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AUB Launches Career Readiness Program and Honors the Legacy of Sana A. El-Hajj

The Suliman S. Olayan School of Business (OSB) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) celebrated a momentous occasion with the official launch of the Career Readiness Program (CRP). The event not only marked the commencement of the 2024-25 CRP cycle but also honored the enduring legacy of Sana A. El-Hajj, the program's founding director, and introduced the Sana A. El-Hajj Career Readiness Program Merit Scholarships.

The gathering brought together AUB leadership, industry pioneers, faculty members, corporate partners, and ambitious students, all united in their enthusiasm for this transformative initiative. The event featured inspiring speeches from industry leaders, heartfelt student testimonials, and the presentation of course completion certificates and awards.

CRP Director Elie Majdalani commenced the event with a moment of silence in memory of Sana El-Hajj, followed by a moving tribute video produced by OSB in her honor.

Dr. Fadlo Khuri, president of AUB, delivered the ceremony's opening address. He said, "This is a fitting tribute to Sana El-Hajj's extraordinary contributions to AUB. Above all, she valued mentorship, and it is our privilege to launch the Sana El-Hajj Career Readiness Program Merit Scholarship." He added, "This initiative underscores our dedication to empowering students and shaping their futures. The scholarship will inspire a new generation to follow in her footsteps—to strive for excellence, serve their communities, and give back in meaningful ways. This is an investment in our collective future."

Dr. Yusuf Sidani, dean of OSB, spoke about Sana El-Hajj as the visionary founder of the Career Readiness Program and provided a historical overview of the program's inception and evolution. "CRP represents a unique partnership between employers seeking talented, well-rounded individuals and students aspiring to excel in their careers. It is an innovative and bold academic initiative that seamlessly integrates academic learning with practical, hands-on work experience. CRP offers a transformative journey of experiential learning, personal growth, and professional development."

Nayla Ibrahim, daughter of the late Sana El-Hajj, delivered an emotional speech, celebrating her mother's remarkable legacy and contributions. She spoke of her unwavering commitment to

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empowering students, her passion for education, and the profound impact she had on countless lives. “My mother believed that the greatest investment one can make is in the youth. She dedicated her life to nurturing not only her own children but also the young minds at AUB. It fills us with immense pride to see her legacy honored through the CRP, which will undoubtedly pave the way for a brighter future for generations of scholars.”

Dr. Victor Araman, associate dean for programs, paid tribute to El-Hajj by celebrating the themes of “learning and success,” which were central to her vision. Dr. Araman underscored the importance of integrating corporate experience into the learning process, highlighted the remarkable achievements of the program’s first cohort, and outlined the program’s objectives and schedule. He concluded by inviting companies and students to apply and join this unique journey.

The event also featured tributes from key industry partners, who shared insights on the importance of career readiness and workforce preparedness.

President of the Lebanese Private Sector Network (LPSN) Rima Freiji delivered a moving speech, accompanied by a one-minute video honoring El-Hajj’s contributions to education and career development. “Sana was more than a board member—she was a driving force and a true believer. She poured her heart into this program, making it a steppingstone for young talents.”

Sabine Doumit, partner at Ernst & Young and an AUB alumna, reflected on the longstanding partnership between Ernst & Young and AUB. She spoke of El-Hajj’s profound impact on students and professionals alike, emphasizing her dedication to bridging the gap between academia and the corporate world. Doumit reaffirmed Ernst & Young’s commitment to supporting the program and continuing Sana El-Hajj’s legacy of mentorship and professional development.

Talent Acquisition Team Leader at Azadea Faten Mouawad reflected on El-Hajj’s passion and dedication to CRP. “Her unwavering commitment and enthusiasm left a lasting impression on all of us. Sana El-Hajj’s efforts created opportunities for both students and businesses, and her legacy will continue to inspire and guide this program for years to come.”

The event included the distribution of course completion certificates to all CRP participants. It also featured testimonies of four CRP students, who shared their experiences and insights. These students—Lamis Komeiha, Sadek Sadek, Saad Melhem, and Mia El Maalouf—were also recognized with the Best CO-OP Performance Awards, each valued at \$800. Their exceptional performance, dedication, and contributions during their CO-OP internships stand as a testament to the transformative impact of the Career Readiness Program in shaping well-rounded professionals.

About the OSB Career Readiness Program (CRP):

The OSB Career Readiness Program (CRP) is an innovative and bold academic initiative that seamlessly integrates students’ studies with valuable, remunerated work experience. Designed for BBA students, CRP fosters a committed partnership between the Suliman S. Olayan School of Business at AUB, employers seeking well-rounded and skilled talent, and students eager to gain a unique work-integrated learning experience. CRP offers a transformative journey of experiential learning, personal growth, and professional development.

For more information about the OSB Career Readiness Program, please contact crp-osb@aub.edu.lb or visit the [CRP website](#).

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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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