



# FULBRIGHT

## FOCUS

The Alumni Newsletter of the AMIDEAST Fulbright Foreign Student Program

### The U.S. State Department and AMIDEAST Recognize the Centenary of the Birth of J. William Fulbright

*"Fulbright is responsible for the greatest movement of scholars across the face of the earth since the fall of Constantinople in 1453."*

Ronald McCallum, 1963

At the centenary of Senator J. William Fulbright's birth, to be celebrated April 9, 2005, his vision for America and its place in the global community is as relevant as it was during his term in the U.S. Senate (1945-1974). Called to action by the world events that defined the past half-century and the heyday of his career, namely the destruction resulting from World War II and the hostilities of the Cold War, Fulbright sought "to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason and a little more compassion into world affairs." Senator Fulbright encouraged dialogue, diplomacy, and cross-cultural learning over what he perceived as a tendency toward dominance and war.

The Fulbright Program developed out of these goals, passing through the U.S. Senate without debate in 1946. "I have thought of everything I can think of," stated Senator Fulbright, "and the one thing that gives me some hope is the ethos that underlies the educational exchange program. It's possible...that people can find in themselves, through intercultural education, the ways and means of living together in peace." Since its founding, the Fulbright Program



has provided over 265,000 grantees across a range of professional fields, levels, and nationalities the opportunity to study in the U.S. and abroad.

Senator Fulbright passed away on February 9, 1995 at the age of 89 at his Washington, DC home. The U.S. State Department and AMIDEAST look forward to honoring the centenary of Senator Fulbright's birth.

### Apply Now!

Applications are now being accepted for the second round of the Academic Year 2004/2005 Alumni Development Grant Competition.

The United States Department of State will award grants of up to \$2,500 each for Fulbright alumni to attend a professional conference or seminar, complete a short-term training program, conduct a collaborative research project or participate in a professional visit with colleagues in their field.

#### Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be alumni of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program from one of the following areas: Egypt, Gaza, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, the West Bank, Oman, Bahrain or Yemen. Applicants must have fulfilled their J-1 visa two-year home residency requirement. Proposed grant activity must occur between **April 1, 2005 and September 30, 2005.**

#### Application Process

Applications received on or before **February 11, 2005** will be reviewed by representatives of the United States Department of State and AMIDEAST. For a list of grant guidelines, eligibility requirements and to apply, please visit: [https://www.amideast.org/programs\\_services/exchange\\_programs/fulbright/grants/guidelines.htm](https://www.amideast.org/programs_services/exchange_programs/fulbright/grants/guidelines.htm).

You are encouraged to submit your application electronically via our online application. If you have any questions, or would like to request a paper application, please contact Mara Kronenfeld at: [mkronenfeld@amideast.org](mailto:mkronenfeld@amideast.org).

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## GUESTS FROM ACROSS THE MUSLIM WORLD ATTEND NOVEMBER IFTAR HOSTED BY THEN-SECRETARY OF STATE COLIN POWELL

Last fall, then-Secretary of State Colin Powell welcomed Muslim students, professionals, clerics and diplomats from across the Muslim world to an Iftar celebration at the State Department. He said that America strives to embrace Ramadan's spirit of hospitality and concern for others.

"As the Iftar welcomes all in a spirit of brotherhood, so America has been open to all, welcoming to all — as we can see in the diverse and thriving Muslim community in America today," Powell told his guests.

Powell noted that new security measures have inconvenienced many people wishing to travel to the United States but said, "I want to assure all of you here this evening and all who may watch this or hear these words, that we're doing everything we can to make sure that we strike the right balance between our security and our openness."



Powell spoke of the United States' many efforts to play a positive and helpful role in the Muslim world. He mentioned the U.S. military's engagement to protect and assist Muslim populations in Africa, the Balkans and the Middle East and to remove tyrannical regimes in Afghanistan and Iraq.

He also recalled President Bush's support for an independent state of Palestine and reaffirmed the

President's commitment to work toward peace in the Middle East.

The former Secretary spoke of U.S. efforts to support and encourage people within the Muslim world who are working to realize greater freedom and democracy. "We believe that reform will ultimately be successful because freedom and democracy are powerful universal values, not just Western or American values," he said.



Powell mentioned several programs related to the Group of Eight's (G8's) newly established Forum for the Future and the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative, which open academic and professional training opportunities to people from numerous Muslim countries. The G8 includes Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia.

"Many unkind, and untrue, things are said about the United States in the Muslim world by some people. But I think the facts speak for themselves," Powell said. "The truth is that America wishes all people well."

He added, "America will be with those in need around the world, regardless of race or religion." [This article has been excerpted from the U.S. State Department website. For full text visit: <http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/Archive/2004/Nov/05-157967.html>]

## THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND AMIDEAST AWARD OVER \$12,000 TO SIX FULBRIGHT ALUMNI

*Last November, in an effort to support the professional development of Fulbright alumni from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and AMIDEAST announced six new recipients of the Fulbright Alumni Development Grant.*

**Daisy Attieh** (University of North Texas, Non-degree student/Psychology, 2001-2002) attended the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Association for Play Therapy International Conference in Colorado last October. Daisy teaches art therapy classes to nurses at the *Institut Universitaire de la Sainte Famille* in Lebanon, showing them how to plan projects and games to help hospitalized patients—especially children—maintain contact with the outside world, keep their bodies active and their minds alert. In addition to sharing her newly expanded knowledge of play therapy with her colleagues, she plans to incorporate findings from the conference into her research toward an MA at the Lebanese University in Beirut.

This March, **Maysoon Al-Nahar** (Arizona State University, PhD/Archaeology, 1995-1997) will travel to Arizona to take part in a collaborative research project involving scientists from the U.S., Spain and Jordan. The project, funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation, will undertake a five-year study on the long-term consequences of human land use on Mediterranean landscapes. Maysoon will be responsible for fieldwork in Jordan, where she is a professor at the University of Amman. The project, which spans the Mediterranean and covers over 6,000 years of history, will eventually help communities make more responsible and effective decisions about land use today.

*continued on PAGE 10*

## *Finding Meaningful Employment After the Fulbright: Tips from Tunisian Alumnus Jamel Jemni*

Mr. Jamel Jemni, a Fulbright alumnus from Tunisia, recently completed non-degree research in the field of American Studies at the University of South Florida (USF). Upon his return to Tunisia, he and his wife founded the Wanderlust International Language Center (WILC) in Sfax, Tunisia. In a recent email interview, we asked Jamel about the center and if he had any advice for recent Fulbrighters looking for rewarding employment in their respective home countries.

### **What is your current occupation and how does it relate to the research you completed under the auspices of your Fulbright grant?**

I am currently an Assistant Language Instructor at the Higher Institute of Languages in Gabes, Tunisia. I am still finalizing my PhD dissertation on racial politics in America after having gathered all the data I need while completing my Fulbright year at USF.

### **When did you and your wife first come up with the idea to start an international language center?**

We came up with this idea four or five years ago. Before we established the language center, we organized home-stay programs for teenagers (aged 14 to 18) from Denmark, Hungary, Spain, Russia and Italy during summer vacations. After our successful programs with teenagers, we were able to convince all of the people we know of the necessity of founding a center like WILC. Eventually, we saved enough money to finance the project.

### **What languages are taught at your institution?**

Our center offers the possibility for motivated learners to study any language they want. For the time

being we are teaching English, French, German and Italian.

### **Why do you think your language center will be different from other language centers in Tunisia?**

WILC is the first language center established by a Tunisian in the history of Tunisia. In addition, it is different from other language centers in its design, the services it offers and the varied objectives it aims to achieve. For example, although our core area of activity is teaching languages, WILC also provides the following services:

- Organization of linguistic and cultural programs, conferences and seminars to exchange linguistic, scientific and cultural knowledge
- Assistance in university registration for Tunisians interested in studying abroad
- Home-stay programs for Tunisians abroad and for foreign students here in Tunisia
- Preparation for standardized tests such as TOEFL, GRE, GMAT, IELTS, etc.



*Wanderlust International Language Center*

### **Can you provide recommendations to other Fulbright alumni on how to secure rewarding employment in the field of TESOL after completing their Fulbright grants?**

I think that depending on everyone's goals and objectives in their lives, the Fulbright grant is a school in itself, and I am sure that other alumni could come up with their own ideas about how to find rewarding employment that fits their particular interests and goals. Teaching and translation are fields that may attract Fulbright alumni, because they know that in our global community if someone does not master language and is not good at translation, he or she will not be able to succeed in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected. I also recommend that Fulbrighters establish partnerships with American institutions and individuals while they are on their grants — that's very important. I have already established the bases of future mutual exchange programs with colleagues at USF and with other American friends with whom I share similar ideas and goals.

### **Any other information you want to add?**

What the center aims for in the long run is to bridge barriers (linguistic, cultural, psychological) between Tunisians and those outside of Tunisia and to establish a better understanding between peoples the world over. We already saw the benefits of exposing teenagers to new cultures in the past five years through our home-stay programs, and we believe that it was not only a worthwhile investment, but the ideal way to contribute to international understanding. Younger generations represent a genuine source of hope for our desperate world. I find investment in this field very rewarding.

# AMIDEAST Field Office/US Embassy Updates

## Egypt

Julie Gelsinger, Fulbright Program Officer (AMIDEAST/HQ), met with the Fulbright Commission and AMIDEAST field office staff in Cairo this past December. While there, Julie, AMIDEAST staff, and the Commission coordinated on the new organization of the Egypt Fulbright Program; AMIDEAST will now play a more direct role in the administration of the Egypt program, including conducting nominee placement. This year, the Fulbright Student Program has significantly increased the number of nominees (18 total), so we hope to increase the number of actual grantees as well.

## Syria

Kate DeBoer, Fulbright Program Coordinator (AMIDEAST/HQ), and Mara Kronenfeld, Fulbright Program



Syrian Fulbright Nominees

Officer, met with eight new Syrian Fulbright nominees at the Damascus field office of AMIDEAST and answered their questions about the placement process. They had lunch together at the Orient House with AMIDEAST/Syria Country Director Barbara Al-Nouri, Educational

Advisor Rasha Rayes and AMIDEAST English Language Coordinator Steve Hanchey.

## Morocco

In September, Mara Kronenfeld led a post-nomination/placement orientation in Rabat with Fouzia El Azhari, Educational Advisor (AMIDEAST/Morocco). Seven of the eight nominees were able to attend the orientation.



Moroccan Fulbright Alumni

While in Rabat, Mara attended the first general conference of the Moroccan Fulbright Alumni Association (MFAA). Attendees included some 150 Moroccan Fulbright alumni as well as honored guests Mohammed Boutaleb, Moroccan Minister of Energy and Mines, Dr. Wail Benjelloun, President of MACECE (Moroccan-American Commission for Educational and Cultural Exchange), and Thomas T. Riley, U.S. Ambassador to Morocco. In addition to listening to a keynote address entitled “The Imperative for Curriculum Development in an Uncertain Age” and participating in a panel discussion on sustainable development, alumni elected the new

governing board of the MFAA for the coming year. Finally, alumni shared ideas about activities they would like to participate in as an association. Ideas mentioned included mentoring new Fulbright nominees; setting up volunteer activities for disadvantaged Moroccans; hosting social functions and networking parties; and setting up joint, interdisciplinary projects with one another to help serve their country.

The conference was an unqualified success! We are hoping the work of the MFAA will inspire Fulbrighters in other countries to establish Alumni Associations of their own.

## Tunisia

Mara Kronenfeld led a post-nomination orientation for ten Tunisian Fulbright nominees last September.



Tunisian Fulbright Alumni

Mara also met with over twenty Tunisian Fulbright alumni. They discussed ways for the alumni to “extend their Fulbright experience”

by sharing what they learned on their grants with friends, family and colleagues in Tunisia, as well as other members of their communities. The alumni are interested in establishing a Tunisian Fulbright Alumni Association and will determine what administrative steps need to be taken to accomplish this.

### Yemen

In December, Sarah Belanger, Fulbright Program Officer (AMIDEAST/HQ), met with AMIDEAST/Sana'a staff and led a pre-departure presentation for the 2005 Fulbright nominees slated to begin their academic programs in January. There were six grantees total – five for the spring and one who was delayed from last fall.

Najeeb Al Sharafi (AMIDEAST/Sana'a) gave Sarah a tour of Yemen, including the souk, Old Sana'a, the Imam's Palace and Kawkaban. The AMIDEAST/Sana'a office hosted a party that included a women's *qat* chew and a Fulbright cake.



Najeeb Al Sharafi admires a view of Sana'a

### Lebanon

Mara Kronenfeld and Hala Kaadi, Coordinator for Educational and Scholarship Programs (AMIDEAST/Beirut), conducted a post-nomination/placement orientation for 12 Lebanese

Fulbright nominees—the greatest number of Lebanese Fulbright nominees to date. The nominees come from various regions in Lebanon (from Sidon to Beit Chebab to Beirut) and have very diverse interests: landscape architecture, drama therapy, public health education and computer science, to name a few.

### West Bank/Gaza

There are 14 nominees from the West Bank this year and ten from Gaza — some of our largest numbers yet! The nominees will study in a variety of fields including public health, engineering, literature, and finance.

### POST UPDATES

#### Bahrain

The Fulbright Program in Bahrain continues to expand with 14 new nominees this year. These very qualified applicants will pursue higher education degrees in fields such as business administration, international law, film and information technology.

We would like to welcome Ms. Samar Hasan to the Fulbright Program. She joined the U.S. Embassy in Manama as the Educational Advisor in January and will be responsible for coordinating the program with AMIDEAST.

#### Oman

This year, 20 nominees were selected from Oman -- the largest group to date. These nominees, including six PhD candidates, will be placed in graduate programs for Public Policy, Molecular Pharmacology, Economics, Information Technology and Nursing.

## ***New Faces at AMIDEAST/HQ***

Since our Summer 2004 newsletter, we have added two new faces to the Fulbright staff at AMIDEAST.

Julie Fitzgerald and Malika de Silva recently started their new positions as Program Assistants.

Julie joined the Fulbright staff in October 2004. She assists Program Officer Sarah Belanger with the placement and supervision of grantees from Jordan, Bahrain, Oman and Yemen. Prior to joining the staff, Julie received a B.A. in Political Science from Stanford University and spent a summer studying Arabic at Yarmouk University in Jordan.

Malika recently joined AMIDEAST and helps Program Officer Mara Kronenfeld with the placement and supervision of grantees from Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as the development of Fulbright alumni projects. She comes to the Fulbright team at AMIDEAST after internships at the Academy for Educational Development and Internews Network. She also spent a semester at the American University in Cairo studying Middle Eastern politics and literature. Malika recently received her B.A. in International Relations from Duke University.

Luckily, we do not need to say goodbye to former Program Assistant Hadi Annous. He has been promoted to the position of Program Officer for the Administration of Justice Support Project in Egypt.

# alumni news & notes

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## JORDAN

**Sima MANGO (2001-2004)** Sima extended her Fulbright grant for an additional six months after being accepted as a UN-Fulbright Fellow. She had previously studied at the University of Akron-Ohio, earning her MBA in International Business. With the help of other Fulbrighters, Sima is working to establish the Jordanian Fulbright Alumni Association.

**Issa SASA (1992-1995)** Issa received his Pediatric Dentistry Certificate and MS while a Fulbright student at the University of Iowa. Since graduation, Issa has been appointed Head of the Pediatric Dentistry Department at Tawam Hospital in Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates, the largest tertiary care hospital in the UAE.

**Shada WADI-RAMAHI (1998-2000)** After completing her PhD in 2003 in the field of Medical Physics, Shada returned to Jordan where she has been working as a Medical Physicist in the Radiation Oncology Department at the King Hussein Cancer Center. Shada attended Rush University Medical Center in Chicago where she received several honors, including the Excellence in Research Award from the Graduate College in 2003 and a Certificate of Recognition for Scientific Achievements; she also took first place in the Young Investigator's competition for the American Association of Physicists in Medicine (AAPM) in 2001. Finally, she has published articles in the *Medical Physics Journal* and has published several research abstracts for the annual AAPM meetings.

## LEBANON

**Pauline AAD (2000-2001)** As a Fulbright grantee (non-degree), Pauline conducted research at Oklahoma State University (OSU) in Reproductive Physiology. Pauline is currently finishing her MS degree in Animal Science and will soon start a doctorate in Breeding and Reproduction also at OSU. She is a member of the American Society for Animal Science (ASAS) and the Society for the Study of Reproduction (SSR). Pauline has published peer-reviewed articles in *Peptides* and *Domestic Animal Endocrinology*; her research interests include the hormonal control of ovarian follicular development through gene expression analysis.

**David EL CHARIF (2002-2003)**  
See Alumni Profile (Page 11)

**Bassil EL-MASRI (2002-2003)** Bassil was a non-degree Fulbright student at Ball State University; he has since gone on to pursue an MA in Geography at the same institution. He is also currently a Research Assistant in the Department of Geography where he studies environmental issues using both remote sensing tools and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

**Makram GEHA (2002-2003)** After completing his year as a non-degree scholar at the University of Nebraska in late spring 2003, Makram returned to Lebanon where he served his tour of duty in the Lebanese Army as a Lieutenant at the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture. Makram now works as the Manager and National Coordinator of chicken sales for Zartech Limited, a large poultry company in Nigeria.

**Youssef HADDAD (2000-2001)** Youssef spent his Fulbright year as a non-degree student in the Department of Education (Curriculum and Instruction) at the University of Texas at Austin. Currently, Youssef is pursuing a PhD in Linguistics at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

## MOROCCO

**Layla BARRIT (2000-2001)** Layla spent her time as a Fulbright grantee at Case Western Reserve where she earned an MS in Computer Science. She now works as a Software Project Manager at Hightech Payment Systems in Casablanca.

**Houria EL FIGUIGUI (1996-1998)** Houria is currently a PhD candidate in Information Science and Technology in the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University. While a Fulbright student, Houria completed her MS in Information Management at Syracuse. An article she co-authored, "Motivational Aspects of Information Literacy Skills Instruction in Community College Libraries," was published in May 2004 in *The Journal of College and Research Libraries*. Houria writes that "the article was accepted with no revisions upon reviewers' recommendations." Houria also notes that she has been selected for inclusion in the 2005 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*.

**Abdallah MALKI (1993-1996)** As a Fulbright student, Abdallah studied at the University of Indiana at Bloomington, where he obtained a PhD in the Semiotics of Theater. As of March 2004, Abdallah is the Assistant Dean of the School of Arts and Humanities at the University of Indiana, where he is responsible for the Department of Student Affairs, Scientific Research and Cooperation. He has several publications in progress including an article on Moroccan semiotics to be published in *Semiotica*, an article on the semiotics of theatre buildings in Morocco and a translation of a book on Umberto Eco.

## SYRIA

**M. Jawdat AUDEH (2000-2002)** Jawdat is currently working as an English Lecturer at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He attended Georgia State University in Atlanta where he earned his MA in Applied Linguistics.

**Hazem IBRAHIM (2000-2002)** At California State University-Sacramento, Hazem worked towards his MA in Intercultural Communication. Following his studies at Sacramento, Hazem volunteered as a Communication Officer at the Aga Khan Development Network in Syria, a group of international private development agencies. As of mid-December, he has taken a new job as Information and Culture Assistant at the Delegation of the European Commission to Syria.

## TUNISIA

**Sadok BOUHLILA (1989- 1990)** Sadok spent his Fulbright year as a non-degree student at UCLA. He now teaches at the Department of English at La Manouba University in Tunis and has recently been promoted to *maitre de conferences*, the equivalent of Associate Professor.

### *focus on: Majda ATIEH from Syria*

Majda attended Howard University and earned her MA degree with honors in African American Literature last August. Her studies covered all periods and literary genres in the field of African American literature: the literature of slavery and freedom, the literature of the Reconstruction, the literature of the Harlem Renaissance, the literature of realism and naturalism, the literature of the Black Arts Movement and contemporary African American Literature (since 1970).

Majda's interest in African American literature developed in a course at Damascus University taught by a visiting American Professor to Syria, Elizabeth

Krekeler. Majda says that reading Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* in Dr. Krekeler's course changed the direction of her academic career.

According to Majda, "I got so inspired by Morrison's works that I decided to decline a full scholarship to the United Kingdom, apply for the Fulbright Scholarship, and



travel, instead, to the United States in order to study African American literature...Professor Krekeler encouraged me because she perceived how much I loved and enjoyed studying African American literary works. Now I can say that Professor Krekeler's advice was the best guidance I have ever received."

When asked whether she is happy living in Washington, DC, Majda says yes and tells us that she considers it a beautiful city and one rich in culture and diversity. When asked about how she viewed relations between different ethnicities in Washington, DC, she responded: "Although I have not been in this area for a long time and my experience is specific to Howard University, a major international institution, I can say that ethnic relations are positive. People tend to cherish a mutual respect for ethnic and cultural differences here. [In addition,] I have noticed that there is a strong and interesting tendency to assert similarity and unity between African American culture and Arab culture. Some of these connections may have come about because of historical interactions between Arabs and Africans in Northern Africa."

The literary and pedagogical significance of Majda's MA thesis was acknowledged and celebrated in two papers presented by Professor Eleanor Traylor (Head of the English Department at Howard University): one, at the Second International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities (convening in Prato, Italy), and the other at the Furious Flower Conference at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, VA. Majda is currently pursuing doctoral studies at Howard University and conducting research in Caribbean literature.

## *alumni news & notes continued. . .*

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**Karim SOUIDI (2003-2004)** Karim studied Water Resources as a non-degree student while under his Fulbright grant at the University of California-Berkeley.

### **WEST BANK**

**Ziad ABDALLAH (1983-1985)** Ziad spent his Fulbright years at Iowa State University where he received his MS in Sociology. He has recently joined a private consulting firm, AGRICONSULTING S.p.A, in Rome, Italy as a Senior Facilitation Expert in the Food Security Technical Assistance Programme funded by the EU through the European Commission Representative Office in Palestine.

**Saleh AL-TAKROURI (2003-2004)** At Rutgers University, Saleh earned an MA in Electrical Engineering and has recently returned home to the West Bank. He continues his studies in the West Bank by writing joint papers with his former professors: one, which was presented at a conference in Hawaii last August, and another, based on his thesis, which he hopes will be accepted at a conference in the Czech Republic in July 2005. Saleh is looking to pursue his PhD and received a scholarship to study in Australia.

**Muna K. SHIKAKI (2003-2004)** Muna is one of three correspondents for Al-Arabiya TV for the Washington, DC bureau. She has been working at Al-Arabiya since May 2004, after graduating from Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, and has covered the U.S. Presidential elections and the Democratic National Convention, in addition to daily news features in Washington, DC and New York City.

### **GAZA**

**Jehad EDWAN (2000-2002)** As a Fulbright grantee, Jehad pursued an MS at Creighton University in Omaha, and recently earned a PhD from the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology at the same university. The title of his dissertation was "Immunomodulation of Allergic Airway Inflammation by Flt3-Ligand." Jehad currently works as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in the

Department of Biomedical Sciences at Creighton University School of Medicine.

**Abdallah KURRAZ (2000-2001)** Abdallah earned his MA in Arts, Modern English and American Literature from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and is now Deputy Head of the English Department at Al-Azhar University in Gaza where he teaches in the field of Literature and Language Skills. Abdallah will be defending his PhD (a comparative intertextual study on Eliot's mythopoetical effects on Al-Bayyati's poetics) in Egypt this May. He also writes poems about current world issues and events and hopes to produce his next poetry collection in April.

### **YEMEN**

**Mokhtar ALZURAIKI (2002-2004)** Mokhtar returned home to Yemen recently and, in October, was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer at Aden University. He currently teaches academic writing for English majors at the Sabir College of Education. Mokhtar completed his Fulbright grant at Georgia State University in Atlanta where he earned an MA in Applied Linguistics and ESL.

**Khaled ISHAQ (2001-2003)** After earning his MA in International Studies from the University of Oregon, Khaled returned to the UN Information Centre in Sana'a. As Chair of the UN Theme Group, his responsibilities included overall management of all operational and outreach activities, coordination of UN agencies in Yemen on information-related matters and the development of an inter-agency framework for communication. In April 2004, Khaled joined the UN Development Programme as Communication Officer, providing strategic advocacy for the more than 20 development projects on communication and media relations.

**Abdullah MODHESH (2002-2004)** Abdullah was awarded his MA in July 2004 by Oklahoma State University and has been admitted to their PhD program in Professional Education. Abdullah and his wife, who had been living in Yemen, were recently reunited in the U.S. and celebrated their marriage with a small wedding in a local mosque.

## USEFUL INFORMATION FOR FULBRIGHT ALUMNI

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**Fulbright**  
ASSOCIATION

The *Fulbright Association* is the private, nonprofit membership organization of Fulbright Program alumni and friends. The Association is dedicated to promoting the Fulbright Program, enriching the experiences of visiting Fulbright students, teachers, and scholars, and fostering a global network of Fulbright alumni.

The *Fulbright Association* works to ensure that U.S. government funding for the Fulbright Program will continue so that future generations of students, teachers, and scholars can participate. The Association keeps members informed of the status of legislation and other issues that may affect the program and mobilizes its members to support the program through media, public education, and grassroots information campaigns.

For more information or to become a member, please go to: <http://www.fulbright.org/join>.

The *Fulbright Academy of Science and Technology* is an independent non-profit organization based in the United States. This organization receives support from selected Fulbright alumni groups, businesses, institutions, organizations, foundations, and individuals interested in developing an international network of leaders in science and technology.

The *Fulbright Academy of Science & Technology* uses the expertise of its network of Fulbrighters and leaders in science to address critical problems in education, scientific innovation and economic development. The Fulbright Academy's database has over 10,000 Fulbrighters and scientists around the world.

*For more information please contact the Fulbright Academy:*

The Fulbright Academy  
PO Box CC-284  
Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107-0284  
United States of America  
Tel: 1-207-799-3098  
Fax: 1-207-767-4306  
Toll free: 1-866-327-4448

<http://www.fulbrightacademy.org>

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**Arafat Al-Dweik** (Cleveland State University, PhD/Engineering, 1997-1999) plans to present his research in digital communications at the Third International Conference on Sciences of Electronics, Technologies and Telecommunications in Tunisia this March. Originally from the West Bank, Arafat now teaches at the Etisalat College of Engineering in the UAE and hopes that the dialogue generated by his efforts to increase the efficiency of communications networks will improve his work and inspire other research projects.

Originally from Yemen, **Aziz Saeed** (Ball State University, MA/Applied Linguistics/ TESOL, 1990-1992) teaches English, as well as sociolinguistics, language and culture, phonology, and translation at Sana'a University. In December, Aziz attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of EGYPTESOL in Cairo with the aim of bringing back new ideas for teaching and research to his colleagues and students. He believes it is important for teachers to use interesting reading materials, carefully designed activities and group work to create an atmosphere "where students feel the need to learn."

In January, **Hala El-Khozondar** (New Mexico State University, Non-degree student/Electrical Engineering, 1993-1995) joined the organizing committee for the Egyptian Materials Research Society's 2005 Conference to choose topics and plan future activities and workshops. Conference topics included Hala's main interests: studying photonic materials and developing optoelectric devices, which have applications in high performance computers and telecommunications. Hala, who has a PhD in Physics and has done post-doctoral work at the Max Plank Institute for Nuclear Physics in Germany, teaches at the Islamic University of Gaza.

In her work as a nematologist at the University of Jordan, **Luma Al Banna** (University of California, Davis, MA/ Agriculture, 1990-1992) studies parasitic worms, or nematodes, to develop non-chemical methods of pest control. This February, she is planning a collaborative

visit to Dr. Patricia Stock's laboratory at the University of Arizona in Tucson where she will learn more about the taxonomy and biology of entomopathogenic nematodes (parasites of soil-dwelling insects) and their potential as bioagents in controlling insect pests. Luma will use this knowledge to carry out a study of this particular type of nematode in Jordan.

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## UPDATE ON YES AND PLUS

### Partnerships for Learning Undergraduate Studies Program (PLUS)



PLUS is a highly competitive regional scholarship program funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. PLUS targets undergraduate liberal arts students from under-served and under-represented communities who demonstrate academic excellence and leadership potential. Students come to the United States for up to six months of intensive English language and pre-academic training and enroll in U.S. universities to complete the final two years of their bachelor's degree. Students are nominated in each country by AMIDEAST, Fulbright Commissions, or U.S. Embassies.

The second cohort of PLUS students has been selected and students are now preparing to come to the United States this spring to begin their pre-academic program. In this second cohort, PLUS has increased to 100 students from the Middle East and North Africa, as well as from the newly included South Asian countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Nepal. In addition, AMIDEAST expanded its partnership of university-based English language institutions to 13 in this growing program.

The 71 PLUS students from the first cohort represent 11 countries in the Middle East and North Africa. In August the students successfully completed their intensive English language and pre-academic training at nine

universities across the United States. They are now enrolled in their academic programs under the administrative responsibility of the Academy for Educational Development and are keeping a busy schedule as they work toward BAs in their chosen majors.

### Youth Exchange and Study (YES)



YES program scholarships, funded by the U.S. Department of State, give secondary school students in many Arab and Islamic countries an opportunity to study at American high schools and live with American host families for one academic year. Students are enrolled in a full academic year of high school study in the U.S., attending classes, labs and extracurricular programs with their American classmates. YES students also participate in special enrichment activities, including community service, youth leadership training, a civics education program, and other activities that will develop a well-rounded understanding of American culture through interaction with diverse groups of Americans. Likewise, participating students serve as cultural ambassadors to their American host communities, becoming invaluable resources for Americans whose contact with YES students will provide them with an opportunity to learn about the rich and vibrant cultures of the Middle East and North Africa.

The YES selection process for the 2005-2006 academic year is winding down, with 240 students expected to be selected from the Middle East, North Africa and Pakistan by February 15.

The first group of YES alumni (academic year 2003-2004) have been active in founding chapter clubs in their respective countries. Alumni have made numerous presentations in their schools and home communities, sharing their experiences from their year abroad in the United States. Many have initiated community service projects including founding tutoring clubs at secondary schools and speaking with departing exchange students to answer questions about integrating into American culture. The Kuwait chapter club is planning a tsunami relief effort to inform their peers of volunteer opportunities and to help the victims of the natural disaster.

## **ALUMNI PROFILE: DAVID EL CHARIF KEEPS THE FULBRIGHT CONNECTION ALIVE**

*David El Charif is a Fulbright student from Lebanon. He was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship in 2002 to conduct studies in the field of Dispute Resolution at the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is currently pursuing a Canadian Common Law degree at the University of Ottawa with an anticipated graduation in 2006. Living in Canada's diverse capital, David focuses on public policy issues that are of increasing interest to Canadians such as immigration laws and equal rights for same-sex partnerships. In his free time, he moderates the Fulbright Listserv "Fulbright Students and Alumni around the World." This listserv is a virtual forum that helps Fulbrighters stay in touch, communicate and exchange opinions. We asked him to tell us more about it.*

### **What is listserv? When was the Fulbright Listserv founded?**

Listserv is a mailing system that allows a person to email all subscribers of a given group through one email address. The Fulbright Listserv is a virtual discussion environment for issues that are of importance to Fulbrighters. It was founded in 1993 by Christos Siopis, a Fulbright alumnus from Greece. I took charge of it in 2002 and will moderate it until 2007.

### **How many subscribers have signed onto the Listserv and where are they from?**

There are 1250 subscribers from 72 countries and 5 continents. We are aiming to expand membership to every country with the Fulbright Program. The number of subscribers from each country varies a lot. Germany has more subscribers than any other country and in terms of continents, Europe has the most members.

As for the Middle East and North Africa, we have members from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Gaza, Morocco, Egypt and the West Bank.

### **How do you think the Listserv can be useful to Fulbright students and alumni?**

The Fulbright Listserv is a communication network between new grantees and their peers. Prior to their departure and placement in the States, Fulbright students can rely on other Fulbrighters who took the same path before to ask them questions and share their concerns and experiences. Whether they are wondering about accommodation in a certain city or at a university, or whether they have questions about taxes, immigration, education or any other topic, they will always find someone able to advise them from his/her own experience and help them upon their arrival.

The Fulbright Listserv is also appropriate for discussions that can take advantage of the unique multicultural background of the subscribers to this list. In this sense, the Fulbright Listserv offers the possibility of having a standing, virtual, global round-table discussion that would be hard to implement in the real world.

### **What kind of email flow do you receive daily and what are the most hotly debated topics?**

We have an average daily flow of two emails. In heated debates, this number can go up to 40 emails per day. The most debated and discussed topics are:

- Political issues such as U.S. foreign policy, the war in Iraq, peace in the Middle East and U.S. elections
- Social issues such as same-sex marriage, abortion, Islam and women's rights
- Educational issues such as academic programs, PhD opportunities, job fairs and enrichment seminars
- Fulbright-related issues such as taxes and the 2-year home residency requirement

### **Can you give us examples of particularly interesting interchanges?**

When you have this diversity of subscribers, it is always interesting to join the debates or just watch the interaction between people from various backgrounds. The war in Iraq, defended by many members, is seen by most Arab subscribers as unnecessary and baseless. On the issue of same sex marriage, which more than 70% of the list members are in favor of, many Fulbrighters with strong religious beliefs wrote that they are against it. This particular exchange can sometimes be emotional with gay Fulbrighters coming out about their struggle for acceptance. The issue of abortion is also a hotly-debated topic with feminists on the list who advocate for a woman's right to control what happens to her own body. Other topics such as the Holocaust and the Israeli/Palestinian conflict attract a lot of attention because they are marking points in our history.

### **Anything else you want to add?**

I have noted that Fulbright alumni continue to "live the Fulbright experience" after they finish their programs. With all the differences in opinion, they have shown solidarity in difficult moments. For instance, I remember all the condolence emails sent to Americans after the September 11 events, to Spanish members after the train bombing and recently to Asian Fulbrighters after the tsunami disaster.

### **How do interested Fulbrighters join the list?**

To join the list, send me an email to the following email addresses:  
[FULBRIGHT-L-REQUEST@LISTS.UFL.EDU](mailto:FULBRIGHT-L-REQUEST@LISTS.UFL.EDU) OR  
[FULBRIGHT\\_MODERATOR@YAHOO.COM](mailto:FULBRIGHT_MODERATOR@YAHOO.COM).



1730 M Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20036-4505

**AMIDEAST FIELD OFFICE CONTACTS:**

**EGYPT**

**Virginia Carley**, Acting Country Director  
No. 23 Musadak Street, Dokki, Cairo  
**Mail:** PO Box 96, Magles El Shaab  
**Phone:** 20-2-337-8265 **Fax:** 20-2-795-2946, U.S. (202) 776-7117  
**Internet:** [egypt@amideast.org](mailto:egypt@amideast.org)

**JORDAN**

**Michael Clark**, Country Director  
Rodeo Plaza Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Nuh Al-Rumi Street, Sweifiyeh, Amman (across from Café La Noisette)  
**Mail:** P.O. Box 1249, Amman 11118  
**Phone:** 962-6-581-0930 **Fax:** 962-6-581-4020  
**Internet:** [jordan@amideast.org](mailto:jordan@amideast.org)

**LEBANON**

**Barbara Shahin Batlouni**, Country Director  
Beirut Central District, Bazerkan Building, First Floor, Nijmeh Square,  
Next to the Parliament, Beirut, Lebanon  
**Mail:** PO Box 11-2190, Riad El Solh, Beirut 1107 2100  
**Phone:** 961-1-989901 **Fax:** 961-1-989901 ext. 100 U.S.  
**Internet:** [lebanon@amideast.org](mailto:lebanon@amideast.org)

**MOROCCO**

**Joe Phillips**, Country Director  
35, Zanquat Oukaimeden, Agdal, Rabat  
**Phone:** 212-03-767-5081, 767-5082, 767-5075  
**Fax:** 212-03-767-5074, U.S. (202) 776-7110  
**Internet:** [morocco@amideast.org](mailto:morocco@amideast.org)

**SYRIA**

**Barbara Al Nouri**, Country Director  
Ahmed Mrewed Street. Next to Nadi Al Sharq. Nahas Building No. 3  
**Mail:** PO Box 2313, Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic  
**Phone:** (963) 11-331-4420 and 331-5316 **Fax:** (963) 11-245-2407  
**Internet:** [syria@amideast.org](mailto:syria@amideast.org)

**TUNISIA**

**H.L. "Lee" Jennings**, Country Director  
22, Rue Al Amine Al Abbassi  
Cite Jardins, 1002 Tunis-Belvedere  
**Mail:** B.P. 351, Tunis-Belvedere 1002, Tunisia  
**Phone:** (216-71) 790-559; 790-563; 841-488  
**Fax:** 216-71-791-913  
**Internet:** [Tunisia@amideast.org](mailto:Tunisia@amideast.org)

**WEST BANK/GAZA**

**Chris Shinn**, Country Director  
**Jerusalem Office:**  
Slak Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Next to Palestinian Counseling Center, Khalil As-Sakakini St. Beit Hanina, Jerusalem  
**Mail:** PO Box 19665, Jerusalem 91193  
**Phone:** 972-2-583-5647 **Fax:** 972-2-583-5912  
**Internet:** [westbank-gaza@amideast.org](mailto:westbank-gaza@amideast.org)

**Gaza City Office:**

Shaheed Raja St. No.8/704  
Bseiso Building, 8th Floor  
Opposite the Arab bank of Rimal  
Al Jondi Al Majhool, Rimal Neighborhood  
**Mail:** P.O.Box: 1247, Gaza City, Palestine  
**Phone:** 972 (or 970)08-282-4635  
**Fax:** 972 (or 970)08-283-8126  
**Internet:** [westbank-gaza@amideast.org](mailto:westbank-gaza@amideast.org)

**YEMEN**

**Sabrina Faber**, Country Director  
Algiers Street, #66 (near the Sana'a Trade Center), Sana'a  
**Mail:** PO Box 15508 Sana'a, Republic of Yemen  
**Phone:** 967-1-206-222, 400-279, 400-280  
**Fax:** 967-1-206-942 U.S. (202) 776-7115  
**Internet:** [yemen@amideast.org](mailto:yemen@amideast.org)