

WAAAUB Second Convention Launching Ceremony
May 2, 2009
9:00-9:45 am Issam Fares Hall

President Peter F. Dorman
Remarks

It won't surprise any of you here to learn that one of the great joys of being president of AUB is the opportunity to meet with, to get to know, and to work with AUB alumni. I am delighted to be able to report that I have had many such opportunities during the past year. Although I have been graciously and warmly received at official WAAAUB events in Jeddah, the Eastern Province, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Jordan, and Washington DC, I have also enjoyed the many more informal gatherings and meetings that I have had with alumni everywhere.

I don't think it's possible to overestimate how important our alumni are to this University. Their appreciation for the AUB experience that they enjoyed and for the role that the University plays in Lebanon and the region, their generous support, their wisdom, and their advice is invaluable. I have benefited enormously and have been deeply touched by some of the stories they have shared with me – stories about the profound impact that AUB has had on them, their families, and their communities.

As I mentioned during the Opening Ceremony in October, I have been especially struck during my meetings with AUB alumni that despite the fact that many of them have had successful careers, not a single one spoke to me about how grateful they were that AUB had provided them with the professional skills they needed to excel. They spoke instead of how AUB had altered their perspectives, had given them a different outlook on the world, and how their time on campus had changed them in wonderful ways that they appreciate more with each passing year.

Our alumni – including some of the people in this room – told me of their passionate belief that the existence of AUB as a place that fosters tolerance, encourages responsibility, and celebrates diversity represents hope for the future not just for them

personally, but for their children, and their communities. They were eager – even anxious – to ensure that I understood that AUB was precious – and that it needed to be nurtured and protected. They were also eager to offer their support, their encouragement, and their advice – all of which I accept with gratitude.

I am grateful that AUB now boasts a strong and effective worldwide alumni association that channels this alumni support while at the same time facilitating our efforts to reach out and serve them. I look forward to working with WAAAUB – with all of you – in support of AUB.