



AUB engineering professor elected to prestigious Lebanese Academy of Sciences

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AUB mechanical engineering professor Nesreen Ghaddar became the second Lebanon-based member of the Lebanese Academy of Sciences, after her research on thermal and renewable energy grabbed the attention of the prestigious academy's founding members.

Ghaddar, who is also AUB's associate provost, now joins another AUB professor, Makhluif Haddadin, in the academy. Haddadin was invited to the academy for his innovative research in chemistry, in the summer of 2009. The two are the only members in the academy who conduct their research in Lebanon.

Known officially by its French name, "Académie des Sciences du Liban (ASL)," the academy is a learned society founded by a governmental decree in August 2007 with "the aim of contributing to the growth, invigoration, and dissemination of the sciences in Lebanon." According to the ASL website, membership to the ASL is a merit-based high honor conferred by election. "ASL members are prominent Lebanese scientists working inside and outside of Lebanon, as well as distinguished foreign scientists," the website added.

"Your remarkable accomplishments in the thermal sciences and your stature as a leading researcher in the area of renewable energy add prestige to the academy. Your intellectual vigor, wisdom, dedication, and efficacy will be a great capital for the academy to draw upon as it goes forward in its mission," said ASL President Edgar Choueiri, in a letter announcing Ghaddar's membership.

Ghaddar's research has centered on developing clothing ventilation models based on both experimental tests and mathematical formulas. Clothing ventilation models allow researchers to identify the best fabrics that should be used in activewear to provide the most ideal level of comfort, ventilation, and body temperature for workers and active people. The models also factor in the contribution of the surrounding environment to thermal comfort.

"We try to develop scientific solutions to problems that are relevant to Lebanon, but that also are of interest to the international scientific community," said Ghaddar.

An induction ceremony was held for ASL's new Lebanese members on November 5 at the Grand Serail. Outgoing Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, in his capacity as Honorary President of ASL, presided over the induction ceremony for Ghaddar, Haddadin, and Charles Elachi, a California-based Lebanese professor of engineering, who has conducted research on astrophysics, planetary science, and jet propulsion.

Thanking ASL treasurer and mechanical engineer, Hussein Zbib for nominating her, Ghaddar refused to take sole credit for her achievement. "No one can do this work alone, as it requires the skills of people from many disciplines," she said. "There are many deserving AUB faculty and researchers who should also join ASL."

As the only Arab woman in ASL, Ghaddar realizes the important role she is playing. "I have received so many positive messages from colleagues, staff, and students, especially women, telling me how glad they are to see a woman scientist acting as a role model," she said, adding: "Recognition does not only come when we work for ourselves, but when we serve others."