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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB Establishes the Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair in Engineering Artificial Intelligence (AI)

AUB alumnus Dr. Fuad “Ford” Tamer has made a $2.5 million gift to the American University of Beirut (AUB) to establish the Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair in Engineering Artificial Intelligence (AI). The chair will contribute to undergraduate and graduate education through innovative teaching, curriculum development, and mentorship, and will foster interdisciplinary collaboration across engineering, computing, medicine, business, and the natural sciences. The appointee will also be expected to cultivate partnerships with industry, government, and international research organizations, helping position AUB as a leader in engineering AI.

Dr. Tamer is working closely with senior leadership at his alma mater to help guide AUB as it builds capacity in the critically important and rapidly changing field of artificial intelligence. “The establishment of the Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair in Engineering Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a pivotal moment for our university, for the Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, and for our new School of Computing and Data Sciences,” commented AUB Board of Trustees Chair Abdo George Kadifa. “The new chair will be a linchpin that will help to propel AUB to a new level in the field of artificial intelligence.”

The $2.5 million gift was first announced by Tamer at the conclusion of his keynote address at the AUB North American Technology Conference in Palo Alto, California, in March 2026. A former member of the AUB Board of Trustees, Tamer is the CEO of Lattice Semiconductor. His career has spanned 35 years in semiconductors and software. Before joining Lattice in his most recent operating position, he served as president and CEO of Inphi for more than nine years, until its merger with Marvell Technology.

Tamer holds an MS and PhD in engineering from MIT and a bachelor of engineering from AUB. He currently serves on the boards of directors of the Global Semiconductor Alliance (GSA) and the Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) and previously served on the boards of directors of Groq, Marvell Technology, and Teradyne.

Tamer credits his AUB education with enabling his academic and professional successes later in life. “AUB gave many of us a strong foundation—one that can take you anywhere—and a community that expects greatness. It is more important than ever to protect that foundation. To invest in it. To evolve it with AI to strive for greatness. And to provide hope for the next generation,” said Tamer. He believes AI will make a lasting difference for AUB students. “AI will open new doors for AUB students and will expand what they can go on to achieve,” he added.

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Rula Tamer, who is the board president of the nonprofit Social and Economic Action for Lebanon (SEAL), also attended AUB and has strong family ties to the university. Her father, AUB alumnus Dr. Samir Najjar, had a long and distinguished career and served as dean of the AUB Faculty of Medicine from 1994 to 2000. “We are fortunate to be able to give back and have made education in Lebanon our priority,” she said. “AUB is the region’s bastion of academic excellence, and it’s where we believe our gift will have the greatest impact. AUB is a promise for Lebanon’s future, and it is home, so it is only fitting that we support it.”

AUB has begun to recruiting for the chair position, which will have a primary appointment at AUB’s Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture (MSFEA) and a secondary appointment at the new School of Computing and Data Sciences (SCDS), which will welcome its inaugural cohort of students in fall 2027.

“AUB is a mission-driven university. Everything we do, we do with purpose. We are very grateful for this outstanding gift from Fuad and Rula Tamer. AUB is looking for someone with exceptional credentials in the field of physical AI to join the stellar team at MSFEA, at the new School of Computing and Data Sciences, and across the university, in order to make a real difference, not just in Lebanon but in the entire region,” said Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president. “We are confident that, working together, we can attract a superstar in this critical field to fill the Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair. As the oldest and finest American institution of higher learning in the region, and given the unique set of perspectives we bring to the complex world of AI, this linchpin recruitment will meaningfully accelerate our impact.”

“This new chair will draw on the breadth and strengths of AUB while opening exciting possibilities for education, research, and collaboration in emerging areas across disciplines,” explained Professor Zaher Dawy, AUB provost.

“AI is going to change not only how engineers work but what it means to be an engineer,” said Professor Alan Shihadeh, MSFEA dean. “Our ambition at MSFEA is not simply to prepare our students for an AI-shaped world but to cultivate in them the capabilities, imagination, and confidence to help shape a more humane, sustainable, and equitable one. We are in a privileged position to think through these questions from Beirut, a city where the consequences of technology, scarcity, and power are never abstract. The Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair will help us develop ideas and technologies at AUB that can matter far beyond the region.”

“We are all deeply grateful to Rula and Fuad Tamer for their visionary support for our university, which we are formally announcing at this time as we launch the search for the Rula and Fuad Tamer Chair in Engineering Artificial Intelligence (AI). Rula and Fuad are truly leading the way, building on their previous support for AUB, which has benefited countless initiatives, including the AUB Medical Center (AUBMC) Emergency Response, the AUB Solar Energy Initiative, and the Worldwide Alumni Association of AUB (WAAAUB) Northern California Chapter Endowed Scholarship,” commented Dr. Imad Baalbaki, senior vice president for advancement and business development at AUB.

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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 800 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9,700 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, which includes a full-service 365-bed hospital.

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