

For Immediate Release



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AUB President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri and alumnus Dr. William Zoghbi receive the prestigious 2018 Ben Qurrah award

The American University of Beirut (AUB) announced that its President Dr. Fadlo R. Khuri and alumnus Dr. William Zoghbi have been recognized as the two recipients of the prestigious 2018 Ben Qurrah award, the highest honor given by the National Arab American Medical Association (NAAMA) Houston Chapter. They have been acknowledged for their “accomplishments and service to the Arab American community and the people of the Middle East.”

Drs. Khuri and Zoghbi were honored at the Houston Chapter Eleventh Biennial Ben Qurrah Award Gala for “trailblazing a path that will leave clear footsteps for our youth to follow,” and to contribute to civilization, as pronounced by Dr. Zaina Al-Mohtaseb, president of NAAMA Houston Chapter.

Chairman of the AUB Board of Trustees Dr. Philip S. Khoury sent a message to the AUB community informing them about this recognition and expressing his pride in the recent honor received by both Dr. Khuri and Zoghbi.

And he said in his message that “the Founding chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston and the director of the Brain Tumor Center at MD Anderson, Dr. Raymond Sawaya, himself a former Ben Qurrah awardee and AUB International Advisory Council member, introduced Dr. Khuri at the awarding ceremony, summing up what he could of Fadlo’s numerous achievements worldwide over the years and at AUB in the last three years. He reviewed Fadlo’s career, describing him as a compassionate and expert physician, a highly cited researcher, an accomplished molecular oncologist, and a thought leader in translational research in cancer. Indeed, Fadlo has demonstrated during his career at AUB so far that he is a visionary who is determined to make a positive, boundless impact through world-class research and healthcare that touches the lives of everyone.”

“President Khuri thanked NAAMA for this enormous privilege and reminded the audience of around 300 guests of “the ethos of medicine,” underlying that “Medicine is a field where you are fortunate to help those less fortunate Every one of us in this room has the privilege to serve the less fortunate.” “In everything he does, at or for AUB, Fadlo emphasizes the necessity of becoming well-rounded, thoughtful,

global citizens who learn in order to make a difference, and then assume the duty to reach out to those less fortunate.”

“President Khuri referred in his speech to the legacy of scholar Ibn Qurrah during the glory days of the Arabs that ended in the 15th century when Jews and Arabs were driven out of Spain. He compared the period of darkness when AUB, wounded during civil war, took the decision to pull back for safety, to the retreat from Al-Andalus. The strategy continued in the post-war years. After describing the current poor health of the Arab world (illiteracy, age of populations, lowest spending per capita on research in the world), he stated that the region needs so much, and AUB will do more than its share. By partnering with universities in Lebanon and abroad (East and West), through the project to annually recruit 100 top students from Lebanon, Syrian, Palestine, and Iraq – and train the leaders of tomorrow, “I am confident, not just optimistic, that working together we can all make a difference... to create another golden era in the Arab world.”

“Chair of the Department of Cardiology at Houston Methodist Hospital and the Elkins Family Distinguished Chair in Cardiac Health at Houston Methodist DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center, Dr. William Zoghbi was introduced by the Walter W. Fondren III Distinguished Endowed Chair, DeBakey Heart and Vascular Center, and chair of cardiovascular surgery at Methodist Hospital, Dr. Alan Lumsden. Dr. Zoghbi has served as president of the American College of Cardiology and the American Society of Echocardiography. He is a cardiology, echocardiography, and cardiac imaging expert who has developed noninvasive heart function and valve disorder evaluation techniques and has overseen national and international heart valve evaluation guideline development. He built his reputation on his ischemic heart disease, myocardial function, and hibernation research, as well as his development of echocardiographic techniques to evaluate valvular dynamics and measure valvular regurgitation.”

“Dr. William Zoghbi, life partner of AUB member of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Huda Zoghbi, spoke at the ceremony about his long-instilled passion for hard work, serving others, and studying medicine. He is a son of Ghazir, Lebanon who is no stranger to the struggles that went along with the Lebanese war, but he persevered to pursue his medical studies in the US and to reach his goal to serve.”

“Named after the prominent Arab physician, mathematician, and thought leader in the 9th and 10th century Thabit Ibn Qurrah Marawan Al-Harrani, the Ben Qurrah Award was established in 1998 to recognize contributions that scientists of Arab origin have made to the fields of science and medicine. During each awarding event, two prominent physicians/scientists are awarded: one from Houston, known for its plethora of scientists and physicians of Arab origin, and an Arab American from elsewhere in the US or an international awardee.”

“Previous Ben Qurrah awardees include AUB trustee and alumna, the Ralph D. Feigin Endowed Chair at Baylor College of Medicine, and professor of pediatrics, molecular and human genetics, neurology, and neuroscience, Dr. Huda El-Hibri-Zoghbi; and executive vice president for medicine and global strategy and the Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at AUB, Dr. Mohamed H. Sayegh.”

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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.

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