



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB Alumni Return to Campus for Reunion 2024

The American University of Beirut (AUB) welcomed more than 3,000 alumni, family, friends, and neighbors to the AUB campus on June 27-29, 2024, for AUB Reunion 2024. The annual class reunion is especially important for alumni celebrating their 25th, 50th, or more-than-55-year anniversary of their graduation from AUB. The members of these graduating classes are honored during a special ceremony in Assembly Hall, which also marks the beginning of the three-day alumni reunion celebration.

In her welcoming remarks during the Honoring Ceremony on June 27, 2024, Associate Vice President for Development, Alumni Relations, and University Events Salma Oueida spoke about the power of the AUB connection. “Regardless of the years that have passed, the spirit of AUB continues to resonate within us, guiding our paths and shaping our lives in profound ways,” she said. Oueida called on AUB alumni to not only honor the past, but to also “look to the future with hope and optimism. May we remain steadfast in our commitment to excellence, integrity, and service to others, embodying the principles instilled in us during our time at AUB.”

In his keynote address, President Fadlo Khuri spoke about recent events at the university, noting that it was “healthier than it’s been in 50 years.” He pointed to the success of BOLDLY AUB: The Campaign to Lead, Innovate, and Serve, the fundraising campaign which AUB concluded on June 30, 2024, as one of the reasons for the health of the university. Khuri said that because of the funds that had been raised during the campaign, which he expected would exceed \$800 million, “there is a higher percentage of students who are getting full support or getting financial aid at AUB than ever in our history.” Khuri also noted that the BOLDLY AUB campaign had been extraordinarily successful in mobilizing the global AUB family: more than 26,000 donors in 101 countries have made donations to the BOLDLY AUB campaign.

Khuri also spoke about the importance of AUB’s alumni community. “This is your university,” he said. “You own this university. Like the faculty and staff, you are partners in the development of the vision of this university... The future, the secret sauce of AUB, is the extraordinary attachment its alumni have to it. And for that, I say ‘thank you.’”

In his speech during the Honoring Ceremony, on behalf of alumni celebrating their 55th and more-than-55-year graduation anniversary, John Makhoul (BE Electrical Engineering '64) spoke about the values that alumni share such as “integrity, openness to other ideas and belief systems, inclusion of others without the artificial limits often imposed by the society around us,

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respect for others even when we disagree, the exercise of freedom tempered by responsibility and civility, and the primacy of reason over demagoguery.” He urged alumni “to do all we can to ensure that this beacon of light and hope never fades.”

Speaking on behalf of the Class of 1974, Mounir Douaidy (BA Economics '74) reflected on the “unwavering light” of AUB: “This institution continues to be a beacon of hope and excellence for future generations. Reflecting on our past, we recall how AUB's high academic standards and global accreditation guaranteed our transition to higher education anywhere in the world. Moreover, we discovered that AUB nurtured our personalities and sharpened our abilities to face real-life challenges.”

“AUB has changed me forever. AUB's education, liberal arts and thinking, openness, diversity, tolerance, accepting the other, and civic responsibility expanded my knowledge and intellectual boundaries, and empowered me with everlasting skills that I find myself using every day,” said Haya Imam (BBA '99), who spoke on behalf of the Class of 1999 celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2024.

AUB Reunion 2024 also included two large musical events on the Green Oval: “Reunion Beats With Rodge” on June 27 and a concert by Melhem Zein on June 28. Many alumni and their families also signed up for a day tour of the Chouf cedars, a visit to Beiteddine Palace, and a traditional Lebanese lunch at Deir el Qamar on Saturday, June 29.

“Our annual reunion celebration on campus is magical for all of us,” commented Oueida. “It means so much to our alumni to be on campus and to have this chance to reconnect with each other and share memories. It means a lot to our university as well. Our alumni are the heart of AUB. Even with all the challenges our university and our community has faced in recent years, our alumni community remains strong.”

ENDS

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 750 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 8000 students. AUB currently offers more than 140 programs leading to bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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