

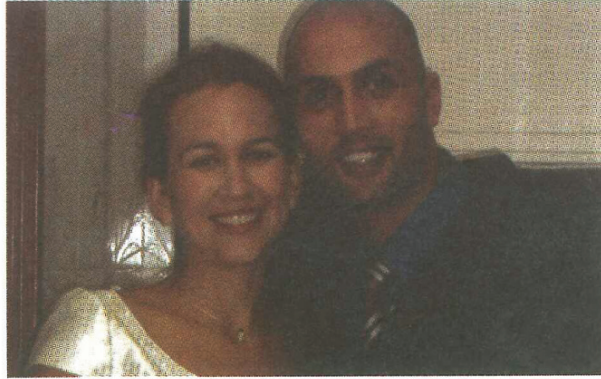


Open Doors draws a crowd



Tight security was no obstacle to the success of the annual Open Doors Day organized by Admission Services to introduce potential students and their families to the mission and the operation of AlAkhawayn University. *(continued on page 4)*

AlAkhawayn University's storks



In an attempt to get to know the 'real people' who work and live in our environment, the auIBridge set out to get to know the personalities behind the professional facades we interact with every day. We started with the most interesting: the AUI Storks: Couples who work together on campus. *(continued on page 11)*

Fun and games at Fun Run



"Be there for those who need a little care" was the main theme of the Fun Run held on the grounds of AUI on April 7th. The theme was chosen by the Hand in Hand Association which each year holds a fund raising event for a chosen community project. *(continued on page 3)*



Ms. Hind Lahlou AA vice president, President Rachid Benmokhtar, and Mr. Youssef Itoban the AA president visiting companies' stands during the "Job Fair 2007" (page 3)

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The Qotbi Show at AUI

RACHIDA AZELMAD

On Friday, April 20th, 2007, a Radio show was recorded from Al Akhawayn University for Casa FM. The show was animated by Imad Qotbi, a famous journalist who broke lately a world record of 46 hours non-stop broadcast. The program included presentations about the university by Dr. Belfekih, Vice President of Students Affairs, Mr. Fatmi, the Communication Department Director and Mr. Ittobane, the Alumni Association President. The event was marked by the presence of active students from different student associations and clubs who talked about their activities and projects. In addition to that, many AUI talents, like Siham Lakchiri, Ahmed Berrada, Safaa Rahbaoui, and Rachid Jabbouri, got the chance to perform for the show.



Imad Qotbi holding auIBridge

Disappointing student turnout at AUI Job Fair

HAJAR BOUSFIHA

On the 5th and 6th of April 2007, the Alumni Association, in collaboration with Communication Club and Human Resources Club organized the 4th annual Job Fair at AUI. This year's slogan was: "Maroc off shoring: Realisations, opportunités, et challenges."

The Job Fair gathered more than twenty companies for the event with the aim of informing and sensitizing AUI students to the offers, opportunities as well as the threats of the Moroccan job market. This 4th edition of the Job Fair was sponsored mainly by the Group ONA (ONA Holding, Leisieur, Central Laitière, Marjane...etc) and CDG (CDG Group, CDG Development...) in addition to a number of Moroccan and international companies such as Nokia, Microsoft, ONE, and ONDA.

During these two days, the Job Fair hosted a conference and a variety of workshops with the presence of important, competent and experienced people to help AUI students acquire the information they need to better position themselves in the job market.

The two-day event, organized with great care by the new board of the Alumni Association under the presidency of Mr. Youssef Itoubane, took great pains to bring to this year's Job Fair compa-

nies which are specifically interested in recruiting AUI graduates. However, student turnout was disappointing, claimed Ms. Iman Amzil, the co-president of communication club. (PULL QUOTE)

Ms. Imane Amzil and her team were responsible for the internal communication regarding the Job Fair within the AUI community. Posters, e-mails, screen labs, AUI teletext, and flyers were among the means used to let AUI students know about the Job Fair. Even direct contact was held by Alumni members with senior students few days before the Job Fair as a way to sensitize students to the importance of the event and to encourage active participation.

Despite all these efforts, AUI students did not show interest. A few students participated the first day of the event, but by Friday, company representatives were jobless and the gymnasium was deserted. Ms Amzil explained: "To succeed in the Job Fair, we need two components: Companies and Students". Huge efforts were made to make available the first component, but this edition of Job Fair was sorely lacking in the second.

Contrary to what AUI students think, the Job Fair is open to every one: seniors, juniors, sophomores and even freshmen. If the student is not ready yet for a job interview, he/she can participate by learning how a Job Fair is



Students networking at the Job Fair

organized, which companies and representatives participate, what their expectations are. Students can network, setting the groundwork for future opportunities, further; they can get a sense of how their studies are going to be relevant in their future jobs.

"Wake up students, those opportunities are not offered to every body, better take advantage of such events and show the best of us, we are not the only students on the market, competition is getting tough and we need to sell our product." warned Ms. Imane Amzil.

Mohammed VI Library hosts AMICAL 2007

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The 2007 edition of the American International Consortium of Academic Libraries (AMICAL) Conference hosted by Mohammed VI Library of Al Akhawayn University, will take place between May 27-30, 2007. "Integrating library and IT services for better learning" will be the main focus of this year's conference. The Keynote address will be delivered by Susan Perry from Mt. Holyoke College, Senior adviser for Liberal Arts Colleges at the Andrew Mellon Foundation and Director of Programs at the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR).

The conference will address three major themes: "Collaboration on Technology-Enhanced Information Environments", "Collaboration for Academic Integrity" and "Networks: Sharing Resources, Sharing Expertise." NITLE post-conference workshops will be targeting the use of social software tools in higher education environments, and information services tools and systems such as learning management systems and

institutional repositories. "Thanks to AMICAL, our library is now a member of the RESPOND project through which our library staff benefited from a number of webseminars and web training sessions. Our library can now contribute original bibliographic records to feed into OCLC databases, and is



Susan Perry, the keynote speaker for this year's Consortium

poised to benefit from the collection analysis service provided by RESPOND", said Dr. Lotfi, Director of Mohammed VI Library.

AMICAL provides a unique opportunity for librarians, faculty members, and IP professionals from a number of institutions around the world to share

experience and to discuss ways to collaborate to better integrate technology in the learning environments that are the libraries, the classrooms, and the labs and IT departments. The conference also provides a unique opportunity for librarians from the member institutions to learn to collaborate to share resources and expertise among themselves and with leading institutions such as OCLC and NITLE.

AMICAL member institutions come from fifteen countries: Armenia, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Morocco, Russian, Sharjah (UAE), Spain and Switzerland. The conference is also attended by representatives of professional associations such as the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), the National Institute for Technology and Liberal Education (NITLE) and vendors of electronic resources.

Mountain tourism on the rise

SALWA NANA

The Tamesmount Nel Akhawayn Club in collaboration with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS) organized a day workshop titled "Amazigh Involvement in Mountain Tourism in Morocco" during Amazigh Day which took place on April 17, 2007.

Participants to the workshop were both Moroccan and foreign researchers interested in the Berber culture in addition to people involved in activities related to the mountain tourism, as well as local inhabitants. Among the contributors were eminent AUI profes-

sors: Dr. Michel Peyron, a world expert on the Berber culture; and Dr. Eric Ross, who conducted a research on how cultural heritage and urban planning are related to development. They gave talks about their own experience with and expectations of mountain tourism in the Atlas region; especially its impact on the Amazigh population. Recent studies indicate that mountain tourism has increased significantly by providing various tourist activities such as trekking, skiing, and rock-climbing. However, the local population, the

Amazigh who are the inhabitants of these mountains, are not profiting from it. According to Dr. Peyron, the number of trekkers in the region is estimated to be 100,000 per year yet the local communities are not seeing the economic benefits.

The objective of the workshop was to discuss the problems of mountain tourism in the Atlas area, and to consider possible solutions that would make the local Amazigh community beneficiaries of tourist activity, with the ultimate goal of increasing the quality of life in the region.



Students buying Amazigh Jewelry

Workshop focuses on women and water

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The UNESCO Chair "Water, Women and Decision Power" of Al Akhawayn University in collaboration with InWent-Capacity Building International and the National Office for Potable Water in Morocco hosted an international workshop on "Women in Water Management" from March 26 to March 28, 2007 at Al Akhawayn University.

The main objective of the workshop was to bring together participants from different countries to discuss and exchange ideas "...in order to set appropriate strategies for strengthening women's capacities in the field of water while taking into account the specific challenges facing Arab countries," said Dr. Asma El Kasmi, the UNESCO Chair at AUI.

Women play an important role in water management by providing, managing, and safeguarding family water use. In fact, women are most often the collectors, users and managers of water in the household. Many women in rural areas spend many hours hauling heavy containers sometimes over long

distances. Because they are responsible for supplying water, women have considerable knowledge about water resources, including quality and reliability, restrictions, acceptable storage methods. Women are key to the success of water resource development and management.

The workshop "Women in Water Management" aims at constructively including women and their knowledge of water in water-related development efforts. It focused on translating theories into concrete possibilities and accurate paradigms by ensuring that women's voices are heard at all community levels and most importantly that their professional skills be recognized and capitalized on within water institutions. The active participation of women is critical for ensuring sustainable use of water resources said Dr. El Kasmi.

In addition to representatives of InWent, the World Bank, and the UNESCO Office for Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, and Tunisia who attended the workshop, professionals from Morocco, Germany, Tunisia, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, and Lebanon also participated in this workshop.



Woman of the Atlas providing water to her family



Dr. Benmokhtar giving the start for the race

Fun and games at Fun Run

KENZA DAHAK

"Be there for those who need a little care" was the main theme of the Fun Run held on the grounds of AUI on April 7th. The theme was chosen by the Hand in Hand Association which each year holds a fund raising event for a chosen community project. The funds collected this year will serve as the core financing for the construction of a new school designed for children at risk.

The main objective of the Fun Run at AUI is to raise monies through a day dedicated to fun activities and entertainment. For the past 8 years, the Fun Run has become a tradition which has drawn the presence of numerous Moroccan celebrities and high profile sponsors.

This year, like every year, the Fun Run started up with Fun Walk.

Lamyaa Bouamar, an Akhawayn Communication student, participated in the Fun Walk and finished her run by saying: "It was an enjoyable-exhausting run!" The Fun Walk was followed up by a lunch buffet in the building 13 (Gymnasium), where an agreeable, crowd families, friends and artists gathered.

In the afternoon, a circus performance by the AMESIP (Association Marocaine d'aide aux Enfants en Situation Précaire) entertained children and adults alike. The afternoon fun continued with horseback riding, games and surprises. "The Fun Fair, occurred in a relaxing environment that most of us enjoyed. The games were very appealing, especially the paint ball activity in which I participated," said one of our Akhawayn students, Moncef

Moqtad.

The Fun Run this year finally concluded at the Gala where Latifa Raafat and Said Mosker volunteered their time to help children at risk. Talented students such as Chacha Camelia, Hmed called "lhaj" and Siham, performed alongside professional artists. Magicians, dancers from Paris and the music group Numydia added to the success of the party. The Gala culminated with the draw and presentation of very attractive Tombola prizes.

The event's success was also due to the contribution of several sponsors (Toyota, Maroc Telecom, Red Bull and many others), the contributing artists who volunteered, and the AUI community.

AUI reps attend preliminary EMYP

KENZA DAHAK

Of two hundred students who applied to attend the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament across Morocco, only five were selected; three of the five are from Al Akhawayn University. Two are sophomore students, Imane Kabbaj and Hamza Essakhi, along with an AUI alum, Wadia AitHamza, were chosen to represent Morocco at the Euro-Mediterranean Youth Parliament (EMYP).

The EMYP initiative was created through cooperation between the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the European Commission. Their objective is to create and facilitate a dialogue between various cultures. The preliminary conference took place in Alexandria, Egypt, from March 10-15.

During the preliminary session in Alexandria, young people from the entire Arab world participated. New relationships were formed based on common interests and concerns. "Even if governments are in conflict, there can be

friendship and brotherhood between the citizens," stated Imane Kabbage, one of our representatives.

Imane related that during the Alexandria preliminary session, the one testimony that grabbed everyone's attention was surprisingly from a simple Palestinian girl who was not part of the youth parliament. (pull quote) The Palestinian girl said, "I was so glad to meet young Israelis and have the opportunity to get to know them because the only Israelis I have ever met in my life are the Israelis' soldiers who killed Palestinians. This, Imane tells us, is a proof of forgiveness, tolerance and awareness from ordinary people who are not responsible for their government's politics.

Most importantly, our students learned more than they expected such as new values for life and new forms of respect. "I realized that differences can become similarities, and I felt that I was a citizen of the "global village" that



AUI students attending preliminary session in Alexandria, Egypt

makes the Earth!" said Imane Kabbaj. Now, our students are ready to go to the primary session of the EMYP which

is scheduled for May 25th to June 4th and will take place in Berlin.

Open Doors draws a crowd

HIND CHRAIBI MIOU

Tight security was no obstacle to the success of the annual Open Doors Day organized by Admission Services to introduce potential students and their families to the mission and the operation of AlAkhawayn University. On April 22, AUI student ambassadors as well as faculty members welcomed over 400 interested and curious guests.

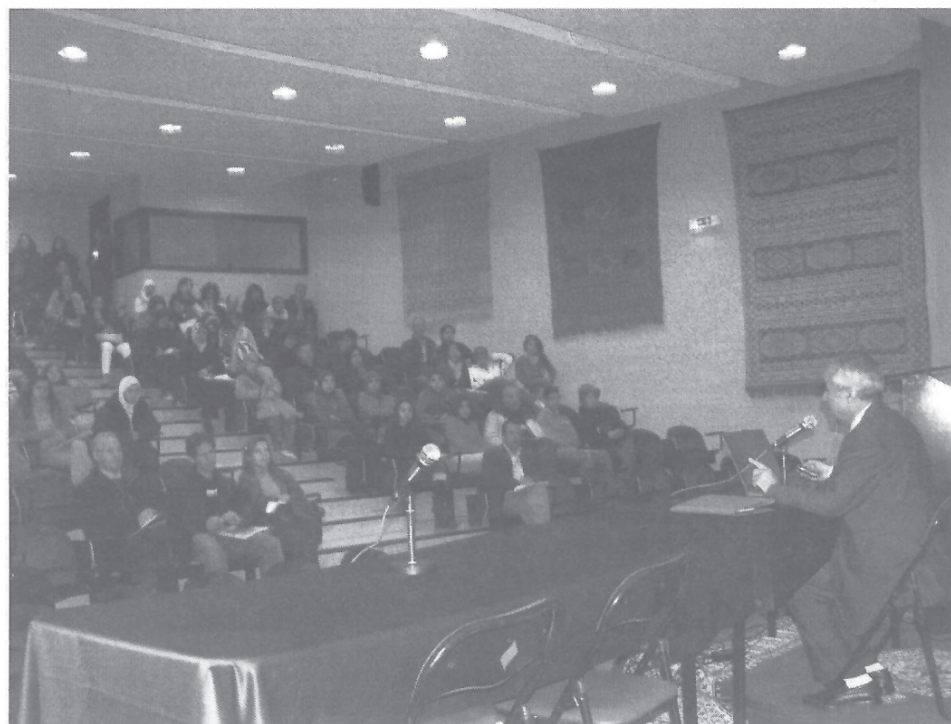
Student ambassadors guided visitors on campus tours which included different buildings such as the library, the gymnasium, the research laboratories, and for the first time the Trading Room in building four.

Dr. Belfekih, the Vice President for Student Affairs, gave a general presentation about the infrastructure and the operations of the University. In addition, the deans of the three schools, Dr. Derrabi, Dr. Legrouiri, and Dr. Dhabi gave introduced each school and specified the academic requirements; whereas, profes-

sors gave detailed information about the courses studied in each major.

This "Open Doors Day" was a little bit different from those of the preceding years as many strict security measures were taken to keep the University and its guests safe. Indeed, AUI security used metal detectors in the entry of building 1, checked the bags of the visitors, restricted vehicular access to campus, and limited parking to the second parking area. The local forces helped AUI security in handling the flow of visitors.

Statistics based on questionnaires filled by each visitor at the end of each visit show that the number of prospective students increases each year, that visitors appreciate interacting with student volunteers and listening to their individual experiences, and that are impressed by the goals and values of our University.



Dr. Belfekih introducing the University to the parents

Think tanks at Leadership Seminar

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The 2nd annual leadership seminar "Student Leadership & Social Entrepreneurship" took place at Al Akhawayn University from April 11 - 15. Forty Seven students, young social entrepreneurs, and journalists from the entire MENA (Middle East and Northern Africa) region as well as the United States attended this seminar.

"The seminar was an opportunity to meet 47 participants from the MENA region as well as from the US

who share the same liberal values as well as principles of freedom and liberty. However, this event would not have happened without the help of three important American NGOs: the American Islamic Congress: AIC, Atlas economic research foundation and Cato institute" said Ms. Zineb Benalla, member of the organizing committee.

The event was organized by the Human Rights Club (HRC) with the aim of bringing students together to share



ideas and common interests. One of the main goals was to introduce participants to the world of think tanks and ideas that can bring change to local communities. This was also an opportunity to learn how to start a public policy project, spread ideas, network, and engage in public relations campaigns.

The 2nd international student seminar covered a wide range of activities and featured workshops on topics related to "Principles of Moral Leadership", "Handling Leadership Challenges", and "Putting Values into Action". The objectives of the workshops were to introduce participants to ongoing

work in the area of leadership and service and provide an informal forum for discussion and exchange of ideas.

"This conference encourages students not only to study but also to reflect, and through an understanding of the world, to prepare for lives of leadership and service. This is can not happen without getting in touch with different people from different parts of the world. This type of event will expose members to diversity, provide global experience as well as develop Al Akhawayn University's international reputation" said Ms. Benalla.

Nanotechnology arrives at AUI

LEILA BAHRI

Alakhawayn University in Ifrane, in collaboration with the "Association Marocaine de Nanotechnologies" (AMANAT) organized the First Moroccan Days on Nanoscience and Nanotechnology from April the 8th to April 10th .

Nanotechnology, or, as it is sometimes called, molecular manufacturing, is a branch of engineering that deals with the design and manufacture of extremely small electronic circuits and mechanical devices built at the molecular level of matter. Nanoscience and nanotechnology have a growing impact on modern materials and on electronics and photonics technology as well as on biotechnology.

The conference turned around nine main topics that were discussed during two days of intensive talks. Talks included "Nanomaterial & Applications",

"Nanofabrication and Characterization", "Nanomagnetism", "Molecular and Macromolecular Devices, "Nanobiotechnology". The invited speakers

were from England (Oxford), Japan, France, Belgium, Canada, USA, Tunisia, Algeria, and from various Moroccan universities.

According to Dr. Darhmaoui, Chair of the organizing committee, the goals of the conference are mainly "...to provide a forum and opportunity for experts from Morocco and abroad to gather and discuss the latest research and breakthroughs, to exchange the most recent information on nanotechnology and dissemination of these high quality findings."

Dr. M. Boussmina, professor of Chemical Engineering at LAVAL University in Quebec, one of the guests of the conference, said that the first Moroccan Days on Nano-Technology were a real success as important issues and innovations had been discussed and shared between scientists from different nationalities.



Students and Professors preparing the conference

TIGA award: Dr. Kettani and AUI honored

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The e-gov project headed by Dr. Kettani, a professor of Software Engineering at SSE, has been nominated by The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Canadian e-Policy Resource Center (CePRC) for the 2007 Technology in Government in Africa Awards Program (TIGA).

The use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the delivery of pub-

lic services to millions of Africans, mostly in rural areas, remains a major challenge for African governments. There is an urgent need to focus on access to information and provision of redress and feedback to communities. Such services remain one of the key Millennium Development Goals.

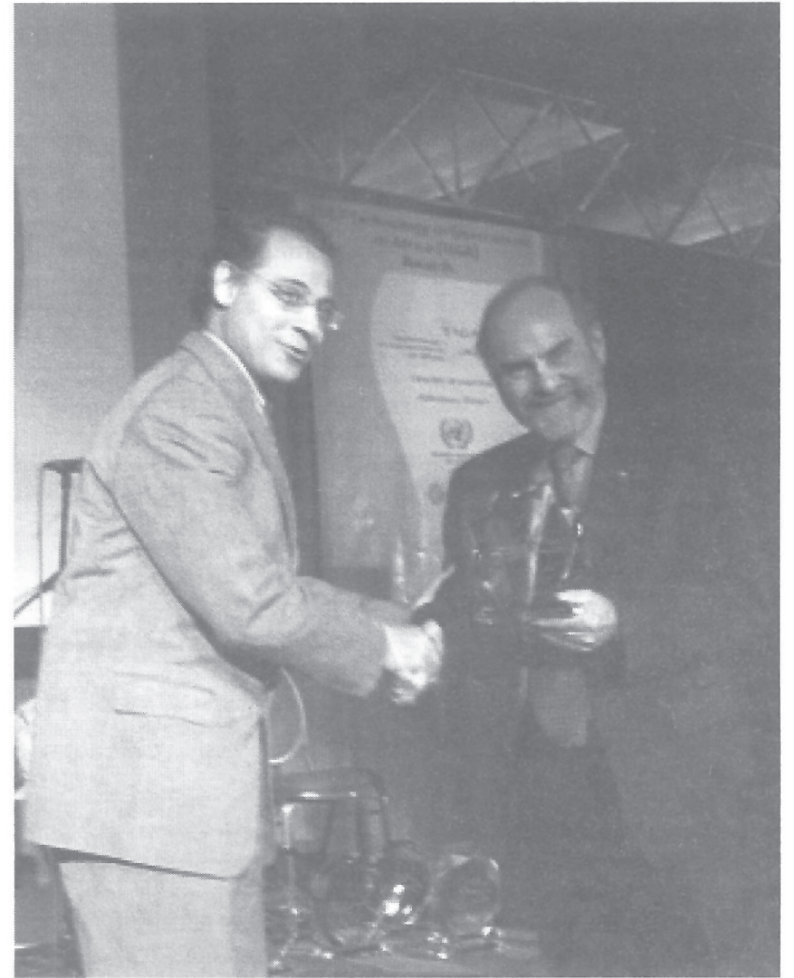
The same project has already won the "e-Mtiaz" Award in 2006 for being the

best e-government project in Morocco that contributes to making information and communication technologies (ICTs) a tool of human, social and economical development of the country.

The TIGA award aimed at recognizing outstanding achievements by organizations or teams in developing and implementing innovative projects to improve online government service delivery (such as birth & death registration, service application forms, tax payments, revenue collection, etc). It is also an opportunity to recognize the work of African Governments in the effective use of ICTs for public services delivery to citizens contributing to the development of the Information Society in Africa.

The Awards ceremony took place on Tuesday, 1st May 2007 at the Sheraton Addis. More than 300 African delegates from all over the continent including the Diplomatic Corps based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as well as representatives of contributors and partners engaged in

providing support to the development of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in Africa.



Miss AUI 2007: Beauty of soul

ZAKARIA EL RHEZAOU

"Soyez belle dans votre âme, le reste tombera impeccablement" the English translation for which is "Be beautiful in your soul, and everything else will follow perfectly", was the doctrine of the Miss AUI 2007 competition.

Miss AUI is a newly launched competition aiming to give our AUI beautiful young ladies the least recognition

"Be beautiful in your soul, and everything else will follow perfectly"

they deserve. The competition did not aim to exclude the masculine gender, and was not at all a sexist action as some people wrongly believed.

Some courageous female students kindly accepted to participate in the competition that was not aiming to end up with a winner and losers, but in fact was just symbolic and intended to say a word of truth about our AUI students.

The competition was organized by AUI Channel, which was very active this semester. External support and cooperation were given by many personalities and associations in terms of logistics, financial support, gifts,



Ms. Mariam Ait Belhoucine honored Miss AUI 2007

clothes, and make up. The competition took place in building 17, and witnessed the presence of a large audience.

The most important in the competition was not the competition itself, but was the general atmosphere and the symbolic idea behind organizing this event. Also, funny anecdotes and unexpected "accidents" took place, and that made people laugh out loud. I can cite the Miss "Bien sur", The Miss who looks for a "guy with filled pocket and cash wallet", and the uncensored comments of the famous Sara Ait Lmouden who animated the show.

The competition knew the participation of one of the best voices in Morocco, Maria Naciri, who overwhelmed the audience by her strong voice and the famous songs she performed.

The competition knew the election of Ms. Mariam Ait Belhoucine, who was crowned "Miss AUI 2007".

We can just encourage similar initiatives, and the organizers promised AUI community that next semester there will be Miss AUI and also Mister AUI competitions. So guys, prepare yourself to take part in this special event, and be ready for Sara's questions.

Editorial

The AUI Bridge: The Bridge to Excellence and Identity

INASS MSAIDI



After the launch of the first issue of the auiBridge, we were encouraged by messages of support and appreciation from all sectors of the AUI community. After the launch, the whole editorial board took a deep breath and started on a new journalistic journey.

We are doing our best to keep improving, and to meet the high standards the auiBridge has set for itself. The auiBridge wishes to be a student publication that aims at reaching a high standard of professionalism and commitment.

In this issue, we have chosen "Dorm Living" as a topic for letters to the editor. The majority of the letters that we received claimed that AUI dorms are comfortable and relaxed. However; there were many suggestions for improvement of the service provided by the housing department. The housing staff needs to be more helpful in terms of answering the students' requests quickly and students want to be taken seriously. Also, noise policy in all dorms should be enforced especially in quiet hours and during exams.

As every year, the month of April was full of different activities that took place at the university. The Fun Run was an opportunity for students, parents, faculty, staff, etc to get together for the objective of "drawing a smile on the face of every child" as the official song of Hand in Hand says. Another major event was the Job Fair which was organized by the Alumni Association. Students of different academic levels had the chance to meet representatives from Moroccan companies and learn about the job market.

At last, we would like to thank our readers for their encouragement and continuous support.

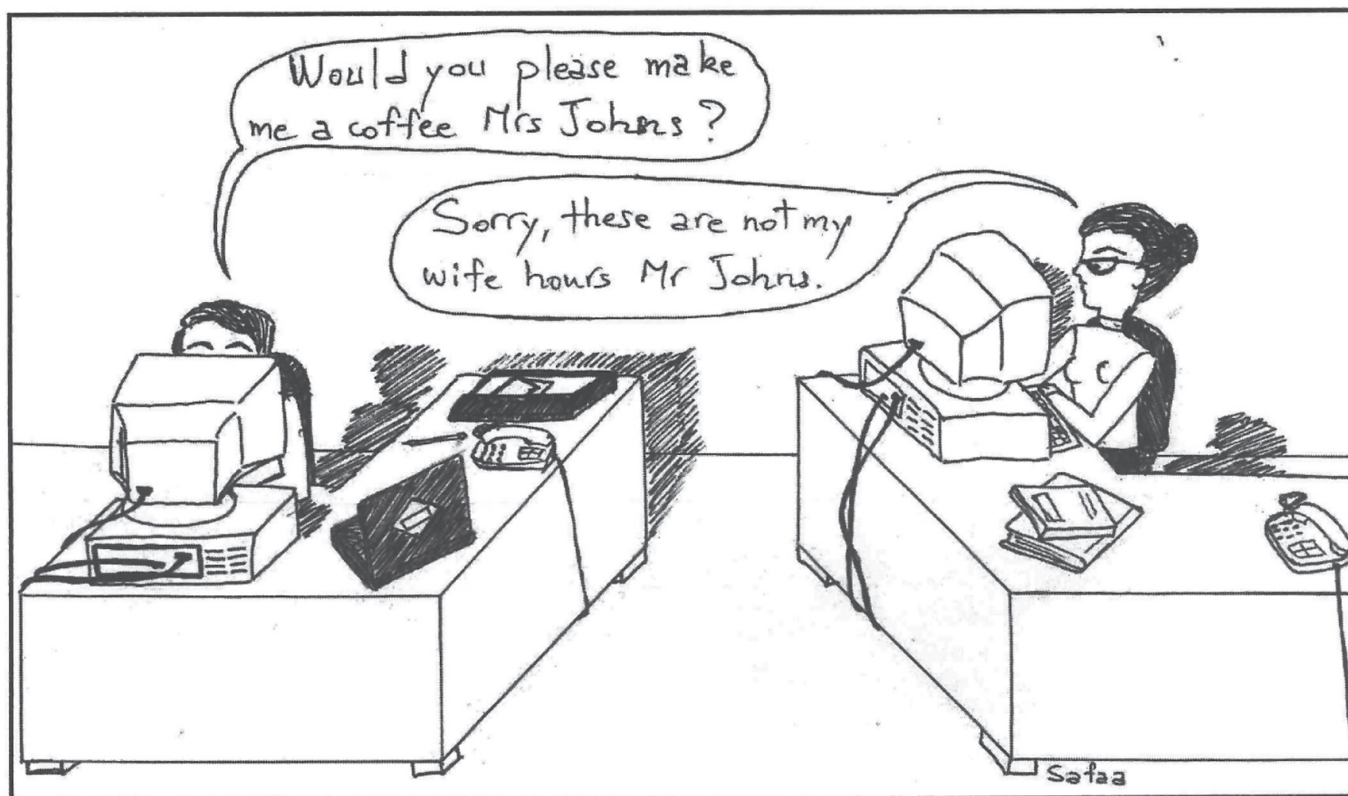
NEXT ISSUE'S TOPIC

Students Government Association

Have something to say?
Get it off your chest!
Write us a letter!

The AUI Bridge wants to hear from you!

Contact:
bridge@aui.ma



Married couples working at the same place

Letters to the Editor
Dorms Life at AUI

Dear Editor,
In my opinion, life in dorms is very comfortable. Indeed, the housing services offer to us all the conditions that will help us to have a comfy life, and to enjoy ourselves inside the campus. In fact, I am glad to continue my studies in a university where I can have perfect housing services. In order to improve the quality of the service, I just suggest giving more attention to some noisy patterns that should not be allowed inside the buildings.

Ouaderzan Abderrahim

Dear Editor,
I think that AUI dorms are the best dorms I have ever been in. We have got all the facilities. We only have to make a phone call to get everything done for us. It would be great if we get more cleaning sessions though. Another thing would be organizing building parties once in a while. This would help people to get to know each other.

Laila El Atikki

Dear Editor,
The housing services keep delaying our demands. Something like that happened for example when the heater was not working or that the TV cable in the common kitchen of my building was missing. That lasted for three months approximately! The housing staff should take the students' demands more seriously.

Hind Rabah

Dear Editor,
Compared to other universities in Morocco or abroad, I can say that the services offered by the housing office are not perfect, but rather ok. I think that the noise policy should be enforced especially in buildings where there is too much noise at night.

Nadia Agoumi

Dear Editor,
The good quality of the housing services at any university is a key part of students' academic success. AUI's housing services provide students with affordable student living; however, many issues still persist within AUI dorms. For instance, noise is still present in many dorms making it difficult for some students to concentrate on their studies or to have some rest. Also, the maintenance services are not all the time provided right after the student's request; this may actually disturb the students' living in the dorms. In addition, the cleaning quality is not all the time at the expectation level of students who may not have time to arrange their rooms, especially during exam periods. I believe it is necessary for housing officers to take into account the importance of these dorms' problems that appear futile, but can be a source of disturbance for students.

Afaf Chekkar

Letters to the Editor Policy

AUI BRIDGE welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should not exceed 200 words and must include writers name. Editors have the right to edit letters for length, grammar and spelling.

Letters may be delivered to the newsroom in the Student Activities Office or emailed to bridge@aui.ma. For more information, stop by the newsroom or contact the editor-in-chief.

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Nine days in Norway

IMANE AMZIL

I was walking to my eight o'clock class when I noticed a poster with a beautiful veiled girl on it. After scanning the content, I realized that it was an International Student Festival held in Norway with a "Global Boundaries" theme. I

Why don't I wear a veil? Do all men have beards? Why do terrorists blow themselves up in the name of Islam?

passed by the same poster every day for 5 days with the feeling that it was talking to me and telling me to send in my application. I was annoyed because I was thinking of it all the time, so I decided to apply.

Six months later, when I had long forgotten about it, I received an email with a little note at the end saying: "See you in Trondheim".

This conference was a unique event because it was strictly student organized and run. Martin Svarva, who is the president of the "International Student Festival In Trondheim (ISFIT)", took one year off his studies to prepare for this 6

million Norwegian Kroners event. There were 376 volunteers who put in 15 plus hour days to ensure that the conference happened and ran smoothly. One of the great things about the conference was the diversity of students from all over the world. There were 470 students from 144 countries in attendance.

Finally, the day arrived. I was in Norway for the conference. All of a sudden, I realized I was the only student from Morocco and that it was my responsibility to represent Morocco, Islam, and other political views. I was bombarded with questions hourly: Why don't I wear a veil? Do all men have beards? Why do terrorists blow themselves up in the name of Islam? At times it was a hot debate, but I realized the questions arose out of curiosity. I was more than happy to discuss these issues with other student representatives.

Every morning we would start by listening to speakers, followed by participation in debates. After lunch, I would attend workshops. My workshop topic was "Defining Culture Equals Defining Identity." We would take an early dinner at 5 or 6 that usually involved informal conversations about everything you

can think of. By the end of the day we were back at the Student House after enjoying ourselves at pubs

It is true that our participation was only symbolic, but at least we were able to understand the need for world development.

and dancing with the students from the conference.

The most important festival event I had the chance to participate in was the World Parliament Experiment. It was a simulation of a world parliament, with constituencies for every geographic region (I was in the Northern African group). The problem we tried to solve was the Sudanese Darfur conflict. It is true that our participation was only symbolic, but at least we were able to understand the need for world development.

Everyone headed home with a strong sense of wanting to create change in the world. I felt that each one of us was like a snowball...we would begin with causing change locally and this local change would snowball and become global.

Alumni Column



Youssef ITTOBANE, President of the Alumni Association

Youssef's idea of membership

YOUSSEF ITTOBANE

In July 2003, I graduated from Al Akhawayn University with a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration majoring in Finance. Then I spent a very challenging and interesting year, during which I traveled to France to take part in a 6 months training program in Leadership and Strategic Communications. This training was an opportunity to assess my strengths and areas of development.

Afterwards, rather than start with anything that would be stamped on my CV, I preferred to accept an internship in Nestlé and at the same time initiate the job interview process.

"I will never forget is my International Management class with Mr. Canterbury where we were required to perform role playing"

I joined Microsoft in January 2005 via a worldwide sales program called the Microsoft Academy for College/University New Hires (MACH). Thanks to this great learning experience, I currently hold the position of Account Manager at Microsoft Morocco.

My best memory from my AUI days is marked by the team spirit of our soccer team -especially when we went to Dubai to represent our University in an International Soccer Tournament. I also still remember when I was required to deliver speeches to students as a member of the Student Government Association. One of the other things that I will never forget is my International Management class with Mr. Canterbury where we were required to perform role playing; it was funny and really valuable. My worst memory is related to the restaurant; I was expecting more diversity and better food quality.

My attachment to AUI continues. I am currently the President of the Alumni Association. Our new board

was elected on November 2006. Our motto is "Be the Trusted Bridge between the Alumni of the Past and those of the Future to Realize our Potential". We have plenty of projects that we are planning to implement despite all the different challenges we are facing (mainly financial and human resources...). In fact, one of our priorities is to get students to be aware of the importance of the Alumni Association in their effort to become Job Market Ready. To do so we have recently developed a coaching strategy (mentoring) for senior students led by alumni who have valuable professional experience. We are planning conferences on specific topics to help students reduce the gap between the theoretical academic preparation and experience in the field, along with the yearly Job Fair, which is also part of our program.

One of our other priorities is to provide our community with relevant and immediate information that will help each one of us make better decisions. Taking this into consideration, we have recently launched the first version of our official web site "One Single IT Collaboration Space for our Community" www.aa.ma that will be launched in July, 2007. This collaborative space will give our members all over the world the opportunity to create their profile, upload their CVs, perform searches (who's who, who's where, find jobs/internships offers...). We will also use it to allow members to participate in AA initiatives either by developing projects or by joining existing ones, regardless of their geographic location.

The team spirit and the feeling of membership started at AUI did not stop when I graduated. I am always thinking about ways to share my experience with current AUI students - especially senior students. As the president of the alumni association, I am working hard to preserve and promote the motto of our university: excellence and identity.



Zero tolerance here to stay

BOUZOUBAA WALID & ALAOUI ABDELAZIZ

For the second time this academic year, the discipline committee suspended students for illegal possession of drugs on campus. This event reminds us of the existence of narcotics inside our university walls. It seems that the demand may be satisfied by some dealers inside the campus itself. But, according to consumers inside AUI, the highest quantity of drugs comes to AUI from the cities where students reside.

These recent expulsions have created a real debate among students about whether or not AUI policy is too severe. For a lot of students, the harshness of AUI towards drug use is justified. Indeed, for them, AUI has the role of a "father who keeps students on the right path". Consequently, as one student we talked to said, "...these punishments are a good warning for those who may be tempted to break the rules." A large majority of students we talked to don't have a strong opinion on the subject as they are rarely exposed to drugs. Indeed, from our investigation, we learned that drug consumption is more likely to happen off campus.

However, the adepts of the "dark side", as the administration calls them, think that AUI punishments are too strict, and that suspension or expulsion is "too hard for something so small". In fact, they think that what they do is harmless and is a normal part of one life. For others, consuming drugs has been a step to integrate into some "cool groups" of students. Others claim that "smoking

weed" is closely related to the fact that they "have absolutely nothing else to do besides go to class". These students wish that the policy was more flexible and tolerant. Some of them propose instituting a system of warnings before being suspended or expelled.

The response of Dr Belfekih concerning the requests for leniency is that the policy will always be "Zero Tolerance". Recently, a student was hospitalized for overdose. According to the Vice President of Student Affairs, AUI is responsible for its students, and therefore has the responsibility to protect them. His majesty, the late King Hassan II himself was clear about this issue. Indeed, in the Dahir that created and established policies for Al Akhawayn University, an entire article stipulates the banning of the use of drugs on the campus.

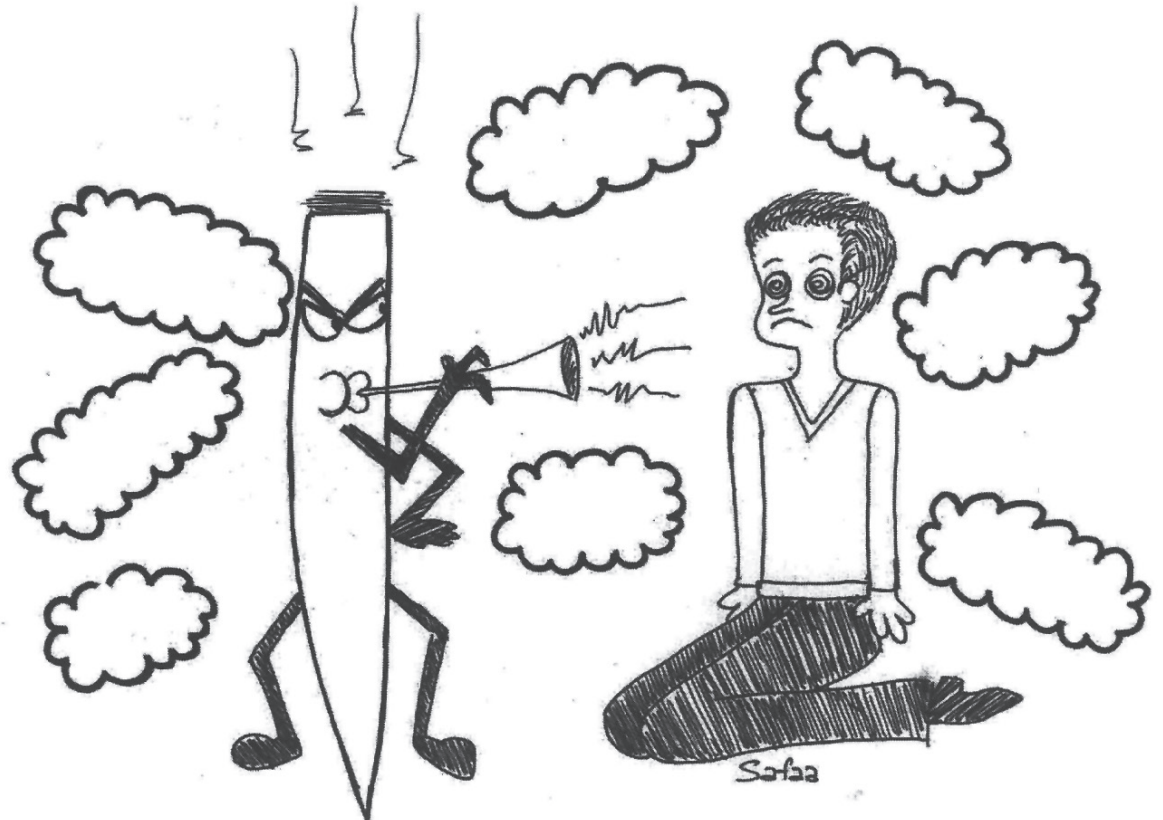
Practical application of the Dahir into policy is achieved by three main approaches: sensitization, assistance, and punishment. However, Dr Belfekih insisted on the fact that the assistance step is primary. Indeed, he claims that all punishments can be avoided by effective assistance procedures. That is why support groups are organized to help students who come to AUI with a drug addiction. Further, if students are caught consuming drugs at AUI, they may "get a second chance" if the discipline committee judges that the student is worth it. This period of "reconsideration" is marked by a daily social work and very comprehensive medical care

meant to help the student overcome the addiction.

AUI is a microcosm representing Moroccan youth, and drug use related issues remain serious and problematic. In a way, AUI strictness can be understood, for addictions

are never to be taken lightly. Indeed, the university has an image and a reputation to preserve, and, more importantly, students to protect. Still, some may think that the policies and regulations in place may have some flaws and could backfire

inducing a reverse and catalytic effect. Actually, according to many students, playing with fire and violating regulations is part of a necessary experimental stage at this age and time.



CAD Tutoring Services: students are catching on

MOUNA EL MANSOURI

Few students have not encountered difficulties at one point in one course or another in the course of their studies at AUI. As the end of the semester draws closer and closer, some students might still not know that Tutoring Services, offered by the Center of Academic Development (CAD), can help.

Sometimes class sessions and office hours are not enough to understand some difficult points in a course. Professors tend to explain concepts with the same explanatory style and with the same methodology. Parallel tutoring sessions can be a valuable help to overcome difficulties in such cases.

This kind of services exists actually and is offered by the Center of Academic Development (CAD). Some students might have known about these "Tutoring Services" through the email notifications sent by the coordinator of the Tutoring Services each semester. They might have heard about them during the orientation period they had to undergo at their entrance to AUI. Others were told about them by their respective profes-

sors, or even through friends and classmates.

The lack of awareness of students regarding the importance of such opportunities and the advantages they constitute is a mystery. Information about Tutoring Services is given during orientation, professors inform students about the availability of the service, friends and classmates talk about Tutoring Services and email notifications are sent out regularly by Tutoring Services coordinator, Fadwa Buchraïne,

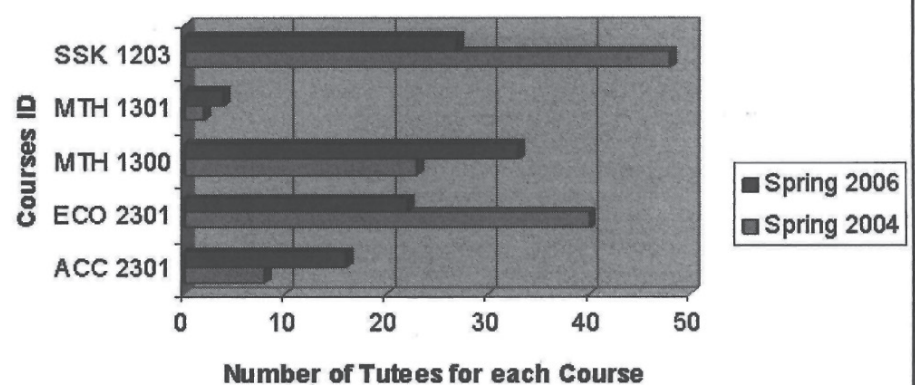
One of the tutors we talked to stated that "Students do not really understand that tutoring is maybe the only way for some students to learn and pass their courses; some students even think that a 'mere' student cannot help them."

Students often forget that tutors are actually top students who passed the course in question and have mastered the materials, and that they are simply doing their job by offering help with no superior feeling attached to their services. Another student who wants to remain anonymous when questioned about the reason why she never took advantage of the service when she obviously needed to, said that she "Did not like the fact that the tutor was actually at the same academic level and that she felt ashamed being lectured by a friend or potential classmate."

Still other students really value the role of tutors: "The tutor and the professor have different ways of explaining the subject matter; sometimes, the explanation of the student is really clear since he knows exactly what difficulties we are encountering".

The tutors we interviewed find tutoring a very rewarding experience. Hanae, one of the tutors, said that tutoring enabled her to help other students and make them more involved with the courses they are taking. Lamia, another tutor, stated that "Knowing that one of your tutees could avoid failing a course thanks to the work you have done with him/her is the best reward a tutor can ever get!" Besides, the experience increases communication skills and is a valuable addition to a resume.

Evolution of the Number of Tutees for some Courses



	Number Of Tutees	Number Of Courses
Spring 2004	77	6
Spring 2006	201	11

The number of students enrolled in tutoring sessions increased 260% from Spring 2004 to Spring 2006. The number of courses supported by tutoring has almost doubled.

Spotlight

AUI alum appointed ITS Director

MOUNA EL MANSOURI

Everything that happens within AUI and between AUI and the outside world is connected by an electronic information network that is supported, serviced, maintained and developed by Information Technology & Systems (ITS). ITS's many services are critical to the day to day operations of this university. The Director of ITS has the task of (WHAT ARE THE CENTRAL DUTIES OF DIRECTOR). This complex position has been recently assigned to AUI alum, Mr. Mohammed Elouedghiri Idrissi.

Mr. Elouedghiri comes to this position with a Master's degree in Computer Science from AUI, and a BA from ECSI, School of Business and Computer Science in Fez. Besides formal academics, Mr. Elouedghiri has amassed a wide spectrum of professional experience in computer project management, software solutions and facility design when working on projects for major Moroccan companies such as IBM, IAM, ONEP, Bank AL MAGHREB, and Centrale Laitière, among others.

Amazingly, Mr. Elouedghiri is still an AUI student currently perusing an Executive

MBA. He believes that this Masters' degree will impart skills that will help him to better manage the ITS team. A director, a student and a family man (living on campus), Mr. Elouedghiri has a unique perspective to bring to ITS.

Before his recent appointment, Mr. Elouedghiri worked as Information Systems Man-

80% of surveyed students last year claimed they are pretty satisfied about ITS products; whereas due to the esteem of AUI, they look forward to better results.

ager, a central position at ITS. Since 1999, he has been in charge of restructuring, managing and integrating existing applications. From this perspective Mr. Elouedghiri became aware of how to address the changes needed to improve ITS's service delivery and effectiveness.

According to Mr. Elouedghiri, ITS's primary role is to provide the AUI community with practical and high quality software services to improve efficien-

cy, productivity, communication and organization among workers, as well as to provide students with software tools to support academic programs, facilitate academic research and support the use of information technology.

Regarding ITS staff, Mr. Elouedghiri insists on the importance of continual learning through sharing knowl-

edge with other professionals in the field. Professional development, especially in the rapidly changing field of Information Technology Service provision is a priority. The new director also believes in acknowledging the human element in delivering effective ITS services to the AUI community. By encouraging his team through attractive salaries and incentive programs, he believes that the quality and the degree of efficiency of future ITS outcomes will improve. According to Mr.

Elouedghiri, "ITS employees' skills and effectiveness depend on the human factor."

Proactive communication between ITS and the AUI community is central to effective ITS services, Mr. Elouedghiri maintains. To make students and faculty aware of the benefits of the user-friendly services provided by ITS, the ITS department will be implementing a new communication plan with the goal of increasing people's knowledge, and awareness of ITS's services. ITS will be reaching out to the AUI community through email, AUI radio, and the AUI Channel to highlight the benefits of IT solutions and services, encourage people to articulate their needs, convey their requests, and also to announce news and achievements.

Helping students to accommodate and use technology is going to become the ITS approach to student service provision. Once in the job market, students will need to know how to help themselves. Whatever their major,



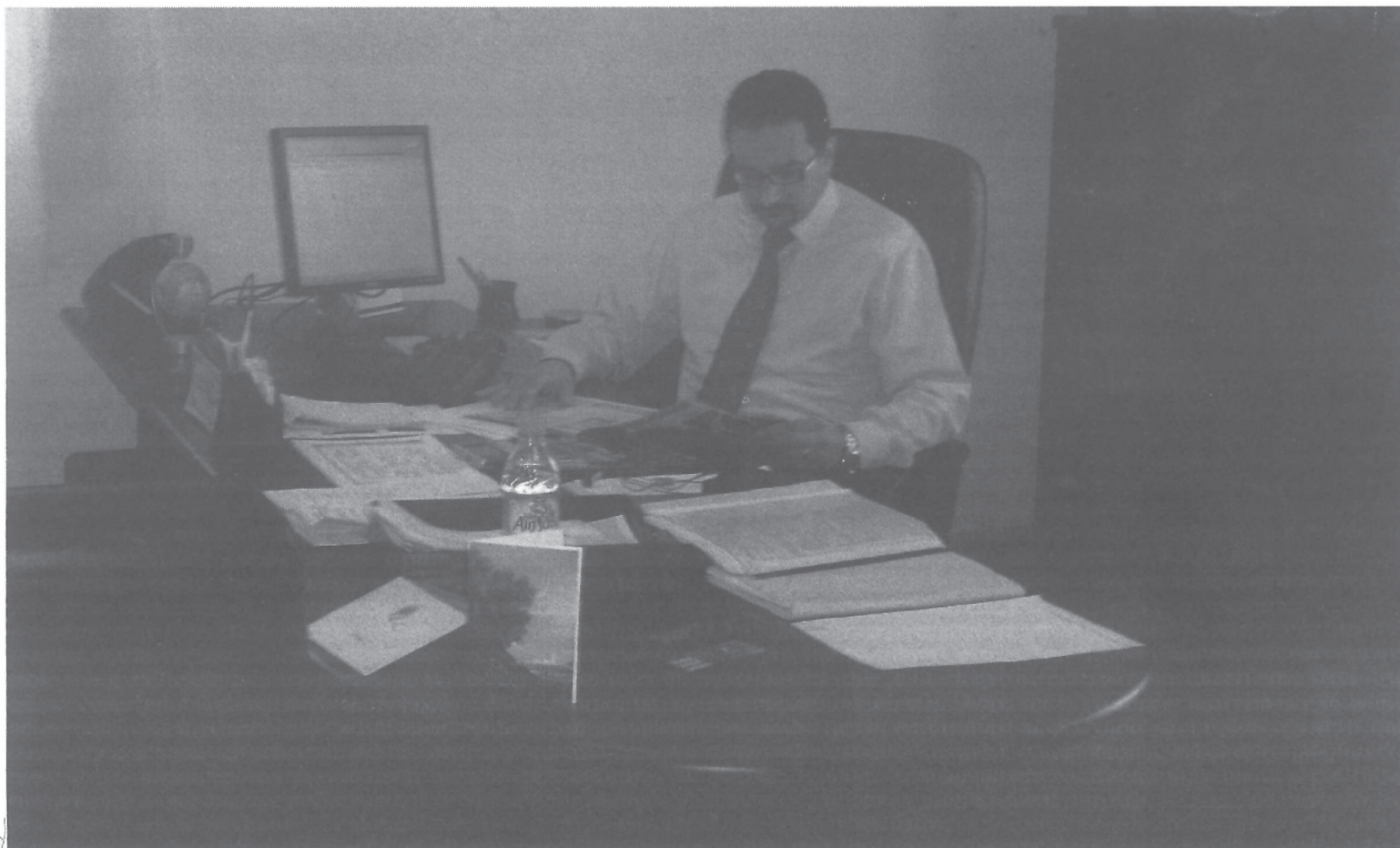
students should at least be able to solve their own personal computer problems.

The JENZABAR software project is an example of 'self help' trend in services. This software will allow AUI students to register online, streamlining registration procedures for students and enrollment services, in addition to reducing costs and maximizing the efficient use of time.

The increasing importance of IT in organizations is pushing this department to think of building relationships with other organizations. It has, for instance, developed partnerships with IBM and Microsoft. Moreover, the ACM club lately made a presentation to ITS about possible issues in which they could work collaboratively for the development of a partnership.

Despite of the fact that ITS is serving also Ifrane High School, the Azrou Center, and the Education Center in Casablanca Techno Park, Mr. Elouedghiri is seriously thinking about broadening the horizons of his department by making ITS at Al Akhawayn a bridge between the academic and the professional worlds by reaching out for partnerships with IT solution vendors as well as IT consumers.

Mr. Elouedghiri reveals his ambitious dream; he believes that AUI should become the best university not only in the Arab world but in the world, and he believes that the ITS department has definitely a role to play. Thanks to the devotion and commitment of the university executives, faculty, staff and students the dream may come true.



Mr. Elouedghiri working in his office

Practicing Diplomacy

ZAKARIA EL RHEZAOU

Recruiting new students, selling AUI's image, networking, constructing bridges between the university and other worlds, especially by sharing knowledge and experience as a student with prospective students, are among the major responsibilities and tasks of the Student Ambassadors of Al Akhawayn University. During the last week of March, one of the major activities of the Student Ambassador Association (SAA), and one of the most important Public Relations (PR) and advertising campaigns for Al Akhawayn University took place. "High Schools Visits" is a regular event where Student Ambassadors visit the major public and private High Schools

of their home cities and regions. Living in Meknes, I was assigned three renowned high schools in this city, which are: Moulay Ismail, Omar Ibn Alkhattab (Bird),

"constructing bridges between the university and other worlds"

and the private school: Emil. The following journal paints a scenario of these visits:

Monday, March 19th 2007. At 9:30 in the morning, the first day off of Mid-Semester break, while most of AUI students are crashed out and still snoozing, I am getting ready

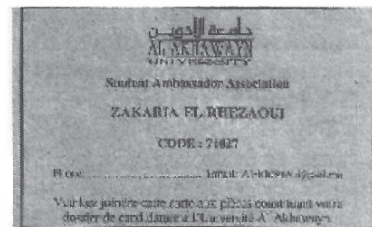
to visit Emil High School. Packed with brochures, presentations, bits and pieces of information including funny business cards, I met with Leila Hlimi, another student ambassador, next to Emil building. At 10 O'clock, we were being accompanied by the coordinator to visit three last-year classes, two math sciences and one experimental sciences class. My teammate and I had a routine: We made quick presentations about AUI, and then we left the floor for the students to ask questions. A few shy questions were asked, and they were mainly about the admission conditions, the tuition, and scholarships. Answering questions took some

ambassadorial diplomacy: a few hecklers thought they were being smart guys by asking questions like "If I do not have a good high school result, and no financial ability to pay tuition, how can I join the university?" They got laughs from everybody including us. We answered that it is never late to try hard and get good grades for the remaining part of the academic year.

Tuesday, March 19th 2007. The biggest high school in Africa was my next destination. At 9:45 am, I met with a Moulay Ismail High School supervisor who took me to the faculty lounge where I met with some professors who bombarded me with questions. Tuition, concentrations, scholarships, security, drugs and alcohol con-

ready decided to enroll at AUI came to talked to me individually to ask about some details, and I was very glad to share my experience with them.

Wednesday, March 20th, 2007. Omar Ibn Alkhattab, the famous as Bird High School is another of the renowned educa-



tional institutions in Meknes. It was my last stop in the "High School Visit" campaign, and I had to do it alone. The general supervisor as well as the sections supervisors (Art, Experimental sciences, Math sciences, and Technical sciences) warmly welcomed me. Each discipline supervisor accompanied me to visit one class. Students were enthusiastic, and asked concise questions. There were some brilliant students who would be eligible for the excellence scholarship, and I explained to the importance of taking advantage of the opportunity to apply. One physics professor refused to give even 10 minutes from class time for the presentation, which was disappointing, even for the supervisor. The "High School Visit" campaign is a very important initiative for Al Akhawayn University. Not only do potential high school students get a chance to ask questions directly from AUI students, thus making an abstract institution very accessible; AUI student ambassadors have a chance to practice skills in diplomacy, and an opportunity to experience being official representatives of an organization.

"AUI student ambassadors have a chance to practice skills in diplomacy"

sumption, and PDA were the main questions asked. I had to convince those professors that what they heard about our university were just rumors, and that security, respect, and firmness are highly respected within the university campus. At 10:10 am, another student ambassador, Yosr Sibari, and I met with Moulay Ismail students in a big auditorium. More than 60 students from different academic programs were present. Questions with more variety came up this time, and we were glad to answer all the questions, even the funny ones. One student asked "Are all courses taught in English?" I answered yes, and he said "Ana l'anglais bini oubinha ghi l'khir oulihsan" (I have a terrible English), "Kifach eddikor?" (So, what can I do?). Other students, who had al-



Members of the Student Ambassadors Association

ACM Club: Experience the fun engineering

YOUSRA ZERHOUNI

"The end justifies the means", this was the "Association for Computing Machinery" ACM club's credo during the ACM day.

The aim of that ACM day was to make the club known to everyone and let AUI students know about the activities of the club. Still, the most important goal was to let people know that engineering is not only about programming with different languages (java, C, C++...) and solving problems, but also it is a lot of fun.

Last semester, ACM was successful in the organization of the International Collegiate Programming Contest (ANARC) at AUI. This ANARC was first initiated at AUI by SSE students 9 years ago, and then the other editions were abroad in Kuwait, Egypt... As you can notice, the ACM is one of the oldest clubs in our university. This time, the club with its new and

old members wanted to make this day a special event and a real success.

ACM is not just about programming and computers; there are a lot of different committees that take in charge

other things. In fact, the ACM day tried to show this diversity by starting with a book exhibition that introduces the last technologies. In the afternoon there were presentations in the game room of Dr. ElGarah



Teams participating in the ACM contest

about E-Business and MIS, and then Anass Kartit presented his "public health manager" which was last year's best capstone project. Imad Maouli contributed by sharing his one year experience in Japan, and presented the project on which he worked during his stay "object caption". Finally, Afifa Baiyed presented a website on which people can practice programming.

In the evening, there was a Quiz Show in building 17, with interesting prizes for participants and the public. The competition was fierce, productive, but also funny. At the end, Dr. Belfkhih gave the prizes to the winners. Talking about these prizes, a funny anecdote hap-

pened. The people in charge of buying the prizes from Meknes could not realize that they forgot to take the necessary money till they reached Lhajeb. Not knowing what to do, the solution came from the Students Activities Office. Mrs Rajae Saidi took the van from Ifrane to Meknes to take the necessary money to purchase the prizes. Hopefully, by the end of the day the prizes were purchased, and the one who forgot the money came back alive!

What is important was to make the ACM club known for AUI students, and let people know that engineering is a lot of fun.



Alakhawayn
University in Ifrane

ACM Chapter

Al Akhawayn University's storks

SOPIA HASNAOUI CHAOUI

In an attempt to get to know the 'real people' who work and live in our environment, the auilBridge set out to get to know the personalities behind the professional facades we interact with every day. We started with the most interesting: the AUI Storks: Couples who work together on campus. AUI professors share their knowledge, and AUI staff contributes to

they have the same values, attitudes, goals and ambitions, they feel good working together! Enjoying the company of her husband at work, Mrs. Catherine Owen describes her husband as "an astute and professional colleague who just happens to be the best course designer in the world". Isn't this description gorgeous? You may wonder what Mr. Burgess said

working, professional, a great administrator and communicator, and she is by far the most important person in his life. No offense, but from a man's perspective this portrayal is without any doubt very sincere and touching.

Marketing professors at the Business School, our next couple is Penelope (Penny) and Robin MacDonald. They met twenty years ago at a travel industry function in Australia. This very experienced couple worked both in their own business, running a marketing consultancy agency, but also as professors at Northern Territory University in Australia, and they have taught together in different other countries before coming to Al Akhawayn University. They both acknowledge loving working together since both are passionate about their work. When asking Mrs. MacDonald about how she manages being with her husband in the same professional environment, she confessed that when they were in Indonesia, they shared a desk and in Lebanon an office. Some would think that they got into arguments often while sharing such a small space such as a desk, well it might have happened since nobody is perfect, but the truth is that



the smooth running of our university. We, the students, see them in the hall ways, during classes, office hours, for administrative purposes; thus, we only notice their professional aspect. We gossip about them, and frequently say things such as "This professor is strict"; "This one is incredibly bright." "The staff works hard during registration." We all know the buzz around the campus and dorms. But, tell the truth, has anyone ever thought of faculty and staff as people, with families, with responsibilities, and more importantly, in romantic relationships? Well, just because it's spring, and the stork pairs are back nesting on Ifrane chimneys and rooftops (storks mate for life), the auilBridge thought of dedicating an article to our married professors and staff.

about his wife. He did great and said that his wife is a committed, hard



Bouziane's best friend happened to be Mrs. Alami's cousin's husband (destiny is sometimes weird). One day, Mr. Zaid met with his best friend along with his wife and Mrs. Alami in a coffee shop in Meknes, and that was the first step toward a love story that terminated with a happy marriage and the birth of cute baby "Ali". When asked about how they manage between their private life and work, they both confessed that they do not see each other during the day, but just the feeling of being close to each other is an advantage. "Very responsible and patient" are the words that Mrs. Alami used to describe her husband. From his side, Mr. Zaid stated that "Houda a caring and loving person, and a great mom; our son Ali is very lucky to have a mom like her".

A newlywed 'Al Akhawayn' couple, Mr. Marouane Guerini, the well-built and tall staff member of the gymnasium (swimming pool safeguard and soccer coach) and Mrs. Paula Santilan Gremm, an AUI part time Arabic professor met for the first time on June 2004 at the university swimming pool. When Marouan tried to talk to Paula in English, she surprised him by answering in fluent Arabic. Marouan says this day will be engraved in his memory all his life. Paula explained that working at the same place as her husband would enhance the quality of their work and their life. She added that working in the same environment will allow her and her husband to help and motivate each other. Marouan agreed with his wife and added that there is nothing better than being next to your wife all the time. Paula said that her husband has become the most important person in her life. She stated: "He understands me, helps me, and takes better care of me than he does himself. I will stay with him till my last breath." From his side, Marouan said that Paula is gentle, slim, modest, and caring. "She is the most beautiful thing in my life." he concluded.

As we rush around trying to get ready for the finals, it's a breath of fresh air to remember that we're all more than 'students' 'faculty' 'staff'. Behind each person there's a world, and sometimes we get a chance to get a glimpse of these worlds, and know some people as we have never known them.

I would like at the end, to thank all the faculty and staff members who kindly accepted to share with us some aspects of their personal life, and auilBridge promises you that there will be other couples articles in our next issues.

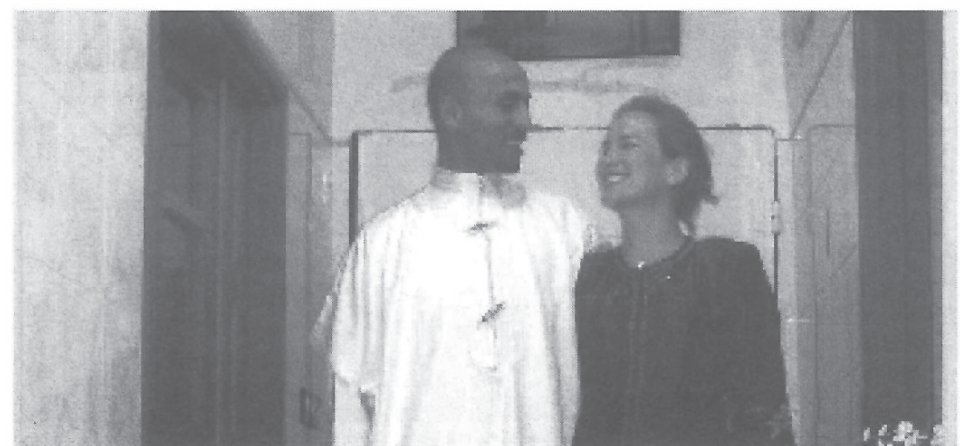


they shared and bounced ideas off each other, developed their teamwork spirit but most importantly had a lot of laughs. "Mr. Robin MacDonald, with only two words expressed his love to his wife and said that "Penny", as he sweetly names her, is my "soul-mate". Mrs. Penelope MacDonald did as good as her husband and stated that "Robin" is her best friend. And we all know that one never loses a best friend.

The third couple, who was kind enough to answer to my questions, is Mr Zaid Bouziane, our competent Communication professor, and Mrs. Houda Alami our beautiful Admissions and Outreach staff. Mr. Zaid

Not all of the married couples (there are a lot of them), had time to talk to us, but some kindly accepted to share a bit about what makes them tick.

Director and professor at the Center for Academic Development, Mrs. Catherine Owens is married to Mr. Robert Burgess, our devoted computer skills professor. They met for the first time in Canada at the University of New Brunswick during an intensive summer program where they were both teaching English. When we asked them, separately, how they manage to work together while being married, they had quite the same exact answer, responding that since



FEATURE INTERVIEW

Rachid Jabbouri: "I love this piece of wood"

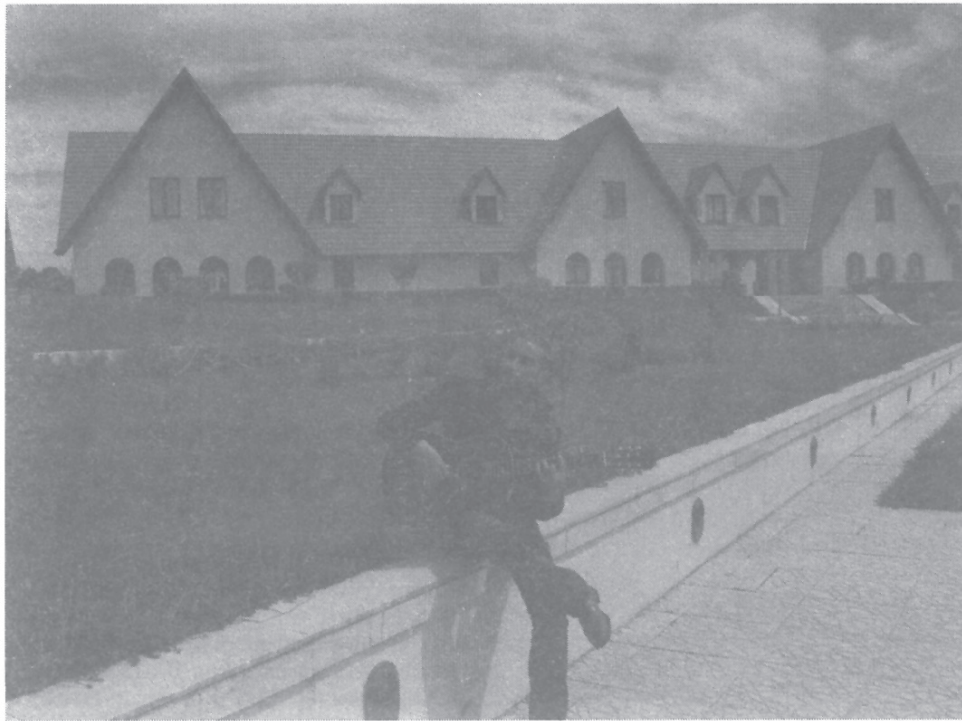

 BOUARICH BADRE

Hiding among us at Al Akhawayn University is Rachid Jabbouri, is a guitar maestro, one of the best guitar soloists in Morocco. At the beach, on the mountain, in the city or at AUI, this guy has performed guitar and impressed all kinds of audiences. As you will see, he is the kind of person that loves what he does and completely invests himself in his passion. **Please introduce yourself:**

My name is Jabbouri Rachid, I am 22 years old, I come from Oujda,

beginning but slowly, we managed to overcome most of them and we have performed in various venues. **What are your best memories as a guitarist?**

Well, there are a lot of wonderful moments in the life of a guitarist. Both my victories at the talent show and at the Spanish Club's Guitar Competition remain very special moments. However, my best memory is the guitar concert that I performed at AUI with Gypsy Soul Band.



and this is my second year at AUI. Right now, I am studying Human Resource Development as a major, and Business Administration as a minor. **What can you tell us about your talent?**

Well, actually I am a guitarist. I do not know if I was born with this talent or if it came by practice and professionalism in work, but all I am sure about is that I love this piece of wood, and I feel better each time I hold it to play my favorite songs.

"I feel better each time I hold the guitar to play my favorite songs"

How did you start playing guitar?

I started playing guitar in the classical musical school of Oujda called "La Cicada". There, I learned the basics of guitar: theory, "Solfège", chords; at the same time I took piano lessons to broaden my musical background. Then, step by step, as I improved my musical understanding, my ability and confidence improved. Finally, I decided to start practicing solos and directing myself toward the Spanish flamenco.

What about your professional career?

My professional career started in my home city Oujda. There, some friends and I, three guitarists and one percussionist decided to create a musical band whose style would be a mix of flamenco and oriental music. We had some difficulties at the

"becoming a big guitarist is not an unreachable dream"

What is your worst memory?

It was during a public concert in Oujda. Actually, there were many people waiting for our concert and when we finally came in, the sound system (Sono) was not working very well and that same enthusiastic public became really furious... **Did they throw tomatoes at you?**

No, thank heavens, but it was a close call! (Laughs)

"I do not know if I was born with this talent"

Last semester, you were an active member of the "Guitar Sans Frontières" Club. What can you tell us about this experience?

Actually, it was really a great experience to be a part of that club. We succeeded in promoting guitar inside AUI in a way that more than 90 people became interested in club activities and in taking guitar lessons. However, we had a lot of difficulties purchasing materials and inviting professional bands because of the lack of financial support.

What advice can you give to all those at AUI who want to learn guitar?

First of all, I want to tell them that becoming a big guitarist is not an unreachable dream. The secret is to be really motivated, to practice regularly and to always seek to improve your skills. Also, there are now technological tools and computer software programs such as "GuitarPro" on the market that may really help beginners as well as professionals to excel in guitar.

Who are your favorite guitarists?

Well, of course the first one is Paco De Lucia: the best flamenco guitarist ever. I would also include Al Di Meola, who has merged different styles in an amazing way.

Please respond to the following terms

in one or two words:

Paco De Lucia: Perfection

Gipsy Kings: Flamenco leaders

Gipsy Soul Band: Promising future

AUI: Wonderful University

auiBridge: Student voice



In search of Fatima - Ghada Karmi

AFFAYA RIM

In Search of Fatima (45 lpp), was written by Ghada Karmi, and published by Verso (London) in 2002. Ghada Karmi was born in Jerusalem when it was still under the British mandate established by the League of Nations in 1920. When her family moved to Britain, she qualified for a career in medicine at Bristol University. In 1972, she worked as a research fellow for the Royal Institute for International Affairs when she founded Palestinian Action. She also worked for an important Israeli-Palestinian reconciliation project for the same institute. Her works: *What future for the Peace Process* (1996); *And she co-edited, The Palestinian Exodus with E. Cotran* (2000).

This book is an autobiography, a personal memoir that tells Ghada Karmi's story and, through her eyes, the Palestinian story. This book distinguishes itself from other Palestinian publications by its sustained attention to the deep social life of ordinary Palestinian citizens before and after the beginning of the Israeli colonization. It presents a memoir of exile rich in human experience. At the same time, it relates a period full of important political events that played a big role in this unique history.

The novel is divided into three parts and fourteen chapters. Each chapter talks about the evolution, or should I say the deterioration of life in Palestine.

The story deviates from the relatively peaceful coexistence that was shared by both Arabs and Jews before 1948 - before the obligation of Palestinian families to leave their homes for a foreign land. A prologue introduces the novel and shows the hurry of the family to abandon its home for safety. The prologue is a short caricature of what will happen in the next three chapters.

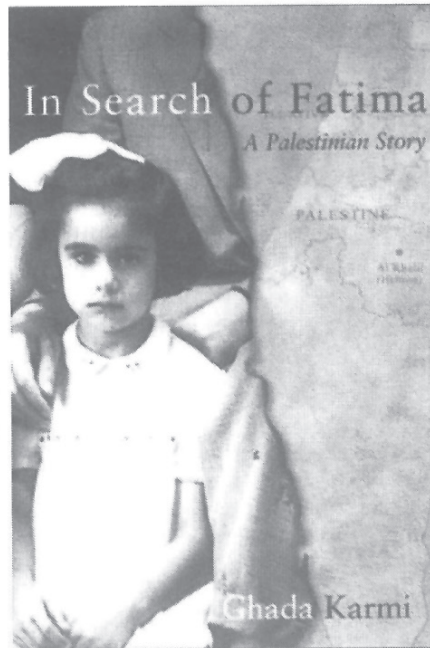
The story begins with Ghada Karimi as a seven year old girl,

relaying years of escalating conflict (bombing, sniper shootings...) that rendered her parents helpless and left her with only a maid (Fatima) and a dog for company. Suddenly, her family is thrown out of their home and they are forced to leave the maid and the dog behind. Karimi is then dumped into her grandparent's over-crowded house in a very religious city where she is verbally attacked for not wearing veil.

The reader is then suddenly transported to early 1950s England and made aware of the world of distance Karimi is now forced to deal with. Her arrival in England was traumatic. Culturally different, in school she is unmercifully teased, and she overcomes the divide by rebelling. Karimi defies her Muslim parents by marrying a British doctor, a marriage that ends with a divorce. She then starts traveling around the world, claiming an independence that her parents, still steeped in Palestinian culture, don't accept. The book ends with Karimi returning to Jerusalem and visiting her old home.

Edward Said, a Palestinian writer, has described Ghada Karmi's memoir as a "novelist's envy". Throughout the writing of her book, Karmi tends to use simple language to express tough experiences. Her writing style captivates the reader from the early on in the book until the very end; her honesty reflects her experience of displacement, loss and nostalgia for dead past, arguing that the only crime the Palestinians committed was to be born in Palestine. Her writing plays with fact and poetry and is both lyrical and cathartic; she easily makes you empathize with her or simply make you smile.

In the final paragraph of the book, Karimi walks down the street telling her Israeli activist friend Akiva that there was no



reason to keep going that way; one might as well give up and accept the inevitable. She is explicit about the journey of return: she doesn't understand the reason why she cannot find Fatima or even identify her. She said: "Fatima remained and remains a presence in her life at once vivid and ghostly," and she adds "It is so symbolic of the Palestine that is there and not there".

The only novel that I have read and that I can consider as the same level as Ghada Karmi's novel is, *I saw Ramallah* by Mourid Elbarghouti. Elbarghouti is a Palestinian poet who with all his family members has lived a long exile. His writing style is far from being as simple as Karmi's, he plays with words as he plays music and it is difficult for a reader to concentrate.

I really enjoyed reading *In Search of Fatima*. I feel concerned about the Israeli-Palestinian crisis and it is a great pleasure to learn more about this conflict through a novel rather than from television or newspapers.

Listen up! Geek Speaking

SAAD BENNANI

My friends tell me that one of their most problematic activities is choosing and buying computers and other computer related devices.

Admit it: you just don't know enough about it. There is uncertainty, it's hard to keep up on what's new unless you constantly read PC magazines, and when you buy, you never know if you've made the right choice. So here's some good advice from a bona fide Geek. And it's free...

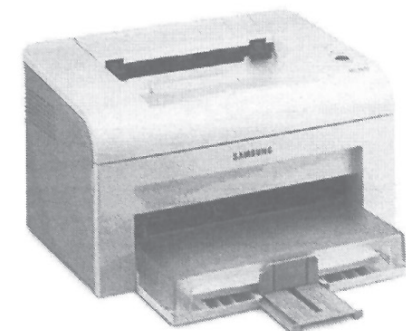
There are so many choices and every month updates and new products appear on the market. Well, here is a review of the best products available in the market that Al Akhawayn students will find useful. In this review I recommended a laptop and a desktop - so listen up!

Apple Iphone

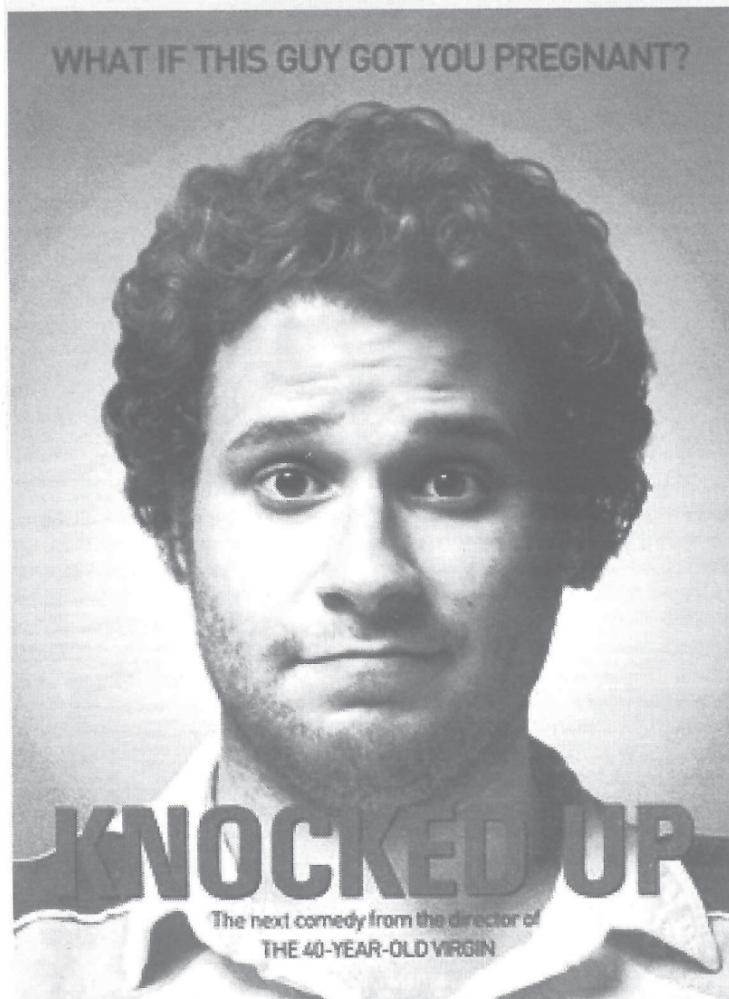


This is the latest innovation from Apple and it is their first cellular phone. Actually, it is not only a phone but this product hides three important devices that anyone needs to have with him/her. This product covers a phone, the famous iPod (up to 8 GB) from apple and a perfect internet device. Today we see people their pockets full of electronic devices and this iPhone has reduced them to one same product. Moreover, the iPhone is very handy and has a light weight (135g). It contains a very large screen of 3.5 inches. It is very easy to connect to the computer, both PC and MAC and transfers music using iTunes. It can also synchronize contacts, emails and messages and can get connected to the internet through WiFi. Unfortunately, the iPhone lacks only one important feature which is the videoconference. The iPhone is still not available and is expected at a price of 5000 dhs.

Samsung Laser Printer ML-2010



Stop going to the computer labs and loose paper by printing other's work! This new Samsung laser printer has made of laser printing accessible to everyone with its really low price of 990 dhs HT. For this price, it is only black and white but still this printer has a cartridge that prints thousands of pages with a speed of 22 ppm. This printer also has an economic mode of printing



Knocked Up

SARAH EL ALAOU

You might want to enjoy the weekend in your room with your roomy so here is a good movie to watch while eating pizza. *Knocked Up* is a movie written and directed by Judd Apatow.

It is the story of Alison "Katherine Heigl", a twenty four year old lady gets promoted in her job. She goes out at night with her friend to celebrate that event. While drinking and having fun in a club, she meets Ben "Seth Rogen", a drunken young man whose priorities are way to far from getting a normal wife with a woman. Alison and Ben finish the night together and eight weeks later Alison calls Ben wondering if he still remembers her because she needed to talk to him.

They go to a restaurant and that is where she informs him about her pregnancy. Finally, Alison decides to get to know the father better hoping that it will work out. Ben finds it difficult to settle down with a woman he just *Knocked Up* since they do not even know each other properly.

As they try to do so, they discover that they have are many differences to overcome. Alison and Ben struggle to make a family and the only example they happen to see everyday is Debbie, Alison's sister which gets the situation more complicated as the new couple still have nine months pregnancy to survive in. *Knocked Up* will be in movie theaters all over the United States starting June 6th 2007.

The 'ragazza' who plays volleyball

AMINE JELLAL

The first thing Chiara Rusconi asked about when she arrived at AUI was whether the University had an official volleyball team.

A 21-year old senior student from Bocconi University in Milan (Italy), Chiara came to Al Akhawayn University to study International Economics within the framework of an exchange program. Besides being a brilliant student, Chiara has many talents; the most interesting of which is that she is an excellent volleyball player.

Chiara, who has been playing volleyball since she was a child, believes that volleyball combines physical activity and fun allowing one to feel permanently fit and healthy. Chiara argues that it is very important for any student to be involved in activities and to get away from their study routines. Physical activity in general, volleyball specifically, gives a feeling a well-being which, Chiara believes, is a key factor in success.

Chiara was very glad to train with people from a different culture and to have the chance to practice the sport

she loves here at AUI. Even though she and her teammates did not perform well this semester, she still thinks that the university has a good team that can improve if people relax and play more for fun. Chiara says that she cannot compare the level at AUI to the one at her university for the simple reason that the latter does not have an official team. Chiara has a high esteem for all her teammates, but singles out Nozomi, Najda and Lindsey as particularly skilled players.

Coming to AUI for an exchange program in the Business school, our interviewee has taken advantage of her stay here in Morocco to visit the splendid sites and cities in our country. She and has learned a lot about the diverse Moroccan culture, as well as the American culture, exchange friends from abroad. She has had a lot of fun playing for the university's official volleyball team.

Regarding her hobbies, Chiara mentions that besides volleyball, she loves reading and dancing to hip hop music. At AUI, she loves spending



AUI Women Volleyball Team (Chiara with the ball next to her feet)

time with people from different cultures and exchanging ideas.

From AUI, Chiara will remember traveling and interacting with people from different cultures she met at AUI. When asked about her best memories at Al Akhawayn University, our interviewee said that she will always remember the new friends and the good times.

One word to describe the following:

- Morocco: wonderful country
 - AUI: good atmosphere
 - your coach: the best one
 - Ahmed El Fassi; Who's that?
 - The AUI Bridge: very professional
- (She added that it is good that AUI has a newspaper, something that Bocconi students lack.)

Nothing lacked, except luck

Essaid El Feydi Mustapha

Ambitious, enthusiastic, and firm to win, the "AUI Lions" football players took the plane to Paris to represent the university in the international ESSEC football tournament.

Many obstacles faced our lions, and despite the tremendous efforts deployed during the different games, the team was disqualified at the first round of the tournament. AUI lions had all the qualifications to win the tournament, except one important and determinant factor, and which was in fact very affecting: LUCK.

It is the final week before going to Paris to participate in the sports tournament organized by ESSEC - Paris, "le tournoi des 5 balons". Many obstacles faced our preparation for this tournament. First, many good players couldn't participate with us, like Abdelmalek Aka "Scholes", Ramy, Youssef "tanjawi", Eric, and many others. Second, we had to spend 3200 Dhs for plane tickets, 660 for the VISA, 250 for the insurance to get the VISA, and finally 1040 for food and shelter, without taking into consideration allowances or pocket money. Al Akhawayn University agreed to pay only the other part of food and shelter expenses which represents around 1/6 of the whole amount.

It's Sunday morning and I am preparing myself to go to Rabat-Salé Airport to meet my other team-mates to get into the plane. After receiving a call from my friend Mehdi Jader, I knew that Ismael Bensouda Koraiichi has lost his mother after a long illness; Inna lillah wa inna ilayhi raji'oune. We decided to meet in Ismael's home to express our condolences and be next to him.

After getting into plane at 15h30 GMT, we arrived around 20h00 Paris time. We had to go by ourselves to the ESSEC through busses, tramway, and subways each one holding his heavy luggage. Since there were some subway lines under construction, it was difficult for us to get directly to ESSEC.

Totally exhausted, we got there at around 1h30; we were excited to know the schedule of our matches. Unfortunately, we had two matches on Monday one at 11h45 and the second one at 15h15. The third match



AUI Soccer team: "The AUI Lions"

was scheduled the next day at 9h00. We stayed at ESSEC for a little bit more than an hour for some administrative procedures. After arriving to the hotel at around 3h00, it was difficult for us to get some sleep since we were off the clock. Nevertheless, we were very excited to dispute our first match against a team from Algeria.

Everybody was tired but motivated in order to win our first match. After receiving two goals in our nets, we finally scored our first goal by a head shot from Mhamed Guessous deviated by Mehdi Jader. But it was too late, the referee declared the final whistle, it was over. We were really disappointed from our performance and started thinking about the second match that was in less than a couple of hours. We started the second match highly motivated and very tired at the same time. We played against a team from France that was not that good. The game was close because of the referee claims that were a disaster. First, Mhamed Guessous received a red card for arguing with the ref-

eree, since the referee showed some racist behaviour. Second, Ztot Youssef was injured in his toe, and it was impossible for him to continue the match. We were down by two players. It was hard for us to stop the opponent attacks, so they scored the only goal of the match. We were able to stop their attacks by including Anas our goalkeeper in the field and replacing it with Ztot.

Late that day Omar Soufi and Ismael Bensouda Koraiichi arrived from Morocco. Thanks to them, we were able to reinforce our team and win the next match on Tuesday. It was against a talented Croatian team. The game ended by 3-2, scored by Yasser, Omar Soufi, and myself. We had to wait for the results of the other groups to know if we were qualified as best 3rd. Unfortunately, our journey ended there. The final game ended by penalty shoot-outs in favour of a team from Belgium against the Algerian team we faced in our first game.

April/May						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Amazigh Day	Hassani Day	One World Youth Project (OWYP) Day		Emagin Cup	World Earth Day Celebration by GREEN club
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
Communication for Social Change Conference	Community Service Seminar	Talents Show: Final	Human Resources Day		Communication Day	
30	1 (May)	2	3	4	5	6
		GREEN Party	Projection of the movie "an inconvenient truth"	Local Programming Competition between AUI		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
		USA Cultural Day				

Sudoku

Each Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically without guessing. Enter digits from 1 to 9 into the blank spaces. Every row must contain one of each digit. So must every column, as must every 3x3 square.

9			7		2	5
	5	1	8	6		
2	8		5	9		6
1	4		2			
3		8			6	7
				4	1	8
	3		2	7	8	9
			4	5	3	7
6	7		1			2

	3	4				1	7
	1			3		6	8
7					1	3	
	7	3			4		
	5	2	7	6	3	9	4
			2			3	7
	8		9				4
1	9			4			8
2		5				7	9

Crosswords

Across

1. An opening
5. Cruel
8. A blemish
9. Frozen water
10. Stalled
11. Mentor
12. Male grandchild
15. An hooped animal, like Bambi
16. A singer one octave below soprano
18. Learning a new job
22. Frostings for cakes
23. Weak
24. Prickly feeling

1		2		3		4		5		6
										8
						8				
		1						1		
						12				
						4				15
						6				
								18		20

Down

1. Left out
2. Running contest
3. Space
4. A rope-like restraint
5. What a bald man lacks
6. Emperors
7. Concealed
12. Granular
13. Talented creator
14. A fictional fire-breathing monster
17. Above average height
18. Topple
19. Hospital unit for respiratory diseases, (abbr.)
20. Own
21. Nanogram, abbr.

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