



## **Hassib Jerius Sabbagh, AUB friend and benefactor, dies** **Thursday, January 14, 2010**

The American University of Beirut has lost one of its dearest friends and benefactors Hassib Jerius Sabbagh, a successful engineer and contractor, who passed away in Cleveland, Ohio on January 12.

In announcing the sad news to the AUB community, President Peter Dorman recalled the illustrious career and achievements of the late Sabbagh.

“Hassib Sabbagh was a great humanitarian,” said President Dorman, “he was a founder and past chairman of both the Welfare Association and the Palestine Students Fund; a founder of the Carter Center and of the Georgetown University Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding; and a trustee emeritus of the Cleveland Clinic Foundation in Cleveland, Ohio. We know much about his public life, but he was also a silent philanthropist, an extraordinarily generous man who quietly supported those in need”. Dorman added: “On behalf of the entire AUB community, I extend my deepest condolences to Trustee Sana Sabbagh and her extended family”.

Born in Safad, Palestine in 1920, Hassib Jerius Sabbagh attended the Arab College in Jerusalem and graduated from AUB in 1941 with a BE in civil engineering. When he returned to Haifa after graduation, he borrowed \$1,000 from his uncle to launch the first iteration of Consolidated Contractors Company (CCC) in 1945.

Hassib Sabbagh left Palestine in 1948, but by 1952 he had set up a new company, also called CCC, with partners including his brother-in-law Said Khoury. CCC is now one of the largest engineering and construction companies in the Middle East with projects in twenty countries, more than 60,000 employees, and annual gross revenues of \$1.8 billion. It has employed more than 650 AUB alumni including more than 250 who are currently on its payroll.

Although he retired in 2002, Hassib Sabbagh continued to remain involved with CCC, serving most recently as honorary chairman. In 2003 he was among the first group to receive the Honorary Doctorate of AUB when this program was resumed after a thirty-year interruption. In his acceptance speech read by his daughter Sana, now also an AUB trustee, Sabbagh recalled that when he started his life journey in 1948 as a Palestinian refugee, he had two passports that enabled him to build his life: the Lebanese passport and his AUB passport—his degree.

In turn, Hassib Sabbagh helped many young men and women to acquire their own AUB “passports.” He has also provided extraordinary financial support to programs at AUBMC and the Faculty of Medicine that have benefited students, faculty, and patients alike. In 1978, he founded the Diana Tamari Sabbagh (DTS) Foundation, which was established upon the death of his wife, to fund the basic sciences, medical research and academic programs at AUB and in the region; the Foundation has also maintained and equipped the DTS Building, which houses the Faculty of Medicine on AUB campus.

Sabbagh also endowed the DTS Medical Scholars Fund to support and promote research by physicians at AUBMC.

In addition to playing an instrumental role in rebuilding College Hall, which reopened in 1999, Consolidated Contractors Company and its founders also supported the construction of the CCC Scientific Research Building. During the groundbreaking ceremony on Monday October 3, 2005 at the construction site, then-president John Waterbury said that CCC’s generous and timely support is making it possible for AUB to provide its students and faculty in engineering,

computer sciences, and those working in the basic sciences with the very best laboratory facilities available. The CCC building was inaugurated on 21 February 2007.

Hassib Sabbagh has received many awards, including the Order of the Cedars' National Medal, Rank of Knight (1970), Rank of Officer (1997), the Lebanese Silver Merit Award with laurels (2001) and the Bethlehem Star Palestinian award (2000).

The funeral service for Hassib Sabbagh will be held on Sunday, January

17 at the Greek Melkite Catholic Archbishopric of Beirut, Old Damascus Road, at 1:00 pm.

Condolences will be received before the service at the church starting at 11:00 am and after the service at the home of Hassib Sabbagh (Sabbagh & Khoury-CCC Building, Beir Hasan) and also on Monday and Tuesday, January 18 and 19, from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm at the home of Hassib Sabbagh.