitment to the society we live in, cater to its needs and become an integral part of it," said Sadek. "Successful engineers should not just be individuals with hard hats and dirty boots; they should be much more than that. A successful engineer should have an interest in and excel in other fields as well, just as Leonardo DaVinci and Michaelangelo did," he added.

He urged engineering students to better themselves by reading widely and to make books their lifelong companions if they wish to become leaders in their chosen profession. He also said that learning through observation played an important role in one's progress. "I would also like to stress how crucial it is that you love what you do; it is extremely important for your future success that you only take up a job that you love. And lastly, believe in yourself and in your ability to succeed," he concluded.

Speaking on the occasion, Chancellor Peter Heath, said that this was an important annual event at AUS as CEN was one of the university's most active and dynamic components. "Engineers always hold a special place at AUS, for they keep the purveyors of the broad ideas about society well grounded in the reality of accomplishing the task at hand," he said. Engineers, he added, had gone forth as the first graduates of AUS to conceptualize and construct the very foundation of Emirati society. "While the Emirates receive innovative constructions, the cutting-edge designs and concepts are communicated back to the faculty in CEN and then

on to you, the students, who will soon join the ranks of the distinguished engineering alumni," he said. "It is our mission to train the next generation of society builders to serve the development needs of the GCC countries, and we will actively and proudly continue to do so," he concluded.

Dr. Yousuf Al Assaf, Dean of CEN, also welcomed all present and thanked the faculty, staff and industry partners for playing their crucial role in CEN's success. He briefly shared with the audience some of the many national, regional, and international accolades that CEN faculty members and students have won over the past year. "CEN is moving forward to fulfill the University's mission by reach out to its community through specialized training, consultation, and applied research. The college has taken constructive steps to achieve its goals through its seven master's degree programs in engineering and its outreach program," he said.

The Open Day, organized under the theme "Dream it, Engineer it," also included a presentation by Yousuf A. Bastaki, Project Director, Emal. Various leading companies set up displays and stalls in the Rotunda of the AUS Main Building. The day also incorporated students' project displays and demonstrations, engineering competitions, and the dean's convocation. The opening session was attended by deans and other senior university officials, faculty members, students and representatives of various leading industries taking part in the event. It was organised by CEN and the



## Chancellor Peter Heath – CEN Open Day Opening Remarks

Engineers have created and will continue to create the infrastructure for the dynamic UAE. Your country is able to draw the world to its seaports and airports and increasingly serve as the doorway to the wider Middle East for fashioning and distributing ideas and goods. In short, the Emirates has assumed its strategic role in the region and the world through the skills and visions of the engineering community. The engineers always hold a special place at AUS, for they keep the purveyors of the broad ideas about society well grounded in the reality of accomplishing the task at hand.

Indeed, engineers have gone forth as the first graduates of AUS to conceptualize and construct the very foundation of Emirati society. But innovation on the drafting board and its application in concrete, steel and glass is a two-way street. While the Emirates receives your innovative constructions, the cutting edge designs and concepts are communicated back to the faculty in the School of Engineering and then onto you, the students, who will soon join the ranks of the distinguished engineering alumni. The alumni, thus, also have the rare opportunity to select among those graduates those who will carry their designs to the next step of elaboration and innovate on their own. And the alumni already established in firms are like experienced “older siblings” for those of you on the threshold of entering the world of work.

AUS recently entered a new phase in building the relationship with our hosts in the surrounding cities. AUS educates its students to further the goals of industry and business of the private sector. It is the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs which keeps the College of Engineering and the other schools and colleges connected to the alumni and the business world. Alumni and friends of the university are drawn back to your alma mater through the many activities of the ODAA to support education and employment of our graduating seniors.

Towards this end, as I am sure all of you are well aware, the American University of Sharjah through its Office of Development has already welded durable linkages between AUS and the private sector in the UAE and other Gulf countries. It is our mission to train the next generation of society builders to serve the development needs of the GCC countries and we will actively and proudly continue to do so.

## Mr. Riad T. Sadek's Remarks

Mr. Riad Sadek, Chairman of Al Habtoor Leighton Group, was invited as the keynote speaker for the CEN Open Day. He offered the following remarks:

I am delighted to be invited to offer a few comments to the undergraduate majors of the College of Engineering today. I will focus my thoughts on leadership, for in your capacity to solve urgent engineering or processing needs, you will have

to amass individuals from many walks of life, who have different worldview and personalities. This requires effective team building.

In addition to the aspects of leadership that may come immediately to mind, such as understanding the “ins and outs” of business, so that a project under your direction earns sufficient profit, I would consider that integrity is the top characteristic of leadership. That is, you are a person of your word. Integrity is necessary for earning the respect of those who you lead so that your comments about how their work may be improved will be taken to heart. That is, your comments motivate them to achieve higher standards, so that the overall team effort improves. Leadership also clearly requires technical expertise to bring together the specialized skills of many individuals, each to complete their small part of the job. In any large scale project, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Effective leaders piece together how the various technical parts articulate into the finished product. Engineers share the language and common culture of their fields within the wider umbrella of mechanical or civil engineering, etc. But team building also requires some tolerance and the ability to see the world as each individual on your team may see it. This is a “people skill” not one learned in textbooks but in the real experiences of the day-to-day getting the job done.

Leaders in engineering must also be aware of political needs and considerations of the country in which they work. And quite importantly, a leader must have a vision of where the engineering and social needs are heading in future decades, for your project must serve the needs of people two or more generations from now. This requires anticipating a future that is not in the blueprints, but is something that the leader has an intuition of. All of this is hard to fathom, if you are a 20 year old student or graduate, striving to excel in coursework to land that first job, which leads to a second one and so on up the trajectory of a career. However, remember, Rome was not built in a day.

I offer one more word of encouragement. AUS engineers are distinguished not only by superb training in the technical and theoretical aspects of engineering, but are also well schooled in the aspects of understanding society and its needs. This also relates to the broad vision of engineering satisfying social needs. Such social understandings and perspectives are provided in the requirements in the social sciences and humanities that you take at AUS. While at this juncture in your education you may deem coursework in sociology or political science unnecessary, actually it broadens your leadership “reach.” Eventually you become the leader who “wears many hats” to pull together many diverse viewpoints and personalities into an effective project and to continue to make an active and most valuable contribution to the Emirati and Gulf society that you live and evolve in—but also, I am confident, to the wider world society.



# Graduating Class Honored at Commencement Luncheon



The Office of Development and Alumni Affairs organized a luncheon in honor of the Spring 2009 Graduating Class. The event was attended by AUS Trustee Hamid D. Jafar. On this festive occasion, Chancellor Heath offered the following remarks to the AUS graduates:

I have the great pleasure to speak with you one last time as AUS students before you receive your diplomas on Saturday and become AUS alumni. Even as you look forward at this moment, you should also take a moment to think about your time here at AUS. When you do so, you will begin to appreciate how the skills, knowledge, and understanding that you have gained here will benefit you in your future activities.

In this rapidly globalizing world of ours, you will find that the specific skills you gained at AUS add value to the workplace. They give you a distinct advantage in your careers. You will see and understand before others the changes taking place around you. This will help you to guide your co-workers to anticipate and master the challenges demanded by the wider market. In sum, your diploma certifies you as an independent thinker and a leader, which is the hallmark of an AUS education.

You are ready to create value through originality. Remember that your ability to solve problems in an original manner comes because you have been trained in an environment which values the importance of fostering

different viewpoints in the classroom, viewpoints which are sometimes offered from different cultural perspectives. You have been introduced by AUS to the "marketplace of ideas." What guides this marketplace of ideas is problem solving. You must seek solutions that work well, knowing full well that these in turn will soon be replaced by solutions that work better.

You also realize that discovering a different and more effective solution, technology, or product must be based on experimentation. This experimentation is premised on first having access to a wide range of ideas, trying them out, and then selecting the one that works best. Your time spent here at AUS in the classroom, debating and evaluating different ideas, examining problems from different perspectives, and analyzing how to overcome challenges, will serve you well in your future activities. Now it is time for you to put the diversity, strength, and high quality of your education to work. You will be surprised at how quickly you acclimate to the work environment and how successful you become in it over the years.

Equally important as solving problems, however, is how we do so. At AUS we emphasize that we all must act in a responsible and ethical way. In Sharjah, the AUS Class of 2009 finds itself on the western edge of Asia at the beginning of what is called Asia's century. A global society is forming that is the counterpart of the global market. We cannot let the guiding aim of the new transnational society be only profit. We must pay attention to the responsibilities we have to society and to our fellow travelers on this globe. The new ideas guiding global society will blend a strong emphasis on innovation and creativity with a renewed understanding of the basic importance of living ethically and in harmony with peoples from different cultures.

Muslim, Hindu and Chinese sages set forth the idea of harmony and balance centuries ago. These great thinkers knew that strong values and a firm grasp of morality are an intrinsic part of the operating instructions for us on planet earth. The futurist, engineer and inventor Buckminster Fuller, said that spaceship earth was so







ingeniously designed that no one had a clue until several centuries ago that we were even on one, flying through the universe at a million kilometers an hour and with no need for seatbelts. There will be plenty of room on this space craft for the world's population, provided that we learn how to live in harmony with one another. Your AUS education will allow you to help create this harmony among a healthy economy, a well-functioning society and an earth whose resources are sustainable. Reaching this goal is the challenge of your generation.

Remember, you will soon be alumni of AUS. Your Alumni Association and the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs will be your first point of contact to network with your classmates and other alumni. This is a proud moment for the AUS Alumni Association since we are just now announcing the members of its Founding Board. Like yourself, these members of the AUSA Founding Board have been educated to seek solutions;

you will benefit from getting to know them. As part of its many activities, the AUS Alumni Association also serves as a professional organization of individuals who can help one another in the many tasks required of your careers. Make use of the many resources that it offers to each of you.

I congratulate you on your graduation and welcome you to putting your fine education to work and to the next step in the AUS identity, your Alumni Association, and your point of anchor at AUS, the Office of Development and Alumni Affairs. I know that you will master the challenges ahead and succeed with great distinction.

On the occasion of the Commencement Luncheon, Dana Gas, a long-term corporate partner of AUS, presented laptops to graduating seniors who excelled in their education at AUS and graduated with honors.



# News and Views from our Alumni - Ali Hassan Al Suwaidi



*1. Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines (this is a free “space” including hobbies and anything else you would like to share about yourself)?*

My name is Ali Hassan AlSuwaidi. I am a 36 year old married man, blessed with four children. I hold a Bachelors degree in electrical engineering from Toledo University, Toledo, Ohio (USA) and an MBA from AUS with 3.58 GPA. I like sports in general and reading management and business related books. I am a team builder with strong communication skills who is able to create synergy within a team. My approach to achieving set goals and targets is that authorities are taken and not given.

*2. What is the title of your current position and what are your current responsibilities? A little more broadly, what does a typical work day schedule look like?*

My current title is Executive Director –Operations at Imdaad-Dubai World. Our company is one of the leading facilities management industry companies in the Middle East ([www.imdaad.ae](http://www.imdaad.ae)). My current responsibilities/achievements can be summarized as follows: I analyze and oversee facilities management operations, project management and consultancy business units, existing business gaps and limitations. I also put forward and implement the required improvements to ensure the provision of robust and reliable service management options. I lead operations, including consultancy and projects business units in decision making and penetration to acquire targeted market share growth. I ensure the P&L of all concerned business units is healthy. I set up the organization's long term plans aligned to lead the industry in providing professional high standards of business delivery. I am in charge of transformations of Q&EHS departments from cost center to profit center by setting up short and long term strategic plans to offer the market unique solutions that will give the organization a competitive advantage. I build up capability within the organization to enable the organization to capture more shares and expand in the potential markets in the GCC and Middle East market. I build up customer focus solutions that will build the organization as a global brand. A typical work day schedule includes: Meeting with my direct subordinates or talking to them by phone to assist them in making decisions with regard to existing/potential clients and related internal needs. Meeting with my direct supervisor, the CEO, to provide an update on certain issues and provide needed feedback to take further decisions. Leading the business development team and presenting our organizational capabilities to various potential clients. Meeting with existing clients and customers. Representing the company as spokesperson with all PR and media for most events.

*3. In a few words, how would you describe the value that your AUS education has brought you in general and to accomplishing the goals in your current position? What role do you see AUS playing in the UAE as the university adds more graduate programs and possibly some doctoral level courses of study?*

I completed my MBA at AUS in 2003. One of the critical goals that I have achieved from my AUS education is improving my interpersonal and communications skills. As a result, I was able to build up team spirit for my subordinates, create synergy, and deliver beyond expectations as a team leader and individual. Another value I attained from my AUS education is the ability to quickly build up the holistic understanding of business components enabling the team to set up the needed drive for organizational success. Furthermore, I gained the ability to overcome challenges and enjoy my time, ensuring that creativity and problem solving skills are very important elements to utilize. The role of AUS in the future is very vital due to the fact that education is considered one of the cornerstones of the UAE's 2015 strategic plan. AUS has started this stage but there is still a long way to go. Adding more graduate programs and doctoral level courses of study will position AUS as a leader within the education sector. To effectively introduce needed programs, AUS will need to build relationships with private and government entities within the UAE. Research of various business industries within the UAE, the GCC and the Middle East is another factor that will need to be introduced in addition to more practical programs. This will eventually allow AUS to be an active partner in implementing the Government Education strategy.

*4. What is your motto in life?*

My motto in life is simply “Together We Can”. We can use the power of individuals and the whole team to achieve our goals as a team and as individuals.

*5. What was the most memorable book that you recently read? And what film has made the most lasting impression on you?*

*Total Leadership* is the most memorable book I have read recently. The film that left the most lasting impression on me is *Rocky*.

*6. What advice you would like to give to fellow AUS alumni?*

I would tell them, if “you stop learning, you stop leading”.

*7. What advice would you give to current AUS undergraduate and/or graduate students?*

Trust your ability and never give up, as education is the path to success

*8. If you were to recommend an AUS education to other members of your community that would be because....*

Quality and consistent education.



# News and Views From Our Alumni - Nasser Al Jurf



*1. Would you please introduce yourself in a few lines (this is a free "space" including hobbies and anything else you would like to share about yourself)?*

My name is Nasser Al Jurf; I am a Jordanian, born on January 21, 1981 currently living in Qatar. I am a civil engineer and completed my masters in engineering systems management with a construction management concentration at AUS in the spring of 2007. My hobbies include watching movies and reading magazines about the latest news in construction or technology. The two years I spent at AUS were amazing in terms both of my studies and working experience. AUS supported me and helped me to reach my dream by giving me the honor of working as a Teaching Assistant with a tuition waiver. Moreover, during the years I spent at AUS, I developed a lot of friendships with both graduates and undergraduates, which I will never forget.

*2. What is the title of your current position and what are your current responsibilities? A little more broadly, what does a typical work day schedule look like?*

I work for Gulf Design Concept, which is an engineering consulting office, as a project engineer. For the time being, I am responsible for projects worth 250M Qatari riyals. My usual working day starts at 8:00 a.m. when I begin my morning project site visits according to the schedule I prepare the day before. At each project site my major concerns are quality of work, safety at the site, and the project status. For project quality, every activity regarding the project has to meet project standards, specifications, approved drawings and, of course, QCS (Qatar construction specifications). For work safety, each project activity has to comply with the project's safety plan, civil defense requirements, and environmental requirements. For project status, daily project monitoring is necessary to ensure that the project is within the plan, and any negative deviation from the program has to be studied and discussed for suitable remedies to be certain the project is back on track. The morning round finishes at 1:00 p.m. The afternoon shift starts at 4:30 and finishes at 7:30 p.m. During this shift

my major role is to conduct meetings and finalize all paper work related to these projects such as: approving material samples that will be used at the site according to the project specifications, reply to contractors' letters and requests for clarifications, approve shop drawings, and any other related paper work. After that, my long work day ends and my private life starts. Therefore, when AUS invited us for an alumni dinner in Qatar, I excused myself from my evening shift just to attend it and share this event with my colleagues.

*3. In a few words, how would you describe the value that your AUS education has brought you in general and to accomplishing the goals in your current position? What role do you see AUS playing in the UAE as the university adds more graduate programs and possibly some doctoral level courses of study?*

My AUS educational experience has added three important characteristics to me: freedom of thinking, self confidence, and creativity. These three things have boosted my career. Moreover, the level of education at AUS and the services the university provides are one of a kind, and any graduate student would dream to have these facilities. Moreover, AUS is one of the leading universities in the UAE and the Gulf, because of its unique programs rarely found in other universities in the region. For example, when I started searching for a university that offered an MS in construction management, only three institutions were offering this program in the region, and AUS was one of them. I hope that AUS will extend their programs to start offering doctoral degrees and I will be one of their students for sure.

*4. What is your motto in life?*

I have two mottos. The first one expresses how I deal with life and the second one expresses how I deal with the future. The first one is, "keep your smile on your face and always be optimistic". Because, your smile has a magical effect on you and the people around you. The second one is, "dream of your future" because without dreams Abbas Bin Fernas' dream to fly, we would never have been able to fly airplanes. However, dreaming alone is not enough to make everything true, because your dreams are your targets you have to work very hard to make your dreams come true. With these two mottos nothing will be impossible in your life and you will always retain high self esteem.

*5. What was the most memorable book that you recently read? And what film has made the most lasting impression on you?*

The most memorable book I have recently read is *Six Thinking Hats* by Edward de Bono. I enjoyed it because he introduced a very simple technique that can organize your or a group of people's way of thinking by encouraging parallel thinking, and encouraging full

spectrum thinking. I advise everyone to read it. On the other hand, for the most lasting impression from a film, I actually have two films that left lasting impressions. The first one is *The Dark Knight*, which attracted me with its state of the art sound effects and visual effects. They were done so fantastically that they allow the viewer to live the film as though he is at the middle of action. The second film is *Slum Dog Millionaire*. The story of the movie is wonderful and well woven. It discussed a lot of social problems like poverty, religious intolerance, child abuse, and other matters which are critical issues these days. I encourage everybody that didn't see them to watch them.

#### 6. What advice you would like to give to fellow AUS alumni?

My advice to AUS alumni is to keep themselves updated with the latest news in their fields because their educational life does not finish when they finish university; they have to keep learning new things every day. Life is filled with things to be learned, and we always must keep our minds open to learn. Moreover, I would ask each alumni to maintain their connection

with the university and provide their feedback, because we are the only people who can help our university, and our feedback will allow AUS to improve its level of education, which will lead to better recognition for the university and our degrees.

#### 7. What advice would you give to current AUS undergraduate and/or graduate students?

College life always has wonderful moments. These moments you will never forget. Therefore, enjoy your college life, and keep your targets in life clear and in front of you at all times.

#### 8. If you were to recommend an AUS education to other members of your community that would be because....

AUS gave me a premium education with the specialization I wanted, supported me to complete my degree, and allowed me to meet the friends that I will never forget. I think AUS not only develops your education, but it also develops you.

## AUS Faculty, Students and Alumni Participate in Region's Biggest Art Events

**Faculty members, alumni and current students of the School of Architecture and Design (SA&D) at American University of Sharjah (AUS) will be participating this month in two of the biggest and most prestigious art events to be held in the region-the 9th Sharjah Biennial and Art Dubai.**

Held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Dr. Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member and Ruler of Sharjah, the 9th Sharjah Biennial will see seven AUS faculty members, five alumni and a number of student volunteers participate in the event. The Biennial, ranked as one of the most prominent cultural events in the Middle East, has served to connect artists, institutions and organizations and to foster artistic dialogue and exchange. It ran from March 16 to May 16, 2009.

For the third consecutive edition of the Biennial, Mona El-Mousfy, Assistant Professor of Architecture, is serving as the senior architect and exhibition designer. She also participated with artistic director Jack Persekian and curator Isabelle Carlos in the selection of art works for the event's production program. Along with Seth Thompson, Assistant Professor of Design, and Nadia Mounajjed, Assistant Professor of Architecture, El-Mousfy is also organizing a panel discussion entitled "The Politics of Space in a Constructed Identity: The Sharjah Biennial in Context," to be held March 20 at Dar Al Nadwa. *In Absentia*, a monograph of art photography by Tarek

Al-Ghoussein, Associate Professor of Design, will be launched on the opening day of the Biennial, March 16, at Dar Al Nadwa. The book has been designed by Roderick Grant, Assistant Professor of Design.

Lamia Gargash and Reem Al Gaith, two prominent SA&D alumni, are participating artists at the Biennial, while three AUS alumni are part of the event's organizing team. They are Khalid Mezaina, artists-in-residence program coordinator; Farah Al Qedra, interior designer; and Yusra Saleh, architect. Twenty-four fourth-year AUS visual communication students, along with Paul Bantey, Assistant Professor and Head of the Department of Design, and Phil Sheil, Associate Professor of Design, are collaborating with Biennial artist Ahmed Foula on an exquisite corp project entitled *Happy Forever*.

Tarek Al-Ghoussein will also exhibit his work at Art Dubai, which will be held March 18–21. This event will host nearly 70 leading international galleries in addition to a strong program of artist's projects including the launch of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize and the critically acclaimed Global Art Forum: 3. Al-Ghoussein's work at the event will be exhibited with three galleries, namely, The Third Line, Dubai; Art School Palestine/London, UK; and Kalfayan Galleries, Athens, Greece. His book *In Absentia* will be launched on March 21, following the Art Palestine panel to be held at the event.



# AUS ALUMNI Qatar Chapter Sought

Dr. Peter Heath, Chancellor and Dr. Nada Mourtada-Sabbah, Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs, hosted a reception for AUS Alumni residing in Qatar on May 9 at the Sheraton Hotel-Doha. The event marked the second administrative foray abroad to commence new chapters of the AUS Alumni Association. The Alumni Association is planning to build active chapters throughout the Gulf.

Chancellor Heath is in his first year at the helm of AUS. The reception allowed an opportunity for AUS alumni to meet him. Both Chancellor Heath and Vice Chancellor Mourtada-Sabbah presented their plans for initiating the branch of the AUSAA in Doha. The reception drew an enthusiastic gathering of some one hundred alumni who welcomed the new chapter with great acclaim.

The visit also engaged the business community in order to involve them more closely in AUS's partnership with the private sector. As a private university, AUS is in the unique position to add programs, courses,



instructors and research agendas to address specific needs of business and industry. This speaks to a close partnership where each partner supports the needs of the other.

