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Editor's Notes

Alumni at the Forefront

It's always a pleasure to talk about fellow alumni and where they are now. In this issue, we feature examples of AUC alumni who have stood out and excelled in their fields. Ethar El-Katatney '07 ("A Reporter Without Borders," page 14), who entered AUC at the young age of 15 and is currently studying for a dual master's degree at the university, is the first Egyptian to win in CNN's African Journalist of the Year competition. Nevine Loutfy '74 ("A Career of Firsts," page 25), the first woman in the Arab world to head an Islamic bank, is spearheading the difficult mission of reforming the National Bank for Development, which was in a loss situation, and transforming it into an institution compliant with Islamic sharia. In addition, Galal El Hadidi '05, '07 ("Hitting a High Note," page 39), the youngest singer to join the Cairo Opera Company, is studying for a Master of Music degree at Yale's School of Music and has been an opera singer in numerous countries worldwide.

Theatre lovers will be excited to hear about the new Alumni Community Theatre group (see "Act One," page 20). Bringing together approximately 40 alumni who share a passion for theatre, members of the group handle the whole process, from performing, directing and fundraising to stage management, production and design. Still in its first year, the group has performed two productions in different theatre venues throughout Cairo, including churches, bookstores, gardens, and of course, their alma mater. Despite the fact that many of them have their own jobs and have to drive straight from work for late-night rehearsals, they are persistent on achieving their goal of becoming a recognized alumni theatre group in Egypt, giving back good theatre to the community and relaying what they've learned through theatre and improvisation workshops.

It makes me proud to see such examples of AUC alumni who are making a mark. This all comes to show that whatever field you are in, if you work with passion and commitment, you are bound to achieve something.



Dalia Al Nimr

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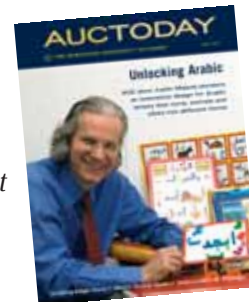
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AUCToday Mail

I would like to congratulate you on such a great issue. I have read *AUC Today* Fall 2009, and I'm very impressed. I read the article by Peter Wieben about Majzub's Abjad system and thought it was very interesting. I would like to ask you if you could give me a way to contact Mr. Majzub. I am a mass communication student at AUC.

Reem Gehad, Egypt



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I finished reading the *AUCToday* Fall 2009 issue. I liked the vignette about the year-abroaders who planted a tree and the final story about the alumna who works for the United Nations. I loved the article about the new Arabic learning technique. I probably need to invest in one of those Abjad Arabic learning sets.

Kristi Beres (YAB '95), United States

Inside AUC, Monthly Alumni E-newsletter



As the university gears up to the upcoming alumni weekend, wouldn't it be nice if the alumni wall was unveiled as part of the celebrations? I understand the construction of the wall in its new location will be completed this spring, coinciding, hopefully, with the start of the alumni weekend. If so, wouldn't it be fitting that, on their exciting homecoming, alumni guests are given the unique opportunity of viewing the wall with, I am sure, its many wonderful inscriptions that fellow AUCians have chosen as their means of honoring those named on the wall?

Motaz Derhalli '62, Canada

Ed — *AUCToday* checked with AUC's development office. Plans are underway for the construction of the alumni wall in the University Garden. When complete, the wall will bear more than 1,700 inscribed bricks. An exact completion date has not yet been set, but *AUCToday* will follow up and keep you posted of this important milestone. Many alumni contributed to the university by naming bricks, and a special area in the AUC garden has been dedicated to commemorate this generosity. This area is located at the highest point in the garden, adjoining the student housing complex and the conference center. It includes seating and landscaping.

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 or Editor, *AUCToday*, Office of Communications and Marketing, AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74, New Cairo 11835, Egypt



Al-Misnad during the Knowledge Society Symposium held by AUC in 2005

Leading Qatari Educator Named to Board of Trustees

AUC recently appointed leading Qatari educator and the president of the University of Qatar, Professor Sheikha Abdulla Al-Misnad, as a member of its Board of Trustees.

Prior to serving as president of the University of Qatar in 2003, Professor Al-Misnad held positions in teaching, administration and research at the

university, including the posts of vice president for research and community development, head of the Department of Foundations of Education and head of the University Council.

Professor Al-Misnad received her Bachelor of Arts in education from the University of Qatar, as well as a diploma in education and her PhD from Durham University in the United Kingdom. She has also been awarded an honorary doctorate in civil law by Durham University in recognition of her outstanding achievements in the field of education.

Al-Misnad has played an important role in the reform of primary, secondary and private education in Qatar. She is a member of the Supreme Educational Council that

oversees the reform of publicly funded education with the aim of establishing progressive and modern independent schools that are privately operated, but publicly funded.

B. Boyd Hight, chairman of AUC's Board of Trustees, said that Al-Misnad will provide unique counsel as a member of the university's board. "Professor Sheikha Al-Misnad's professional experience in education and educational reform in the Arab region will provide AUC's Board of Trustees with invaluable expertise in that field," said Hight. "In addition, she will play a vital role in advancing AUC's mission to serve the region in providing quality education to the next generation of leaders in the Arab world."

School of Continuing Education Appoints New Dean

Charles Norman has been named dean of the School of Continuing Education. Norman joins AUC from the University of Tennessee, where he held numerous positions, including dean, vice chancellor and special assistant to the executive vice president of the University of Tennessee state system.

Norman received his bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University, where he studied plant and soil science with a minor in political science and education. After receiving his master's in agricultural extension education, he went on to earn a PhD in educational leadership, both at the University of Georgia. When asked about his dual interests in agriculture and education, he said, "While I have stayed involved in agriculture programs throughout my career, all my leadership and management positions have been educationally focused and community based."

His previous experience includes work on public-policy grants, statewide outreach programs for the University of Tennessee and distance-learning programs at the University of Georgia. Looking forward to his new role at AUC, Norman said, "The School of Continuing Education has tremendous potential since it is already so respected and well-connected to the community. I am excited to work with people to accomplish the school's goals in the community."



Queen Rania Speaks at AUC

An alumna and a global advocate for community empowerment, Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah '91 of Jordan recently spoke at AUC about the importance of civic engagement in the Arab region and the role it can play in improving lives and ensuring progress. In her address, she called on the next

generation of young Arabs who have benefited from higher education to accept their obligation to advance their societies.

AUC President David D. Arnold noted that Queen Rania stands as a role model for young people around the globe, pointing out that she chose “a life of service and volunteer leadership on behalf of others,” and that her example stands “as a testament to all the best qualities that we wish our graduates to strive for.”

In her address, Queen Rania pointed out that civic engagement is rooted in Arab culture and that now is the time to revive it again and fuse fresh energy into it. She referred to the story of the founder of Alashanek ya Balady, Raghda El Ebrashi '04, '07, who at the age of 12 was inspired by a poor woman to start her foundation. The queen underscored how this story can serve as an example to be emulated by many others, saying that in “each and every one of us is the ability to look beyond ourselves. Civic engagement is about leaving the four walls of your life and looking up.” Queen Rania ended her talk by calling for action and change. “What are we waiting for? None of us can hope to fix everything, but each of us can do something,” she said, adding that people should not wait for governments to act. Civic engagement, she explained, “is a path to enlightenment” and even though it is not enough to elevate a country’s status, it is an indispensable part of it.

Barbara Ibrahim, director of the John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement, which organized the event, noted, “Her Majesty Queen Rania is a role model for those who believe that no matter how young one may be, determination and vision can result in important impact on our region and the reforms that are so urgently needed.”

To watch Queen Rania’s lecture on YouTube, visit www.youtube.com/auc.



Galal Amin Wins Arab Culture Award

Galal Amin, professor of economics, has received the Sultan Bin Al Owais Cultural Foundation Award, which recognizes distinguished works and rich contributions to Arab culture. Amin’s award was for the humanitarian and futuristic studies section in recognition of his contributions to economics, politics, community and culture.

“I felt quite honored and very happy to get this prestigious award, which is probably the most distinguished cultural prize in the Arab world,” said Amin. “It is really a very big boost to me.”

Amin is also the recipient of the Award for Economics from the Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science; Order of Merit for the Sciences and Arts from the President of Egypt; and the State Prize for Economics (Egypt).

Capital Campaign Raises \$125 Million

To celebrate the successful end of its comprehensive capital campaign, AUC held a Founders' Dinner to honor major contributors. The campaign, which was officially launched in 2003, raised funds to build the New Cairo campus, improve the quality of education the university can offer, increase the number of scholarships based on academic excellence and financial need, as well as recruit high-quality faculty. The campaign has gone beyond its \$100 million target, raising almost \$125 million, of which more than half went to the establishment of AUC New Cairo.

Alumni played an active role in the campaign. The number of alumni donors amounted to 4,342, contributing more than \$46 million. This represents the largest constituency in the number of donors, which totalled 6,830, and the second largest in the total amount donated. Seventy-one percent of the donors came from Egypt, followed by North America. There were also donations from the Gulf and other countries.

New PhD Program Begins

The university has introduced its first PhD program in the School of Sciences and Engineering (SSE). The program will offer PhD degrees in applied sciences with specializations in nanotechnology, biotechnology and computer science; and in engineering with specializations in mechanical, construction, electronics and environmental engineering.

"This is an important milestone for AUC," said AUC Provost Lisa Anderson. "It took five years of hard work and research to set up the criteria for this program. We investigated every single detail to make sure everything would go well -- faculty, facilities, accreditation, library and external funding."

According to Medhat Haroun, SSE dean, "Surveys conducted by the university showed that there is strong interest from well-qualified students to pursue PhD degrees at AUC. In fact, there is a real shortage in the number of highly qualified scientists at the doctoral level in fields such as biotechnology, bioinformatics, nanotechnology, information technology and cutting-edge engineering applications. AUC has opportunities to build human capacity in these disciplines and to address the shortage in highly qualified faculty members in the region."

In his remarks at the PhD launch, Haroun noted that there are several factors that prompted the introduction of the PhD program. These include the strength of existing SSE master's programs and the recent introduction of new innovative graduate programs in biotechnology, nanotechnology and food chemistry. In addition, the PhD program complements the strong foundation of



AUC's biotechnology graduate students will benefit from the new PhD program in the field

SSE undergraduate studies and the international accreditation the school received from ABET, a recognized U.S. accrediting body for university programs in computing, engineering, technology and applied science. Haroun also credited faculty members at the School of Sciences and Engineering for their combined excellence and contributions to important ongoing research.

According to Amr Shaarawi, associate dean for graduate studies and research, the PhD program is open for students with MSc degrees from recognized schools. "We anticipate PhD students to receive their degrees in four years," he said, explaining that the program will start with 10 students in the first year, and five additional new students per year, until reaching sustained enrollment of 25 students. "We are selecting a small number of students on purpose," Shaarawi explained. "We want to guarantee quality, and it is important for us to do it well with a great deal of professionalism."

AUC Launches Three New Schools

In two separate ceremonies held at AUC New Cairo, the university launched its new School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) and the School of Business (BUS), as well as the Graduate School of Education (GSE). Although the three schools have been operational since last fall, the ceremonies marked the official launch, and were attended by Egyptian and international dignitaries.

GAPP is composed of three academic departments: law, public policy and administration, and journalism and mass communication. The school also includes five research centers and programs covering a wide range of topics including gender and women's studies, electronic journalism, Middle East studies, American studies, as well as migration and refugee studies. Highlighting the importance of the school's programs, Ambassador Nabil Fahmy '74, '77, founding dean of GAPP, noted that in today's world, the global community needs to "empower itself with inclusive multidisciplinary thinking, tolerance for others and a global outlook to the policy issues it faces."

BUS is made up of three departments: economics, management and accounting. It also includes the Management Center, as well as multiple executive education

and research centers. In 2006, the school received accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International, making it one of only 5 percent of all business schools in the world to receive such accreditation. "The School of Business is extremely ambitious, and our goal is to claim a rank among the world's top 100 schools," said Sherif Kamel '88, '90, dean of BUS.

GSE offers professional educator diploma programs in five areas: educational leadership, early literacy education, teaching diverse learners, integrated educational technology for classroom teachers and teaching for non-education majors. The school also offers parenting courses to Egyptian families, and a master's program in international and comparative education will begin in Fall 2010. In addition, the school's Middle East Institute of Higher Education targets research, policy dialogue and capacity building for post-secondary institutions worldwide. "With this school, we have an opportunity to bring the best education research, practices and perspectives in the world to Egypt," said AUC Provost Lisa Anderson.

To watch the events on YouTube, visit www.youtube.com/auc.

Amre Moussa Delivers Nadia Younes Lecture

As part of the annual Nadia Younes Memorial Lecture, in remembrance of Nadia Younes who tragically lost her life in 2003 while serving as the chief of staff for the special representative of the UN secretary-general in Iraq, Amre Moussa, secretary-general of the League of Arab States, delivered a public lecture on international service. Explaining the risks and challenges facing the United Nations, Moussa spoke about the instrumental role international organizations and international law must play in alleviating the conflicts in the region, such as the war in Iraq and the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as in combating global crises like climate change, food security and water shortage.

"It is detrimental to stability to marginalize the United Nations," Moussa noted. "In the Middle East, we continue to feel this marginalization, especially in the failure of the UN Security Council to seek a just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the rights of the Palestinian people." Because the United Nations serves as a vehicle committed to fairness, justice and international principles of human rights, Moussa urged students to champion its cause. "As days pass by, I feel more and more that my generation will not be able to solve this conflict," he said. "You need to know what awaits you. We have failed time and again, and it's because of the marginalization of the United Nations."

To watch Amre Moussa's lecture on YouTube, visit www.youtube.com/auc.



LEAD Student Receives Moataz Al Alfi Award for Philanthropy

Hagar Ibrahim, computer science junior in AUC's Leadership for Education and Development program, received the Moataz Al Alfi Award for Excellence in Civic Engagement and Philanthropy.

Offered by Al Alfi Foundation for Human and Social Development, the award was established by prominent philanthropist, business leader and Vice Chairman of AUC's Board of Trustees Moataz Al Alfi to recognize an undergraduate junior who balances academic achievement with leadership in philanthropy and service to the broader community. The award, which has both a financial and a mentoring component, requires candidates to submit a proposal identifying a key issue in society and provide a potential solution or campaign. Ibrahim's project is to develop a software engineering company, where she will employ 20 students from local public high schools as interns to provide them with training in computer programming.

"To be a good programmer in Egypt is not an easy thing; it is a very competitive field," said Ibrahim. "I was hoping to find the place where I can develop my skills and gain the knowledge and experience to become a professional programmer. I want to provide public school students this opportunity because I believe they all have high potential if guided in the right direction with proper training and experience."

In addition to community-service work on campus, Ibrahim also participated in off-campus activities, including volunteering with Bibliotheca Alexandrina and the Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement. She was also secretary-general of the Alexandria International Model United Nations, a speaker and moderator at the Islamic conference youth forum, and a study-abroad student at Portland State University in the United States.



Students Awarded First Prize for Emotion Recognition Project

AUC engineering students received first prize at the 11th International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and Accessibility for their project on assistive technologies for individuals on the autism spectrum. The project, part of the Affective Computing research group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) Media Laboratory, creates a wearable system designed to recognize a person's emotions through analyzing facial expressions in a video.

The project was co-authored by Abdelrahman Mahmoud, AUC computer engineering senior; Youssef Kashef, AUC electronics engineering senior; and Mish Madsen, graduate student at the MIT Media Laboratory. The project was supervised by Rana El Kaliouby '98, '00, who currently holds a research scientist position at MIT.

The three-year project at MIT is funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and aims to develop a

wearable social-emotional system to help autistic individuals improve their communication abilities by detecting the social cues of others. It is currently being piloted at the Groden Center, a school for autism spectrum disorders in the United States. "[The research] is human centered so it is not just about computers and machines. People actually benefit from it," said Kashef.



Kashef and Mahmoud

AUC Launches Arabic Web Site, Magazine

As part of its outreach to the Arabic-speaking community, AUC launched a new Web site in Arabic. The site will serve as the communication hub for all Arabic content, including the biannual magazine, *In Arabic*, which includes Arabic articles covering topics such as faculty research, alumni achievements and community outreach. This new initiative and AUC's Arabic Facebook page allow Arabic speakers to gain access to information about academic and research activities, cultural events and university news.

Describing the importance of this initiative, Moataz Al Alfi, vice chairman of the university's Board of Trustees, noted, "Despite the pivotal role that AUC has played throughout the years in education and service, its connection with the Arabic-speaking community needed endorsement. Therefore, it was imperative to find a channel of communication between the university and the different constituents of the Arabic-speaking community because AUC is a vital bridge between East and West, connecting Egypt and the region with the world at large."

The Arabic Web site includes pages currently available on the English version of the AUC Web site that are relevant to the Arabic-speaking community. The site will also promote public events that are in Arabic or feature Arabic translation.



Library Receives 20,000 Volumes of Rare Books Collection

The Rare Books and Special Collections Library recently received a 20,000-volume book collection from philosophy professor Father Pierre Riches.

An Italian priest, Riches was born in Alexandria, Egypt. Describing his affinity with the city, he noted, "I feel very connected to Alexandria, belonging and a product of that very particular place that Alexandria was from approximately 1880 to 1945 or so -- insulated, cosmopolitan, very particular and non-repeatable."

Having completed his studies at Victoria College, Riches acquired his master's in philosophy from Cambridge University and his doctorate in theology from the Pontifical Lateran University in Italy. Riches held visiting professorships at Loyola University, at both the Chicago and Rome campuses, and at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. He has also lectured in the philosophy department of Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

The assorted works, which come in a variety of languages, represent numerous genres including rare and first-edition books and manuscripts; books signed by their authors; political and historical tracts; pieces on fine arts, cinema and photography; as well as thousands of novels, short stories, plays, philosophical treatises and books of poetry. "The

wealth of this collection from an intellectual perspective alone demonstrates the absolute boon it will be to AUC students, faculty and researchers," said Philip Croom, associate dean of the rare books library. "These works represent a real treasure trove."

Riches's extensive collection is the combination of works that he has collected throughout his life, including gifts from well-known literary friends and books bequeathed to him by family members. Explaining why he chose AUC, Riches noted, "They have enough books in Europe and not enough in Egypt, so I hope these books have an educative effect."

AUC Trustee Sadek Wahba '87, managing director of the U.S.-based Morgan Stanley who donated the shipping costs, explained the importance of such a collection to the university. "This gift attests to the important intellectual role AUC plays in the region, bridging cultures and providing the students with a true liberal arts education."

Sharing the same viewpoint, Catarina Belo, assistant professor of philosophy at AUC, added, "This extraordinarily generous gift, for which the philosophy department is most grateful, will significantly boost the library holdings in philosophy and greatly assist our faculty, students and visitors with their academic work and scholarly interests."

Provost Starts New Lecture Series

Provost Lisa Anderson established a new series of lectures at the university that will provide AUC professors with the opportunity to showcase their research and scholarship to faculty and students, as well as the Egyptian community at large. Anderson noted that AUC's faculty includes prominent scholars from around the world and that much of the research taking place by faculty members is being recognized globally. "We hope that this begins a series of dialogues with the bigger society which we are part of," said Anderson. "We would like it to be reciprocal, so that people would not only get the chance to see our faculty, but they would also be able to follow up with their research."

Each semester, the provost will host four lectures — three in English and one in Arabic. Translation will be provided for all lectures. For the Spring 2010 semester, Ali Hadi, vice provost and professor of mathematics and actuarial science, will deliver a lecture on May 5 titled "Visualizing Data Beyond Three-Dimensions: An Introduction to the Visualization of Massive, High-Dimensional Data." Other faculty members who gave lectures this semester include Ambassador Nabil Fahmy '74, '77, dean of AUC's School of Global Affairs and Public Policy; Galal Amin, professor of economics and renowned author; and Salima Ikram, professor of Egyptology and leading scholar in Egyptian funerary archaeology.

To watch the Provost's Lecture series on YouTube, visit www.youtube.com/auc.



Ambassador Nabil Fahmy



Professor Galal Amin



Vice Provost Ali Hadi



Professor Salima Ikram

AUSACE Conference Draws Prominent Media Scholars

Under the theme Innovative Media in a Changing Middle East, AUC hosted the 14th annual Arab-U.S. Association for Communication Educators Conference (AUSACE). The main objective of the conference was to provide a forum for communication educators, students and media professionals throughout the Middle East, the United States and the rest of the world to discuss the innovation of media and its ongoing, uneven impact on a changing region.

"This is a valuable opportunity to share ideas and exchange lessons and to encourage and promote cross-cultural, intellectual and scientific dialogue," said Naila Hamdy, chair of AUC's journalism and mass communication department and AUSACE president.

The conference was attended by a large number of media academics and scholars from different Egyptian and Arab institutions, including AUC, as well as Cairo, Ain Shams, Suhag, Kuwait, Lebanese, Sharjah and Algeria universities. It was also attended by media professors from the United States, Europe and Asia.

Community Catalyst

Salah Arafa named Man of the Year for Environment and Development

Salah Arafa, physics professor at AUC, has been selected Man of the Year for Environment and Development by the Society of Writers on Environment and Development. Arafa researches how to utilize natural resources to create eco-friendly communities in rural villages, which will develop capacity and competency for residents of rural areas. One of Arafa's projects, Basaisa, has gained wide recognition as a model for successful sustainable development projects in Egypt.

Established in 1996 by renowned Egyptian journalist Salama Ahmed Salama, the Society of Writers on Environment and Development honors experts who had an impact on environmental development. The society's goal is to develop the capabilities of journalists working in the environmental field and to raise awareness on environmental issues. "Professor Salah Arafa is the leading pioneer in environmental development in Egypt," said Susan Zaki, the society's secretary-general. "The society honors him for his distinguished role in achieving sustainable development in rural Egypt. He was the first to use solar energy and recycling in rural areas,

and was the first to develop the capacity of young people living in rural areas and to empower rural women through offering appropriate training and job opportunities that are compatible with their way of life."

In 1974, Arafa decided to go beyond the boundaries of a university and work in a small village in the Sharkia governorate. At the time, he was working alone without funds or supporters. Every Friday, he would travel to this remote village, Basaisa, to work with residents on improving living conditions. By utilizing local resources and engaging all of the residents of the village, Arafa created an "integrated approach to development." His program included training sessions in agriculture, efficient use of natural resources, literacy, group collaboration, creative thinking and community building. Today, as a result of Arafa's efforts, Basaisa has been transformed from a poor and marginalized village to an eco-friendly community for sustainable development.

Through open dialogue and dedication, Arafa was able to encourage the residents of Basaisa to work with him to reduce illiteracy rates, educate women, as well as



Ahmad El-Nemr

guide youth and farmers. After a couple of years of working independently, AUC students, friends and colleagues joined Arafa in this mission. "When people started to learn about what I was doing in Basaisa, they became enthusiastic and wanted to participate so that they could direct their efforts toward sustainable development," Arafa explained. "In the end, everyone found something to contribute and a way to share in the responsibility of this project."

Arafa also started a project in 1992 in New Basaisa, a small desert community in Ras Sudr, South Sinai governorate. "When we went to the new village, we introduced new technologies, such as recycling of agricultural waste to produce biogas, and solar energy for producing electricity and heat," Arafa said. "With 28 young men, we were able to create a new eco-desert community that is ecologically and environmentally friendly. It was difficult, but possible." □

By Doaa Farag

Georges Abi-Saab, professor emeritus of international law at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, speaking at the graduate commencement



A Celebration of Success



Nadine Hagar, biology major, recipient of the President's Cup



Center: Mahmoud El Lozy '76, '79 receiving the Excellence in Research and Creative Endeavors Award; bottom: Mohamed Shafik Gabr '73 receiving a plaque from AUC President David D. Arnold



Hassan Azzazy, chair of the chemistry department, receiving the Excellence in Teaching Award

Graduates and faculty members honored at AUC's 87th commencement ceremony

Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr

Held in AUC New Cairo's ARTOC Sports Court, the university celebrated its 87th undergraduate commencement ceremony with the presentation of 411 bachelor's degrees.

Delivering the keynote address on behalf of Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif, Minister of Higher Education and Minister of State for Scientific Research Hany Helal focused on the role of AUC in promoting science and

technology in Egypt. “We are all expecting that AUC will continue its contribution to develop the leaders that Egypt needs,” he said. “In research, AUC is a catalyst and partner in science and technology, engaged in a new kind of cultural diplomacy.”

AUC Trustee Ahmed Zewail, U.S. science envoy and member of President Barack Obama’s Council on Science and Technology, also briefly offered advice to the new graduates. “On your way up the ladder of success, do not forget those who cannot climb the ladder,” said Zewail. “Be prepared to help yourself and your family with passion and love, and be prepared to help the world at large with devotion.”

Faculty members recognized during the ceremony were Medhat Haroun, dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering, who received the Excellence in Academic Service Award; Hassan Azzazy, chair of the chemistry department, who received the Excellence in Teaching Award; and Mahmoud El Lozy ’76, ’79, professor of performing and visual arts, who was granted the Excellence in Research and Creative Endeavors Award.

AUC also recognized the achievements of the graduate commencement speaker, Georges Abi-Saab, who was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters for his work as an internationally recognized jurist and legal scholar. In addition, Mohamed Shafik Gabr ’73, chairman and managing director of ARTOC Group for Investment and Development, received a special plaque in recognition of the ARTOC Sports Court.

Addressing master’s degree candidates, Georges Abi-Saab, professor emeritus of international law at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva and former chair of the appellate body of the World Trade Organization, focused on the benefits of a university education, explaining that along with tangible benefits like increased knowledge, AUC graduates have upgraded their intellectual profile by learning how to reason and use good judgment. He added, though, “That is not enough if the framework is wanting. You must develop an idea of what should be done for your country, speak it, stand for it and, if necessary, fight for it.” □

By Henry Agbo

Maha Khalil, biology major, winner of the Ahmed H. Zewail Prize for Excellence in the Sciences and Humanities



Medhat Haroun, dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering, receiving the Excellence in Academic Service Award



Minister of Higher Education and Minister of State for Scientific Research Hany Helal addressing bachelor’s degree candidates



Center: Ingy Attallah, business administration major, with the Parents Association Award; bottom: Dina Abu-Seif, sociology-anthropology major, speaking on behalf of master’s degree candidates



During the 2009 CNN African Journalist of the Year award ceremony held in South Africa

Photo courtesy of CNN London office

Alumni Profile

A Reporter Without Borders

Propelled by a love of journalism, Ethar El-Katatney '07 is the 2009 winner in the economics and business category of CNN's Multichoice African Journalist of the Year competition. El-Katatney was selected for her article "The Business of Islam," which is currently being turned into a documentary. She is the first Egyptian to win in the competition, which started in 1995 and recognizes excellence in African journalism.

"This is a complete and utter privilege, and it is making me more determined to go back home, work even harder and get the message across to my colleagues [journalists] that what we're doing is great; we're on the right track," said El-Katatney during the award ceremony held in South Africa.

International recognition is not new to El-Katatney, who entered AUC at the young age of 15. She is the winner of the press category in the 2009 Annah Lindh Mediterranean Journalist Award, which she received from Prince Albert III, the prince of Monaco, for her article "Identity Crisis 101." She also won second place in 2008 in an investigative journalism program by the International Center for Journalists in New York and the Arab Reporters for Investigative Journalism in Jordan for her article on the hepatitis C virus, "Dangerous Blood."

El-Katatney graduated from AUC with high honors with a bachelor's in business administration and a minor in Arab and Islamic civilizations, and was the student representative at her graduation

At 22, Ethar El-Katatney '07 has been recognized internationally for her journalistic work



“I like to provoke thought, provoke debate. I do not write to inform. I write on issues that are interesting to help my readers learn something new.”

El-Katatney filming a story in Nahya village for her master's in TV journalism

ceremony. She realized her passion for journalism when she became editor in chief of *Dimensions*, the Student Union newspaper. When she graduated, El-Katatney knew where she was heading: a career in journalism. Currently, she works as a staff writer in *Egypt Today* and *Business Today* magazines and has been featured in several newspapers and local television programs.

“I love being a journalist because I believe I can deliver a message,” said El-Katatney, who is currently pursuing dual master's degrees at AUC in television and digital journalism and in business administration. “I write feature stories, not news stories. I like to provoke thought, provoke debate. I do not write to inform. I write on issues that are interesting to help my readers learn something new.”

Besides her journalistic career, El-Katatney is active in local and international cross-cultural dialoguing initiatives. She is a member of the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow, and has attended conferences in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan, Turkey, Norway and Denmark. She is also a writer for Muslimah Media Watch, a

Web site that critiques how Muslim women are represented in the media.

In addition, El-Katatney has authored several books. The first, *40 Days and 40 Nights in Yemen*, details her experiences in a Sufi school in Yemen, which will be published this year in the United Kingdom. *Diaries of a Mujaddida*, also to be published this year in both Arabic and English, describes her experience traveling around the Arab world as a participant in Mujaddidun, an Islamic reality TV show headed by Egyptian televangelist Amr Khaled. The show features 16 participants from nine Arab countries chosen out of 250,000 applicants. Traveling to Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Sudan, the participants take part in missions aiming to tackle problems the Arab world faces. Every episode, one participant leaves the show, with the winner at the end receiving 100,000 Euros to create a development project in his or her country.

El-Katatney's third book is based on a videoconferencing course she took at AUC, through which she made friends with a student from New York University. The book includes e-mails exchanged over the course of their friendship, with the aim of portraying

how two people from different cultures and backgrounds grew close.

“I feel I am representative of my gender, my faith and my country, and it is my responsibility to deliver the right message with any language,” El-Katatney said.

During her time at AUC, El-Katatney was an active student. She was a member of several community-service clubs and worked in *Dimensions* as a reporter, English editor, columnist, photographer and production editor. As a member of the Bussy student club, which aims to empower women, she acted in two theatrical productions to promote women's rights in Egypt. “The diversity at AUC and the wide variety of activities helped me create connections with different people around the world, and it opened my mind to different ways of thinking,” she said. “Education alone is not enough to make you a well-rounded character. You need skills. If you do not take advantage of what AUC has to offer other than classes, then you have cheated yourself out of amazing opportunities and experiences.” □

By Doaa Farag

THE GOLDEN AGE

On its golden jubilee, the AUC Press celebrates five decades of achievements

By Henry Agbo

When AUC Press was first established in 1960, it began as a one-room operation, beset by chronic shortages of paper and ink, as well as outdated equipment. In the early years, the press published a limited number of scholarly and educational books, focusing on AUC's own academic activities. The very first titles published were in 1961, with K.A. Creswell's *A Bibliography of the Architecture, Arts, and Crafts of Islam*, followed by Otto F. A. Meinardus's *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts*, an AUC Press bestseller.

Today, on its 50th anniversary, AUC Press has emerged as the leading English-language publisher in Egypt and the Middle East, with a backlist of more than 1,000 publications, a new distribution center, five bookstores and an extensive international publishing program that covers eight areas, including Arabic literature in translation.





Ahmad El-Nemr

The Naguib Mahfouz Era

In the 1980s, the press began to innovate, showing a growing interest in Arabic literature in translation, as it courted one of the best known Arabic authors at the time, Naguib Mahfouz. “I went to see Naguib Mahfouz regularly with a colleague of mine,” recalled Mark Linz, director of AUC Press. “We had already published six of his works, and we hoped to prepare a comprehensive program with him to publish all of his works over time.”

In 1985, the press signed an agreement to be the primary publisher for all of Mahfouz’s works in English and to be his worldwide agent for all of his translation rights.

A few years later, in 1988, when Mahfouz became the first writer in Arabic to win the Nobel Prize in literature, nine of his books were available in AUC Press English-language translations. As Mahfouz wrote after receiving the Nobel Prize, “It was through the translation of these novels into English . . . that other publishers became aware of them and requested their translation into other foreign languages, and I believe that these translations were among the foremost reasons for my being awarded the Nobel Prize.” To date, the press has translated and published 38 of Mahfouz’s 40 books and has licensed more than 500 foreign-language editions of his works in 40 languages.

Through the critical acclaim and commercial success of Mahfouz, the press has been able to scout other well-known Arabic writers from Egypt and the region, like Taha Hussein and Yusuf Idris, and nascent talents such as Hamdi Abu Golayyel, winner of the Naguib Mahfouz Medal

for Literature in 2008, and Mekkawi Said, shortlisted for the International Prize for Arabic Fiction, and Saudi author Yousef Al-Mohaimed.

The press has also launched the careers of some notable Arabic authors, like Alaa Al Aswany, who has now been translated into 26 languages and whose critically acclaimed debut novel, *The Yacoubian Building*, published by the press in 2004, has sold 1 million copies worldwide. “He burst onto the world literary stage in a way that has never happened before to an Arabic author,” said Linz.

In the field of Arabic literature alone, one of the most expansive of its publishing programs, AUC Press now features more than 150 novels.

In line with its commitment to make Arabic literature and culture more accessible to Western readers, the press established in 1996 the annual Naguib Mahfouz Medal for Literature, an independent award to recognize and promote talented writers of the Arab world, given to the best Arabic contemporary novel of that year. To date, recipients of the medal include nine Egyptians, two Palestinians, one Lebanese, one Algerian, one Moroccan, one Iraqi and one Syrian writer.

As AUC Press continued to expand over the decades, its facilities were at times stretched. Neil Hewison, associate director for editorial programs, recalled his experience as the only editor in the 1980s. “In those days, there was no computer technology, but we did have one computer in the press — a pre-Mac Apple that had two floppy disk drives, which we used for keeping a general record of publications,” Hewison said.

Bigger is Better

The 1990s and beyond saw increased growth and prominence for the press. Technological advances allowed for drastic upgrades in equipment and promoted efficiency. The Internet had an increasingly dominating presence, which the press utilized to augment traditional bookselling services, launching its online shop in 2007. In addition, it strengthened partnerships with other university presses and publishing companies throughout the world, trained and expanded its workforce, and published a mix of general interest and scholarly works by Egyptian, Arab and Western authors. "We were doing so well in the 1990s that we decided to double our existing program from 20 to 40 and then to 80 books a year," Linz noted.

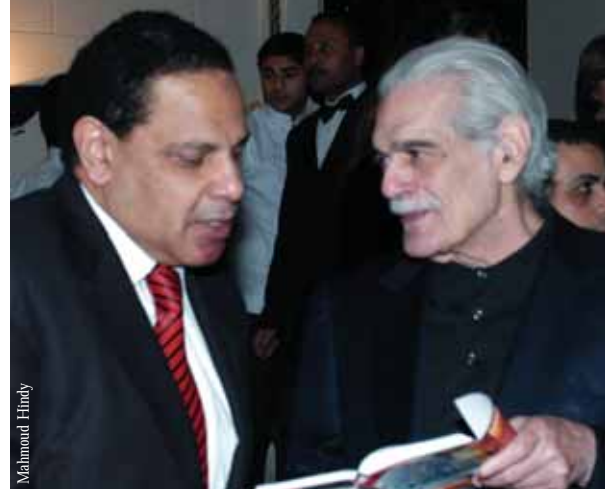
By then, the press had expanded its publishing program in Islamic architecture and the arts, travel literature and guidebooks, history and biography, as well as archeology and

ancient Egypt. Today, it publishes annually up to 100 books in eight subject areas including language studies, politics, economics, social issues and religious studies. In addition, through its bookstores and international distributors and agents, it distributes annually more than 500,000 books, and has licensed more than 500 foreign editions of Arabic literature in 40 languages. It now operates five full-service international bookstores throughout Cairo, including its new bookstore downtown, officially inaugurated earlier this year.

Cognizant of the challenges inherent in the publishing business, AUC Press staff members find satisfaction with each new published title. "Every book we publish is different, so even within every project, there are challenges and rewards," Hewison said. "The big reward, though, is seeing a book off the press and getting the first copy of it." □

AUC Press Bestsellers 1960 – 2010

1. *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts*, by Otto Meinardus, 1961
2. *Cairo: The Practical Guide*, compiled by Aleya Serour, 1975
3. *Khul-Khaal: Five Egyptian Women Tell Their Stories*, by Nayra Atiya, 1984
4. *Gods and Myths of Ancient Egypt*, by Robert Armour, 1986
5. *The Cairo Trilogy*, by Naguib Mahfouz, 1989
6. *Egypt Yesterday and Today: Lithographs and Diaries by David Roberts*, 1996
7. *Whatever Happened to the Egyptians?*, by Galal Amin, 1999
8. *The Illustrated Guide to the Egyptian Museum*, introduced by Zahi Hawass, 2001
9. *Secrets from the Sand: My Search for Egypt's Past*, by Zahi Hawass, 2003
10. *The Yacoubian Building*, by Alaa Al Aswany, 2004



Alaa Al Aswany, author of *The Yacoubian Building* and *Chicago*, with international actor Omar Sharif during AUC Press's 50th anniversary celebration

Golden Jubilee

AUC Press held a ceremony at AUC's downtown Cultural Center in celebration of its 50th anniversary. The event was attended by a number of prominent figures including members of the university's Board of Trustees; Egyptian Minister of Culture Farouk Hosni; Margaret Scobey, U.S. ambassador to Egypt and Abdel Azim Wazir, Cairo governor. Other distinguished guests were Zahi Hawass, secretary-general of the Supreme Council of Antiquities, and award-winning Egyptian author Alaa Al Aswany.

During the event, internationally acclaimed Egyptian actor Omar Sharif read *Games*, a short story from *Friendly Fire*, by Alaa Al Aswany. This was followed by a recital by Egypt's virtuoso pianist Ramzi Yassa, who played Chopin compositions.

Other events surrounding this golden jubilee included the inauguration of the new Margo Veillon Gallery of Modern Egyptian Art at AUC Downtown. Operated by AUC Press, the gallery preserves and exhibits the permanent collection of Margo Veillon, the prolific and independent artist who lived and worked in Egypt, and showcases historic retrospectives of 20th-century Egyptian art.

BEYOND LITERARY BOUNDS

AUC's newly established Center for Translation Studies provides a forum for leading Arabic-English translators to promote outreach programs in the literary field

AUC has launched a new Center for Translation Studies that aims to foster collaborative outreach programs as well as research in translation studies in order to enhance interaction and cooperation between AUC, Egyptian, regional and international institutions.

The Center for Translation Studies has set an ambitious agenda including a lecture series called In Translation that features prominent English-Arabic translators; a yearly international translation studies conference; workshops and seminars for researchers, students, faculty members and professional translators; a translator-in-residence program that will host distinguished translation theorists and practitioners each semester; and a yearly bilingual journal showcasing the best in student translation. Eventually, the center plans to offer a one-year diploma and a two-year master's degree, both in translation studies.

"We will focus on interdisciplinary work and will encourage the free exchange of ideas to promote

translation as a cultural political practice that can enable innovation and generate new spaces for the development of individual societies and cross-cultural conversation," said Samia Mehrez, professor of Arabic literature at AUC and the center's director.

The center's lecture series has featured some of the most prominent English-Arabic translators in the world, such as Denys Johnson-Davies, who has translated the works of Egyptian Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz, Yusuf Idris, Tawfik Al Hakim, Yahya Hakki and others; Humphrey Davies, who translated the acclaimed *The Yacoubian Building* by Alaa Al-Aswany and the Arab Booker Award-winning novel *Sunset Oasis* by Bahaa Taher; as well as Khaled Al Khamissi, author of the best-selling novel *Taxi*, and his distinguished translator Jonathan Wright. In his address, Denys Johnson-Davies explained that "nothing moves without translation," emphasizing the critical role that translators play as mediators of different cultural and literary worlds. □

By Henry Agbo



Denys Johnson-Davies with Nobel laureate Naguib Mahfouz (left) and speaking at AUC (center); Wright and Al Khamissi at AUC

ACT One

By Dalia Al Nimr

As the lights went out signifying the start of the play, the giggles came to a halt. The children, who were seated right up at the edge of the black box stage near the actors, turned excitedly to watch. The play employed simple, brightly colored props, and the actors were dressed in black, wearing add-on jackets and gowns as appropriate to the scene. As an interactive children's theatre, actors sometimes spoke directly to the children during the performance, asking them for direction, help or input. And the children joined in the fun, shouting out comments, pointing in different directions and jumping with excitement as one scene led to another.



*Dalia Kholeif '05, Ali Nasser '07,
Ramsi Lehner '05 and Amina Khalil '09
in Marmalade Gumdrops*

The newly formed Alumni Community Theatre group is setting the stage for good-quality theatre at AUC and in the Egyptian community





Ahmad El-Namr

Warming up before the show

The play, *Marmalade Gumdrops*, was the second production put on by the newly formed Alumni Community Theatre (ACT) group last winter. The brainchild of Leila Saad '66, performing and visual arts professor at AUC, Nimet Naguib '71 and the late Sophie Sarwat '70, the group was officially founded in 2009. It is managed by alumni and is supported by the university's alumni office and performing and visual arts department. ACT is currently made up of 40 members, mostly theatre majors, but also graduates of degrees ranging from biology to business administration. As a community-theatre group, ACT presents good-quality theatre to the public while giving alumni an outlet to express their talent.

"University productions naturally cater to students, so we thought of forming a group for alumni of all ages who want to give back good theatre to the AUC community and the Egyptian community at large," said

Saad, explaining the purpose behind ACT. "We are all pros and are giving it 110 percent."

The commitment is apparent. The group meets once a month, and auditions for a play take place at AUC New Cairo in the evenings, after everyone is finished with their work. "When I began my new job," said Amina Khalil '09, assistant producer for Karma Edutainment, "I told my boss about ACT and that I do not intend to miss any auditions or meetings, and I didn't, which meant that during peak times at work, I sometimes came home at 6 am."

But Khalil has no regrets. "When I have a night of auditions," she explained, "I go to work the next day with a huge smile on my face. ACT brings out the best in me. It keeps me going and keeps the fire in my life. It's a place, home and family for everyone sharing a passion for theatre. It gives you space to follow your dreams."

Ali Nasser '07, who works at a bank in Giza, said that despite having to

drive from work all the way to AUC New Cairo and stay in rehearsals until 9 pm, the trouble is all worth it. "I sometimes feel like I lead two separate lives," he said. "The nature of my job is highly demanding and I have to be serious and formal with clients, so I need to let loose at times. Some people might prefer going to the gym or watching a movie at home, but for me, ACT is the most appropriate outlet. I am able to leave my emotional and professional luggage behind and come with a totally different agenda --- one that is challenging and demanding, yet fun. We're all in it together, driven by a common drive and passion for theatre, and the sense of camaraderie and mutual respect keeps me going."

ACT's inaugural production, *Celebration and Party Time*, held in October 2009, was written by Nobel Prize-winning playwright Harold Pinter and directed by Hani Sami '08. The two one-act plays focused on the dysfunctional relationships that can



Amira Colar

Luke Lehner '05 and Reem Kadry '08

characterize the human experience in a complex and sardonic way. The two plays depict different situations: one in which an unhappily married couple celebrated a wedding anniversary at an elegant restaurant, and one about a gala party where elites discussed an unknown occurrence taking place outside.

For its second production, the group turned to a light-hearted play for children. “It was pretty jarring at first,” said Nasser. “The Pinter plays had heavy themes and a specific style of performance, but we went into the children’s play with an entirely different mindset. The children also helped a lot in making the performance much more lively than during the rehearsal days.” The group’s third production, *Oleanna* by David Mamet, is scheduled for April 2010. The play is about the power struggle between a university professor and his female student, and

addresses the issue of sexual politics on campus.

It’s not just about performance. All aspects of the creative process are completely managed by alumni, from the design of stage props, costumes, posters and programs to sound, light and production management. Backstage, the stage manager — sometimes referred to as the magician behind the show — is responsible for all logistics, acting as a liaison between the director and actors, and keeping everything running smoothly. For Yasmine Riad '07, a professional ballet dancer who specialized in stage management as an undergraduate, working as a stage manager with ACT is more fulfilling than the type of work she did during her university years. “As a student, everything was ready for you, but here, you have to do things from scratch,” she said. “At the end, when you see all your efforts come to

“Some people might prefer going to the gym or watching a movie at home, but for me, ACT is the most appropriate outlet.”



Ahmad El-Nassar



Amira Gabr

Luke Lehner '05, Amina Khalil '09, Reem Kadry '08, Hani Eskander '03 and Tamer Guirgis '10 (standing)

“We want to reach out to the community, slowly at the beginning, then having bigger and more solidified work later on.”

fruition on stage, you feel a great deal of pleasure and self-confidence.”

ACT is made up of several committees, including fundraising, special events, a reading committee, which is responsible for reading different plays and selecting the one to be performed by ACT, and a workshop committee, which provides training for schools and individuals. Luke Lehner '05, head of the workshop committee who conducted several theatre sessions in the United States, said that, initially, the group plans on approaching schools to give students theatre and improvisation workshops. “We want to reach out to the community, slowly at the beginning, then having bigger and more solidified work later on,” said Lehner, adding that one of the most joyous things about ACT is being with AUC graduates. “Working with such a like-minded group who share the same ambitions and outlook on

life is really a great opportunity.”

His brother, Ramsi Lehner '05, an actor, director, writer, composer and drama instructor, also likes the idea of having a professional relationship with AUC graduates and professors. “As students, we had rapport with our professors who performed with us at times, but still, there was this feeling that this is my professor,” he explained. “With ACT, we’re all here to create theatre without the pressure of an academic environment.”

Working with ACT does not come with a paycheck, but it does give its members an avenue through which they can keep the spirit of theatre alive. As Bassma Matta '08, the group’s assistant stage manager, put it, “I love theatre. I know it can’t be my money-making job, but I can’t live without it.”

To become a member of ACT, contact Yasmine Riad '07 at yas.riad@gmail.com. □

A Career of Firsts



Nevine Loutfy '74 is the first woman in the Arab world to head an Islamic bank

Nevine Loutfy '74 doesn't seem perturbed by the global financial crisis that brought the international banking industry to its knees last year. Sitting in her immaculate office in downtown Cairo, the managing director and chief executive officer of the National Bank for Development (NBD) is confident in her plan to reform the ailing bank and transform it into a fully Islamic sharia-compliant institution, with new, modern products and customer-oriented services.

Loutfy graduated from AUC with a bachelor's in economics. With 32 years of experience in financial capitals, working with Citigroup and traveling from New York to London, Loutfy is well-prepared for her current challenge being the first female CEO of an Islamic bank in the Arab world. Loutfy also held several top positions in banks in Europe, the United States and Egypt.

In 2007, as part of the government's privatization program, the Central Bank of Egypt sold a 49 percent share

of NBD to the Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, which began rebranding the non-performing institution. Loutfy set off to restructure the bank's operations to comply with Islamic sharia banking practices; reform its customer, commercial, and small and medium-enterprise sectors; as well as implement debt repayment and employee training programs. "The bank is in a loss situation," she said. "We aim to take it to profitability through new products, new services and new customers."

Loutfy finds herself on the right side of a turbulent industry. According to her, in the last few years, Islamic banking has exploded across the Middle East and in Egypt. "There is a very healthy appetite among the Egyptian public and corporates for Islamic banking products and Islamic finance," Loutfy explained, adding that the global financial crisis has forced the finance industry to reform its policies. "Everybody is reconsidering what they've been doing so far and facing a totally new reality, and you've got

to adjust to it. It's an eye opener that things don't go well all the time, and you've got to be protected and ready when there's a downturn."

As a woman, it hasn't been easy for Loutfy blazing the trail. She recalled when she first asked for an international posting at Citigroup 28 years ago. "It really shocked everybody because they thought women wouldn't request an international assignment," she said. "My boss then asked, 'What will we do with your husband?' And I replied, 'You never ask a man what you will do with his wife.'" Loutfy was then posted in Italy, making her the first woman at the time to receive an international assignment from the bank.

For young generations, Loutfy has one lesson to share, "If you want it bad enough, you will get it." The most gratifying part of her job? "Self-fulfillment and the ability to get things done, but my biggest achievement in life are my two sons," she said with a smile. □

By Sarah Topol



Dana Smillie

By Sarah Topol

Facelift revives Tahrir Square legacy as cultural hub

Following the university's move to its campus in New Cairo, AUC's campus in Tahrir Square continues to serve as a landmark in the heart of downtown Cairo. The campus, which includes the palace, Hill House and Falaki, has been remodeled and renovated to create AUC Downtown.

Historic Palace

The palace, which constituted the administration building of the Main Campus, was built in the 1860s for the Minister of Education Khairy Pasha. The structure is fashioned in neo-Mamluk style and has been

designated a historical monument by the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, which made remodeling the property a great challenge. "A consultant from the Supreme Council of Antiquities approved every alteration following internationally recognized conservation standards to ensure the preservation of the historic space," said Hesham Abdel Aziz, associate vice president of AUC Downtown.

In November 2009, a downtown Cultural Center opened in the palace, which now includes a new bookstore, the Margo Veillon gallery and two permanent exhibition



WHAT'S UP WITH DOWNTOWN?

spaces. Ewart and Oriental halls continue to host lectures and public events held by the university, and may be rented for outside events.

The new bookstore, which was designed by noted architect Agnieszka Dobrowolska, displays some of the best offerings from AUC Press on two expansive floors with an open face to Sheikh Rihan Street. It also includes a café, opening out onto a garden, as well as terraces and fountains. Inside the bookstore, one can find an extensive Arabic literature in translation section; scholarly works in Middle Eastern studies, politics, economics and social theory; as well

as classical literature, self-help and children's books — more than 20,000 titles. Books can also be purchased on order.

Building a two-story bookstore in one room of the palace was complex. University engineers could not build up due to the designation of the building as historic, so they innovated and dug 1.5 meters down. Due to the age of the structure, drawings of the site were unavailable and unforeseen happenings abounded. “During one of our activities, we found out that underneath the bookstore was an 11,000-kilovolt cable, and we had to

cut it. It turned out later that this was a cable feeding the Ministry of Interior,” Abdel Aziz said.

The Margo Veillon gallery, in honor of Egyptian painter Margo Veillon, opened on her 96th birthday. The gallery maintains a permanent collection of 100 of Veillon's masterpieces, as well as some 5,000 of her watercolors, drawings and graphics. The gallery will also present larger retrospective shows focusing on modern Egyptian art.

In addition to the downtown Cultural Center, all offices and meeting rooms in Hill House were turned into classrooms.



Ahmad El-Nemr



Dana Smilie

Falaki Academic Center

In early 2009, the old Falaki building was torn down and transformed into a landscaped sitting area. The 10-story Falaki Academic Center, built a decade ago, was kept to ensure adequate space for the student population. It houses the School of Continuing Education, which makes up the largest component of AUC Downtown; Management Center; and Engineering and Science Services, all of which cater to 65,000 students each year.



Ahmad El-Nemr

Old Falaki demolished and space now serves as a sitting area



Top left: The new, two-story bookstore has been designed by noted architect Agnieszka Dobrowolska; top right: The Margo Veillon Gallery includes a permanent collection of 100 of Veillon's masterpieces, as well as some 5,000 of her watercolors, drawings and graphics





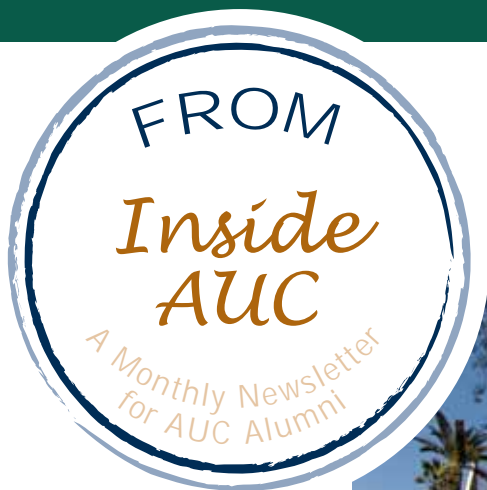
The Greek Campus will be sold, in addition to the Rare Books and Special Collections Library and 33 Mohamed Mahmoud Street

Greek Campus

Purchased by the university from the Greek community in 1964, the Greek Campus was the hub of social activity for students. It housed the library, Social Science Building, Jameel Center and School of Continuing Education (previously known as the Division of Public Services).

Plans are currently underway to sell the Greek Campus as well as the Rare Books and Special Collections Library. Meanwhile, 33 Mohamed Mahmoud Street, which used to house AUC Press, has been sold to an Egyptian joint stock company and a local business. The building will be used for administrative purposes.

The downtown renovations offer an opportunity to celebrate AUC's legacy in the downtown community and look forward to its future as a beacon of culture and education in the heart of historic Cairo. The university aims to blend the past with the future by presenting modern cultural programs in historic spaces. "AUC has a rich tradition in education and outreach to the community dating almost to its founding," said AUC President David D. Arnold. "It is important that AUC retain its presence and continue to be a major contributor to the intellectual and cultural life of downtown Cairo." □



Below are entries from the monthly contest that ran in *Inside AUC*, the alumni e-newsletter, where alumni gave ideas for remodeling AUC Downtown

Demolish Science Building

"If I were to return to visit AUC and see the Tahrir Square campus, I would love to visit the old Main Building with its beautiful Arabesque meeting rooms, but please tear down the science/math building that was on the corner near the student center. That thing was a nasty eye-sore from the beginning"

Nicole Bovey Alhakawati MA '94, Jordan

Speaker's Corner

"I have great memories of the old campus, and my last visit was in 2003, which tells me that it is time to visit again soon!"

I saw an interesting contest in Inside AUC, and I have a suggestion for making the campus a focal point for all. If a Speaker's Corner could be created in the central courtyard, we could create a theme for each week, and all people visiting the campus could share their thoughts on the theme. This could be interspersed with brief talks from people on their memorable moments during their time on campus. All of this can be streamed on the AUC Web site and will be watched with great interest by the online community.

Keep up the good work and hope to meet up with all of you sometime soon."

Balakrishnan Sethuraman Manjeri (MA '80), United Arab Emirates

Preserving History

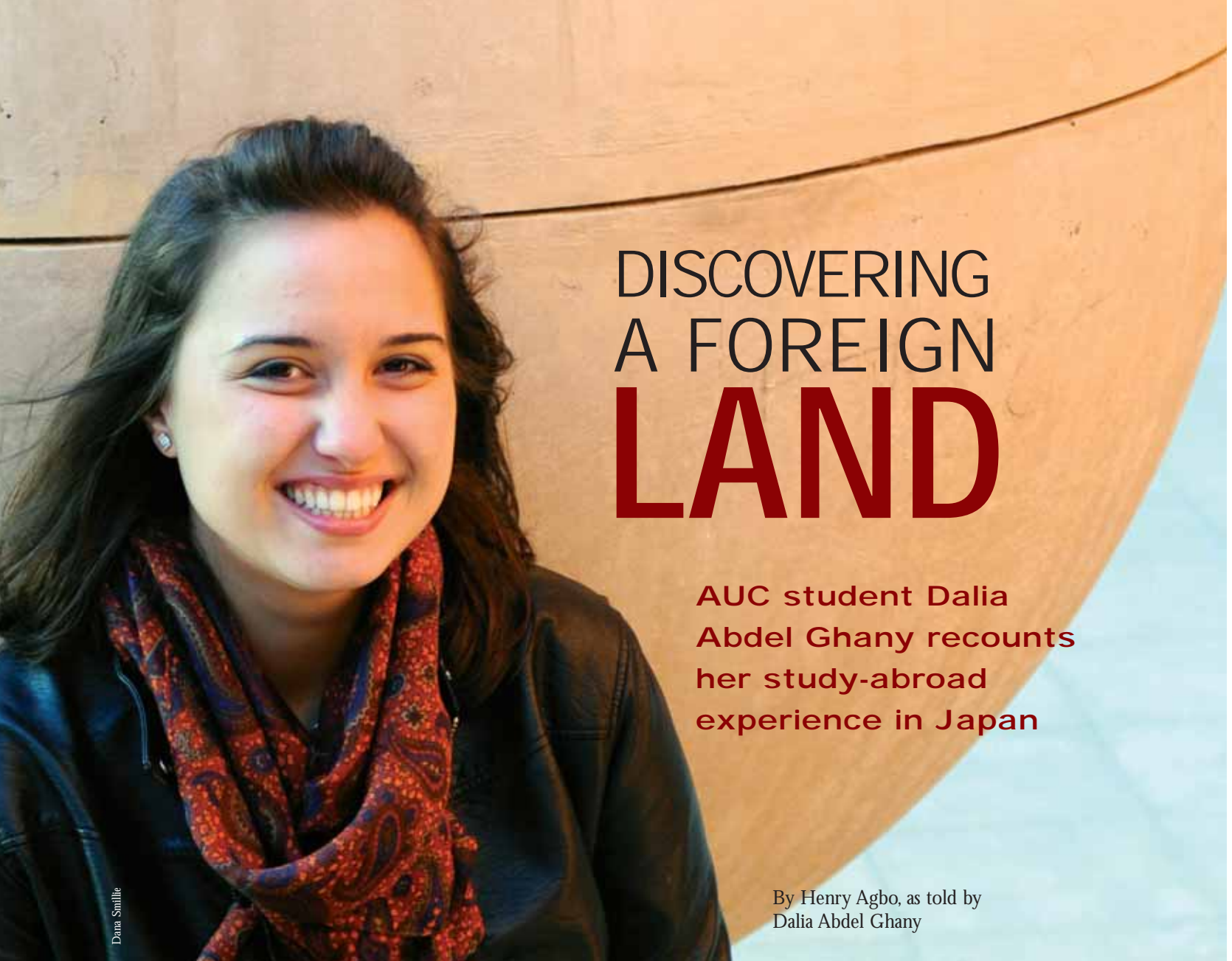
"I read about the renovation project at the old campus that would transform it into a 'downtown cultural center' that includes a bookstore and café! You have asked for our input regarding this venture. I understand your intention to involve the Cairene community in this historic location. But I have my fears that this beautiful campus might lose its character and turn into a social club and meeting place. I hope you have plans to limit access to times of special events. I also hope that you intend to preserve the beautiful Oriental Hall and its foyer exactly as is. This is history and art in one spot, and it is full of memories for generations of students. The water fountain under the huge tree in the central yard is also very precious to our hearts and is inseparable from the artwork of Oriental Hall. This part of the old campus is the one part that, in my modest opinion, should be left untouched.

Thank you for allowing us to share our opinions, and I hope that they would be taken into consideration."

Rafida Shukairy Saadi '66, '70, United States



To sign up for *Inside AUC*, visit alumni.ucegypt.edu



Dana Smille

DISCOVERING A FOREIGN LAND

**AUC student Dalia
Abdel Ghany recounts
her study-abroad
experience in Japan**

By Henry Agbo, as told by
Dalia Abdel Ghany

The place known as Japan in English, I affectionately call Nihon, which means “the sun’s origin.” For me, the island country lives up to its name because, like the rising sun, it invokes positive memories, eye-opening experiences, countless adventures and opportunities that I had never imagined before I left Egypt. While I knew that spending a year as an exchange student at Kansai Gaidai University in Hirakata, Osaka, Japan would allow me to discover a unique and interesting culture completely foreign and different from anything else I had known, I could not have

anticipated my caring and close-knit host family, my struggle to master written and spoken Japanese, or the excitement of my travels with a fellow AUCian and close friend, Allia Shahin. These experiences, while disparate, give a portrait of my time in Japan that, like the sun, has a trajectory rising from the first speck of light over the horizon at dawn to its descent in the evening.

When people ask me the inevitable question of why I decided to spend a year as an international student in the Asian Studies Program at Kansai Gaidai University, I give them my well-rehearsed, but completely genuine reply

that I wanted to discover a unique and special place. When I decided to study abroad, I was allured by the prospect of living in London or Los Angeles because I had heard stories from friends about their remarkable experiences in these places. After being accepted to a semester-long program in London, though, I decided I wanted to extend my exchange for a whole academic year and began looking for another program that could cater to that wish. I scheduled a meeting with the International Programs Office to discuss my search, and received information about schools that matched my

requirements: one for a university in Canada and another for this program at Kansai Gaidai in Japan. I went home that night and anxiously read through the brochures, but I found myself lingering for a lot longer on the Japan booklet. Perfect, I thought.

As the time for my departure to Japan drew near, I became excited. A friend of mine from AUC, Allia Shahin, had also decided to go to Japan, and in the weeks leading up to our departure, we downloaded a few Japanese language lessons to prepare ourselves for Hirakata. When we arrived in Japan, however, we realized that very few people spoke or understood English. We were instantly inundated with signs advertising Japanese products, street signs in characters we barely recognized and a completely foreign city, which we had no idea how to navigate. Those first few weeks involved a lot of hand gestures as we struggled to pick up fragments of the language and learned how to get around our new home base. Luckily, everyone in the town is accustomed to foreign students because of the international university, and they were never reluctant to help when they saw us staring bewilderedly in the middle of an intersection or grocery store. The

gentle kindness and radiant warmth of the people definitely reminded me of Egypt, and I felt good knowing that I was in safe hands.

As my time wore on and the glow of the sun began to encompass me, the feeling of being welcomed increased dramatically. My host family, in particular, went to great lengths to ensure that I was enjoying my time. Although I share a room with Allia in the dorms, once or twice a month, I visit a Japanese family living an hour and a half away in the city of Nara. I play Nintendo Wii with the two boys while they ask me questions about my family, interests and life in Egypt. Soon after the start of this program, they began demanding that I come over more often than once a month, and I was happy to oblige them. The daughter of the family, Mari, constantly encourages me to speak in Japanese, allowing me to learn the colloquialisms and informal version of Japanese that people my age often use. I even had the opportunity to see a traditional Japanese household when we went to visit their grandmother, who is a marvelous cook and who made me rethink my initial aversion to Japanese food.

Studying in Japan has also allowed me to take advantage of opportunities



In front of the Osaka Castle

“When we arrived in Japan, however, we realized that very few people spoke or understood English. We were instantly inundated with signs advertising Japanese products, street signs in characters we barely recognized and a completely foreign city.”



Abdel Ghany with her host family



At a park near the dormitory in Japan



At the Kansai International Airport



Top: Abdel Ghany (right) at the Royal Palace in Bangkok, Thailand; center: At the Fushimi Inari Shrine; bottom: With friends at a Sushi restaurant

of traveling within the country and throughout the continent to see a part of the world that I had never seen before. One of my first stops was its capital city, Tokyo, where Allia and I became incredibly lost while trying to find our bus, which was parked in front of one of many Staabacksu (yes, that is Starbuck's Coffee). I also went to Kobe, the only city in the Kansai area with a mosque; Kyoto, to attend the moon and fire festivals; and Nagano, to go skiing in the city where Japan hosted the 1998 Winter Olympics. Next semester, I hope to see Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where atomic bombs were dropped during World War II. Outside of Japan, I have been to Thailand and Malaysia, and in the spring, I have plans to visit China, South Korea, Indonesia and maybe also the Philippines and Vietnam.

With all these chances to discover new places and learn about Japanese culture outside of the classroom, it is a wonder that one of my most valuable experiences is the academic component of studying abroad. In the fall, I took five classes: Speaking Japanese, Reading and Writing in Japanese, Chinese and Japanese Brush Painting, Religion in Japan and the Psychological Applications of Yoga, Buddhism and Taoism. All of these

courses taught me an incredible amount about topics that might be harder to discover in Egypt. This spring, I am taking some business classes for my major in business administration and marketing, but the ones here will use Japanese business case studies as a model for learning. Beyond just the classes, though, I have been able to interact with many Japanese students who are in the English language program at Kansai Gaidai, as well as the plethora of international students from North America and Western Europe. We constantly intermingle so I feel like even though I did not go to the United States or the United Kingdom, I am still learning about those cultures as well.

With a few more months remaining, the end of my time in Japan is quickly approaching. While I am still here, though, I have vowed to push myself further out of my comfort zone in the hopes that I will learn something transformative about myself. I want to work hard to improve my Japanese, enroll in a karate class, and continue to learn from and spend time with my host family. Ultimately, I want to make the most out of my time abroad before the sun sets on this experience. □

Around the World

Oman



Alumni gathering in Oman's Al Bustan Palace Hotel; B. Boyd Hight, chairman of AUC's Board of Trustees, his wife Mary K. Hight and Sherry Arnold at the event

Sharifa Mohamed Al Lamki '56 graduated with a BA in economics and was the first Omani alumna to graduate from AUC. While in Egypt, she succeeded in establishing a radio station that broadcast in Swahili, which was particularly important at the time due to the increasing number of Swahili-speaking Omani students in Cairo. Al Lamki later became an announcer. In 1957, she married Sheikh Nasser bin Saif Al Bualy, who later became Oman's ambassador to England. In England, Al Lamki worked as a math teacher for more than 10 years, during which she also served as headmistress. The first alumna to open her home to AUC and an avid supporter of all alumni activities in Oman, Al Lamki received the Distinguished Alumni Volunteer Award.

Bahrain

Gathering brings together alumni from Bahrain and Saudi Arabia



Adel El Labban '77, '80, group chief executive officer and managing director of Ahli United Bank in Bahrain, and AUC President David D. Arnold; Alumni from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia



Alumni gather at the residence of Adel El Labban '77, '80 and his wife Nihal Taher in Manama, Bahrain

Egypt



Alumni trip to Fayoum in November 2009

Connecting Alumni and Students Team gathering in December 2009



Alumni catch soccer fever

Gathering in November 2009 in the Alumni Lounge at AUC New Cairo to celebrate the victory of the Egyptian national soccer team in the final round qualifying for the FIFA World Cup 2010



More than 100
alumni celebrate
decade reunion



Decade reunion reception held in November 2009 in AUC New Cairo for Class of '80 to '90

United Arab Emirates



Alumni gathering at Westin Mina Seyahi in Dubai in November 2009

Class Notes

'52

Helene Moussa, curator of St. Mark's Coptic Museum, is celebrating the museum's most recent publication, *Marguerite Nakhla: Legacy to Modern Egyptian Art*. The book is designed by Lillian Hanna '00, who worked as a *Caravan* writer at AUC, and printed by Printology, whose vice president is Iman Demian-Nasralla '95. The book is sold at AUC bookstores. Moussa is a freelance researcher and writer, and was a faculty member at AUC from 1955 to 1957.

'74

Mona Sabry-Montens (MA '80), along with **Hoda Fahmy** '73, '79, wrote to *AUCToday*: "On January 29, 2010, a gentle, noble woman of great strength and integrity, our dearest friend Saneya Saleh '71, '76 passed away. For a person so full of vitality and determination, the word death is simply irrelevant. When referring to a person who had the ambition, determination and perseverance to work hard and move from a stay-at-home wife and mother of two, to affiliate professor awarded Order of Excellence of the First Degree by the Egyptian president, one can only speak of movement. Saneya had the dedication to move mountains to achieve the goals of a better, more fulfilling life, not only for herself or her loved ones, but for society at large, especially the underprivileged and the needy. Saneya Saleh moved on from this world to a better one."

'81

Ola Hammouda wrote the original screenplay for the romance movie *Walad w Bent (A Boy and a Girl)*, which was featured in Egyptian cinemas. She is working on another movie, *Talk Al-Ayam (Those Days)*, a political psycho-

drama, in cooperation with Ahmed Ghanem '88 as director. Hammouda would like to get in touch with AUC graduates who have ventured into the film industry as writers. She would also like to hear feedback about the movies through aucola@aucegypt.edu and netscola@aim.com.

'87

Dalia Hassouna has been working as an announcer at Radio Cairo since graduation. Recently, she joined the Industrial Modernisation Centre (IMC) as media adviser, working with Adham Nadim '86, executive director of IMC. Hassouna would be happy to offer advice to anyone who needs help in the field of radio broadcasting through dhasouna@aucegypt.edu.

'95

Germaine Demian is a freelance public relations and communication consultant (PRecise Consultancy) in London, Canada. Demian would like to contact other AUC alumni living in the same city through germaine_demian@yahoo.com.

Shima Barakat (MBA '98) acquired a PhD from the University of Strathclyde in Scotland, after which she lectured for two years at the University of Manchester before setting up a company with her husband. Their company is called Value in Enterprise, providing solutions to help management overcome the problems they face as they try to become more environmentally and socially responsible. Barakat is also teaching and researching at the Judge Business School, University of Cambridge.

'96

Moushira Al Abiad (MA '09) recently received her master's in teaching Arabic as a foreign language

from AUC. She is now a part-time teacher at AUC's Arabic Language Institute and hopes to reconnect with her university friends from around the globe through msabiad@aucegypt.edu and mosh_abiad@yahoo.com.

'98

Ihab Shoukry moved to Geneva and is looking forward to meeting other AUC alumni in the area.

'00

Mariam Al Maskary considers AUC a turning point in her life. She received a scholarship to study at AUC and enrolled in the university with minimal English and computer skills. Today, she works as director of the Information Resource Center at the American Embassy in Oman.

'04

Rania Saleh (MA) is celebrating with journalist and cartoonist Amr Okasha her first satirical book, *Mozakkarat Zoog Maqhour w Zoga Makhno'a (Memoirs of a Hen-Pecked Husband and a Fed-Up Wife)*, 2010, Cairo, Shabab Books. Saleh is writing on behalf of all wives whose husbands drive them crazy, and Okasha is writing on behalf of men who get tired of their wives. The book is in Egyptian colloquial Arabic.

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'06

Nesreen Abu El Ezz (MPA) is a self-development consultant for teens and would like to offer her expertise to alumni with teenage children through nhaezz@aucegypt.edu.

Special Programs

Lisa Caugherty Hahn (YAB '79) works at the U.S.-based Caugherty Hahn Communications, Inc., helping businesses build their brands. She is impressed with the networking activities offered at AUC New Cairo.

Austin Sher (ALU '03) worked for a real estate developer and manager in Boston, Massachusetts since graduating from New York University in 2007. Sher is interested in connecting with fellow alumni in the Boston area, as well as alumni who work in real estate development and investment through axs203@nyu.edu.

In Memoriam

Hilmi Ibrahim '54 died in July 2009.

Saneya Saleh '71, '76, faculty member at AUC's sociology, anthropology, psychology and Egyptology department and at the Social Research Center, died in January 2010.

Tawhida El Askary (MA '96), who has worked for many years as the associate director and the was backbone of North America's alumni chapter, died in December 2009. El Askary received her master's from AUC in teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

Hitting a High Note

Since age 4, family and friends surrounding Gala El Hadidi '05, '07 noticed her strong voice and talent in imitating tunes. "I have been singing for as long as I can remember," said El Hadidi. "My mom used to listen to a lot of music when she was pregnant, so I grew up with a musical ear."

Today, El Hadidi, the youngest singer to join the Cairo Opera Company, is studying for a Master of Music degree at Yale's School of Music and has performed as a solo artist in Italy, Germany, Finland, Turkey, Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and the United States. "I did not train myself to be an opera singer; it was just natural," said El Hadidi, who is a fluent speaker of Arabic, English, German, French and Italian.

At age 10, El Hadidi became a choir member in her German school. Five years later, she qualified to enter a voice competition in Turkey for all German-school students. It was then that her family discovered that El Hadidi is not just a regular singer, but an opera singer. She joined the Cairo Opera House's Talent Development Center, and sang in Egypt's dubbed Disney movies as well as in small concerts at the Cairo Opera House. A week before entering AUC in September 2001, 18-year-old El Hadidi had signed a contract as a soloist with the Cairo Opera House, becoming their youngest singer.

"When people started telling me that I have an opera voice, it enticed me to enter the field and break the stereotype of opera singers being static and old, especially that opera singing in the world is now following in the footsteps of a Hollywood style."

At the university, El Hadidi

maintained a high academic record, graduating with high honors. After graduating from AUC with a bachelor's in philosophy and a minor in music, El Hadidi went on to pursue a master's in English and comparative literature. She wrote her thesis on "Carmen: Debating the Femme Fatale," where she used her knowledge as a musician to talk about literary influence on music, solidifying her knowledge in the field. "After six years at AUC, I became more secure in my art," she said, adding that what she loves most about music is its ability to unite people together from all backgrounds.

In 2005, El Hadidi received a scholarship to attend the International Bach Academy in Stuttgart, Germany. The mayor of Stuttgart also invited El Hadidi to sing in honor of Egypt's First Lady Suzanne Mubarak who was receiving her citizenship of the city. In 2008, she was awarded an outstanding achievement prize and recognition by Egypt's Ministry of Culture. In 2010, she was given an Encouragement Award by the Metropolitan Opera National Council auditions as a New England regional finalist.

El Hadidi's most memorable moments, however, are Christmas concerts. "As they are repeated every year, the audience can see me grow up in front of them," she said. "I feel huge amounts of love from the fans, my AUC professors and my parents, who were always there for me, supporting me all the way."





Doing WEL: Lessons on Leadership

I was overcome with shock and disbelief when I first learned that I was selected to be a participant in the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership (WEL) program at AUC. It was a very gratifying experience for me. I have learned how to effectively put theory into practice as an entrepreneur, developed a network of businesswomen who could serve as friends and contacts, and saw myself developing into a leader in ways that I had never imagined.

When I started running Bodyshake, a comprehensive health and fitness center for women in Cairo, my goal was to help women lead better, healthier and more active lives. Due to my background in the medical field, I was able to offer customers advice about healthy habits like diet and exercise with confidence and expertise. What was missing, though, were business skills that could help me promote my enterprise to interested customers, expand my services and implement general management procedures that would help increase my profit margins while keeping customers and employees satisfied.

The WEL program helped fill this gap. It taught me how to think better when it came to business principles and allowed me to develop a strategy to improve the strength of my business. First, I needed to decrease expenses while maximizing my labor force so I decided to amend the working hours to reflect the times when most of my customers were able to come. Then, I started belly-dancing classes as a fun and exciting alternative to just pure aerobics. That turned out to be a hit! Now, after purchasing the vacant space next to my studio, I have begun offering dermatological services.

Having successfully applied theories about innovation, operations, management and marketing that I learned in the program, I know my work is still not done. The world is constantly moving, and as a business owner, I have to make sure that I remain flexible to adapt to its fluctuations. Particularly now as the global economy struggles to rebound, the challenges facing businesses like mine are proliferating. To respond to that threat and ensure that I am constantly learning new strategies for my business, I keep in contact with other WEL participants from my cohort. We are able to share best practices and offer advice to one another.

The WEL program not only made me a better businesswoman, but also gave me the confidence and support to be a real business leader. I want to stand as a role model for other women in Egypt and throughout the region to show them that we can be economically and socially empowered, and that we can put our competencies in many different realms to work. For me, that means transforming Bodyshake into the premier specialty center for body reshaping and health. Thank you Goldman Sachs, the WEL program, AUC and everyone who is helping bring my dream to life.

Gihane Refaat is a graduate of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women Entrepreneurship and Leadership (WEL) program. The WEL program is a joint partnership between AUC and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania with funding from Goldman Sachs Inc. to teach business management skills to women entrepreneurs.

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 and may be edited for length and clarity.