

Nicholas Saadah

Nicholas Saadah is a first-year medical student at the AUB where he represents the third generation of his family to attend the AUB medical school (all four of his grandparents graduated from the AUB faculty of medicine and his grandmother Mai Saade was the first Lebanese woman to graduate from the AUB medical school in 1940). His father was born and raised in Amioun and graduated from the AUB medical school in 1971. His mother was born and raised in Nazareth, Palestine and, along with her family, fled to Lebanon in 1967 to escape the Israeli occupation of their homeland. Together, they moved to the United States in 1972 where his father completed his residency, with intentions of returning to Lebanon once finished. With the beginning of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975, they remained in the states and raised a family of three boys, of whom Nicholas is the middle child.

Though Nicholas grew up in the states, he and his brothers spent most of their summers in Lebanon - which Nicholas attributes the fact that he thinks of Lebanon as home. After finishing high school, Nicholas earned a B.S. in Aerospace Engineering from Purdue University and a M.S. in the same subject from Stanford University. He spent the summers of his university years interning for NASA at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, TX. He returned to the AUB for medical school this year and, once finished, plans on working in the grow in intersection between the fields of medicine and engineering.

Nicholas' extra-curricular passion is ballet. He spent his childhood in dance classes and was awarded a year-long scholarship to train at the Conservatoire National d'Aix-en-Provence in France. In addition to his studies, Nicholas spent the past five years on paid contract with four ballet companies and describes being paid to dance before an audience as 'an exhilarating and humbling experience.' Though medical school has put an end to his professional dance career, he can still be found most nights studying while stretching on the floor of his Penrose dorm room.

Nate George

Nate George is a Lebanese-American graduate student at the Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies at AUB. He earned his undergraduate degree with honors in Cinema from the University of Iowa in the United States. His short films are award-winning and have been screened at several festivals. He also minored in Music and was a DJ, news host, and the Programming Director for the University's student-run radio station. He plans on pursuing a career in either media/film or academia, or possibly both.

John Hayden

John Hayden is a Masters Candidate in the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration (PSPA) at the American University of Beirut, and a Graduate of History at the University of Toronto where he studied with the prominent Kurdish intellectual, Amir Hassanpour. John has written pieces for the MIT Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies, the University of Toronto's Trinity Journal and the Ethics Section of the Canadian Journalism

Project. In 2006, John spent a summer semester at Birzeit University in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and continues diverse research on various topics, including; Canada's diplomatic history in the region, the political philosophy of International Relations, and the role of liberal public intellectuals in shaping discourse on the Middle East. Before coming to Beirut, John worked for three years in community economic development in south-eastern Ontario, during which he presented research on knowledge network formations for professional associations and research networks at the provincial and national level. He is currently a member of the AUB Choral Society, under the direction of Paul Meers.

Ruth Bonazza

Name: Ruth Bonazza

Nationality: Canadian and American

Education: BA- Major in International Affairs, Minor in East Asian Studies at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR Study abroad experience at Kansai Gaidai in Osaka Teaching certificate to teach English as a second or foreign language from Seattle University, Seattle WA.

Work Experience: Taught in Japan for 5 years, specialize in early childhood education

Academic Interests: Childhood studies, studies of group identity and exclusion.

Personal Interests: I'll read just about everything (I don't like to name favorites, but recently I have read Natsume Soseki, Milan Kundera, Banana Yoshimoto, Victor Hugo, Evelyn Waugh and William Golding). I also like to swim.

Why I chose Lebanon: I came because I wanted to learn. AUB has an excellent reputation and I wanted to be a part of the CBR. I partly chose Lebanon because of the rocks, the beautiful gray rocks of the mountains. When I was a child, I fell in love with the rocks over a picture book atlas, and finally, I have the chance to see them in person.

Important people in my life: My grandfathers. One traveled across the world to escape fascism and the other was a driving force in studying the economics of education and started studying Chinese when he turned 70.

Future Plans: I am excited to be at AUB and I hope to learn more about the education system in Lebanon. I would like to be a part of education projects that could link Lebanon to Japan and the US.

Paul Ramia

I am a biology major (pre med). This is the end of my junior year. My future career plans are heading towards to medical school and in due time graduating to become a doctor. Onwards from there, I believe the possibilities are infinite. As for my personal hobbies, first off I am really passionate about sports and exercise, and I make sure to consistently dedicate a lot of my time to achieving my athletic goals. More relevantly, one of my greatest interests is public speaking and I place great importance on the ability to communicate my thoughts and beliefs. (I guess that means the pressure is on me to give a great presentation).

Tarek Tutunji

I was thrilled when I got the news about the Michel Chiha Essay Contest. My name is Tarek Tutunji, (I prefer that it be spelled this way), I have lived all my life in Lebanon and have done all my schooling in Brummana High School. I did my BA in Political Studies in AUB and graduated with distinction. I am currently doing my Masters in Comparative Politics in the AUB Political Science Department. I am a member of the USFC and a writer for Outlook. I am active outside of the University in an NGO called Nahwa El Muwaitiniya, and an independent student political group called No Frontiers. I am a Graduate Assistant at the Political Science department. In my future plans I hope to get published and continue my education in order to get a PHD to do research and teach. In my spare time I especially enjoy reading post-modern literature and filming with my video camera. I would say that my most outstanding trait is my independence.