



AUS holds MathFest for nine Sharakah Schools

March 8, 2015

Over 100 students and teachers from the Sharakah partner schools of American University of Sharjah (AUS) participated at MathFest on March 5, 2015. The event stresses the importance AUS places on encouraging students to become critical thinkers and problem solvers.

Organized by the AUS Office of Enrollment Management in collaboration with the Department of Mathematics and Statistics, the day-long event comprised individual and team competitions for students as well as a team competition for high school math teachers. Mathfest included a 75-minute test that consisted of multiple choice and written questions that each participating student solved individually. The test covered standard math topics from the schools' curricula of up to grade 11, including logic, analytic and plane geometry and basic algebra.

Kevin Mitchel the AUS Interim Provost gave the opening speech welcoming the participants at the university. Ali Shuhaimy, Executive Director of Enrollment Management at AUS, welcomed the students to the event. "I welcome everybody to the second MathFest here at AUS and I look forward to having an entertaining and challenging day with you. This event aims to build bridges and connect with Sharakah schools and seeks to assist students into learning and growing. Our Sharakah program tries to help high school students with their transition into the university life and assist teachers with workshops," he said.

Dr. Hana Sulieman, Head of the AUS Department of Mathematics and Statistics, also welcomed the students and teachers and said that MathFest was an acknowledgement and reward of their abilities in mathematics.

Dr. Abdul Salam Jarrah, Associate Professor of Mathematics and Statistics and Chair of MathFest, said the event was a great initiative to engage with the local community. "It provides a great opportunity to identify the best students and to encourage their math skills and get them interested in perhaps seeking a future in the discipline. Such a festival will identify and

encourage cooperation between AUS and local high schools and I hope MathFest turns into an annual event," he said on the occasion.

Participating schools in the MathFest included Al Nahda National School, Al Rawafed Private School, Liwa International School, Madar International School, International Community School, Al Ma'arifa International Private School, Al Shoula Private School, Sharjah American International School-Sharjah and Sharjah American International School-Dubai.

The student with the highest grade was Zhanru Wang from the Sharjah American International School- Dubai and in second and third place were Rita Hasan of Al Shoula Private School and Rula Mustafa Al Ma'arifa International Private School respectively. The winning school was International Community School. Teachers also competed to solve a 75-minute test. Each question was to be solved using standard math techniques from the high school math curricula and the team of teachers from Madar International School placed first.

Shaza Karaman, a student from International Community School and one of the winners, stated, "It was a very engaging experience. Working as a team made it more manageable and easy to achieve the highest average score."

The event was held as part of the Sharakah program under which AUS has signed Memorandums of Understanding with 12 secondary schools in the UAE whereby the university will offer workshops to teachers and students; offer patronage of selected research, cultural, social and sporting activities and events organized by the Sharakah partner school; award partial scholarships to deserving students selected from lists provided by the schools; and offer university preparation courses, including SAT and TOEFL preparation courses, as well as recruitment of outstanding students from varied sociocultural and economic backgrounds to AUS.