

Traditional Class Ring Ceremony revived

Friday, June 25, 2010

AUB students can once again choose to receive their University class ring, thanks to a student initiative that revived one of the oldest traditions on campus.

Initiated by the University Student Faculty Committee (USFC) and supported by the Worldwide Alumni Association of AUB (WAAAUB), the inaugural class ring ceremony took place on June 24, reviving a university tradition dating back from 1968.

With the receipt of the special University ring, each graduating student automatically becomes an alumnus.



The ceremony transformed Green Field into a sea of black and white, as young men in black suits and young women in black or white dresses prepared to take their oaths as alumni.

“With this ring we salute you, our alma mater. We promise to be faithful and committed to our beloved AUB.” Uttering these words in unison, the senior graduating class of 2010 became part of the inaugural AUB class ring ceremony.

“We are delighted to revive one of AUB’s oldest traditions,” said Elias Ghanem, vice president of the USFC. “A ring is a universal symbol of commitment and a sign of an everlasting bond. This ring confirms your permanent relationship with the University and with your classmates. Just as you have been part of AUB, so will the University always be a part of you.”

After singing the National Anthem, Tony Harrouk from the WAAAUB Programs Committee welcomed the students, their parents, and guests to the ceremony before introducing Ghanem.

WAAAUB President Khalil Makkawi welcomed the graduating students to the group of 54,000 alumni spread across 62 countries. “We encourage the bond that the class ring commemorates and invite you to stay connected with your alma mater, to become members of WAAAUB, and to actively participate in your local alumni chapter.”

AUB President Peter Dorman thanked students for their influence on the University during their time on campus. “How AUB has impacted you is apparent, but less apparent is how you have impacted the University. Successive classes all give the University something different, helping us to change and grow.” He went on to mention his pride in the class of 2010 for reviving two AUB traditions – the class ring and the speaker’s corner that used to take place on campus in the 1970s and has now been reintroduced.

“You have influenced life on campus. Your fresh ideas help us to innovate so that AUB can be a more enriching environment,” he said, urging students to maintain a strong connection to their alma mater and support its mission to help the next generation of AUB students.

“I am sure this class ring will remind you of the things you learned at AUB, the teachers who inspired you, and the friends you made, but I also hope it will prompt you to remember the foundational tenets that have defined AUB for generations and motivate you to live up to them,” said Dorman, referring to the University’s commitment to freedom of thought and expression, tolerance and respect for diversity and dialogue, and promoting social responsibility.

Dean of Student Affairs Maroun Kisirwani reminded students of the ways in which AUB has contributed to their lives in terms of building their confidence, integrity, and pride, freedom of expression, critical thinking and accountability. “Nurture these values to create a better community,” he said.

“Your step today is your leap into the future. Watch your steps carefully,” said Kisirwani, signaling the commencement of the oath taking.

Each faculty was called up onto stage as a group to join their faculty dean and recite the oath while holding up their right hands bearing the class ring—a silver band engraved with two cedar trees between the words “American University of Beirut Class of 2010”.

The ceremony ended with the singing of the Alma Mater, after which guests were invited for refreshments in the courtyard of the Charles Hostler Center.

“It’s quite cool,” said graduate Dalia Jaffal of the class ring that she intends to wear on a necklace. Jad Halabi, a marketing graduate said of the ceremony, “Renewing the tradition is good. It gives us recognition. When we see someone with a ring, we’ll know that person’s part of the alumni family.”

Forty-five-year-old alum Nadine Yared is graduating for the fifth time, with a master's degree, and was excited about receiving her first ring. “I wanted my children to see this so that it would make them want to graduate too,” she said.