



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Beirut, Thursday, May 25, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USAID Celebrates the Graduation of 91 Students at the American University of Beirut

Beirut, May 25, 2023: The Higher Education Scholarships Program (HES), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), at the American University of Beirut (AUB) held its graduation ceremony for 91 scholars. The event was an opportunity for the U.S. government and AUB to celebrate a decade of partnership in education through USAID's HES program. U.S. Ambassador Dorothy Shea, USAID Acting Mission Director Walter Doetsch, AUB President Fadlo Khuri, AUB faculty and staff, and the scholars attended the ceremony.

USAID has invested more than \$70 million in this program at AUB over the past ten years, enabling more than 712 academically outstanding and economically disadvantaged students from across Lebanon to receive a world-class education. Today, USAID HES supports 254 students currently enrolled at AUB. USAID's assistance requires students to engage in volunteer work, training workshops, internships, and community service that they conducted in their own communities to ameliorate the challenges posed by the multiple crises in Lebanon.

President Khuri, addressed the audience saying that "This program has been a Godsend to the community of young Lebanese scholars, to the American University of Beirut, and to the Lebanese American University." He added, "This has allowed us to continue to enroll the best and brightest young people, to enroll them without fear of lurching into the kind of economic elitism that can trump, and even drown out, intellectual excellence."

In September 2022, USAID provided \$30 million to AUB to support scholarships for Lebanese and refugee students. USAID further provided AUB with \$19.5 million dollars in financial aid to support 1,950 enrolled students who have been significantly affected by the economic crisis.

In her remarks, Ambassador Shea stated, "This occasion is the result of U.S. Embassy's and USAID's continued partnership with the American University of Beirut to increase access to higher education for youth in Lebanon. We believe

that education is the key to unlocking potential, opening doors, and creating opportunities. That’s why, since 2010, USAID has provided more than \$70 million in full undergraduate scholarships to students from all of Lebanon’s 26 districts to study at AUB.”

Dr. Malek Tabbal, provost designee at HES, concluded saying, “This program has been transformative in every sense, not only to the scholars and their families but also to all of us involved at AUB.”

ENDS

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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 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8000 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 365-bed hospital.

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