

Fulbrighter

The Fulbright Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

A newsletter for alumni and current grantees from the Middle East and North Africa.



FULBRIGHT



AMIDEAST
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A Fulbrighter Imam

By: Muhammad Abulezz, *Egypt, 2009-2011*

I think I may be the first imam who got an MA scholarship from Fulbright. The chance to study in America and at the University of Georgia is a great blessing from Allah for me. My professors appreciate so much that I am from Al-Azhar University and a Fulbrighter. Prof. Honerkam let me teach his class about the biography of the Prophet Muhammad while he was away. The class liked my lecture and thanked him for choosing me. I also volunteer with the Muslim community... I teach the Qur'an for the kids and the Arabic language in the Islamic center. Moreover, I sometimes give the Friday speech on campus for students who cannot attend the mosque. All these activities added much to my experience.

Yes, it is a blessing that opened my mind.... I was always thinking universally and I understood Islam as a universal religion that came for the happiness of humanity. I found this universality here in America. I now completely understand the Qur'anic verse which says, "***O mankind! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other. Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is the most righteous of you***" (Qur'an 49:13). Here, I found people with the diversity of languages, colors, characteristics, ethics, talents, and abilities all cooperating to help and benefit each other.

Please check out the rest of Muhammad's article and other current student updates on [State Alumni!](#)

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From the South to the North

By: Mirna Khairallah, Lebanon, 2009-2011

I was jumping with excitement when I read the email from IIE that said I would be going to New York City for my Fulbright Foreign Student Enrichment Seminar. I have been living for the past seven months in the South, in a small city in northwest Arkansas called Fayetteville, home to the University of Arkansas, with a population of around 70,000 people. I now know my way to everywhere in town. When I'm walking down the street I always bump into someone I know. I walk to my classes and to downtown and I know the bus schedule by heart in case I want to take it to shop in the only mall we have in town.

When I reached NYC, I was overwhelmed by the number of people walking in the streets. I was looking outside of the window from the bus taking me from the airport to the hotel, and although it wasn't even rush hour, there were cars everywhere honking and rushing about. People were moving on the sidewalks like a herd. New York is busy, loud and alive; Fayetteville is relaxed, friendly and green, and this is what makes the United States such a diverse and interesting place to experience. At this point in my U.S. experience, I just can't wait to see what other American cities have to offer.

Please check out the rest of Mirna's article and other current student updates on [State Alumni!](#)

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Alumni Updates

Bassil El Masri

Lebanon, Ball State University, 2002-2003



Mr. Bassil El Masri has been working on projects aimed at understanding the effect of climate change on terrestrial ecosystem functions and structure. As part of his dissertation, he is working in projects directed at estimating terrestrial ecosystem carbon exchange and above-ground biomass using available data. To achieve his research objectives, he utilizes satellite data as well as geographical information systems (GIS). Remote sensing provides direct measurements of forest parameters that are highly related to forest productivity and biomass and is essential for continuous spatial and temporal monitoring of terrestrial ecosystems.

Please check out other alumni updates on [State Alumni!](#)

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Announcements

STATE ALUMNI is the official website for more than 1,000,000 alumni of exchange programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Interactive, dynamic and password-protected, alumni.state.gov offers alumni from U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs a place to:

- Network with alumni from Fulbright, IVLP, and other programs
- Participate in the exclusive Fulbright Community
- Register for a FulbrightMail.org email account
- Find grant and funding opportunities worth more than \$33 billion
- Access more than 20,000 free journals, periodicals, and more
- Participate in *Q&A Live* discussions with experts
- Share your work in the Fulbright Library, organized by academic discipline
- Stay involved through a local alumni association

All alumni are invited to register for the site by clicking "Join Now" at <https://alumni.state.gov>

State Alumni operates over a secure connection, to prevent cyber theft. State Alumni asks that you register in order to log onto the website and provide a password so we can keep you and your fellow alumni in better contact. Registrants have the option to hide their personal information.

We've Moved! Please look for the new Fulbright AMIDEAST Facebook page at the following link!

<http://www.facebook.com/#!/FulbrightProgramfortheMiddleEastandNorthAfrica>

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