

For Immediate Release



## Two AUB professors receive 2014 CNRS award for research excellence

Beirut, Lebanon- 13/11/2014 - Dr. Souha Kanj, an infectious diseases specialist, and Ibrahim Osman, associate dean and professor of business information and decision-making systems, each received the 2014 Research Excellence Award from the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) on Wednesday, November 12 during the annual awards ceremony held at the Grand Serail.

A public institution headed by the Lebanese Prime Minister, the CNRS grants annual awards for research excellence in Lebanon in four categories; engineering and basic sciences, medical, biological and public health sciences, agricultural and environmental sciences, and human and social sciences.

Osman was awarded for his research, which aims to create shared economic, environmental and social value using advanced data and analytic tools.

“I am recommending the creation of a public, private and community partnership where the government acts as the regulator, the private sector acts as the operators and investors, while the community can invest through shares,” said Osman, who is the Husni al-Sawwaf Endowed Chair in Business & Management and and Chair of Business Information & Decision Systems at Olayan School of Business (OSB). “This also calls...for the greater involvement of citizens in the development of their own societal needs.”

Sharara, head of the Division of Infectious Diseases and chairperson of the Infection Control Program at AUBMC, received the award in the medical sciences category for her findings on the prevention, control and treatment of resistant gram-negative bacterial infections.

“Unfortunately, in our region most of the bacteria that hospitals struggle with is the multi-resistant gram-negative type,” Sharara explained. “These are bacteria that are usually acquired in hospitals and sometimes in the community. They can cause serious infections in the lungs, skin, urine and bloodstream and are very difficult to treat. Some can lead to the death of the patient, so I was looking on how we can improve this.”

The CNRS’s role of funding research initiatives in the country as well as annually recognizing research through the awards ceremony has proven beneficial for the AUB awardees for both their personal and academic goals.

“I think the CNRS has really put a lot of effort into supporting and recognizing research efforts in Lebanon,” Sharara said. “It gives me pride that my efforts have been recognized at the national level.”

Osman added, "The award provided me with an exciting experience and an opportunity to communicate my research findings. Before the awards, no one was paying attention...but people now start to listen to you and doors start opening for you."

The ceremony was conducted by the CNRS President Georges Tohme and CNRS Secretary General Mouin Hamze. Prime Minister Tamam Salam was also present to distribute the awards and directly recognize the researchers for their achievements.

"[The CNRS] will again announce the fifth cycle of the Research Excellence Awards for the year 2015 and identify the scientific sub-categories, which will be different from this year," Hamze said in his speech to the attendees, which included the European Union and Italian ambassadors as well as several academics.

Joseph Assaad, a professor at LAU and NDU, received the research award in the engineering category while Gaby Khalaf, director of the CNRS Marine Research Center, was awarded for his research in the environmental category.

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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 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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.

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