

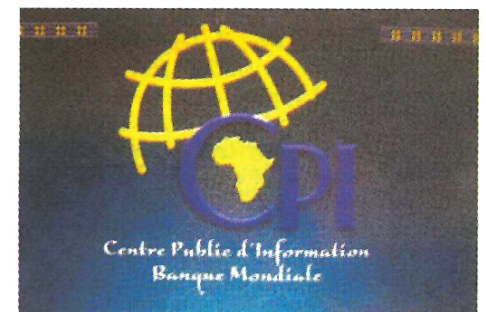


Study Abroad Fair



The Office of International Programs (OIP) in collaboration with exchange students from AUI's partner institutions overseas and former AUI students who studied abroad organized a Study Abroad Fair on February 6th-7th, 2007. (page3)

Mohammed VI Library designated Regional World Bank Library



The Mohammed VI Library of Al Akhawayn University was recently granted the status of a local library for the World Bank, the world's largest development institution. (page 2)

Stop Smoking Campaign



Dr Cherie Mobasher

The Health Center in collaboration with the Student Activities Office and Counseling Services of Al Akhawayn University launched a Smoking Cessation Campaign on February 5th. This initiative took place on the AUI campus over 5 event-filled days. (page 2)

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AUI honors Dr. Ouaouicha

RACHIDA AZELMAD

On Monday, February 19, 2007, Al Akhawayn University organized a farewell party in honor of Dr. Ouaouicha to thank him for all of his services.

After working for eight years at AUI, first as the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, and then as the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Driss Ouaouicha recently decided to leave AUI for personal reasons.

Known for his kindness and modesty, Dr. Ouaouicha will always remain one of the figures that devoted themselves to the development of the university.

Mohammed VI Library designated regional World Bank library

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The Mohammed VI Library of Al Akhawayn University was recently granted the status of a local library for the World Bank, the world's largest development institution.

"Mohammed VI Library was asked to act as a repository for World Bank publications in recognition of its leading role as an information provider to the AUI community and to a host of researchers who use its resources," said Prof. Abdelhamid Lotfi, the library's director.

Mohammed VI library is now an active partner in the dissemination of World Bank materials. It endorses and highly encourages their use among readers seeking information on Bank operations. Not only does the library serve the AUI community, but it also aids external research-

ers, who can access World Bank materials through the library's on-line catalog.

World Bank document users will now have access to more on-line, print and CD-ROM resources, and Mohammed VI will become known as a channel for the sharing of information and knowledge among both institutional users and the wider public. The MENA foundation acknowledges that Mohammed VI library is now more than any time capable to serve development in Morocco as well as in the Middle East and North Africa.

The World Bank print collection is housed in the Periodicals Department on the library ground floor, but documents can also be accessed through the library online catalogue.

AUI smokers targeted

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The health center in collaboration with the student activities office and counseling services of Al Akhawayn University launched a smoking cessation campaign on February 5th. This initiative took place on the AUI campus over five event-filled days.

Three experts attended the five-day seminar in order to provide smokers with advice, support, and practical tools that can help them to quit smoking. Participants included: Mr. Reynolds Agathe, psychologist and vice-president of the International Committee for the Prevention of Addictions (ICPA); Dr. Najat Gharbi, Head of the Non-Transmissible Diseases Division, Moroccan Ministry of Health; and Dr. Hafid Abdelmajid, Chief of the Workers Health Service, (NTDD), Moroccan Ministry of Health.

Smoking is an addiction. Many people fail at quitting and just give up. Quitting smoking actually requires outside support and significant assistance. That's why the smoking prevention program aimed to promote information on factors that ensure wellness, so that students can make healthy lifestyle choices and especially so they can make decisions about how they are going to quit.

"We have been showing smokers the physical and physiological means of overcoming this addiction. That's why we have a doctor and a psychologist in attendance at these workshops. The doctor talks about what happens to a smokers' body and shows all the problems that smoking causes, whereas the psychologist is here to push forward and work on the mental side so that those who smoke can fully understand how dangerous smoking is," said Mr. Reynolds Agathe.

During the campaign, smokers could speak with professionals about their specific situations so that the latter could give them expert advice. "They are fighting, and they are doing their best," Mr. Agathe said of those who attended.

The initiative is meant to encourage responsible behavior among smokers by reminding them of their responsibility not only to themselves but also to their environment, and how wellbeing and safety are crucial in one's life. "Smokers dirty their bodies; they kill themselves. We just bring them to think how precious their life is and how wonderful their body is, and we make sure that at least one is going to quit and is not going to die with whatever cancer," said Mr. Agathe.

ATTENDANCE		
Course ID: _____ Year: _____		
Instructor: _____		
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AUI absence policy changes

HAJAR BOUSFIHA

"Attendance has been shown to be a key factor in academic success". This is how the Student Affairs Office announced the new university attendance/absence policy change by the end of last fall.

Ceilings are now set as follows: 5 absences for classes meeting twice a week, 7 absences for classes meeting 3 times a week, and 10 absences for language center students as they meet 5 times a week. Whenever a student goes beyond these ceilings, the instructor will assign a WF grade, and the student is dropped from the

course.

Only students participating in the university's external events are allowed to request excused absence forms. However, students are not allowed to have more than 3 absences of this kind during the semester. Any other kind of absence that has no adequate reason, such as being absent for family or personal matters, is recorded.

Faculty members now have more flexibility and control in their classrooms and students are aware that they are ultimately responsible for their grades.

3 brand new clubs launched

LEILA BAHRI

Three new clubs, the GREEN club, the Marketing club, and Le Proscenium, have been launched this semester to add the repertoire of student club activities.

The GREEN Club:

The Group of Rational Ecologists and Environmentalists (GREEN) aims at highlighting environmental issues and making students aware of them. "The club is launched to promote environmental awareness and ecological consciousness on campus especially among students," declared Ms. Zaynab El Barnoussi, the president of the club.

According Zaynab, most AUI students are not aware of the environmental crisis and its effects on human life. The mandate of the club, then, is to make students aware of environmental issues involving nature and the "green creatures."

The Green Club is planning to start with three main introductory events: the showing of a documentary, the organization of a workshop about graduate environmental study possibilities, and third the "World Earth Day Celebration." This last event will be celebrated on April 22nd in collaboration with CEIRD.

The Marketing Club:

"The reason why we launched the club is because we personally felt that the marketing innovation spirit in AUI is flat." This is how Mr. Driss Taleb, a member of the Marketing Club, summarized the reasons behind the foundation of the club. Marketing is one of the most innovative disciplines in business; that's why the club is back to raise students' awareness of the importance of this discipline, Mr. Taleb explained.

The club plans to organize a set of speeches by marketing executives, including AUI alumni. In addition, they will be working on organizing a marketing competition.

Le Proscenium:

Promoting the artistic abilities of students is the main objective of Le Proscenium. In fact, the club has been launched to create a theatre troupe that will be staging plays in French.

The club is planning to bring theatre professionals to present workshops to club members. Also, club members will benefit from relaxation and concentration exercises that will help them improve their acting abilities; and therefore, perform well in different talent shows they are planning to participate in.



Butting out demo at Anti-Smoking Campaign

Early birds land

LEILA BAHRI

Furthering one of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the larger Moroccan community, AUI organized the annual Early-Bird campaign between January 29th and February 2nd. The campaign consisted of inviting excellent baccalaureate students from different provinces of the country to spend two days enjoying the hospitality of the university.

Once at AUI, the selected students were received by the admission/outreach office staff and members of the student Ambassadors Association. Three different groups were welcomed in spring 2007. Each group was exposed to an intensive pre-orientation program about the university, its system, and the services it provides.

The guests were introduced to the university by watching a short

video-presentation, and then they were shown the different activities organized by student activities and clubs. A guided tour of the university was part of the program to give them the chance to get their bearings and to get a general idea about life on campus. The guests had rooms within the university campus which made them more familiar with the different components of the AUI life style.

The students who had the chance to live the AUI 2-day experience are expected to spread the good word in their communities about AUI. According to Mrs. Houda Alami Ouali, Admissions Officer, such programs are of great importance for the popularity, excellence and identity message of AUI.



First meeting of the New SGA board

New student reps elected to SGA

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The Student Government Association (SGA) held its annual elections on Tuesday, February 13th.

The SGA helps the student body to establish an effective liaison with the administration and faculty regarding issues relevant to the students. It resolves student

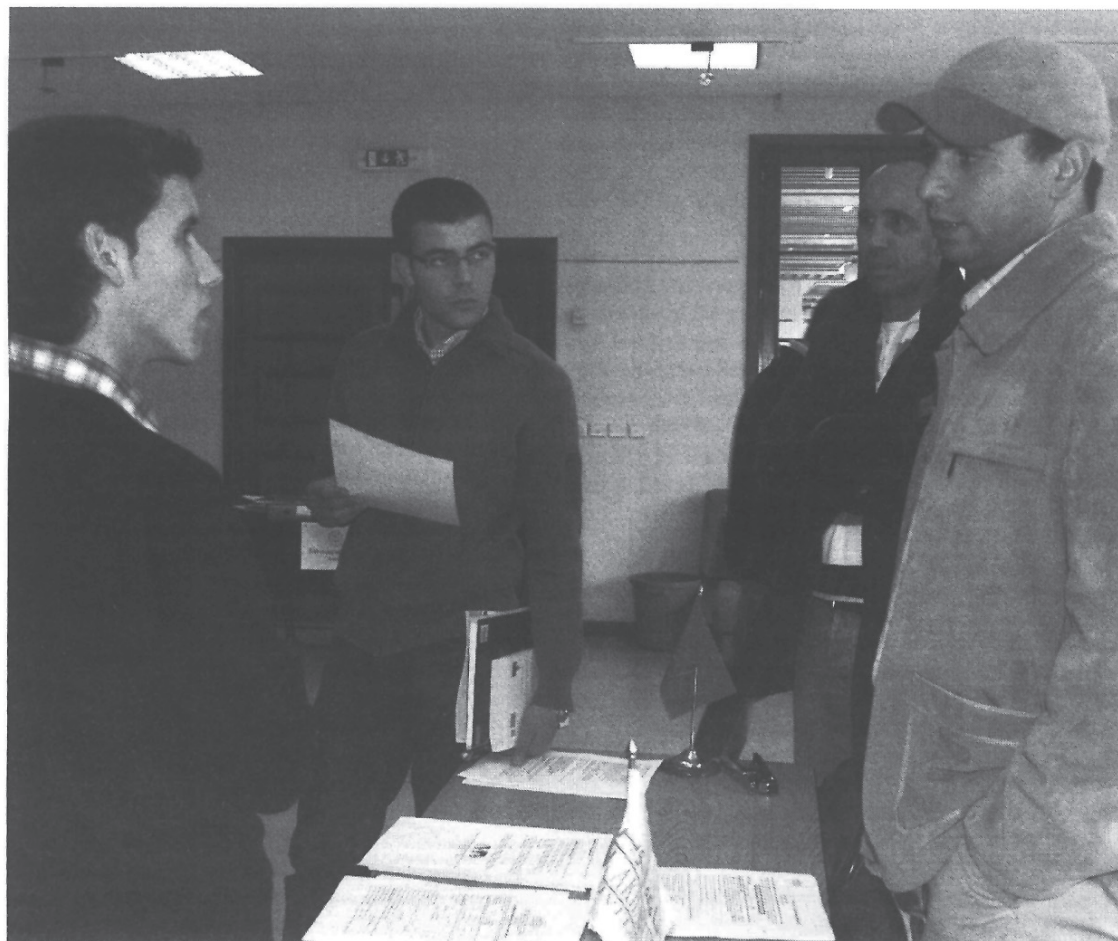
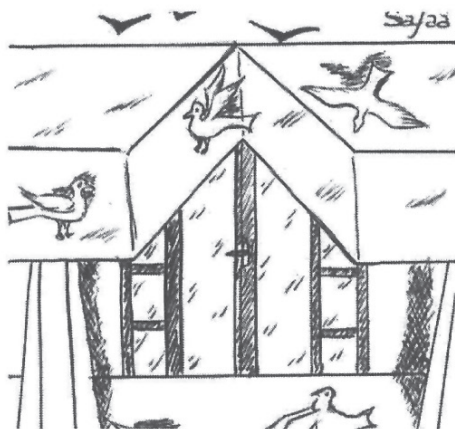
complaints, advocates for new university policies, and provides input about various issues at the University.

This semester, students from each school selected their representatives. Salma Slaoui, Mohamed El Harrak, and Fahd Medkouri have been chosen by SBA students.

SSE students voted Ijlal Lotfi, Mouad Baha, and Youssef Ztot. Driss Lembachar, Inass Msaidi, Obaira Afifi, and Yosr Sibari will be representing SHSS students.

Now that the new student representatives are in place, it is the responsibility of the elected members to actively represent

the needs, concerns and ideas of AUI students. Indeed, it is the level of participation from its members that determines whether the SGA reaches its goals: the higher the level of student participation, the greater the tasks that the SGA can accomplish.



International Programs Office staff welcome inquiries

Study Abroad Fair

RACHIDA AZELMAD

The Office of International Programs (OIP), in collaboration with exchange students from AUI's partner institutions overseas and former AUI students who studied abroad, organized a Study Abroad Fair on February 6th and 7th, 2007.

The Study Abroad Fair is an annual information fair for AUI students who are interested in learning more about the many exciting study abroad opportunities all over the world. "It's simply a service to remind our students of their choices. It gives them an opportunity to understand that there are many places where they can go," said Mrs. Amy Fishburn, the director of the Office of International Programs.

At the Fair, students were able to ask questions and to get reliable answers.

In fact, being accepted for a study abroad program is not an easy process, and students need to start planning early. To do that, they need to know which are the available international opportunities.

By attending the Study Abroad Fair, students have the opportunity to meet AUI students who have returned from exchange or other programs; the chance to meet foreign students who are at AUI; and to take a look at various programs and facilities. Students can also find out which foreign universities offer scholarships to foreign exchange students. More than that, students who already made their decision to try a new experience can fill out the necessary applications. "Over 70 to 80 applications were filled during the first day," said Mrs. Fishburn.

By choosing to study abroad, AUI students challenge themselves by exposing themselves to new cultures and enhancing their career choices while earning credit toward their AUI degree. They also get new perspectives on their studies that will help to make them citizens of the world. "Everybody should go at least once. It's not really so important where you go; it's the fact that you go which is more important," said Mrs. Fishburn.

Editorial

The AUI Bridge: The Bridge to Excellence and Identity

INASS MSAIDI



This issue marks the launch of the AUI Bridge: Al Akhawayn University's official student newspaper.

The mission of the AUI Bridge; the official student newspaper in English for the AUI community, is to provide credible, reliable,

and timely coverage of information and news to the AUI community, using balanced reporting and information analysis. It also aims at promoting the welfare of the AUI community by fostering communication and providing a forum for community discussion with the goal of creating a voice and identity.

The AUI Bridge provides news, information and advertising to Al Akhawayn community and offers for its editors and reporters, the opportunity to learn and gain experience in a receptive journalistic atmosphere. Our intention as a team is to have and provide a vocational journalistic experience. We work hard to approach professional standards.

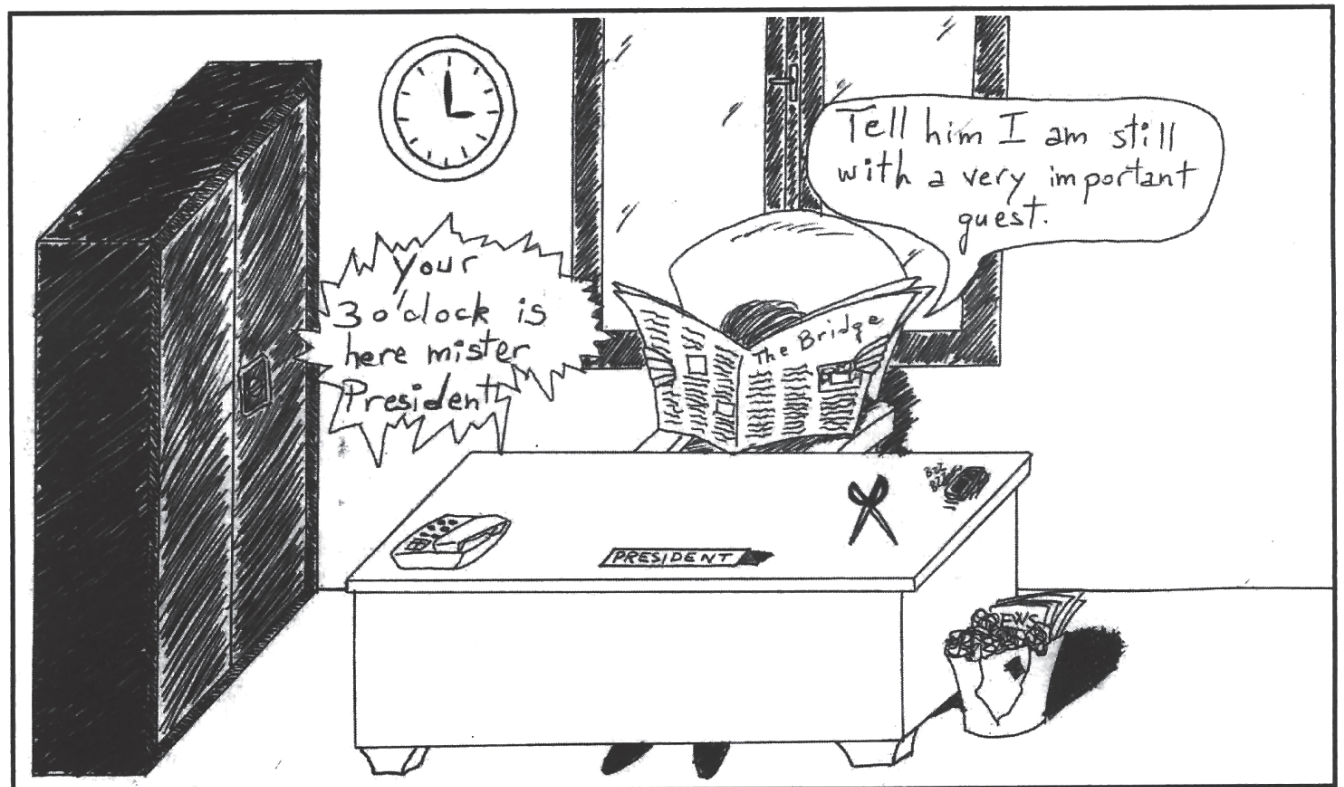
The structure of this newspaper mirrors professional papers. Six editorial desks each manage a number of volunteer staff reporters ensuring standards are met and guaranteeing timely publication.

Besides regular coverage, which will be distributed in the three main sections of the newspaper: news, features and entertainment, the AUI Bridge speaks to and gives voice to the greater AUI community through dedicated columns. By allocating a column for alumni, the AUI Bridge provides a way for alumni to continue to participate after graduation. Both students and alumni will gain from accounts of first hand experience transitioning to the workplace. Foreign exchange students coming to AUI from abroad and AUI students going abroad will write a column where they can 'journal' their stay so that we can all participate in their experience. As well, students at AUI who are not part of the staff will be called upon to write columns so all can be 'front row center' when they participate in an event.

Also, I invite AUI students to energetically participate in the OP/ED section. In "Letters to the Editor" students can express their opinions about specific issues related to our university and suggest realistic solutions. For the first issue, we have chosen "The Pre-Pre Registration" as a topic for "Letters to the Editor," because of the number of students who declared that it is a crucial issue and a vital service that needs to be improved in the upcoming semesters.

I would like to take the opportunity and call for the cooperation of all the university departments because they are the sources from where we gather data which we then organize, and finally present as credible and reliable news.

On behalf of the AUI Bridge team, I would like to welcome the new board of the Student Government Association. We wish you the best of luck.



Letters to the Editor The "Pre-PreRegistration" Process

Dear Editor,
I was very happy when I read, via email, that there will be a pre-pre-registration to better plan for the courses offered in Spring 2007. I had thought that the courses chosen would definitely be the ones I would be registered in. But now, I think that this process is very complicated and meaningless. I suggest that the administration keep the old process, since it can give an estimate of students who will enroll in different courses, and at the same time, save time.

Imane Amzil

Dear Editor,
There is no doubt that the pre-pre-registration is a good idea and an excellent initiative for students to plan ahead and select the appropriate courses for them. However, there were some courses that I registered in, but which were not offered. Also, I found many time conflicts in the courses I wanted to take. To improve the quality of this service, courses offered should be based on the students' needs.

Siham Lekchiri

Dear Editor,
I think that the pre-pre-registration process was not fruitful, since the courses we selected with the advisor, as classes, were not offered, even though the advisor added comments when he

entered my courses. I suggest that the administration take into consideration the courses that the students select with the advisor prior to the pre-pre-registration period and try to meet their needs.

Fatima Ejekki

Dear Editor,
The pre-pre-registration was a good idea to select courses. After four years at the University, this is the first time that I found all my courses without any conflict in time or between classes. However, I hope that in the future we can have a system that allows students to add and drop classes online, without redoing the process of pre-pre-registration, pre-registration then registration. Online registration is a good solution.

Fatima Zahrae Chrfi Alaoui

Dear Editor,
The pre-pre-registration process for me, as an MBA student, was not effective because I was not able to get the courses I wanted. In fact, I wanted more marketing courses to be offered but, unfortunately, not a lot of these courses were offered. Besides not being able to register in the courses I wanted, there was a time conflict between two courses I registered for.

Driss Taleb

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@au.ma. For more information, stop by the newsroom or contact the editor-in-chief.

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NEXT ISSUE'S TOPIC

DORM LIVING

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

The AUI Bridge wants to hear from you!

Contact:
bridge@au.ma

A Life-Changing Experience

OTHMAN BENLAMLIH

During the fall of 2006, during my last semester at Al Akhawayn, I had the opportunity to take the Video and Film Production Course. It was an advanced communication class and I was a business student with a minor in Communication Studies.

Using my experience at Al Akhawayn as a reference, I can say that it was the most exciting and practical course I have ever taken. Before this class, I never thought that video and film production would be either interesting or challenging.

In retrospect, I would divide this class into two equal parts: theoretical and practical. During the first class, I applied every single piece of information I had learned as a student. It was the first time I had the opportunity to meet and work with renowned professionals in the field of cinema.

After one semester's work, I achieved two short movies. One was professionally done. The second was a promotional piece, featuring the facilities at Al Akhawayn.

Throughout those first weeks, we learned the basics of video and film production by discovering the stages of film production, camera components, light features, etc.

Next, working in pairs, we had our first experience shooting a very short movie without dialogue. We wrote our own scenarios. The experience needed to be a basic one. It was

our first time using a camera to shoot a short movie with a scenario, and editing the footage using software. We learned that writing a scenario is not as easy as it seems. For example, we had to deal with challenges, such as the light, and shooting fast scenes, which included juggling a football in the soccer field. Each group was proud of their completed outcome.

The second and most enthusiastically received stage of this class was to professionally shoot a short movie. First, we agreed on the scenario. Then, we packed up the equipment. The location was in Rabat.

Once there, we performed as professional crews under the direction of our professor for two days. The ambiance during the shooting was so good that we forgot about the amount of work we were doing. We behaved like a unified family. We worked 12 hours the first day and 18 hours the second day. They were the best hours I have spent at Al Akhawayn. We touched on and understood every aspect of shooting. By the end, I felt that we had become true professionals. We understood the amount of work and the seriousness involved in making a movie. We enjoyed being professional cinematographers during those two brief days, in an excellent and unforgettable ambiance.

As a result of this experience, I have stopped criticizing Moroccan movies. Making a

movie requires many technical skills that our cinematographers lack. Also, huge financial support is essential.

After this unforgettable experience, I got the opportunity to work with a professional cinematographer, Zakaria Atifi, to make a promotional movie for Al Akhawayn. Atifi is a renowned Moroccan actor and technician, whose work has mainly been

in the advertising field. Though under serious time constraints, we came up with fine results. We had one day to shoot every office at Al Akhawayn. We shot student activities, AUI schools, labs, classrooms, the athletic areas, dorms and of course, the students. During that same day, we edited all the work. We worked 14 non-stop hours. Even under the supervision of a pro-

fessional, I have never worked under such stress in my entire life.

The movie was shown during the Moroccan Film Festival, where I had the opportunity to talk and share stories with professionals. I had the opportunity to share my modest experience with them. I discovered the working conditions for Moroccan actors. I had the rare honor to participate in a discussion with the respected director of "A La Recherche du Mari de ma Femme" and "Lalla Houbbi", Hadj Mohamed Abderrahman Tazi, who is also affiliated with 2M channel.

I discovered a new field that I had ignored prior to the Video and Film Production Course. I learned to work under stress, with professionals, which very rarely occurs at Al Akhawayn. Opportunities to share our experiences and to work with professionals are seldom present.

Without reservation, I can state that this course is the most important and unforgettable one that I took during my studies at AUI, even though I am speaking as a business major. I learned so many things, like the video-making vocabulary and a personal work ethic that I was unaware I could achieve.

I wish to thank my classmates for their support and their work during the Rabat trip. I extend an invitation to all Al Akhawayn students. Take this course, so you can have a great video making experience!



Othman Benlamlih lights his way

Blue and Gold Memories

LAMIA TAGRIT

On the plane to the United States, I asked myself different questions about how my exchange experience was going to be. I decided, then and there, that no matter what was going to happen, I was going to take a positive approach, because even the saddest experience can trigger some positive outcomes in the long term.

I was expecting to be homesick and I was. Food was also an important issue: it was hard for me to get used to American food and I deeply missed the home-made Moroccan dishes, especially the daily baked fresh bread! Industrially packaged bread just isn't the same. As time passed I remembered my decision to be optimistic, and I started to enjoy my stay in West Virginia. I had the opportunity to meet wonderful people and have some good times. Luckily, beautiful days were numerous.

Is it possible to talk about an American university without mentioning its football team? WVU's team was the pride of all West Virginia citizens. You may have guessed why I have described my memories in the title as blue and gold: it is because those are the two colors of WVU. During game day, all Morgantown citizens wear blue and gold and I participated in this tradition too.

My friends from Morocco and I experienced some strange and funny things – especially when we were asked about our country. In fact, a lot of people didn't know where Morocco was. Some people told us that they knew Morocco and started talking about our princess Grace Kelly! "That's Monaco! We are from Morocco!" How can people confuse Monaco and Morocco! Another thing that really seemed weird was what was weird to others: the fact that we Moroccans tend to use both Arabic and French in the same sentence, for example. When our international friends listened to us talk, they were really confused and they disclosed that our way of speaking was very unusual and that normally, one should use only one language when speaking.

It is sure that I will never forget the politeness and friendliness of West Virginia people. From the very beginning to the very end, I saw a lot of smiling faces. Also, there were those small different things in people's behavior that meant a lot to me, such as everybody's respect of line ups – under all circumstances – and their spontaneous readiness to help whenever anyone seemed to be in trouble.

My exchange experience enabled me to make new friends and to learn about new cultures. In addition to meeting

American students, I got the chance to meet students from all over the world who were enrolled in exchange programs too and with whom I am still in touch now.

Enrolling in an exchange program was and is still a very enriching experience. Sometimes, we don't discover the

benefits or the importance of an experience until it is over, and that's part of the beauty of the thing! There are the beautiful moments you live when you travel and the other ones you live after it is over, when you discover, little by little, that you were able to learn or see more things than you expected.



West Virginia University

When I decided to study abroad in Morocco

RAVI KANERYA



When I decided to study abroad in Morocco, my mother was very scared. She was afraid that I would be entering a land of terrorism, disease, war, and Islamic fundamentalism. Of course, I knew that these were little more than stereotypes held by Americans who were uneducated about Morocco, but still, I was scared too, albeit for very different reasons. My greatest fear was that I would end up being just another "exchange student". By that, I mean that I was afraid that I would come to Morocco and just end up being one of those cliquy exchange students who only mingles with other exchange students and never really gets integrated with the Moroccans. Therefore, early in the semester, I made a concerted effort to speak with Moroccan students and to get to know them. It is a decision that I have never regretted. In all my time here at al-Akhawayn University, I have found the Moroccan people to be warm, generous, interesting, and endlessly curious. Everyone I met wanted to know about me- where I was from, what US state I lived in, how I learned Arabic and French, why I chose to study in Morocco, if I knew such-and-such American singer or such-and-such American TV show. I had to get used to three people asking me questions at the same time and regurgitating the same answers to people over and over in what my friend Redouane began referring to as the "cassette tape recording". Still, I loved every minute of it; I saw it as an opportunity to satiate my own curiosity and to learn about the lives of the people around me, and I also looked at it as an opportunity to make friends and meet new people.

I still remember my first impressions of Morocco. After getting off the plane at Fez Airport, we met Mouad and Abdullah, two students from the ERASMUS Club who had come to meet us and to escort us to AUI. The van ride to AUI was amazing. I can still remember how dazzled I was to feel that I was in Morocco and how I was engrossed in every little detail about this new country. The atmosphere just felt so fresh and new and different. The donkeys pulling carts along the

roads, the rolling yellow hills, the little Berber villages in the distance, the shops in the little towns selling traditional Moroccan goods, the Arabic street signs - everything was so enchanting and had its own special charm to it.

Back at my home university in the United States, our study abroad coordinator had told us that this first phase of our study abroad experience was called "positive culture shock". She explained that this phase would be marked by great happiness to be in a foreign country and a fascination with everything around us. She also explained that this first phase would be followed by a second phase, in which we would soon grow jaded and depressed once we got accustomed to our new surroundings and the novelty of everything wore off.

While I did soon get accustomed to life at AUI, the second phase never really came to

with so many fond memories of Morocco that will stay with me forever. I remember the first night when I had dinner with Bouteina and Meryem and how Younes had to translate a lot of things for us because we had problems understanding each other. I remember that the first time I ever danced in my life was with Khalid Bennani. I remember the time Leah and I got on the wrong train and how the train operators stopped the right train just so that it could pick up two stupid American travelers. I remember all the debates I had with Souad and Driss and Meryem. I remember the very awkward American-Moroccan blind date that I and some of the other exchange students went on with Badr, Hicham, Ilias, and Huda. I remember getting "engaged" to Marney 10 minutes before our Moroccan-style wedding in the Game Room. I remember how Fatimah Zahra and I went

Rami work his magic with the football and score impossible goals. I remember the day Anas and I walked into English conversation hour, where I experienced the most hilarious hour and a half of my whole time in Morocco. I remember the time that Patrick, Leah, and I went to the little-known town of Zaouiat Bougrine and how we got invited to the home of a local family who served us an elaborate dinner, welcomed us to sleep overnight in their home, and sacrificed so much to accommodate us despite the fact that they had so little to give.

While my impressions of Morocco are overwhelmingly positive, there will always be areas that need improvement and reform, and so I think it is fitting that I should leave you with some advice. First, treat your women better. No country will prosper that does not respect, value, and treat equal-

not 9:30PM.

Some people say that AUI isn't really part of Morocco, but I disagree. Maybe it has a different culture and environment, but it is no less Moroccan. Countries develop and cultures change; it is an inevitable and necessary part of human progress. It isn't that AUI is un-Moroccan; it is that AUI and its students represent the future of Morocco and that is why I am so hopeful for this country. Being in AUI has reinforced my belief in the commonalities of all people. Perhaps our languages and religions and histories are different, but Moroccan students and American students are more alike than they are apart. We all yearn for the same things - for freedom, for friendship, for love. We laugh together and cry together and worry together about the uncertainties of our lives. As young people living in the age of globalization, we



New Jersey College

pass for me. In fact, the longer I stayed here, the more I fell in love with Morocco. The rich culture and history, the varied and magnificent scenery, the diverse linguistic heritage, and the stunning monuments and cities made every day in Morocco a treasure. Still, while these things are great, the thing I will always value and appreciate the most about Morocco is its people.

I am infinitely grateful to all the remarkable friends I have made here who have gifted me

on an unsuccessful wild goose chase to try and find each other in Marrakesh during an unrelenting rainstorm. I remember how our economics class got swarmed by hundreds of curious, little children during our visit to the Tafilalt. I remember couscous on Fridays with Khadija, Aicha, Simo, Ismail, and Kowtar. I remember singing Amr Diab during the MILETUS Competition. I also remember attending the Ramadan football tournament and being awestruck as I watched

ly one half of its entire population. All this macho stuff about hissing at girls on the street and keeping 4 girlfriends at the same time is not cool; it's degrading and wrong, and it has to stop. Second, I have observed in my time here that Morocco is a country of religious paradoxes. People follow religion when they shouldn't and don't follow religion when they should. It should be the other way around. And finally, be on time! Timeliness is an important life skill. 9PM means 9PM,

strive together to find happiness in a changing world and to reconcile our shifting values and desires with the dictates of tradition and convention. I take heart in the future because being here has made me realize that whether we are American or Moroccan, the basis for mutual understanding and harmony between us (and between all peoples on this planet) is strong and grows stronger everyday as the world becomes a more open and connected place.

Life Lessons

FADWA BOUACHRINE

What colors do you like? Who's your favorite author? What's your favorite food, your favorite activity? What makes you happy? Why do you spend your time the way you do? Why do you practice your religion? Why do you think what you think? Do you really like your career path? Does your life have a meaning? Who do you think you are?

My name is Fadwa Bouachrine. I am an AUI alum who graduated in December, 1999, from the School of Science and Engineering.

"My love for diversity started when I was attending AUI. It was the first place where I experienced classrooms filled with people from various parts of the world."

My love for diversity started when I was attending AUI. It was the first place where I experienced classrooms filled with people from various parts of the world. They added value to discussions and debates.

Whether in the workplace, the classroom or a public place, I find it enriching to know and work with people from differing backgrounds and cultures, and with different lifestyles, values, ideas, manners, goals, experiences and priorities.

My newly awakened passion for diversity found a home in classrooms abroad, where I continued my studies. I gained patience, understanding and respect toward other cultures. I was amazed by the richness of discussion that could result from a multitude of backgrounds and experiences when examining the same situation.

BEING AN AMBASSADOR

The people in my new community felt that they were getting to know Morocco better, through getting to know me. I kept repeating that I was one individual, with thoughts and behaviors of her own. I encouraged them to stop generalizing. Just like every citizen abroad, I was faced with the unasked-for responsibility of being an ambassador for my country.

In Spokane, friends, classmates, colleagues and neighbors were curious about Morocco. Every question they asked had a 'why'.

They made me think of issues that Moroccans take for granted, things I never discussed before. The scope of questions was broad. Some were frivolous. Some were recurring, such as, "Does it really snow in Morocco?"

Others were well thought-out and precise. "Why do you kneel when praying? Why does your flag look that way? How much freedom do women really have within Moroccan society? What is women's status in government?" My homework became to learn as much as I could about Morocco, to provide as many answers as possible.

I was forced to do research on my own country, learning much in the process. There were many opportunities to discuss my new knowledge, with people of different viewpoints. This enhanced my thinking, evaluating, adopting and refuting abilities. For the first time, I formed my own opinions, rather than mimicking someone else's.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

Courage, belief, will and perseverance are key to being able to say: "Enough is enough!" and acting on it.

Enough blaming others for being constantly sad! To be happy or sad is, in most cases, a choice, as is being angry, bored or miserable.

Enough forgetting that all beings just pass through this life. We have a limited time on earth. We all need to make the most of it, to enjoy the moments, to leave the world a better place.

Enough of considering defeat and failure as end points. They can be starting points! Yes, of course, it is extremely difficult to do. Perhaps the difference between successful people, and those less successful, is the level of difficulty undertaken. As Eleanor Roosevelt said "You have to take defeat over and over again, and pick up and go on."

Enough of accepting a 'fit the mold approach', just to belong. It is absolutely fine to be different! It is everyone's duty to welcome and enjoy differences, as long as they are respectful to their environment.

In truth, it takes time to make such changes, time to learn the life skills we need and incorporate them into our daily interactions.

Three interesting years abroad came to an end. I was back in my county, my city, among my family, my friends and my environment. Everything looked so small. Reverse culture shock? Never heard of it before actually experiencing it.

I came back to the AUI community with one additional degree plus international experience, to find myself hired by the very place that, initially, opened the doors of the entire world to me! Readjusting remains an interesting process and

"The scope of questions was broad. Some were frivolous. Some were recurring, such as, "Does it really snow in Morocco?"

re-examining remains a challenge that starts from the self and ends with the community.

No matter who you are, or what your background is, you can make a difference if you choose to do so. You can achieve change via continuous and smart work. As the Yugoslavian proverb proclaims, "Grain by grain, a loaf - stone by stone a castle."



4 new faculty members

HAJAR BOUSFIHA

Four new faculty members joined AUI in time for the Spring, 2007 semester. The School of Business administration welcomed Dr. Dave Edward Kotcher and Mrs. Widad Soufi, and the School of Science and Engineering welcomed Mr. Hassan Lhou and Mr. Michael Haddad.



Full Name: Dave Edward Kotcher

Academic achievement:

- Ph.D in general Business Management
- Law degree
- Master in business administration
- Bachelor in journalism

Nationality: American

This is Dr. Kotcher's first visit to Morocco. He considers his position at AUI a great opportunity to get to know Moroccan culture and history. He loves travelling and visits many countries as a way to satisfy his curiosity. Dr. Kotcher has taught in more than six different countries, mainly in Central Europe, among which are: Poland, the Slovak Republic, Ukraine and Turkey. He is also a businessman and a writer. He is passionate about teaching. He thinks of Morocco as a fascinating country where people are very friendly and never show anger.

A word from Dr. Kotcher to AUI students: "Take a deep breath and keep going, have faith and never give up!"



Full Name: Lhou Hassan

Academic achievement:

- Master of Science in applied mathematics (option statistics), 2005, University of new Hampshire, USA
- Master of Science in mathematics, 2002, University of new Hampshire, USA

Nationality: Moroccan

After working many years as a high school teacher in Morocco, Mr. Lhou decided to go abroad and continue his studies in Mathematics in the USA. By the time he finished his studies there, Mr. Lhou was teaching in his field. Mr. Lhou describes himself as a person who loves what he is doing very much. He is very happy to be here at AUI, especially after being away from the country for a long time. Mr Lhou says of his students: "Moroccan students have a strong background, at least from what I see in my math classes."



Full Name: Soufi Widad

Academic achievement:

- Enrolled in a Ph.D program at the University of Wisconsin- Madison (USA) since 2001
- MS Degree from Virginia Tech (USA) 2001
- MS Degree in Agricultural Development, Institut Agronomique de Paris (France) 1994.
- Engineer Degree from Institut Agronomique et Veterinaire Hassan II, Rabat (Morocco) 1993

Nationality: Moroccan

After coming back from France, Mrs. Widad Soufi "thought that she was ready for work"; therefore, she started working in the Ministry of Foreign Trade (1995-97) and at the Customs service (1997-99) which allowed her to represent the country in many international meetings especially at the European Commission. After four years of work, Mrs. Soufi decided to go to the USA and study about the evaluation of economic and trade policies. Mrs. Soufi finds Ifrane a too small city, and it is difficult to visit a large city such as Rabat or Casablanca, but on the other hand she does not have time to go anyway.

A word from Mrs. Soufi to AUI community: "We are all working here for the future of Morocco."



Full Name: Micheal Haddad

Academic achievement:

- Master in Science in Mathematics, 1996, Concordia University, Canada.

Nationality: Canadian

This is Mr. Haddad's first time in Morocco. Mr. Haddad thinks that AUI students are serious and polite, but his classes are so crowded that it makes knowing and keeping eye contact with each student almost impossible. He thinks of Morocco and especially AUI as a fascinating place. He loves nature and admires the campus environment.

Reading Habits Survey

MOUNA EL MAN, SOURI

Many people seem to see reading as a compulsory activity, cultivating people's minds and knowledge by offering them the opportunity to learn about different issues, ideologies, and people. This is even more important for AUI students as they frequent a highly academic and cultural environment where knowledge is a key component.

The AUI community is an interesting population to study in regards to many aspects. The first reason consists in the cultural variety of its members. In fact, it is rare to find people from not only all around Morocco, but also from around the world, in the same place. The second reason lies in the university location. The fact that Ifrane is not a big city seems to push students to create and generate extra curricular activ-

ities in order to spend their free time, and one of the activities students might choose to spend their free time doing is reading.

In order to investigate this issue, an e-survey was sent to all AUI students asking them for their input on the matter by answering a few questions that addressed specific reading habits. Even if the number of responses (46) limited the sample size to the extent that we cannot consider the findings representative, results of the survey do point to certain tendencies which we found worthwhile to explore.

Respondents' profile:

On average, 63% of the respondents were female students, while the largest portion of respondents, in regard to their academic level, was made of freshman students, with a response rate of 26%. Only a

small portion of respondents were language Center students (2%). This may be due to the fact that these students are still not feeling comfortable and confident enough in their English skills to answer surveys and participate.

Reading tendencies:

When at AUI, respondents tend to choose reading material that is inspired by the courses they take. They prefer non-fiction to fiction, and before reading online newspapers, they will choose to read popular materials related to their field of study. As to which reading materials they prefer, readers gravitate toward magazines, books and newspapers in hardcopy rather than reading online.

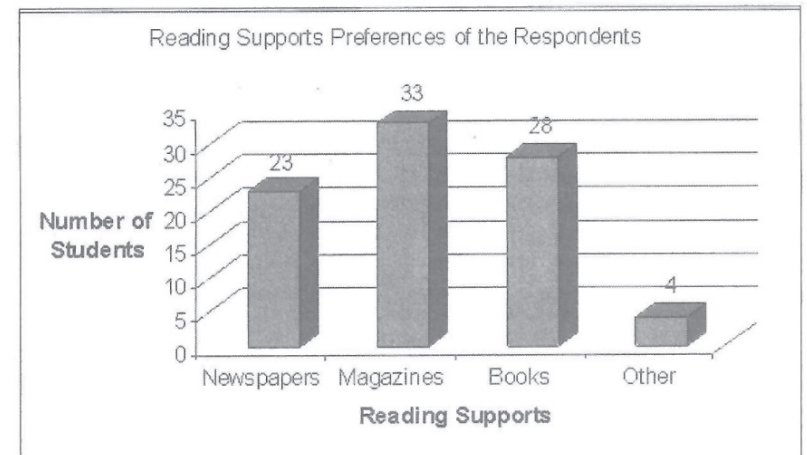
The findings show also that the majority of students who responded rely on the library and on purchasing as source

for reading materials. Online reading is rarely mentioned in their preferences; however, this can be due to the fact that most students gravitate around Moroccan sources rather than foreign materials, and that these Moroccan sources are not always available online.

The large majority of respondents spend less than 8 hours per week reading online. Al-

though many pointed out that reading online enables them to stay up-to-date with what happens in the world without having to leave their rooms, especially during the cold season, the impact of online media for the majority still seems to be limited.

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Vice-President Ouaouicha's Legacy

RADIA CHRAIBI

After more than 30 years in the field of education, on the eve of taking leave of Al Akhawayn University, Professor Driss Ouaouicha, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs of Al Akhawayn University, feels "...happy to see that people in Morocco and internationally are glad and proud to have their children study at AUI."

Professor Ouaouicha came to Al Akhawayn University with international and national degrees in education, languages, and linguistics, and many years of experience in teaching and administration in the Moroccan educational system at all levels. After 30 years of service, Professor Ouaouicha is taking some personal time with family and friends.

AUI Bridge knocked on Professor Ouaouicha's door, requesting an interview in an attempt to understand the legacy he leaves after eight years of dedicated service to Al Akhawayn University.

When Dr Ouaouicha first arrived at AUI eight years ago as Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, "AUI was ready for change," according to him. The programs needed to become more competitive. Dr. Ouaouicha was instrumental in closing old degrees and launching new degrees relevant to the private

and public sectors. As Dean, Dr. Ouaouicha spearheaded the Master degree in International Studies and Diplomacy, and the Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies, in addition to the Bachelor of Science in Human Resource Development. As a result, the school grew in numbers of admissions and visibility.

In 2002, Dr Ouaouicha was appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs – an experience that he qualified as challenging and gratifying. In fact, one of the biggest challenges a Vice President faces is

"AUI students, scattered around the world, are proud to claim their belonging to AUI, as an institution that has acquired, in only twelve years, respectable international status."

how to ensure the learning outcomes are achieved from a position twice removed; for as a V.P. he does not teach directly, nor does he have direct contact with Professors. An educated student is a complex outcome, and ensuring the quality of such an outcome is a laborious work that demands a lot of coordination and communication.

Another challenge was working with the President and Deans in order to get accreditation for AUI schools. Accreditation of a university is bestowed to those universities world wide that meet international standards. After a rigorous assessment by the British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, the School of Business Administration and the School of Science and Engineering succeeded in achieving high ranking.

The assessment evaluated the programs, the faculty, the students, and the graduates who were already on the job market, as well as the library services and learning resources. The British Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education has recommended that AUI set up a unit of quality assurance inside the university in order to ensure the continuity and improvement of these achievements. Still, although AUI is recognized administratively and academically in the United States, the university's accreditation as a whole is postponed because of security reasons which arose after the events of September 11th. The efforts are being resumed and Dr. Ouaouicha is confident that with persistence and serious work, there should not be a problem.

The university now regularly participates in a Major Field Test (MFT). As hundreds of universities and thousands of students around the world also participate in this test, Dr. Ouaouicha sees it as a good opportunity to measure the performances of students enrolled in SBA and SSE, and the results are quite satisfying, with some students scoring in the top 5%.

All these achievements are gratifying to Dr Ouaouicha, as he feels associated with Al Akhawayn University's improved academic quality and with the growing admission rates as more students choose AUI over other universities.

For Dr Ouaouicha, meeting international standards and participating in the international testing of students is part of a goal to create a reputation for AUI internationally.

Thanks partly to Professor Ouaouicha, who was the main coordinator of the Scholar Ship Program, Al Akhawayn participated in establishing the programs of the Scholar Ship along with other major and well-known universities around the world such as the University of Califor-

nia at Berkeley (the number 1 state university in the world), Shanghai University (number 2 in China), Macquarie University of Australia, and the University of Cardiff in the United Kingdom. Also, 10 of the fifty courses offered on the Scholar Ship next Fall are AUI courses.

Many other international programs and partnerships have been setup with the help and coordination of Dr Ouaouicha, among which is a partnership with one of Tokyo's good universities (Aoyama Gakuin), the beginning of preparation for a joint program in Biotechnology with California Polytechnic University, the establishment of a joint Masters degree with the University of Lecce in Italy, and the Distance Arabic teaching with Montana.

Al Akhawayn's international reputation is already starting to bear fruit. Recently, during his participation in a joint committee in Riad involving Saudi Arabia and Morocco, Dr. Ouaouicha witnessed that people were highly impressed by AUI. Some Saudis were proud to say that their children were students at Al Akhawayn and others would like to join. It is thanks to all these achievements

Meeting international standards and participating in international testing of students is part of a goal to create a reputation for AUI internationally

that AUI students, scattered around the world, are proud to claim their belonging to AUI, as an institution that has acquired, in only twelve years, respectable international status.

As the ambitious man that he is, Dr Ouaouicha thinks that AUI still has a long road ahead in increasing the number of students enrolled while keeping, if not improving, the quality level of education it has achieved so far by improving the selection tools used for choosing faculty and students, and through setting up high standards and control mechanisms enabling evaluation for improvement.

After over 30 years in teaching and administration, Professor Ouaouicha decides today to spend some quality time with his family since he had not the opportunity to do so before, and it is with a lot of regret that we are seeing a modest, serious and ambitious man leaving us.



Dr. Ouaouicha during the 9th Commencement Ceremony

Spotlight

Mr. Abdessamad Fatmi

MOUNA EL MANSOURI

There's a type of person who walks into a room and everyone turns to look: suddenly, there's a buzz. This kind of person carries with him or herself potential, possibility. Mr Abdessamad Fatmi is one of those people.

This is not the first time Mr. Abdessamad Fatmi has caused a buzz at AlAkhawayn University, which makes the reoccurrence even more remarkable. A year and a half ago, Mr. Fatmi was the director of the Student Activities Office.

Behind that image of the hard working and dedicated person, Mr. Fatmi is known for his outgoing and pleasant manners toward everyone around him, his ever encouraging attitude toward efforts, his willingness to help, whatever the situation or the difficulty, and his great communication and management skills that his colleagues appreciated when collaborating with him. All this made Abdessamad one of the most popular figures of AUI. The student body was sad when a year and a half ago he decided to pursue a Masters in International Studies and Diplomacy at The University in Catalonia, Spain.

Master's in hand, Mr. Abdessamad Fatmi is back at AUI; and the buzz is that he has a plan.

Upon return, Mr. Fatmi presented AUI with a strategic communication plan featuring his vision of the priorities that AUI needs to tackle. His plan was based on intensive research, many interviews, and his analysis of AUI activity and financial reports. This plan has become our university's plan, as Abdessamad Fatmi is now head of the Development and Communication Department at AUI.

Born in Meknes, Mr. Fatmi pursued a BA in English Literature from the University of Meknes, and then went to Tangier in 1991, from where he got a Masters degree in translation, combining Arabic, English, French, and Spanish. Soon after that, he embarked in the professional world with a first job that, despite a salary of only 2000 MAD, offered him the opportunity to make use of his potential and learning. He joined a clothing company based in Meknes and was among the people who opened up the British market for that sector.

Mr. Fatmi came to AUI in February, 1995. He started first in Housing Services and then went on to Enrollment Services, Registration, and the Financial Aid Office. After that, he started the Office of Outreach and Ori-

entation, where he worked for about two years. Then he moved to the Office of Student Activities, where he held the position of acting director for about two years before being named Director. In 2001, when he expressed his desire to study, the university suggested that Mr. Fatmi enroll in the first Combined Study-Work Masters Program. He emerged with a Masters degree in International Studies and Diplomacy.

When he left AUI, he accepted a position at the University of Tarragona in Catalonia, Spain, as the person responsible for International Outreach. Ever wanting to improve, he also started a PhD in Mediterranean Cultural Studies, and is currently pursuing it.

"You come back with renewed energy, with a lot of detachment, new ideas and different perspectives, having taken the time to think about the strong points that we have and that sometimes we cannot see while inside."

The vision of the new director of Development and Communication: Ownership produces capital: "We need to get people to feel that they own this place."

In his vision of the priorities that AUI has to work at, Mr. Fatmi emphasizes the development of the human factor. According to him, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and partners need to have a feeling of ownership about the university and its values. Such ownership produces capital for the university. Cultivating this capital is no longer about informing, consulting, including, and motivating. When everyone feels that they own a piece of AUI they will serve it in the best possible way. This approach to identity develops the potential of the whole constituency of AUI. Therefore: ownership, motivation, and commitment are key factors essential to reaching a state of complete synergy which will benefit AUI as an institution and ultimately the whole community.

Abdessamad Fatmi insists also on the importance of adopting smart and targeted content-based communication. AUI needs to use its uniqueness as a university with the complete support of the state and to communicate through it that uniqueness. Al Akhawayn University was founded by the late King Hassan II and has been honored by the visit of King Mohamed IV. It has the valuable asset of having a board of trustees that represents the economic, political, and social power of this country; the board even represents international interests. It has a status that allows it to be the best

of the public and the private sectors. Another great unique feature of Al Akhawayn University is that it was founded with an international perspective – a great strength that few universities, worldwide, can claim. In addition to that, AUI is a very young university, and in only 12 years it has already won the distinction of being internationally recognized for its Identity and Excellence.

Ultimately, in order to keep growing, to be all that it can be, AUI needs to work on develop-

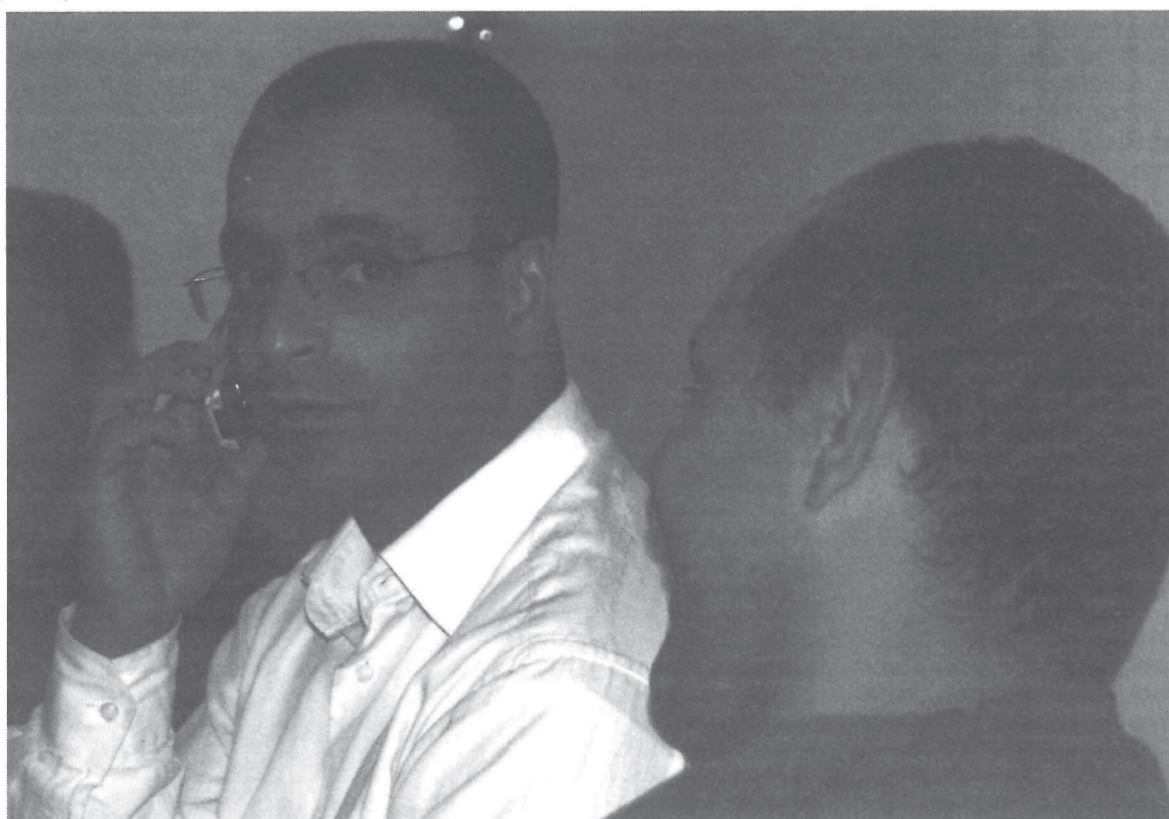
ing its policies, procedures, and systems. Even if the first asset of the university is human resources, the institution cannot depend on human beings and their accumulated experience alone. Building systems will permit a degree of efficiency independent from the human factor in terms of functionality. Human and system development is a very urgent matter in the eyes of the new Director of the Communication and Development Department.

When asked to describe himself in few words, Mr. Abdessa-

mad Fatmi stated:

"I am a Moroccan who would like to go as far as he can to see his dreams come true."

This simple sentence reflects the desire of Mr. Abdessamad Fatmi to serve. Leaving his wife in Spain and coming back to Morocco is an example of the type of sacrifice he is ready to assume to realize his dream of taking part in constructing a history for Al Akhawayn University, and his hopes of making from this institution a model for other institutions in Morocco.



Mr. Abdessamad Fatmi communicating

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Regarding reading frequency, almost 60% of respondents declared that they read at least once a week. Others stated that they read only when they had time; for them, homework and course related assignments come first.

But we do have to mention those few mavericks that "choose not to have a TV in their rooms on purpose" and spend more than 20 hours a week roaming the world for information from lemonade.fr to pitchforkmedia.com. More than a

few respondents state that they spend more than 2 hours a day reading online sources. We also have to mention that a few admitted that they read zip absolutely nada – unless they had to.

The good news:

Readers might be surprised to learn that even with such a small sample, the survey found that those who responded had a strong relationship with the written word. When asked which, if any author or book had an impact on their lives, the sheer variety of responses was extraordinary.

Among those authors listed were many famous and authoritative names from Maupassant, Hugo, Flaubert, and Baudelaire to Hemingway. The list of authors who left ideas, arguments, visions, memories and new ways of thinking are, in no particular order: Stephen Zweig, Romain Gary, while Chomsky, Coelho, Barjavel, de Beauvoir, Buzati, Calvino, Merzisi, Edgar (Allen Poe), Mohamed Chems, Fatima Merzisi and Elizabeth Allende, Tahar Ben Jalloun, Adam Smith, Ricardo, Delillo, Orwell, Barjavel, J.K. Rowling, the author who wrote

Pride and Prejudice and "yes, but I don't remember his name..."

AUI students seem to have very broad reading horizons, expressing again the unique intellectual openness culture that AUI is so known for. This is principally due to the fact that reading is anchored on our students' backgrounds, since the majority of them come to AUI with a rich literature and academic experiences gained through education and personal intellectual curiosity.

Some voices speak for themselves: "Maupassant is the author that made me

love and appreciate reading. In fact, when I was young, my father suggested that I read "Une Vie". I found this book marvellous, and since then I am addicted to literature."

As a conclusion, we could notice that even if AUI students do read, they still do not consider reading as priority and tend to focus more on academic sources rather than on news and fiction. However, most of these students come to AUI cherishing the knowledge they learnt to nurture during their early years – and are still nurturing – through reading.

A welcome trip

ZAKARIA EL RHEZAOU

"Wonderful!" "Amazing!" "Very helpful, but sometimes exhausting," commented the majority of newly registered international and exchange students for the Spring 2007 term. They were referring to the entertainment offered during orientation.

On Saturday, January 20th, the Office of Outreach and Admissions organized a trip. This major entertainment happened on the third and last day of orientation. Newcomers joined members of the Students Ambassadors Association. Students from this association, who lead the orientation days by supervising the orientation program and activities, were at the AUI restaurant at 8:00 a.m., where everyone ate breakfast together. At 9:30, everybody boarded three buses, which transported the 146 travelers, a mélange of new comers, mentors, and staff. The day was very sunny and clear.

The first stop was Michlifén. After about 40 minutes of chatting and listening to music, the crowd arrived and broke the silence of this

snowless ski spot. The first planned activity was to explore the Michlifén region. The participants proceeded to walk to the top of the mountain in a large group. After a few minutes of walking in the high altitude,

"The crowd arrived and broke the silence of this snowless ski spot".

everybody felt exhausted. Some exchange students started bickering. They decided it was best to return to the hotel restaurant.

On the way, people divided into smaller groups, as they naturally integrated with each other. One student, Hajar Imane, noted that while some decided to enter the café to enjoy the sunbeams, others regrouped near the sprinkling of handicraft vendors, who had been attracted by the noise of the crowd. People were milling around, talking in groups.

Many decided to head off

to explore and have some fun discovering nature. Student Tawfiq Oussaid said that the main element attracting a large number of participants to this trip was sports. Another student, Daou Hamza, added that the group benefited from forming teams to engage in football, volleyball and Frisbee, playing not to win, but to have fun and make new friends. After two fun-filled hours packed with running, jumping, walking, chatting, and a lot of laughter, the group boarded the buses and departed from Michlifén.

Next on the agenda was a brief visit to the Hebri Mount, where the crowd took a group picture as well as personal photos. Then the buses stopped at the Gourou Cedars, which is a place crowded with Barbary apes. Most students enjoyed feeding the hungry animals and taking more pictures. Student Maria Chahdi Ouazzani noted that not all the students debarked from the buses, for a variety of reasons, such as feelings of fear or disgust toward the mon-

keys, or simply being tired.

The organizers planned a much longer sojourn to Azrou before the group stopped for lunch. Mr. Rachid Hade, Outreach and Orientation Coordinator, referred to it as "the tourist trajectory". The few minutes on the road transformed into almost two hours on a very tiring

"Playing not to win, but to have fun and make new friends".

and difficult road. People on the bus began to argue. Tons of turns and twists, ups and downs, hot weather and physical discomfort exhausted all the travelers. The mixed group fell victim to hunger and fatigue, ambassador Miloud Bousoumi explained to The AUI Bridge.

When the bus reached Ain Leuh, everybody left the buses, breathed in welcome fresh air and drank some refreshing water. Some, feeling dizzy, sat down to catch

their breath. Hunger was the common feeling. A few had brought some food. Others chose to go into the Ajabou restaurant, there in Ain Leuh. A surprise awaited them. The restaurant was not in service. Once again, the group headed toward Azrou. Everybody on our bus began discussing lunch and what would be served. They hoped for a variety of food and planned to devour every morsel.

Expectations about the food quickly met with reality. Hassan Radi felt that the food was anything but delicious or varied. Many students ate only salad and some meat. The biggest benefit for them proved to be gathering around the tables to chat and make new friends.

Finally, the buses were ready to return to AUI. Participants, totally exhausted, were dreaming about cool

They hoped for a variety of food and planned to devour every morsel.



Michlifén

showers and sweet food after such a busy day.

Mr. Rachid Hader, the Outreach and Admission Officer stated that some of the glitches with the itinerary were out of control. The Michlifén element, for instance, would have been an excellent experience if snow had been present, as expected. The hot weather made the itinerary more uncomfortable than it should have been.

Some glitches were a learning experience and changes will be made when organizing next year's program. Overall, the trip was successful. That is, students got used to a new environment, while getting to know each other and their new "family". The goal of the outing was to have students gather, explore their new environment, and to give them the opportunity to talk with the students ambassadors, who provided them with so much important information and support.

Some students complained, during the trip, about being exhausted, but the next day, feelings of being tired were forgotten. What remained, in their minds, were good memories, new friendships, funny anecdotes, and the things they learned.

Fashion vs Cold at AUI, NORMALLY OR STYLISHEE?


 SOFIA HASNAOUI CHAOUI

To keep your body warm in Ifrane is an issue, even for AUI students; not because they don't have warm cloths, but for the reason that they like to look stylish. Can you be stylish and at the same time avoid Ifrane's freezing cold? AUI Bridge addressed the issue with students and found interesting approaches. Entertain yourself!

Fashion is an issue that is discussed everyday and everywhere, and we students not only talk about it but also have elected Mr Stylish 2006, Mouhcine Essaouri. As designers come out with new collections for the different seasons, "The Bridge" links the topic of fashion with the start of this cold and snowy semester at AUI. After conducting some interviews about winter-fashion at AUI, I came out with the fact that there are three categories of students. The first one thinks that being stylish is not to take into consideration when it's freezing outside, the second believes that FASHION is ESSENTIAL in all seasons... and there is also this category that is unique but which I respect, such as the one who likes wearing high heels or mini-skirts in the SNOW!!!!!! I..RESPECT but don't really understand since the question "aren't they frozen is often raised in my mind" Of course, a unique winter trend is observable when it snows at AUI. In other words, everybody wears hats, gloves, scarves, a huge coat and PLEAAAAASE we should not forget the "imitable", "non-esthetique"

but, I acknowledge, "practical" UGGS (they really keep your feet temperate); TRUE all of these tools keep you warm from the mountain cold of Ifrane.

Let's come back to the first category: The "NORMALLY" dressed. They assume that in the winter they don't need to be nicely dressed up to feel good in their body and mind. What is crucial to them is to feel warm and obviously they don't give attention about what other "STYLISH" students would say about them such as "wili, wili shouf hla hroubi". I have interviewed a senior girl (she prefers to be anonymous) who told me that one day she left her room wearing her pyjama and a big warm coat because when she looked outside her window the weather seemed as freezing as in the North Pole and she felt too lazy to dress up. Wonder what happened? She received the worse comments in her whole life; such as "Nari, quelle catastrophe, regarde celle la avec son pyjama, hla beldiyaaaa!" The girl was so frustrated that she got back to her room crying... Yes, CRYING, because she thinks that what is unusual is often very criticized by what I would call the "NORMALLY" dressed and the "STYLISHEE" ones.

The "STYLISHEE" category is composed of the students who believe that one can follow the winter trends and at the same time feel pretty warm. Indeed, you might have noticed in the beginning of the semester, the "MODEL SHOW" of this category at AUI with its



latest boots, coats and nice winter accessories. WARM and Fashion at the same time, isn't it AWESOME? Yes!!! Say many. Some would say, who cares????? Protect yourself from the cold!!!!!! Others want to be so much up-to-the-minute that they forget about the seasons (I don't have to remind you... very sexy mini-skirts, mini-shorts...). Opinions diverge, and we could not miss out interviewing Mr Stylish 2006, Mouhcine Essaouri, about his main concerns in relation to Fashion vs Cold. Mr Stylish thinks it is really important to invest in a trendy coat which at the same time keeps you warm. According to him, the emphasis should be put on two main words: Practicality and Style. Practicality in the way he dresses up means feeling warm and avoiding slipping down on the floor! Mr Stylish is fashion conscious but not at the extreme, because he believes that when it comes to negatively affecting health, fashion has its limits. When asked about how he wishes to see the representation of fashion during the winter at AUI, he said that EACH one of you guys should SHOW OFF his/her personality. His advices about how one could play on originality are to "PLAY ON THE HAIR" and to "FOLLOW YOUR INSPIRATION".

Let's talk about the testimonies of another student about the topic. Anas Chraïbi confesses that "AUI is not really representative of fashion in the winter". WHY? He thinks that when it's cold, people are lazy and thus do not devote time thinking of the esthetic side, rather they focus only on the protective one. To make winter fashion stand out at AUI, Anas advises to wear BRIGHTER COLORS such as purple and green.

Designers would give us the same advice of Anas about wearing a variety of colors. The winter collection 2007 is all about intense and eye catching colors such as fushia, royal blue, green and white. For those who are keen on looking their best, brands such as Energie, Diesel, Zara, Mango, Stradivarius and Celio are both stylish and affordable (examples of brands that the students interviewed gave).

Fashion vs Cold at AUI is, I admit, a debatable issue and actually after the investigation about fashion in the winter, I came out with this obvious fact that it's super cool to show off your stylin' self but still: We, mountain dwellers should be well outfitted to face winter!!!!



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!

HP Pavilion DV 9017

This is the laptop that has been selling like hotcakes in the Moroccan market this past month, thanks to a reasonable price and remarkable features. This computer has the new Core Duo processor (1.73GHZ) from Intel with 1024 MB of memory and 120 GB hard drive. It comes with a DVD+/-R/RW with double layer support and a 1.3 megapixels web cam.

In terms of connectivity, it is equipped with an infrared port, Bluetooth and WiFi; moreover, it has four Universal Serial Bus US ports (2.0) which will help connect four different external devices at once, such as a printer, a USB key and scanner, or one IEEE 1394 Firewire Port - the best way to connect to audio/video tools.

What's more, this computer has a TV-Out port (S-video) which will allow you to plug the computer into your TV, an integrated consumer IR which permits the use of a remote control to watch DVD's from your bed, a 5-in-1 Digital Media Reader that offers the capability of reading memory cards in your phones or cameras, a microphone, a RJ-11 (modem), a RJ-45 (LAN), a VGA and finally an HDMI (dedicated graphics only), which will let you play as many games as you want all at once.

Another great feature of this laptop is a 17" widescreen - the best way to watch movies and work comfortably, especially since it has Integrated Altec Lansing stereo speakers. The one drawback is that it is a very heavy laptop. This computer is available in different places in Morocco and is offered at an approximate price of 12.000 dhs(HT).



HP Pavilion Media Center t3634



Hewlett Packard has been criticized harshly because of the prices of its products even though they are of good quality. Yet, ever since few years ago, HP products are the most interesting. This desktop is made up of the latest technologies for a very attractive price of about 10.000 dhs (HT).

The Pavilion Media Center runs with an Intel Pentium D915 Bicoeur (2 x 2.80 GHZ) processor and is compatible with the new Windows Vista. It has a huge storage capacity with a hard drive of 320 GB - so you can forget about using your AUI partition (G drive) for storage.

There's more. The Pavillion Media Center has a DVD player and burner DVD+/-R/RW with double layer support. It includes a 9 in 1 memory card reader which accepts all different types of memory cards, 7 USB ports 2.0 to connect seven different external devices at once, 2 Firewire ports for your multimedia tasks, a wireless keyboard and mouse for you to control your computer from your bed while watching a movie, and finally a TV tuner card with a HP remote control which permits you to watch TV on your computer so you don't even think of buying a TV!

Siham Rocks

ZAINAB OUTANA

Smiling and fascinating, shining and singing, performing and excelling. God gave Siham a combination of beauty, charisma, a sweet voice, confidence on stage, and the ability to switch from pop to slow to R'n'B effortlessly: characteristics that are reserved for famous and successful singers only. Siham Lekchiri has fans.

Born on October 22nd 1985, the Casawi girl has always enjoyed singing. Her first experience singing, according to her parents, was screaming and crying when she was a baby. Her talent developed as she grew. Gifted with a musical ear and capacity to learn songs by heart, she could imitate the most famous singers. When she was still a child, with no musical background or education, she was a big fan of English and French songs, especially slow music.

In high school, she developed her skills and talent, and music became her ultimate passion and part of her life. Siham says "Music is my life. I express myself and

"Music is my life. I express myself and my feelings of both joy and sadness through singing"

my feelings of both joy and sadness through singing". In an answer to a question concerning her riveting on stage performance, Siham replied: "I feel and live what I sing...I always have problems when people ask me to sing a love or a happy song while I am in a bad mood and vice versa." "I also like to move and dance on stage, and get the audience involved while performing a rhythmic song," she added.

Her parents and elder sister Mouna have always supported her and enjoyed her sublime voice. In fact, performing at family gatherings became a custom. But apart from family, only close friends had the chance to hear her sing. She never had the opportunity to get unbiased feedback from a large audience. "I wanted to know that I'm a good singer from the involvement and



interaction of a large audience, and their applause for my performance. That was a dream," she stated.

The dream became a reality at AUI. Her joining to AUI was the starting point for a new era of excellence and "popularity". The first interaction with the "tough" and "savvy" AUI community was in her second semester (Spring 2004) "talent show". "I was scared a little bit. It was the first time performing in front of a big, "strange" audience, and I didn't rehearse. I knew that the song I was going to perform is very popular among the students. They knew the lyrics, the rhythm, and all the details of the song. I had to approach the

original performance very closely; otherwise, It would have been terrible." She was right. AUI students are a tough crowd; even professional artists who came to AUI can attest to that. But, this opportunity comes once in a life time, and Siham rose to the challenge.

"I picked up the microphone and I gave it my all." Her roommate and close friend, Maha Foujri confirms to the AUI Bridge that Siham's warm voice took the audience by storm that day and everybody recognized that they were in the presence of a star.

"I picked up the microphone and I tried to give my best. It was not the right time for hesitation and fear"

After almost four years now, everybody at the university knows Siham, who often sings in concerts, special faculty events, and even does duos with famous singers. She has performed in front of hundreds of spectators in building 17, the gymnasium, and in national competitions, such as the University Music Festival in Marrakech.

Siham says the best memory she retains from her performances is when she was elected the best AUI talent in the 2006 "Talent Show". She also rates her duo with Moroccan star Maria Naciri as one of the best memories.

Hatim Ammor's said it all when he said on stage in front of more than one thousand spectators in the fan run gala party: "I thought she was a professional singer invited just like me and Joudia, but when I found out that she was a student I was really surprised and I invited her to join us in the music world."

"It is always a pleasure and great honour, to receive encouragement words and favourable acknowledgement from President and Mrs. Benmokhtar, as well as from Dr. Belfekih whose support always helps me," she adds.

One of Siham's future plans is to participate in Star Academy or Studio 2m. Her close friend Widiiane Saqalli told AUI Bridge she always urges Siham to participate in professional shows and spread her talent to the large audience outside AUI campus.

However, Siham does not plan to have a professional career in music. Siham sees her future in the business world more than in music. "As a business student majoring in management, I am focusing on my studies for the moment, and this is my priority. Singing stays for me a passion and a love; it is not my career choice." But she promises her fans that she will never hesitate to meet them at concerts and musical gatherings, and share with them her emotions and warm voice.



CALENDAR

March						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
			1	2	3	4
			Guitar Club soul band German Club workshop		Counter Strike Tournament	Counter Strike Tournament
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Communication for Social Change Conference Media	ACM SSE Capstone Projects Exhibition Presentation of Last Technologies Quiz Show	Music Night Dar Dmana H-Kayen				
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Music Night Oum		Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger	Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger	Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger Hotel Crown Plaza Casablanca	Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger Hotel Crown Plaza Casablanca	Outreach Forum Qsar DIAFA Tanger Hotel Crown Plaza Casablanca	
26	27	28	29	30	31	
			Japanese Club Japanese Day		Admission Applications Deadline	

Rewind

SARAH CHERRABI EL ALAOUI

Rewind is a book written in English by Driss Tamsamani. It is 180 pages long and was published by "Authorhouse" in February, 28th, 2005.

Driss Tamsamani is a Moroccan marketing expert who is also a writer. Driss was born in Tangiers, Morocco, and has been living in the USA, Miami,

Florida since 1987. Tamsamani is the creator of the DNA Marketing theory. He describes his work domain as being within "cultural marketing, visualization, and emotional experience".

Driss Tamsamani holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration. He went to the university of Miami, Columbus University, Center for Creative Leadership, Harvard University School of Business and Austral University in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

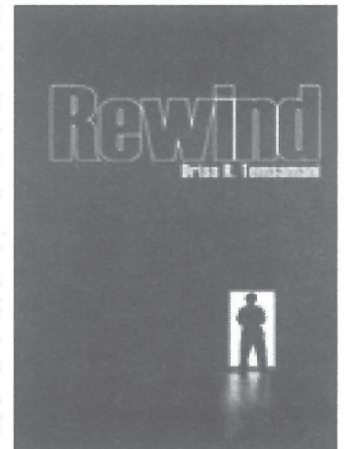
Driss Tamsamani started writing Rewind on his birthday in December of 2004 in his house in Miami and has been inspired to continue writing since then. A chapter of his book is entitled, "Come home: I really miss you". It depicts the nostalgia the author was feeling at the moment he wrote it. It is a conversational text between the author and a child asking him to come back home. All the other parts are beautifully written and the reader feels the emotion of the author while reading. In addition to the book, Tamsamani composed a music CD that he offers for free to promote Moroccan music and culture.

Rewind, Driss Tamsamani first book in English, includes poetry as well as short stories illustrating different events unfolding in different places. According to the author's website, Rewind is "a drama of the human spirit's struggle to find happiness while away from home". The titles of the poetry vary from love to hate to loneliness to nostalgia but each of them has its own charm and beauty. One of the most poignant poems of the book is titled, "For a better life". The poetic way in which this book is written makes it easy to read and understand. In addition to that, it makes the reader feel as well as think.

When asked about Rewind, the author said: "In the story, I am a leaf on a branch of a strong tree growing next to a pond. It's a parable about my upbringing in Tangiers, Morocco. Maybe that's what prompted me to write the story in the first place. Like that tree, I grew up with a view of water, met lots of characters who taught me about life, and migrated from place to place in search of a home. This volume is the product of that labor".

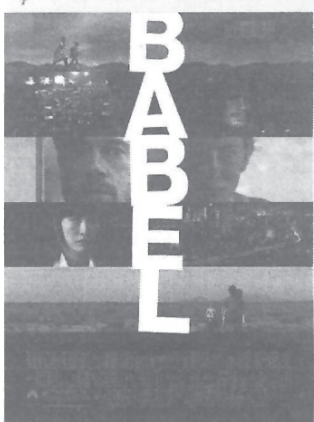
Driss Tamsamani writes about the immigrant experience on his blog "...An immigrant, who was someone, became no-one, and thanks to his people become someone once again. This new experience has allowed me to meet so many people from my country. It has opened my eyes to our community. What I have learned so far is that we have many challenges and that the only way we will become strong while away from our homes is to support each other".

When reading his book and listening to the different Arabic rhythms of the CD, one can inhale the thoughts and strong feelings Driss Tamsamani's words evoke. It is on sale online and a very interesting read to enjoy during a trip or on a sunny afternoon.



Babel (2006)

SARAH EL ALAOUI



You have certainly seen or at least heard of this American movie of which takes place mostly in Morocco. Actually, Babel, a movie by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, is a convoluted story that takes place in many different places of the globe.

An American couple on vacation in Morocco will eventually involve different people in different countries. Back to America, San Diego, where the American Couple left their two children with a Mexican nanny who took

the kids with her to Mexico to her son's wedding. The little girl and the little boy will be both shocked by certain events and happy about others.

Japan, as a location, carries the story forward in two ways: the first shows a sixteen years old deaf girl who is looking for anybody at all to take her virginity. She happens to be the daughter of a Japanese hunter who went to Morocco once and gave a Moroccan man in a rural area a rifle. Now you might wonder why this is important to the story and how is this related to the American couple. Well,

the American lady will be shot while travelling in the desert inside a bus in Morocco. The person who shot her accidentally is a little boy who was trying the rifle his father just bought from some man in Tazarine, a village in southern Morocco. The event will be interpreted by the American authorities as an act of terrorism while it was only an accident that happened to two brothers.

This movie is artistically performed by actors of different nationalities. Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett play the American couple. Rinko Kikuchi play the role of the deaf Japanese

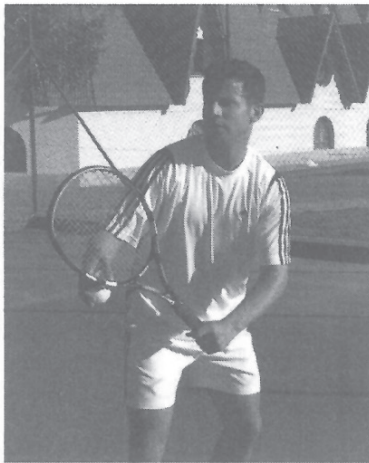
girl and Kôji Yakusho plays the role of her father. Elle Fanning is the couple's daughter and Nathan Gamble plays the role of their son. Adriana Barraza takes on the role of the children's nanny, while Gael Garcia Bernal plays the role of her relative who picked her from San Diego together with the kids, and took them to Mexico where the wedding was taking place.

The different stories of this movie link many people around one point which is the murder of the American woman — the beginning of the struggle.



Badr: The person and the champion

AMINE JELLAL



Badr. I am sure you have already met this guy or seen him around in the restaurant, cafeteria, or elsewhere on campus. Behind his smiling face and kind personality, hides a modest, talented champion.

We will time-travel to different places, and discover the diverse stations that mark the life of this talented student. Prizes, training, international and national participation, personal life, and many funny and surprising things are in this interview.

What is the relation between Badr and the pretty Russian tennis player, Sharapova? What happened in Thailand and Nigeria? Stay tuned!

Please introduce yourself.

My name is Bouarich Badr. I am 20 years old. I am a Business Administration student. This is my second semester at Al Akhawayn University.

What can you tell us about your talent?

Well, I am a tennis player. I started playing at a very young age. I was 7 years old when I joined the tennis club in Meknes. After accompanying a friend of mine to one or two of his training sessions, I liked the game and asked my mother to let me join the club. This is how I started playing tennis, a sport I love so much.

What are the major milestones in your professional career?

After I got my baccalaureate degree as a free candidate from Paul-Valerie High School, in Meknes, my objective was to reach the professional circuit and quickly evolve in it.

I traveled to Spain, where I joined the famous "Juan-Carlos Ferrero" Academy and trained there for half a year. This brief journey was very fruitful. It allowed me to enhance both my physical and psychological abilities. During this period, I started participating in the famous Futures Tournaments. That helped me improve my technical skills and get outstanding results. My major achievement was a victory against a player ranked at 800 ATP.

Then, I moved to Portugal. It was there that I felt I could do extremely well. I qualified in a tableau of 128 players, and won against a British player, who

ranked 8th in the World Juniors Category.

This period gave me the opportunity to travel around the world and to discover different cultures. This is the beauty of it! And it allowed me to win my first ATP point, to become a real professional tennis player and to beat a player ranked 500th in the world.

Who discovered your talent?

When I trained in the tennis club, in Meknes, I was supervised by a professor called Kiksi. My parents came, regularly, to watch me. They noticed that I quickly progressed and developed my skills. My parents encouraged me to evolve in this sport. They asked Kiksi to give me additional training sessions.

Though my mom was the first to discover my talent, later on it was my father who took care of the rest of my career. He supervised my training sessions and asked my respective professors to be tough with me, when it came to physical exercises. Hence, as I developed my muscles and raised my technical abilities,

I won many tournaments, but the most important to me is the first title that I won, in 1997, in Marrakech. I was only 12 years old. Mr. M'hamed Mjid, the current president of the Tennis Federation, gave me the cup. It remains a very special moment.

Did your parents give you sufficient support?

My parents were always there to support me, especially in the most important events like semi-finals and finals, be it in the north, south, east or west of the country. They traveled, more than once, outside Morocco to support me in international competitions. At home, they provided me with great support, especially when I had to choose between tennis and studies.

Concerning the financial side of it, tennis is a very expensive sport. It is very difficult to play it and evolve in it. Besides the fact that I am a member of a financially OK family, I have wonderful parents, who believe in the long-term investment. My parents have never said "No" to any expense that they perceived as useful. My journey in Spain cost them a fortune.

My parents were always ready to pay my travels, my training sessions, and my sports clothes, to mention a few things. They did it with great pleasure and not by obligation. I thank them from the depths of my heart, for that.

Can you tell us an anecdote from your professional career?

Yeah! During a tournament, in Thailand, I qualified for the final roundtable. My mother traveled to Phuket, where the competition was taking place, to support me during my important matches. She had to take three different planes, respectively, from Casablanca

to Dubai, Dubai to Bangkok and Bangkok to Phuket. My mom's initiative got me so excited that I forgot to give the referee a piece of paper that contained important information like my ranking. As a result, I could not register in that tournament. I'll leave it to your imagination as to what the reaction was of someone who just realized that she had made a useless 24 hour trip.

What is the worst thing that has ever happened to you?

It was in Nigeria. I had to eat the exact same food, chicken and rice, twice a day for two weeks. I was told that the food was not very safe in this country and that chances were that I would catch a disease, if I ate Nigerian food. The last evening of my journey, I decided to go to one of the best restaurants in the country to eat some tasty food. I was really bored, eating the same dish, for such a long period of time. As soon as I came back to Morocco, I became sick for 15 days, because of a microbe, which caused me to lose weight and suffer from terrible diarrhea.

What effect did joining AUI have on you, both as a person and as a tennis player?

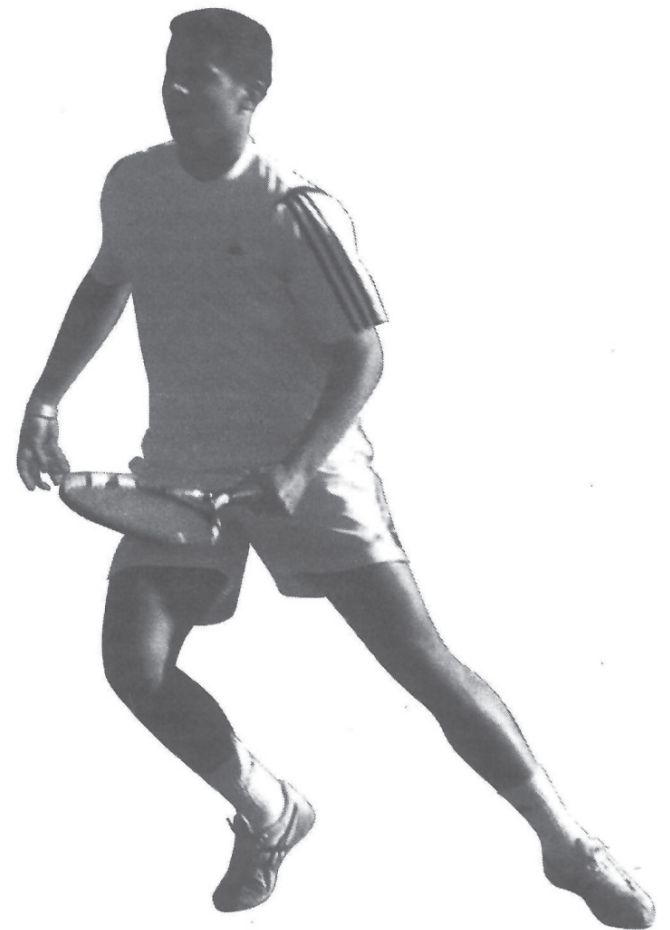
Priorities change. My objective now is to succeed in my studies, rather than to win tennis competitions. I tend to spend more time studying and doing activities other than playing tennis. Before, I used to spend 6 hours per day training with my coach. This is not the case anymore. Now, if I play tennis, I do it more for fun than for other reasons. From a personal standpoint, I would say that AUI is the appropriate place for those who love to socialize and to discover other cultures. It regroups people from different Moroccan cities, in addition to international students, who come from different cultures. Also, being at AUI gives me the chance to diversify my activities, rather than focusing solely on tennis. I am a member of both the tennis and soccer official teams and the president of the guitar club. All in all, I am very pleased with the enriching experience I am having here.

Did you get enough support from the University?

Concerning a scholarship, I wrote a request but have not yet gotten any response from the administration. This is really unfortunate. I am sure I would have received a sports scholarship from any US university, if I had chosen to study abroad. I prefer to stay in my country because I believe in it. Unfortunately, I have not yet been able to find, in this country, the awards I could have had in a foreign one. As we say in French, "Il ne faut pas insulter l'avenir".

Who is your idol?

When I started playing, my idol was an Austrian player: Thomas



Muster. I admire this guy because he is more than a simple player. Even though he got seriously injured in an accident, he had the power and the will to overcome his injury. More than that, he was able to reach the leading position in the ATP official ranking.

How can you describe yourself in few words?

What a tough question! I am an open-minded person, with an open spirit, and my experience as a tennis player who traveled a lot and lived abroad for many years required from me, and helped me to be, open and friendly. I am very serious, a perfectionist when the situation requires me to be so.

I am also a crazy and humorous person when it comes to having fun and enjoying time with friends. I don't forget pain easily, but still I have an open heart. I love people, regardless of their identity, sex, age, ethnicity, religion....

Well, let's now talk about the good memories you retain from your long experience in tennis.

Each moment I spent in tennis is a good memory; even the bad

memories are actually associated with good memories. I remember my victories, the good times I spent with friends, travels to different places, and world stars that I had a chance to meet.

I want to talk about a special memory, which is hard to believe, but I can show some proof later. In a party at the Juan Carlos Ferrero Tennis Academy in Valencia, I met Maria Sharapova, who was also training there, along with a lot of other well known stars. I had the chance to play cards with her and many other friends, in the academy.

Are you kidding?

I swear!

What can you say about the following names in one or two words?

Nadal. Strength.
El Aynaoui. Fighting Spirit.
Fouad Oppab. Good Friend.
Dr. Belfekih. Dedication.
The Bridge. Professionalism.
AUI. The future.



Losing well is an art

KAWTAR CHRIYAA

"You don't love me!" screamed my younger sister, Sara, when she saw me packing back to AUI.

"Why are ya' sayin' this?" I countered. "I do love you."

"So why are you going to Ifrane, on the 18th of January, if you are not gonna start your studies until the 23rd?"

I smiled, trying to explain my early departure. The AUI basketball team, of which I am a member, had a game against Oujda's team. We needed several days of training for the "Snow Queens" to be in good physical condition. This argument was not proof enough of my love for my sister Sara. However, Sara knew that for basketball's sake, nothing could stop me from returning to AUI.

I arrived at Ifrane on the 18th of January. Just after entering my room, I received a call from Khalifa, asking me to come to the soccer field for the first training session. Thus, the flow of disappointments began. First, we couldn't train inside the gymnasium, since that's where

registration was held. Can you imagine training for basketball with no basket and no ball?

The next stumbling block was a lack of male players. A sole male appeared. And not all the females stuck to their word, either. A mere five players attended our first training day.

That Saturday evening, we did manage to get in a training game with the basketball team of a high school in Ifrane, Allal Al Fassi, I think it's called. That game was proof that we had several playing issues, which needed to be addressed. Regrettably, there was no time to deal with any of them. Sunday was a rest day. On Monday our journey began, midday.

We met in front of the gymnasium, on schedule, along with the AUI Lions. We left Ifrane sometime around 1:30 p.m. Oh! I shouldn't forget to mention one very important point - we traveled in AUI vans during that long, long trip! I can't deny that learning to sit in a van throughout 900 km was an interesting experience.

Anyway, after a couple of stops, including one in Taza for lunch, we reached Oujda, sometime around 8 p.m.

Contrary to my expectations, the accommodation was the best part of the trip. We were hosted in a hosting center of the Ministry of Youth and Sport. For dinner, they served Harira and meat with dried apricots. This type of treatment is usually not granted to other teams or universities.

Personally, I slept very well. We had to awaken at 7 a.m. Breakfast was served at 8 a.m. It was quite fancy. The spread included milk, orange juice, tea, and coffee along with boiled eggs, "petit pain", bread, butter and jam. Because we were early, we had enough time for some practice before the game.

Here comes the most exiting part of the trip. As expected by everyone, except me, we lost. I am not going to present a list of logical or plausible reasons to rationalize our defeat. Simply put, I believe that our opponents wanted to win more than we



did. So, they did.

Surprisingly, during lunch, we were treated like winners. Speaking of lunch, it was also served in as fancy a way as possible, by our hosts.

We left the center to visit the famous souk of Oujda, the counterfeit one. After about an hour and a half of visiting small shops and buying chocolate bars, we departed Oujda for the return trip to AUI.

The return journey was just as interesting as the trip out. This time, however, our meal on the road was dinner in

Oued Amlil We arrived at the university exactly 15 minutes before the curfew.

In a nutshell, it was a good experience. We learned many things, one of which was learning how to lose. Of course, losing is easy, but losing well and having the spectators on your side, till the end of the game, is an art. For this, I should give credit to the most senior player in our team, Meriam Habibi, who also notably, taught a girl from the opposing team to dance the Tango, with a basketball, during the game.

It's not over till it's over

ZAKARIA EL RHEZAOUI
YOUSSEF MUFARREJ

In an attempt to win its first three points in the Moroccan University Football Championship, the AUI Lions trained hard and traveled far to face Oujda's University of Mohammed I football team. The ambition and fighting spirit were present in our players, but the talent and physical condition of the Ouejdi Giants defeated the AUI Lions.

All the tactics, guidance, screams and quarrels of Mr. Adil Kaman, the AUI Lions' coach, in addition to the all-out effort of the players, were not enough to stop the Ouejdi volcano. Final result: 4-1 in favor of the Ouejdies.

Mr. Adil Kaman, coach of the AUI Lions, was aware that the Ouejdi team always gives the AUI Lions a hard time, even when playing on home turf on the AUI soccer field. The AUI Lions lost the last home game 1-2. So, he was determined that this game was going to be different. The coach planned and schemed. He gathered his crew before leaving for the winter break, and they all agreed to return for training early to get a head start in preparation for the "nightmare" game. Mustapha Essaid El Feydi, aka "Happy", who plays back line defense and is one of the most talented players on our team, stated that the Ouejdi team always includes Mouloudia of Oujda's professional players who play in the GNF1 (Morocco's national championship). He added that they are well built and very able players, but what is frightening about them was not their talent, but the fact they play aggressively and commit a lot of fouls.

A series of training sessions on different tactics and game combinations marked the preparations of AUI Lions. Coach Adil had to create a strong

team spirit among the players. The players understood what was at stake and kept high spirits and high hopes despite the rigorous discipline and the painful training. Players who were able to demonstrate their talent, and more essentially apply the tactics and stick to the coach's game plan, formed the official team that finally confronted the Ouejdies.

The team traveled for hours to get to Oujda in Morocco's Far East and were glad to rest when they got there. Coach Adil was wise when he decided that the team would spend the night before the game there in Oujda.

The day after, January 23rd, the team was ready to fight for the first win of the season. Excitement was high when the game started, but the first half didn't go well for Coach Adil's men. The Oujda players seemed to be physically stronger, and controlled the game. The infamous "Moulodiat Oujda" was constantly annoying our defenders. Happy and the captain Jalaeddine, together with the other defenders and even midfielders, retreated to the back line to rebuff Oujda's attack.

Standing most of the time and giving direct criticism and advice to his players, Adil felt his team lose control as pressure increased. He ordered the backline to stay focused and to cover the empty spaces. The captain, Jalaeddine, was getting direct orders from Coach Adil to organize the positioning of the players on the pitch. He also recommended that the wings and the striker to move more without the ball to destabilize the Ouejdi defense and to open a way to the goal.

Following these changes, the AUI Lions played their best football in the

last fifteen minutes of the match and Imad surprised the Ouejdi defense and goalkeeper and all the spectators with a terrific bazooka shot that found its way inside the Ouejdi goal, to make it one nil (1-0) for the AUI Lions.

Unfortunately, The Lions were not able to hold onto their lead. Just before the half time whistle, Opab, with the defenders before him, could not stop the Ouejdies from scoring the equalizing goal.

At half time, Coach Adil addressed his players emphasizing the fact that players should move more and create more scoring opportunities. He also stressed on the fact that players should be better positioned.

During the second half, the Lions started getting tired. Their bodies could not endure the punishment and they fell victim to exhaustion and injuries that led to two necessary substitutions. The Ouejdies controlled the second half

and were able to score three more goals making it a final 4-1.

The coach and the players know that they could have done better, but admitted that the Ouejdies are a strong team and even the best of the division. "The players performed very well at the first half, and they applied the tactics we agreed on. Sadly, in the second half the team stamina went down and they couldn't follow up the rigorous match pace imposed by the adversaries." Coach Adil explains.

The AUI Lions are committed to improving and are confident that they will bounce back from this defeat. "We have two games left this semester, against a team from Meknes and the second from Fes. Each consists of two matches, one at home and one away. We are training very seriously and the team is determined to win." Coach Adil promises auisBridge readers.



Amine blocks a goal

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