For Immediate Release

AUB receives donation in support of educational program on green energy

Beirut, Lebanon- 26/04/2012 – Engineering students at the American University of Beirut will soon be able to develop and make use of a fully-solar-powered air conditioning system, thanks to a donation jointly made by Deutsche Eco AG and Junior Chamber International (JCI) Chapters of Aleppo/Beirut/Freiburg.

The in-kind donation of the "educational photovoltaic system," which consists of solar panels, was officially celebrated in a ceremony held at AUB on April 26, 2013, in the presence of Pierre Khoury, representing Energy Minister Gebran Bassil, who was the patron of the event; German Ambassador Birgitta Maria Siefker-Eberle; AUB President Peter Dorman; Deutsche Eco Ag CEO Elias Issa; and representatives from JCI Aleppo, Beirut and Freiburg, all of whom gave speeches at the official ceremony.

By funding educational programs that support green techonology and sustainable practices, we can hasten the development and adoption of green construction and production in the industry, noted President Dorman.

Installed atop the Faculty of Engineering, at Bechtel Building, the solar panel system will serve as an ongoing experiment in green energy while simultaneously providing an environmentally-friendly cooling system and solar source of electric power up to 2 kW. All air-conditioning systems also produce water by extracting the humidity from the atmosphere. This system will produce 15 liters of fresh drinking water per day.

"The importance of this 100-percent solar-powered system is that it saves energy, produces water, and creates a comfortable built-in environment, using a renewable energy source, without any harm to the environment," said Nesreen Ghaddar, professor of mechanical engineering and the Qatar Chair of Energy Studies. "When the experiment is not running, the power that is produced by the solar panels lights up part of Bechtel Building."

Moreover, since the system includes a digital display (pictured) that is set up at the Department of Mechanical Engineering, students will be able to know how much of the electric power at Bechtel is produced by the sun. "This will promote awareness among students about the ability of implementing clean power solutions," added Ghaddar, who is also associate provost at AUB.

The system will be used in lab courses related to renewable and air conditioning systems to educate students on innovative methods of integrating and designing systems using alternative energy sources. It will also serve as a showcase of how renewable energy can be used in meeting cooling and fresh water needs in Beirut's humid climate.

"This is part of a strategy to green curricula at AUB via hands-on experience," noted Kamel Abou Ghali, the chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering. "The three-year-old Applied Energy Program's strategy is to provide such practical experience. AUB's vision, through this program, is to accelerate students' professional development and the adoption of sustainable practices in buildings and building technologies." Green education and programs at AUB, particularly at the Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, are becoming a landmark for the region and the University offers many degrees with courses related to renewable energy, environmental science and technology, and sustainability.

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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 600 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the 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 420-bed hospital.

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