

AUBMCares Chronicles



EDITORIAL MESSAGE

Kamal Badr, MD, ASCI, AAP,
Head of AUBMCares



AUBMCares is an initiative launched in May 2017 by the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine (FM) aimed at providing an administrative structure to organize, channel, and vet volunteer activities among medical students and healthcare providers at AUBMC. It was established in response to the mounting need for humanitarian health services in Lebanon and the numerous spontaneous volunteer activities by students, driven in large part by the impact of the new curriculum. Its functions include vetting of NGOs/organizations, incorporating already existing volunteer activities at the FM, and organizing volunteering assignments, logistics, and scheduling. What is most special about AUBMCares is that it is administered totally by medical students, who are responsible for its internal organization, by-laws, governance and sustainability, under the guidance, and with the support of, the Office of the Dean of Medicine. As I look back, I am truly in awe of the number, extent, and variety of the volunteering activities which AUBMCares has sponsored and most notably of the number of students, residents, physicians and nurses it has drawn into its ranks. This newsletter is a reflection of these efforts and showcases the spectacular success of AUBMCares. It is truly heartwarming to witness the giving spirit of our community, led by our students, as AUB extends the best that Medicine has to offer to those whom society has left behind. "By their fruits, you shall know them."

HUMANITARIAN OF THE SEASON

Zeina Kanafani, MD, MS, CIC,FIDSA,
Associate Professor of Medicine



When we commit to a career in medicine, we are committing to a life of service to others. And it starts as soon as we step into the classroom on the first day of medical school. We are not consumed by our personal interests. Rather, we assume responsibility for the welfare of our community. We look for where we are needed, where medical care is lacking, and we try to shore up this gap, by offering our time and our efforts in order to fulfill the role in society that we have taken upon ourselves. And when we make a difference in the lives of others, the reward is so great and it gives a new meaning to our own lives. Offer up your time! Volunteer! Serve!

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VOLUNTEEROMETER
TOTAL HOURS

AUBMCARES SECOND ANNIVERSARY

"That they may have life and have it more abundantly" is the first thing one reads when they enter the doors of the American University of Beirut. On Monday, June 10, 2019, AUBMCares proudly celebrated its two-year anniversary with an event that was widely attended by physicians, residents, NGO representatives and student volunteers. Throughout the hall, a slideshow of pictures showed the many ways students have been volunteering their time and efforts to help underserved members of the community have life more abundantly. In his keynote address, Mr. Gino Raidy emphasized that "empathy is perhaps the thing we lack most in our daily lives", and that the world we live in is full of injustice. The right to proper healthcare is often forgotten. He mentioned that the importance of having an initiative such as AUBMCares in a country, where one of the greatest wars faced is the war of race, is that it brings such "joy and hope in an otherwise joyless existence in Lebanon" and sets an example for the rest of the community. The Dean of Medical Education, Dr. Kamal Badr, also took the stage to talk about the launching of our initiative and to congratulate the students on the work they have done over the past few years.

AUBMCares was launched in 2017 by EVP Dean Sayegh and President Fadlo Khuri to serve as a platform for students, residents and AUBMC staff to volunteer with multiple NGOs and initiatives. With more than ten partners and AUBMCares-based initiatives, AUBMCares fills a niche that is especially needed in our society. Members have let their music and songs take the patients' minds away from the pain that their body was experiencing, allow their souls to dance and their conscience to gain peace, and create an environment that allows those patients to heal. Volunteers have played board games with patients on dialysis, traveled to villages across Lebanon in mobile clinics, participated in awareness campaigns against smoking such as "خلي قلبك عيلتك", created the sudden cardiac arrest campaign: Champs Fund, and gotten "Bowtied for a Cause" once a month to raise funds and awareness for specific causes. These are just a short list of the many different activities that AUBMCares were up to throughout the past two years.

This year's anniversary was centered around HEAL, one of AUBMCare's oldest student-led initiatives. HEAL provides free, sustainable primary healthcare medical services to underprivileged populations and offers medications, labs, and diagnostic imaging at reduced prices. One of HEAL's immigrant patients also spoke at the event. A Sudanese young man who wrote a poem in Arabic on the pain and misery that he was facing in Sudan, the segregation he faces in Lebanon away from his country, the image of power that a medical doctor provides to him and the society and the sense of safety and acceptance he had while being treated by HEAL volunteers. HEAL has been working hand in hand with the Migrant Community Center as well as one of their newest campaigns, that was established in a partnership with the Social Medicine Consortium (SMC) to take part in the international Campaign Against Racism to support equal healthcare for all, especially foreign healthcare workers. Their campaign was launched at the event under the slogan "Don't forget them" "ما تنسوهم". Overall, AUBMCares seeks to continue on their quest on creating and assisting in more projects and initiatives that will be able to help give their society more life and have it more abundantly.



MOTO AMBULANCE, A NEW INITIATIVE BY CHAMPS FUND

When it comes to life-threatening situations such as cardiac arrest and car accidents, time is key. A response time of eight minutes has been reported as an acceptable standard for emergency medical services, but this standard is still a challenge in many countries, including Lebanon. Traffic, especially in Beirut's highly congested roads, is a significant barrier to a timely response – this is where the Moto-Ambulance comes in. The Moto-Ambulance, or Medical Emergency Motorcycle (MEM), is operated by paramedics and carries basic life equipment and supplies. The features of the Moto-ambulance - including its speed, size and maneuverability – enable the paramedic to rapidly reach an emergency situation in heavily populated areas and during rush hours. Once paramedics reach the scene, they administer immediate support – such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), defibrillation, control bleeding etc. – until an ambulance, if needed, arrives.

The Moto-ambulance initiative in Lebanon was officially launched on April 24th, 2019 and several steps were taken to ensure its efficiency and the safety of the paramedics. Training sessions on basic life support were carried out in the Life Support Center at AUBMC, and the Civil Defense paramedics received certification by the American Heart Association. In the first stage of this initiative, six moto-ambulances were launched in Beirut and Jounieh, two highly congested cities. The initiative aims to launch a total of 56 moto-ambulances covering cities all over Lebanon, including Jbeil, Batroun, Tripoli, Saida, Sour, Zahle, Hadath, Baalbak, Aley and Damour. Upon calling the Civil Defense number, 125, a moto-ambulance will be immediately dispatched with two paramedics ready to medical support in the most timely manner possible:

“When every second counts, the Moto-ambulance can make the difference between life and death”

– Dr. Mona Osman El Hage, Founder of Champs Fund



AMP: THE ATTENDING MUSICIAN PROGRAM

Since December 2017, a group of medical students with a shared passion for music joined efforts to incorporate music into the hospital setting. Inspired by initiatives established in academic medical centers in the US and Europe, they started performing music on a weekly basis for patients at the Psychiatry inpatient unit at AUBMC. The success was instantaneous. Through a one-hour long session, the medical students developed a more empathetic connection with their patients, allowing for better communication and understanding of their concerns and needs. In parallel, the positive impact the sessions had on the patients was evident.

Today, their success story is ready to expand to other departments by officially establishing the Attending Musicians Program or AMP. The initiative, which falls under AUBMCares, aims to incorporate music into patient care as part of a holistic approach to medical service. AMP will not only continue its current program at the Psychiatry inpatient unit and Partial Hospitalization Program but will go beyond to address a need for music in other wards and departments. In fact, several studies performed in academic tertiary centers in the US have shown that the incorporation of the arts into patient care enhances the overall physical as well as psychological well-being of patients.

While the Attending Musicians Program does not replace the need for certified music therapists to be recruited on the long-run, it does offer a unique advantage. AMP provides a much-needed creative platform for the large number of musically-talented medical students, residents and physicians. It also opens the door for multidisciplinary research opportunities in line with the growing body of research on the healing power of music. With a growing emphasis worldwide on the arts in medicine, AMP establishes a first of its kind initiative in Lebanon and the region, emphasizing AUBMC's pioneering efforts in introducing multidisciplinary and innovative approaches to healthcare.

GET BOWTIED FOR TIES!

On the warm morning of July 18, members of TIES, an AUBMC platform that aims to support AUBMCares healthcare funds through social awareness and fundraising, decided to partner with Get Bowtied for a Cause in a fundraising effort at the AUBMC main hospital, with the goal of supporting the various artists providing art therapy to the many long-term patients at the AUBMC.

The event consisted of a booth in the main lobby where bows, bow ties, home-made cakes and plants were sold to various students, members of the faculty and visitors.

With a special musical performance by accordionist Samah Boulmona, and a guest appearance by Associate Dean for Medical Education and local bow tie champion, Dr. Kamal Badr, the event was a resounding success. Passers-by were able to get a front-row view through a live streaming of the upstairs performance at the stand. To show your support, make sure to rock your bow or bow tie during Get Bowtied for a Cause's monthly fundraisers at AUBMC, with a different fund and cause every month!

