



**AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY
OF BEIRUT**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUB President Honored by the American Task Force on Lebanon for Leadership and Service in Education

The American Task Force on Lebanon (ATFL) honored American University of Beirut (AUB) President Fadlo Khuri with the Peter J. Tanous Founder's Award at its annual dinner on September 24, 2026, in Washington, DC. The award recognized his leadership of AUB and his contributions to Lebanon and the Lebanese American community.

Named after ATFL's founding chairman, the award recognizes exceptional achievement in the arts, culture, or education. Past recipients include Northeastern University President Joseph E. Aoun and the Lebanese dance group The Mayyas. Carmen Debbane, whose support for AUB includes the Carmen and Ray Debbane Scholarship for undergraduate students in the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, presented the award to Khuri.

The dinner marked ATFL's 40th anniversary, bringing together government officials, diplomats, business and cultural leaders, and other Lebanese Americans to celebrate four decades of strengthening relations between the United States and Lebanon. AUB President Khuri and his wife, Lamyia, attended alongside members of AUB's Board of Trustees and International Advisory Council, as well as university staff.

The evening featured remarks by ATFL President Edward Gabriel, ATFL Chairman Spencer Abraham, Lebanese Ambassador to the United States Nada Hamadeh Moawad, and US Ambassador to Lebanon Michel Issa.

In his own remarks, Khuri reflected on his ties to both countries. A Lebanese American born in Boston and raised in Beirut, he recalled attending AUB before leaving for his junior year abroad in 1982. He spent the following 33 years in the United States before returning to the university. "And I've never looked back," he said.

He also emphasized the responsibility of institutions to serve their communities and affirm the worth of every person who turns to them.

"If we can persuade one student, one patient, one human being, that they matter, then what could possibly be a better use of our time?" he said.

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Khuri noted that he has known Tanous for a decade and has collaborated with him, Gabriel, and others on university and healthcare initiatives vital to Lebanon. He reflected on AUB's founding ethos of service and the role of universities in the region.

Recalling AUB founder Daniel Bliss's description of service as "the law of life," Khuri said, "It is in that spirit of service that I accept this award."

In thanking ATFL, Khuri described the recognition as a collective honor and credited his colleagues, faculty, staff, students, and the university's board, as well as his family.

The evening's recognitions extended across business, public service, and humanitarian work. Shell Chief Executive Officer Wael Sawan received the Joseph J. Jacobs Distinguished Achievement Award, while US Representative Nicole Malliotakis of New York's 11th congressional district was also honored. Beit el Baraka, the Lebanese Red Cross, and the International Rescue Committee jointly received the Ray R. Irani Lifetime Achievement Award for their humanitarian assistance to the people of Lebanon.

ATFL also celebrated eight young Lebanese American professionals through its Rising Leaders Program, part of the organization's NextGen initiative. The program recognizes individuals under 35 who have demonstrated professional excellence in public service, entrepreneurship, or the arts, along with dedication to community service in the United States or Lebanon.

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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