

A BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER THAT SERVES AS A POTENT VOICE FOR ALL MEPI TL STUDENTS ENROLLED AT THE LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY. THIS NEWSLETTER ALSO BRIEFLY COVERS VARIOUS EVENTS & ACTIVITIES OF THE MEPI TL LEADERSHIP

# Tomorrow's Leaders Newsletter

## LAU-MEPI TL Program

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

SPRING & SUMMER 2014

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## Leaders of Today

By Barik Mahadin | Editor-in-Chief | Cohort 4



**2013-2014 LAU-MEPI TL graduates**

From the aromatic land of jasmine, Tunisia, passing by the historic land of pyramids, Egypt, crossing the Red Sea to the young and welcoming Jordan, reaching the hospitable land of cedars, Lebanon, 23 inspired leaders of the LAU-MEPI TL family have graduated, making us all proud of their achievements and their continuing aspirations.

With their enthusiastic civic engagement and responsible citizenship undertakings, our young leaders have left a positive mark both within the confines of LAU and beyond. Through conducting internships, initiating projects, and taking part in different trainings and seminars, they have contributed constructively to their surroundings and local communities both in Lebanon and back home. Diverse in their educational experiences and backgrounds, our leaders have truly enriched the LAU community in general and the Tomorrow's Leaders family in particular. Having pursued degrees in various departments at LAU, they have always

served as our first reference point for questions and inquiries. Whether in Political Science & International Affairs, Economics, Business, Accounting, Graphic & Interior Design, Computer Science, Psychology, or Communication Arts, there has always been an exemplary TLer to point us in the right direction.

To our dear graduates, we would like to say this: you have been a true family to us. You have supported us through our ups and downs, taught us to draw on our own internal strength, encouraged us to always go further and do better, and shared with us the best of your life experiences. You are our inspiration, setting the example of academic excellence and self-improvement with your admirable postgraduate endeavors at reputable institutions across the globe. Your motivation to become engaged citizens and your infectious aspirations to pursue your dreams have served to inspire us all to find our own path and, more importantly, to find the strength to walk it. You entered the program with the goal of becoming the leaders of tomorrow, but now, witnessing you unleashed unto the world, armed with the knowledge and experience you have gained, we can confidently say you are the leaders of today, and every day to come. Congratulations!

# A Word from the Editors

By Chafic Najjar | Editor | Cohort 5

Once again, it has been a real pleasure to take part in the editing process for this issue of the newsletter. Barik and I have received several articles from our fellow leaders, as well as the continual support from the administration, especially from Dr. Khachan.

For this issue, we decided to separate the various articles under the following categories: *Graduates*, *News & Events*, *Alumni News*, *Civic & Social Engagement*, and finally, *Free*

*Thoughts*. We are pleased, yet saddened, by the departure of 23 fellow LAU-MEPI TL students who have recently graduated and to whom the first section is dedicated. As the author Libba Bray put it, "In every end, there is also a beginning."

For any suggestions on improving the newsletter, please drop us an email at [mepitl@lau.edu.lb](mailto:mepitl@lau.edu.lb).

## Graduation Ceremony



# List of Graduates!

**Abed el Karim Farroukh** ([Lebanon](#), Banking & Finance)

**Ahmed Moussa** ([Egypt](#), Political Science & International Affairs)

**Aisha Hawwari** ([Lebanon](#), Business Accounting)

**Ali Ramadan** ([Lebanon](#), Economics)

**Basim Dawood** ([Egypt](#), Political Science & International Affairs)

**Dana Naim** ([Lebanon](#), Graphic Design—Emphasis in Digital Design)

**Farah Missmar** ([Jordan](#), Political Science & International Affairs)

**Ferdaous Naili** ([Tunisia](#), Communication Arts)

**Hayfaa Assaad** ([Lebanon](#), Civil Engineering)

**Haneen Monzer** ([Lebanon](#), Interior Design)

**Jad Shedrawy** ([Lebanon](#), Pharmacy)

**Joud Halaseh** ([Jordan](#), Business Marketing)

**Joud Zaumot** ([Jordan](#), International Business & Banking and Finance)

**Leen Aghabi** ([Jordan](#), Political Science & International Affairs)

**Mohamed Atieh** ([Lebanon](#), Computer Science)

**Nada Kobeissy** ([Lebanon](#), Electrical Engineer)

**Nour Laswi** ([Jordan](#), Banking & Finance—Minor in Economics)

**Raffoul Francis** ([Lebanon](#), Computer Engineer)

**Rami El Masri** ([Lebanon](#), Interior Design)

**Ramy Shukr** ([Lebanon](#), Psychology)

**Rita Farhat** ([Lebanon](#), Graphic Design)

**Tala El-Issa** ([Jordan](#), Communication Arts)

**Zeina Al-Bitar** ([Jordan](#), Banking and Finance)

“We LAU-MEPI Tomorrow’s Leaders  
pledge to strive to inspire positive  
change in our communities and lead  
others in times of darkness.”



**LAU-MEPI TL students donating an olive  
tree to the Lebanese American University—  
Byblos**



**TLers bid farewell one last time**



**Every end is a new beginning**

*“No one can tell  
us the sky is the  
limit when there  
are footprints on  
the moon”*

## Farewell

By Nour Laswi | Cohort 3



**MUN training session**

Being part of the LAU community for the past four years has proven to be an experience beyond all expectations and greater than all hopes.

The notion that university is not, and should not, only be about academics is one that I firmly believe in as there is no refuting that academics alone never got anyone anywhere! The Tomorrow's Leaders program recognizes this and provides its students the chance to engage in civic activities extensively, enabling them to progress in ways that are crucial for their development and their future.

Being part of the LAU-MEPI Tomorrow's Leaders program provided me with this opportunity. Despite my minimal experience in civic engagement, everyone at LAU, and in particular those involved in the TL program, were extremely helpful, enthusiastic, and willing to teach me and my fellow students the required skills. No doubt I speak on behalf of all the TLers when I say that this program has aided in our development and contributed to our maturity, not

only as academic students but as students of life. Indisputably, this program has been a building block in who we are today and a stepping stone to where we hope to go.

My experience is best summarized in the words of William Shakespeare: “Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them.” This program has filled us with the supreme knowledge that we are BORN great leaders, that we can ACHIEVE great results, and we will always lead by example as trust will be THRUST upon us.

If there is one thought that has persistently



**Nour (in blue) surrounded by fellow TLers**

surfaced over the past four years - a thought that the Tomorrow's Leaders program has both directly and indirectly reinforced - it is this: the power of the individual.

Today, knowledge is our strength; knowledge that no one can stand in our way, no one can refute our ability to do something, and no one can tell us the sky is the limit when there are footprints on the moon. While LAU-MEPI's impact has been substantial indeed, it is these

sentiments that we will carry with us wherever our paths may lead.

With that, we leave with great joy, knowing that not only have we learned so much, but that we have also found a family that will be with us a lifetime. It has been a pleasure and an honor to be part of the LAU-MEPI TL program and my hope is that my path will once again cross with the many fabulous people I have had the privilege of meeting.



Let's take a selfie!

## The Ethics of Silence!

Narrated by Dr. Victor Khachan | Newsletter Coordinator | MEPI TL Student Life Coordinator

In a mostly emotional tone, a member of the LAU-MEPI TL administrative team delved into how potential leaders should react to character assassination. The one-million-dollar question wasn't whether leadership necessitates an aggressive 'head on' approach, but the possibility of leading and persuading in silence! Though heated, his fiery revelation was, surprisingly, energized and pacified simultaneously by silence around him!

"In the cracks of rage-rooted pride, remarkably no one can deny the sincerity and serenity of silence!" he exclaimed. "Why can't silence be a means of self-defense facing the screams of anger and guilt?" he questioned himself and everyone else; and before this emotionally provoking notion could find an answer, he floatingly forced another thought: "If silence possibly defends one's self-respect and dignity, then why can't it hold the potential to defend those who feel pity for fellows who have lost their peace of

mind and the warmth of their hearts?"

As we internally struggled to grasp this human reality which had just begun to dawn on us, the reality of the silence of the abused and the numbness of human conscience, he interjected yet again: "In this act of silence, the voiceless defenders of right are a breed of leadership that the world needs most, where loud speeches have blindfolded ethical behavior and dulled righteous aspirations! Silence and leadership may not meet frequently, but once they do, the energy of their collision is a bright star in the galaxy of unspoken humanity and untold ethics."

On this note, yes TLers, you have the right to be silent!

***"Silence and leadership may not meet frequently, but once they do, the energy of their collision is a bright star in the galaxy of unspoken humanity and untold ethics"***

## Screening: *The Square*



Screening of *The Square* (a documentary contextualizing the fall of Mubarak's regime) followed by a discussion of the Arab Spring with Dr. Ghassan Dibeh and Dr. Makram Ouais



MEPI TL Student Life Coordinator Dr. Victor Khachan prepares the students for the discussion that follows the screening

## Social Entrepreneurship Workshop

The second workshop on social entrepreneurship entitled "The Entrepreneur's Mindset: a mental shift and a life choice" took place on March 26, 2014. The hands-on workshop was conducted by Ms. Carmen Geha from *Beyond Reform & Development (BRD)*, a consulting firm and social

business specialized in policy research, public management reform, and human development.

This workshop was an endorsement of TLers' entrepreneurship potential and their adaptability to the right mindset.

## Debate Sessions II and III



Debate training phases II and III took place on January 18 and March 8, 2014, respectively. This training was an opportunity for our Tlers to put into practice the theoretical know-how acquired in phase I of the debate training. The concept that 'debating and leadership are synonymous' has been contextualized and realized.



## Awards Harvest!

Sami Chakroun, a cohort 6 Tler, was the recipient of the international essay contest launched by the United Nations under the title "Many Languages, One Word." The event invited students from all over the world to reflect on the theme of global citizenship and the role that multilingualism plays in fostering this concept around the world. Congratulations Sami!

The Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab world (IWSAW) has awarded cohort 3 Tler Joud Zamout the "The Mary Turner Lane Award". Established in 1986 in honor of the late Mary Turner Lane, founding director of the Curriculum in Women's Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, this student paper competition awards the best research paper on women and gender studies. Congratulations Joud!



**Sami Chakroun...winner of the Many Languages, One World Essay Contest**

## Alumni News

### Ahmed Wahid Moussa (B.S. '14)

Ahmed resides in Egypt and is the owner of an organic lawn care company. He is also working as a program officer at the Egyptians Without Borders development foundation.



### Aseel Baidoun (B.A. '12)

Aseel has completed her graduate studies in global journalism in Sweden. She is currently working as a communication officer for the Danish Church Aid in Jerusalem, Palestine, and is a part-time media analyst at the Palestinian Prime Minister's Office.



### Faris Halteh (B.S. '13)

Faris has gone on to pursue a master's degree in Computer Science at Uppsala University, Sweden. He has also been working on a project course in cooperation with Ericsson to develop an application to be used in cross-country skiing championships.

## Ghid Amhaz (B.S. '12)

Ghid is currently a third-year medical student at LAU and a resident at LAU Medical Center-Rizk Hospital. She has served as president of the Social Medicine Society Club at LAU-Byblos for the past year and is launching a series of different projects, including the Nabha Dispensary Project.

## Joud Zaumot (B.S. '14)

Joud is currently on scholarship pursuing graduate studies in Corporate and Financial Management at Lund University, Sweden.

## Leen Aghabi (B.A. '14)

Leen is enrolled at the London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom, working toward the completion of her master's degree in International Affairs.

## Margueritta El Asmar (B.S. '13)

Margueritta is currently enrolled in an M.D. Program at AUB.



***“It was then that it all made sense. It was then that the urge to take action was ignited.”***

## There is No Honor in Honor Killings!

By Joud Zaumot | Cohort 3

During my internship at Sisterhood is a Global Institute/Jordan (SIGI/J) in 2012, I had the opportunity to visit the women’s prison in Jwaideh, where many inmates are detained for their own safety and not for having committed a crime. Initially, I was overcome with shock and couldn’t quite absorb the idea. Naturally, the questions that came to mind were: How can they be in prison for their own safety? Aren’t they living with thieves, drug dealers, and all kinds of criminals? It was not until I learned the crux of the problem that I understood the logic behind the reasoning: “Honor Killings”. It was then that it all made sense. It was then that the urge to take action was ignited.

As part of my capstone project, concrete solutions to the problem of honor killings were presented through the establishment of Haqi - an NGO with the primary goal of protecting women from honor killings in Jordan. However this is not Haqi’s only objective; helping and defending women from *all* types of violence and forms of maltreatment justified in the name of tradition and culture are other objectives. Haqi targets four main issues; first, raising cultural awareness in the society; second, targeting religious leaders and influential representatives; third, training police officers and judiciary employees; and finally, establishing protection homes where women can find shelter and protection. These provisions would be of a great advantage to all women in the Arab world as Haqi can lead by example, encouraging other women’s rights and human rights NGOs to adopt these measures to their own organiza-

tions, thereby helping these girls and solving the issue from its roots.

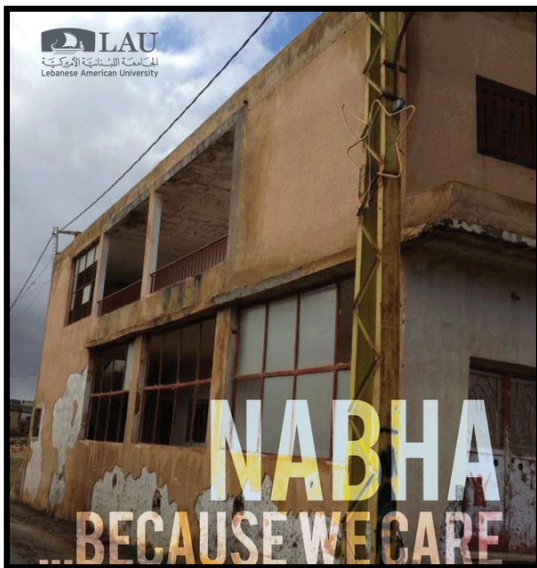
“Honor Killings” is a very serious issue concerning many people, whether they are the families of these girls or the authorities who cover up these murders and announce them as suicides or unintentional killings thus preventing the prevalence of justice and accurate statistics.



Sadly, “Honor Killings” represents the end of the journey for these girls and unfortunately nothing can be done to change this condemnable reality. It is for this reason that rather than focusing on the end result, attention should be turned to how these women were maltreated both mentally and physically prior to meeting their unfortunate fate. That is, the violence they faced on a daily basis – violence that a moderate percentage of Jordanian women currently face in their lives – to identify similar or predictable patterns of behavior in an attempt prevent the reoccurrence of such horrific crimes.

# Nabha Campaign

By Ghid Amhez | LAU-MEPI TL Alumni



As many of you know, despite having the most advanced private health care system in the Middle East, Lebanon's public health care infrastructure is a mess. It is unacceptable that every day people in Lebanon die because our folks in the government fail to provide acceptable health care institutions in the abandoned areas of Lebanon. The call for this cause was echoed loudly by the people in Nabha and the neighboring villages.

As members of the Social Medicine Society, as future physicians at the LAU School of Medicine, as Tomorrow's Leaders, my colleagues and I took it upon ourselves to lead by example and initiate the restoration of a run-down dispensary, so that it may serve the area as a humble health institution. As anthropologist Margaret Mead so accurately said, *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

Nabha, located in the northeast region of Lebanon in the Bekaa valley between Baalbeck and Deir el Ahmar, is considered a hub for the surrounding towns, which are home to more than 20,000 citizens.

After visiting multiple dispensaries across Lebanon (Maaser el Chouf, south-west Bekaa, Qartaba and Baalieh), Nabha was our choice because:

- Our community services would provide the greatest benefit for the largest number of people
- It is the most deprived area in terms of medical services
- It is the furthest dispensary located to the closest hospital, which is a 40 minute- drive away
- Locals would be working on the restoration process, thus alleviating unemployment
- The Ministry of Health along with the local municipality agreed to be responsible for further sustainability

We visited the site and conducted a full needs assessment. Multiple members took part in the restoration process, including the Social Medicine Society Club, the LAU MEPI-Tomorrow's Leaders Club, LAU's Dean of Students' Office, the Municipality of Nabha and the Red Cross. The George Nassim Khoriaty Foundation generously donated all the required medical equipment. Tinol paints also kindly donated all the painting material needed to restore the building. In an effort to raise the necessary money, various fund-raisers were held at the Byblos campus; we sold donuts donated by *Dunkin' Donuts*, and beach bags and memo-pads donated by *Garff Group*. We also sold tombola tickets with more than 50 valuable prizes including an iPad from *Stars Communication* and packages from *Enjoy Lebanon*. As a result, we managed to raise \$5000 of the required \$7000.

In sum, the expected implementation period, the positive impact on the current health care status, and the large number of stakeholders all contributed to the success of the restoration process, but by the same token, they proved to be challenges we had to face. Nevertheless, the idea was ripe - the local people of Nabha were in serious need of a dispensary and the time was right for action. As said by French poet Victor Hugo, "All the forces in the world are not so powerful as an idea whose time has come," and the time for this idea has definitely come!



**“We managed to reach the \$5000 of the needed \$7000 ”**



**TLers selling food to raise money for the Nabha campaign.**

## The Slaughter of Hope

By Mohammed El Gohary | MEPI TL Students Representative | Cohort 4

Originally published here: <http://worldyouthalliance.wordpress.com/2014/07/31/the-slaughter-of-hope/>



The Middle East is home to one of the greatest and most everlasting civilizations of the world, the Arab civilization. Throughout history, the hallmark of the Middle East has been its diversity and prosperity. From the scientific discoveries of *Ibn Toulon* and *Al Khwarizmi*, to the medical discoveries of *Ibn Sina*, the Middle East has always been a prosperous region of the world

with its vast and fertile agricultural lands, rich natural endowments, and diverse communities living in harmony. Fast forward to the year 2014, go and sit in any coffee shop in Cairo, Beirut, Damascus, or Marrakesh and you will meet many young, educated people, filled with aspirations and burning with a drive for success. What do they have in common? An unrelenting desire to leave the Middle East at the first possible opportunity.

This issue is not specific to any particular Middle Eastern country; it is an epidemic facing the entire region. The educated youth are simply leaving without a speckle of hesitation. The

obvious question is *why*? Why is everyone leaving as soon as they get the chance?

The answer is the loss of hope. It is expected that a country goes certain economic, social, or political problems every now and then. It happens to all countries, to the best of countries, with no exception. However, the case in the Middle East is different because the onset of the Arab Spring in 2011 effectively served to raise the youth's aspirations to new heights. Hope for a better future dispersed quickly and a renewed sense of optimism permeated hearts and minds. Remember that we are talking about a region where young people comprise an average of 30% of the population if not more, with the youth unemployment rate at about 30%. Frustrated with the static and stagnant situation they found them-



selves sinking in, the youth started demanding jobs, health care, and a normal life – nothing more than the basic needs their counterparts in the rest of the world enjoy. Instead, they had to face oppressive regimes that know only the language of autocracy and violence.

Despite the initial success of some of the revolutions of the Middle East, they were soon to be hijacked by those whom I personally consider to be the most backward-thinking forces in society: religious fundamentalists. The once hopeful youth were faced with two choices; either accept things to remain as they

were before the revolutions, or accept extreme religious ideologies that serve to dictate how they should live their lives. This duality of either autocracy or religious fundamentalism is not the product of the Arab Spring; it has existed since the end of World War I and is due to the creation of the many artificial states that exist in the Middle East today as a result of the Sykes–Picot agreement. Neither choice would satisfy the youth's demands for a better future and a normal life.

As if that were not enough, as I write this article, there are currently six military conflicts simultaneously taking place in the Middle East, two of which threaten the very existence of two of its states (Syria and Iraq). The implications of these wars go far beyond their immediate scope in this period. War means more children are not going to school, more people are losing their jobs, and more infrastructure is being destroyed. Faced with a choice between the stability of dictatorship or the chaos of religious extremism, the decision was inevitable: stability over chaos. The general feeling in the Middle East right now is that everyone is stuck in this vicious cycle with no way out. The reason being that these conflicts are not just political; they are religious, sectarian, and communal, which make the prospects of solving them in the near future almost impossible. I believe that the Middle East is currently going through a period similar to that which Europe went through in the Dark Ages. The lack of education, the static state of societies, the negative role religion played in politics, the spread of military conflicts, and the barbaric images of slaughter and torture all support my belief. The only difference is that there is no Renaissance coming anytime soon because this is still the beginning. Many say the conflict in the Middle East is about God; I say God has left the Middle East.

# رسالة وداع لبيروت

By Tala El-Issa | Cohort 4

ولم تعطيني إلا الجمال،  
فهل تعتقد أنني كباقي الرجال؟  
أصمت حينما تريني نهدان  
وأروض حين تفلتين جديلتان؟  
كلا وألف كلا فأنا أريد حبا وليس  
عوارض حب.

أريدك أن تسرحي لي شعري،  
وتحلقي لي نقتي الطويل الطويل  
وأن ترتمي على صدري، لنضع  
الدموع تسيل ومعها نسيل

أعذريني يا حسناء،  
فظلم أن أطالب بحب غير موجود  
وخطيئة أن أفترض حبا من طرف  
واحد.

ها أنا ذاهب يا بيروت  
ولكن اعلمي أن حبي لك غير  
مشروط.

أبيروت،  
لماذا لا ترأسليني،  
وقد كتبت من جبالك  
رسائل بعثتها إلى الله؟

أبيروت لماذا ترفضيني،

الأنني لم أولد في مريضك؟  
أرجوك لا تكوني عنصرية

أم لأنني لا ألفظ أبجديتك؟  
ولكننا كلانا نتكلم العربية

أو لعني لا أفهم حزنك؟  
ولكن صدقيني يا وردتي الجورية

جروحي بحجم جروحك،  
والحاني كالحائك شجيرة

أبيروت، أخذت مني حبي

بيروت حبيبتني،  
إنني أحبها ولكنها لا تحبني.  
بيروت مهجتي،  
قلبي يسعها ولكنها لا تسعني.

أبيروت،  
لماذا تكابرين وأنا مشيت ذليلا بين  
دهاليز قلبك؟

أبيروت  
لماذا ترفضين أن تعطيني قبلة  
وأنا قد قبلت هديك، وجهك وشعرك،  
وكمريم مسحت قدميك  
بزييت مطهر؟

أبيروت،  
لماذا لا تكلميني،  
وقد كلمت كالمجنون  
أبوابك، أرضك، بحرك،  
وكل ما أراه ولا أراه؟

Lebanese American University - Byblos Campus

University Enterprise Office

Frem Civic Center, R 501 f & g

Email: mepitl@lau.edu.lb

Website: mepitl.lau.edu.lb

Tel: + 961 9 547254, ext. 2242

Fax: + 961 9 546008

## Editorial team

Coordinator: Dr. Victor Khachan

Editor in Chief: Barik Mahadin

Editor: Chafic Najjar