



AMERICAN
UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT
MEDICAL CENTER

المركز الطبي في الجامعة الأميركية في بيروت

OBGYN NEWSLETTER

50 *Issues Later*

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

This milestone reflects far more than a number. It tells the story of people, progress, challenges, and a shared purpose that has shaped the department of OBS/GYN over time. Since the launch of the first issue, our newsletter has grown alongside the department. Its pages have captured academic achievements, important firsts, accreditation milestones, resident graduations, new programs and divisions, community outreach, HER Fund exquisite activities, departmental symposia and moments of joy. They have also given us space to pause together—to honor and remember colleagues and mentors who left a lasting mark on us and on generations of physicians.

Across 50 issues and just as importantly, it has highlighted the heart of our department: its residents, faculty members, nurses, staff, and alumni. It has reflected times of growth and celebration, as well as periods of challenge and collective strength.

Our department has always been more than a workplace for us. It is a community built on collaboration, compassionate care, and commitment to excellence. Reaching the 50th issue reflects our perseverance and commitment to continuity. Some names have appeared since the earliest editions; others joined along the way, and some even left us, sometimes for good.

This milestone belongs not only to those of us here today, but to everyone who has ever been part of the department. To our alumni, we extend our sincere gratitude. Your dedication, guidance, and spirit are woven into our daily work. The patients you cared for, the residents you mentored, and the lessons you shared continue to shape our present and our future.

As we look back with gratitude, we also look forward with purpose. This newsletter remains a space to share our work, recognize our people, and record the moments, big and small, that define who we are.

In this special anniversary edition, we share recent news and achievements, welcome new additions to our department, and honor mentors from within and outside our department who have left us recently but continue to have a profound impact on us. This special issue would not be complete without sharing a special moment, the 90th anniversary of our diva Fairuz, that was celebrated on November 21. The "Did You Know" section is presented in a new style, and exceptionally, the "In the Spotlight" section explores how our previous guests responded when asked to revisit the same questions. Since we value the comments of our readers, we will share a selected number of such remarks that you have sent us following the release of almost every issue. We hope that this golden jubilee is up to the expectations.

Sincerely,

Anwar Nassar, MD
Editor-in-Chief

FAIRUZ: A VOICE OF A NATION AND A SOURCE OF PRIDE



Ten years ago, in our 19th issue, we celebrated a special event: Fairuz turning 80 years. A decade later, we celebrate her 90th birthday. Fairuz, born Nouhad Haddad, remains a voice that transcends generations, borders, and time itself. Her songs carried Lebanon through hope and heartbreak, morning light and dark nights, war, and rebirth. For millions across the world, she is not just a singer; she is a homeland, a memory, a prayer, a miracle, and an eternal dawn.

The years have not dimmed her gentleness nor her strength. Even in the face of profound personal losses, including the recent passing of her son, Ziad Rahbani - a genius of his own -, and a few weeks ago her younger son Hali, she continues to embody quiet defiance and unmatched grace. She has known sorrow, yet her voice always rose above it, turning grief into poetry and longing into beauty. As Mahmoud Darwish beautifully describes it, "Fairuz is the song that always forgets to grow old; she makes the desert smaller and the moon larger."

Across her extraordinary career, Fairuz gifted the world more than 1,500 songs, many remain unreleased, produced 80 albums and performed 21 musical plays, with unforgettable performances from the Temple of Jupiter in Baalbek to the ancient Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens, and from the Royal Albert Hall in London to the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Her first major hit with the Rabbani brothers, 'Itab' in 1952, marked the beginning of a journey that reshaped the entire region's musical and cultural identity. By 1957, her voice rose in Baalbek, a moment that remains foundational in the Arab artistic history. Today, at 90 years of age, Fairuz remains the undisputed diva of the Arab world, a living treasure whose presence continues to inspire, comfort, and unite people everywhere. Very few of the readers may know that Fairuz continues to rehearse regularly, making this a daily ritual that she has embraced since her early years. She is a strong believer of in the famous saying, "If I don't practice one day, I know it. Two days, the critics know it. Three days, the public knows it." On November 21, the Women's Health Center (WHC) proudly celebrated her legacy, her poetry, her unmatched influence, and her timeless voice that continues to brighten our days. Throughout the day, documentaries about her and extracts from her concerts were projected on the screens. Visitors of the WHC could listen to testimonials about her by musicians, Lebanese and Arabic poets, international politicians, and journalists. In addition, a selection of interviews with her and how she answered when asked about family, music, Lebanon, life, glamour, routine daily activities and personal questions were resonating all over the place. A selection from her long repertoire including rare songs and older versions of famous songs along with unreleased concert extracts were also played. We remain hopeful that she will perform again one day ... *Eh Fee Amal*.





DR. ADNAN MROUEH: THE FATHER, THE PHYSICIAN, AND THE EDUCATOR

We share the 50th issue of our newsletter with sadness as we remember Dr. Adnan Mohamad Mroueh. His passing invites us to reflect on a life marked by service, values, and deep commitment to medicine. Dr. Mroueh's connection with AUB began in the 1950s. Over more than 50 years, he served AUB, the Department of OBS/GYN, and the people of Lebanon and the region with dedication and care.

He viewed the many unanswered questions in reproductive medicine as an ongoing challenge and a reason for lifelong learning. When reflecting on his point of weakness, he stated clearly and honestly: "I have low tolerance for persons who compromise on basic ethical principles and physicians who are greedy and insensitive to patients' needs." This was not merely a statement, but a principle that guided his work as a physician, a teacher, and a leader.

Beyond medicine, Dr. Mroueh appreciated life's simple pleasures and spoke of his love for farming and the joy he found in seeing plants grow and thrive, as well as his appreciation for classical music. These details reflected a thoughtful and grounded person whose values extended well beyond his professional life.

In May 2022, the Department of OBS/GYN honored Dr. Mroueh for 50 years of service to AUB, recognizing both his many achievements and the values he upheld throughout his career. On Wednesday, December 10, 2025, a moment of silence was observed in his memory in the Professor Ismail M. Khalil Auditorium. As we bid farewell to Dr. Mroueh, we do so with gratitude and respect as his influence lives on through the generations of physicians he taught, the patients he cared for, and the example he set for all of us.





A FAREWELL TO A LIFE OF GRACE AND INTEGRITY: DR. ISMAIL M. KHALIL

On Wednesday, December 17, 2025, and during the weekly OBS/GYN grand round, a minute of silence filled the Professor Ismail M. Khalil Auditorium, a venue that now carries his legacy. It was a moment of quiet reflection to honor a towering figure whose presence continues to be deeply felt across our institution. Dr. Ismail Khalil was not simply exceptional; he was of a different caliber. Beyond titles and achievements, he embodied a standard of integrity and humanity that set him apart and made him someone we all aspire to become.

He was a physician who never placed himself above the simplest acts of patient care, a mentor who gave his time generously, without hierarchy or hesitation, and a man of integrity in its purest form. He was known for his constant warm smile and for greeting everyone he encountered with genuine respect. His name has become a synonym for courtesy and modesty. His elegance, refinement, and class were not assumed roles, but natural extensions of who he was. For him, dignity in medicine was not optional; it was essential.

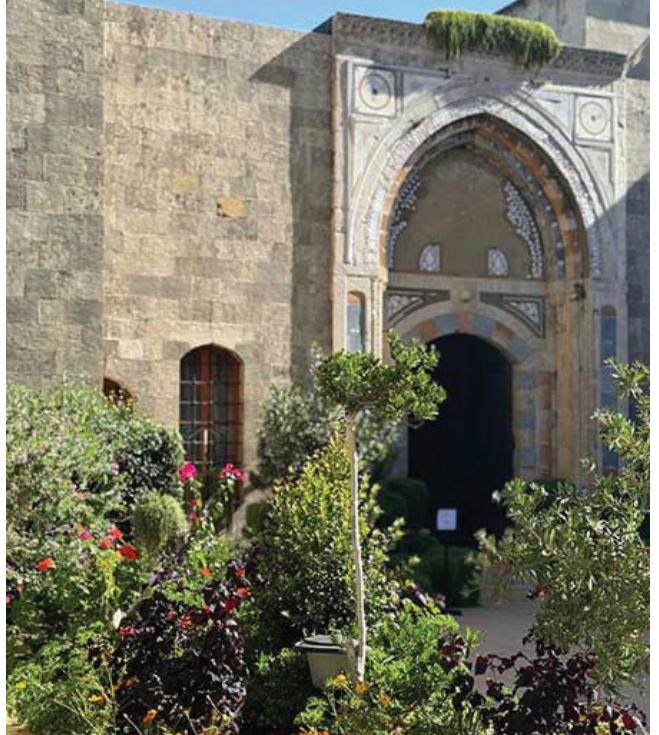
Dr. Khalil's greatness does not lie solely in surgical mastery, but in the way he carried himself through adversity—with grace, gratitude, and quiet resolve. He showed us that excellence in medicine is measured as much by character as by skill, and that true leadership often speaks in a gentle voice. As we pause to honor Dr. Ismail Khalil, we recommit ourselves to the values he lived by and the standard he set for all of us. His example will continue to guide us.

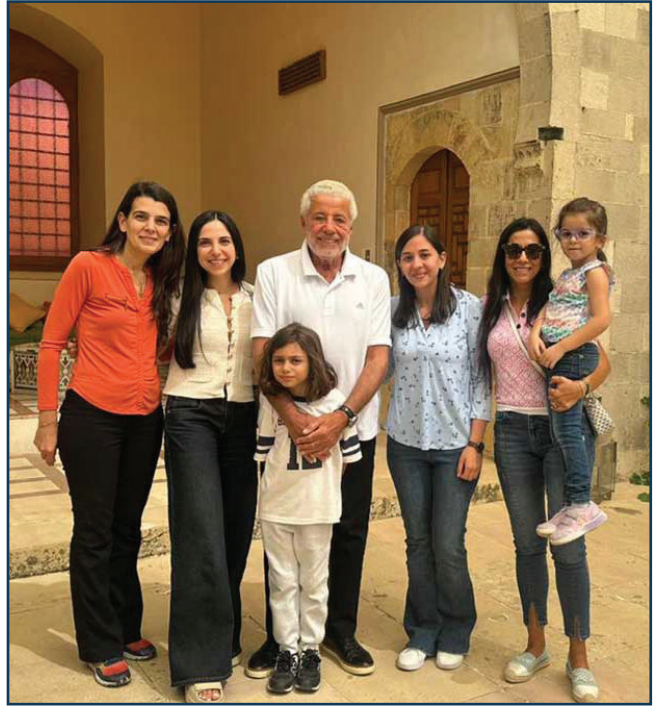


THE DEPARTMENTAL RETREAT AT MIR AMIN PALACE: AN IDEAL PLACE FOR REFLECTION AND PLANNING

The 50th issue of the OBS/GYN Newsletter comes at a moment of reflection and renewed momentum, following the recent departmental faculty retreat at the historic Mir Amin Palace Hotel, a 19th-century Lebanese landmark overlooking the Chouf mountains on September 20-21, 2025. Its quiet courtyards, stone archways, and panoramic terraces created an ideal setting for two days of focused discussion, thoughtful planning, and genuine collegial exchange. The retreat underscored ongoing progress across the department, including advances in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), expanded services at the Women's Health Center, and strengthened rotation structures at Keserwan Medical Center, along with continued efforts to standardize preconception care and unify clinical practice. Residency and fellowship discussions highlighted the importance of reinforcing academic engagement, broadening surgical exposure, improving case-log accuracy, and preparing for upcoming accreditation milestones. Emphasis was placed on the need to enhance research productivity, maintain steady involvement in teaching, and ensure consistent supervision of trainees in all clinical settings. A full afternoon session was dedicated to the short-term goals to establish specialized clinical programs that include endometriosis, polycystic ovarian syndrome, menopause, uterine fibroids, and abnormal placentation. Operational updates, financial planning, and the introduction of additional support services, including doula and lactation programs, completed an agenda that looks ahead to enhancing patient experience, enriched training, and greater departmental cohesion.







A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION: KEEPING OUR TRAINEES WARM

As a token of appreciation to their pivotal role in patient care and student teaching, FIGS jackets were distributed to all residents, house physicians, and fellows during the winter season. Despite its modesty, this gesture was greatly appreciated by our trainees. We will continue supporting our trainees in ways that enhance their daily clinical experience and sense of belonging within the department.



ENHANCING RESIDENCY TRAINING IS A TOP PRIORITY

The Department of OBS/GYN recently held its first resident robotic training workshop, supported by the departmental fund. The workshop consisted of two sessions that were held on Saturday, November 15 and 29, 2025, in the main operating room (OR). Each session was led by experienced OR nurses who routinely scrub on robotic cases, underscoring the importance of inter-professional collaboration in surgical education.

Senior residents (PGY 3 and PGY 4) began on robotic simulation machines to develop fundamental skills in camera control, instrument handling, and coordinated movement within a safe and structured environment. They then transitioned to the actual robot in the main OR, where they practiced system setup, docking, and basic console maneuvers under close supervision.

This stepwise training approach allowed residents to build confidence and familiarity with robotic platforms while reinforcing OR workflow, communication, and patient-safety principles. The residents expressed gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this workshop, which they view as an important investment in their residency training and in the quality of robotic gynecologic care they provide to their patients.



CHRISTMAS SPIRIT FILLED THE DEPARTMENT THIS YEAR

The Christmas gathering is always a delightful occasion offering an opportunity to come together in a relaxed and festive setting. Residents and faculty members gathered on December 14, 2025, at the 'Royal Cellar' for an evening marked by warmth and genuine connection. Laughter, music, and shared moments filled the night, highlighting the close bond between residents and their mentors and the spirit of unity that defines both the holiday season and the OBS/GYN community at AUBMC. What made this year special was that the residents were the ones who invited the faculty members and for that we would like to genuinely thank them for their thoughtfulness.

As a thoughtful gesture of support during these challenging financial times, the Department of OBS/GYN extended a Christmas voucher to all OBS/GYN staff across the Women's Health Center, Haifa Idriss Fertility Unit, Delivery Suite, and 7 North, in addition to the administrative offices. The gift was shared with residents, fellows, nurses, clerks, and administrators, with a personalized message from Dr. Anwar Nassar in appreciation of their dedication, teamwork, and unwavering commitment to patient care.

The Christmas decoration this year was not the very classic one as you can guess from the images.





FOUR FACULTY MEMBERS JOINED THE DEPARTMENT SINCE JUNE 2025

We are pleased to welcome four faculty members who have joined the department over the past.



DR. CHRISTELLE DAGHER

Dr. Christelle Dagher joined the Department of OBS/GYN on June 1, 2025, as a clinical assistant professor of OBS/GYN, with a specialization in minimally invasive gynecologic surgery (MIGS) and a focus on menopause and midlife women's health. She has a joint appointment at the American University of Beirut (AUBMC) and Keserwan Medical Center (KMC).

Dr. Dagher earned her M.D. from the University of Balamand and completed her residency in OBS/GYN at AUBMC, where she received the Best Presentation for Research Award. She subsequently pursued subspecialty training in MIGS in Belgium, refining her skills in complex laparoscopic and hysteroscopic procedures. In addition, she holds university diplomas in cosmetic and reconstructive gynecology and in the management of menopause from top Paris universities.

Dr. Dagher has contributed to several research projects and presented them internationally, with her current work focusing on gynecologic surgery and menopause. Dr. Dagher can be reached on extension 5619, via email at cd19@aub.edu.lb and for appointments on 01-759619.

DR. STEPHANIE FELLAS



Dr. Stephanie Fellas joined the Department of OBS/GYN on June 1, 2025, as a clinical instructor of OBS/GYN. She has a joint appointment at AUBMC and KMC. Dr. Fellas earned her M.D. from AUB in 2011 where she completed her OBS/GYN residency. She then pursued advanced training in Brussels at Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) Brugmann, specializing in maternal fetal medicine and OBS/GYN sonography. During that year, she also completed a diploma in fetal medicine from Université Paris-Sud in France.

Alongside her medical career, she is also completing a certified diploma in life coaching, with graduation expected this month reflecting her deep commitment to supporting women not only medically, but holistically. In addition to her professional path, Dr. Fellas is a proud and devoted mother to her two daughters — nine-year-old Lyana and two-year-old Ayla — who remain her greatest source of joy and purpose. Dr. Fellas can be reached on extension 5619, via email at sf27@aub.edu.lb and for appointments on 01-759619.

DR. FAYSAL EL KAK



Dr. Faysal El Kak was appointed as an associate professor of clinical OBS/GYN in the Department of OBS/GYN as of September 1, 2025, and he holds a joint appointment as associate professor of public health practice at the Faculty of Health Sciences. Dr. El Kak continues his role as the director of the WISH Program combining clinical practice, academic leadership, and public health advocacy. Dr. El Kak has built over the past two decades a career that bridges medicine, policy, and global health. His academic and scholarly record is rich and diverse as well as global presence and contributions, currently serving as President of the World Association of Sexual Health (WAS).

Dr. El Kak will continue to advance AUBMC's mission by expanding clinical services in women's health and sexual health mentoring medical students and residents, and leading interdisciplinary research and policy initiatives. His work will play a vital role in strengthening AUBMC's reputation as a regional center of excellence in education and public health leadership. Dr. El Kak can be reached on extension 5606, via email at fk01@aub.edu.lb and for appointments on 01-759619.





DR. MUHIEDDINE SEOUD

Dr. Muhieddine Seoud was reappointed as a professor of clinical OBS/GYN in the Department of OBS/GYN on October 14, 2025, returning to AUBMC after serving as Chairperson of the Department of OBS/GYN at Sheikh Shakhbout Medical City (SSMC) in Abu Dhabi (2021-2025). He also held an adjunct professorship at Khalifa University.

A highly distinguished physician, researcher, and academic leader, Dr. Seoud is American and Arab Board Certified and an active member of several international professional societies. He is a founding member of both the Lebanese Gynecologic Oncologic Group (LGO) and the Middle East–Mediterranean Gynecologic Oncology Group (MEMAGO). Dr. Seoud’s substantial contributions to women’s health span gestational trophoblastic disease, HPV prevention, cervical and ovarian cancer management, placenta accreta spectrum disorders, and advanced gynecologic oncology surgery. He has published over 145 peer-reviewed articles, delivered more than 450 invited lectures worldwide, and was recognized in 2025 among the 24 most-cited researchers at the Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Seoud can be reached on extension 5614, via email at mike@aub.edu.lb and for appointments on 01-759619.

Please join us warmly welcoming Drs. Dagher, Fellas, El Kak, and Seoud to their new roles.

**WELCOME
ABOARD!**

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Abdallah Adra was presented with the William Liley Award, by Professor Frank Chervenak, president of the international society of “The Fetus as a Patient”, during its last annual congress, that was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia on May 14-16, 2025. The award is bestowed to honor outstanding members of the society for their long-standing contributions to perinatal medicine, continuing the work of Sir William Liley, a pioneering New Zealand physician scientist and researcher, who performed the first successful fetal blood transfusion in 1963.

In September 2025, Dr. Faysal El Kak was the recipient of the prestigious Honoris Causa Fellowship, one of the highest distinctions bestowed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) for his achievements in advancing women’s healthcare globally. Soon after, in October 2025, Dr. El Kak was awarded an honorary shield by the minister of Public Health for his contributions to women’s health locally and globally and for being a tireless advocate for women’s well-being and rights.

Recently, Dr. Lina El Taha has successfully attained membership of the RCOG.



LOVE IN THE AIR: CONGRATULATIONS

Omar Alameddine (PGY 4) recently got engaged to Miss Rayane Lakkis on October 25, 2025. His engagement party took place at ArtHaus, Gemmayze on November 8, 2025, in the presence of family and friends. Omar wanted to share with us special moments from his proposal in Lake Como, Italy in this special edition. Please join us in extending warm congratulations to Rayane and Omar, wishing them a lifetime of love and happiness as they start this beautiful journey.



ACADEMIC NEWS

Dr. Faysal El Kak presented on “Hormone therapy and CVD in women” during the MEMA 2025, October 4, 2025, and on “Understanding menopause: Bridging biological changes and professional realities,” organized by the Office of Equal Opportunity/Title IX, October 17, 2025, at AUB. Regionally, he participated as a speaker and moderator in the Menopause Hormone Therapy (MIT) Academy and MHT advisory board, in KSA on November 2, 2025, and in the 9th International Conference of the Iraqi Society of OBS/GYN, that was held in Baghdad, Iraq, on September 14-18, 2025. He was also a speaker and chair of a session in the FIGO World Congress that was held in Cape Town, South Africa on October 5-9, 2025, and participated virtually in the Gynecological Society of Southern India on World Menopause Day on October 18, 2025.

Dr. Abdallah Adra was an invited speaker to the 9th International Scientific Congress of the Iraqi Society of OBS/GYN, that was held in Baghdad, on September 18-20, 2025, where he discussed the management of short cervix during pregnancy and use of low dose aspirin in high-risk obstetrics. He was also an invited speaker at the multidisciplinary congress of the Beirut Arab University (BAU), entitled “Frontiers in Healthcare”, and that was held on October 24-25, 2025, in BAU - Tripoli campus. He presented on “Screening for fetal aneuploidy in 2025.” He was also an invited speaker at the OBS/GYN Congress of the Centre Hospitalier du Nord, entitled “Maternal Health Matters,” that was held on November 15, 2025, where he delivered two presentations.

RESIDENTS AND FELLOWS PRESENTING THEIR WORK IN REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS

Our residents and fellows continue to present their work at regional and international meetings. Recently, Drs. Lara Nahouli (second year fellow REI) and Sima Sharafeddin along with Dr. Ghina Ghazeeri had two poster presentations at the American Society for Reproductive Medicine Scientific Congress and Expo (ASRM) that was held on October 25-29, 2025, in San Antonio, USA.

Drs. Dima Salloum, Lara Nahouli and Mohammad Ghotmi (third year fellow REI) attended the European Society for Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) meeting that was held in Paris, France on June 29 - July 02, 2025 where they presented their work “Comparison of progestin primed ovarian stimulation protocol to Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone antagonists for oocyte freezing procedures: a retrospective study.”

Dr. Tony Bazi and Dr. Nathalie Chamsedine (PGY 4) had an abstract accepted at the Mediterranean Incontinence and Pelvic Floor Society meeting 2025 (MIPS) that was held in Istanbul, Turkey, on November 20-22, 2025. The presentation was delivered in a video format by Dr. Chamsedine, who showcased a rare case of idiopathic vestibulo-rectal fistula that was surgically managed at AUBMC, highlighting detailed surgical steps and key intraoperative findings.

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PUBLICATIONS

Nassar AH, Usta I. Factors contributing to the reduction of global maternal mortality ratio. *Lancet Glob Health* 2026;14(1):e4-e5.

Sharafeddin SF, Chehade Z, Sayed SE, Salloum D, Nahouli L, Hannoun A, Ghazeeri G. The effect of environmental stressors on anti-mullerian hormone levels in Lebanese women: a retrospective study. *PLoS One* 2025;20(11):e0336016.

Wahab S, Chehade Z, Jaffa M. A Cross-sectional study of endometriosis surgeries across obstetrics and gynecology subspecialties: Does minimally invasive gynecologic surgery (MIGS) fellowship training make a difference? *Cureus* 2025;17(8):e90828.

El Kak FH, Hamadeh R. (2025). Maternal death surveillance and response, 2024, UNFPA, MoPH, Lebanon.

DR. MICHAEL FAKIH'S CONTRIBUTION TO REI TRAINING

Dr. Michael Fakh is an alumnus of AUB, where he completed his residency training in OBS/GYN. He later pursued further specialization in the United States and developed a career in Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI), including the establishment of the Fakh IVF network.

Over the years, Dr. Fakh has remained connected to AUB and the Department of OBS/GYN. Through contributions totaling USD 250,000, he has provided support to the REI Fellowship Training and Research Support Funds, with a focus on strengthening education, training, and academic development. This support has covered fellow stipends, Scholars in Health Research Program (SHARP) training, conference and course participation, publication fees, resident examination fees, educational materials, office supplies, awards, and academic travel, including recent lodging support for fellows during the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) Congress and continued assistance for European Society for Human Reproduction and Embryology (ESHRE) meeting activities.

In addition, Dr. Fakh has supported observational experiences for chief residents and fellows at his centers in the UAE, offering exposure to different clinical settings. The Department of OBS/GYN at AUBMC sincerely thanks Dr. Fakh for his continued support, which has contributed meaningfully to training and academic growth within the REI fellowship.



WISH PROGRAM: PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The WISH program has been involved in several projects and activities. A policy paper on sexual reproductive health and rights was developed in collaboration with K2P-FHS under the WISH OXFAM project. An e-book titled *From Cell to Self: A Guide for Sexual Reproductive Health* has been developed. In addition, an ongoing project to develop guidelines and training related to sexual reproductive health is being led by the WISH program in collaboration with UNFPA and MoPH. The WISH team participated in advocacy work during breast cancer campaign and World Menopause Day with activities related to sexual health in breast cancer survivors and women transitioning to menopause.

Drs. Ali El Safadi and Omar Alameddine (both PGY 4) have been leading a series of educational sessions, as part of WISH program activities, on sexual health and sexually transmitted infections (STI) awareness across Lebanon, including the North, the South, and Beirut. The interactive workshops targeting adolescents and young adults provide evidence-based guidance and practical tools to support healthy decision-making. This outreach highlights our department's continued commitment to community education, preventive health, and equitable access to information.



EMBRACING LEADERSHIP EARLY: BEST LEADERS START BEFORE THEY FEEL READY

During the recent “By Women, For Women” Workshop that was organized by the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI) in collaboration with the Center for Women in Business on November 7-8, 2025, Dr. Zeina Chehade (PGY 1) served as one of the presenters alongside Dr. Ghina Ghazeeri and Mrs. Manal Ayoub. Drs. Tara Nader and Pamela Moukarzel (both PGY 3) were also among the participants. During her presentation, Dr. Chehade shared practical leadership tips and lessons learned from leading the OBS/GYN Interest Group (OGIG), with particular emphasis on the successful clinics organized by the department of OBS/GYN during the war for displaced women and run by volunteer attending physicians, residents, and OGIG members under the umbrella of HER Fund.



READERS' CORNER

From the first issue and until the last one, we have always received very encouraging comments and sometimes suggestions and ideas from our readers. A word of gratitude for all those who took the time to send such heartfelt comments, a sample of which is available below.

- *Really great idea and execution! Congratulations.*
- *Congratulations on the first issue. It was spirit uplifting... Hope that we will continue to receive it to keep track of our mother department.*
- *Very nice work. It is so nice to see that people at all levels are recognized.*
- *Briefly, the newsletter is very interesting to all readers, not only the members of the department, but to the AUBMC community and our alumni, as well.... It's informative and has a wonderful artistic touch.*
- *This newsletter is very lively, rich in information, artistic, and unique.*
- *It is always a pleasure and a gust of warm tender air reading the department's accomplishments and news.*
- *The newsletter looks incredible. I love getting all the news about people I know and some that I do not, also about departmental activities.*
- *Special and astonishing as usual!! I loved so much the part about highlighting passions and talents.*
- *Congratulations on this initiative. Not only does it keep the AUBMC family connected, but it is also very professional in design and content.*
- *Enjoyed reading the amazing newsletter. So beautifully organized and informative.*
- *Thank you for sharing this enlightening publication!!*
- *Very elegant and informative.*
- *Beautiful vibrant issue and so special in many ways!*
- *Very interesting as usual! You made us even prouder in the "Did you know?" section.*
- *I like this newsletter. I wish we had more newsletters like the OBS/GYN newsletter. It is very positive and inspiring.*
- *As usual, I enjoyed reading the newsletter. Thank you for sharing the upbeat news with us, the larger AUB community.*
- *As always: vibrant, hopeful, unifying and informative.*
- *A refresher. Very nice work. Really superb.*
- *Putting the department on the national map of OBS/GYN and getting closer with our alumni.*
- *Congratulations on a well-invested effort in this nice informative newsletter.*
- *What an inspiring newsletter as usual, stunning renovation and such a sense of unity at the department.*

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

In this special issue, we asked some of the guests who were previously featured in the “In The Spotlight” section of older issues to reflect on the same questions and pick up two or three which they would answer differently now. Enjoy a selection of those interviews which exceptionally include some “Did You Know” material. The old responses are displayed first but you can check the complete old interview by clicking on the name of the guest; The "In The Spotlight" section is shown on the last page of each issue.



DR. KARAM KARAM

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: *Mudnaka Ghafahu, Ghafnuhu Allama El Ghazal* by Abdel Wahab, *Aghadan Alkak* by Oum Kalthoum, and *Layali El Unsi* by Asmahan.

Q: What is the movie or book you recently enjoyed watching or reading?

A: *House of Stone* by Anthony Shadid, *Myths, Illusions and Peace* by Dennis Ross, and *Fi Hukumatin Lam Tahkum* by Salah Salman.

Dr. Karam Karam seems to be consistent with almost all his previous answers and though he continues to enjoy listening to classical Arabic songs, this time he chose a different song for Mohammed Abdel Wahab Assiba Wal Jamal - 1938 that was written by Bechara Al Khoury (al Akhtal al Saghir) for the first Miss Lebanon Jamila Khalil. Al Rabee' by Farid Al Atrache is another favorite for Dr. Karam. Among the books that he lately enjoyed reading are Nahj Al Balagha by Al Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib and The Good Spy by Kai Bird.

DR. GHINA GHAZEERI



Q: What are your main duties?

A: In addition to my clinical duties, I teach first- and third-year medical students, and I supervise the infertility OPD clinics.

Q: If you were not doing this job, what would you have chosen to do?

A: A teacher or a part-time crafts maker.

Q: What do you find most challenging about your job?

A: Helping people reach the most enjoyable feeling in this life: becoming a parent.

Dr. Ghina Ghazeeri believes that nowadays her main duties are to make people around her healthier, happier and more optimistic, and she adds: "I enjoy helping everyone around me grow and reach potential." Although previously she would have chosen to be a teacher or a craftsman, this time she would choose between being a librarian or someone caring for elderly people. The most challenging thing about her job is "understanding people around me, seeing them not from my lens but from theirs."



DR. DINA CHAMSY

Q: What is most enjoyable about your job?

A: Surgery. Yet, I must admit that delivering babies is quite exciting and gratifying.

Q: What is your point of weakness?

A: Kindness; I'm often told I'm too kind.

Dr. Dina Chamsy continues to find the greatest joy in surgery; however, forming meaningful connections with the residents and watching them grow over the years, in her role as OBS/GYN residency program director, for her is incredibly gratifying. As for her point of weakness, she confesses that "I love my three children equally, but my little girl has a way of melting my heart that is hard to put into words."

DR. ELIE HOBEIKA

Q: What are your main duties?

A: In addition to my clinical duties, I am mostly involved in teaching students and residents, including the coordination of the obstetrical simulation case scenarios.

Q: What do you find most challenging about your job?

A: The time away from my family especially my youngsters.

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: My wife hooked me up on the new Wael Kfoury album; too romantic for me but love it nonetheless.

Q: What do you enjoy doing during your free time?

A: Traveling and exploring whenever feasible, playing sports, namely volleyball and snowboarding, and watching movies when the time allows.



Dr. Elie Hobeika responded that in addition to his clinical and educational duties at AUBMC, he serves as the chief of the OBS/GYN service, the president of the medical committee and the OBS/GYN residency site coordinator at KMC. He believes that the long working hours which have a toll on his wellbeing are the most challenging part of his job. Lately, he is listening frequently to Ya Ibni by Wadih El Safi, with his dad getting old and his two boys growing every day.” As for the book or movie that he enjoyed lately, he replies that there is no time for either activity since “between my work, my teaching, and my family, I look forward to find my pillow and sleep every evening.”

DR. ABDALLAH ADRA



Q: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go and why?

A: Italy has always been a favorite destination of mine; everything about it is so enchanting - I would not hesitate to go there anytime I get the chance. The Greek Island of Santorini would be second on my list.

Q: What is most enjoyable about your job?

A: The sense of fulfillment that I feel every time I see ecstatic parents holding a healthy perfect newborn is incomparable.

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: *Love in Portofino*, a beautiful song from the latest album by the great Italian Tenor, Andrea Bocelli.

Dr. Abdallah Adra continues to consider Italy as a favorite destination but lately, the Greek Islands have become for him a setting for unforgettable family vacations. He adds that “magical Santorini carries a special place in my heart, since it is the island where my daughter got married the past year.” He believes that the heartwarming evaluation and positive feedback that he continues to receive from medical students and residents has been his greatest source of joy in academic medicine. As a classic person, the beautiful song of Frank Sinatra My Way is his favorite these days.

DR. SANDRINE ATALLAH



Q: What do you find most challenging about your job?

A: Staying objective and accepting everything I hear without being judgmental.

Q: What do you enjoy doing during your free time?

A: Traveling when I can, going to cultural events on a weekly basis, reading, and doing sports daily.

Dr. Sandrine Atallah would answer two questions differently which, for her, reflects how her work and personal life have evolved: “While staying objective and non-judgmental remains essential, the greatest challenge for me today is setting healthy limits and giving myself the time and space needed to balance clinical work, projects, and personal well-being.” Reading has become almost an obsession for her during her free time. She adds: “I rediscovered my childhood dream of becoming a writer one day. I still enjoy everything I used to, but I have now set myself a personal target of reading two books per week.”

DR. IHAB USTA



Q: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go and why?

A: Italy. It combines history, culture, beauty, and ice cream. The language is music to the ears; the people take it easy and enjoy life.

Q: Tell us something that most people don't know about you.

A: I love cats and I drink a lot of diet Pepsi.

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: Whatever is on the radio on my way to and from the hospital.

Dr. Ihab Usta, who previously chose Italy as a favorite destination, would nowadays choose to go to Mecca and Madina, wishing she could spend more time, if at all available, on spirituality. In response to the question about something people don't know about her, she replied that being so long at the medical center, “I am now an open book and people know almost everything about me.” As for her favorite songs these days, she believes that she is stuck in the past, “I love Oudak Rannan by Fairuz and El Alb Ya'shaq Kol Gamil by Umm Kulthum.” The words of the latter song express a deep spiritual journey using Sufi language and it is said that Umm Kulthum got emotional and cried when she first performed it live in 1971. This song is also one of the songs of her last concert before passing away in 1975.

DR. FAYSAL EL KAK



Q: What do you enjoy doing during your free time?

A: I watch lots of movies and enjoy books. Besides practicing sports (mainly boxing), I also do some voluntary community and agricultural work in my village. I spend quality time on father-son bonding and activities, and of course not forgetting social media networking.

Q: What is your point of weakness?

A: I am sensitive and goodhearted, and I rarely say “No.”

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: *Ain't Go No, I Got Life* by Nina Simone, and couple of Fairuz and Umm Kulthum classics.

Dr. Faysal El Kak responds that since “there is more and more of less and less time, I mostly spend my free time with family and doing calisthenics.” His point of weakness is family, and his favorite songs lately have been Ya Mahla Layali Lhawa by Fairuz and Inta Omri by Umm Kulthum. Inta Omri was the first collaboration between Umm Kulthum and Mohamad Abdel Wahab and was one of the three songs that she chose to sing during her two concerts at L'Olympia in Paris in November 1967, the only concerts held outside the Arabic countries.

DR. ANWAR NASSAR



Q: What is your point of weakness?

A: I forgive easily.

Q: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go and why?

A: Italy. It is my favorite part of the world. I enjoyed every day I spent there. I love the history, the culture, the landscape, the food, the music, the language, the accent, the people and the wine!

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: *Eh Fee Amal* by Fairuz, *Adagio* by Albinoni and *Otl w Darar* by Ziad Rahbani.

Dr. Anwar Nassar believes that nowadays, Noor, his only child, is his point of weakness though the way he is raising her – which is stricter than her mother – does not include saying yes to everything she desires, in fact, it is the contrary; and if the answer is no, it is final. Although Italy remains his favorite destination, lately, he has been visiting Paris more frequently, “a city that inspires me at every corner.” Lastly, he has been listening recently to two songs by his favorite artist of all times Fairuz: Sa’louni El Nas and specifically the live captivating version that Fairuz delivered in her concert at Bercy in 1988 and Ana Indi Haneen in its live version that she sang for the first time during her concert in Sharjah in 1978. Both songs were composed by her son Ziad Rahbani that Dr. Nassar admires fondly, not only for his artistry, but for who he is as a person.

At the end of this section, we would like to remember two faculty members who were featured in previous issues and who are no longer among us, Dr. Fayez Suidan ([Issue 02](#)) and Dr. Adnan Mroueh ([Issue 23](#)). Read what they said back then ...

ENHANCING RESEARCH TRAINING IN THE REI FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM: THE SCHOLARS IN HEALTH RESEARCH PROGRAM SHARP

SHARP at AUB is a capacity building initiative launched in 2013 that plays a critical role in empowering our trainees in mastering essential quantitative research methods. It offers didactic courses and structured training in study design, epidemiology, biostatistics, ethics, library science, equipping participants with the tools needed to interpret and critically appraise studies and guidelines. It also empowers them to conduct rigorous clinical and translational research. Given the central role of research in sub-specialty training, REI fellows are required to complete the SHARP as part of their education. The department of OBGYN sponsors trainees on a yearly basis, covering their tuition fees, to augment their training and encourage their meaningful engagement in research without any added financial burden.

The REI Fellowship Program was launched in 2016, with the first fellow graduating in 2018. To date, the program has graduated eight fellows. In line with ACGME-I accreditation requirements, the fellowship has recently expanded from a two-year to a three-year program. The additional year is largely research-focused, with up to 80 percent of the fellow’s time dedicated to research activities. In addition, residents who are highly involved in research and who expressed a need for financial support were recently granted partial tuition coverage, with 50 percent of the SHARP fees covered by the department, further supporting their academic development.



A DAY WELL SPENT IN FAQRA

On Saturday, September 13, 2025, WHC staff including administrators, clerks, nurses, and the administrative team of the department, were warmly hosted by Dr. Nassar and his family at their place. Everyone enjoyed the food, nice music and beautiful weather. This gathering offered everyone a chance to relax and served as a heartfelt expression of appreciation for their continued dedication and hard work.



DID YOU KNOW?

The two highest IQ scores

ever recorded belong to women.

Women have a larger pupil than men,

and they blink 19 times in a minute compared to only 11 times for men.



An average woman eats

1.8 kg

of lipstick in her lifetime.

The International Women's Day's date

March 8

was chosen because of the Russian revolution. On that date in 1917, women in the Russian capital of Petrograd protested and went on strike, demanding food and the end of the empire. A week later, the Tsar abdicated.



Girls' brains mature two years earlier than boys.



The **only major US city** that was founded by a woman is

Miami

From Virginia Apgar, who developed the Apgar score for the assessment of a newborn's health immediately after birth, to Rosalind Franklin's groundbreaking work in DNA discovery, and more recently to Katalin Karikó's work on mRNA technology for COVID-19 vaccines, women have made key

medical advancements that have saved countless lives.



DID YOU KNOW?

Only two percent of women perceive themselves as **beautiful.**

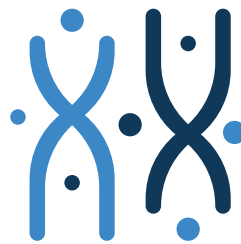
Women tend to **cry more often** and for longer durations than men **due to higher levels of prolactin** and more developed tear glands.



Women spend at least **five months** of their lives deciding **what to wear.**

While the male produces the smallest human cell, the sperm, **the female's ovum is the largest cell in the human body.**

The **two X chromosomes** also provide an immunological advantage over men by offering a "double dose" of immune-related genes in addition to the positive effect of estrogen, leading to a **more robust immune response to infections and faster recovery rate.**



Due to the presence of **two X chromosomes**, women have a

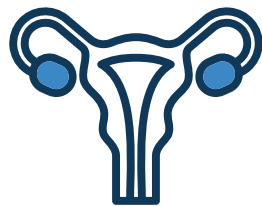
larger color vocabulary

and are way better than men at distinguishing subtle color differences. This is also due to the presence of additional cone cells in the retina, which enhances their color vision.



DID YOU KNOW?

A woman loses about **1,000 eggs** per menstrual cycle, but typically only one egg matures and gets ovulated.

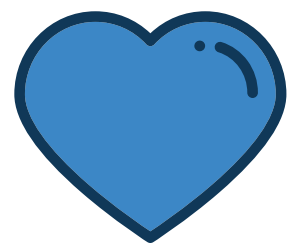


By weight, the uterus is the strongest muscular organ

in the woman's body. The pressure and power the uterus employs during labor is the strongest force exerted by any muscle in the body.

The curvature of the women's **lower spine**, which spans three vertebrae (compared to two in men), **provides greater flexibility** mostly to accommodate pregnancy.

A woman's heart is typically **smaller, weighs less, beats faster, and pumps less blood**



per heartbeat than a man's heart.

