

For Immediate Release



Beirut: 2-7-2018

The power of connection:

AUB honors its alumni in celebrations of medals, music, and color

The American University of Beirut (AUB) held its traditional alumni reunion celebration to honor and celebrate its alumni from around the world. Over four days, the alumni were engaged along with their families and friends with concerts, parties, official ceremonies, and social activities that proved and strengthened a lasting bond with their alma mater.

During the official annual ceremony held at Assembly Hall, 288 alumni were honored with commemorative medals presented by AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri. An astonishing 39 alumni celebrated more than 55 years of being proud AUBites. Thirty-seven celebrated 50 years (class of 1968), 41 celebrated 40 years (class of 1978), 23 celebrated 30 years (class of 1988), 146 celebrated 25 years (class of 1993), and two members of the EMBA class of 2013 celebrated their fifth anniversary of graduation.

“When we honor you, we are also honoring the university and the power of the connection that we share,” said AUB President Fadlo Khuri. “I hear from many of our alumni, and from faculty and staff as well, that their connection with AUB has had a transformative effect on their lives—not just on the career paths—and on the people they are, the values they hold most dear, the causes they champion.”

President Khuri spoke about his vision for AUB and called for embracing and building on the things that define it: its liberal arts ethos in education, its excellence in research, its compassionate commitment to medical care for all, and its abiding commitment to Lebanon and the Arab world.

Associate Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations Salma Dannawi Oueida reiterated that “AUB is a university that influences the lives of the young men and women who attend it,” and thanked all who came to “relive the glorious days spent at AUB” and all who support their alma mater.

“Those of you who we are celebrating today are powerful evidence that the bond with AUB does not just survive 25, 50, and even more than 50 years, but actually gets stronger with time.”

Speaking on behalf of the class of 1968 was Ramzi Raad, group chairman of TBWA\RAAD that includes the advertising agency in 14 MENA countries and the PR consultancy Ketchum Raad Middle East. “Without my AUB education, I am almost certain that not all of this could have been possible.” Raad comes from five generations of AUB alumna that he hopes will become six when his granddaughter joins AUB in 2020.

Dr. Muhammad Bulbul, clinical professor of surgery and acting head of division of urology at AUBMC, spoke on behalf of the class of 1978, among whom were medical doctors and graduates of the Advancing Research Enabling Communities Center (AREC), about the type of connection that grows with and through AUB.

“AUB was not and is not about science and education only, it is about the campus, the trees, the stairs, the benches and their love stories, the laughs, the cries, the friends, the spirit and above all the people... AUB was and is the solid foundation of every one’s achievements and for that we are ever grateful.”

Concluding the ceremony was Jihad el Murr, COO of MTV Lebanon and CEO of different media channels and entertainment corporations. Representing the class of 1993, Murr said that “every milestone [he] has reached along the years and the continuous successes would not have been possible without the tools acquired though a solid educational background that started with AUB.” He proudly referred to his two daughters currently enrolled at AUB:

“They are experiencing the university life that I have told them about... they realized the truth in my words and are grateful that I recommended AUB... I hope one day in 25 years my children will be standing right here in my place, before their former classmates and colleagues, telling them the story of how their kids made the right choice...again.”

A day earlier, Fisk Hall lit up with a celebration of lights and music as around 1100 people enjoyed a night of Arab music heritage revival through the “Music in Colors” concert by acclaimed artist Jamal Abul Hosn. Organized for AUB alumni by the Zaki Nassif Program for Music in partnership with the Lebanese National Higher Conservatory of Music and presented with the Lebanese National Oriental Orchestra and Fayha Choir, the concert paid nostalgic yet

innovative tribute to Lebanese and Arabic musical heritage through revisions and newly orchestrated and visualized performances of poetry, memorable songs, and music enhanced by mesmerizing audio-visual multimedia and light show.

An Antika Night party for AUB alumni, family, and friends, offered an array of music and entertainment for all ages. The audience danced at the Green Oval with shimmery costumes and percussion accessories to Arnabeat band music and enjoyed catered refreshment and food. The last day of this year's reunion offered a family day out, hike and meals, with AUB's Nature Conservation Center (NCC) to Hammana, which followed a dinner party of dancing and live performances at Teatro Verdun.

Proceeds raised during the four-day celebration went to the Class Reunion Endowed Scholarship Fund, allocated to fund the education of qualified children of alumni who require financial assistance to attend AUB.

As one observes the smiles of pride on the faces of the alumni as they walk through AUB campus, look up at its buildings and trees, and stop to tell their loved ones cherished stories about the "good old AUB days," one cannot help but think of the mystic "power of connection" that keeps AUBites, no matter their age or world-wide engagements, eager to come back and relive the days of hope, freedom, and accomplishment that they relished in the safety and guidance of their alma mater, their AUB.

ENDS

Text by: Safa Safa
Senior Writer
Office of Communications
American University of Beirut

For more information please contact:

Simon Kachar
Director of News and Media Relations
Mobile: (+961) 3-427-024
Office: (+961) 1-374-374 ext: 2676
Email: sk158@aub.edu.lb

Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 900 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 9,100 students. AUB currently offers more than 120 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 420-bed hospital.

Stay up to date on AUB news and events. Follow us on:

Website: www.aub.edu.lb

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/aub.edu.lb>

Twitter: http://twitter.com/AUB_Lebanon