



Ahmad El-Nemr

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## Editor's Notes

### Follow Your Dreams

Egypt is full of examples of community service, from non-governmental organizations working to eradicate social problems to charity groups to environmentalists. All these people have a dream of making a change in society and are taking an active stance in pursuing their dreams.

A small example of what happens in Egypt is what happens at AUC. "Service Begins at Home" (page 14) shows how students, alumni, faculty and staff are collaborating to wipe out illiteracy among the university's custodians, security guards, maintenance personnel and drivers. The project started out nearly a decade ago as a small student-led initiative and has now been revived as a university-wide campaign. Similarly, in "Volunteers with Vision," (page 20) a student's dream for her country led her to establish one of the most active service clubs on campus that has steadily grown into a youth movement drawing in students not only from AUC, but from national universities as well. Both of these projects started with a dream, a simple wish.

For AUC, the new campus (page 13) is a dream that is gradually becoming a reality. I remember when I was a senior almost 10 years ago, AUC had only bought the land and it was hard for many of us students to imagine what the new campus would be like. It was all plans on paper. Having visited the construction site recently, I saw AUC's dream home taking shape.

Everything begins with a dream, no matter how small or far-fetched. The idea is to follow our dreams and not let go.



*Dalia Al Nimr*

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**Nostalgia**

I am glad to hear that the original AUC building will never be sold. This ancient khedival mansion is a symbol, full of memory for many of us. That building was the first Egyptian university under the leadership of King Fouad.

Ewart Hall and Oriental Hall should also never be sold or transformed. I am glad to have contributed to replace chairs bearing my name and the name of my AUCian boyfriend, Malcon Jibran (If anybody knows his whereabouts, please let me know through *AUCToday*).

As a child, I listened at Ewart Hall to General de Gaulle and General Catroux pleading for the Free French Forces during the Second World War. As a student, I heard, among others, a speech by a slim, tall, almost shy colonel of the Egyptian Army. He soon after became President Nasser. In addition, the Maskers Team will remember the plays and sketches they produced in Ewart Hall. It was also the stage where we sang Christmas carols and the unforgettable place for commencement — our graduation day!

Oriental Hall was also a wonderful place for people attached to French culture. There, my brother and I had the pleasure to attend lectures by Georges Duhamel, Andre Fide, Claude Aveline and Henri Michaux after the publication of his book *Miserables Miracles*.

At that time, AUC was almost a private club and a big family. In the early 1950s, we all knew one

another and appreciated each other: Christians, Muslims and Jews all together. There were wonderful young men and women from so many countries: Palestinians, Jordanians, Iraqis, Ethiopians, Italians,

Greeks, Germans, a few Americans and, of course, Egyptians. This brotherhood continued long after graduation. Along the years, I met friends from AUC in Germany, Brazil, England, the United States and Cairo. I also stayed in touch with my teachers, to whom I owe so much. As an international civil servant, I ended my career in Cairo. So please never spoil our memories by selling our old building.

That doesn't mean that we don't support the new campus. On the contrary, in memory of Wafiyya Mishriqi, my dear classmate in journalism, I booked a seat at the new auditorium.

It is a privilege to see AUC becoming stronger and bigger.

*Sylvia Gabbai '53  
Brussels, Belgium*

**Gratitude**

I just received the summer issue of *AUCToday*. As a graduate of AUC, I always look forward to the arrival of my university magazine. It is now such a well set-out and informative periodical. I am 83 years of age and keep on looking back over my strange life — a life that AUC played a significant role in. I feel extremely grateful to this institution. A million thanks to you all, and may your work continue for long.

*Elizabeth Sivyer (Nee Sokolsky) '46  
New Zealand*



**We Would Like to Hear from You**

*AUCToday welcomes letters from readers. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Please send to [auctoday@aucegypt.edu](mailto:auctoday@aucegypt.edu) or Editor, AUCToday, Office of Communications and Marketing, 113 Kasr El Aini Street, P.O. Box 2511, Cairo 11511, Egypt.*

## *Citadel Capital Financial Center Launched*

Through a partnership between AUC and private sector financiers, the Citadel Capital Financial Services Center (CCFC) opened its doors to students, researchers and finance professionals.

Thanking the representatives of Citadel Capital at the center's inauguration, President David Arnold said, "Your generosity is key to AUC's goal of providing Egypt's young men and women with a world-class education at a world-class university."

Housed in the Abdul Latif Jameel Management Center, the CCFC is a state-of-the-art instructional facility that provides practical and theoretical financial education. The center will offer a complete set of learning opportunities, including a simulated

trading room outfitted with the most current information technology; instructional classes that will teach students how to understand and utilize the financial technology of the trading room; interactive trading sessions; guest lectures; computers with the latest financial software and advanced placement services.

Delivering the keynote speech at the opening ceremony, Hani Sarie Eldin, chairman of the Egyptian Capital Market Authority, asserted that Egypt's most valuable resource is its young men and women, like AUC students. "The most important type of investment for Egypt is a human investment," Sarie Eldin said. "Economic development can never be sustainable without the right people in the right place."

## *AUC Inaugurates Smart Village Office*

In a ceremony attended by more than 300 guests, AUC officially inaugurated its Smart Village office in Sixth of October city.

The event was highlighted by the signing of a partnership protocol between AUC and the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. The agreement aims to implement career development training programs for Egyptian graduates in areas such as business, education management, computers and English. Companies and individuals can also turn to the Smart Village office for training, consultation, human resource development programs and career advising.

## **Yemeni Students Receive Hayel Saeed Scholarship**



*Anaam plans to use her education for the development of her country Yemen*

Laila Anaam, 19, recently left behind her family and friends in Taiz, a small city in southern Yemen, to pursue her education at AUC.

As one of two recipients of the Hayel Saeed Scholarship, the full cost of Anaam's college education, including tuition, housing, books and spending money, is covered. With few opportunities for bright young students in Yemen, the endowment was established by Yemeni businessman and AUC alumnus Abdul Rahman Hayel Saeed '68 to provide top Yemeni students with a stellar education, enabling them to facilitate their country's development by bringing knowledge and experience back to Yemen.

"I believe that I have a lot to learn from different people and places," said Anaam. "However, my job won't be done until I go back to Yemen to implement everything. My country is not very developed, so I do understand why people with opportunities choose to leave it behind sometimes, but things will never improve if I do that as well."

Instead, Anaam plans to return to Yemen after graduation to work for Saeed's business group to gain practical business knowledge and experience before pursuing her ultimate dream of launching her own business. "I'm sure that my vision will become clearer after I work for a few years and try my hand at a number of fields."

## Board Member Juffali Awarded Honorary Doctorate



*AUC Trustee Juffali was the keynote speaker at the undergraduate commencement ceremony*

Suad Al-Husseini Juffali, AUC trustee, was awarded an honorary doctorate at the February undergraduate commencement. Juffali, chair of the Ahmed Juffali Foundation, was also the keynote speaker at the ceremony. She urged graduates to reinvest their knowledge in the region. “The Arab world is desperate for young pioneers,” she said after accepting her Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters. “You are the future, and you have the power to change it [the Arab world] for the better.”

Born in Jerusalem, Juffali demonstrates her commitment to the region through philanthropy. The founder of multiple centers and organizations that provide educational and health services to mothers and children, Juffali also serves on many business and university boards.

At two separate commencement ceremonies for graduate and undergraduate students, master’s degrees were awarded to 125 students and 449 undergraduates earned bachelor’s degrees.

Among the undergraduates recognized, electronics engineering major Dalia Badawy received the President’s Cup for the highest grade point average in the senior class; Hanzada Abou Youssef, journalism and mass communication student, received the Parents Association Award; and Nora Badra, double major in mathematics and computer science, received the Nadia Younes Award for Humanitarian and Public Service. At the graduate ceremony, the Excellence in Research Award was given to Salima Ikram, Egyptology professor and chair of the sociology, anthropology, psychology and Egyptology department.

## Gerhart Center Launches Two Groundbreaking Projects

The John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement recently announced two initiatives to promote long-term philanthropic efforts in the region.

The first project is a collaboration between AUC, Egypt’s Ministry of Social Solidarity and local community groups. The aim is to test a new partnership model for addressing poverty in one urban neighborhood in Cairo. The yearlong project will assess the needs of the community and evaluate new activities, including

identifying families at risk, helping women make successful transitions from school to the workplace and postponing early marriage.

“We share with the minister a firm belief that governments, universities and local civil society can work together more effectively in solving the challenges facing the country today,” said Barbara Ibrahim, director of the Gerhart center. She added that universities are pivotal in testing new approaches to poverty reduction through the provision of skills,

volunteer efforts and the evaluation of results.

The Gerhart center also received a grant from the Boeing Corporation to document philanthropy in the Arab region. The project will create an initial map of philanthropic organizations designed to enable civic groups in the region to have better access to local funding sources. In addition, the Gerhart center plans to prepare a report that highlights good practices and makes recommendations for strengthening regional philanthropy.

## New Master's in Gender Studies

The Cynthia Nelson Institute for Gender and Women's Studies (CNIGWS) officially launched its graduate program last fall. The new interdisciplinary program investigates how gender relations are rooted in social, political and cultural structures.

"This program provides excellent grounding for students with career aspirations in human rights, health, migration and refugee studies, and social services," said Martina Rieker, CNIGWS director. "AUC is uniquely placed to take a lead in the changing academic landscape because it already has a well-established reputation internationally and regionally as an academic institution that supports gender studies research, teaching and training."

## Knight Fellow Shares Expertise at AUC

When asked what fuels his interest in topics as diverse as the Arctic tundra, firefighters who battle forest fires and modern-day Egyptian artifact smuggling, Craig Duff simply shrugs and says with a smile, "I guess I was just born curious." This pull of natural curiosity has taken Duff to the four corners of the world and has now brought him to Cairo and AUC's Adham Center for Electronic Journalism.

As a Knight fellow, Duff is sharing his expertise to promote international journalistic standards in Egypt. Created by the International Center for Journalists, the Knight Fellowship is designed to match accomplished journalists with developing countries around the world in order to improve the skills of local professional journalists and elevate the overall standard of media production.

An award-winning documentary television director, producer and writer, Duff has worked for PBS, CNN, the Discovery Channel and *The New York Times*. For Duff, moving to a developing country for nine months to share his media knowledge was a natural step. "Everybody reaches a point in their career when they want to give something back," he said.

At AUC, Duff is serving as guest lecturer and is working with students to improve basic reporting skills and Internet media techniques. Outside the university, he is participating in an outreach effort to help broadcast journalists in Cairo improve their skills in feature television reporting and documentary making.

## Sudanese Trustee Rewards Good Governance in Africa



AUC Trustee Mohamed Ibrahim, a prominent Sudanese businessman, recently announced that he would award national leaders from sub-Saharan Africa \$5 million if they prove to be committed to good governance.

"I'm not proud at all," Ibrahim told *The New York Times* of Africa's leadership. "We really need to resolve the problem, and the problem, in our view, is bad leadership and bad governance."

Recipients of the Mo Ibrahim Award for Achievement in African Leadership, which will be administered by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, must be eligible candidates who will have taken office through proper elections and left

having served the constitutional term stipulated when taking office. The index for the prize also includes criteria such as providing security for the people, rule of law, political freedom and economic opportunity.

Recipients will receive \$500,000 each year for 10 years, along with an additional \$200,000 each year for the rest of their lives, with possible bonuses for participating in philanthropic work.

Ibrahim is a global expert in mobile communications. He is the founder of Celtel International, one of Africa's most successful companies. He is also a member of the Africa Regional Advisory Board of the London Business School.

## *International Celebrities Discuss Darfur*

In a closed session, actor and director George Clooney, actor Don Cheadle, long-distance track runner Tegla Loroupe and Olympic speed-skater William Cheek met with members of AUC and the Egyptian community to discuss potential solutions to the Darfur crisis.

The four celebrities came to AUC as part of a trip to raise awareness about Darfur that included stops in China and Turkey. The purpose of the visit, as Cheadle explained, is “to learn and explore” from people who are closer to the events and may have a new perspective.

“We don’t come here with any political agenda. We are not trying to solve all the political problems. There is a humanitarian crisis going on — not withstanding the 300,000 or 400,000 people that have died already — there are 2.5 million people in refugee camps that are losing aid as we sit here and as we speak,” said Clooney. “We are looking for ideas, looking for help, looking for suggestions, and offering whatever focus we can bring on it to try to come up with some solutions for security and for aid for those people.”

For a podcast of the discussion, visit [www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm](http://www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm)



*Actor and director George Clooney*

## *AUC Hosts 8-Year-Old Prodigy, Students with Special Needs*



*Wael has proven his ability at the School of Continuing Education*

Mahmoud Wael, an 8-year-old Egyptian boy, is not only the youngest student to have studied at AUC’s School of Continuing Education (SCE), but he is also a child prodigy with an IQ of 155. Ahead of his peers, Wael has been featured in more than 20 newspaper, magazine and television interviews inside and outside Egypt.

Helping to foster Wael’s talent and unique mental abilities, AUC accepted him in a 50-hour intensive, customized course in written and spoken English at the SCE. When he first joined, Wael spoke only a few words of English. Today, he can hold a conversation and multiply aloud 12-digit figures in English.

“It was a pleasure teaching Mahmoud,” said Dalia Hanna, SCE instructor. “He assimilated the target language quickly and easily recalled difficult terms and related them to newly taught vocabulary expressions and grammar points. His performance was exceptional.”

In addition, AUC is currently providing six teenagers with special needs with a third session of conversational English and computer classes at the SCE. This is the first time that a program is tailored for students with a slower learning ability.

While enhancing their English and computer skills, the students also learn to use teamwork as a means of overcoming their individual challenges and bridging their uneven language ability. “They are so innocent and caring with each other; it is really touching,” said instructor Dalia Aziz. “I may teach them English, but I learn so much about life from them.”

## Distinguished Speakers On Campus

This year, a number of prominent speakers came to AUC to deliver lectures on different topics, from post-war Iraq to the peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Christians. Below are snapshots of some of the speakers and their lectures on campus. To listen to the podcast of any of the speeches, visit [www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm](http://www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm)



Speaking to a packed audience, Mark Danner, distinguished journalist and visiting professor, described the U.S. president as an increasingly lonely, unpopular president who is still clinging to the broad philosophy of changing the Middle East.

In his lecture titled, “Bush in Winter: Democracy, the Elections and Bush’s Iraq War,” Danner asserted that only a political agreement between all the forces in Iraq can bring an eventual solution. “But it seems less and less feasible because of the process of deterioration and fragmentation,” he said.

Danner, a longtime staff writer at the prestigious *New Yorker* magazine and winner of three Overseas Press Awards, has covered foreign affairs and international conflict in Latin America, Haiti, the Balkans and the Middle East for the past two decades, and more recently in Iraq.



“I have lost Nadia, and I shall never get over it,” said an emotional Bernard Kouchner at the second annual Nadia Younes Memorial Lecture. Speaking to members of the Younes family, diplomats, faculty and students, the co-founder and former president of the Nobel-Prize winning Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders), recounted his memories of Younes.

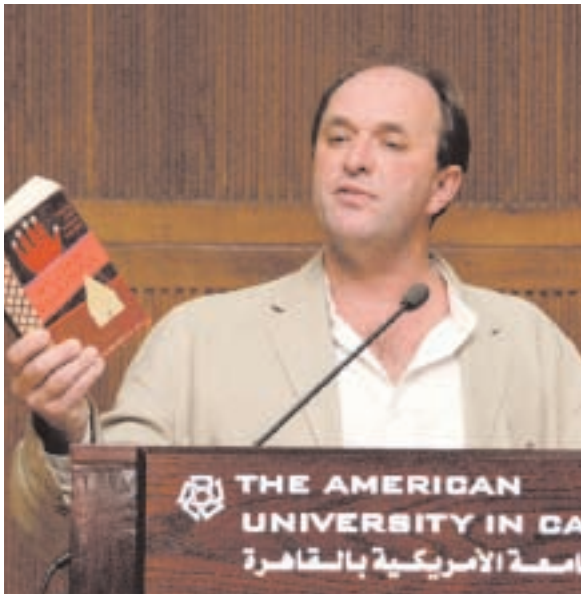
Younes was tragically killed in the bombing of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad on August 19, 2003, while serving temporarily as chief of staff for the UN special envoy in Iraq. “Without Nadia, it was impossible to maintain such a spirit,” said Kouchner, praising the bravery and courage of his “Egyptian princess. . . I want you to think of Nadia and all of the UN workers who are often forgotten. They are the watchers of peace, the salt of the earth.”



Winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize for Literature, vice president of PEN American Center and a spokesperson for the United Nations Development Project to eradicate poverty, Nadine Gordimer honored the late Egyptian author and Nobel laureate at the inaugural Naguib Mahfouz Memorial Lecture titled “Witness: The Inward Testimony.” The lecture was part of a weeklong celebration commemorating Mahfouz on what would have been his 95th birthday.

As part of the celebration, AUC Press launched an exhibition of 500 editions of Mahfouz’s works in 40 languages at the Rare Books and Special Collections Library. The celebration culminated in the awarding of the annual Naguib Mahfouz literary prize to the Palestinian author Sahar Khalifeh for her novel *Sura Wa Ayquna Wa Ahduun Qadim* (*The Image, the Icon and the Covenant*).





William Dalrymple, British historian and author, gave a lecture titled “Islam and Christianity: Clash or Clasp of Civilizations?” The lecture, on the historical relationship between Christianity and Islam, highlighted the numerous spaces in time when trade, scholarship and everyday life brought Muslims and Christians together in a peaceful, tolerant manner.

“There is a choice,” said Dalrymple. “Clashes between cultures are inevitable to a certain extent, but we can choose coexistence, the exchange of ideas, intermarriage. Indeed, coexistence can be extremely fruitful.”

Dalrymple has earned wide recognition and acclaim for his contributions to travel literature. A published author since the age of 22, he most recently wrote *White Mughals*, a book on the 18th and 19th century British colonialists who relocated to India and adopted the local way of life.



Seymour Hersh, a leading investigative journalist and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, delivered a public lecture dissecting the Bush administration’s shifting strategy in the Middle East.

“My government has made a decision: the Bush administration will not talk with Iran or Syria, but instead has joined with the United Kingdom and the moderate Arab states in what can only be described as a *fitnah* (rift) — Muslim brother against brother,” said Hersh, criticizing Bush’s policies in the Middle East and suggesting that Iran could be the next target.

Hersh has been an active voice in world politics since 1969 when his reporting on the My Lai Massacre won him international attention and the 1970 Pulitzer Prize for international reporting. It is with the same investigative spirit that Hersh has recently dedicated himself to the task of writing about U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.



Timothy Garton Ash, honorary chair of the European Studies Centre at St. Antony’s College at Oxford, called for a strengthened relationship between Europe and the Middle East, particularly concerning the development of democratic institutions. “The story of the European Union over the last 60 years is a story of the steady continuous enlargement of freedom from country after country,” he said. “Our strategic objective should not be to go back to the Free World, but to move forward toward the vision of a free world, a world in which everyone is free, living in liberal democracies.”

Garton Ash, also a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, is a columnist for *The Guardian* and a regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*. He was featured in *Time* magazine’s list of the 100 top global public intellectuals in 2005.



# A Global Perspective

**Jerry Leach, renowned expert in international relations, is at the helm of AUC's Center for American Studies and Research**

**A**fter visiting more than 100 countries and living and working abroad for many years, Jerry Leach, AUC's director designate of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR), has cultivated a strong interest and appreciation for foreign cultures and societies.

Leach recently left behind Washington, D.C., a city he's called home for 27 years, to tackle a new professional and personal challenge: living and working in Egypt. With skills, knowledge and expertise honed through an impressive career that includes experience at the World Affairs Council, White House, U.S. State Department, Peace Corps and Cambridge University, Leach is once again working to improve international relations and share his knowledge of American studies in a fresh, new context.

**How did you become interested in international affairs?**

The three years I spent in Turkey after graduating from Emory University were really life changing. I learned another language, lived in the midst of a culture that was very different from my own, and

*Ahmad El-Nour*

through the excitement of everyday life, I gradually came to see the United States through the eyes of another group of people. The overall experience was so stimulating and challenging that I've tried to incorporate it into everything I've done since then. In one way or another, all of my career choices have flowed out of the discoveries I made in Turkey.

### **Why did you decide to leave Washington, D.C.?**

I was finishing up 27 years in three challenging and grueling jobs: as national president of the World Affairs Council, division head of the Peace Corps and member of the National Security Council for the U.S. State Department and White House. I had taught overseas in the first part of my career at the University of Papua New Guinea, Gazi University in Turkey and Cambridge University, experiences which I thoroughly enjoyed. I wanted to return to the adventure of teaching abroad.

### **Why did you choose to come to the Middle East?**

I started my career in the Middle East, living in Turkey for three years and working for the Peace Corps. I've traveled back to Turkey more than 15 times and also had the opportunity to visit most of the countries of the Middle East and Central Asia. It's a part of the world I've come to know fairly well and for which I feel a real fondness. There is something nice about returning to the place where I've started my career. More than that, working in an outstanding university like AUC

means I will have a chance to shape people who will be the region's future leaders.

### **Do you find the region changed since you last lived here?**

I see improvements in many aspects of Middle Eastern life. For example, modernization is picking up pace, economies are much more open, educational opportunities in the region have increased and public health is dramatically better. Overall, there is more optimism and self-confidence and less fatalism and despair as compared with three decades ago. However, progress is lagging in other areas, especially in the political arena. Many issues remain to be addressed, and a lot of hard work is still needed.

### **Why is it important that people learn about American studies?**

The United States is a prime mover worldwide in this era, playing a very important role among the world's 200 plus societies. Consequently, like it or hate it, everybody should have some familiarity with American society and how it works. However, American studies taught overseas cannot be taught the same way it would be in California. One should not assume that students abroad have background in American history and government. CASAR is unique because it provides a broad overview of the United States in all facets and is committed to providing knowledge of practical value to students in their lives and careers. In CASAR, we will concentrate on both the strengths and weaknesses of the United States, recognizing that America, like all societies, has plenty of both.

### **What would you like to see CASAR achieve during your tenure?**

Currently, CASAR is still in start-up mode. I am committed to making sure that the center gets off the ground well and develops a program that is appealing and interesting to students and faculty of AUC and other Egyptian universities, as well as to the general public in Egypt and the Middle East as a whole. Among the many items in the CASAR agenda are international conferences on contemporary themes, student trips to Washington, screenings of documentary and film series and short courses for adults to be used in training Egyptian diplomats and journalists. I also have plans to start a new Core Curriculum course in September 2007 titled "What is America?," as well as a new publication series, "Americans as Seen by Others."

### **Given current tensions, are you optimistic about the future of U.S.-Arab relations?**

I try to see things in the past, present and future in a continuum of time as opposed to snapshots, which I find very limiting. The Middle East has come a long way, and it will continue to improve. I think the future looks bright here. Progress and opportunity continue to improve year in and year out. The United States, like all major countries past and present, makes mistakes. However, it also gets past those mistakes. There is too much good will on both sides for me to believe that we will fail to get beyond the issues that divide us today. □

*By Larissa Lawrence*

# Philanthropist Works to Bridge Cultures



**A** strong supporter of education and proponent of intercultural understanding, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Saud has consistently worked to further AUC's mission of providing high-quality education to all segments of society and bringing cultures together. In October 2004, he established in his name the Center for American Studies and Research (CASAR) as an institution to help bridge the gap between East and West. He has also made a generous contribution to the university to name the School of Humanities and Social Sciences building on the new campus.

Explaining his reasons for the establishment of CASAR, Prince Alwaleed noted, "It is my view that there has been little serious and systematic scholarly effort made in the Arab world to investigate the complex facets of American society. It is my intent in contemplating the establishment of such a center not only to fill this regrettable void, but also to contribute to a greater and deeper understanding of the United States in the Arab world, an understanding that would hopefully lead to better relations all around."

Prince Alwaleed was educated in the United States. He

received a bachelor's in business administration from Menlo College and a master's in social science from Syracuse University. After completing his education, Prince Alwaleed returned to Saudi Arabia to begin work as a private entrepreneur and international investor. In 1979, he started building his portfolio, which quickly grew and diversified, leading him to create Kingdom Holding Company. An investment organization, Kingdom Holding Company has enjoyed enormous success under Prince Alwaleed's management and has been consistently rated as the largest private company in Saudi Arabia since 2004.

Through the rising success of his company, Prince Alwaleed has chosen to invest heavily in educational development to improve cross-cultural understanding. International institutions that have received support from Prince Alwaleed include the University of New Haven, Syracuse, Harvard and Georgetown universities in the United States; the University of Exeter in England; the American University in Beirut; as well as Kyungwon University in South Korea. Dedicated to supporting Islamic culture, Alwaleed has also donated to the Louvre Museum in France to facilitate the construction of an Islamic art wing. In addition, he has provided funding for the Council on American-Islamic Relations to support its mission of easing tensions between Muslims and non-Muslims in the United States. Prince Alwaleed also supports the U.S.-based Arab American Institute and the Arab Cultural Fund Initiative Program of the Arab League in Egypt.

Through education and business, Prince Alwaleed has formed strong ties to the United States, leading him to concentrate his efforts on promoting cross-cultural dialogue. This belief inspired him to establish CASAR at AUC as a way of promoting a scholarly approach to the study of the United States, with careful consideration given to the culture and concerns of the Arab world. The center is a catalyst for independent research in American studies both within AUC and with the outside community through an outreach component. In addition to organizing conferences, lectures and short courses on various features of American society and culture, the center has expanded AUC's academic curriculum in American studies. "My hope is that people of good will, both Arab and American, in the public as well as the private sectors, will join forces with us to help in achieving our common goal," Prince Alwaleed said. □

*By Larissa Lawrence*

# 10 Facts

*You Didn't Know  
About the New Campus*

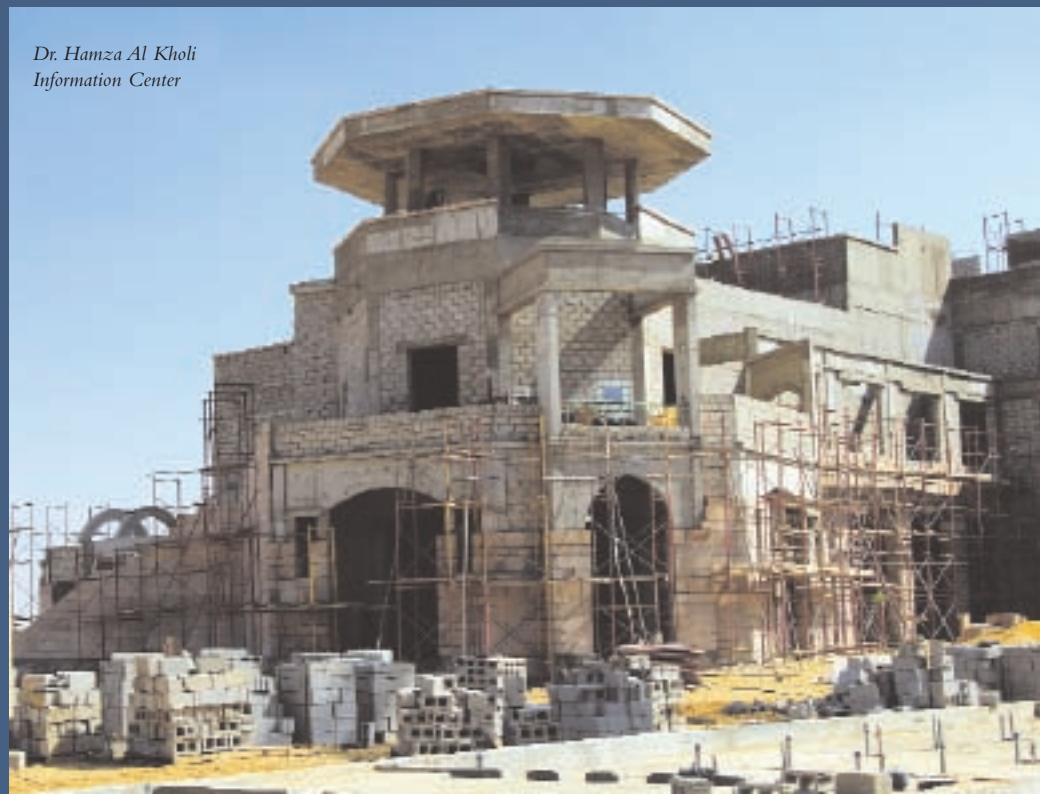
- 1 All buildings, except the library and Core Academic Center, are no more than three stories high.
- 2 The longest distance between any two academic buildings is a 10-minute walk.
- 3 The entire campus is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 4 Wireless access to the Internet will be available everywhere on campus.
- 5 Parking can accommodate up to 2,000 cars inside the campus.
- 6 The auditorium will have 1,400 seats, compared to Ewart Hall's 1,000.
- 7 Campus capacity will be 5,500 full-time regular students, representing a 10 percent increase from the downtown campus, with room for expansion.
- 8 Petrified wood collected from the site during construction will be used as landscape features.
- 9 Twenty acres of the new campus will be open to the public. This area includes a park, amphitheater, art gallery, bookstore and restaurants.
- 10 Two-thirds of current AUC families live closer to the new campus site than to its downtown location.



*Bookstore Arcade*



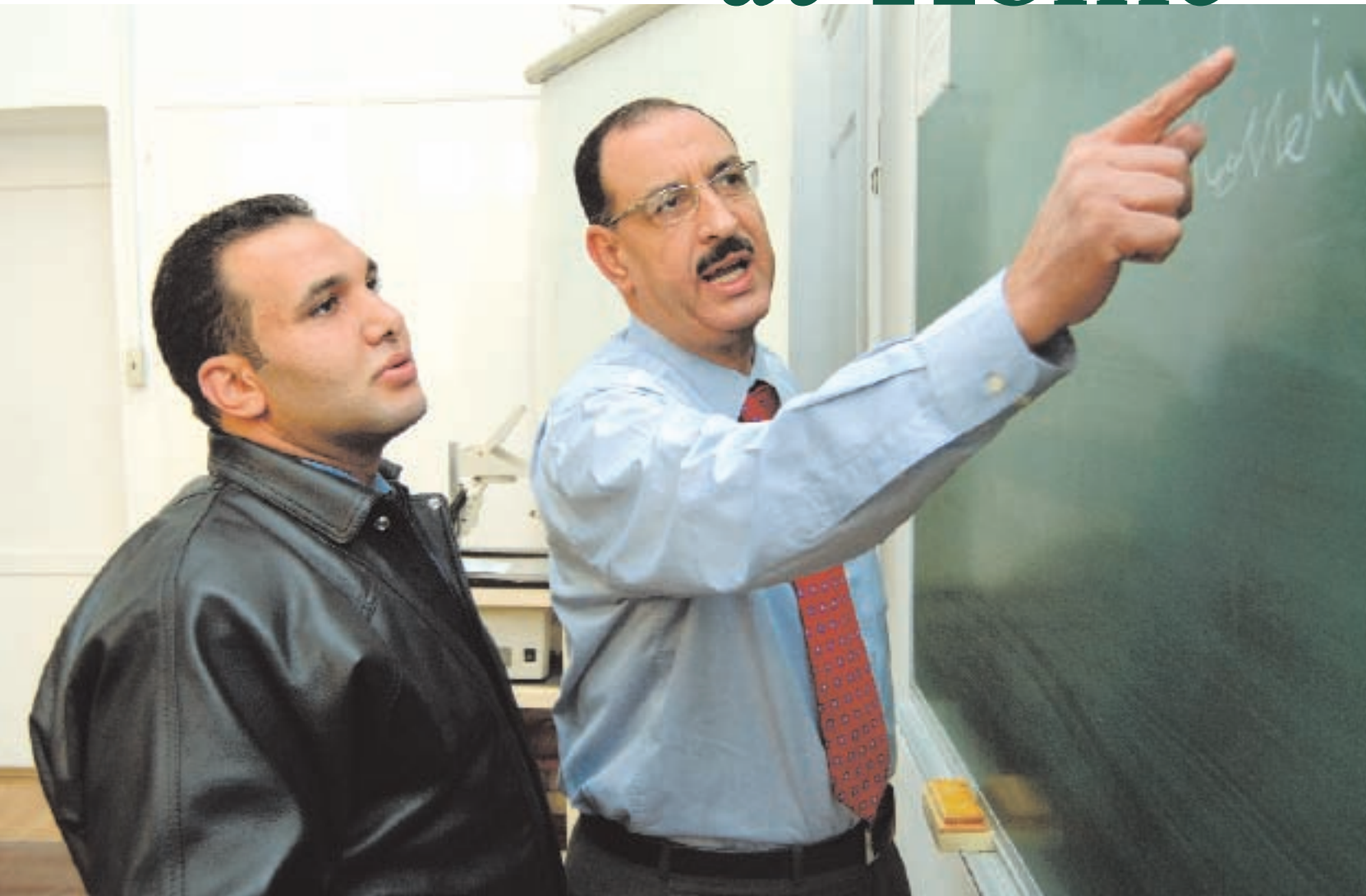
*AUC Portal  
(Visitors' Entrance)*



*Dr. Hamza Al Kholi  
Information Center*

# Service *Begins* at Home

Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr



*Atef El Hoteiby (right), special sales and marketing manager at AUC Press, helps security guard Mahmoud Hussein to improve his written language skills*

**Students, alumni,  
faculty and staff  
are working to  
eradicate illiteracy  
on campus**

**M**ahmoud Hussein stands at the Greek Campus entrance gate almost every day of the week, checking IDs and keeping a watchful eye on anyone entering the campus. Posted at the entrance, Hussein's job as a security guard often requires helping visitors with information, but it wasn't until recently that he was able to handle that responsibility fully. Participating in

English language classes, Hussein is now able to communicate with people around him in a way that was never before possible.

"When foreigners come in who don't speak Arabic, I am now able to help them," he said.

Hussein is one of the first to participate in the campus literacy campaign, launched by the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and

Civic Engagement last spring. The campaign links faculty, staff, student and alumni volunteers with AUC maintenance personnel, security guards, lab assistants, janitors and drivers to improve their Arabic and English literacy skills. So far, 51 volunteers have given classes to 175 workers. “We hope to make AUC a model for how a university can be of service to its wider community. And what better way to start than here at home?” said Barbara Ibrahim, director of the Gerhart center.

Embodying the center’s mission of promoting human development and social inclusion, the program enables workers who participate to acquire language skills that will last them a lifetime. “The classes helped me develop my English so that I am more effective here, answering visitors’ questions and pointing them in the right direction,” said Hussein, who has worked at AUC for three years.

The program also gives teachers a heightened sense of social responsibility. Tim Warren, a writing instructor in the Composition and Rhetoric Program, found the experience of volunteering a valuable community-building exercise. “The security and maintenance staff are always so friendly and helpful,” he said. “I appreciate the opportunity to go beyond the everyday smiles and cordialities by teaching them and learning from them. AUC is a diverse community, and this project helps bind us in ways that go beyond the mere recognition of the fact that we all work at the same institution.”

Using a practical approach to teaching, instructors focus on useful skills in everyday life rather than trudging through grammar rules and complicated topics. The goal of the English classes is to develop speaking skills and build greater confidence in

the use of a foreign language. Participants engage in role playing and dialogue to simulate their day-to-day interactions with people on campus — guiding a new student, describing a professor or answering the telephone. In Arabic classes, participants learn to write their names and fill out forms.

Doria El Kerdany, who is studying Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language at AUC, taught Arabic classes last spring. “I have always been interested in fighting illiteracy in Egypt,” said El Kerdany. “We have a lot of illiterate people in this country, and I want to help in any way I can.”

Ahmed Metwalli, custodian at the Gerhart center who has been at AUC for 16 years, was one of El Kerdany’s students. He noted the progress in his Arabic language skills as a direct result of his participation in the program. “Now I’ve started to recognize the letters,” he said. “My skills are still basic, but I improved a lot. I definitely plan to continue and hope that I will learn to read.”

The campus literacy campaign is a

rejuvenation of a student-led initiative started by Yasmína Abou Youssef ’99 in May 1997. “I saw that there was a need on campus, and I began to match volunteers with workers,” Abou Youssef said. “It was a very rewarding but informal program, and it was clear that it needed institutional backing to last.”

Launched in March 2006, the Gerhart center was established in honor of John D. Gerhart, AUC’s former president who was responsible for expanding community-service activities. The center has a dual focus: to consolidate university activities aimed at encouraging engaged citizenship and service, and to promote enhanced philanthropic giving in the region. Combining learning, research, service and advocacy, the center works to expand the boundaries of philanthropy, going beyond charity to address development and social justice.

For information on how to volunteer in the center’s literacy program, call Malak Hammad at 02.797.5467 or e-mail [mhammad@aucegypt.edu](mailto:mhammad@aucegypt.edu) □

By Lily Hindy



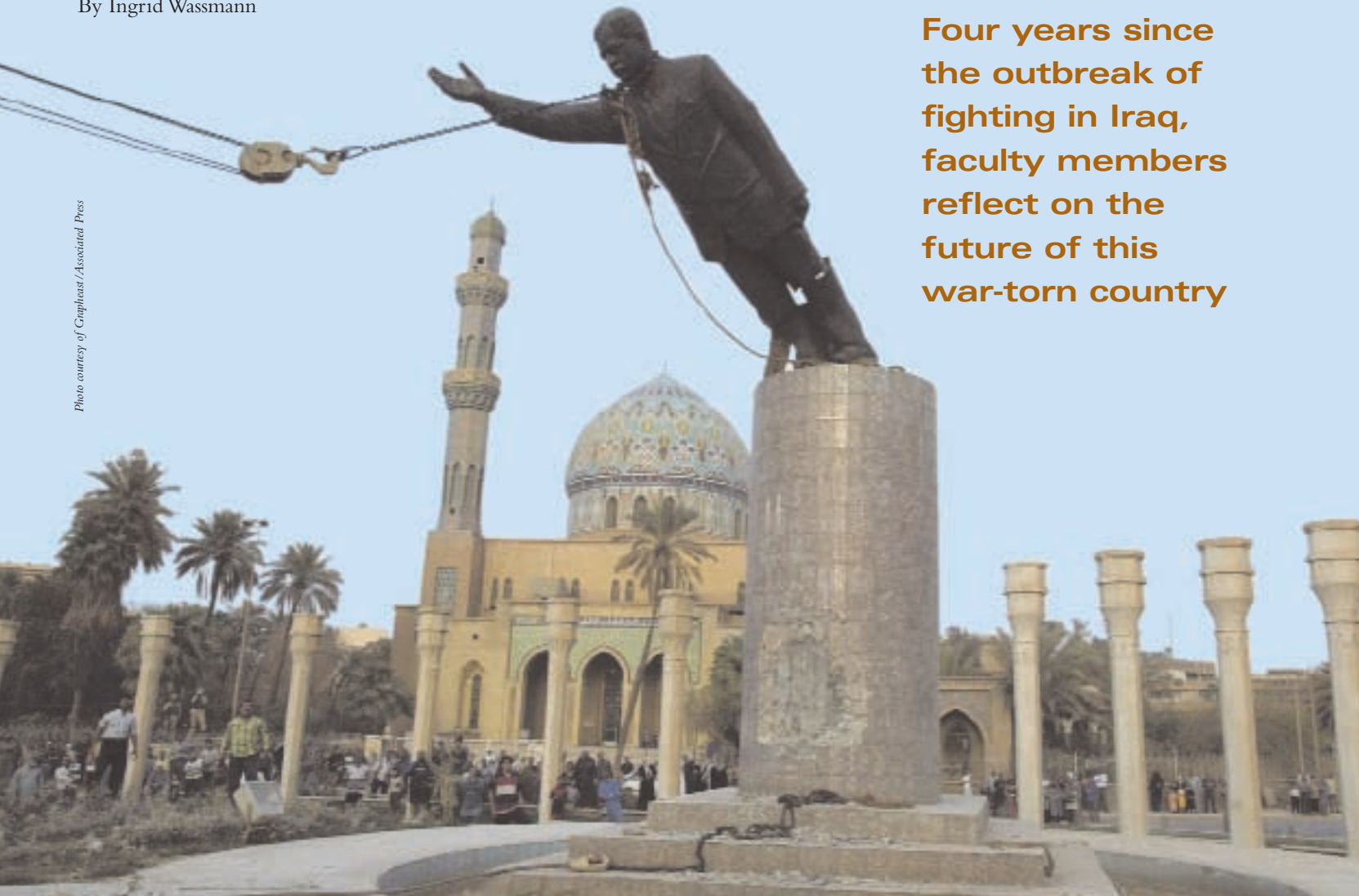
*Amira Lamei, a student in the Leadership for Education and Development program, teaches facilities and services workers Ahmed Mostafa (left) and Yasser Mohamed*

# *Eye on Iraq:* **A Spiral of Violence**

By Ingrid Wassmann

**Four years since the outbreak of fighting in Iraq, faculty members reflect on the future of this war-torn country**

Photo courtesy of Graphcast/Associated Press



*The toppling of former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's statue in central Baghdad in April 2003*

In 2003, the world watched as the famous statue of former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein fell in central Baghdad's Fardus Square, marking the beginning of what has now become a center of debate and divide. The war in Iraq has left the country in disarray and has taken its toll on people in both the United States and the Arab world.

Four years into the war and several months after the hanging of Saddam Hussein, faculty experts examine where Iraq is heading politically, socially and economically.

Joel Beinin, AUC's director of Middle East studies, noted that Hussein's execution has exacerbated the already explosive situation in Iraq and deepened the rift between Sunni

and Shiite Muslims. "Especially because the execution occurred on the first day of *Eid Al Adha* (The Feast of the Sacrifice), a day on which Muslims are supposed to be merciful," he explained.

Beinin added that toppling Hussein and dismantling the Baathist party has wiped out Iraq's political foundation, leaving a dangerous vacuum and



breeding ground for civil war. It also marked the beginning of the U.S. administration's problems in Iraq. "The only ministry for which security was provided was the oil ministry. Everything else was looted, and all sorts of criminality was tolerated or not dealt with," noted Beinín.

As U.S. forces repeatedly fail to bring peace and stability to the country, Beinín believes that the only path forward is through a fundamental U.S. policy change in Iraq. He hoped that the Iraq Study Group Report, released in December 2006 and prepared by the Baker-Hamilton Commission, would result in just that. The commission proposed alternative courses of action in Iraq, ranging from the implementation of a strong federal system to a full breakup of Iraq into three separate countries. "I think the latter may be unworkable because the populations were not historically divided in such a way that we could draw a line. However, there is a de facto partition on the ground and ongoing ethnic cleansing in formerly mixed areas," said Beinín.

On the other hand, Walid Kazzíha, chairman of the political science department who lived in Iraq as a student in the 1960s, noted that the policies first put in place in Iraq under Paul Bremer, former head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, paved the way for Iraq's future division and the eruption of ethnic and sectarian cleansing. "Iraq will be de facto divided into three areas: the Kurds, the Sunnis and the Shiites," said Kazzíha, describing each partition as unstable and vulnerable to internal dispute and regional intervention.

While some may hesitate to describe the ethnic militia insurgency as a civil war, Kazzíha leaves little room for doubt. "There is definitely a civil war

currently taking place, but everyone wants to gloss over it and say it doesn't exist," he said. The U.S. administration, he explained, shuns the term in order to avoid recognizing policy failure in Iraq, and the Arabs try not to use it to minimize the sensitive issue of Shiite minorities in other Arab countries.

But not everybody would agree with this interpretation. "It is not strictly true if one thinks of a civil war as a war between two sides because [in Iraq] this is between six or eight sides, depending on how you count," explained Nicholas Hopkins, emeritus professor and former dean of the humanities and social sciences school.

As Iraq plunges further into civil war, Kazzíha sees sectarianism as the most serious problem in Iraq today. "Not because there are different sects in the region — they have always been there — but because they are being exploited and reinforced by outsiders," he said, adding that the escalation of this sectarian violence could turn into a full-blown and long-drawn conflict like in Lebanon in 1975, when the country fell into a dark 15-year civil war. "It may be longer and worse," warned Kazzíha, not excluding a potential spillover into the Gulf states.

Another scenario Kazzíha considers possible is an abrupt pullout of U.S. troops from Iraq. "The Americans went in and opened Pandora's box. They may suddenly pull out from the region. They did that in Vietnam," he said.

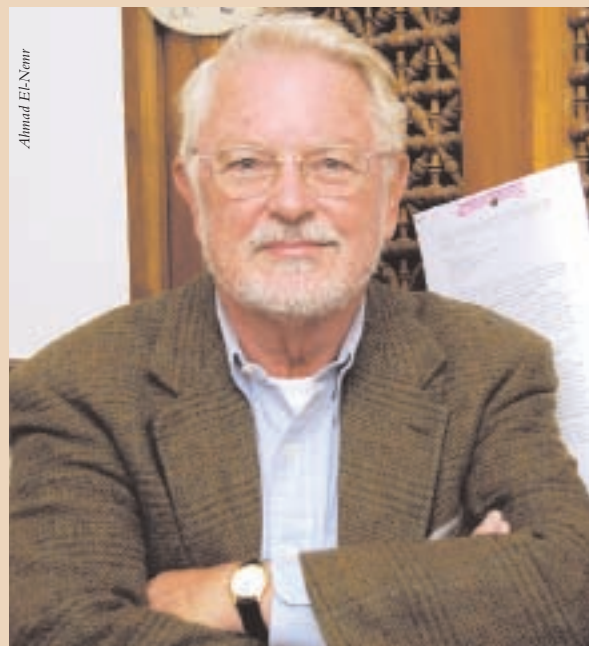
The consequences of such a scenario, however, could be devastating. "It would be utterly catastrophic for the country if there is no indigenous Iraqi force capable of ensuring security for all," remarked Beinín, who suggested that the U.S. administration may eventually not only cut back, but also concentrate its troops in places like the



Helen Rizzo

"All the physical and psychological stress is bound to put pressure on the family structure and on relationships between husbands and wives."

Rizzo



Nicholas Hopkins

"No matter who wins, the women lose."

Hopkins

“If the Bush administration or any American administration would have gone into Iraq, removed Saddam Hussein, helped rebuild the country and encouraged democratic forces to emerge, I might have supported the war.”

*Beinin*



Joel Beinin

Kurdish area of northern Iraq.

Beinin and Kazziha agree that the disastrous situation in Iraq today is greatly due to the gross missteps of U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East. According to Beinin, some of the most serious mistakes committed by the Bush administration include the lack of a coherent plan for administering Iraq after the war, as well as the failure to secure civil order and rebuild a crippled infrastructure. “The number one priority would have had to be ensuring basic security,” Beinin said. “If the Bush administration or any American administration would have gone into Iraq, removed Saddam Hussein, helped rebuild the country and encouraged democratic forces to emerge, I might have supported the war.”

Similarly, Kazziha stressed that U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East is further aggravating the Iraqi conflict. “At the moment, the policies of the U.S. toward the Palestinians, the Syrians, the Iranians and the Lebanese do not help at all in restabilizing the Iraqi situation,” he said.

### **Strained Economy**

The extensive political breakdown and material devastation of Iraq have also damaged the country’s economy, already greatly weakened under the late Saddam Hussein. According to Monal Abdel-Baki, assistant professor of economics, the two Gulf wars launched by the former leader against Iran in 1980 and Kuwait a decade later cost Iraq an estimated \$100 billion in indirect losses, not counting the punitive economic sanctions imposed by the United Nations for its invasion of Iran.

“Saddam was definitely a major barrier to Iraq’s economy, but the country has huge economic potential,”

said Abdel-Baki, referring particularly to its vast and largely untapped oil reserves, as well as its agricultural, industrial and pharmaceutical sectors.

According to the United Nations Development Programme, Iraq’s annual household income dropped from \$255 prior to the 2003 war to \$144 during the first half of 2004, a time when approximately half of the population was unemployed. Meanwhile, a local non-governmental Iraqi organization reported that the rate of inflation from July 2005 to July 2006 rose to 70 percent. By November 2006, the Iraqi Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs estimated that nearly 5.6 million Iraqis were living below the poverty line.

But for Abdel-Baki, the primary threat to Iraq’s economy is the disintegration of civil order. “If the situation in Iraq persists for much longer, we will see a real brain drain, especially in the pharmaceutical sector,” she said, specifying that some 10,000 Iraqi professionals have already fled the country since 2003 and will most likely never return.

Ranking the issues that need to be urgently addressed in Iraq before the country can stand on its feet again, Abdel-Baki cited human and capital flight out of Iraq, the diversification of its economy away from the petroleum industry and the establishment of a more equitable foreign trade. “We want Iraq to have more stable trade partners with better terms and less corruption,” she said. “Matters are aggravated by the upheaval of civil war and the pulling out of many multinationals. ... The estimated cost of rebuilding Iraq’s battered economy is around \$1.6 trillion over 10 years.”

### **Social Disorder**

Iraq’s strained economy, political weakness and social disintegration are

directly impacting Iraqis' standard of living and, consequently, women and family life. Helen Rizzo, assistant professor of sociology, cautioned against the possible rise in domestic violence, child abuse and divorce in the Iraqi household. "All the physical and psychological stress is bound to put pressure on the family structure and on relationships between husbands and wives, since you express your frustration to the people who are closest to you," explained Rizzo.

Women's role and place in Iraqi society today have also been affected by the sectarian divisions and violence. Rizzo believes that secular Iraqi women aspire to professional and political ambitions and desire a secular civil code, while the more conservative Shiite and Sunni women welcome the implementation of the sharia, the Muslim code of law. "The combination of the physical threat with some Islamist conservative groups reasserting a certain religious interpretation is reinforcing their justification that women should stay at home and take care of the family," Rizzo said.

Iraqi women were promised greater representation and participation under the country's new constitution, yet today there are only six women in the 37-member cabinet. "It is these inconsistencies which I think many women across the spectrum feel frustrated about," Rizzo noted.

Echoing the same sentiment, Hopkins said, "No matter who wins, the women lose. The current level of violence is certainly undercutting the role of the middle and lower class urban women, who, for a number of years, were able to make their way through education and participate actively in society."

Hopkins argued that Iraq, like everywhere else in the Arab-Muslim

world, is going through a religious conservative social movement that emphasizes the importance of women's dress code, their freedom of movement and role in the household. "I think possibly some of the expression of this in Iraq was delayed under the relatively secular government of Saddam Hussein, but every country in the Arab world is going through some version of this. So at some level it is not surprising that Iraq is too."

However, for Hopkins, ethno-religious identity is only one of varying interpretive models for the Iraqi conflict. "People in Iraq are not just fighting about religion; they are fighting about material interests and power. One could argue that the U.S. forces have become just another faction fighting in Iraq over control of the country's resources," he said.

Hopkins views warlordism and class struggle as the other significant reasons behind Iraq's political and social breakdown. He also pointed out that during times of conflict, people return to their primordial ethnic, tribal and religious identity. "It is a relatively common circumstance, especially when they are at a point where they have to group together to protect themselves from outsiders," Hopkins explained.

As solutions to Iraq's political, economic and social troubles seem more distant than ever, the future of the country looks daunting. "If the United States persists in pursuing policies that have no grounding in social reality, who knows what could happen," Beinon said.

Agreeing, Kazziha noted, "I think it will take five to 10 years before a reasonable pattern of development or stabilization will emerge. It's quite bleak in that sense. ... The United States broke the country, and it's not fixable at the moment." □



Walid Kazziha

"The Americans went in and opened Pandora's box. They may suddenly pull out from the region.

Kazziha



Monal Abdel-Baki

"The estimated cost of rebuilding Iraq's battered economy is around \$1.6 trillion over 10 years."

Abdel-Baki

# *Volunteers* *with* *Vision*



By Larissa Lawrence  
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr

**From its humble beginnings as a student community-service club, Alashanek Ya Balady has grown to a national movement**

**R**aghdha El Ebrashi '04 can trace her passion for community service to a single definitive moment as a 16 year old, when she was working as a volunteer in an earthquake zone in Cairo.

"I met a 12-year-old boy who was uneducated, addicted to drugs and without parents," El Ebrashi said. "After working together, we discovered that he was a talented writer. Four years after we met, his first story was published and that transformed him completely. ... He touched me deeply. Working with him is one thing in my life that I will never forget. It was the first time that I ever changed the life of another person."

One year after meeting the young boy, El Ebrashi entered AUC and wasted no time founding a community-service club, which she named Alashanek Ya Balady (For My Country). Today, five years later, Alashanek Ya Balady has not only withstood the test of time, but has grown into one of the most active service clubs on campus and expanded into a non-governmental organization (NGO) also founded by El Ebrashi. Whether students or

alumni, members of Alashanek Ya Balady all share a love of their country that propels them to volunteer their time to actively develop Egypt's disadvantaged communities.

**"Many people see the problems in our country, ... and they want to go to Europe or the United States to escape."**

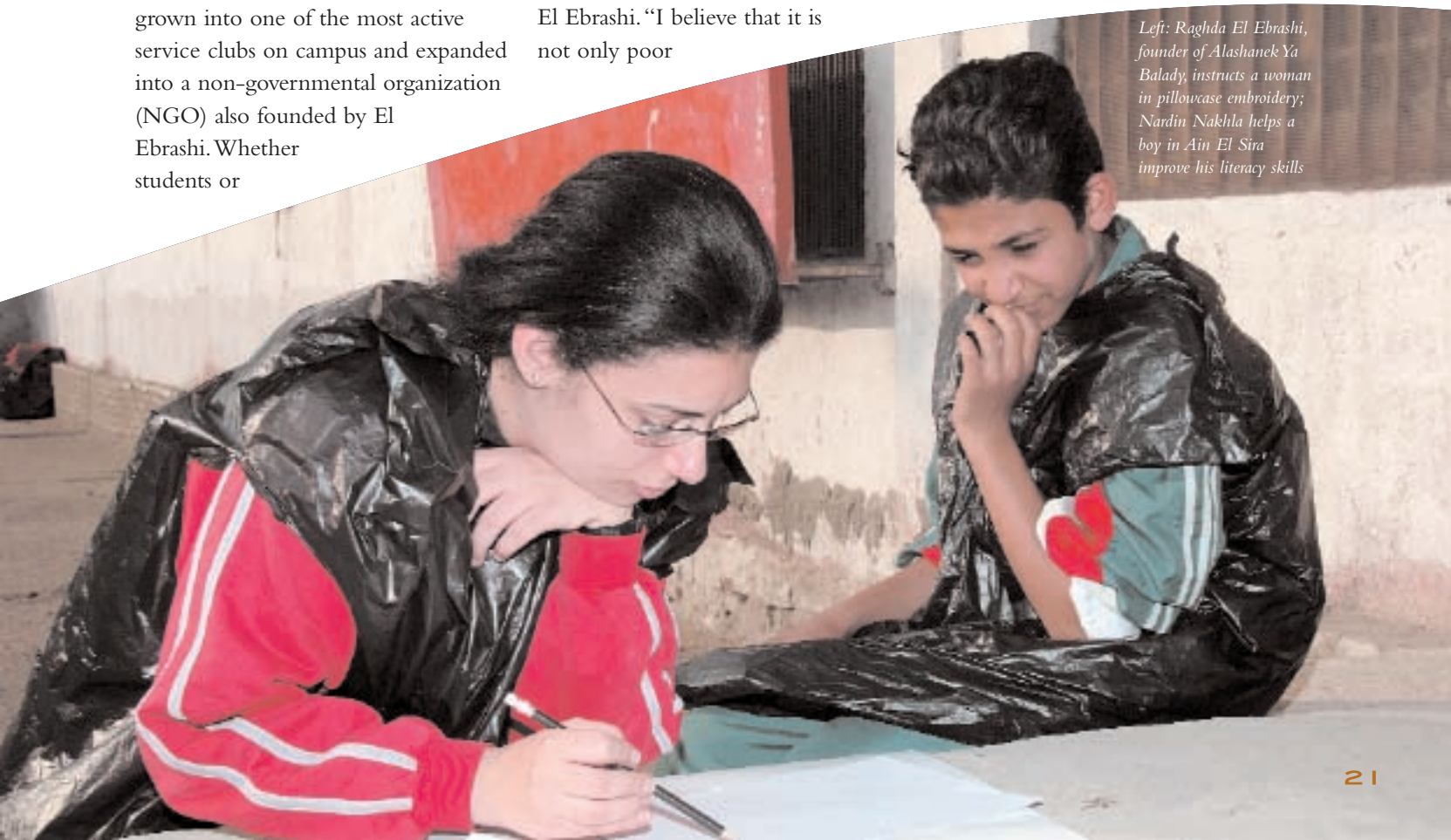
When El Ebrashi first thought of the project, she was set to establish a club that was unique among other pre-existing organizations on campus. Her main aim was for the club to help instill a sense of nationalistic pride in Egyptians. "Many people see the problems in our country — the pollution, the ignorance, the poverty — and they want to go to Europe or the United States to escape," explained El Ebrashi. "I believe that it is not only poor

people who cause these problems. When wealthy, educated people leave the country with their potential, they eliminate opportunities for Egypt's improvement and weaken their own identity."

With that in mind, El Ebrashi named the club Alashanek Ya Balady as a way to address the apathy that is sometimes found among youth. "I wanted to emphasize the responsibility and attachment that wealthy, educated Egyptians should show toward other less fortunate Egyptians," she said, adding that when Alashanek Ya Balady first started, there were many clubs at AUC doing charity work, but not many were directed at development as a cause.

"Most of the clubs were focused on distributing food, clothes and blankets, but few helped create permanent projects for the poor that would continue long enough to make any sort of transformation in the community," she said. "It is

*Left: Raghdha El Ebrashi, founder of Alashanek Ya Balady, instructs a woman in pillowcase embroidery; Nardin Nakhla helps a boy in Ain El Sira improve his literacy skills*





development, not charity, that will cause Egypt to advance.”

With a long-term goal of establishing a larger service network on a national level, El Ebrashi connected Alashanek Ya Balady with Ain Shams, Cairo and Alexandria universities. The club concentrated its efforts in Ain El Sira, one of the most poverty-stricken districts in Cairo. For the past five years, Alashanek Ya Balady has established an ambitious, multi-faceted program that consists of eradicating illiteracy; teaching language, computer and technical skills; setting up income-generating projects; as well as creating youth development programs. For all members, participating in these activities has given them a feeling of internal satisfaction and pride.

“I feel I am making a difference in people’s lives because I can help them get better jobs by teaching them a foreign language,” said Nour El

Akkad, business management senior and member of the club’s language development program.

Mohamed Ibrahim, computer science sophomore and head of the club’s computer learning center,

**“It was incredible seeing how someone could start from zero and make such progress in a short time.”**

acknowledged that it is not only the members that exhibit enthusiasm, but also the people of Ain El Sira. “People enrolling in the computer courses are highly motivated and have enormous potential,” he said. “They come because they want to be there, because they want to improve themselves.”

Citing a particular instance, Ibrahim

recalled how one of the female participants started off not knowing that touching a keyboard would cause letters to appear on the screen. Within two months, her knowledge of computers sky-rocketed, and she advanced to an intermediate level. “It was incredible seeing how someone could start from zero and make such progress in a short time. It made me feel that we are doing something worthwhile,” Ibrahim said.

While programs such as computer and language learning are targeted at people of all ages, the youth development program is focused on children in particular. It seeks to educate them on social issues and positive skills, as well as sexual well-being. “In underdeveloped areas like Ain El Sira, children are especially susceptible to physical and sexual abuse,” explained Eman Elba, political science senior who currently serves as president of the club. “At the

“There are disappointments, but there are also success stories, and that is what keeps us optimistic and inspired.”



Left: Mahmoud Ashraf, computer science junior, teaching women how to read and write; Omar Ramadan and Salma Kashmiry (bottom row), Faudi Pitsuan (middle) and Eman Kourtam with children of Ain El Sira

moment, there are few resources in the neighborhood that are easily accessible to children trapped in violent situations.”

Determined to take action, members of Alashanek Ya Balady are receiving professional training from AUC psychology professors on how to conduct trust-building activities and provide self-esteem workshops. When working on such sensitive topics, the establishment of trust and rapport between local children and club members is essential to making the program successful. “These kids need to know that they have a safe corner, somewhere to go,” Elba said.

Aside from teaching and educating people at Ain El Sira, members of Alashanek Ya Balady also set up micro-projects that help families become financially independent. Club members provide funding for the projects, whether they be supermarket kiosks, farms or knitting workshops, and help not only in setting them up, but also in terms of basic budget planning so that a portion of the

income is saved. “The idea is for them not to hold their hands out to charity,” said Nabil Ahmed, mechanical engineering sophomore and a member of the skills and projects program.

He added that although results may take years to materialize, it is worth the investment. “Development is about progress in the long run; you simply

**“These kids need to know that they have a safe corner, somewhere to go.”**

don’t see instant results,” he explained. “There are disappointments, but there are also success stories, and that is what keeps us optimistic and inspired.”

Working alongside the student club, the NGO El Ebrashi heads, which currently has more than 100 members, provides practical support and guidance to the student club and is working to expand the sense of volunteerism throughout Egypt. Dedicated to the overall development

of Masr El Kadima, where Ain El Sira is located, the NGO seeks to improve people’s living standards through various social, cultural, economic and environmental projects. “Although dear to my heart, it’s not Alashanek Ya Balady that I’m attached to; it is the overall cause,” said El Ebrashi. “I would love to see more and more AUCians take part in development projects that would help push our country forward.”

Echoing the same sense of enthusiasm, Elba noted how volunteering in Alashanek Ya Balady has made a difference in her life. “I’m happy with what I’m doing because I feel the reason we have been blessed in our lives is that we are being held responsible for the less fortunate ones out there. I’m surrounded by people who are full of eagerness and dreams, and seeing how we can affect other people’s lives energizes me to keep on going. ... The practical work we do in the field is much more enriching than all the theoretical studies we learn.” □

# A Balancing Act



By Cole Gibas  
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr



## Joel Beinin, new director of the Middle East studies program, looks at the region from multiple perspectives

Middle East historian at Stanford University for more than 20 years, prolific author on the region and former president of the Middle East Studies Association, Joel Beinin is the new director of AUC's Middle East studies program.

Educated at Princeton, Harvard and the University of Michigan, Beinin, who speaks Arabic well, is not new to the Arab world or to AUC. He was a student at the university's Center for Arabic Study Abroad in 1969.

"I've been interested in the Middle East for as long as I can remember," Beinin said, citing Arab decorative arts, language and politics as subjects that drew him in. "I was fascinated by the Arabic language and started to teach it to myself before I enrolled in the university."

After visiting the region on and off over the next few decades, Beinin returned to AUC in 2001 as a distinguished visiting professor, and in 2004-05 he came as a visiting research fellow. "I had a really good time here. I had good relations with a lot of people, both inside and outside the university," he said, explaining why he decided to join AUC.

The current political climate also attracts him, Beinin noted, pointing out the presidential elections and related protests that have been going on over the last few years. "It's an exciting time to be in Egypt," he said. "There's a considerable broadening of political opportunities and a lot of movement happening."

Beinin also believes that as a scholar

on the region, there are obvious advantages to living in Egypt. "There's an academic way of understanding Egypt and the Middle East, which is perfectly valid if it's done well. And then there's living the experience," he said. "Just by interacting with people as things are happening you get a very different sense of what's going on. There are certain things you get out of it that you can't get from a distance."

**"I was fascinated by the Arabic language and started to teach it to myself before I enrolled in the university."**

Living in Egypt and witnessing how society evolves, including both events and people's reactions to them, has made an impression on Beinin. "There is a greater sense of immediacy," he said. "Something as simple as walking from the Al Ahram building to AUC and seeing what books are being sold on the street corners, or just getting a falafel sandwich at a popular restaurant can open your eyes to a lot of things. People see that I'm a foreigner and start talking to me. It's important to stay in touch with people and stay in touch with what Cairo and Egypt feel like."

While Beinin has found himself the target of American right-wing media for bringing an uncommon perspective into academia, the forthright professor believes that living in the region for six

years has helped shape his attitude since he was able to see things firsthand and interact with people directly. "I never define myself as pro-Arab or pro-Palestinian, but I worked hard at studying Arabic and have lived for considerable stretches of time here," he said. "I have an affection for the culture and many friends here."

He added that while many foreign observers treat the region from the perspective of their own interests, a deeper understanding is necessary. "I don't approach Egypt as a foreign policy problem or as some place in a regional strategic plan," he said.

A prominent historian and researcher, Beinin has made numerous contributions in various academic journals and books. He has also written and edited seven books on Egypt, the Arab-Israeli conflict and social classes in the Middle East. His current research focuses on the new global economy and the political economy of Islamic social movements. With AUC's Middle East Studies program, he plans to focus on its interdisciplinary nature.

"We have an innovative intellectual agenda that seeks to overcome some of the narrowness that any discipline imposes," he said, adding that the program is looking to reach outside AUC. "We want to increase the public visibility of the program. In particular, we want to be in touch with Egyptian intellectuals both to learn from them and to share our interdisciplinary approach to studying the region."

Beinin has been an active member of the Middle East Studies Association for many years and has witnessed firsthand the evolution of the field. He explained that the demand for Middle East studies in academia hasn't always been secure. After the end of the Cold War, people questioned whether or not area studies, which focus on a particular



region such as the Middle East using an interdisciplinary approach, could offer the same academic rigor as a single discipline such as history or political science. "September 11 put an end to that debate," Beinín said. "It became obvious for national security reasons that people need to learn languages and have some sort of comprehensive understanding of Muslim societies."

The attacks of September 11 not only increased interest in the region, but also brought more scrutiny to the field. "After 9/11, I gave a number of lectures in the United States about why it happened. A lot of people were upset when I suggested that U.S. foreign policy over the years has caused resentment, specifically with regards to the Arab-Israeli conflict, U.S. support of autocratic regimes and the imposition of sanctions on Iraq. Some people thought explaining the reasons was excusing terrorism," he said.

While Beinín focuses much of his research on Egypt, the Arab-Israeli conflict is also prominent in his work. He believes that resolving it is essential for the well-being of the region, but isn't optimistic about the direction it is

heading. "Israel wants Arab governments and the Palestinian Authority to recognize its right to exist, but it isn't willing to talk about establishing a truly independent Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip with its capital in East Jerusalem. ... Can there be meaningful negotiations in those circumstances?" he asked.

Looking at the current state of the region and the various conflicts, Beinín sees the Arab-Israeli conflict as the most important. "Ultimately, the resolution of this conflict is required for development in the Arab world and in Israel too," he said. "It's the single biggest thing that could make things better."

Beinín's willingness to talk about and stand behind his views has drawn the spotlight on him at Stanford, causing professors and students alike to both praise and attack him. "I have not hesitated to express my opinion about the Arab-Israeli conflict. This is a big taboo in the United States, not so much in academia, but in the broader society," he said, adding that the media, politicians, religious leaders, policy-making bodies and even economic

powers, such as the arms industry, exert indirect and occasionally direct pressure on scholars. "As a PhD student, I was told not to write about the Arab-Israeli conflict," he said.

However, it is his outspokenness that has made him popular among students. Marwan Hanania, who is working on his doctorate at Stanford under Beinín's supervision, praises this quality. "His style is very direct," Hanania said. "He says it like it is and does not sugarcoat what he says. I find this approach to be refreshing because it's honest."

Indicating that it is more complex than just being on this side or the other, Hanania added, "Joel is unique because he has not been afraid to speak out against injustice even though this has neither won him many friends nor made his family and communal life any easier. While Joel has shown a commitment to issues such as alleviating the plight of the Palestinians, his views are complicated and, in my view, strengthened by the fact that he is not wedded to this or that ideology. ... He is critical of both Israelis and Palestinians when either side is wrong on a certain issue." □

# Brains *For* Brands

By Dalia Al Nimr  
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr



**Alumni working as brand managers share their experience in the marketplace and in their daily lives**



**W**ith the spurt of multinationals and private companies in Egypt, marketing has become a field of high-powered business. From brand managers and regional directors to consultants and advertising executives, AUC alumni have proven their capability in the fast-paced marketing arena.



Many alumni working in the field started off as brand managers, overseeing all aspects of a brand, from pricing and advertising to product delivery and packaging design. Shooting commercials, conducting consumer research, attending budgetary meetings and visiting the factory to check on the production line, the life of a brand manager is full of vigor and challenge. *AUCToday* spoke to several alumni who work as brand managers to find out what it takes to lead a brand to success and how their job has affected them on both a personal and professional level.





“A brand is a love mark — a lovable thing,” said Ihab Baligh ’98, senior brand manager for Ariel detergent in Egypt and Syria. “When you think of Starbucks coffee, you know it’s something you love, something you want apart from all the others. . . . When I look at my brand packs, I start imaging my own child.”

As part of his job, Baligh regularly travels to rural areas to watch how women use detergents. Those consumer visits, he noted, have opened his eyes to a side of Egypt he had not known before. “You spend days with lower-income families and at night go to sleep in the mayor’s house. You see how these people lead very simple lives, and it makes you feel that there is a whole world out there that we are not exposed to,” he said.

Even when he is not on the job, Baligh finds it difficult to switch off. When shopping with his family in the supermarket, he observes women in the detergents section. “My wife tells me they’ll think I’m flirting with them,” he said jokingly, “but I want to look at the way each woman approaches the product, turns the pack, puts it back and chooses another one. This is live voting.”

Working in the field for more than eight years, Baligh noted that his exposure to brand management actually started during his university days. “To me, the Student Union, Student Judicial Board, Model United Nations and other organizations on campus all represent brand names that have meaning to people,” he said. “When you meet sponsors, take part in activities and write petitions, you are selling an idea, and that’s what brand management is all about — making the first move and convincing people of what you want.”

Responsible for the Signal toothpaste brand and growth of the oral care category, Riem Fahmy ’99 has previously worked as senior brand manager for Axe and Rexona deodorants. In an effort to help build new consumer habits, Fahmy was part of a team that organized an educational campaign for children and teenagers. “We went to schools to educate them about the difference between anti-perspirants and deodorants and to encourage them to brush their teeth. I felt that what I was doing was important, not only to raise awareness about my brand, but mainly to help people understand about personal hygiene,” she said.

It’s not only children and youth that Fahmy interacts with, but adults as well, particularly women. Through consumer visits and market research, Fahmy saw how self-sacrificing Egyptian women are. “After marriage, Egyptian women’s main concerns are the household and children; they are very selfless. Personal products like deodorants become second and third priority,” she explained.

Nevertheless, Fahmy stressed that these lower-middle income class consumers still aspire to high-quality products that they are exposed to in the media. “That is the role of the brand manager, to dig into consumer habits and play on their aspirations and hidden desires,” she said.

When off the job, Fahmy feels she has developed a critical eye as a consumer. “Every time I go to the supermarket, I head directly to the aisles of the categories I work on, looking at prices, in-store promotions and new products on the shelf. When I flip through magazines, my eyes automatically look at advertisements. The difference is that I view things as a professional,” she said.





**F**or Mariam Moheb '99, product group manager for Lux franchise in the Middle East, anybody she meets is a consumer, even family and friends. "When I visit a friend's place, I pretend I want to go to the bathroom and the first thing I do is look at what soap bar they are using. I carry soap samples in the trunk of my car to give out to people, and when I go to restaurants, I put soap samples in the bathrooms. ... When you are a brand manager, your brand grows under your skin," she said.

Moheb noted that working as a brand manager has helped strengthen her problem-solving abilities. From the devaluation of the Egyptian pound and aggressive competition to the factory running out of a product and consumers not re-purchasing a brand, Moheb noted that each day at work is an adventure in itself. "You face problems and run out of traditional ways to solve them, so you have to be able to think outside the box," she said. "You operate with a plan, but have to always keep modifying your plan because things change in the market everyday."

Managing a multi-functional team of sales, advertising, research and production personnel, Moheb noted that her communication skills have grown tremendously. "Business is not easy, and with brand management, you must have a good business sense," she said. "You have to be able to influence, negotiate and manage others, and at the same time, sustain your brand and your team in difficult times. The level of energy, enthusiasm and passion that you bring to the job can either make it or break it for your brand."

**F**or Bassem Abdul Ghani '99, category manager for Juhayna dairy products, brand management is all about decision-making and vision. "You have to be able to take risks," he said. "You have to be quick and proactive in the face of competition. You own the flagship of the brand, and you are its champion. You have to lead other departments and units in order not to lose sight of the big picture."

Abdul Ghani started off as brand manager for Dove soap, an international brand, and after two years moved to Juhayna, a local company. To him, marketing a local brand provides more opportunities for innovation and creativity. "You have the ability to set the trend in the local market," he explained. "The brand becomes your own baby, and you shape it and reshape it the way you want without being limited with rules from abroad. There is a lot of room for trial and error, but that is part of the excitement that pours into your business."

This excitement is what makes the job unique for Abdul Ghani. "Because you are targeting people of different income levels, you always have to be alert and observant," he said, adding that a successful brand manager has to be all-pervading. "You have to go to summer resorts, stadiums, underdeveloped areas, supermarkets and grocery shops. You have to visit places like the Azhar Park and see how people with minimum budgets spend their time. You have to ride public transportation and listen to what people are talking about. This interaction with society is what will make you able to foresee opportunities in the market. It is also what makes the job fun." □





Queen Rania Al-Abdullah receiving a plaque from AUC President David Arnold in honor of the scholarship in her name

# Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Endowed Scholarship Established



Yusra Abdul Razik, member of the AUC Music Group, sings at the event

In honor of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al-Abdullah '91, AUC held a dinner in Amman, Jordan in January 2007. During the dinner, which was attended by alumni and friends from Jordan, Egypt, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, President David Arnold announced the establishment of an endowed scholarship fund in the name of Queen Rania to support female students from Jordan.

“We could not think of a better way to honor her majesty for her continuous efforts toward the development of the Arab region and to thank her for her commitment to education and creative educational initiatives than by establishing this important scholarship in her distinguished name,” said Arnold. He added that Queen Rania exemplified “what we look for in our alumni: academic excellence, leadership and a fierce sense of justice and devotion to public service.”

Queen Rania (formerly Rania Al-Yasin) was born in Kuwait, where she completed her primary and secondary education. In 1991, she received her bachelor’s in business administration from AUC and returned to Jordan to pursue a career in banking and information technology. In 1993, she married His Majesty King Abdullah bin Al-Hussein (then prince). She has stated that her primary role as queen is to partner with her husband in his efforts to improve the standard of living in Jordan and help transform the country into a modern civil society and model for the region. Her activities encompass issues such as education, health, youth and the environment.

The Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Endowed Scholarship Fund will offer a scholarship covering all tuition and living expenses to one female student from Jordan to study at AUC. The Queen Rania scholarship fund is one of many scholarships at AUC that are funded through individuals and corporations to ensure the recruitment of top-quality students regardless of their financial situation. AUC spends more than \$17 million annually to provide scholarships and financial assistance to students.

“AUC works closely with individuals and local corporations to raise funds for scholarships for students from Egypt and the Arab world. We share with local business and community leaders the desire to provide high-quality education to the best and brightest students from Egypt and the Arab region,” said Arnold.

The event was sponsored by Mohammad Abughazaleh '67, Wasef Jabsheh '67 and Ramzi Dalloul '59, as well as Aramex, Cozmo, Ernst & Young, the Arab Academy for Banking and Financial Services and the Central Bank of Jordan. □



Mary Iskander '76, Wasef Jabsheh '67 and Hana Jabsheh



Mrs. Zaid Al-Rifai, Sherry Arnold, President David Arnold, Inam Mufti '56 and Zaid Al-Rifai, speaker of the Jordanian senate and former prime minister of Jordan



AUC Trustee Moataz Al-Alfi, Mohammad Abughazaleh '67 and Ahmed Abughazaleh

# Alumni Gather at Media Reception

The alumni media reception provided a chance for journalism students to meet alumni who have become successful media professionals. During the event, four alumni were recognized for their accomplishments in the field.

After graduating from AUC, Laila Rustom was awarded a scholarship to pursue postgraduate training in journalism and advertising at Northwestern University. She began her career as an announcer on United Arab Republic Television. Her shows included the weekly *20 Questions Quiz Show*, *The Lighted Room* and *Meet Your Favorite Star*. She also presented the French news bulletin.

Throughout her career, Rustom interviewed numerous world political leaders and international stars. In the late 1960s, she moved to Lebanon, where she became host of the television show *Sahra Maa El Madi (An Evening with the Past)*.

In the wake of the Lebanese civil war, Rustom launched a show for Kuwait television, *Myth and Reality of Arab Conquests*. Later on, she presented another program for United Arab Emirates television named *Trial of the Arabs' Famous Political and Literary Figures*. In 1990, she became the *International Herald Tribune's* representative in Egypt, a position she holds until today.



A veteran of 19 years in television and print journalism and recipient of the President's Cup and the Mustafa and Ali Amin Journalism Prize, Lamees Al Hadidi '87 holds a number of key positions in the media. She is executive chief editor of *Al Alam El Youm* newspaper, senior business correspondent of Al Arabiya news channel and host of the television talk show *Itkallem (Speak Up)*.

Al Hadidi started her career working with leading news organizations such as NBC and *The New York Times*. She then became a regular contributor to *Sabah El Kheir* magazine in Egypt and soon after co-founded *Kol El Nas* magazine and *Al Alam El Youm* newspaper, the first Arab business daily.

Her television career started with the MBC Network in Dubai. She then became the Cairo business correspondent for the Al Jazeera network, and in 2003, was CNBC Arabiya's bureau chief.

In 2005, Al Hadidi was chosen by the World Economic Forum to be named Young Global Leader, becoming the first Arab female journalist to receive this title.

Nihal Saad '96 is dubbed by many as the Queen of Talk, famous for her widely recognized interviews with international figures, including Prince Charles of Wales and Microsoft's Bill Gates. Saad's reputation for asking hard-hitting questions has also earned her interviews with top politicians, including U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the late Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and former Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres. Her one-on-one interview with George W. Bush made her the first Arab television journalist to have interviewed an American president.

Saad is currently the host of two weekly political talk shows, *Cairo Watch* and *The View*, in addition to being the senior political correspondent, producer and talk show host at Egypt's Nile TV International.



Starting off as an active student during her undergraduate years at AUC, most notably with the student newspaper *Caravan*, Mona El Shazly '96 has quickly become one of the region's most popular presenters.

After graduation, El Shazly joined ART Italy, where she presented television programs targeted at Arabs living in the United States, Australia and Europe. In June 2005, she was recruited by Dream TV to host the popular show *Al Ashera Masaan (10 pm)*, which she continues to host today. Frequented by public figures, her show discusses timely issues and has been said to have a major influence on public opinion.





Top to bottom: Professor Emeritus Abdallah Schleifer addresses attendees; Businessman Omar El Derini meets with Amr Adeeb, host of Al Qahira Al Youm program on Orbit TV; alumni and students mingle at the media reception

# Alumni Connect ONLINE

To connect AUC graduates around the world, the newly launched alumni online community, a Web site exclusive for alumni, has made keeping in touch with classmates possible at the click of a mouse.

Accessible at <http://alumni.aucegypt.edu>, the community offers an array of Web-based services to AUC alumni. They are now able to locate their classmates through the online directory, read and submit class notes, register for alumni events in various countries, apply for a free AUC e-mail account and subscribe to the alumni e-newsletter. They are also able to review and update their own information.

"It's a way to strengthen the bond between alumni and their alma mater, and at the same time it gives a chance for alumni to stay in touch with each other no matter where they live," explained Kamal Fahmy, associate director for alumni information, who has been working on this project since 2005.

All alumni who wish to participate must register their names and contact information at the Web site, activating their account. They will then be able to update their profile online, choosing at all times what information to keep confidential.

"It's important for alumni to build and maintain relationships with one another, and in our modern age, online communication is the ideal means to do so," said Fahmy. "The more alumni who use the Web site, the more active and successful it will be."

Those who register will be eligible to win a trip for two at the Four Seasons Resort in Sharm El Sheikh, including airfare and accommodations for three nights. The drawing for the winner will be held at Homecoming 2007. (See front inside cover for details).

# Around the World

## United States



*Alumni gather at a reception held at the Boston Marriott Copley Place Hotel in November 2006*

In recognition of his achievements, David Bonderman '67 received the Distinguished Alumni Award during the Chairman's Reception held at the Harvard Club in New York in October 2006.

A 1966 graduate of Harvard Law School, Bonderman studied at AUC for one year. Today, he is the principal and founding partner of Texas Pacific Group (TPG) and its Asian affiliate, TPG Newbridge.

Prior to establishing TPG, Bonderman had a distinguished career that spanned a variety of fields. He was chief operating officer of the Robert M. Bass Group, a partner in the law firm of Arnold & Porter in Washington, D.C., a fellow in foreign and comparative law in conjunction with Harvard University, special assistant to the U.S. attorney general and assistant professor at Tulane University's School of Law.

Bonderman currently serves on the boards of several public companies, as well as non-governmental organizations such as the American Himalayan Foundation, World Wildlife Fund, Wilderness Society and Grand Canyon Trust.



## England



*President David Arnold; Mrs. Mona Madi, recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Volunteer Award; Sherry Arnold and Gehad Madi, Egypt's ambassador to the United Kingdom, at the alumni reception in London*



*Sir Derek Plumbly, the British ambassador to Egypt, and Lady Nadia Plumbly '77, '81*



*Nermine Harvey Phillips '78, Nevine Loutfy '74, Tarek Mooro '83, Sherif Wahba '85, President David Arnold, Youssef Hammad '91, Stephen Zinser, graduate of the Center for Arabic Study Abroad, and Mary Iskander '76 at a breakfast hosted by Mooro in his office at Heptagon Capital*

Jaweed Al-Ghussein '53 received the Distinguished Alumni Award during a reception held by Egypt's ambassador to the United Kingdom in October 2006.

A successful businessman, active promoter of peace and dialogue, and strong believer in education, Al-Ghussein studied economics at AUC. After graduation, Al-Ghussein moved to Kuwait, where he established the Cordoba Development Corporation, a construction and engineering company that is currently based in Abu Dhabi.

Al-Ghussein is also co-founder of the Next Century Foundation, a British non-governmental organization that aims to promote peace between adversaries, and the Welfare Association, a Palestinian charity organization that works to alleviate the plight of Palestinians by providing education and employment opportunities. In addition, Al-Ghussein, a Palestinian national, served as chairman of the Palestine National Fund and was a member of the Palestine Liberation Organization from 1984 to 1996.



## United Arab Emirates



*Alumni mingle at an iftar held in Bustan Rotana Hotel in October 2006*



## Qatar

*Alumni gather at an iftar held at the Diplomatic Club in October 2006. Abdul Aziz Dawoud, Egypt's ambassador to Qatar, was the guest of honor*

## Egypt

*Freshman and senior students meet at an iftar held on campus in October 2006. The gathering was a venue for launching the new Connecting Alumni and Students Team initiative*



# Class Notes

'44

**Claude Feninger** recently published his memoirs in a book titled *Sang Froid*, which talks about his experience managing and building international hotels in various Arab countries and worldwide. The book also gives a behind-the-scenes account of the 1952 burning of Shephard Hotel in Cairo, where Feninger started his career.

'60

**Anna Martin** is a social worker in Gaston County's social services department. She went to the United States in 1964 and received an MEd degree from Springfield College in Massachusetts. She was a teacher at Winston-Salem in North Carolina for eight years. Martin has two adult children and one grandchild.

'71

**Mervat Hatem** (MA '75) is a political science professor at Howard University in Washington, D.C. She was recently elected as president of the Middle East Studies Association in North America.

'77

**Husam Hazboun** left Qatar in August 2006 and relocated to Amman, Jordan. He is working with Shell Petroleum, Middle East and Africa.

'86

**Hala Afify** teaches English as a second language at a college in the United Kingdom and offers support for students with learning difficulties. After graduation, Afify got married and moved to New York, where she earned a degree with highest honors in Near Eastern history and literature from

## *Eltahawy: Journalists Can Change the World*

An award-winning New York-based journalist, commentator and international lecturer on Arab and Muslim issues, Mona Eltahawy '90, '92 has a passion for her job. "I cannot imagine being anything else but a journalist, and I cannot imagine any other time I would rather be a journalist than today," said Eltahawy when she returned to AUC recently as a distinguished visiting professor.

Eltahawy moved with her family to the United Kingdom at the age of 7, to Saudi Arabia as a teenager and later to Egypt, Israel and Libya as a Reuters correspondent, covering major stories in the Middle East for a decade. She also reported for *The Guardian* and worked as a stringer for *U.S. News & World Report*.

A strong believer in journalists' ability to change the world, Eltahawy describes the late Iraqi female reporter Atwar Bahjat as her "hero" and model of valiant dedication and unbiased reporting. Bahjat was abducted and killed while covering the sectarian violence in Samara, Iraq.

After 9/11, Eltahawy left news reporting and became an opinion columnist. "Because I couldn't be objective about what was happening," she said, describing herself as a moderate, secular Muslim.

Over the past years, Eltahawy has been active in condemning terrorism while also fighting stereotypes, particularly those pertaining to Arab Muslim women and "bearded men in Pakistan." She regularly appears on television and radio talk shows as a guest analyst. Her opinion editorials are featured in prominent U.S. and Arab publications such as *The Washington Post*, *International Herald Tribune*, the pan-Arab *Asharq Al-Awsat*, Lebanon's *Daily Star*, *The New York Times* and *Christian Science Monitor*.

In 2006, Eltahawy was awarded the Cutting Edge Prize by the London-based Next Century Foundation for her distinguished contribution to the coverage of the Middle East and in recognition of her "continuing efforts to sustain standards of journalism that would help reduce levels of misunderstanding." In addition, she recently became a columnist for the Danish daily newspaper *Politiken* and the online commentary site [www.saudidebate.com](http://www.saudidebate.com). She is also currently working on a book about Muslims living in Denmark.

For a podcast of Eltahawy's lecture at AUC, "Does a Journalist Change the World or Does the World Change the Journalist," visit [www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm](http://www.aucegypt.edu/resources/smc/webcasts/index.cfm)



*Eltahawy speaking at AUC in November 2006*

New York University. She worked as a teaching assistant for two years.

**'87**

**Soha Sadek** (MSc '89) works for a consulting group and lives in the San Francisco Bay area. In 1994, she received a scholarship from the University of Miami to complete her doctorate. She is married and has two daughters, Hana, 9, and Neda, 7. She would love to hear from her colleagues at [soha@athanasios.com](mailto:soha@athanasios.com)

**'92**

**Akram El-Husseiny** is director of the Catalonian Trade Promotion Center in Egypt and coordinator of the trade enhancement program. He was blessed with a baby boy, Omar, who was born in Barcelona, Spain in November 2006. He also has a girl.

**'93**

**Miral Fahmy** has been working with Reuters news agency across Europe and the Middle East for 12 years. She has recently been posted to Singapore as the region's lifestyle and entertainment correspondent. She is privileged to be the first person from the Middle East to get a journalism job with Reuters in Asia.

**Nihal El Daly** (MBA '97) is the first female marketing director for Unilever Egypt, managing the food and beverages portfolio. She returned from Dubai with her husband, Khaled El Gibaly '85, where she was the regional marketing manager for Unilever, handling hair care for North Africa, the Middle East and Turkey. The couple was recently blessed with a baby boy, Iyad.

**'95**

**Shahira Tewfik** is director of public affairs at the National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce in Washington, D.C. Her job involves dealing with trade and investment issues that promote relations between the United States and the Arab world, while trying to rectify controversial issues that hinder commercial relations between the two governments. She has been fortunate to meet and reconnect with many AUC alumni living in the Washington, D.C. area. Tewfik is married and has two children, Sharif and Jenin.

**'96**

**Bassem El Baiady** is senior support engineer at Oracle Global Support Center in the Smart Village. After graduation, he joined Pyramid Systems Development as a software developer for three years. He also worked with Vodafone as a business analyst for six years.

**Nadia Bishai** pursued graduate studies in engineering at Cornell University and received her MBA from Harvard Business School. In 2002, she joined Bunge Global Markets, an international agribusiness company, as business project manager based in New York. Bishai also worked with the company in Geneva, Switzerland and Sao Paulo, Brazil before moving back to New York in 2005. She is currently involved with the Rome office as a project manager for investments in Egypt, Morocco and Romania.

**'97**

**Bassam Sabry** married Noha Kerkor '01 and they have a son, Farid, 3. They are currently living in Poland. Sabry is on expatriate assignment, and Kerkor

works part-time at Procter & Gamble. They are eagerly following AUC news, particularly pertaining to the new campus. They would love to stay in touch with their friends and colleagues via e-mail [sabryb2@gmail.com](mailto:sabryb2@gmail.com)

**'98**

**Dina El Masry** is married and has a boy, Mostafa, 6.

**Mohamed Abdul Fattah** recently earned his MBA in Internet strategic planning and is working as a management consultant and board member of a British Internet company. He has also completed an international certificate in corporate training. He gives training courses in Egypt and the Gulf on time management, planning, leadership and organizational development.

**'00**

**Niraj Dawadi** works as a human rights officer at the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal, one of the largest missions in the world. He first worked with the United Nations Development Programme in a capacity development project at the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal. After graduating from AUC, he won a Japanese government scholarship to do his master's in international relations, which he completed in 2002. Afterwards, Dawadi moved to Nepal where he has been working in human rights capacity development. He has been working for the past three years on the drafting of the peace agreement in Nepal.

**'01**

**Merit Al-Sayed** is currently in charge

of dealer development and special projects at BMW, Egypt. After graduating with honors in 2001, she pursued her MBA at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland.

### '03

**Sarah Al Mojaddidi** attended the first Euro-Mediterranean Journalism Institute that was held in Athens in September 2006. Al Mojaddidi is the regional representative coordinator at AUC's alumni office.

### '04

**Miray Zaki** has been working for LinkdotNet as senior systems analyst and consultant since graduation. In September 2006, she began her MBA at the University of Chicago.

**Mohamed Haggag** is the regional export manager for North European

and American countries at Oriental Weavers. Haggag hopes to pursue his master's at AUC.

**Nada Abdul Basset** (MPA) is currently pursuing her doctoral studies on change management in the Egyptian civil service at the University of Stirling in the United Kingdom. She is also representative of the Central Scotland Arab Community in Stirling. After graduation, she worked at AUC until September 2005.

### *Special Programs*

**Charles Maher** (ALU '91) and his wife Colette were blessed with a baby girl, Maeve. She was born in Hawaii on August 1, 2006 while Maher was deployed as the executive officer on a U.S. fast-attack

submarine. Maher and his family returned to Pearl Harbor in September following a six-month deployment in the Western Pacific. They will move to Newport, Rhode Island, where he will attend the Navy War College. He has been recently promoted to the rank of commander.

### *In Memoriam*

Ghaleb El Farouki '33 died in Amman on November 30, 2006.

Peter Paul Estiban '57 died in Cairo on December 3, 2006.

Laila Fawzi Guirguis '74 died in London on November 29, 2006.

Amgad Elhamy Morcos Hanna '99 died on October 24, 2006.

## *Weddings*



*Marwa Haféz '97 (MBA '98) was married to engineer Aly Galal at the Conrad Hotel in Cairo on August 9, 2006. The couple is currently living in Doha, Qatar*



*Sarah Moustafa '02 was married to Mohamed Salaheldin Sedky on April 30, 2005 at the Cairo Marriott Hotel. The couple spent their honeymoon in Marbella, Spain*

## Crossing Cultures

**I**n this day and age, it is very important to maintain global ties, and participating in international conventions and workshops abroad is a perfect way to start.

Last September, I represented Egypt in the first Euro-Mediterranean Journalism Institute (EMJI) held in Athens. Aside from providing an excellent introduction to Greece and the politics of southeast Europe, the conference was also an opportunity to network with fellow journalists from 25 countries across the globe. This was extremely rewarding for me.

While I was in Athens, it brought me so much joy that I was able to connect with my peers and overcome our cultural differences by discussing our norms and traditions. I received ample compliments about my presentation and interpersonal skills, as well as my ability to convey my message. People were impressed that I connected well with journalists of different origins and that I was eager to understand their points of view when it came to religion, politics and global corruption. I knew then that I was blessed to have spent my college years at AUC.

Being at AUC has helped transform my former shy and timid identity and veered me toward being versatile and outgoing — two invaluable assets in journalism. As an undergraduate, I judged our student-run academic conferences in haste. While I was a sophomore, I saw no value in participating. However, during my final semesters at AUC, I decided to get involved and attended most of them. Looking back now, the Model United Nations, Model Arab League, International Student Leadership Conference and other student-run activities on campus have all served as training ground for us to be able to take part in professional, cross-cultural events such as EMJI.



*Al Mojaddidi in Athens, Greece*

These activities helped shape who we are today.

Even before EMJI, I was blessed to have had plentiful chances of immersing myself in the midst of diverse communities. I was born and raised in Saudi Arabia and moved to Cairo in pursuit of an amazing educational experience offered to me by AUC. Afterward, I traveled alone to a little town in France called Royan, without speaking a word of French, and I acquired the language after living there for a year. Then when I least expected it, I received a call to participate in EMJI.

My experience in Athens helped open my eyes to what the real world is all about. When we were students, life was all about grades and doing well on exams. When we graduate, however, the picture changes completely. We are faced with a steady stream of responsibilities and expectations, and there are no A's or C's in the real world. It's your skills and ability to handle situations that count. Life is an ongoing journey, and we must not fear transition or neglect a challenge. We must follow our dreams even if society shuns them. That is the only way we will succeed.

*Sarah Al Mojaddidi '03 is the regional representative coordinator at AUC's alumni office.*

*Akher Kalam is an open forum for members of the AUC community. We invite you to share your thoughts on any topic of your choice. Submissions should be sent to [auctoday@aucegypt.edu](mailto:auctoday@aucegypt.edu) and may be edited for length and clarity.*