



Ahmad El-Nemr

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On the cover: Mohamed Kazem on stage before a concert in Cairo, photographed by Ahmad El-Nemr

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Editor's Notes

The Koshari Connection

If you were to walk into our offices in the communications and marketing department, one of the first people you would see is 23-year-old Liberian-native Robtel Pailey, our intern for the 2004-05 academic year. If for any reason you didn't notice her, the always boisterous "good morning" is sure to catch your attention.



Robtel and I about to devour a bowl of koshari

In many ways Robtel is our own experiment in cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. With a continuous flow of scholars to campus, often discussing issues like understanding the other, misconceptions about the Arab world and the need to build bridges, it is amazing how simple it can be to create experiences that can be transforming. Initiatives like the dialoguing project, which has AUC students videoconferencing with their peers from U.S. universities, the study-abroad program and the presidential intern program all provide the types of interactions that gradually shatter stereotypes.

Each year, between six and eight presidential interns, like Robtel, are assigned to various departments on campus, where they work alongside full-time staff, assuming regular work responsibilities. Their contributions to the work and the fresh perspectives they bring are naturally invaluable. Their even greater contribution, however, is on a much more personal level. When you bring a young graduate of a U.S. university and throw him or her into a typical office of predominantly Egyptian professionals of a much older age group, culture shock has to hit in both directions.

At a dinner held for this year's interns, I was struck by the impact of this experience on them. While several admitted not knowing what to expect when they first arrived, all of them left with a greater respect for a new culture and plans to one day return. Almost all of the interns reported being moved by the warmth of the relationships and the support they received from the people they met in Egypt.

On the flip side, just as the interns leave with a unique personal experience in Egypt, each of them is a small window into their own culture. Through regular office chit chat, working on the same team day-by-day, Robtel became just another one of us. It is remarkable how far a one-on-one conversation over a bowl of koshari can go in bringing about cross-cultural understanding.

Dina Abulfotuh

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Flopped Flip

Thanks for an attractive [Spring 2005] issue with interesting articles. I'm sure you've already noticed that the photo on p28 is flipped — compare rings, cutting hand and writing on sweater against p27.



I read the article on videoconferencing just after listening to a guest on a radio program who has just had a book published on the killing of the English language. One of his examples was the noun "dialogue" and how it seems to be used increasingly as a verb. From that a new noun "dialoguing" has been created, and I see that in your article "dialoguing" is now also an adjective. I'm afraid that I'm in the same camp as the writer and prefer "talk to" rather than "dialogue" as a verb, and I prefer "dialogue" as the noun rather than "dialoguing."

Sandy Darling
Ontario, Canada

Making Contact

I was reading the *AUCToday* Spring 2005 issue and came across the article on Dina Sarhan. I am very interested in learning how to cook and was very happy to read about Dina. Therefore, I would like to get her e-mail or contact numbers. Is there anyway you could help me with this?

Salima Barakat '01
Cairo, Egypt

Dina Sarhan Culinary Solutions
103 Mirghany St., 1st floor, Suite #2, Heliopolis, Cairo
Telephone: (02) 290-3343

Keep It Coming

I must say that *AUCToday* has improved a lot, but I still

think it could be more interesting. The style of reporting is very formal, and the stories covered are important to AUC but not catchy. Why don't you deal with controversial topics that trigger debate, such as the issue of niqab (face veil) at the university or whether or not the quality of education at AUC is the same now as it was in the past? Why not tackle issues that affect AUCians, such as career opportunities, rising unemployment and how AUC students compare to those from private universities? Even fun topics such as love relationships between AUCians and whether or not they develop into marriage would be nice to read.

Also, it would be very useful to have a calendar of AUC events in the magazine. As an alumna, I would like to attend lectures, plays and concerts that take place at the university; I just don't know when these events are happening. Having such a calendar in *AUCToday* would help alumni keep in touch with AUC.

Nouran Sharshar '01
Cairo, Egypt

Thanks for the feedback. You can sign up to receive a monthly alumni e-newsletter containing a full calendar of AUC events and updates by visiting www.aucegypt.edu/alumni — Ed.

New Campus Reality

I was very impressed with the cover of the Spring 2005 issue of *AUCToday*. My son was a year abroad at AUC more than 10 years ago, and I have been keeping up with AUC's news ever since through the magazine. I knew that AUC was building a new campus and was glad to see that construction had finally started on the buildings. Good luck with this huge and ambitious project.



Ferial Atia
Virginia, United States

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, 113 Kasr El Aini Street, P.O. Box 2511, Cairo 11511

AuScenes

Broadcast Journalist Linda Vester Elected to AUC's Board of Trustees



Linda Vester, prominent broadcast journalist at Fox News channel for the past seven years and a former Fulbright scholar at AUC, has been recently elected as a member of the university's Board of Trustees (BOT).

Specializing in Middle East affairs, Vester is host of *Dayside with Linda Vester*, the only live newscast on U.S. television that features a studio audience. Prior to her work at Fox, she spent 10 years as an anchor and correspondent for NBC News. She has traveled to more than 40 countries, covering wars and political strife.

Vester graduated from Boston University with a bachelor's in journalism and earned an honors diploma from the Sorbonne in France. She was a Fulbright scholar studying Middle East affairs at AUC, where she took courses in Arabic, political

science, Islam and history. She currently serves on the board of the Institute of International Education and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

AUC Board Chairman Boyd Hight noted that Vester has extensive ties to the Middle East, specifically to AUC and Egypt. "It is an honor for the university to have such a distinguished journalist as a member of its board and we look forward to working with Ms. Vester as AUC continues to play a unique role in creating links between the United States and Egypt," he said.

AUC's 38-member Board of Trustees is composed primarily of American, Egyptian and Arab individuals, distinguished for their professional accomplishments in areas relating to Egypt and the Middle East. Members of the board are volunteers, elected to renewable, three-year terms.

Kofi Annan Speaks at Event Commemorating Nadia Younes

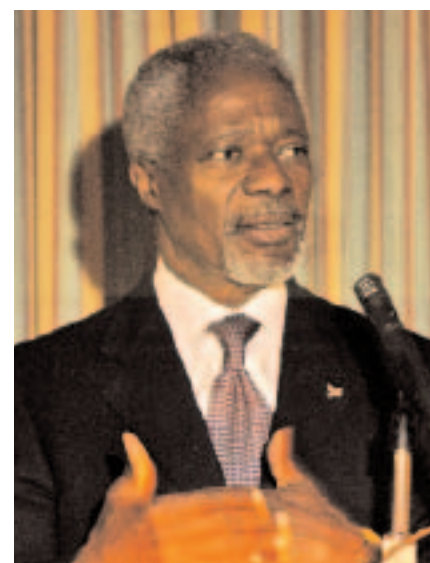
During the Board of Trustees meeting held in New York in May, Kofi Annan, United Nations secretary-general, spoke in memory of Nadia Younes. The Nadia Younes Memorial Fund was established at AUC last year in the name of the U.N. administrator who died in August 2003 during the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Iraq.

"The Nadia Younes Memorial Fund is a wonderful way to honor a colleague whose memory will remain with us forever ... And a beautiful memory it is that lives on among all of us in the United Nations family who had the benefit of working with Nadia

... Nadia inspired a whole generation of young women — and men — by demonstrating that there were no limits to what a person with talent, commitment and courage could achieve. And she inspired all of us, regardless of age, to keep things in proportion," Annan said.

Contributions to the fund will be used to establish an annual lecture and an award for public and humanitarian service, in addition to naming a conference and meeting room in the Model United Nations Center on AUC's new campus.

For information, call (+202)797-5152 or e-mail develop@aucegypt.edu



Employment Fair Reaches Capacity

More than 100 companies were vying for prospective employees from AUC at the university's Spring 2005 Employment Fair, held on the Main Campus in May. The half-day fair provides a forum for cultivating and developing productive partnerships between AUC graduates and the corporate world.

Initiated in 1986, the employment fair was the first event of its kind in the region and has continued to expand until reaching capacity for the first time this year. Companies, including some of Egypt's top multinationals and industry leaders, were assigned booths that took over every inch of the campus.

AUC alumni and current students came out in droves to flaunt their professional acumen. "As an idea, it sounds good. You get to see what vacancies are open, making it easier for you to apply. I was impressed by the amount of companies represented," said Abeer Ziadeh, a graduating senior in political economics.

Having attended the last four consecutive employment fairs, graduating senior in finance Hussam El Tayeb said, "It's an edge in the market and seems to get better every year."



Fadel Assabghy Returns to True Passion

From graduate student to dean of the School of Sciences and Engineering (SSE), Fadel Assabghy's connection to AUC goes back more than 40 years. Assabghy said that he has spent "his entire adult life at the university," passing through many professional milestones.

This semester, Assabghy will step down from his six-year position as dean to go back to what he describes as his true passion: teaching. "I consider myself first and foremost a teacher. I was only on loan to the administration," he said.

But Assabghy will not be without administrative responsibilities. He will also be heading the newly established Science and Technology Research Center, which he helped initiate. "This center is a big challenge; I feel a great sense of satisfaction because it has developed from nothing," said Assabghy. "It has enormous potential, but at this stage, it is still in its infancy and has to be nurtured."

Directly after receiving his doctorate from Keele University in the United Kingdom in 1970, Assabghy joined the physics unit at AUC where he was instrumental in developing the electronics option as an applied program within the physics major.

"I remember my first teaching day vividly. I was still green; I felt self-conscious and not confident of doing the right thing," he said. Over the years, Assabghy did many things right at AUC, most notably the accreditation of most of the SSE's departments.

Assabghy joined the university in 1963 as a graduate student. "There wasn't a Greek Campus or a science building or even a physics major," he said, adding that seeing the university build a new campus is exciting.

Assabghy's former posts at AUC include heading the physics unit, directing the Core Curriculum program and chairing the University Senate from 1996 to 1998. In 1998, Assabghy was awarded the Parents Association Outstanding Teaching Award.

His research interests and publications are in the fields of electronic properties and Electron Spin Resonance studies of glasses and carbon fibers. He was actively involved in the inception of the university's Desert Development Center and helped direct its solar energy activities.

Engineering Professor Medhat Haroun is Assabghy's successor and will take up his new post starting September 1, 2005.

AuScenes

Arabic Studies Professor Wins World Prize

Bernard O’Kane, AUC professor of Islamic art and architecture, recently won the World Prize for the Book of the Year for his volume of photographs, *Early Persian Painting: Kalila and Dimna Manuscripts of the Late Fourteenth Century*.

“It will introduce people to a picture book, as well as interesting stories,” said the quarter-century veteran of AUC about his masterpiece co-published by AUC Press and I.B. Tauris, London. After spending four years fundraising for the publication, O’Kane was ecstatic to see his hard work and dedication pay off.

Held in Tehran last February, the award ceremony was presided over by President Mohammad Khatami who bestowed gold coins upon the recipients, an ancient Iranian custom for honoring prizewinners. “I was very impressed that he would involve himself in such a ceremony; it speaks volumes for the interest in culture in the country at large and in government circles,” said O’Kane in retrospect.

A linguist of the first degree, the Irish national speaks fluent Arabic, Persian, French and English. Adding another honor to his list of credentials, he was awarded the special prize for books published on the Middle East by the government of Kuwait at last year’s annual celebration of the British Kuwaiti Friendship Society.



Foundation works are underway for the new AUC library

First AUC Employees Move to New Campus

The new campus development office will go down in AUC’s history as the first to move to the new campus. The step was taken in April as a means of enhancing day-to-day work interaction.

“We have three groups on site that require continuous interaction at this stage of the project: the contractor, the project management team and AUC’s new campus development team,” said Ashraf Salloum, director of planning and design for the new campus. He noted that as project tasks have switched from design to construction activities, the office’s presence at the site is critical at this stage.

To ensure direct coordination for both the project management team and the new campus development team, a site office has been established

next to the contractor’s office. Preparations for the move included communication systems and data links to university networks.

“We’re quite excited as we move from the established vision in the design documents to actual realization of the new campus,” Salloum said.

Inas Mikhail, assistant to the director of planning and design at the new campus development office, liked being one of the first to move to the new campus. “Although the move was incredibly hectic and required a tremendous amount of work, as an alumna, I feel very excited about being a part of AUC’s history,” she said.

The new campus project will be completed by September 2007 at an estimated cost of \$300 million.

Condoleezza Rice Calls for the Government to Have Faith In Its People



Speaking to a packed audience in Ewart Hall, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice addressed the Egyptian government, the up-coming elections and the emergency law, within the context of democracy in the Middle East.

Rice called for the Egyptian government to have faith in its people and stated that it “must fulfill the promise it made to its people and the rest of the world, to be free to choose ... Egypt’s elections, including the parliamentary elections, must meet objective standards that define every free election.”

Though in the past the United States has been seen to support dictatorial regimes, Rice made it clear that the Bush administration had no intention of now imposing democracy, but that it did see autocratic countries as a long-term threat. “For 60 years, my country, the United States, pursued stability at the expense of democracy in this region, here in the Middle East, and we achieved neither,” she said. “Now we are taking a different course. We are supporting the democratic aspirations of all people.”

During an open question session, Rice was asked about the relationship between the United States and Europe with regard to Middle East policy. “I’ve been saying to our European allies let’s stop analyzing the state of the U.S.-European relationship and put that relationship to good work toward great strategic goals,” said Rice. “The United States and Europe share a history of having struggled and having sacrificed so that there could be democracy and unity.”

The speech was an indication that the United States will not be satisfied with just the outward appearance of democracy in the region and that they are looking for the Middle East to fully embrace it.

Ruler of Sharjah Discusses Joint Collaboration Projects with AUC

Working to foster collaboration between educational institutions in the region, AUC welcomed Sheikh Sultan Bin Muhammad Al-Qassimi, ruler of Sharjah, for a meeting with President David Arnold, AUC Trustee Moataz Al-Alfi, AUC Advisory Trustee Esmat Abdel Meguid and top university administrators.

An avid supporter of effective pedagogy in higher education, Al-Qassimi founded the American University of Sharjah in 1997. Al-Qassimi visited AUC to explore ways in which the two institutions can cooperate on joint projects. Future collaborations include linking

scientific research centers and faculty of similar interests in the humanities and social sciences, as well as establishing exchange programs.

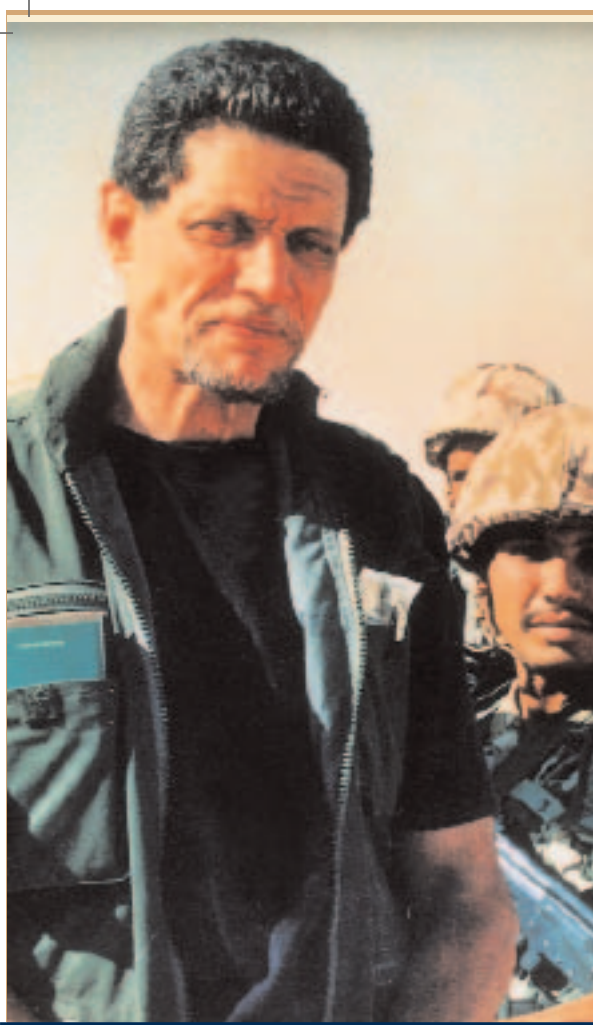
Al-Qassimi was briefed on AUC’s new campus construction developments and work progress. An art patron and connoisseur, the sheikh also added AUC’s Rare Books and Special Collections Library to his tour of the university.

After obtaining an undergraduate degree in agriculture from Cairo University, Al-Qassimi went on to receive a doctorate in history from the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom. He has made giant strides as the ruler of Sharjah and is



President David Arnold (right) presenting Al-Qassimi with a facade of AUC

credited with facilitating progress in several areas including the economic, agricultural, social and cultural domains.



Broadcasting Schleifer

Credited with establishing the Adham Center for Television Journalism and training countless aspiring journalists in the region, Abdallah Schleifer has earned the respect and admiration of his peers and students



Far left: Schleifer with soldiers in Iraq during the Gulf War; top left corner: at work inside the Adham center; top right: Schleifer with the late former Egyptian President Anwar Al-Sadat; bottom left: receiving the Presidential Award for Distinguished Service with Provost Tim Sullivan and AUC President David Arnold; bottom right: greeting Hussein El Sharkawy, vice president for new campus development, during an event held to honor Schleifer's contributions



One week before Anwar Al-Sadat was assassinated, Abdallah Schleifer, NBC News producer-reporter and Cairo bureau chief, pulled up to the desolate, barricaded residence of the president and immediately felt the prickling brown hairs on his arms stand up. A terrible sense of dread transformed into empathy for the president because "I had this feeling of a man abandoned. It had all the elements of a Roman tragedy."

As the rolling camera dawdled about, Schleifer's London-based network news director advised him to throw in a last minute, outrageously tangential question. "So I told our correspondent, Paul Miller, to ask Sadat about his most triumphant moment as a Muslim leader." On U.S. national television, Sadat admitted for the first time to working closely with the CIA to fund and arm the Afghan *mujahideen* militia against Soviet forces. The bombshell

news item sent ripples through the Cold War press like fire crackling shots, further sealing Schleifer's fate as a rising journalistic star.

Nearly three decades later, Schleifer is now slated to retire from AUC as director of the Adham Center for Television Journalism after launching several enduring institutions in his 22 years of service to the university. AUC Trustee Paul Hannon captured many of the sentiments inside AUC. "Abdallah is larger than life. He is a superb leader and mentor. His legacy is in the scores of his students and their continuing accomplishments and contributions," said Hannon.

Schleifer left NBC News to join AUC's faculty in 1983 and was asked to establish a TV news-training center, which he opened within a few years. The Adham center has been described in countless articles in the Egyptian, Arab and international press as the prime location for training journalists

in the region, competitive with any equivalent center in the United States. Michael Hudson, director of Georgetown University's Center for Contemporary Arab Studies, praised Schleifer for bolstering Adham's capabilities. "As founder and director of the Adham center at AUC, he contributed positively to the information revolution in the Arab world. Abdallah also made outstanding contributions to our understanding of Islam and Islamic civilization," he said.

Today, the center's alumni are anchors, producers, correspondents and videotape editors at every major Arab satellite channel and mainstream Egyptian TV channel. Its graduates also work for media giants such as BBC, CNN and Time Warner's New York 1 and hold prominent positions in the print media as well.

In addition to launching the Adham center, Schleifer founded *Transnational Broadcasting Studies* (TBS), an electronic

journal published twice a year, now in its eighth year. Currently the niche publication for reportage, research and debate about Arab satellite television, TBS has an estimated global readership of nearly 10,000 mass communication scholars, broadcasters, journalists and government officials tracking broadcasting in the Arab and Muslim world. "Due to his vision and foundation of the electronic journal TBS, the international academic and journalism communities now look first to AUC when they have questions concerning the Arab media," said AUC President David Arnold. Even on the brink of retirement, Schleifer is still making strides, recently overseeing the launch of a print edition of TBS.

While Schleifer's stellar accomplishments are impressive, the lasting impression he has made on his colleagues in the field and students only exceeds his achievements. Mirette Mabrouk '89, '90 an Adham center

graduate and publisher of *The Daily Star Egypt*, spoke of Schleifer's commitment to ethics in a field where there is intense pressure to get the story at any cost. "It has been a privilege for me to call him my teacher, and even a larger privilege to call him my friend," said Mabrouk.

According to Les Crystal, former president of NBC News, Schleifer was the epitome of journalistic integrity. "Abdallah Schleifer represented the very best in journalism. With him as our bureau chief in Cairo, we never missed a story; and thanks to him, I believe we always got it right," said the current executive producer of NewsHour with Jim Lehrer.

Born in New York, Schleifer is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and received his master's in Islamic political thought from the American University in Beirut. A 69-year-old of Jewish origin who converted to Islam 40 years ago,

Schleifer (formerly Marc Schleifer) is a frequent contributor of articles on mass media as well as Arab and Islamic affairs to scholarly and specialist journals. While he plans to "make time for more physical and spiritual exercise" after retirement, he will remain connected to AUC as professor emeritus.

A Renaissance man, Schleifer has interviewed notorious figures, scuttled through enemy territory, befriended presidents and achieved success in the professional and personal realms. *New York Times* op-ed columnist and AUC alumnus Thomas Friedman encapsulated Schleifer when he said: "We Middle East correspondents are something of a fraternity and Abdallah has always been a credit to our little club. He is intensely independent, honest and a wonderful explainer about both Islam and the Arab world. He has been a great bridge-builder between cultures." r

By Robtel Pailey

A League of their Own

By Dalia Al Nimr
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr



Four students reflect on their first year at AUC, the transition from public schools and living in Cairo

As Fatma Gamal walked through campus on her first day at AUC, she had a stinging sense of insecurity. “I always had the impression that AUC is a place where rich, fashion-driven people who are not too serious meet, and that made me very uncomfortable,” remembers Gamal. “It was also the first time for me to be away from my family. I felt drastically homesick, and I didn’t want to talk to anyone or see anyone.”

Today, Gamal is a valuable member of many student-run clubs and conferences at AUC. “I love the campus; I love my friends; I love the atmosphere,” she said with enthusiasm.

Gamal is one of 54 new scholarship recipients at the university. She is part of the Leadership for Education and Development (LEAD) program instituted this year, awarding top-performing public school students in Egypt a full tuition undergraduate scholarship. Funded by the United States

Agency for International Development and the Ministry of International Cooperation, the program aims to build future leaders for Egypt by instilling in its recipients the knowledge, attitude and skills to become active players in the country’s development. During their university years, LEAD students are required to take part in a community service club and attend a management development program. Top performers will spend a semester abroad. In addition, they visit three governorates every semester to understand local challenges.

For three consecutive years, the program will select a male and a female public school student from each governorate. This year’s recipients represent the first group of LEAD students. Though still in their first year, many look back on it as a turning point, reflecting on how things have changed for them personally, socially and academically. Below, four LEAD students share their insights on their first year at AUC.

Name: Fatma Gamal

Age: 18

Governorate: Marsa Matrouh

Major: Intended construction engineering

Activities: Arab Youth Development Congress, International Conference on Information Technology, Entrepreneurs Society and Phonathon

I simply love joining extracurricular activities and getting to know people. My friends tell me that I’m overdoing it because I come home late and that will eventually affect my studies. But I don’t feel that these activities are wasting my time; in fact, they help me organize my time. In my first semester, I joined only one activity and got bored very quickly. When I joined several activities in my second semester, university life became a lot more interesting. I worked as a delegate in conferences, an organizing committee member in clubs and a fundraiser for special events. It was all very exciting — meeting new people, going out there and doing things myself and then seeing it all come together. Joining these activities makes me feel like a new person. I am more self-confident now; I know how to deal with people and difficult situations and, more importantly, I feel that I am doing something worthwhile.

To me, the best part of the LEAD program is our regular visits to Egypt’s governorates. I’ve always wanted to see all of Egypt, and these visits have made that dream come true for me. It’s awesome getting the chance to meet governors and



government officials and discuss with them problems pertaining to Egypt. It makes me feel important when I sit and have a face-to-face discussion with VIPs.

But I know that these discussions have to lead somewhere. That is why I am constantly thinking of Matrouh. Unemployment there is increasing, and there are no private sector establishments. My dream is to set up an engineering company there and help rectify the image of the place from a humble tourist area to a modern, civilized urban center. As a first step toward achieving that goal, I plan to conduct literacy classes there in the summer. I always tell my parents that everything I do here at AUC is for beloved Matrouh.



Name: Mark Anis

Age: 18

Governorate: Ismailia

Major: Intended computer science

Activities: Alashanek Ya Balady

When I first came here, everything seemed different. The educational system was different, people were different and the atmosphere was very different. I felt I would never be able to adjust to my new environment. But as the days went by, I felt more and more acquainted with AUC and its activities. Actually, it became a second home to me.

One of the main things that helped me make a smooth transition was my joining Alashanek Ya Balady student club, which helps the underprivileged residents of one of Cairo’s poorest areas, Ain El Sira. I go there weekly to give computer lessons. Although it does take up a big portion of

my time, the immense satisfaction I get is unparalleled. Every time I return from a session, I feel happy that I was able to help poor people and paint a smile on their faces. University life is not just about academic courses; the extracurricular activities help make you a better person, capable of helping others and able to deal with people of different ages and backgrounds. I distinctly remember that many times I had to give sessions on Saturdays and would have exams and papers due the next day, but I always felt committed to go. People were waiting for me, and I couldn't let them down.

Besides the internal satisfaction I got, I also became more confident in my presentation skills. I never thought I would be able to conduct training, but I did. And because I like what I'm doing, it has turned out to be successful. In fact, my colleagues and I have developed a manual to be used as

a reference for future training.

That's another thing I learned — the concept of teamwork. We regularly attend conferences, conduct panel discussions and make presentations on varying topics. This has definitely increased my knowledge in different fields, but more importantly, it has taught me how to work efficiently in a team: how to get my ideas across but acknowledge others' input, how to plan and prepare things together and how to consolidate everything into a single piece of work that we all get credit for. It's very rewarding.

Looking back at my first year at AUC, I think I've changed a lot. I have a vision to play a positive role in my community, though I am unsure of what route to take. I feel that in everything I do, there is something new to learn everyday. All in all, I've become more knowledgeable, creative and responsible.

Name: Mary Hisham

Age: 17

Governorate: Minya

Major: Business Administration

Activities: AUC Music Group, Cultural Discovery Club



Friendship has taken on a new meaning for me. Back in Minya, conservatism dictated that I choose certain types of people to talk with. I could not talk to a person who smoked for fear that people would label me in a bad way. I could not make friends with a girl who was not dressed

conservatively because she was seen as disrespectful. This past year, I learned to accept others and to make all kinds of friends. Just because some people think in a way different from mine or have a different set of values doesn't mean I can pass judgment on them. That doesn't mean giving up your morals, but acknowledging that people are different.

But the best part of my stay here is the amount of freedom I enjoy — the freedom to make my own decisions and take responsibility for them. Being away from my family means that I choose the way I live, handle issues independently and learn how to deal with problematic situations that come my way. Even small things make me feel independent. At my school in Minya, our teachers used to do everything; we couldn't handle lab equipment or log onto the Internet without permission. Now, I conduct my own lab experiments and use electronic resources freely without a teacher looking over my shoulder all the time.

I cherish LEAD because it has opened my eyes to my country's problems. I can't believe I'm Egyptian and wasn't aware of the dynamics of the situation in my own country. Because we travel to different governorates, I've come to learn about the problems of each governorate and began to think of how they could be solved. For instance, I got to know that Fayoum is a great tourist place, but needs to be marketed as such to attract tourists. Also, the fact that there is no university in Aswan makes it difficult for students from that governorate, especially females, to seek higher education. We also went to AUC's Desert Development Center in

South Tahrir and saw how a barren, desert land could be turned into a little, green village and farmland.

All this got my mind twirling about what how we, the educated group, could take our country forward and has helped develop my vision for the future. I never thought I would be able to make a change in my country, but after LEAD, I have a feeling inside me that I could do something.



Name: Kareem Omara

Age: 19

Governorate: Giza

Major: Economics

Activities: Student Union, Entrepreneurs Society, AUC Choral Group

I always used to see things from my side — the Egyptian and Arab side. Everything was either black or white. But sitting in class and listening to what students from other countries have to say made me realize that there is no right or wrong answer; every person's contribution adds value to the discussion and expands your way of thinking. Seeing things from an international perspective has made a tremendous difference in my personality.

To be honest, when I first joined the university, I didn't think that my experience would be so positive. I always had the impression that AUC students are a bunch of snobbish, spoiled people who don't study hard and have nothing to do with their country. But, on the contrary, I found political awareness on campus, sit-ins to protest against the war in Iraq, dedicated community service clubs and student-run events made up of youth who are thinking hard of ways to develop their country and don't just talk

It's not yet clear to me what exactly I want to do, but I know I want to be part of a development project for Egypt. Or better yet, I would like to be an AUC professor and teach students to develop their own ideas and thinking skills. The best thing I've learned is that it doesn't matter what field you specialize in or what major you choose as long as you are provided with the means of success.

without taking action.

After studying here for a year, I came to the important realization that one doesn't get educated just to receive good grades. The real meaning of education is teaching you how to think and getting you interested in new disciplines. That is where I think the liberal arts program is phenomenal. I know that many people think it's a waste of time to study subjects that you may not use in the future, but I don't agree with that view. I like reading about philosophy and scientific thinking even though I am an economics major. As you read more, you build up knowledge that would help you take meaningful part in discussions and debates. I sincerely believe that studying a certain major doesn't necessarily mean you have to work in your field of study; the key is to be educated and learn how to teach yourself.

It's true that because the LEAD program is so intense, I don't go out with my friends or watch TV as much as before, but I think it's really worth it. Every two weeks, we have speakers from different fields discussing with us some of the challenges facing Egypt as a developing country. Through these seminars, I became more aware of my responsibility toward my community and began to develop a vision.

I always ask myself after these seminars: Will I really be able to help my country after I graduate? I think the answer is that I have to learn well, study hard and take up every opportunity that comes my way. As a first step, I plan to run for the Student Union leadership in my senior year to be able to implement a new vision for students and make them aware of Egypt's needs through interesting events. I believe that entertainment always has to have a message. I also plan to start a student club at AUC that would fill any needed gap in the students' experience. By training myself in the leadership of my university community, I would be taking one step forward in helping my country. A journey of 1,000 miles begins with a single step. r

Main Made Biology

A founder of biology at AUC, Andrew Main's is a face few biology alumni forget

Main with students inside the lab; on a trip in Kenya; dissecting inside the biology lab; Main as Santa Claus



He has traveled with his students to Kenya and Australia, surprised them in their finals dressed as Santa Claus and hosted regular dinners at his home for biology majors. Andrew Main, the biology professor and department chair who has served for many students as a mentor and guide, is now leaving the department after a decade at AUC.

In his soft-spoken voice, Main reflects on his time at AUC and his instrumental role in establishing the biology department with characteristic modesty. When he first joined the

university in 1994, students could not major in biology. Four years later, the biology major was established and the first class graduated in 2000. "I've enjoyed every graduating class. Each class meant something different. The first ones were the pioneers who struggled with us as we tried to get things right," said Main.

Prior to joining AUC, Main was no newcomer to Cairo. Since 1986, he worked as a researcher in the U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit in Cairo studying the West Nile virus and vector-borne disease problems in Egypt

and neighboring North African and Middle Eastern countries. "By 1992, my contract ended but I had become fond of Egypt and life outside the laboratory, so I thought of other ways to remain here. The job at AUC seemed perfect," he reflected.

Coming from Yale University's school of medicine, where he taught pre-med students, at AUC Main was appointed head of what was then the biology unit and taught freshman biology and Scientific Thinking, among other courses. "At first I was apprehensive, but then I enjoyed

teaching Scientific Thinking. I think it's an excellent course with a lot of room for give and take on controversial topics," he said.

Enjoyable is the word that he uses to describe many of his experiences at AUC. It is the enthusiasm and energy that he gives to his work that has proven contagious among his students. "I enjoy working with the students very much. I think we have a great bunch in biology in particular. Biology is not one of those high impact majors that people come in to because there are a lot of jobs out there like engineering, business or computer

he dons his Santa costume to the delight of those around him. "Last year while I still had the costume, I wore it to the finals and surprised the students," he said. "That's not a permanent job, just on the side," he said laughing.

In addition to his Santa-like demeanor, Main is known for the individual attention he gives his students, often taking special interest in their projects and research. In 2001, Main took a few students to Kenya on a camping trip to look at wildlife. Three years later, he went on another biology trip to Australia also to study the wildlife.

to graduate or medical schools," Main said like a proud father.

Beyond instilling a sense of community in the biology department and among his students, Main has helped groom future generations of biologists. "I knew Dr. Main well before taking any classes with him. He taught us how to think like biologists, how to acquire information and how to handle and analyze findings," said Ahmad El Droubi, biology senior.

When asked about his greatest achievements at AUC, Main still draws attention to his students. "I am most proud of the students," he said.

science," said Main. "Students choose biology because they like it, and that's a strong point in making students here in biology what they are."

Bearing a charming resemblance to Santa Claus, Main puts those around him at ease. A colleague once told him that a student admitted being stressed out about the Scientific Thinking course until he met Main. The student then knew it was going to be a good class when he saw that his professor looked just like Santa Claus, recounts Main. Main has become a regular at the faculty and staff Christmas party, where

Amira El Sherif, biology senior, describes Main as a father figure. "I don't think there are words that describe Dr. Main. In addition to being a good teacher who knows his stuff, he genuinely and sincerely cares about his students," she said.

Long after they graduate, students still keep in touch with Main by sending updates to the weekly newsletter sent out by the department. "We keep close track of them. They are an enthusiastic friendly group and it's a pleasure working with them and seeing them succeed after graduation. Many go on

After leaving AUC, Main will focus on the research he has been working on for decades. He will continue to study the West Nile virus and the role of animals in the epidemiology of Hepatitis E at a lab in Connecticut.

Summarizing the feelings of students and faculty, Provost Tim Sullivan said, "He was a great teacher, a mentor to many junior faculty and students and a supportive colleague. We will miss his sense of humor and total dedication to his students and colleagues." r

By Lamiya Tawfik

Diplomatic Rhythms

By Dalia Al Nimr
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr

Mohamed Kazem '86, '89 heats up the stage with a fusion of diplomacy and music



Fully clad in a suit, tie and sparkly polished shoes, with the formal, refined demeanor of a diplomat, Mohamed Kazem '86, '89 sets off to work in a public diplomacy initiative with the Euro-Arab Foundation in Spain. Forgoing day-long meetings and rounds of negotiations that are the hallmark of a diplomatic career, Kazem has carved out another path. Dressed in a shirt and pale black jeans, sounding off melodious tunes on his guitar and singing songs amid a cheering audience who sway their candles in harmony with his music, Kazem has found a new breed of diplomacy.

Having graduated from AUC with an undergraduate degree in economics, a minor in political science and a graduate degree in Middle East studies, it was not unusual for Kazem to pursue a diplomatic life and join the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. What makes him different, however, is his

synergy of diplomacy and music, writing and composing more than 150 songs in English, Arabic and Spanish and performing them live under the umbrella of public diplomacy — a field in which he received his doctorate from Spain seven years ago.

“Public diplomacy is a way to achieve dialogue among peoples and music is a bridge,” he said.

Away from the typical theme of romantic sagas, Kazem’s songs deal with aspects of the “human dimension:” moments of hope, insecurity, disappointment, love and joy. These include songs on how time passes you by quickly, the difference

“Public diplomacy is a way to achieve dialogue among peoples, and music is a bridge.”



Kazem on stage at his most recent concert in Cairo

between dreams and reality, the horrors of wars and killings, the uncertainties of life and the frustration from unfulfilled goals and unanswered questions. By focusing on themes that all people can relate to, Kazem hopes to forge a common understanding among people from different parts of the world.

“We all have things in common, but may have different ways of expressing them. That’s where public diplomacy comes in. It is a message to people from all nations and a key to making our world a better place,” Kazem said.

Born to a father who worked with the United Nations and in the field of higher education and a mother who is a psychologist, Kazem found himself traveling extensively with his family from the age of four. Traveling in the Middle East, Europe, the United States, Mexico and the Far East developed in Kazem a belief that people from diverse backgrounds have more similarities than differences. “This is when the seed of public diplomacy began to grow in me, but I didn’t know it at the time,” he said.

The feeling crystallized inside him as he grew older, reaching a turning point at the age of 12 when he spent



Kazem reflects on life as a diplomat and musician in his Cairo apartment



the summer at a U.S. camp in Nevada. “I made a lot of friends there, but was shocked that the salient image they had of Egypt was people living in the desert and traveling by camel. I was convinced then that stereotypes lead to misunderstanding, and something had to be done to alleviate such distorted images.”

Kazem found his calling in music. With a sister who plays the piano and

a cousin who plays the guitar, Kazem always had an affinity for melodies, developing gradually into a young guitarist. When he was 15, he teamed with a drummer friend and performed concerts at clubs and other venues. As college students, Kazem and his friends formed a music group called the Harmonix, performing at AUC and other universities, as well as in public theaters. His first tape was

released a year after his graduation, and his latest CD, *Stygmatisim*, was released two years ago.

“I want my songs to express the true moments in life — moments that we all share as humans. I want to underline what is common among us, but also make us accept what is not. It’s not about a clash of civilizations, but more of an alliance or integration of civilizations,” he said.

“I want to underline what is common among us, but also make us accept what is not. It’s not about a clash of civilizations, but more of an alliance or integration of civilizations.”

Following AUC, in 1991, Kazem went for a one-year foreign service training program at Oxford University, receiving a certificate in diplomatic studies. International politics, trade and law were, of course, part of the learning experience, but for Kazem it was his interaction with 30 junior diplomats from 26 countries that made all the difference. “We mingled together in an informal atmosphere and I felt more and more that many of the differences we focus on are shallow masks, while the real ‘us’ lies in the moments of truth we all share as humans when and if we can afford to let those masks fall down,” he said.

Kazem moved to Madrid, Spain in 1993, where he has now served for two terms at the political section of the Egyptian Embassy. He received his doctorate in international relations from the Autonomous University of Madrid, specializing in public diplomacy and in bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Mediterranean region. Kazem’s thesis focused on the image Egyptians have of Spaniards and the one Spaniards have of Egyptians as conveyed through the mass media. “My research confirmed to me that work had to be done to rectify the impressions people of different nationalities have of one another, and I felt deep down that art and music were an excellent path for that.”

Currently, Kazem is a first secretary at the Egyptian foreign ministry. He works in collaboration with the Euro-Arab Foundation in Spain, an organization focused on promoting dialogue and cooperation between the Arab world and countries of the European Union through research, scientific, educational and cultural exchange programs.

For three years, Kazem has performed concerts, delivered lectures and conducted meetings touring Spain, the United States and Egypt under the title “In Search of Understanding.” In his concerts, Kazem plays the guitar and sings in three different languages, focusing his songs on the universal themes of hope, fear, frustration and dreams of peace and love. His music is a combination of soft rock, pop, rumba, reggae and blues.

Occasionally, Kazem invites diplomats from other countries to perform with him. Revenues from his concerts are used for philanthropic causes, which included helping homeless children in Brazil and helping the poor through the activities of Fat’het Kheir, a nongovernmental organization working in Egypt.

“Money is not my objective,” Kazem pointed out. “I am a human being affected by my surroundings and their interaction with accumulations within me. I want to share my feelings and thoughts through my songs. I sincerely believe that songs dealing with aspects of the human experience will touch people’s hearts and souls if they are honest and pure.”

Persistent in the path he set for himself, Kazem continues to write and compose his own songs about what unites and breaks up humans, as the following excerpt denotes:

*To the dream of being at peace with yourself and harmony with others,
To love and be loved, and to be happy without hurting others.
It is never easy as it partially lies in what is said, but more in what is unsaid.*

The Unsaid, 1999 r

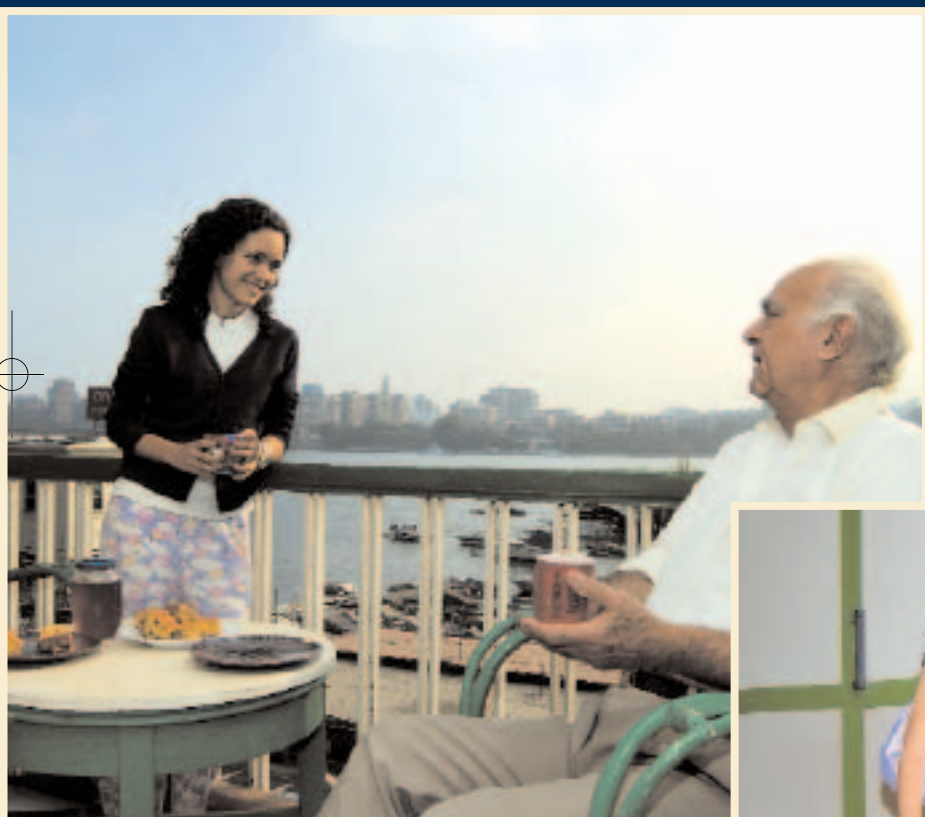
Commencement Countdown

With 10 hours left to the final walk across the stage, graduates grapple with mixed feelings as they prepare for the grand event

Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr

For many of this year's graduates, commencement marks a long-awaited milestone that ends one chapter of their lives and ushers a new beginning. To find how a typical graduate spends the day leading up to commencement, *AUC Today* followed Mennat-Allah El Dorry, an Egyptology major, from the time she woke up for breakfast until the walk across stage to receive her diploma.

Working toward her degree for four years, El Dorry was excited to have finally arrived at her graduation. Though she may have had to endure sociology, philosophy and Arabic classes, she said that it was her zeal for Egyptology that kept her going. She also managed to gain work experience during her time as a student, working with both the former AUC public relations department and the enrollment office. Among El Dorry's most memorable experiences at AUC is mummifying a fish that she can now treasure forever as a memento of her life at the university.



8:00 a.m.

The day begins as El Dorry makes her way onto the street. "We just need to wait for a friend who's going with me to the rehearsal." Moments later Wazzi arrives and it's off to Nasr City



4:00 p.m.

El Dorry makes her final preparations for the ceremony as she tries on her cap. "I just hope everything goes smoothly; it's already been a long day," she says with nervous anticipation



7:15 a.m.

A quick breakfast while Mennat-Allah El Dorry, Egyptology major, goes over the plan of the day with her father. "Believe me, you won't make it if you leave at six, especially if you have to pick up uncle on the way," she says. Fully relaxed, dad tells El Dorry not to worry and just focus on her own schedule

10:00 a.m.

Celebration is in the air and graduates are quick to congratulate each other amid warm greetings. After several calls for order, El Dorry hears her name and makes her way to the allocated seating.



8:30 p.m.

The moment El Dorry has been waiting for finally arrives. "It's been a long time coming but I'm glad I finally have it," El Dorry says with a smile



Cairo After College

By Robtel Pailey
Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr

Inside AUC's offices, four presidential interns selected from top U.S. universities spend 10 months working at the university, learning about Egypt and themselves in the process

Top right: Zeyad Bahaa-Eldin, chairman of the General Authority for Investment and Free Zones, delivers the graduate commencement address; center right Six graduates receive the President's Cup for scoring the highest grade point averages; bottom right: Aliaa Rohaieem, representative of the master's degree candidates, addresses the graduates



Most people rarely take time off to unearth their life's passions. Familial responsibilities, a demanding career and the daily routine seem to eat up the years, while the list of unexplored possibilities continues to linger.

Each year, six presidential interns — fresh graduates of U.S. universities all under the age of 25 — opt for a different track during a 10-month stint in Egypt. Taking a short detour from the expected job applications and graduate school programs that invariably follow after college, these young men and women set out to explore new frontiers.

Established in 1981, AUC's presidential internship program provides graduates of some of the most prestigious universities in the United States with the opportunity to work in AUC's administrative offices. In two decades, the program has brought more than 150 graduates to Egypt, many of whom have gone on to careers in academia, journalism, international development, diplomacy, law and banking. Former AUC presidential interns include a MacArthur Foundation award recipient, a CNN White House correspondent, an aide to former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright

and numerous authors of acclaimed books on Middle East history.

This year, AUC's presidential interns, who hailed from Connecticut College, Davidson College, Harvard, Howard, and Stanford universities, plunged into the Cairo scene. Beyond experiencing their first full-time professional jobs at AUC, the interns developed their Arabic language skills, spearheaded outreach projects, occupied themselves with cultural exploration and engaged in personal development.

Reaching to Refugees

Floridian Sean Brooks established a natural rapport with Omar Idris, one of his students at St. Andrews Church, and was immediately enveloped into his family. Amidst a booked schedule in the president's office drafting and editing correspondences, preparing speeches and conducting research, Brooks squeezed in several hours each week instructing refugees in English. Idris was his top student. "In exchange for teaching Omar's sister on the side, his mom fed me," said Brooks with a contented smile.

During dinners filled with heaping plates of enjera and berbery sauce from Idris's native Eritrea, Brooks gleaned insight about the complexities of refugee life. "I've learned a lot about



Caroline Foster

“Being able to read opposition newspapers and watch television in modern standard Arabic has given me the kind of knowledge that generic textbooks lack.”

how to wait for a hope that may never come,” he said referring to the transitory nature of refugees in any urban environment. Refugees often wait like lame ducks, and the bureaucratic system that keeps them in a state of flux haunted Brooks. “It’s a struggle for them to build their lives in a country that they want so desperately to leave,” he said. Coping with the daily challenges of racism and poverty in Cairo, Brooks’s students came to St. Andrews for a break in the monotony and to prepare themselves for possible resettlement to Anglophone countries. Brooks taught at St. Andrews to find hope in the unseen.

For Brooks, Cairo also represented a hub from which to scrutinize recent developments in the Middle East. Having focused on the region in his last two years of study at Davidson College, Brooks traveled to Cairo for a year of immersion. “Being able to read opposition newspapers and watch television in modern standard Arabic has given me the kind of knowledge that generic textbooks lack,” he said.

Teaching the Teacher

A class of 20 pupils at the Modern English School sat transfixed in their seats as Center for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) intern Caroline Foster discussed Niccolo Machiavelli’s *The Prince*. Several hands popped up following Foster’s presentation, and the students began a vigorous debate about leadership styles. While some teachers would be unnerved by the cutthroat undertones of Machiavelli’s seminal text, Foster used it as a springboard from which to discuss politics in Egypt. “This mutual learning is what I enjoy most. There are students and teachers in the room and the positions are not necessarily strictly defined,” she said.

In addition to establishing partnerships with CACE and the local community, launching an oral history project chronicling the achievements of the center and creating a record management program with AUC’s Rare Books and Special Collections Library, Foster exhilarated in the rush of adrenaline that goes hand-in-hand with teaching. “Teachers have the opportunity to help people feel excited about knowledge,” beamed the aspiring museum educator.

When she was not in the classroom, Islamic Cairo transformed into a source of wonder and awe for Foster. She was speechless while standing at the apex of the Blue Mosque minaret for the first time on a Friday afternoon.

“You can ‘feel it’ when you’re in a place that contains the history you’ve studied,” said the Connecticut College graduate in medieval studies.

A Portal to Africa

At the height of a spectacular tribute to Rastafarian Bob Marley in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa, Web communications intern Courtney Mosby found herself on stage dancing near the reggae icon’s progeny as they performed several of his classic hits. As professional photographers clamored for a glimpse of the Marley clan, Mosby stood at arms length snapping away with ease.

For Mosby, who spent her time coordinating Web site development with technical, administrative and academic units at AUC, the true lure of spending a year in Egypt was its proximity to top travel destinations. Eager to explore the African continent, Mosby grabbed every opportunity to travel both inside and outside the country. The high point, however, came during the winter break when Mosby developed an



Sean Brooks

“I realized that both groups were uprooted from their homelands and are still struggling to cope with displacement and marginalization.”

affinity for Ethiopia’s people and landscape. “While in Shashamane, I was also able to understand the spiritual dynamics of Rastafari life and culture often misconstrued by outsiders,” she said about her trip to a Rastafarian commune.

As for domestic travel, Mosby found the real charm of Egypt encapsulated in a voyage to Aswan. The Howard University history graduate heard an exclamatory “my sister” from many of Aswan’s residents. It was at this critical moment that Mosby as an African-American felt a sense of parallel history with Upper Egyptians. “I realized that both groups were uprooted from their homelands and are still struggling to cope with displacement and marginalization,” she said.

Sports Connection

In a fast-paced, action-packed soccer game at the AUC hostel in Zamalek, a fearlessly aggressive Chris Raftery “joked” his first contender with precision and flair. After a slight fake to the left, Raftery shuffled to the right, in control of the spotted white ball.

When he wasn’t writing and editing promotional pamphlets for the Desert Development Center (DDC), preparing research project proposals or acting as a liaison between the DDC and the AUC community, former

Harvard University football star Raftery experimented with the nuances of soccer, a game he had never played seriously before coming to Cairo. Raftery warmed up to soccer because “it is a world communicator that transcends class, religion and nationality.” His newfound love of the game enabled Raftery to make a connection with people who may have seemed inaccessible because of age, culture or language barriers. Among Raftery’s most memorable matches were the ones played with members of AUC’s hostel maintenance staff, who showed him their skills on the field and talked about their lives as Egyptian nationals after the games. “Before I greeted them with an impersonal nod; now the smiles are friendlier, warmer, more genuine,” he said.

Egypt’s topography left an indelible impression on the government graduate. Escaping the pollution, crowds and uproar of the city, Raftery trekked to the arid regions of Egypt to find solace in personal reflection. “It was the one place where I could be at peace with myself without the clutter of people and noise,” he admitted. r

The writer, Robtel Pailey, served as the communications and marketing intern, where she covered events, wrote stories and provided invaluable input.



Chris Raftery



Courtney Mosby



Art students take their class to Spain, exploring the likes of Picasso, Miro and Gaudi firsthand

Viva España

While their counterparts toiled through the densely-packed winter session courses on campus, art students took their classroom to Spain. From Barcelona in Catalonia to Granada and Seville in Andalusia, the students discovered that the land of flamenco dancers, bullfights and nighttime fiestas

is a goldmine of ancient and modern art and architecture. Through a four-week course, The Art and Architecture of Spain, AUC art students spent two weeks in Spain, traveling to different cities, studying the art museums, galleries and buildings by famous architects while documenting everything in their sketchbooks.

“Spain to me was nothing more than flamenco dancers, famous beaches, lively night life and Barcelona’s well-known soccer team. Never before had it crossed my mind that Spain could have [such a rich] art and architectural world of its own,” said Salma El-Sayed, an art senior. The idea started when the course

instructor Tarek El-Akkad, affiliate professor in the performing and visual arts department and a specialist in Spanish studies, proposed a winter course. “Because of the tight schedule I thought that the best way to do a course like this is to take the students on a field trip to experience the content firsthand,” El-Akkad said. “Spain is rich in its art and architecture and Barcelona has influenced every artist and architect who has lived there. I felt it would be an inspirational experience for our students.”

The aim of the course, El-Akkad added, was for the students to interact directly with the subjects they are learning about. “I could sit them in class and show them many slides about Spain, but they would not know what the paintings or sculptures are about until they experience them themselves. In addition, slides mean that you are seeing the work of art through somebody else’s vision, but walking around the sculpture or painting, examining it from different angles and drawing it using your own eyes is a totally different experience,” he said.

With museum visits in the morning and field sketches and library research in the afternoon, the students had a busy schedule in Spain. Walking through the cities and examining the buildings, palaces, art galleries and museums, the students covered many kilometers on foot.

“How could you visually experience a city in a taxi?” El-Akkad said, explaining the pedestrian part of the trip. “The emphasis was on the visual experience because one picture is worth a thousand words.”

The course began in Cairo, where for 10 days, El-Akkad gave his students a background on Spanish art and architecture and an overview of the course content. They then took off to

Barcelona, where they attended lectures by Spanish professors at the International University of Catalonia. The rest of the week in Barcelona was spent visiting museums and examining the works of famous artists like Picasso, Dali and the Spanish architect Gaudi. Of course, the students paid a visit to a flamenco dance performance.

“In Barcelona, I was exposed to some of the most inspiring artistic elements I had ever witnessed,” said Mai Rashdan, art senior. “I did not only react to what I saw in galleries; it was the entire atmosphere. I felt the liveliness of the city and its people and the variation in art schemes that was evident in the design of buildings and the intricate artwork on sidewalk tiles.”

For other students, Barcelona exposed them to a new side of art they had not fully grasped before. “I was never a fan of Picasso, but after seeing his artwork firsthand and understanding the meanings behind it, I appreciate every piece that belongs to Picasso. I think he is an art genius,” El-Sayed said.

In the rest of the cities they visited, the students also learned art from the Islamic period. “I’ve always been interested in Islamic art and architecture,” said Rashdan. “It was

amazing and inspiring for me to see everything in real life and to examine the details you don’t see in slides. It added to my experience as an artist and pushed me to a higher level.”

Though the students were exhausted by the end of the trip, they all felt that what they gained in knowledge and exposure was worth the fatigue.

“The trip showed me a completely new side of myself,” said Malak Sowellem, a psychology senior. “I never thought I would be interested in art, but I found out I was. I also realized I could draw, which is something I never thought about doing before taking this course,” she said.

For Rashdan, the course helped her develop new ideas. “I needed this trip because I felt I was repeating myself in my work and wanted to find new sources of inspiration,” she said, adding that the Spanish culture with its “vibrant colors, loud music, flamenco dances and the intricate designs you see in almost everything around you” is a fertile ground for creativity.

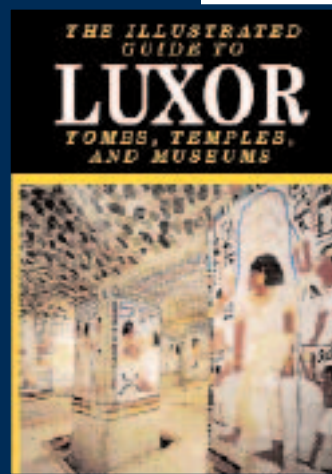
“In Spain, many things can inspire you as an artist,” she said. “I now want to go back to my studio and work on something new and unique.”

By Dalia Al Nimr



Professors in Print

Sharing their expertise, AUC faculty members contribute innovative publications to their fields



The Illustrated Guide to Luxor: Tombs, Temples and Museums, AUC Press By Kent Weeks

For the thousands of tourists who flock to one of Egypt's prime destinations, this illustrated guide tells visitors what they should expect to see in Luxor. World-renowned archaeologist and AUC Professor Kent Weeks takes the reader through the hub of Pharaonic civilization from the eyes of an insider.

"The full color photos show the monuments to their best advantage and help in the general understanding of the antiquities and the time period in which they were built," said Weeks, adding that he hopes that the guide would give readers a chance to understand more clearly what they are seeing when they come to the Luxor area.

The book not only provides a comprehensive itinerary through the tombs and monuments of ancient Thebes and the museums of modern Luxor, but also has extensive chapters devoted to the history of the city and Egyptian religion, as well as advice for the modern traveler on hotels and restaurants. "For all readers I hope to convey the very real fragility of the heritage we are trying to preserve," said Weeks.

Before the Theban Mapping Project, which Weeks heads, no large-scale attempt was made to survey and publish information on the tombs found in the Valley of the Kings.

"I feel that this guide is an extension of the work the Theban Mapping Project is conducting in the valley today; providing information and increasing accessibility will facilitate us in our attempts at preserving this precious legacy, ensuring that the purpose and use of the antiquities is remembered and respected," he said.

The Internet in Egypt and the Arab World, Dar Afaq Publications By Rasha Abdulla

In an Arabic book that traces the start and development of the Internet in the Arab world, Rasha Abdulla, journalism and mass communication assistant professor at AUC, examines the freedom of electronic information flow in Egypt and the Arab world and how governments have dealt with this new medium. "I think the Internet is a breakthrough in communication, like Guttenberg's printing press. It gives Arabs a chance, and we either latch on to it or we don't," she said. "The introduction of the Internet to our countries provides us with great opportunities. These opportunities are currently not being utilized to their maximum potential."

Abdulla also discusses the uses of the Internet in the Arab world, stressing that the Internet should be used to enhance the lives of citizens in the Arab world. It could also be used to improve the image of Arabs in the West, spread democracy and create a more active and empowered civic society.



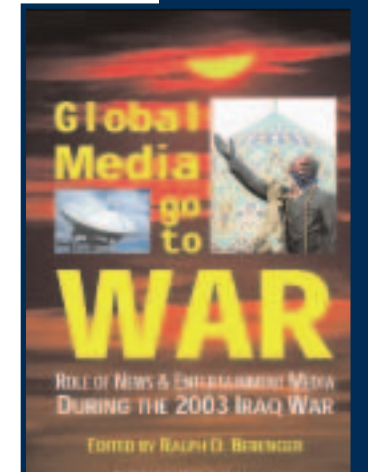
Global Media Go to War: Role of News and Entertainment Media in the 2003 Iraq War, Marquette Books Edited By Ralph Berenger

What started as a bet with a colleague ended up as an important scholarly work on the behavior of international media during war. "I bet my colleague that there wouldn't be a war in Iraq because Saddam Hussein would never risk being forced to step down. I lost my bet, but became enthralled by how the media was behaving," said Ralph Berenger, journalism and mass communication professor and the book's editor.

The book is the first scholarly effort to examine the media's role in covering the war. It is comprised of the scholarly work of nearly 50 academics, including nine from AUC and the Middle East, and journalism professionals who are all authorities in their fields.

The book has received positive reviews by numerous journals and Web sites including the *Global Media Journal*, Amazon.com and AUC's own journal, *Transnational Broadcasting Studies*. It has also been adopted as a textbook in many media and political science classes in U.S. universities.

"As soon as the tanks moved across the borders, I wanted to be the first to get a scholarly book together about the war. I wanted it to be directed to a general audience, to cut through the fog of the war and to show that both the Arab and Western media were stretching the truth, had incomplete information and inaccuracies and used various propaganda techniques," Berenger said.



Divine Creatures: Animal Mummies in Ancient Egypt, AUC Press Edited by Salima Ikram

In ancient Egypt, animals and not just humans were mummified to live, as was believed, forever. *Divine Creatures*, made up of the work of 10 contributing scholars, looks at the mummified animals of the ancient Egyptians, of which there were four types; food offerings, pets, sacred animals and votive offerings.

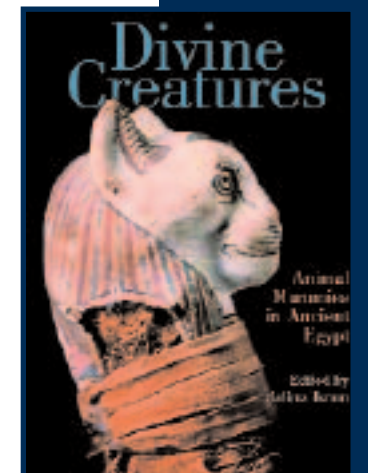
"Egyptologists tend to obfuscate, but to clarify is our job," said Salima Ikram, associate Egyptology professor and the book's editor. "In the lives of ancient Egyptians, animals played an important part in society. There's a great similarity with life today as many cared for their pets."

In her book, Ikram sought to "blast some myths" like the notion that the ancient Egyptians worshiped all animals. "As far as I know, this is the first book exclusively on animal cult mummies in ancient Egypt," she said.

Ikram has done extensive work on animal mummies and is responsible for the re-establishment of the animal mummy room in the Egyptian museum. She encouraged her students to work in the room and has also involved them intensely while she was putting her book together.

But the book is not targeted solely to the avid students of Egyptology. "It's directed toward the general reader. Practically anyone who likes animals and thinks they're cute will enjoy this book," she said.

By Lanya Taufik



From Day One to Daycare

Photos by Ahmad El-Nemr



Tucked in the corner of the Greek Campus, one of AUC's best-kept secrets has come a long way since it first opened nearly two decades ago, and the future looks even brighter for the toddler crowd on campus

Protected from the sweltering Cairo heat in the cocoon of AUC's Alf Leila Wa Leila Daycare Center, little Kiko, Quinland, Ahmad and Sherifa sit in their miniature cherry red chairs painting what appears to be a figure representing the Asiatic island of Japan. While the dimpled Kiko fidgets with the small bristles of his brush, Quinland pushes away a mass of auburn curls so as not to obstruct her view. Ahmad and

Sherifa are both riveted by the sheer possibilities of their creation, attempting to keep their hands and eyes in sync to stay in the lines.

Nearly two decades before this scene materialized, the conceptual framework for a daycare center at AUC was still in its infancy. Then a firebrand campaigner for establishing a facility on campus, Khadiga El Ghazaly and three other young AUC employees spearheaded the initial push. "In the

1970s, there was no such service in Egypt, especially on the private level. The need for the faculty and staff started to emerge much later and the demand was there," said El Ghazaly, associate director in AUC's development office. In the early 1980s, El Ghazaly and colleagues circulated a university-wide survey asking members of AUC's faculty and staff about the need for a daycare facility for their children. Fifty-four respondents agreed



with resounding approval, further legitimizing El Ghazaly's cause.

The center was embraced as an intriguing experiment by friends and supporters, a blessing by parents and a home away from home by children. It was supported by donated time and help, fees and contributions collected from parents, raffles and bookkeeping services. The space was facilitated and furnished by the university after petitions from staff. Inaugurated in 1984, the first center surfaced in the old Zamalek dormitories. As more and more students enrolled, the modest fourth floor apartment reached capacity and became a potential fire hazard. Thus began an overhaul change, shifting the physical space of the daycare as it moved from a villa on Sheikh Rihan Street to the Old Falaki building within a span of eight years.

Currently tucked in the rear of the Greek Campus and overflowing with the rambunctious laughter of little ones, the center has since developed into a multipurpose facility, providing a comfortable and stimulating environment for children to explore and discover the world around them. Establishing a daily rhythm conducive to each child's development, the supervisors are skilled caregivers. "The kids are so open here because that's the kind of environment we promote — one that advocates the right to express

their opinions," said daycare teacher Yaquta Mohyuddin, who was teary-eyed after bidding farewell to many of her students graduating in June.

For AUC employees whose children are enrolled in the daycare center, life is more manageable because of the center's proximity to their offices. As a research fellow at the Institute for Gender and Women's Studies, Leslie Lewis did not anticipate the bureaucratic rut she'd encounter in Egypt. The mother of two expected a smooth transition to AUC after packing up her husband and kids and shipping tons of boxes from their residential home in San Diego, California. Though Lewis settled into a healthy routine only recently, her schedule wasn't always so predictable.

The University of San Diego graduate student was relieved to discover AUC's daycare center on the Greek Campus for daughter Sophie, a 15-month-old learning both Spanish and English. The erratic move to Egypt upset the natural flow of Sophie's rhythm, and Lewis was hard pressed to restore her daughter's patterned lifestyle. Unlike the other daycare centers Lewis visited in Egypt, AUC was not regimented or rigidly structured. "Schedules are good with kids, but sometimes they need the variety to be able to choose activities," Lewis said, lauding the AUC daycare

for its engaging environment. The daily schedule at the daycare begins and ends with free choice activities such as painting, drawing, reading books and playing with construction toys, puzzles or play dough. During the day, the children engage in themed activities, story, music, computer sessions and garden play. While conducting research on the ideological underpinnings of secular and Islamic feminists in the Middle East, Lewis is assured that her daughter is well taken care of.

Having adopted the daycare as her life's work, El Ghazaly, who continues to serve on the daycare's board, has put in countless hours trying to secure recognition for the center under the university system. Because of the vigilant efforts of the board, AUC has allotted an area for the daycare on the new campus to further develop the skills of children and parents alike. "This is the first space that was allotted from the very beginning," said El Ghazaly whose daughter is a graduate of both the daycare and AUC. Administrators are currently in the process of customizing the new facility to accommodate a record number of 80 children. Though Kiko, Quinlan, Ahmad and Sherifa may not reap the benefits of Alf Leila Wa Leila on the New Cairo campus, their successors certainly will. r

By Robtel Pailey

Around the World

United Arab Emirates

At La Marquise restaurant in Dubai, more than 100 alumni living in the United Arab Emirates spent the evening remembering their days at AUC and catching up on the latest events in their lives. Organized by the alumni committee in Dubai and coordinated by Heba Shaaban '92, the March gathering brought together graduates of all ages and was a day that many hoped would be a recurring tradition.

“As a newcomer to the Emirates, I feel that I have a community here. All of a sudden, I found myself singing: We of AUC forever, raise our voices now together!”

Ayman Madkour '89



President David Arnold and Mary Iskander '76 with alumni in Dubai

“I was a very active student ... and doing any type of activity that connects me and keeps other AUCians linked to AUC is a pleasure, particularly while living abroad.”

Heba Shaaban '92



President David Arnold presenting Yousef Jameel '68 with a rendering of the Jameel Management Center on the new campus

“I definitely hope we can do this on a regular basis. It's a beautiful feeling when you meet someone you know in a place full of strangers.”

Safynaz Rizk '02



Alumni gathering in Dubai



Alumni meeting in Chicago hosted by Marileez Doss Suter '72 and Werner Suter at Le Meridien Hotel in May



For her continuous support and dedication to her alma mater and for opening her home to AUC and to its alumni, administrators and faculty, Marileez Doss Suter '72 (third from right) was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Volunteer Award, as Mary Iskander '76, Sherry Arnold, President David Arnold, Tawhida El Askary '96 and Werner Suter look on



Alumni meeting in Houston in May at the Intercontinental Hotel



Alumni and friends of AUC at Sheraton Biscayne Bay Hotel in Florida

United States

Throughout the United States, the AUC spirit was alive, as alumni met in several cities across the country.



Alumni meeting in Dallas hosted by Shahira El-Kholi '91 and Amr Koura at their residence in May

Qatar



Members of the alumni chapter in Qatar with Lebanese TV star George Kurdahi at the alumni gathering held in May at the Four Seasons Hotel

Saudi Arabia

In April, two alumni meetings were held in Riyadh and Jeddah, in addition to several luncheons, dinners and individual meetings with prominent figures in Saudi Arabia.



Ahmed Abdullatif '57 received a plaque from President David Arnold in recognition of his leadership and commitment to higher education. After receiving his bachelor's in economics from AUC, Abdullatif was trained at the International Monetary Fund and in commercial banks in the United States and India.

A prominent economist and banker, Abdullatif contributed to the formulation of the Banking Control Law in Saudi Arabia and was the first bank controller. He held several senior posts throughout his career, including chairman of the Arab Banking Corporation in Bahrain, managing director of Riyadh Bank and founding member of the Arab Bankers' Association in London.

A believer in the value of education, Abdullatif helped establish and run the Saudi Institute for Public Education, which aims to eradicate illiteracy, and has been a big supporter of the Alumni Endowed Scholarship at AUC. "We must concentrate our efforts on educating our young men and women. Economic and financial power, especially if based on depletable resources, is no match for human intelligence," he said.



AUC Trustee Suad Juffali receiving the Distinguished Honorary Alumni Award from President David Arnold and AUC Trustee Moataz Al Alfi in recognition of her commitment to liberal arts education and her outstanding record of leadership and service



AUC Trustee Moataz Al Alfi, Kenneth Manotti, Mahmoud Al-Maeina, Nashua Taher and Sherry Arnold



Abla Leheta El Farouki '69, Hiyam Dajani '57 and Souhial El Farouki '68



Seated: Amira Nazer, Sherry Arnold, Samira Bidewy; Standing Abla Leheta El Farouki '69 and Nashua Taher



Alumni meeting in Jeddah



Alumni meeting in Riyadh

United Kingdom

London-area alums enjoyed an Egyptian-themed day, featuring food and crafts, as well as a briefing on ancient Egyptian art and magic.



Alumni at Egyptian day in London hosted by Nadia Teufik '80, '99 at Rosslyn Hill Chapel

"I really enjoyed the *koshari* and the tea with mint. I haven't spoken in Arabic for almost two years now, so it was like a real homecoming to me."

Moataz Atallah '01, '03

Alumni Chapter Announcements

Lebanon

Laila Ziada '57 and Hany Katma '72 are establishing an alumni chapter in Lebanon and would like to hear from any alumni who live there. Ziada can be contacted at l.ziada@ocph.com

Switzerland

An alumni dinner will be held in Geneva on September 18, 2005. More details to follow.

United Arab Emirates

The next alumni gathering in the UAE will be a Ramadan *iftar* on Thursday, October 20, 2005 in Dubai. It will be followed by a trip to Al-Ain during the Eid weekend. For alumni who are not registered on the Dubai list, please contact Heba Shaaban '92 at heba_uae@eim.ae

IT Alums Network on Campus

More than 200 alumni, including many of Egypt's leading IT professionals, gathered in the Science Garden on the Main Campus in a special reception. With a guest list boasting leaders from almost every major IT enterprise in Egypt, the reception offered an opportunity for alumni to network both professionally and personally. Tarek Kamel, Egypt's minister of communications and information technology, described the gathering as "a celebration of the partnership between Egypt and the United States. AUC has always been a vehicle of strong dialogue and partnership."



Three AUC students, Mahmoud Abdel-Fattah, Ahmad Ezzat and Fadi Mounir, are recognized for winning first place at the Association for Computing and Machinery's regional programming contest.

At the event, Akil Beshir (MA '79) received the Distinguished Alumni Award, which is presented to loyal alumni who best exemplify the liberal arts ideas, ethics and academic standards of AUC and have demonstrated outstanding achievements in their respective careers and lives.

"It is a great honor to be presented this award. I've gone through a lot of education throughout my life, but there is no doubt that in my practical life, the one that had the greatest impact was the education that I received at AUC," said Beshir.

Beginning his career at Cairo University, where he taught mathematics, Beshir moved on to a corporate career in 1975 and has held positions in various companies including: managing director at Giza Systems Engineering, chairman of Al-Ahly Computer Equipment and vice president of the Egyptian Computer Systems. In January 2000, Beshir also took on the crucial position of chairman of Telecom Egypt, which he continues to hold.



Wael Amin '93, co-founder of ITWorx, was also presented with the Alumni Achievement Award for his entrepreneurial spirit and outstanding achievements. Amin began his career in 1992 as co-founder and software team leader at Microlabs. In 1994, he co-founded ITWorx and took on the position of technical director. He later became managing director in 2001 and president in 2003, a position he still holds. Under his leadership, the company has flourished into a regional software powerhouse.

"I dedicate this award to AUC's computer science graduates. ITWorx would not be what it is today if it weren't for the efforts of the alumni working in the company," said Amin, who joined the university at the age of 14 and graduated top of his class.

Ayman Ayad '87, chief executive officer of EnCube, received the Alumni Achievement Award. Ayad has led an impressive career with NCR-Corporation, holding many important positions with the company across the Arab world. In 1995, at the age of 29, he was appointed branch manager of NCR Qatar and in 1997 received the "The Best of the Best Award."

In June 2000, Ayad left NCR and founded EnCube, the company for which he currently serves as managing director. In 2003, Ayad was named by *Business Today* as one of Egypt's Top Ten Executives under 40.



Class Notes

'64

Joseph Gal currently serves as professor of medicine, pharmacology and pathology, as well as director of the Therapeutic Drug Monitoring and Toxicology Laboratory at the University of Colorado's medical school. He can be reached at joe.gal@UCHSC.edu

'80

Nadia Tewfik (MA '99) is a journalist who has worked for leading media organizations including BBC, CBS News, *The Chicago Tribune* and the *Boston Globe*. She is currently pursuing a doctorate at the University of London. Her thesis is titled, "The Concept of the West in Contemporary Egyptian Thought."

'82

Ashraf Aziz recently moved from Sydney to New York. He finished his books, *A Dictionary of Egyptian Idioms* and *Ta'birat Min El Sharei El Massri: Expressions from an Egyptian Street*, which will be on sale in July. His second book is like a dictionary that took him 12 years to write.

'83

Ahmed Hassan currently lives in Buroa, a town north of Somalia. He works at a private corporation that produces wet, blue-tanned sheepskin exported to Asia. He can be reached at ahmedihassan2003@yahoo.com

'85

Mohamed Ragheb will be teaching journalism at AUC from September 2005. He is the only Egyptian to have won the coveted John S. Knight journalism fellowship in 1991. Ragheb

The Dynamic Duo Inside Oriental Weavers

"You are not given respect; you gain it," are the words of advice that Yasmine '99 and Farida '00 Khamis were given by their father when they first started to work at Oriental Weavers Carpet Company, one of Egypt's leading corporations and their family-owned business.

Today, the two women have not only earned the respect of their co-workers inside the company, they are also making their mark on its future.

Yasmine, 27, director of operations, recalls her start, "It was difficult ... People thought, 'who's this person — a female, young and wants to tell us what to do and how to do it.'"

At first I wanted changes and I wanted them now. I was very aggressive but I learned that wasn't the way. I had to show them that what I was doing was right, gain their trust and that way gain their respect."

For Farida, 25, investor relations and international business director, the challenge of proving herself was equally difficult. "Initially, people didn't understand why I wanted to know costs, why they should give me our breakdown... There was a lot of sensitivity and I wanted to create transparency and awareness," explained Farida.

Whatever expectations may have been placed upon them to join the family business, Farida is satisfied it was the right thing. "I guess it was assumed, but we weren't forced. When I first graduated, I was more interested in investment banking and wanted to



Farida (left) and Yasmine Khamis of the Oriental Weavers

gain experience elsewhere so that I could come back to the company with more. So rather than just conform, I worked in a field I was interested in."

Yasmine is also pleased about what they have achieved. "Initially I was doing marketing research and then slowly started to work on product development, which was my father's pride and joy," said Yasmine. "That was always the one thing that no one in the company could do except for him and he wanted to get someone involved to help him and to eventually free his hands of it."

Despite the struggles of being young women in an Egyptian business, Yasmine and Farida have flourished, along with their company, which now has subsidiaries in the United States and the United Kingdom.

is a musician, graphic artist and conference translator. He immigrated to Canada in 1993 and pursued a career in advertising after earning a master's in film in 1997 from York University in Toronto. In 2001, Ragheb won a bronze Remi for Best Dramatic Screenplay from the Houston International Film Festival for his work, *A Thriller in the Satirical Vein of the Coen Brothers*.

Somaia Afifi (MA) is a professor of Russian language at Ain Shams University. In 1995, she received Egypt's Decoration of Arts and Science from President Hosni Mubarak. She translated the Quran into Russian and got the highest award from Ain Shams University in 2000.

'87
Amal Hassan works as an executive secretary at Agiba Petroleum Company. She also owns Maya Shop in Nasr City.

'89
Ayman Madkour has relocated to Dubai as human resources director at Hilton Al-Ain. For more than three years, he was the regional training manager for Hilton hotels in Egypt and Sudan. Madkour received a professional certificate in human resources from the Human Resources Certification Institute, Society for Human Resources Management in the United States. He can be reached at aymanmailbox@hotmail.com

Khaled El Ashmawy has relocated to Dubai for three years as human resources manager at Shell Exploration and Production.

'90
Ghassan Freiwat got engaged to Siham Kasabry. Freiwat is the regional

sales manager at Trane Air-Conditioners in Dubai and has recently been promoted to department manager of the Middle East-Africa-India region. His name appeared in *Who's Who for Professionals* in 2000. He published a political book, *Scream*, and a novel, *The Call and the Coffin*.

'92
Samar El-Labban was married to Bassam Zahran in July 1998. They have three children: Mohamed (6), Miral (5) and Minerva (1). Mohamed and Miral are students at the American International School.

'96
Khaled Hamada graduated from AUC with a bachelor's in physics and obtained a master's in electrical engineering from the United States. After working as a professor, he changed careers and worked at a national law firm then as a patent agent in the United States. He returned to Egypt and is currently the managing director of Hamada Intellectual Property, a specialized law firm that sets up strategies for Egyptian companies to increase their market share and be competitive locally and internationally.

'99
Mariam Farag received a master's in international relations from London's University of Westminster in 2000. Her thesis was titled, "Rape as an Ethnic Tool in the Former Yugoslavia Conflict: A Comparative Study Between the International Humanitarian Law and the Islamic Law of Wars." Farag worked at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Egypt and in Cyprus. She was married to her Portuguese husband in Cairo and is currently living in Paris, where she is taking full-time courses in French.

Tamim Khallaf (MA '04) has been a diplomat in the Egyptian foreign ministry for the past four years. He is currently posted in Egypt's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in Geneva working on disarmament issues. He received his master's in international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science. At AUC, Khallaf was a recipient of a Sasakawa fellowship, through which he earned his master's in political science.

'00
Marwa Shehata is an executive secretary at the American Research Center in Egypt. She is married to Moustafa Sherief, enterprise resource planning consultant at Raya Gulf. They were blessed with a baby boy, Khaled.

'01
Mai El Dahan has been working in Dubai for three years. She started as a reporter at Al Arabiya Radio, Arabian Radio Network and Dubai Media City. Currently, she is head of programming.

Aly El Garraya, mathematics major, was recently engaged to Dalia Ali Salem, Cairo University political science graduate.

'02
Medhat Nabet will be moving from the United Arab Emirates to Egypt to take on a new position with Shell.

'03
Sally Saleh was blessed with a baby boy, Hassan, born on October 13, 2004.

'04
Ahmed El-Sherbiny (MSc) was engaged to Hana Hesham Said '05.

Weddings



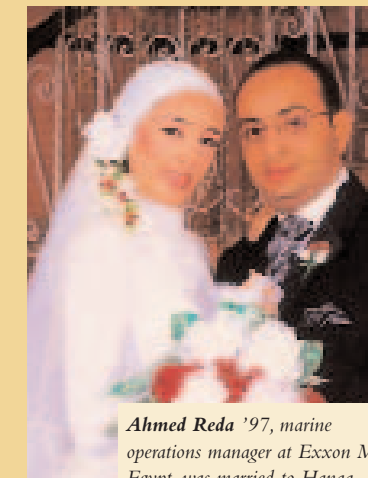
Dina Samhout '03, account executive at Promoseven Weber Shandwick, was married to **Tamer El Sadany**, architect at Emaar Company, on August 20, 2004 at the Semiramis Intercontinental Hotel. The couple honeymooned in the Far East and is currently living in Dubai



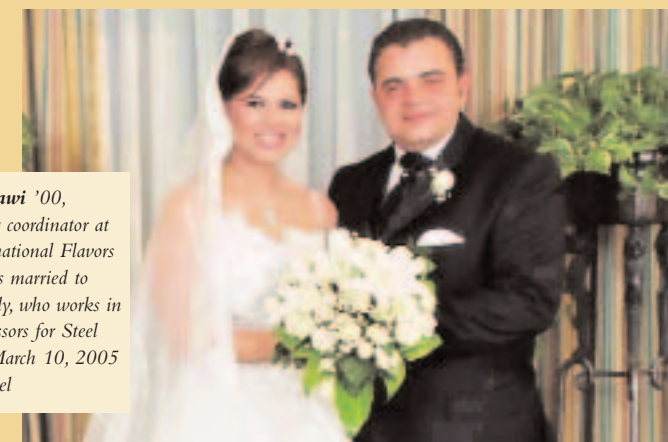
Mai El Kinawi '99, market research manager at Master Foods, North Africa and East Mediterranean, was married to **Haythem Soliman** '97 on January 22, 2005 at Grand Hyatt Hotel



Noura Benjamin '04, an employee at AUC's enrollment services office, was married to **Karim Elsabee** '99, business development manager at DYMK-Kassabgui Trading and Contracting, on October 5, 2004. They spent their honeymoon in Thailand, Malaysia and Dubai



Ahmed Reda '97, marine operations manager at Exxon Mobil Egypt, was married to **Hanaa Mohamed**, graduate of Al Alsun, on November 17, 2004 at Cairo El Salam Concorde Hotel



Dalia El Ghamrawi '00, fragrance-marketing coordinator at Middle East International Flavors and Fragrances, was married to **Ahmed Mostafa Aly**, who works in Mostafa Aly Successors for Steel Construction, on March 10, 2005 at the Conrad Hotel

In Memoriam

Ali Othman '47 died in London on February 25, 2005. After graduating from Chicago University in 1954 with a doctorate in comparative philosophy, he became a diplomat with the Arab League office to the United Nations in New York. In 1957, he was deputy director of the United Nations/Arab World Center for Community Development in Egypt. He was the first UNICEF representative to the Gulf in the 1970s. He is author of a number of books including *The Concept of Man in Islam*.

Roger Minionis '49 died in the United States on February 10, 2005. He was very fond of teaching and taught his students how to think and experience life. He taught at the American University of Paris before earning a master's in teaching from the University of Carolina. He worked as a teacher and chairman of the math department at Great Neck South High School for 35 years. An athletic and vibrant student, Minionis was given the title of Mr. AUC. He is survived by his wife, four children, eight grandchildren and two sisters.

Mahmoud Atallah '63 died in Surrey, London on May 3, 2005. He was the deputy editor in chief of *ELAF* newspaper. He was the managing editor of *Al-Ahram* before relocating to London, where he was the deputy editor in chief of *Asharq Al-Awsat* for 15 years. He is survived by his wife Amira Alwakil, his son Karim and his daughter Zainab.

Ahmed Seif El Nasr '70 died in Monaco on December 12, 2004.

Amr Fouad '88 died in Cairo in March 2005.

Akher Kalam

A Passion for Refugee Rights

In September 2002, I graduated from Fourah Bay College at the University of Sierra Leone with a Bachelor of Science with honors. I assumed my intended life purpose at the start to be scientific, but science was not what my society needed at the time. It needed peace, stability and a run-in with humanity.

Crippled and destabilized by a decade-long rebellion, tens of thousands of Sierra Leoneans had fled to asylum in neighboring countries. The vast resources of the country were wasted and destroyed, and humanity itself became inhumane. The country needed professionals who could identify the multifaceted problems facing refugees, and in turn, help bring about sustainable solutions for the nation's development. I knew I had a role to play, so I immediately traveled to Cairo to pursue a postgraduate degree in forced migration and refugee studies at AUC.

I wasted no time upon my arrival. I enrolled in refugee short courses while at the same time completing application procedures for the postgraduate diploma. By the time I was admitted to the program, I had already completed two summer-school short courses: International Refugee Law and Integrating Immigrant and Refugee Newcomers, as well as a refugee community interpreter's course. As a part of my experience, I also picked up a six-month copyediting job in a Cairo publishing house. In Fall 2004, AUC awarded me the African Graduate Fellowship to pursue my desired postgraduate diploma in forced migration and refugee studies. I graduated in June 2005 and have been re-awarded the same fellowship to pursue a master's in professional development starting September.

With the knowledge I have gained, I can now actively help the Sierra Leonean refugee community in the areas of integration, education and voluntary community interpreting in two Sierra Leonean languages with the Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance project for incoming asylum seekers. In addition, I help new asylum seekers prepare for subsequent status



determination interviews with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

I have never been as fulfilled as I am now. Helping refugees help themselves is my new life's purpose. It differs very much from the botany and chemistry experiments I performed during my university days, yet it fills me with a euphoria that never goes away. On the rich fertile soils of West Africa and bounded by the Atlantic Ocean, Sierra Leone is in dire need of professional developers, and I have been destined to serve that end.

Mohamed Berray '05 is a graduate of the Forced Migration and Refugee Studies program and is currently pursuing a master's in professional development at AUC.

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.