

New York-Middle East Talks

In April, LAU's New York Headquarters and Academic Center inaugurated a Middle East speaker series in conjunction with LAU's Summer Institute for Intensive Arabic and Culture (SINARC) program. The speaker series is designed to attract LAU alumni and friends, students in the New York City area, and other individuals interested in Middle East affairs, culture, and history. The Director of SINARC, Dr. Mimi Jeha, is responsible for choosing the speakers for the series. Ed Shiner, Director of Alumni and Special Project in New York, has also scheduled two post-SINARC lectures. These events are free and open to the public.

On May 21, Joseph Cari from the World Policy Institute will speak on "What is

the Role of Morality in American Foreign Policy?" On June 26, Todd Fine will speak on Ameen Rihani and the "Little Syria" area in lower Manhattan as well as the "Save Washington Street" project. These lectures will be held under the auspices of LAU New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter.

The first speaker series event was held at the New York Headquarters on April 2 and featured Elias Khoury who gave a lecture on "The Arab Culture and the Revolution: A Missed Opportunity." Mr. Khoury was born in Beirut in 1948 and studied Sociology and History at Lebanese University in Beirut and the University of Paris. He began his career as a literary critic with his book, "Searching for a Horizon: The Arabic

Novel After the Defeat of 1967." He served on the editorial board of "Mawakif Quarterly" and as the managing editor of "Shu'un Falastinia" (Palestine Affairs) and "Al Karmel Quarterly."

The second speaker series event was on April 9. Rami Khouri discussed "Is the Arab World in Freefall or National Rebirth? An Analysis of the Last Three Years from within the Region." Mr. Khouri is a Palestinian-Jordanian and US citizen. He is the first director of the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut. He also serves as a nonresident senior fellow at the Kennedy School of Harvard University.

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Alumni Mentoring

The LAU Alumni Relations Office has officially launched its Alumni Mentoring Program, addressed to students in their final year of study. The program aims to support the graduating students through the transitional period as they step out of the university into the professional world.

This project, developed in collaboration with the Career Guidance Office, brings together experienced and successful alumni and student groups within the same field.

“The goal is for our students to take advantage of our alumni’s experience and learn more about the practical and professional aspects of the field they have chosen to work in, figure out the right choices, understand how to act in job interviews, prepare their CVs and more importantly to build up capacities that best serve their professional career,” says Abdallah Al-Khal, Executive Director of Alumni Relations.

This program will open new horizons for LAU students who will have internship and employment prospects in leading institutions both in the country and abroad, as well as great networking opportunities to build on.

North America alumni can also participate in this program as well via email and Skype. Alumni chapters can also promote alumni mentoring with their members, families, and friends.

If you wish to take part in this venture as a student or mentor please contact:

Ed Shiner, Director of Alumni and Special Projects
(646) 255-1099, or ed.shiner@lau.edu



ON OUR WEBSITES

Visit the LAU Matters website for additional information on events, alumni news and updates:
www.laumatters.org

Check out the website for *Fulfilling the Promise: LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence*:
campaign.lau.edu.lb

If you would like to make a donation to *Fulfilling the Promise* please visit:
campaign.lau.edu.lb/ways-to-give

The *Fulfilling the Promise* website includes:

- Updated information about the campaign
- Its goals and progress
- Additional information, profiles and articles not included in the newsletter

Be sure to visit often for the latest news and updates.

LAU matters

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Editorial and Design

Dalila Mahdawi, Maryam Zoma

Robert Hollback, Assistant Vice President for Development
Edward Shiner, Director of Alumni and Special Projects

LAU Matters
211 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017-2935
(212) 203-4333

Please send all comments to: laumatters@lau.edu.lb

www.laumatters.org



New York City Celebration

On March 27, members of the LAU community including friends and donors celebrated at the Chairman’s Dinner, held in conjunction with the twice-yearly Board of Trustees Dinner. Around 120 people attended the event at the InterContinental Hotel in Midtown Manhattan, New York City.

The Board Chairman, Dr. Paul Boulos and Dr. Joseph Jabbra, President of LAU, gave speeches during the dinner and discussed the LAU Gilbert and Rose-Mary Chagoury School of Medicine and University Medical Center- Rizk Hospital (UMC-RH). Dr. Jabbra introduced the Dean of the Medical School, Dr. Youssef G. Comair, and Joseph Otayek, Chief Executive Officer of UMC-RH.

In addition, some important members of the Lebanese community in the New York City area attended the dinner including Ambassador Nawaf Salam, Caroline Ziade, Deputy Secretary of the United Nations Permanent Mission to Lebanon, and Consul General Majdi Ramadan.

LAU’s next Galas will be in
Beirut in October 2014
and **New York City in April 2015.**



From top to bottom: 1) Dr. Jabbra speaking at the Chairman’s Dinner; 2) Dr. Elise Salem and Dr. Elias Khoury; 3) Dr. Paul Boulos addressing the gathering; 4) From left to right: Hon. Consul Majdi Ramadan, Dr. George Faris, Claudia Faris, Salim Sfeir.

LAU events

From top to bottom: 1) LAU making "music" in the Bahamas; 2) LAU group after dinner in the main dining room.



Sail Away with LAU

On February 27, 14 alumni, family and friends traveled from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to Nassau, Bahamas and Key West, Florida for LAU's first Alumni Cruise.

The group sailed on Celebrity Cruises' Constellation ship which had extensive entertainment and relaxation options such as a casino, swimming pools, health spa and many bars. The alumni, family and friends went on fun, one-day excursions at Nassau, Bahamas and Paradise Island, as well as a very enjoyable day in Key West. There were almost 2,000 passengers on board. Everyone ate and drank very well, experiencing spectacular cuisine and exceptional service. All were pleasantly surprised at the spacious and well-appointed staterooms.

In addition, the cost of the cruise was quite affordable. Prices started at \$404 per person and covered ship accommodations, ocean transportation, most meals, some alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages and most entertainment onboard ship. If you are interested in going on a future cruise with LAU, please contact:

Ed Shiner, Director of Alumni and Special Projects
(646) 255-1099, or ed.shiner@lau.edu

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 21: New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter - *Lecture by Joseph Cari, "The Role of Morality in American Foreign Policy"*

May 29: Montreal Alumni Chapter - *Organizational meeting of new officers and committee with Ed Shiner*

June 1: *First gathering of Western Canada Alumni*

June 8: Toronto Alumni Chapter - *Breakfast in the Park*

June 9: Houston Alumni Chapter - *Dinner gathering welcoming Dr. Jabbara to Houston*

June 14: New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter - *Saturday at the Met with Dr. Jabbara, cocktails and gallery tour of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*

June 22: Washington, D.C. Alumni Chapter - *Family Picnic*

June 26: New York/New Jersey Alumni Chapter - *Lecture by Todd Fine, "Ameen Rihani's Legacy of Place"*

August 6 - 10: *Alumni Homecoming, Lebanon*

September 7: Toronto Alumni Chapter - *Family Picnic*



The Toronto Chapter gathered for its Annual Gala Dinner at Mazza Garden in Ajax, Ontario on April 5. Around 100 alumni, family, and friends attended the Gala and the event also featured live music, and belly dancer, and argileh.



The Southern California Alumni Chapter met at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in La Cañada Flintridge on March 1. The chapter and friends had a tour of the laboratory led by former LAU Chairman of the Board and Director of JPL, Dr. Charles Elachi. Around 30 people attended the event.



The South Florida Alumni Chapter gathered at the home of former LAU Board of Trustees member Ron Cruikshank in Fort Lauderdale for a cocktail reception on March 9.



From left to right:
 1) Dr. Jabbra with Congressman Joe Wilson, Republican, U.S. Representative for South Carolina's 2nd congressional district.
 2) Dr. Jabbra with Congressman Gerry Connolly, Democrat, U.S. Representative for Virginia's 11th congressional district.

Valuable Federal Aid to LAU

In addition to the generous assistance LAU receives from its alumni and friends, the University also receives a significant amount of funding from the U.S. Federal Government to support student scholarships and academic programs. Dr. Jabbra visits Washington, D.C. regularly and works with Jay Ghazal, LAU's representative in Washington, to meet with members of Congress and committees. His goal on each visit is to reiterate to members of Congress the importance of U.S. support for American institutions of higher education in the Middle East.

LAU receives funding from a variety of federal programs. One important source of support is from USAID's American Schools and Hospitals Abroad (ASHA) program. This program helps institutions like LAU maintain American educational standards and also offers

local communities access to high quality medical care and assistance. LAU also receives funding from the U.S. State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), which provides much-needed academic scholarships to deserving students from across the MENA region. MEPI currently works in 18 countries and has been active in the Middle East since 2002. Finally, LAU also receives funding from the Economic Support Fund to provide scholarship assistance for Lebanese students with high financial need to attend not-for-profit educational institutions in Lebanon that meet standards required for American accreditation.

LAU's and Dr. Jabbra's presence in Washington, D.C. is incredibly important to both the University community and Lebanon, according to Ghazal. "Dr. Jabbra provides members of Congress,

including committee leadership in both the Senate and the House of Representatives, and State Department and Department of Education officials with crucial information about the importance of supporting access to higher education throughout the region," Ghazal emphasized.

Dr. Jabbra's regular visits to Washington, D.C. ensure that Congress understands the important impact that U.S. support for higher education is having in the region. Federal funds help LAU provide an indispensable, high quality education to future leaders in Lebanon and throughout the Middle East which help instill universal values in our students including seeking truth, respecting human dignity, promoting gender equality, being inclusive and advocating for social justice.

Middle East Speaker Series

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On April 30, Dr. Rashid Khalidi and Dr. Paul Salem discussed "Lost in Transition: Conflict and Change in the Arab World." Dr. Khalidi is the Edward Said Professor of Arab Studies in the Department of History at Columbia University and was an advisor to the Palestinian delegation in the 1991-1993 Arab-Israeli peace negotiations. Dr. Salem is a vice president of the Middle East Institute (MEI), leading an initiative on Arab transitions. Prior to joining MEI, Dr. Salem was the founding Director of the Carnegie Middle East Center in Beirut, Lebanon between 2006 and 2013.



From top to bottom: 1) Rami Khouri. 2) Left to right: Dr. Rashid Khalidi and Dr. Paul Salem.

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This list includes donors from North America who have graciously supported LAU during the first quarter of 2014.

Samer Andary

Where do you live and what do you do?

I Live in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, and am the owner and Principal at s2h Inc., an application software company. s2h specializes in Software development and implementation and our flagship product is D2R-Collect.com, which is getting listed on Google and Salesforce. We are Google, Microsoft and Salesforce partners and we implement Microsoft products such as MS-CRM and MS-Sharepoint and MS-Dynamics.

When did you start getting involved with the Toronto Chapter?

I was one of the founding members of the Toronto Chapter in 2001 when we first met as a group before the official chapter was created. I was President of the Toronto Chapter from 2002-2008. We started a local chapter to catch up with other alums and form a community that provides a network to LAU graduates and their families. The Toronto Chapter is an important unit for its members since it acts as an extended support group and

family to them. It connects and forms long-lasting relationships between alums and their families. We have watched children grow together and form life long bonds. The chapter gives them an understanding of who we are, where we came from and our relationship with LAU and homeland. Most importantly, the Toronto Chapter provides friendly and familiar faces that one misses away from home. That atmosphere has spilled over to non-LAU members and they form an important extended family to the chapter.



What are some of the future events the Toronto chapter will hold this year?

On yearly basis the Toronto chapter holds a Breakfast in the Park and this year it is on June 8, 2014. The chapter also holds and Annual Family Picnic and it will be on September 7, 2014. We also hold a Gala and this year's was on April 5, 2014 (See page 5 for photos. Samer and his wife Hala at this year's Toronto Gala).