



**AMERICAN
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Qatar Scholarship – Education Above All Program at AUB Celebrates the Graduation of 93 Students

The Qatar Scholarship – Education Above All Program at the American University of Beirut (AUB) marked a significant milestone with the graduation of its final cohort of 93 students. The occasion was celebrated in a graduation and closing ceremony that marked the program's completion and honoring the remarkable achievements of its scholars.

The event brought together senior university leadership and faculty members, including Dr. Fadlo Khuri, AUB president, alongside distinguished guests such as His Excellency Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, ambassador of the State of Qatar to Lebanon; Dr. Rima Karami, minister of education and higher education in Lebanon; Acting CEO of the Education Above All Foundation Mohammed Al-Kubaisi; and senior representatives from the Qatar Embassy in Lebanon and the Education Above All Foundation.

Launched in 2021, the Qatar Scholarship – EAA Program at AUB was established to expand access to quality higher education for 316 Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian students. It provided scholarships to Lebanese youth, as well as Palestinian and Syrian refugees living in Lebanon.

In his opening remarks, AUB President Fadlo Khuri highlighted the profound community that grew out of the program, one that extends beyond academics to build meaningful human connections. "This program was launched as a bridge, an opportunity for bright, determined students to access higher education," he said. "You have made it into something more: a vibrant, diverse community at AUB, built on shared challenges, solid friendships, and a sense of belonging that extends far beyond any classroom."

Khuri added, "Thanks to the support of the Education Above All Foundation and the Qatar Fund for Development, hundreds of students have gained access to a world-class education at AUB, alongside civic engagement, global networks, and the mentorship needed to prosper. This partnership does not just fund education, it changes lives."

His Excellency Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani praised the Education Above All Foundation for its pioneering role in empowering youth and promoting inclusive, high-quality education.

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He acknowledged the vital contribution of the Qatar Fund for Development and the strong collaboration with AUB. "This initiative reflects the State of Qatar's unwavering commitment to supporting students on their educational journey," he said. "It reaffirms our belief in education as the cornerstone of cohesive societies and a key pillar of sustainable development. We are proud to stand with these young people as they build their futures."

Acting CEO of Education Above All Foundation Mohammed Al-Kubaisi emphasized the deeper mission of the program and its lasting impact. "The Qatar Scholarship Program is not just an academic opportunity; it is a vital source of hope, a catalyst for empowerment, and a springboard for youth to reclaim their futures," he said.

Al-Kubaisi added, "We have not only supported these students through graduation, but also helped equip them to give back, engage civically, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. We are deeply proud of our graduates and grateful to our partners for ensuring that education continues to be a pillar of hope, justice, and sustainable development."

Dr. Joseph Costantine, director of the scholarship program, reflected on the journey of the past four years, comparing it to a ship that has now reached its harbor. "This ship, this scholarship, started its maiden voyage in August 2021, when hope in Lebanon was scarce and faith in a bright future was lacking," he said. "This scholarship is beyond financial support; it is a belief, a trust, a fuel for potential, connection, and engagement. We are deeply grateful to the State of Qatar, Education Above All Foundation, Qatar Fund for Development, and Qatar Foundation, all of whom made this journey feasible."

A highlight of the ceremony was the ACE Talks Improv Public Speaking Competition, where computer science students Angela Sobhiyeh and Mona Jamal, along with environmental health student Christa Maria Bou Raad, and mechanical engineering student Ghina Sharif, took to the stage with improvised speeches in response to a prompt announced during the ceremony. Angela Sobhiyeh won the competition following a live vote by the guests of honor and audience.

As part of the celebration, the program's annual distinction awards were presented to recognize outstanding student achievements. Racha Saad received the Highest GPA Award, while Cecilia Bakalian was honored with the Qatar Connection Engagement Award. The Remarkable Civic Engagement Award was presented to Zeinab Halima for her impactful community involvement. Additionally, Malak Mehrez, Wael Kheil, and Ada Al Kotob were awarded the Scholarship Engagement Award in recognition of their exceptional participation in scholarship-led activities.

Attendees were also treated to two captivating musical performances by the Zaki Nassif Music Program at AUB. The ensemble's dynamic and heartfelt renditions added a rich cultural dimension to the event, enchanting the audience and enhancing the celebratory atmosphere.

The ceremony concluded with a student procession and a commemorative group photo, capturing the pride and promise of a program that has transformed lives and shaped futures.

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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