

# ALUMNI E-NEWS

NDU ALUMNI AFFAIRS OFFICE

APRIL 2008

UAE SPECIAL ISSUE

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome to the special issue of Alumni E-newsletter. Our goal is to make a positive and permanent connection with hundreds of graduates in the UAE who call NDU as their alma mater. Our NDU family is growing and expanding. We are well very busy reestablishing contacts, locating as many alumni as we can, updating their stories and getting reacquainted. This special issue is obviously different and maybe louder.

Enjoy these pages about NDU Alumni in Dubai & Abu Dhabi!



## President's Address to NDU Alumni in Dubai & Abu Dhabi\*

Welcome to all!

On this occasion, I wish to address all NDU graduates residing in the UAE, and hopefully next time I would be present with all of you in person. I convey the greetings of NDU administrators, faculty and staff to all present at this gathering organized by the Alumni Affairs Office (AAO).



When we first established the Alumni Affairs Office about one year and a half ago, we had in mind the goal of continuous communication with graduates, wherever they may be - in Lebanon or elsewhere - because we consider graduates as an essential part of NDU. Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude was deemed the best person to handle this mission.

Until recently we have defined NDU's community as students, faculty, and staff. Is this all there is to our community? No, I must add, with full confidence, that you, our alumni, are a vital part of our community. From the moment you enrolled as an NDU student, you became part of our University community, and you remain so today. You now have an even more crucial role to play as you move on in life in continued pursuit of your aspirations.

Permit me to place on record that one of the things that make NDU a distinguished institution nowadays is partially attributed to its graduates who are spreading its name wherever they are. The world is meeting NDU through you and thanks to the image that all of you are portraying to the world. I assure you that everyone at NDU is working hard to move on with progress so that this university can keep up with the demands of higher education, especially now that we have initiated the Accreditation Project. We have many challenges. Our dream is big. Those who do not have the courage to take risks will not achieve anything.

All of you, be it in Dubai or Abu Dhabi, carry the name of NDU and of Lebanon and I hope that both names will remain placed on high pedestals. We should put our words into actions. Lebanon is passing through trying times. We need men and women who are resolved to change the tides for the better. Stand up and be counted.

To end, I would like to thank all those who have organized this gathering. Hopefully, such gatherings would be held again in Lebanon or elsewhere where NDU graduates are present. I also convey my appreciation to the United Arab Emirates and its generous people. Whenever you come to Lebanon, do not forget to pass by NDU. We are waiting for you.

Fr. Walid Moussa, MM

\* The address was conveyed in the form of a video displayed at the Alumni gatherings in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi.

## Address of the Director of Alumni Affairs Office, at NDU Alumni gatherings in Dubai & Abu Dhabi

Good Evening. Dubai is glamorously adorned tonight with the NDU graduates. On behalf of the NDU Alumni Affairs Office, which operates under the direct supervision of NDU President Fr. Walid Moussa, I welcome all of you.



This event is the first for the Office outside of Lebanon, and the Office will seek to make it an annual event here and in other parts of the Arabian Gulf region. Many have said that it is only natural to initiate such an event in Dubai/Abu Dhabi since they include a large number of NDU Alumni. I agreed with them; but also added that this country blossomed with the first ever NDU Alumni Group comprising Elie Matta, Elie Mattar, Robert Ohannessian, Abdo Ghaoui, Elie Keyrouz, Hazem Aouad, Georges Skaff, Alain Rahi, Bassem Ghaoui and Sayed Tayoun, with a hope that none was forgotten.

The NDU Alumni Affairs Office was established almost a year ago, with the goal of creating a continuous and fruitful communication between the University and its graduates. You did not merely pass by the University: each and every one of you has a place at NDU and in our hearts. Within this framework, I would like to share with you some thoughts which we have start to implement and others still under development:

- The daily work done by Mrs. Rose Mady, for which she is deeply grateful, is the creating of a database in an organized and easily accessible manner. Since 20 years, NDU has been sending out to society batches of graduates that exceed the 9,000 mark nowadays. I profit from this occasion to ask your help in providing us with information about people who have graduated from NDU and who are not receiving e-mails from the Alumni Affairs Office.
- A soon-to-be project is the Alumni website which is being developed in cooperation with Mr. Fawzi Baroud and the Division of

Computing Services. The website will become a daily and continuous means of communication.

During the first year, we have managed to prepare seven events, all crowned with the utmost success. We will proceed with a new series of events, including the honoring of the first ever group of NDU graduates of 1990-1991, Invading the Old Campus – which includes spending an evening together at the NDU old campus, and the Alumni Annual Awards – a ceremony held between Christmas and New Year to honor NDU Alumni who have made us proud with their success stories.

Many asked me about the purpose of my visit to Dubai and Abu Dhabi. My answer to them included 4 axes:

1. Creating a social network and a career network among NDU graduates
2. Informing NDU Alumni of the UAE government's recognition of NDU degrees. I take advantage of this occasion to thank Dr. Viviane Naimy, Director of Admissions & OTME for preparing and presenting the NDU file to the concerned authorities.
3. Notifying NDU Alumni that the University has started the Accreditation process, and accordingly we will inform you of the progress of this important academical administrative step.
4. This gathering is a special occasion by itself, but its highlight is the trace it leaves behind. The future of the NDU Alumni Affairs Office lies within your hands. I would love to hear your thoughts and ideas, what you want from the Office, the work you think it should accomplish and ways it could serve you as Alumni.

In conclusion, thank you NDU Alumni for being here tonight. Thank you all of those who have contributed to the organization of this gathering: Robert, Sayed and Elie. Thanks to those who have helped me group the NDU Alumni: Tony Bismarji, Jad Bechara and Abdo Ghaoui. I raise my hat to the Lebanese consulate and all those who work in it, in particular Lebanese Consul Mrs. Donna Turk.

To end, I would like to propose a toast to every NDU Alumni here tonight: for love, happiness and success.

Thank you UAE. Thank you NDU. Thank you Lebanon!



# NDU UPDATES

## UAE ALUMNI GATHERINGS

In realization of the announcements made during the past few weeks, Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude headed to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and paid a visit to the NDU Alumni residing there in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. This brief report gives him a chance to stop for a moment, catch his breath and reflect on the trip just completed. Hereby, find an update of the visit.

Within the framework of NDU Alumni Affairs Office's annual activities and inline with the office's strategy to reach all NDU Alumna wherever they may be, the theme of the gatherings "Be Proud of It, Be Part of It" was held at the Lebanese Consulate in Dubai on Saturday March 8th, 2008 at 7:00pm, while that of Abu Dhabi was held on Monday March 10th, 2008 at 7:00pm at Crowne Plaza.



Despite the fact that the number of alumni in Dubai surpassed that of Abu Dhabi, both gatherings were equally successful and productive. NDU Alumni are so very interesting and such a good fun, and they felt content at having an NDU representative visit them and show the University still remembers them.

The functions debuted with a welcoming note by an NDU Alumnus (in Dubai; Robert Ohanessian and in Abu Dhabi; Bassem El-Ghaoui) followed by the address of Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude, Director of the NDU Alumni Affairs Office, recognizing the importance of alumni to their alma mater. Afterwards, documentaries were shown about NDU and the various activities the Office organized during 2007 for alumni in Lebanon. The gathering ended with an e-speech from the NDU President, Fr. Walid Moussa, to the NDU Alumni in Dubai and Abu Dhabi which informed them NDU is moving steadily forward to

strengthen its academic and non-academic endeavors. Forthcoming chats and greetings took place before calling it a night. Most importantly, the evening provided the chance for many alumni to reconnect or newly discover other fellow alumni in UAE, and thus renew their ties to NDU.

NDU - UAE Alumnus Robert Ohanessian (BS '95), the lead volunteer who worked on organizing the event, said "Making this gathering a reality has been quite challenging but the end result is worth the effort." The gatherings were very insightful and informative in terms of the needs and expectations of the NDU alumni in the UAE. Alumni residing abroad have different needs than those in Lebanon: they are more work-oriented, more productivity-driven and yet they have a deep longing for their family and friends in Lebanon and their professors back in NDU, all of whom they greeted and saluted.

They expressed concern about the differences of work level and organization between the NDU Alumni and AUB/LAU Alumni; however, Mr. Abou Jaoude re-assured them that NDU Alumni – being young – can achieve different things than the AUB Alumni – dating back to over 100 years. He also told them to have faith and patience, as there is no doubt, given our record and current trajectory and their commitment and loyalty, NDU Alumni can legitimately become the best Alumni in the country.



Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude had the chance to meet the Consul of Lebanon in Dubai, Mrs. Donna Turk. NDU Alumni Robert Ohanessian and Elie Matta were there too. He was pleased to leave the encounter with two positive impressions: Mrs. Turk was very welcoming and generous with her time despite her busy schedule and her hard work to contribute in maintaining Lebanon as a leading nation in the Arab World. She promised to schedule a visit to NDU on her upcoming program to Lebanon.

During the visit, Mr. Abou Jaoude met some employers (CEO/HR/Managing Directors) of NDU graduates, who communicated their satisfaction with the performance of graduates and pointed out the potentials and caliber of NDU graduates. They expressed their interest in recruiting more NDU graduates and as such will coordinate with the Placement Office to that objective.



When Mr. Abou Jaoude asked NDU graduates, who are just beginning or are at a cross-road in their professional journey, whether it is worth leaving home to work abroad, they talked mostly about the quality exposure they get from the many projects in a job market that is huge.

NDU Alumni-UAE also expressed readiness to give time and effort to help develop the NDU Alumni - UAE through establishing a committee and setting up goals and an action plan for it. The NDU alumni also showed willingness to help younger fellow Alumni settle in the country, find a better job or even expand their social network. Mr. Simon Abou Jaoude was truly moved by their generosity and dedication to NDU. It is clear that NDU is a very special place to many alumni.



Finally, they solicited NDU to hold regular meetings and gatherings for them, especially at first, to encourage and support them in their mission.

It was definitely an overall rewarding visit that was very much worth while and that will certainly bear fruit in the near and long-term future. Thanks to the support of the NDU President and the passion

and willingness of our alumni. It is very important to NDU's future that we reconnect with the largest segment of our Alumni.

## NDU Alumni WEBSITE

A pilot study was done earlier this year on NDU Alumni concerning what they wanted from the Alumni website. Some of the answers came as follows: "We want a website that primarily reflects data, ideas, people or things," Wael said. "We want a website that is interactive, accessible, and career-promoting," Roland commented. Moussa who lives in Dubai said, "The website must link us appropriately to the NDU campus."

What are the goals of NDU Alumni Affairs Office website? Who will be the target audience for the website? What should it include? These were the main questions we asked ourselves in the brainstorming session held before embarking on the creation of our very own website.

All of these concerns were addressed to Grace Baroud Khalil (BA'99), NDU Web Coordinator, and Sahar Nassar (BA '99), NDU Web Designer, each in her capacity to set up the website features, design and content for the NDU Alumni Affairs Office. Several meetings were conducted between the Alumni Office staff and the NDU Computer Center personnel. In the coming weeks we shall see the fruit of their collaboration. Allow me to acknowledge the efforts of Mr. Nazih Khalil (BS '93, MS '99), Miss Brigitta Kassis (BS '01) and the leadership of Mr. Fawzi Baroud.

## ALUMNI UPCOMING EVENTS

**NDU Alumni Faculty and Staff Reunion 2008** - The first upcoming event at the Alumni Affairs Office - 'Two Sides of the Coin' - is an in-house gathering where a group of special alumni, NDU Alumni Faculty and Staff, will meet to exchange ideas and concerns and share the mission and vision of the Office. The attraction of the event is the documentary "*Individually We are One Drop, Together We are An Ocean*". The reunion is scheduled for Monday, May 19, 2008 at 12:00 noon.

**Celebrating Your Next Step** - The second upcoming Alumni event will be held on Wednesday, May 28, 2008 at Pierre Abou Khater Auditorium where 100 tentative Spring graduates will enjoy the opportunity to have a private

audience with the President of NDU. Fr. Walid Moussa will address the students on how to benefit from their NDU education to venture out into the future and be proud of their *alma mater*.

**Lost Alumni Campaign** – On June 13 of every year The Church celebrates the feast of St Anthony of Padua. He is renowned for his intercession in finding lost people and things. Those who feel very familiar with him may pray, "Tony, Tony, turn around. Something's lost and must be found." A gathering will be take place on Friday, June 13, 2008 at 6.30pm, followed by a Mass in the space in front of the Alumni office.

**Invading the OLD CAMPUS** – This year's highlight will be an enchanting evening at the Old Campus to share old memories of how NDU first began its mission of educating generations. Many of us still remember the good old times when all of the NDU community was a small family. A big number of people still talk to this day about how NDU, growing from one small building to a vast academic institution, touched the depth of their lives. The event will take place during the Fitr holidays towards the end of September – early October.

## COVER STORY – See the Intimate Picture

You feel the NDU community's dynamism as soon as you set foot on Dubai International Airport. **Jad Bechara and his wife Rita Auoud, Carol and Toufic Mady** were waiting at the exit door of the arrival terminal. It is a strong solidarity that starts with an e-mail or a phone call to announce that you are coming there. **Jad Abou Mitri** called to make sure that I have someone to drive me to the hotel. It's having dinner with **Pascale Ghanem, Jad and Rita Bechara, and Jad Abou Mitri** at Boardwalk Cafe and gaining a new perspective of the Dubai ground that made it a great beginning. It is sending an email to an alumna, **Juliana Hawi** and hearing back the same day. In one word, despite their heavy work load, the NDU community in Dubai will know you and support you.

I was in Dubai at the time of the year when anyone who knows anything about horse-racing comes to Dubai. Frankly, who could blame them when you know that the Dubai World Cup is the wealthiest horse race in the world? I also came

one day after the International Diva **Celine Dion** performed in Dubai on March 5, 2008.

Lunch with **Robert Ohanessian and his wife Nancy**, is beyond comparison. I met the couple few months back in Beirut at the Alumni Affairs Office and was captivated by their vigor and their charisma. Robert expressed his concerns for laying a solid foundation of what was already established in Dubai. He presented me with a brief history of the efforts made by a group of committed NDU Alumni. Robert willingly has been very willing and active in organizing the Dubai gathering.

A great way to see as much of Dubai as possible is to take a ride with **Toufic Mady and his family**. "Sir, you're not going to see everything in one day", said Toufic, "Why not Madinat Jumeirah?" The Madinat has an ideal location – between Sheikh Zayed Road and Emirates Road. Guess who we met there: **Anita Kozah and her husband Hiram Aziz**. She introduced us to her mother who was on a visit to Dubai. **Rita Awad Bechara** got us a boat ride in the Venice-like water streams. We were able to get a revealing view of spacious villas and townhouses built in classic Arabian and Mediterranean styles.



By now most NDU Alumni knew I was in Dubai. The phone calls I got from **Yves Sfeir, Stephan Abboud, Elie Mattar, Celine Zeinoun, Jean Pierre Dib, DalyJoe Saroufim, Elie Tahchi, Joyce Arjan Khayat**, and **many others** were very encouraging that the NDU Alumni gathering in Dubai would grab the headlines. They made sure to tell me that they got the message across concerning the gathering.

In the evening, at the Marina Walk, one of the coolest hang-outs of Dubai, with lots of cafes, restaurants and shops on a breath taking Marina view with amazing sky scrapers, a large group of NDU Alumni met me; in addition to the same group that took me to Madinat Jumeirah. The



pleasant **Bassam Tabcharani**, the charming **Wael Sarkis**, the unsurprisingly glamorous **Zeina Khoury** (She is here because any gathering without her would be incomplete!), the very assuming **Elie Matta**, and **Tony Bismarji**, and many others joined.

Guess who attended the Alumni gathering: two ex-NDU professors, Miss **Amira Van Loan** and **Mrs. Rita Mouawad**. They were the attention-



grabbing figures of the gathering. Their input in the discussion that took place in the gathering was very instrumental.

After the great success of the Alumni gathering, **Jean Pierre Dib** insisted that we should have dinner or at least a drink somewhere. I remember we went to Irish Village. We were joined by **Jad Abou Mitri**, **Bassam Tabcharani**, **Jad and Rita Bechara**. We sat down and remembered the good old days at NDU and how at the time they were students, they sometimes acted mischievously.

Coffee at the Crowne Plaza Lobby could not have been better than with the affectionate **Pamela Bteiche** joined by **Jean Pierre Chaer**, **Rami Khoury** and **Tony Bismarji** (It is hard not to respect Tony's willingness and perseverance to do well in his job at Schlumberger ( Oil & Gas services) as logistics and procurement Coordinator.)

There are definitely many restaurants in Dubai that provide a panoramic view of the city, but the Vu's Bar on the 51th floor of Jumeirah Emirates Tower was breathtaking. Do you remember, **Elie Matta**, after our pleasant visit to the Lebanese Consul Mrs. Donna Turk and then lunch with Robert at Scarlett's?

My last night in Dubai was marked by a special group of Alumni at Trader's Vic, **Roger Younan**, **Elian Sarkis**, **Tony Bismarji**, **Samir Maasri**, **Jean Pierre Chaer** and joined by **Zeina Khoury**. There are 366 reasons why the First Alumni trip abroad was to Dubai!

The key to the Dubai visit was the ride to Abu Dhabi. I passed the highway just before a massive traffic accident occurred between Dubai and Abu Dhabi. More than a dozen cars burst into flames during the accident, turning the highway into an inferno during the morning rush hour. Thick fog and poor visibility caused the accident. Thanks to all who called to check whether I was safe.

Abu Dhabi visit was like squaring the circle: the hospitality of **Sayed Tayoun** during which I heard from him how tough working abroad has become, was seconded by **Richard Haddad** and **Dany Shakhtoura**. The Alumni gathering intensified my emotions when I met **Naim Rammal**, **Elie Saliba**, **Carole Kaldawy**, **Talal El-Deek**, **Mony Abou Jaoude**, **Saleem Diab**, **Wissam Farran**, **Robert Aaraj**, and many others; the sincere moments over a cup of tea with **Bassem Ghaoui**, **Nesreen Hajjar** and their little cute daughter in their home; and the visit with **Bassem Boustani** to Team Young and Rubicam. **Michel Khadij**, **Michel Gemayel**, and **Ribal Deeb** were very missing Lebanon and NDU very much.

It will be a busy year for the two Alumni groups in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Thanks to leadership of Robert Ohannessian and Bassem Ghaoui who will lead the groups respectively. Is there a case for optimism? Remarkably, yes!

"A man travels the world in search of what he needs and returns home to find it."- **George Moore**.



## CLASS NOTES

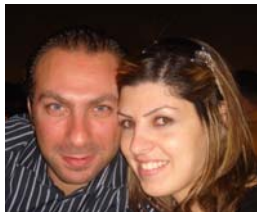
The class notes below are those of graduates working in Dubai & Abu Dhabi who are exceptional human beings in life but who are not unusual among NDU Alumni. We can easily add scores of others who exemplify our values "with their feet on the ground, heart open and head touching the sky."

**\*NDU AAO reserves the right to edit all Class Notes submissions.**

**Robert Ohanessian (BS '95)** graduated from NDU with a BS degree in Computer Science. He has been living and working in UAE since 1997. In 2003, he joined Data Processing Systems (DPS); an aviation company specialized in airports system integration which enhances airport safety navigation, in the capacity of program manager. His responsibility covers managing all the company's projects in Dubai, Northern Emirates and Qatar airports. He is happily married to Nancy Zakharia since 2004. Robert has been actively involved in the NDU Alumni community, UAE group since 2000.



**Jad Bechara (BBA '03)** writes, "I graduated with a BA degree in Business Management and pursued my MBA – Human Resources Concentration at NDU in spring 2004. After working for a year in the family business, I moved to Dubai to work in March 2006 and started my MBA in the American University of Dubai (AUD) – Marketing Concentration. I am currently working in a media company as a media manager handling the account of Dubai World Trade Center. On June 23, 2007, after nine years of commitment and love, I married **Rita Aouad (BBA '04)** who graduated from NDU with a degree in Banking & Finance and now we are both living and working in Dubai. Rita works at BLC Bank as credit officer.



My management courses at NDU were the key of my success and the backbone of my working position. No need to mention the communication skills that I have earned from being the president of the NDU Social Club 2002 -2003. It gives me a great pleasure to be part of this organization "NDU" and I would like to thank the Alumni Affairs Office for the effort they have made for giving us the chance to communicate with our colleagues, professors and friends once again."

**Bassem Ghaoui (BA'00)** graduated with a BA in Business Administration -Marketing concentration. After his graduation, he worked

with AMC-Advertising in Dubai as an account manager and then moved to Abu Dhabi to manage the Abu Dhabi operations. After that, he moved on to Intermarkets Advertising - Abu Dhabi to initiate their operations. He is now working on a new challenge and will move within a month to Impact BBDO - Abu Dhabi. He has been active since 2001 with other NDU alumni members residing in the United Arab Emirates to build the UAE Alumni Group; and now, with Mr. Simon Abu Jaoude, he says they at last have the pillars of the NDU alumni structure. He is married to **Nesreen Al Hajjar**, an NDU graduate in 1999 in Graphic Design who is now working as a senior art director at Team Y&R Abu Dhabi. They have a little angel, the two-year-old Yara. Bassem has been actively involved in the NDU Alumni community, UAE group since 2001.



**Celine Zeinoun (BA '07)** writes, "Well where do I start; I graduated in fall 06 and attended the July 07 podium graduation. I majored in Advertising and Marketing, and have been working with J. Walter Thompson (a multinational advertising agency) for over a year now as an account executive. We recently won the "Agency of the Year" award at the LYNX 1st Dubai International Advertising Festival which is the only Festival promoting all forms of advertising communications in the Middle East and North Africa Region.



I got the chance to attend the festival's workshops and seminars which were very educating and inspiring experience for me. The best part is that one of the accounts that I'm handling won GOLD in print and outdoor category and I had the privilege of going on stage and receiving the awards with my colleagues, which was a great moment for us after all our hard work. I'm very happy to be part of one of the leading advertising agencies in the world! But I owe some of this credit to NDU and I will tell why...

Advertising agencies such as JWT are considered schools in advertising but what's interesting to know is that when they are headhunting for talent, they focus on personality and that's where NDU comes in. NDU is a university that helps its students develop their social intelligence/skills through its open spirit of communication and



sharing ideas, lets each student express his/her identity and helps him/her to cultivate it.

NDU students stand out wherever they go, because not only are we educated but we are socially intelligent, great entrepreneurs and equipped to succeed at everything we do...

On a personal level, I'm single, not much time for relationships because I'm practically married to my work and Dubai's hectic lifestyle doesn't help because you have time for nothing!!! I miss home very much ...When Lebanon is more stable, I would love to come back..." Who does not love a beautiful woman with an intelligent sense of humor?

**Richard Haddad** graduated with a

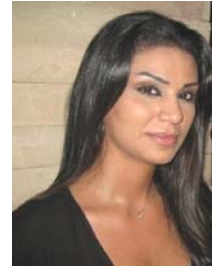
bachelor degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management. He is proud to say that he was a founding member and Vice President of the Hospitality and Tourism Club at NDU. Richard started his career in



1991 as a waiter in a leading French restaurant and has never stopped focusing on developing his career path which expanded to Lebanon, Bahrain, Qatar, Libya, Jordan and United Arab Emirates. Richard attended "Professional Development Programs" at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York with a focus on Revenue Management and Strategic Pricing for Hotels. He successfully completed the General Manager Program in 2006 at the School of Hotel Administration, Cornell University. Currently he is the General Manager of Vision Hotels Management, based in Abu Dhabi and Part Time Lecturer with European International College, an affiliate of César Ritz College in Abu Dhabi. He is a member of the HSMAI (Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International). Richard is happily married to Melinda Biado and has a six-year-old daughter, Yasmina. He seems very confident in his work; "Pressure is something you feel when you don't know what you are doing!"

**Zeina Khoury (BBA '07)** graduated with a degree in Banking & Finance. She writes, "I enrolled in fall 2001 in Banking and Finance. After the 1st semester I wanted to change my major into Advertising and Marketing; however thanks to the advice of Dr. Viviane Naimy, I was 100% convinced that this is the field I wanted to be in. I started loving the material more and more when I started taking advanced courses with Mr.

H. Hovivian, Dr. R. Shaffu, Mr. T. Khalil, and Dr. R. Khoueiry. Being a professional basketball player (Champville, Riyadi, Sagesse, Antranik, Jamhour, and the Lebanese National Team), I played with the NDU



team under the supervision of Georges Nader. We went on a trip to Bogazigi University in Turkey, where we won the championship. These are the best memories of my days at NDU. Most of the students that used to hang out at the Sports Office are still in touch, especially when they come and visit Dubai.

While studying at the university I always held a part-time job (acting, modeling, radio and TV presenter at Rotana for three consecutive years). I graduated in fall 2007 (I had to stop for a couple of semesters, which explains the delay). After graduating, I moved directly to Dubai, and I am currently working in an Australian company called Emirates Sunland where I am a property consultant. My company is behind the development of the most exclusive property in the world which is the Palazzo Versace. Therefore we work closely with the house of Versace in Milan. I have been with them for the past ten months and I am very happy at work. My long term plan is to go back to Lebanon to be close to my friends and family."

**Joyce Bou Sader (BA '03)** graduated from

NDU with a BA degree in International Affairs & Diplomacy. There she learned that, "the world is not as we thought it was, and that we have to leave it a better place." While still studying, Joyce started working in LBCI as a TV presenter. In the year 1999



she moved to Abu Dhabi TV where she hosted several programs, among which were "Cinemanía" and "MotorX". In 2007 she decided to take a different career path and accepted the position of Media Coordinator in the Interior Minister Office Directorate, Security Media Section, Abu Dhabi Police General Headquarters. Joyce still remembers well her professors: Dr. Georges Labaki, Dr. Naim Salem, Dr. Akl Keyrouz. One of her closest NDU classmates, Ziad Azzi says, "Joyce is always smiling! She is well spoken, humorous and talented."

**Pamela Bteiche (BA'07)** graduated from NDU with a degree in Education – Early Childhood. Her ambition took her to Dubai, where she was seeking a job opportunity. She did quite a number of interviews in the advertising, marketing, and education fields. One day, she got a phone call that she was accepted in one of the advertising agencies that she had applied to. It was a big challenge, because her experience in this field was below zero, and she was supposedly under probation for 6 months. But since the improvement was so fast, the probation period went down from six months to three months only. However, she cannot deny the fact that Child Education helped her big time in her professional career. She was able to understand the whole concept of advertising and client servicing psychology “thanks to my university and professors who influenced my career life. People usually remember the old days of university when they go out into the real world. All that I can say is that NDU has graduated the best candidates in all fields,” she said.



**Maher Khoukhaji (BA '94)** writes, “I started my career at Fortune Promoseven in Lebanon in 1993 as account executive working on BMW & Coca-Cola. Then I moved in 1994 to Dubai to handle the McDonald's account along with the Coca - cola account for GCC, ME & North Africa. In 1999, I joined Bates Pan Gulf as Advertising & PR Director for Dubai Shopping Festival & Dubai Summer Surprises 99 & 2,000. After that I moved to Jeddah and started an event management company called "Landmark Events" for 2 years. I moved back to Dubai and joined Wunderman ME "Member of THE Holding Group" as Events & Special projects Director for another 3 years. The decision was taken to open my own event's company "Spotlight events" with the head office in Dubai and affiliates offices in KSA, Cairo, Beirut & Tunis. The company handles clients like LG Electronics ME, SAMSUNG Mobiles ME, Colgate ME, Sony Ericsson ME, etc... Beside the several awards that I have gained in my career, I have been elected last month by Emerald Who's Who (from NY, UAE) for professionals for the outstanding performance in



the Marketing & events business in the Middle East region. I'm happily married to the love of my life **Natalie Papadopoulos (BA '95)**, NDU graduate in Advertising & Marketing, whom I have known for the past 15 years and we have been married for 11 years and have 2 lovely kids: Jeffrey 5 years and Georgia 14 months.

**Elie Mattar (BBA'97)** writes, “While still taking courses at NDU, I started working. My career path is long and full of experience in different domains and fields of the market. My first job took me to GTC Hanna Salim Moussan & Sons as the Sales Team Leader for the North of Lebanon. In 1997 I received my degree in Business Marketing from NDU and joined the army for my military service.



In 1999, I left for Egypt to work at INDEVCO Group for 3 years. I was handling the sales activities of UNIPAKNILE in Alexandria in the capacity of Area Sales Executive. In 2002 I got a job offer to join Abu Dhabi National Industrial Projects-ADNIP as the Senior Marketing Executive for Abu Dhabi National Carpet Factory which was a member of the ADNIP Group. At that time the projects field was starting to boom in the UAE and after analyzing the market it found it was the best field to join. In 2005 I joined Silver Shore Trading as the Projects Sales Manager; I worked with them for about a year and a half. During this year I got married to Carole Ghorayeb whom I met in Dubai in 2004 and was the main reason for me to leave Abu Dhabi and move to Dubai after getting married. In 2007 I tied with Emirates Computers as the Projects Key Account Manager of the Networking division. Currently I am working at INTERIORS, one of the oldest interior supplies companies in the UAE and part of one of the biggest groups in the country, AL GURG GROUP occupying the position of the sales and projects manager tackling UAE projects. For me living in the UAE is great especially that I was raised here since my family was residing in Dubai since the early 70's.”

**Roger Younan (BBA '05)** a familiar face at NDU, graduated in Business Management. He believes that the campus life and academic knowledge that he gained at NDU had a major impact on his personality and career path. Courses of Management with Dr. Caroline Akhras

and Accounting with Mr. Hovivian had been very instrumental for him at work. After graduating, he moved to Dubai where he is currently working as Operation Manager at Transfreight Forward Company, offering worldwide forwarding service by road, sea and air. Roger has gained a reputation of being friendly and approachable.



**Marwan Rizkallah (BA '01)** after graduating with a BA in International Business Management, he applied to Cesar Ritz University in Switzerland and finished a postgraduate diploma in Hotels and Restaurant Administration. He joined Al-Bustan Rotana Hotel - Dubai in 2003 as Events Coordinator. He then moved to the Advertising field where he worked with Publicis Graphics for two years handling the Nestle portfolio. He was offered a position at Impact BBDO to handle the PepsiCo portfolio. Currently Marwan is still with Impact BBDO in the capacity of Senior Accountant Manager.



**Elie Akl (BE '99)** is among the first group to graduate with a BE in Mechanical Engineering. After finishing his military service as Lieutenant in the Rangers group 1999-2000, he joined Bassoul & Hneine – Lebanon as workshop manager for BMW-Renault & Alfa. In 2001, he moved to Dubai to work at Bosch Service Center. Chrysler, Jeep & Dodge Dealers- Abu Dhabi was his next job as After Sales Manager. By the end of 2007, he accepted the same position with VW/Audi & Porsche Dealers – Abu Dhabi.



Elie describes the type of work he does: "What I do is after sales, which means everything related to vehicles after the selling stage: repairing & spare parts. This involves a process of continuous learning of all new automotive technologies as well as quality control to reach always the highest customer satisfaction"

Elie is happily married to **Eliane Andrea** who graduated from NDU in summer 2003, and has a cute little daughter. Elie added in his class

notes, "NDU experience is great. I agree with my colleague and friend Peter Taouk that the five years we spent between the old campus and the new one are unforgettable and I add to it that I do not believe that anyone who studied and graduated from NDU is not proud of it...and for the Alumni gathering in Abu Dhabi, I would like to thank you, Simon, for visiting us in Abu Dhabi. Hopefully next time you will have enough time to spend with us so we shall have the chance to treat you as you treated when we were students. Really it was a nice act of NDU to keep us all in touch like a big family and I was really astonished of how big and fast our NDU is growing."

**Dany Chakhtoura (BA '02)** writes, "Thank you NDU for being part of our lives again. I wish you all the best and I'm always ready to offer any help. I graduated from NDU with a BA in Advertising & Marketing and then moved to Abu Dhabi to work in an advertising company called Advertising and Marketing Consultants (AMC). In the year 2004 I decided to take my academic life forward. I enrolled in the Masters Program at the University of Leicester and graduated in the year 2006 with an MA in Mass Communications. In November 2005 I joined Union National Bank Abu Dhabi, head office as Senior Officer in Marketing and Media. One more time, I decided to take the extra mile and move forward in the academic field. Therefore, in August 2007, I enrolled in the Doctorate program at the University of Phoenix, Arizona working to obtain a Doctorate of Management in Organizational Leadership. In March 2008, I moved to a new company called Gulf Finance Corporation to be the head of Marketing and Communications and Acting General Manager for their offices in Abu Dhabi."



**Hazem Aouad (BBA 00')** writes, "After my graduation from NDU in Hotel Management, I joined the University Centre Cesar Ritz in Brig, Switzerland where I graduated with a Post-Graduate Diploma. I started my career with the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company in Doha with the opening team in September 2001 and moved up the ladder until I



reached my current position of Senior Sales Manager at The Ritz-Carlton, Dubai. On the personal level, I met my future wife in Dubai in 2006 and our marriage is scheduled for May 30, 2008 in England and August 9, 2008 in Lebanon. I have been part of the NDU Alumni in Dubai since 2005, when I moved to the UAE. I encourage all NDU graduates to participate in the activities that the Alumni are doing as this is a great opportunity to stay in touch with your colleagues and friends. It is a very good tool to get assistance from them when needed."

**Selim F. Kassab (BS '99, MS '06)** a face of character, still remembers his ID #: 952963. He graduated from NDU with Bachelor of Science in Computer Science and MS in Computer Information Systems. Currently he is working in COMPUWARE Middle East, an international American Company in IT and Business Industry in two capacities as Professional Services Manager and Human Resource Manager too. The company is located in Dubai Media City.



**Nabil Skayem (BS '95)** graduated with a BS in Computer Science when NDU was still at the Old Campus. He started his career in Abu Dhabi as a software developer and pre-sales support. He longed to come back to Lebanon but failed both times to stay. Currently he is working in Dubai as consultant in the supply chain automation industry. His marital status hasn't changed yet: young, free and single. Whenever he is back in Lebanon; Nabil never fails to visit NDU, particularly his very good friend Karla Sfeir.



**Sayed Tayoun (BBA '00)**, an indicator of excellence, writes, "I graduated in year 2000 with BBA in Hotel Management and Tourism. NDU was one of the leading universities in the region to start this major. After several years, I feel so proud to see NDU Hotel Management graduates penetrating the industry globally and having much positive impact on larger organizations. My career started while studying in 1997 where I worked at Regency Palace Hotel in Adma in its different departments. In 2002 and after graduation and completing my military service, I moved to Dubai with Rotana Hotels and started in Sales & Marketing. In 2005 I joined

InterContinental Hotels Group and moved to InterContinental Doha Qatar as a senior sales manager, where I spent almost three years. Then I got transferred to Crowne Plaza Abu Dhabi as a Director of Sales & Marketing in December 2007. I am absolutely passionate about my job and enjoy everyday at work. It is very interesting to be part of the growth in the Gulf region yet frustrating to see Lebanon going in the opposite direction. My dream is one day to be back home and contribute to the tourism industry in my own country"



**Juliana Hawi (BS '05)** writes, "I graduated in the summer of 2005 with a BS in Computer Science. I moved to Dubai almost a year ago, where I am currently working as pre-sales consultant at Span group, an IT solutions warehouse." With a megawatt smile, Juliana continues, "I believe that I was very lucky to get the chance to study in such a wonderful university and in such a WOW environment. Believe me, till now I still remember every second I spent at NDU, particularly at the Sports Office where I was part of the Women's basketball team. I take the opportunity to thank the NDU staff, my teachers, with special thanks to Mr. Georges Nader and Mr. Lucy Boutros."



## Sheikh Mohammed – A Man of Vision

You can never miss his name in Dubai. Everyone talks about him. Jad admires his leadership. Jean Pierre considers him a shining example of how leaders should be. They call him "Sheikh Mohammed", as if they are calling their brother, their son or their father. He is not only a national figure but also a major figure internationally. One of his confidants said to TIME Magazine, "What he is trying to do is to build an Arab and Muslim success story."



You can never miss the book found in all libraries and stores in Dubai. My Vision - Challenges in the Race for Excellence is a book co-authored by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai, and Adel Bishtawi, Palestinian biographer and author. It was first published, in Arabic, in April 2006. The English version will be out soon.

The book consists of 13 chapters and is divided into 5 key sections. The book tries to put in writing the vision and philosophy on which the current economic boom of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates is based. It focuses on providing a pathway for the Arab nations to come together and become an effective central region of the world. He holds Dubai up as an example of extraordinary development based on excellent leadership, management, teamwork and timely decision-making.

In September 2007, Sheik Mohammed launched a humanitarian campaign, Dubai Cares, to raise money to educate one million children in impoverished parts of the world. The campaign is Dubai's contribution to the U.N. Millennium Development Goals for providing Children's Primary Education to every child by 2015. The amount donated to this campaign exceeded US\$ 65,573,770 six days after its launch.



Early April 2008, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed paid a visit to Tsinghua University during his visit to China. He was asked by one of the students in a private audience the following question: There are so many young people in important positions in UAE, so why do you choose so many young people to take so much responsibility? Sheikh Mohammed answered, "I'll tell you a story. There is an example in Europe... a lion better leads the sheep than the sheep leads the lions. And I was giving a lecture one day and I thought to say it... but I said, whoever said it; it's a very bad example. I think the leader should teach his followers to be lions like him... and then the lion will lead lions... We went to the best universities, our sons went to the best universities and we have the experience of leading the country... By gaining the experience they become young, but leaders. "We have to make history and approach the future with

steady steps, not wait for the future to come to us."

## Last word – Lost Alumni Campaign

**Help us Find Them –** When Fr. Walid Moussa, President of NDU initiated the Alumni Affairs Office, his first priority was the database. More than ten thousand graduates have Notre Dame University as their Alma Mater. The Alumni Affairs Office rolls out a new advertising campaign to encourage back alumni who have lost touch with the University. "We know there are a lot of people who aren't connected," said Fr. Moussa, "They are people who have lost touch with the University. We are hoping to try to find them in many ways." Why now? First and foremost, because we care about them and don't want to lose touch with them.



We are approaching every Alumnus, asking their help in tracking lost Alumni. If you know the whereabouts of any of these people, please contact Mrs. Rose Mady in the Alumni Affairs Office by email at: [alumni.affairs@ndu.edu.lb](mailto:alumni.affairs@ndu.edu.lb).

**ALUMNI E-NEWSLETTER**  
 Is a bulletin published by NDU Alumni Affairs Office (AAO)  
 Email: [alumni.affairs@ndu.edu.lb](mailto:alumni.affairs@ndu.edu.lb)

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