



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB to Award Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters to Christiana Figueres, Raif Geha, and Philip Khoury in May

President of the American University of Beirut (AUB) Fadlo Khuri announced that during AUB's 156th commencement exercises on May 30, 2025, the university will confer its highest honor—the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters—on three exceptional leaders whose work has had an enduring impact in service across global domains.

“By honoring these luminaries, we reaffirm AUB’s unwavering commitment to the values they embody and inspire. Their resolute dedication in advocating knowledge discovery and exchange, their excellence in service of humankind, and their steadfastness in the face of adversity reflect the very mission of our university,” Khuri said. He continued presenting: “trailblazer in climate diplomacy Christiana Figueres, esteemed physician-scientist Raif Geha, and eminent historian Philip Khoury.”

“Christiana Figueres is a global leader in climate action. As UNFCCC executive secretary, she rebuilt trust and united 195 nations behind the historic Paris Agreement on climate change. She co-founded Global Optimism and co-authored *The Future We Choose*, advocating “stubborn optimism.” She also co-hosts the podcast *Outrage + Optimism*, where activists, scientists, and policymakers explore climate change challenges. In recent years, she has championed integrating financial investment and nature conservation to achieve sustainable outcomes for both the planet and the economy. Her honors include the UN Champion of the Earth Award, France’s Legion d’Honneur, and a UK Damehood.”

“Dr. Raif S. Geha (BS General ’65, MD ’69), James Gamble Professor of Pediatrics at Harvard Medical School, is a world-recognized allergist, immunologist, and clinician who has advanced the understanding of immunodeficiency and allergic diseases. He transformed the Boston Children’s Hospital into a global center for excellence in pediatric immunology and is renowned for identifying the genetic causes of primary immunodeficiencies and studies in the mechanisms of eczema. He established the International Consortium for Immune Deficiency, a network of more than 35 centers in 25 countries aimed at advancing research and clinical care of patients with immunodeficiency.”

“Dr. Philip S. Khoury, chairman emeritus of the American University of Beirut Board of Trustees, is one of the preeminent historians of the last two centuries of Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine.

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Among the most renowned scholars of the modern Middle East, he holds the Ford International Professorship of History at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he also serves as vice provost. Over his transformative career, he has made significant contributions to the academic discourse and held influential roles at prominent institutions, earning numerous fellowships and honors. He has been instrumental in AUB's exceptional growth and resilience, leading its distinguished board for 15 years. An advocate for academic freedom, social justice, and geopolitical participation, his work continues to shape the intellectual landscape and foster global change."

"We proudly welcome these inspirational role models to the distinguished community of AUB's honorary degree recipients—people who lead with purpose, drive progress, and commit to building a just and sustainable future. The American University of Beirut and its community thank them for their dedication toward creating a better world and improving lives worldwide," Khuri concluded.

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 790 full-time faculty members and a student body of over 9000 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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