AUK Dominates Imagine Cup

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

Four teams from AUK’s Computer Science and Information Systems program, headed by the CSSIS program lead, Dr. Amir Zeid, achieved a mind-numbing victory at the Microsoft Imagine Cup 2012 Kuwait Finals by winning “The People’s Choice” award on top of conquering all three positions, 1st, 2nd and 3rd. If that’s not enough, AUK’s team will also represent Kuwait, for the third time in a row, in the World Finals scheduled to be held in Sydney, Australia, in July 2012. Talk about winning a lottery, but in this case, because of hours of grueling work, and sleepless nights! Team Code Breakers won first position and the “Mobile Development Award,” and will thus represent AUK of course, and the State of Kuwait in the Microsoft World Finals. The team consisted of senior AUK CSSIS students, Khalid Al-Jassar, Khalid Al-Qahtani, Mohammed Al-Sharti and Abdulla Al-Shaya. They stylishly utilized Microsoft’s Kinect to intellectually develop software that could turn sign-langauge into homogenous voice from foreign languages! This allows bridging the communication gap between hearing and deaf individuals and the society encompassing them. Truly a technology that potentially solves one of the toughest world problems!

Next was the project titled the “Home Rehabilitation System,” created by team “1337”, composed of AUK senior students Dalia Al-Qahtani, Khalid Al-Hazem, and Mubarak Al-Enezi, that achieved second place. The remarkable project aimed at creating an application that allowed paralysis patients to do guided physiotherapy in the security of their homes by creating a link between the medical professional, who could monitor patient’s progress, and the patient. AUK seniors, Thamer Al-Mayyan, Omar ElKhatib, Talal Alaysen, and Ali Taqi, the members of “Team GG,” claimed third place with their impressive project titled “KINED,” that integrated school learning with Microsoft’s Kinect motion activate system. The kinesthetic learning approach was emphasized with KINED.

Last but not the least, AUK’s fourth team “TriQWR” impressively came up with software called “Physio” that kept the needs of pregnant women in mind by allowing exercises in the comfort of their homes under remote supervision of their doctors. This team composed of Wadha Al-Dalama, Eman Karam, and Barrak Al-Sarraf. The event was sponsored by Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science, Burgan Bank, and Zain, and was hosted by Microsoft and the Central Agency for Information Technology. AUK teams, under the mentorship of Dr. Amir Zeid, have been receiving titles in the Imagine Cup Competitions since 2009, winning 1st place Mobile regional award in 2009, 1st Place Software Design regional award in 2010, 1st Place Software Design local award in 2012, and 2nd Place Software Design regional award in 2011. Moreover, two AUK teams also qualified to compete at the World Finals in Poland 2010, and New York 2011.

As declared on its website, www.imaginecup.com, “The Microsoft Imagine Cup is the world’s premier student technology competition inviting all eligible students to use their imagination and passion to create a technology solution that addresses the Imagine Cup 2012 theme (for now) - Imagine a world where technology helps solve the toughest problems.” Since inception, over 1.4 million students have been a part of the Imagine Cup, and with over 358,000 students representing 285 countries and regions having registered for the Imagine Cup 2011 competition.

Wolfpack Gives Blood (Lots of It)

BY DINA EL-ZOHAIRY

On Thursday May 3rd, the Multi-purpose Room at the American University of Kuwait (AUK) was transformed into a hospital-like setting from 11am-5pm to accommodate individuals who wished to donate blood. The spring blood drive was organized by the Voice of AUK, a student-run organization, and executed by Kuwait’s Central Blood Bank staff. According to Ms. Hind, a PR officer at the Blood Bank, 170 people had shown up and 140 had donated blood at the end of the day. The room bustled with activity as dozens turned out, usually with friends, casual if they had done it before, hopeful to be deemed eligible if previously rejected, and often anxious if they were first-time donors. Each person had to first complete a lengthy questionnaire, await their turn at the data-entry station, and then get their hemoglobin level checked by a device similar to the one diabetics use. If it was lower than normal, they couldn’t donate. Otherwise, they moved on to the last step of the screening process where a doctor asked a few questions and measured blood pressure. Movable partitions divided the room into male and female sections, housing four blue recliners each. Each person had 1 pint of blood (~ 450ml) removed from their body by means of a needle inserted in the arm. Some ten male and female nurses floated around in their white uniforms, starting the 20-minute actual donation in some and ending it in others. They also monitored the machine for alarms and donors for any symptoms of discomfort, such as light-headedness, which was more common among females. Voice of AUK members and volunteers, easily identified by their red shirts, helped greet potential donors, managed traffic, and made sure every donor grabbed a donut and juice to up their sugar levels, and a special badge as a token of appreciation on their way out. The event’s organizer, Voice Business Manager Hala Ahmed, said that after months of preparation, she was “absolutely ecstatic” at the large turnout. Voice faculty advisor, David Hart, stated that “Hala has done a fantastic job; this just wouldn’t have happened without her tireless efforts. It’s great to see those efforts rewarded with such great support from the community”!

This is the fifth time since 2008 that the Voice has organized a blood drive that one can safely consider it a trademark event. This author, an AUK alumna, originally conceived the idea of holding a blood drive to raise awareness among the community about the importance of donating blood to help make it readily available for cancer, trauma and post-surgical patients, among others. Board members also found it an excellent opportunity to recruit potential Voice members, particularly writers, and increase the organization’s visibility on-campus to promote readership, according to David Hart. The Voice of AUK is the university’s official student newspaper, operated exclusively by a student board in consultation with a faculty advisor. Issues are produced monthly and contain diverse sections such as News, Arts, Health & Science, Opinions/Editorials, and an Arabic Corner.
Women as Global Leaders

BY NADA BEDIR

During Spring Break of this year, five female AUK students were privileged to attend the 4th Women as Global Leaders conference that was held at Zayed University in Abu Dhabi. The event was held under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Fatima H. Murabir, this year’s conference theme was “Creating a Sustainable Future for the World,” focused on the social, environmental, and economic aspects that would lead to a sustainable future. Throughout the conference, reputable guest speakers conducted keynote speeches on leadership, climate change, and women’s role in the society, among other things. The delivered speeches were motivating for us as young women that aspire to make this world a better place and to contribute positively to the development of our communities; quoting one of the speakers, H.E. Raja Al Gurg, Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, “An empowered woman is the best catalyst to promote a sustainable future.” Being mothers, sisters, daughters, employees, or employers, women play a major role in shaping the future of our world. Another distinguished speaker, Siomgery Weaver, winning actress and environmentalist, highlighted that women are 14 times more vulnerable to climate change than men. This piece of information made us realize the importance of women’s role in the society. As women, we should be seeking education and competing to obtain decision-making positions because we are the ones who are going to be affected the most. According to Zeinab Badawi, BBC TV Correspondent, one of the reasons why women better leaders is their passion. This showed us that women have a sign of strength as a leader and not a weakness as many seem to see it.

In addition to listening to keynote speeches, delegates of the conference were encouraged to attend assorted workshops and panel discussions with a centric focus on the theme of the conference. The various lectures delivered were both practical and theoretical, engaging all participants to interact and integrate with each other towards sustainability. Dalaa Al-Qahtani, a senior at AUK studying Computer Science, was inspired by one of the panels, “one speaker whom I won’t forget was Her Excellency Noura Al Kaabi, the head of Tawarw and Human Development, who, prior to that, was an IT support manager at Zayed Military Hospital. The things she said were extremely motivating coming from another tech major, seeing there was a future for female computer scientists/engineers in the Arab world, especially in the increasingly dominated field.” In addition, Nada Bedir, a senior studying Finance and Accounting, was motivated after hearing the keynote speech delivered by Soraya Sahl, regional director of MINAZ Al Arab Nada says, “The reason behind Soraya’s success is her passion towards what she does; she believes that youth can make a difference and this is how she was able to inspire all of us to follow our dreams.”

One of the most rewarding aspects of this conference was having the opportunity to network with prominent women as well as female students from all around the world. During the evening cultural activities and events, we shared our college experiences and views on women-related issues with other women from Mexico, the United States, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Sweden, Singapore, Kurdistan, etc. Lujan Al-Bad, an accounting and finance student at AUK says, “observing women coming from conservative backgrounds that fight for their rights, and wanting to leave their own fingerprint makes us wonder of the great power that lies within every woman.”

This conference is considered a remarkable experience for all the AUK delegation. We had the chance to learn about women’s status around the world, obtain a deeper understanding of leadership education, and share our experiences with young women just like us. We are now inspired to take additional steps to fulfill the needs of our society and the world. May Omran, a sophomore student at AUK says, “As a young woman, I believe I have the competitive advantage of taking part in the sustainability of the world’s future.” Listening to influential women has allowed us to draw a positive picture of the future. We are now filled with positive energy to experience new horizons and to continue learning in order to create a positive change.

MEPI Deputy Meets with Alumni

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI

On March 12, Saira Sareed, the MEPI Regional Office Deputy Director, made a visit, as part of a regional tour, to Kuwait and made it a priority to sit down and meet with alumni of the program she works to promote and develop. Along with other alumni, I was fortunate enough to be invited to share my experience and how it has contributed to the desire to want to give back to this community, in more ways than one. Before that thought, she thoroughly introduced herself and expressed joy at having the opportunity to visit Kuwait, hoping that the MEPI alumni chapter underway here will spearhead others in the Middle East and North Africa. The program sends students from countries of the Middle East and North Africa to select universities across the United States for the prospect of being instructed on leadership and civic engagement, thereby building/setting examples that populations across the region can emulate and learn from. Activities are also organized by advisors and performed as part of a practical approach to instill these values within participants. Alumni who attended the meeting mentioned having come out of the experience with determination to address and conquer some of Kuwait’s most disturbing problems, how to be self-starters even when encouragement is hard to come by and the importance of networking in their community because although a project can be initiated by one person’s effort, seeing it through will take a robust support system. Time was also designated to discuss grant proposals in which alumni are able to apply for funding to civil society projects. Many topics were discussed, and it was clear that the Kuwaiti teaching patterns in Kuwait’s educational system as well as giving rise to various forms of community service. Foreigners often mistaken Kuwaiti as a progressive era and none but 1960s and 1970s endure to speak, but there are plenty of problems that present and leave the general public adapted. Institutional models set up in the 1960s and 1970s endure to be the dominant trend. They and the methods that go along with them are put to use, much to their dislike. Kuwait needs to be ushered into a progressive era and none but its youth can achieve that.
International Worker’s Day at AUK

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

On May 3rd, the American University of Kuwait celebrated International Labor Day and held a Staff Appreciation lunch in the Auditorium and related activities to honor and distinguish its appreciation of the services provided by the workers of the university.

Workers were all present at the university in casual attire this day, as a sense of boosted confidence and gratitude could be felt in the air. The day, an appreciation lunch, was prepared by the AUK community members working in collaboration from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm to assist in making the event successful and show their admiration for the services provided by AUK support staff.

Dr. Carol Ross thanked Student Life, Community Engagement, AUK Bookstore, Drama Club, and the volunteers for their diligent efforts and support on behalf of the campus, and in addition to each worker was handed a certificate of appreciation along with a goodie bag and bingo prizes, on behalf of the faculty, student organizations, and AUK students. AUK community members also performed the setup and clean-up for the respective lunch, and greeted persons on arrival.

Student, faculty, and staff volunteers who were trained as interim support staff, helped supervise the AUK gates for the security personnel, and helped in picking up and collecting trash from the campus grounds and waste containers for the housekeeping employees in an effort to collaboratively keep the campus safe and clean. The swappers wore red aprons.

The purpose of this event was to appreciate and express gratitude to the housekeepers, technicians, security officers, landscaping and office facilitators for their hard work and professionalism in ensuring that AUK remains a secure and pleasant place for the individuals on the premises to both learn and work.

International Labor Day is a day that signifies giving gratitude to the laborers, which is usually held at 1st of May. Around the world but certain countries held it around in accordance to their convenience. It celebrates the many contributions to society made by laborers and honors their dignity. This day is celebrated around the world and is also known as 'International Worker’s day' or 'May Day.'

AUK participates with their trophied from the Beirut Unisports Festival 2012.

BY TREVOR TAYLOR

On March 15-19, the American University of Kuwait (AUK) participated in the Beirut Unisports Festival 2012 in men’s soccer, men’s and women’s volleyball, and table tennis competitions. A total of 32 student-athletes represented AUK while competing against 26 different universities from 10 different countries. The University Saint-Joseph hosted the Beirut Unisports Festival 2012, allowing competitors to use their sports facilities and having their students act as guides for the visiting athletic teams.

This 4-day tournament gave AUK student-athletes the opportunity to play against a more diverse group of competitors, in a tournament that is proven to have a higher level of competition than any tournament Kuwait currently offers. At each and every game, AUK made a huge impact on an overwhelming amount of AUK and Kuwaiti pride that could not be expressed. The team was filled with energy from AUK’s cheering, drumming, and singing in support of whichever AUK teams were playing. There was no surprise when AUK was awarded a huge cup for the university with the Best Team Spirit.

After this tournament, AUK student-athletes are ready to compete in the second half of the University Championship Cup (UCC). Starting in April, AUK will participate in soccer, volleyball, tennis, squash, and swimming. They will play against the Australian College of Kuwait, and the Gulf University for Science and Technology to see which institution will be crowned the UCC Champion.

Beirut Unisports Festival 2012

AUK athletes celebrating a victorious ending to the Beirut Unisports Festival 2012.

BY ANNA AL-OMARE

On Monday morning April 2nd 2012, the AUK library, as part of the Career Week season, hosted inspiring Kuwaiti writers Abdulwahab Al-Sayed and Abdulaziz Al-Hashash in a “question and answer” session, followed by a book signing. Students, visitors and faculty members attended the event.

The event started with a welcome speech from Ahmed Al-Ritala, a student at AUK, introducing the two authors. Abdulwahab Al-Sayed has a degree in chemical engineering and is the first Kuwaiti author to write in metaphysics and horror. Al-Sayed published 13 books. Some of his novels are: “Unknown Dimensions”, “Rare Cases” and “After Midnight.” Many of them became bestsellers.

Abdulaziz Al-Hashash has a BA in psychology and sociology. He is an author of a popular TV series. He wrote a number of plays and short stories, winning several awards in Kuwait and in other countries. His series include “The Eyes of Love.”

It was preceded by questions for the two authors, followed by open questions from the audience.

The two writers spoke to the audience about their experiences in writing novels and scripts. Both of them stressed the importance of reading as essential foundations of any good writer. Al-Sayed stated that one won’t be able to write unless one reads. They advised students interested in pursuing the literary career to start by reading. They recommended starting the “Forum of Creative Writers of the Writers Association” where renowned Kuwaiti writers teachbeginners and review their work. To provide further guidance, Al-Sayed holds workshops for young aspiring writers.

When asked about inspiration, Al-Sayed pointed to Dr. Nebil Favouk, Dr. Ahmed Khaled Tawfik and Herbert George Wells as his inspiration. Al-Hashash mentioned Tawfik Al Hakim and Stephen King. Concluding their talks, Al-Sayed stressed the importance of commitment and hard work mentioning the difficulty of writing as well as distribution. He stated that, “heroes only become heroes because they strive to reach their goals.”

Al-Hashash stressed the importance of having an aim behind any work. He added, “dreaming is your legitimate right. To pursue your dreams, take advice from your elders, invest in your talents, and never get pulled back by frustration.”

Anna Al- Omari, director of the library, and Anna Al- Kanaan, assistant director of the library, concluded the event by honoring the writers each with a shield.

The event ended with the book signing. The authors’ books were on sale at the event.

Library Honors Young Writers

Finance Week's Zero Degrees and H umbah!

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

As a segment of AUK’s Annual Finance Week from April 1st to April 5th, 2012, the Finance Club proudly hosted Zero Degrees, a scrumptious froost business, outside the Academic Advising Center, and Humbah, a succulent fast food business, next to the Wolfpack Fitness Center. The AUK community was invited to “taste their imagination,” and to devour the tasty burgers of Humbah creation!

As proudly declared by the Zero Degrees’ staff: “Zero Degrees is not just a cold place and an extreme sports brand, but a planet that breeds super heroes, i.e. flavors! Those flavors, led by Captain Ore (the original flavor) have come to planet Earth to deliver heroes, i.e. flavors! Those flavors, led by Captain Ore (the original flavor) have come to planet Earth to deliver

What a philosophy!

Humbah on the other hand served scrumptious burgers to the AUK community. As stated by them, “Humbah is a Kuwait fast food concept created, owned and operated by Kuwaitis. Humbah is an innovative fusion of foods, with all your favorites but adding a unique touch! The HUMBAH way! Just one bite is all it takes!” Quite intriguing!

“pay your imagination” and “taste” What a philosophy!

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As the Finance Week intellectually created quite a humble and bustling atmosphere on the AUK campus. Flyers, posters, and ads advertising the events were almost everywhere; even the elevators weren’t spared! It was inspiring to see how the Finance Club also kept in mind the necessities of life which includes: deserts. Humbah and Zero Degrees did the trick. Way to go Finance Club!

Finance Week’s Zero Degrees and Humbah!

BY NADA BEEH

As part of the Career Week activities, local and international companies were present at the annual Career Fair that took place in AUK’s auditorium. Participating companies set up their booths to meet students and provide them with detailed information regarding career opportunities in Kuwait.

It is the time of the year when AUK students get the chance to explore different career options including: internships, part-time, and full-time positions.

The Career Fair was organized by the Career & Wellness office, and is considered to be one of the most significant events of the year. AUK students came dressed in their business attire and brought their CV’s to present them to the participating companies. Students had the opportunity to learn more about different companies’ recruitment policies and the current available vacancies.

The Career Fair, being held towards the end of the Spring Semester, allows our graduating seniors to start searching for suitable jobs that would meet their expectations.

In the past, some students were offered full-time positions after handing in their CV’s and networking with companies’ representatives, which were also present in AUK’s previous Career Fairs. On the other hand, freshmen, sophomore and junior students get the chance to apply for different internship opportunities, where they can utilize the skills they gained during their study at AUK.

All in all, the Career Fair is an important event that connects students with the professional world and captures their attention in planning for their future.

The participating companies included Gulf Bank and Zain as Platinum sponsors, KAMCO and ABYAT as Gold sponsors, Impact & Echo/BDJO and Al Manama as Silver sponsors. Other companies were Ali Abdulwahab Sons & Partners, Kuwait Bank, Ernst & Young, Burjanka Bank, Hewlett Packard, M. H. Alshaya Group, LOYAC, Pricewaterhouse Coopers, Kuwait Food Group, Wataniya Telecom, and AUK Career Fair.

AUK students celebrating a successful ending to the Beirut Unisports Festival 2012.
BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

Today’s technology has almost surpassed human imagination and the mere question of what is possible and what is not. A new generation of bionics which can wirelessly connect with the nervous system and develop feeling are miraculously under development! This brings up the long awaited answer to the question of what is not possible; the answer being “Nothing!” Tests on animals have already been conducted in which devices were directly implanted into the nerves to process and transmit signals wirelessly to an external device. The system works!

To top it all, researchers are also developing prosthetic skin which will be able to wrap around a bionic limb and transfer sensory information to the nervous system wirelessly, theoretically allowing users to detect and feel objects easily.

The present bionic arms can pinch or hold using electrodes fitted inside the portion of the prosthetic which fits over the skin. They’re positioned to pick signals up the prosthetic which fits over the stump of an amputee. With the traditional prosthetics, a rod screwed into the bone at the stump, nerve fibers grow through it. Then, the nerve signals pertaining to specific movements are selected and transmitted wirelessly to a receiver in the prosthetic.

In the past we all had awed developments like the above, we were left to wonder about, the successful link to the nervous system. It will almost be like regeneration! How does the mechanism work? Once the device is inserted into the nerve in the stump, nerve fibers grow through it. Then, the nerve signals transmitted directly into the nerve fibers in the stump itself.

In the new bionics, since it will be a rod, higher loads can be potentially carried than with the traditional prosthetics which fit over the stump of an amputee like a glove. It will also avoid friction between the skin and the artificial limb.

Currently, Prof James Fawcett, a scientist of the Cambridge Center for Brain Repair is developing neural interfaces whereby prosthetics will be able to communicate wirelessly with implants fitted directly into the nerve fibers in the stump itself. Neural interfaces would be implanted in nerve trunks to read and transmit signals.

Prosthetic limbs becoming more like in form and function.

Quitting smoking RIGHT NOW!

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

Unlike the conventional researched writing, I won’t go into the preliminary detail about the “yada-yada” of smoking, but will just get right to the point. You’re reading this because you either tried to give smoking up yourself, or have someone close to you who you want to compel to quit smoking but it just isn’t working. Well, here’s a little informative yet eye-opening insight for you about YOU! So, for a starter, let’s grab that hopefully last cigarette and read on!

You’ll be glad to know that about half of you, i.e. smokers, atleast make one attempt to overcome the smoking addiction in a given year. Several actually do well in inception; scientific studies (Cochrane Review 2007) show that over 40% of those who use all available help, i.e. nicotine replacements and behavioral support, are successful; however, when it comes to quitting smoking in its entirety, that’s an entirely different matter. Long-term success is much less common and usually more than 95% relapse within the first year itself leaving only a few percent of those will unalteringly willpower alone, without support from health professionals, replacement drugs, or medical treatments, to become successful long-term quitters. The million dollar question here is how do to wonder about, the successful link to the nervous system. It will almost be like regeneration! How does the mechanism work? Once the device is inserted into the nerve in the stump, nerve fibers grow through it. Then, the nerve signals transmitted directly into the nerve fibers in the stump itself. Neural interfaces would be implanted in nerve trunks to read and transmit signals.

So far the device has been successfully tested on mice and rats. Some potential concerns such as scouring within the device might strangle nerve fibers and disrupt signals are possible, but none have been detected so far.

We might one day limit the potential of human intellect by engraving a ceiling, but with developments like the above, we can only ask ourselves if one day we will have to walk amongst our bionic counterparts, with an ability to think?

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The Voice of AUK

HEALTH & SCIENCE

Volume 8, Issue 6

BY ISHA SADIQ HAIDER

Quit smoking RIGHT NOW!

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A Great Journey in a French Experience

BY MANAL AL-TAILI AND KUWAITYA AL-TAILI

AUK students from Professor Joseph Fiannaca’s 389 French class visited the French Short Film Festival that took place at the Laila Gallery on Monday the 9th and on Tuesday the 10th of April. The event involved displaying French short films for free and was organized in partnership with Cinescape and Le Festival Du Doux-métage De Clermont Ferrand. The French movies that were shown in the cinema were awarded by the International Short Film Festival of Clermont-Ferrand (France). Therefore, students had the opportunity to see the brilliant work of the French culture.

A highlight in this trip was when we went to see the short film, “Un Mardi.” We felt that they successfully influenced the music of the Arabian “Oud,” which we enjoyed. We felt much related to it. Personally, we mostly were interested in this film, “Un Mardi.”

Active Career Week

BY ABIR ITANI

Career Week, at AUK, took place on April 8th - April 10th. On the first day, we had the Alumni Panel, where Alumni had the chance to discuss their AUK experiences and link it to their careers. They talked about the employers’ expectations and field values. They offered great advice to all AUK students and the number one advice was: BE PERSISTENT.

On the second day, two resume doctors were present on campus and helped the students build their resumes and write their cover letters. It was very useful and had many students asking interesting questions related to their CVs. The number one recommendation was limit your resume to ONE-PAGE because you are a fresh graduate. On the same day, April 8th, young entrepreneurs were on campus for the Entrepreneurship Panel. They talked about their fresh experience in opening a business and how to deal with people and ministry rules. They shared great ideas and their number one recommendation was: BE PERSISTENT.

They closed the panel by collaborating together to start a recycling project and awareness campaign. The Career Fair on April 10th gathered recruiters from Kuwait and the region. Big companies were present such as Zain, Gulf Bank, KAMCO, Impact and Echo, Alyaura, Loyac, Ernst and Young, Pricewaterhousecoopers, KPMG, ABK, Wataniya, HP, Kout Food Group, Al Shaya, amongst others. The students were eagerly walking around and collecting information from recruiters and submitting their CVs. The companies who were present were very interested in hiring AUK students. In addition to the professional part, the Career Services and Wellness center had a raffle for students. The first prize was the New IPAD and the two other prizes included big Career baskets. Congratulations to the winners!

Introducing the Kuwait Designers’ Club

BY THE KUWAIT DESIGN- RECYCLED

The Kuwaiti Designers Club (KDC) is dedicated to providing a format for activities, lectures, workshops, and peer review of Graphic Design projects for students of the American University of Kuwait. This will give AUK students an opportunity to benefit from each other’s contribution, peer review and tutoring, friendships, and may allow for design improvements to flourish here. Furthermore, this gives Kuwait’s designers a chance to be able to watch fun and informative films, interview professionals from around the world (via Skype), and even hold competitions.

Dr. Carol’s Corner

BY DR. CAROL ROSS-SCOTT

I will make my note to the Wolf Pack short and sweet: IF YOU STAND FOR NOTHING, YOU WILL FALL FOR ANYTHING. ISN’T IT ABOUT TIME YOU STOOD UP AND BEGAN TAKING CONTROL OF AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR FUTURE? Backing out of the corner until next time...PEACE!
Tips for current AUK Students?

President of the Marketing Club


Tips for current AUK Students?

Get active! Find something you’re good at and enjoy and go for it. It is so important to be active. You’ll get to know more people, learn how to interact with different personalities. These experiences will shape your character and help you deal with situations in the workplace. They will also give you a wider perspective of life. Do not limit yourself to being a good student. In this day and age, that is not good enough anymore. A good GPA does not get you very far anymore—not if you want to compete internationally anyways. I know that in my case, getting a scholarship and into a good master’s program abroad had a lot to do with the fact that I was active on campus (which meant I was well-rounded) and served as a female leader in body that had not witnessed female leadership before. Most importantly, have fun and enjoy yourself because when you are enjoying what you’re doing, you are being new ideas to the table and end up having a greater impact on the rest of the community.

How has being active through clubs/organizations/leadership programs at AUK prepared you for future leadership positions?

The leadership skills I gained throughout the 4 years in AUK made me highly motivated and committed to pursuing my goals in life. At work it helped me take the role of a team leader as well as a team player.

Tips for current AUK Students?

The true university experience is about a student’s involvement beyond the classroom. Students should take advantage of extracurricular activities - for they allow students to explore and engage with the community in a practical way.

How has being active through clubs/organizations/leadership programs at AUK prepared you for future leadership positions?

The clubs I was part of taught me a wide range of skills, most importantly patience and flexibility. I can now bring people together as one interconnected group.

Tips for current AUK Students?

Being a student worker has taught me professionalism in the workplace. L.E.A.D. facilitator gave me the background on how to communicate and coordinate with people in high positions and organize small lectures. PALs helped me with mentoring practices and being more social.

Being a Soccer Team Captain helped in realizing the importance of doing fun-related activities, which I also think is important in the workplace to create a stronger bond between colleagues. It also gave me the sense of responsibility in which your actions will directly affect your team members, especially when working on a project with others.

Tips for current AUK Students?

How has being active through clubs/organizations assisted you with your work placement?

The true university experience is about a student’s involvement beyond the classroom. Students should take advantage of extracurricular activities - for they allow students to explore and engage with the community in a practical way.

How has being active through clubs/organizations/leadership programs at AUK prepared you for future leadership positions?

Be as active as you can in university, the opportunities are endless and you have more time to try out new and different things. Don’t think of it as a learning experience while you’re doing it, just enjoy it but be aware of the things that you are learning. You will find that one day you will look back and see how being active contributed to where you are.

Tips for current AUK Students?

How has being active through clubs/organizations assisted you with your work placement?

How has being active through clubs/organizations/leadership programs at AUK prepared you for future leadership positions?

The leadership skills I gained throughout the 4 years in AUK made me highly motivated and committed to pursuing my goals in life. At work it helped me take the role of a team leader as well as a team player.

Tips for current AUK Students?

Get involved! Being active in student leadership programs ensures that you can experiment with situations in the workplace. And most importantly, be true to yourself and go after what you believe in no matter how “far-fetched” your dreams may seem.

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AUK's Leaders of Years Gone By

By Rama Sarano

"Why should I get involved on campus? Why should I be the President of this club? What good is it for me? It's just a waste of time!"

I'm sure these are all thoughts and questions that go through your head when thinking of joining a club/organization. Speaking as an alum, I would like to say that on the contrary, it would be a waste of time if you DON'T participate on campus.

A good friend of mine, who's also an AUK alum, and is currently the coordinator of Alumni Affairs and Employment Placement, once said: "When I was a student at AUK, I came to class and left campus. After working at AUK and seeing what is available on campus and how alive the student body is, I regretted not being involved. I missed out on a very crucial part of the university experience."

Speaking from personal experience, I like to think that my persona was shaped by the time I put getting involved on campus. I'll admit I wasn't really active within the club arena, but I made sure I student worker jobs around campus, played on the soccer and basketball team and served on the Student Government Association at least once.

On that note, I hear a lot of you saying, "Why should I run for SGA? I know I’m going to lose." I actually ran for the Vice-President position my senior year and lost. I was disappointed of course, however, the campaigning process was a learning experience for me. I try and make use of every opportunity given to you through your college years.

Come to think of it, when I got interviewed for my first job after graduating, I was asked to give examples of situations that showed my leadership skills. I was a fresh graduate, with no job experience! Luckily for me, I got to give examples of when I served on SGA or when I was a co-chair in the campus activities board. Being active helped me look good in that interview!

Enough about me and my advice! It's time to show off those fellow alumnae's that made a difference on campus. Let's take a look at what they have to say!

Tips for current AUK Students?

"I suppose what qualified me most was my previous experience, my knowledge, and my writing and compositional skills. But my learning outside the classroom (as a volunteer, intern, student worker, or club member and active member of the AUK community) prepared me for these responsibilities in ways my classes could not have done."

"Being active on campus definitely prepared me for life after AUK. Assignments and internships have all been instrumental to my knowledge and experience, but I also have my 4 years of club and organization activity to credit. Committing to activities outside the classroom shows you learn about team work and interacting with people, managing time and projects, and communicating."

"Working around the clock to meet deadlines and cover sections of the Voice nightly helped me get a good start in writing and copyediting for magazines, websites, and blogs around Kuwait and Dubai."

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"Get involved! From the very first day of the semester, find out how to get involved. Visit Student Life and discover what various clubs and organizations are currently at AUK, or ask to create one youself! Getting involved on campus as a club member, student workers, or getting involved in projects you are passionate about by helping others in the community will teach you the skills you can only learn outside the classroom.

"Most of my good memories of being at AUK stem from my time with clubs, organizations, and leadership programs. Much of my time on campus was spent with the Voice of AUK and the AUKWaiwat Review, sitting in the clubs and organization offices racing to meet article or cartoon deadlines, cuttin open newly printed piles of Voice issues for distribution, or proofreading the last drafts for the Review."

"I was often frustrating and stressful, but it was also always tremendously exciting."

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The Artist Spectacular!

BY JARAH AL-SHAMALI

We've been watching films for decades, and the films have evolved in their own way. They have brought so much to the world, and it's hard to imagine life without them. The Harry Potter movies have been a fan favorite for the past decade, and they've shown that even though the stories are magical, they still have real-life implications. The visual element(s) of a movie are not all that important in a global sense, making one but some are just as important. We can look at movies and say that audiences would ever grow tired of them. However, there is a change. I know that movies need to appreciate about this movie is its raw delivery and fearless experimentation. Every contemporary one looks and sounds the same but it does not have to be restricted to a time period. A movie can be just as successful regardless, once it sets its priorities straight. It was one, for which I commend The Artist whether it was set in 1927 or 2007. All I have to say is never!
May 2012

OPINIONS & EDITORIALS

Around the States in 45 Days

BY JAHAN AL-SHAMALI

On August 15, 2008 it was all over, the most life-changing experience yet in my twenty-three years on this planet. Considering that it has been that long, I might be expected to forget most of it but it has left an indelible mark and this may sound painfully clichéd but it turned out to be one of those periods of my life that had me fully believe that all good things [must] come to an end. What I have been keeping vague is a program sponsored by the Department of State called the Middle East Partnership Initiative and I will not get into painstaking details about what it constitutes/does for participants. There is always good old Google for that. I want to make this a purely personal account of how that summer went. It was the work and the result of fate that I even had been given the opportunity to sign up for it. I was really lucky; I did luck out and am grateful for that. Because I made several decisions and this is not that I have decided to categorize what remains of the article into this section.

Washington D.C. The capital was one of the most exciting places right off the bat, mostly because I felt that residents were very much open and welcoming, more so than other parts of the States I ventured off to later on. This made me feel a bit of sense since it is a hub for diplomatic missions and receives the aforementioned on a regular basis. So that sort of culture, if you will, was held within the walls of this city of time. To get a sense of the political framework, we visited the White House, where people who have made a living out of working for the American government are nice enough to break things down for us. Also there, I met organizers of the program as well as advisors who flew in from my host university and encapsulated what we were to expect for the next six weeks. Mine were from Wayne State University (located in Detroit, Michigan) and one of the first points they made to us, and which they were sure to repeat on countless occasions, was that Detroit harbors “the largest population of Middle Easterners outside of the Middle East.” They truly never made me forget it and to this day, I have never.

Detroit, Michigan. What is something about one traveling abroad, regardless of the duration, looks for? Yes, a good time. But I have a different spin on this one: I want to be able to see and meet new people, not feel like I am still in my neighborhood back home. Some of the first people I met at Wayne State University were of Arab origin, even ones who were fresh out of the Middle East and trying to make something of themselves, however that may be. I was of period - and understood. Then there were bookshops at every corner, sightings of women with hijabs on every so often and signs upon billboards catering to the Arabic/Muslim populace. Needless to say, it did not feel like walking down a street in the States. But what was remarkably atypical about being there is witnessing people that I belong to go about things with an exciting energy, nothing I had ever been able to locate in Kuwaiti society and even countries in the greater region I had visited. They upheld impressive work ethic and spoke of unification in a broad sense whenever they had the chance; when I compared to that unprofessionalism and divide-and-conquer methodologies sweeping through Kuwait, going back was not a priority.

While at Wayne State University, however, we had to experience the compulsory classroom sessions that taught us, in our own way, how to cope and in which we can apply knowledge related to leadership and civic engagement to our respective communities. A lot of exercises were given and our critical thinking/problem-solving skills were put to the test. Professors that truly impressed us instructed these lessons and were of different backgrounds - their enthusiasm was infectious and a conscious effort into getting all this off the ground was invested because we were the very first batch of participants of this program to be hosted by Wayne State University.

Apart from an academic environment on campus, we saw much of Detroit by way of visiting exceptional civil society and internationally renowned organizations. Off the top of my head, I remember Rotary International which stands out more so than the rest because longterm members were part of the chapter established at Dearborn made sure to introduce us to sights and sounds of the city and I even got to take part in a gathering of senior citizens, who began that festive morning by singing melodies that I like to call old-fashioned. Myself and a few of our group who were with me did not attempt to mumble the words, just waving our heads to and fro.

At the time when we made Detroit our home for a mere few weeks, economic instability was prevalent and a lot of long-time residents had resolved to leave the city and look for better, more profitable opportunities elsewhere in the States. Also, the mayor of the city at the time, Kwame Kilpatrick, was being riddled with corruption charges and a variety of scandals all throughout this tenure – in relation to this, we were taken to meet Kym Worthy, the prosecutor of Wayne County, who was filing law suits against the mayor as early as March of that year. It was very exciting to meet and sit with her – she was incredibly humble and a woman of immense valor. There were these excursions around Detroit having to do with stocking up on knowledge about how civil society organizations are begun and maintained. Then there was the part where we visited landmarks, enjoyed the scenery (those of us from the Arabian Gulf appreciated it more for obvious reasons) and outdoor activities. There were plenty of places that left lasting impressions but there was one that I ended up appreciating a lot more than the rest: the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History. It is because there is more to it than walking through endless corridors of historical artifacts. Most people do not acknowledge the suffering that African slaves had to endure but this establishment went the whole nine yards in that department.

It was not merely a host of guided tours and educational workshops. When we walked down to a section of the museum that was designed to give the impression of rooms that would imprison the slaves, they had us tread into it in a familiar fashion as they would have: barely any breathing space between yourself and the slave in front of you. Next, we were told to stand pressed to the wall, as closely as possible to one another. This analogy has been repeated enough, I know, but it really did feel like being saddled in a can.

A good portion of the six weeks was spent at the host university but part of the program does include traveling to different states, and selecting which ones to go to was dependent upon the overarching themes being communicated. As I am not certain what other host universities paid close attention to, I can only speak for mine: we looked into automotive industries in (Detroit), patterns of governance and the civil rights movements.

Chicago, Illinois. The Windy City worked its magic on us. A lot more metropolitan that Detroit, there was more to see in comparison and was vibrant in every sense of the word. I felt that it catered to tourists very nicely and even if it was for five days, we took a comprehensive circuit of the city. Looking into how it plays the important role of being an economic center, we made our way to the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago where we were briefed on its history, relevance to the preservation of sound economic conditions and given visual presentations because when things became far too complex it was not always easy to grasp. One of our outings in Chicago included taking a very pleasant cruise along the Chicago River and sailing far enough to look back, and see the skyline. It was breathtaking, to say the least.

New Orleans, Louisiana. At the time, only four years had passed since the devastation brought by Hurricane Katrina so before crossing the state border into New Orleans, we had made plans to get a first-hand experience in helping out with disaster relief efforts. I assure you that they were still being funded and carried out and a testimony to this was driving through several affected neighborhoods. Divided into groups of two, we were each taken somewhere where our services were required. My group was to help clear out the backyard of a resident senior citizen whose house was caught up in the infrastructural damage. We got to know her as we hauled fairly huge pieces of fallen branches and picked up debris. She was incredibly grateful and insisted that we not pack up or we will not have any sauce and she may say a word of prayer. That was worth everything.

New Orleans were as follows: trying my very first (and last, sad to say) snowball, trying an ex-drug dealer who now helps get youth in schools and being completely awed by two things. These are delicacies and the fact that the heat wave that met us there rivals any we have had in Kuwait! It had me rethink geographical positioning and whether it has any significance ever since.

Montgomery, Alabama. We then headed to this neighboring state which saw the birthplace of the civil rights movement, kicked into gear by the late Martin Luther King Jr. Going there was ultimately to get us at its root and appreciate the effect it has had on Americans, and to this very day. Also there, we had a colorful march by demonstrators on the Edmund Pettus Bridge and walked along it, our advisors and aids they had recruited in Montgomery. I actually pictured myself in the history of the city would explain what happened in that peaceful and unforgettable feat to have accomplished. I really never pictured myself going to the United States apart from as a tourist, let alone retrace the steps of a civil rights movement. Washington D.C. en route to Kuwait City, Kuwait. This was the final leg of our trip, and in the part, where we had to say our goodbyes and goodness knows I will not complain about the many things of that I did not mention but doing so would fill up another article. So this will suffice. I made a lot of lifelong friends, shared unforgettable memories with them and time flew by as fast that I could hardly believe it when I was on the plane, home-bound. Emotions ran high on the day we all caught the plane for the first time, but I am eternally obliged to have been lucky enough to become a participant and alumnus of this prestigious program.

I have to admit I was not entirely excited about the onset and it felt like embarking on to the unknown but it was all worth it. Something that I was to experience is to expect and the thrill of it all that made every moment special because that is how I live as an individual in every possible way and have what it takes to evolve as an individual and share that with my society. If after reading all of this, you are considering applying (if you meet the program’s requirements), that is the biggest mistake you can make. Do not consider, do it without a second thought. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain!
May Events

1. **May 1, 1707** - Great Britain was formed from a union between England and Scotland. The union included Wales which had already been part of England since the 1500’s. The United Kingdom today consists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

2. **May 2, 2011** - U.S. Special Operations Forces killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan. The raid marked the culmination of a decade-long manhunt for the elusive leader of the al-Qaeda terrorist organization based in the Middle East.

3. **May 5, 1893** - The Wall Street Crash of 1893 began as stock prices fell dramatically. By the end of the year, 600 banks closed and several big railroads were in receivership. Another 15,000 businesses went bankrupt amid 20 percent unemployment. It was the worst economic crisis in U.S. history up to that time.

4. **May 6, 1527** - The Renaissance ended with the Sack of Rome by German troops as part of an ongoing conflict between the Hapsburg Empire and the French Monarchy. German troops killed over 4,000 Romans, imprisoned the Pope, and looted works of art and libraries. An entire year passed before order could be restored in Rome.

5. **May 9th** - Victory Day in Russia, a national holiday commemorating the defeat of Nazi Germany during the “Great Patriotic War” (World War II) honoring the 20 million Russians who died in the war.

6. **May 14, 1607** - The first permanent English settlement in America was established at Jamestown, Virginia, by a group of royally chartered Virginia Company settlers from Plymouth, England.

7. **May 17, 1792** - Two dozen merchants and brokers established the New York Stock Exchange. In good weather they operated under a buttonwood tree on Wall Street. In bad weather they moved inside to a coffeehouse to conduct business.

8. **May 21, 1991** - Former Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in the midst of a re-election campaign, killed by a bomb hidden in a bouquet of flowers. He had served as prime minister from 1984 to 1989, succeeding his mother, Indira Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1984.

9. **May 22, 1972** - President Richard Nixon became the first American president to visit Moscow. Four days later, Nixon and Soviet Russia’s leader Leonid Brezhnev signed a pact pledging to freeze nuclear arsenals at current levels.

10. **May 24, 1881** - A boating disaster occurred in Canada when Victoria, a small, double-decked stern-wheeler carrying over 600 passengers on the Thames River keeled over then sank, killing 182 persons.
I can still remember the first time I wrote an e-mail; I was 12 years old and it was directed to my English teacher at the International School. It was about the music of Elvis Presley. I remember going through it over and over again, trying to form words I thought I could. One time after the other, I cared less about how it was written while I wrote whatever came up to my mind, then hit the send button. I believe at that time—when e-mails first started, most people used e-mails to keep in touch with their friends and family, and not much of professional communication was involved. Nowadays, I believe it is the opposite. People catch up with their friends via SMS, WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook, and many other communication means that involve more technology while business is mostly done by e-mail. Think of AUK as an environment where you can contact your friends or colleagues, you pick up your iPhone or other devices, when you click, the WhatsApp or the e-mail icon? What about when you want to contact your professors? Having emails as the official communication medium at universities means that you will take all the time we need to send e-mails. This is actually how the real world works, it's more convenient. Assuming that the majority of e-mails are sent by students at AUK are directed to their professors, here are some quick tips to directed while writing your e-mails.

Never leave the subject of your email empty: Type in a subject that defines what your email is about. You don't want to just leave it as “question” or “question about assignment”. Your professor probably teaches more than one course with different sections and this title could confuse him/ her. Therefore, writing your course name (e.g. ENG1101) and section number (e.g. 502) before stating the purpose of the e-mail will be the best thing to do.

Check your spelling and grammar: Try as much as you can to avoid spelling mistakes or grammar when sending an email to your professor.

Rudeness: Hi Professor would be acceptable too.

Try to make your question as clear as possible: Because this is not face-to-face contact, if the professor doesn't understand the question clearly, he won't be able to answer your question properly.

End your email by thanking your professor in advance.

After you finish writing your e-mail, read it once again before hitting the send button just in case of any typos. In the end, I hope you take in consideration these points next time you write an e-mail. Let's prove to our professors that we can be professional.

When I'm studying what I love, I never actually study, but I'm enjoying my time reading the things that interest me. To be an English major means to know and understand different cultures, contexts, and traditions in human nature and history, perspectives, and to develop the ability to interact with them and to understand life. I can wear different hats, once I'm a psychoanalyst, another one is a social scientist, who understands different relations between societies, and I can be a historian, an artist, and a different person of a particular culture each time I'm interacting with a text of that culture. How can I not but choose English as a major!?
Thank-you Wolfpack!

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