

## Meet AUK's New Dean of Business

BY MAY OMRAN

### How long have you served in this specific field?

I began my career as an academic and taught both full and part time for seventeen years. I also worked for a multinational corporation for more than thirty years on five continents, primarily in business development.

### What insights have you developed about the American University of Kuwait?

Anyone who pretends to have great insight after only three weeks at an institution is not being truthful. However, I have found the faculty and staff to be highly qualified and passionate about their work. I see students who are energetic and purpose driven. And, I find a community atmosphere that is very comfortable. Ask me a year from now for insights.

### In terms of academic infrastructure, how does AUK differ from previous institutions?

Other than the fact that we have a lot more sand, I think you could transport the AUK campus to the US and

it would be like many other small universities. Our intent is to emphasize that we are an American-based university, and I believe we are doing a good job in this respect.

### What are some of the key elements you believe are essential to be established in an academic institution?

For the College of Business and Economics, it is simple. Our output must be outstanding graduates who are demanded by employers throughout the region. To accomplish that we need outstanding teaching supplemented by research that keeps our faculty at the top of their profession. To achieve these goals we need to be certain that we carefully focus our resources, and maintain a close external relationship with the business community.

### As Dean of the College of Business at AUK, what initiatives do you plan to take?

We are just now in the process of creating the college. I am meeting with our faculty one by one to get their input as to where they see the institution moving. From this, I am gathering many data points that help me understand the needs of the college. Many good

ideas have arisen from these conversations. I will be sorting through them in the coming months, and working with our faculty, the administration and our Business Advisory Board to develop short term priorities and a long term strategy.

### How do these initiatives fit into the university's long-term plan?

AUK's history is as a liberal arts college. Even though we are creating a College of Business, I will not lose sight of our foundation. I believe that for a student to develop a competitive advantage in the business world, a liberal arts background is important.

### Do you have any comments to emphasize on?

I spent the last three decades working in the business world. During that time, I was involved with hiring hundreds of university graduates. Those who were most successful after they were hired were those who graduated from programs that challenged them to think and analyze. A university education needs to be demanding. I want our graduates to be so well educated that employers will be begging us to hire them. This means that we will be holding to high standards throughout your tenure at AUK.



Dr. Doug Munro, founding Dean of Business & Economics at AUK.

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## Students Express Themselves...



### on the Sidewalk!

BY NADA EL-BADRY

On Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> of March, all students were invited to grab some colorful chalk and draw to their hearts content on the floor of the square in front of the Liberal Arts building as a part of AUK's International Week. Since it's not often that an institution actually encourages something that would normally be viewed as graffiti - also commonly known as vandalism, - students eagerly seized the opportunity to express themselves on AUK's campus. Both artists and the not-so-artistically-inclined joined in the fun and, if you had happened to

walk through the Liberal Arts' main doors between one p.m. and four p.m. on Sunday, you might have seen clusters of students crouched down on the floor, keenly focusing on their art piece. In a country where art and creativity is not as appreciated as it should be, it was truly a heart-warming sight.

The illustrations varied from beautiful drawings, to words of encouragement ("all you need is love", "better tomorrow", "peace", and "know thy self", among others), to passionate words about current events ("free Syria", "stop racism", "stop

discrimination", "stop sexism" and "Kony 2012 is emotional blackmail") to, finally, students merely expression their sense of humor on the sidewalk ("we 'r awesome" and "no woman no cry", to which someone responded with "no man no cry"). Whether they sketched a picture, expressed a thought or simply drew something for laughs, one thing was clear: the students were not afraid to express themselves on the halls of the American University of Kuwait. Here's hoping AUK gives us even more opportunities to express ourselves in similar ways!

## Transitional SGA

BY SUMAIAH AL-SOURI

The Transitional Student Government Association has started operating and is at your service to improve your life here at AUK. We have set forth an agenda for the remainder of the Academic Year. Following are the main points of our agenda: amendment of the SGA constitution, clubs and organizations procedures, teaching methods, restaurants and vending machines inside the university campus, sports and sport teams at AUK, provide student supplies with ease, improve IEP experience

Allow me to present you with the members and their positions at TSGA: President: Abdul Aziz AL-Mutairi, Vice President for Logistics: Omar Mehdi, Vice



President for Academic Affairs: Souri.

Hani Al-Azzam, Vice President for Student Affairs: Ahmad Al-Refai, Secretary: Lateefa Boutaiban, Treasurer: Khaled Al-Mutawa, Programming Officer: Kevork Awakimian, Media Officer: Habiba El-Hobail, Public Relations Officer: Sumaiah Al-

TSGA welcomes you all to their office if you have any questions, suggestion or complaints. The office is located inside the SGA, Clubs and Org. office, B building, ground floor, opposite to the computer lab. Office hours are given below:

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
9 am		Kevork		Kevork	
10 am		Sumaiah	Khalid	Sumaiah	Khalid
11 am	Kevork	Habiba	Kevork	Habiba	Kevork
12 pm	Sumaiah	Habiba	Sumaiah	Habiba	Sumaiah
1 pm	Abdulaziz	Khalid		Khalid	Abdulaziz
2 pm	Lateefa	Ahmad	Lateefa	Ahmad	Lateefa
3 pm	Hani	Ahmad	Kevork	Ahmad	Hani
4 pm	Hani	Omar	Omar	Omar	Hani
5 pm	Abdulaziz	Omar	Omar	Omar	Abdulaziz
6 pm	Abdulaziz	Omar	Omar	Omar	Abdulaziz

## Redefining Modern Supercars

BY SAQIB SYED

Ever wonder why a 6-cylinder Nissan GTR beats a 10-cylinder Lamborghini in a drag race sometimes? By the end of this read, you will know. Ok, so before I start pushing the presumably boring concept of turbocharged engines in your small and sophisticated brains, the following are 0 - 100 kph timings of some of the most advanced and modern supercars (of course fitted with turbocharged engines in their stomachs):

Bugatti Veyron – 2.5 seconds  
Nissan GTR – 2.8 seconds  
McLaren MP4-12C – 3.2 seconds  
Porsche 911 Turbo S – 3.2 seconds  
Pagani Huayra – 3.3 seconds  
Mercedes SL 65 AMG – 3.8 seconds

So what makes a Bugatti Veyron one of the fastest cars in the world? Or, what makes a Bugatti Veyron reach 100 kph in just 2.5 seconds (top speed of 431 kph) even if being driven by the dumbest driver in the world? It is certainly not because of the driver or because of its aerodynamic shape, but mainly because of the 4 turbochargers dancing in the middle of Bugatti's engine and hence making it an automotive engineering marvel!

However, I do not think that today's automobile engineering & technology should only be about raw power and speed. I mean even a fat farmer from Kentucky, who does not know sh\*t about the 'magnificent' laws of physics, can tune up his engine



and make his car go faster. Simply pumping more horsepower in an engine without thinking of fuel requirements is like using your credit card without worrying about your credit limit and bank balance (sucking everyone around you into a super recession, I must say).

So what else should we expect from automobile technology? How about efficiency? Yes, I know that being in the Middle East; *fuel efficiency* may not even be your last concern since there are billions of barrels of fuel floating under your foot. Nevertheless, since I am little more concerned about the future generations, I would expect to have engines that are more efficient or green (environment friendly) as well. Therefore, if we can make faster cars by not hampering "Mother Nature," only then we will be making optimal use of automobile technology.

*Hmmm....so what in the world is a Turbocharger all about?*

A Turbocharger is a compressor

that uses waste gases from the engine to force additional air into the engine more efficiently. Turbocharger ensures that all the fuel is properly burned before being converted into smoke. Hence, a turbocharger increases fuel efficiency without any need to increase power of the engine and also easily distinguishes YOU from a Kentucky farmer!

There are superchargers which are built for the same purpose as well. However, since superchargers are not powered by exhaust gases and are connected to the engine resulting in backpressuring of the engine, they are not as efficient as turbochargers. Yes, turbocharged engines cannot be as green as solar fuel cells but they are certainly the most favorable solution for cars that need to meet enjoined emission levels, but want to be brutally fast at the same time.

Now, ever wondered why a 6-cylinder Nissan GTR beats a 10-cylinder Lamborghini in a drag race? You may just know the answer a bit too well...

## Faster-Than-Light Neutrinos an Error



BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM '11

Having covered this story in two articles now, I have been paying close attention to just how it pans out since it is a developing one. The world did go into frenzy when the news was announced but it seems there is no apparent match for the most fundamental law of physics. So, Albert Einstein will continue to posthumously polish his crown. Personally, it is a bit of a letdown: I honestly thought something inventive would come of this discovery but like most people, was caught up in the hype.

Scientists have attributed the outlandish results to bad wiring, believing that technical difficulties were behind them. Just as physicists at the European Organization for Nuclear Research had

suggested, counterparts carried out their own experiment, duplicating what was allegedly done to bring out such a sensational outcome. More specifically, it was a case of a loose fiber-cable. I will not attempt to get into the mechanics of the problem but the bottom line is that there certainly was one! I may just be drawing my own eccentric supposition but I feel like we are at a point in human history when foundational discoveries are not the norm; nowadays, there are merely modifications and/or enhancements of established ones.

Truth be told, it was bordering on the imaginary and it seems that it was only a matter of time before the claim was falsified. It was even released in a statement

put out by the scientists who performed the initial experiment; they reported there having been potential errors in their hardware. It takes great integrity to admit to a mistake of this magnitude but the good news is that the world can once again have their faith in the theory of relativity restored, at least for those who had got on the neutrinos-are-faster-than-light bandwagon.

Opinions are split about the entire controversy and as hypotheses are continually suggested, it may have been too early to wave the white flag and call it quits. Some say a chance should have been given to completely verify the results but what must also be kept in mind is that scientists are almost always in the limelight, pressured to deliver, without fail, conclusions to tested theories. This was just too big of a story to contain and in their defense physicists at CERN did invite their colleagues to affirm the findings. It was a conundrum from the very start but one I was (and still am) happy to write about. There are good and bad things to learn from this episode but I will leave that for you to look into. Debate may be the lifeblood of science but it keeps it energized!

# THE VOICE OF AUK

## Our Mission

The Voice of AUK is a student-run, monthly newspaper that seeks to foster active communication among the entire campus community and keep it abreast of diverse and relevant issues by providing high-quality news and information in an academic context. Through this, The Voice also strives to heighten awareness of rights and responsibilities of membership in the AUK community. The Voice also espouses a commitment to philanthropy.

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The Voice of AUK welcomes contributions from all registered students, faculty and staff members of the American University of Kuwait. Submissions should be emailed to [voice@auk.edu.kw](mailto:voice@auk.edu.kw).

All submissions must be approved by the Editorial Board, in accordance with the Editorial Policy. The Voice of AUK offers no guarantee that any submission will be published.

To be considered for publication in the Voice, submissions for a given issue must be received on or before the published deadline for that issue. The views expressed in opinion columns represent strictly the views of the author, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Voice of AUK, nor those of the American University of Kuwait.

All submissions become property of the Voice of AUK.

The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit all submissions, including for grammar, spelling, style, and clarity. Writers have the right to withdraw submissions at any time prior to publication.

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For advertising information, send email to [voice@auk.edu.kw](mailto:voice@auk.edu.kw). Advertisements for a given issue must be received on or before the published deadline for that issue. The Editorial Board reserves the right to accept or reject any advertisement. Opinions and/or attitudes expressed in advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of the Voice of AUK nor those of the American University of Kuwait.

## New Meningitis B Vaccine

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM '11

Just months ago, news swept across Kuwait of patients suffering from meningitis, a contagious bacterial infection of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord, known as meninges. Meningitis B is the type that is highly deadly but also rare. Thankfully, the six cases reported by the Ministry of Health were treated and citizens/residents were reassured that everything was under control. Of course, they had to be quarantined as being around a patient of this disease that so much as talks, coughs or sneezes will render one's immune system defenseless.

Recently, scientists in Universidad de Chile made a major breakthrough, having developed a successful Meningitis B vaccine that has immunized nearly 100 percent of adolescents tested between the ages of 11 and 17. The disease regularly claims the lives of 170,000 people each year but this finding could change all that. It has been labeled an aggressive virus by the World Health Organization but the South American nation we do not hear



The vaccine being tested on an adolescent.

much about is on its way to spearheading a treatment that will actually save lives. There have been attempts at tapping into effective ways to target Meningitis B but all have proven to be failures up against it.

"The study has been a huge undertaking. It has taken over a year and a half of preparation before we could administer the first dose to young people," says Miguel O'Ryan, Vice Chancellor for Research and Development at the Universidad de Chile. "But the result has been a big step because it is the first effective vaccine to combat this disease." So, they have clearly done their research and would not be foolish enough to publicize anything on chief media

outlets if not completely sure of its value. I myself saw it on Al-Jazeera English, where a full report was put together with experts on the matter giving their hopes for what this vaccine will mean for newly-diagnosed patients.

The next step is that it be posed to governments around the world to admit to the importation and use of this new vaccine that is guaranteed to cure incidences of Meningitis B. It has long eluded professionals in the field so it may take some time and more tests to convince health-related institutions to begin administering the vaccine but this is, nonetheless, a step forward and in the right direction.

# NBK Volunteers Clean Up Desert Campsites

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI,  
AUK ALUM '11

The National Bank of Kuwait began a very effective campaign early last December that brought together volunteers to clean up campsites and the surrounding desert landscape in Kuwait. It continued through March and aimed to do as much as possible to rehabilitate an area of this country that many consider an enjoyable pastime. Camping season takes place around these four months and the extremely pleasant weather patterns make the experience all the more worthwhile. After all, enjoying the outdoors in this part of the world does not exactly hand people a lot of options to choose from so we should definitely make the most of the ones we have by ensuring safe, clean environments.



NBK volunteers giving time and effort to the campaign. Photo taken by National Bank of Kuwait.

People in Kuwait definitely know how to have a good time but are not so good at tidying up after themselves – I have personally witnessed this at several of our beaches, in mid-ocean and wherever there is an abundance of large dunes of sand because garbage is frequently collected around them. There

is an insatiable habit of littering in this country, but credit is due to NBK for orchestrating a movement that will lessen some of the collateral damage to the desert environment. Of course, awareness should be raised but that requires planning of its own.

Upon arriving, it is no doubt a disheartening display of rubbish



One of NBK's volunteers picking up wastes. Photo taken by National Bank of Kuwait.

but the team went right to work. With garbage bags and bins in hand made available by Think Twice, a nationwide campaign with the same goal in mind, they proceeded with collecting debris left at desert surroundings that negatively affect the habit and make for a distasteful sight. At times, harmful waste

is left behind that would make an otherwise fertile region, incapable of supporting various forms of life. Campers who were on site, where NBK volunteers began the campaign, responded positively to their efforts and joined them. They need to be integral components of the solution.

This is essentially the first step towards educating people who camp out frequently: by having one-on-one conversations with them at these sites so that they are cautious and clean up accordingly before leaving. Needless to say, this could all be avoided if campers would take the time and leave these campsites the way they found them but this appears to be a recurring theme in Kuwait. Large piles of trash are at every turn so the only solution is to have impassioned volunteers take the reins. There are a number of youth-led organizations springing up in Kuwait, especially during the past few years with a mission to take better care of our country's environment. Of course, as mentioned earlier, measures need to be taken at some point to *prevent* these actions. No rule could have been any simpler: do not litter.

# Amr Khaled Speaks at Islamic Conference

BY DINA EL-ZOHAIRY & NUR SOLIMAN

The crowd that turned out for Dr. Amr Khaled's lecture was huge; in fact, every seat in the Gulf University of Science & Technology (GUST) auditorium was taken, overwhelmingly by women. This was no doubt expected for the world's most popular and influential Muslim televangelists, the 6<sup>th</sup> in the list of 'Top Public Intellectuals' according to Foreign Policy, and also the 13<sup>th</sup> in Time's list of most influential people. The lecture drew everyone, from high school to university students, to older parents and professionals.

In the course of the next one and a half hours, the hall was overcome by moments of absolute silence, sudden and all-encompassing, a great quiet and a very focused, intense hush as everyone listened, transfixed. For the topic of civilizing oneself and looking to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a role model, Amr Khaled spoke of a wide range of ideas that returned to a compelling argument of learning with passion, of taking initiative, and of having 'heart,' or humanity. From his stories of his time in the UK after he left Egypt in 2002 due to conflicts with the former government, to the tale of Abu 'Asi Abi al-Rabi', the husband of the Prophet's daughter Sayyida Zainab (RA), the audience was torn between rapt teary-eyed attention and amazement at the strength and inspiration of the stories. From occasional jokes that sent ripples of genuine laughter through the audience, to reminders to read not only the Qur'an and religious texts, but also novels, fiction, and books related to science or other subjects, Amr Khaled reiterated some time-old pieces of advice that, as oft-repeated as they are, needed to be heard again and again, to remind listeners to renew their *imaan* and hold on to the values and goals they maintain to be crucial to their development as Muslims.

As for our development as an *ummah*, how do we expect to play any role in the advancement

of human civilization when we lack the first and most important factor for building a civilization: knowledge? High illiteracy rates plague the Muslim and Arab worlds. A quick glance at the World Bank's map indicates that the lowest literacy rates are concentrated in the Middle East & North Africa (MENA) region. In Egypt alone, for example, there are 17 million people who cannot read or write.

Let's be practical. Ask yourself the following four questions: 1) Do you study to gain knowledge or merely earn high grades leading to a degree? 2) Do you read at least one book every month? 3) Does the thought of gaining new knowledge excite you? 4) Is the pursuit of knowledge one of your priorities in life? If you answered no to any of them, please don't claim that you follow the example of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) for you are not a true knowledge-seeker, yet.

Take the example of Imam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal, who would walk around with a pen and paper, ready to record each and every knowledge byte he crossed paths with. When asked when he'd stop, he replied "From the inkwell to the grave." That is how keen the righteous followers were on the pursuit of knowledge. They found pleasure in learning, as beautifully expressed in Imam Al-Shafie's desire that all his bodily organs were ears to experience the pleasure of receiving knowledge.

So, where do you start? Pick up a new book every fortnight, read on diverse topics—science, religion, self-development, history, literature, etc., attend lectures and workshops, take online courses, and sit with scholars. Pursue knowledge with the intention of using it to contribute to the flowing river of civilization in fulfillment of the purpose for which Allah (SWT) created us, as successors on this earth. Become a true knowledge seeker and know that: "Whoever pursues a path seeking knowledge there, Allah facilitates for them

through it a path to Paradise" [Muslim].

Imam Ash-Shaafie eloquently stated that "All humans are dead except those who have knowledge. And all those who have knowledge are asleep, except those who do good deeds..." Indeed, those who do not have knowledge are closer to the dead, which brings us to the next point.

Don't 'stand in line,' waiting for that job, for that career path, for something to happen and energize your life. Get a move on. Be proactive. Take initiative. Seize opportunities. Find a new hobby. Learn a new language. Live, don't just exist! And ask Allah for guidance at all times. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) went out and spoke to all the Arab tribes, conveying one message: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah. Was he always welcomed? Absolutely not. 26 tribes refused to follow him. His own people, Quraysh, plotted to kill him. At Al-Taif, he was pelted with stones until his feet bled. Yet he kept going and in doing so embodied the true meaning of *tawakkul*—doing your part and leaving the rest to Allah.

Using his own personal experience as an example, Khaled illustrated another important point. When he willingly left Egypt ten years ago, he was heading into the unknown. Too tempting as it was to stay with his family and keep his well-paying job, doing so would have been at the expense of bringing his hidden potential to maturity. Moving from England to Saudi Arabia to Lebanon, Khaled knew little what the future held in store for him: he would soon become an internationally known speaker and presenter of several successful TV programs. Had he chosen to remain an accountant, his primary profession which he didn't particularly like, he wouldn't have been here today. As Khaled explained, you find your calling in life by one of two ways: an expert will tell you what works for you, or, more commonly, you will strive to discover your

hidden treasure until it reveals itself one day.

Such experts are hard to find today, but the Prophet (PBUH) knew exactly where each of his companions fit best and guided them accordingly. For example, Khalid Ibnul Waleed, dubbed "The Drawn Sword of God", belonged on the battlefield. Abdullah Ibn Mas'ud is one of the four, most-trusted Qur'an scholars. Umar Ibnul Khattab (RA) became one of the righteously-guided caliphs, while Bilal was appointed as the Madinah's muezzin.

Another story illustrates the Prophet's wisdom in regards to channeling youth's energy into something beneficial. On the day Muslims entered Makkah, laughter was heard from the people of Quraysh as a young man mocked Bilal's voice as he recited the call to prayer. The Prophet summoned him. He did not scold him as expected, but instead offered him to be Makkah's muezzin, which he gladly accepted. A message to parents: don't suppress your children's talents by asking them to focus on what is more important in *your* viewpoint. If your child draws well, help them develop their art skills. If they're good with the ball, sign them up on the school's football team. You don't know what your child is destined to become, so help bring out the best in them. Help them find their treasure early on in life.

Every Friday, we are asked to read Surat Al-Kahf (The Cave) to reflect, understand, and implement its teachings—not to mention reaping a reward. Its 110 verses tell the stories of men who were doers, not watchers. The Companions of the Cave took refuge in a cave from an unjust ruler to protect their religious beliefs. Prophet Musa (AS) set out on a long journey to meet Al-Khidr, a man who had knowledge that he was not granted. Dhul-Qarnayn (the two-horned king) traveled from east to west for the purpose of reform.



Dr. Amr Khalid.

The third point Khaled stressed was the importance of embracing humanity, or treating everybody well regardless of sex, race or nationality, loving for others what you love for yourself. Khaled reminded the audience that education, schooling, and prized positions in the world are nothing without humanity, and that there are those who boast high degrees in education and expertise in their field, but are not the most pleasant of people to be with, nor have they internalized their knowledge to impart wisdom and to benefit the soul. In compelling words, Khaled explained to his intent audience that, with life's trials and tribulations, and with the hardships of interacting with others, it can sometimes be hard to believe that there is good in others who may seem to be cruel or otherwise distant, but it is important to find that goodness of heart in others once we are comfortable with the concept of love and faith. Khaled then

proceeded to tell the audience about his experience with an elderly neighbor in London who, after three gestures of great goodwill from Khaled himself, transformed from being a wary and cautious neighbor to one who shoveled the snow from Khaled's house's doorway, and, once he knew who he was and the troubles he had faced in Egypt, said that "know that my house is always open to your wife and children should you face danger or hard situations."

Khaled roused the audience to emotions of deep joy and affirmation, motivated and rejuvenated to take initiative and become proactive in taking charge of their lives through passionate education and self-improvement, and making the most of what there is in life, of becoming capable of 'dreaming,' and longing to achieve that dream, and of caring for their hearts and faith and enriching the lives of those around them with love and *imaan*.

# APRIL EVENTS



APRIL 1, 1867 – SINGAPORE BECOMES A BRITISH CROWN COLONY.



APRIL 3, 1922 – JOSEPH STALIN BECAME THE FIRST GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION.



APRIL 3, 1948 – PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN SIGNS THE MARSHALL PLAN WHICH AUTHORIZES \$5 BILLION IN AID FOR 16 COUNTRIES.



APRIL 10, 1998 – POLITICIANS IN NORTHERN IRELAND REACHED AN AGREEMENT AIMED AT ENDING 30 YEARS OF VIOLENCE WHICH HAD CLAIMED OVER 3,400 LIVES. UNDER THE AGREEMENT, PROTESTANTS AND CATHOLICS IN NORTHERN IRELAND WOULD GOVERN TOGETHER IN A NEW 108-MEMBER BELFAST ASSEMBLY, THUS ENDING 26 YEARS OF "DIRECT RULE" FROM LONDON.



APRIL 12, 1961 – RUSSIAN COSMONAUT YURI GAGARIN BECOMES THE FIRST PERSON IN SPACE.



APRIL 14, 1865 – PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN IS SHOT BY JOHN WILKES BOOTH AT FORD'S THEATER IN WASHINGTON, D.C. HE DIED THE NEXT DAY.



APRIL 30, 1975 – THE VIETNAM WAR ENDS WITH THE FALL OF SAIGON (LATER RENAMED HO CHI MINH CITY).



## Why Hunger Should be Your Cause

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM '11

The next time you complain about your food, remember that millions of people out there go for months without a decent meal. And even when they can eat, it is never exactly dinner at the Ritz. They have to plow through life, living on the margins of organized society and hoping that help will soon find them. People of these impoverished regions are victims of corruption - talk about first-world problems to them and they are likely to grimace. I have long pursued the humanitarian route and what I find is people refusing to give or sponsor aid and/or relief operations because those benefiting are not of the same religion or are in support of a fraudulent political system. And so, my onslaught begins. It is a wonder to me why this message still needs to be put to people but we should seek to help others despite all of that.

You see, doors are opening for people who only have the option of volunteering virtually and that goes hand in hand with making hunger a thing of the past. Here is why: hunger, today, is the world's most solvable problem. We

have the means and resources, but are too wrapped up in our lavish lifestyles to listen and respond with immediacy. Who are we to not recognize their agony? We are all equal, a phrase that continues to be repeated throughout human history but very few follow through with its application. The good news is that you can make a difference from the comfort of your own home: non-profit organizations that work for these causes went the whole nine yards by simplifying everything down to the click of a button. In fact, many of them set up ways to directly fund feeding the hungry online! So if you do your best to be interactive, you feed more people than you would expect because it takes a very small amount of money to provide for a hungry individual.

Social networking websites are bigger than ever before: use them! Use your online presence to share information and firmly believe that there is power in that. We all are interconnected so information you are reluctant to pass on might be useful to somebody, somewhere. I subscribed to the World Food

Programme's newsletter a few months back and cannot express how happy I get when reports are sent recording another milestone, one step closer to making hunger, history. Generosity drives these movements and there is nothing like joining the ranks of a cause you feel strongly about, even when it is done virtually. You are still a part of the change and no one can tell you otherwise.

The first step is to educate yourself and the people around you about hunger hotspots and familiarize yourself with initiatives you can help with raising awareness. One day, I did something completely spontaneous: I sent an email to the World Food Programme, expressing my appreciation for the noble work they perform and generally asking about projects/activities in the region. Although the answer to the latter question did not satisfy me, I was told this and it put the most ridiculous smile on my face: "Helping raise awareness about hunger is a *crucial* part of the solution, and we greatly appreciate your help!" So what are you waiting for?

## What Do You Find in Your Heart?

BY AYAH EL HASHASH

A stranded palm tree disregarded at no distinctive place in the desert waves its dry leaves vigorously, penetrating new heights of darkness, and waves as a sign of life and perseverance. The forgotten palm tree struggles each day, but doesn't stop believing in her passion for the rain and water. It believes that its passion has reason and that is enough to justify its meaningful existence. If the palm tree stopped believing that the rain would eventually reach its soil, that would be the day the water never came back. We, the people, don't have a story very much different from the palm tree because we all have a dream, a passion. Deep within us, beneath the thick skin that covers our hearts is a reason we wake up- even if some days we painfully wake up to a blur of our fortune.

Fatima Al Mosawi always had big aspirations which she wasn't able to express while she was

pursing her undergraduate and postgraduate education in the UK. However, when she returned to Kuwait, she knew that she was now ready to grow into her dreams which, at some points in her life, seemed bigger than her, more than she could envision. Fatima Al Mosawi is now the founder of Spread the Passion, an organization that recruits volunteers for community service. Fatima believed that giving back to the community is a duty for all.

Fatima's passion originated from the culture she was brought up in. She discussed how volunteering in the UK was part of who the people were; it was part of their life instead of an opportunity. When she started Spread the Passion, she got up to 600 volunteers, most of which were Kuwaiti. She addressed this statistic as a pleasant surprise, and she elaborated wholeheartedly on the fact that people wanted to volunteer and participate in the

gradual change of the world, but they were waiting for someone to guide them and set the path for them - they were waiting for the opportunity to spread the passion.

Although Fatima stressed the fact repeatedly that a country can be judged by its sense of community and responsibly, she believed that community service must not be mandatory, but rather come out of deep-rooted, intrinsic motivation. Her mission is not to obligate the duty of community service, but to plant the awareness of giving back in people's hearts. Fatima followed her dream and connected people; she changed many people's lives by making this generosity a part of it. She never gave her dreams away, and put her education first, because she had a perception of priority. Fatima was patient and she waited for the right time and place. That is what dreams are about: everlasting patience and fortitude.

## University Social Life

BY GHALYA A. ALDHAFIRI

The mere mention of the word "politics" is bound to make many teenagers or university-level students fall asleep. Ask them if the members of the Kuwaiti Parliament or the ministers are doing a good job, they would probably just echo what their friends or family say, either completely uninterested or with a complete lack of understanding and research. However, if we asked university students about segregating schools and universities or who to vote for in the next Student Government Association campaign for example - they could go on for hours. But surely that's politics too, right?

It's a question of the chicken and the egg. Have university students switched off from the world of politics because they have no need to know about it, or because they're just oblivious to the world in general? It is plausible to say that these students are barely aware enough about politics, and that they don't know who's left-wing or right and they wouldn't think - with reason - about why governmental decisions are made. Nevertheless, it is understandable that the true reason why there is such a huge lacking in true political understanding within Kuwait amongst Kuwaiti youth is because there is no real inlet or outlet for politics for their age-groups; there is no true active participation.

During the 2012 Parliamentary Elections in Kuwait, a vast majority of our youth's population joined hand in hand to campaign for their preferred candidates, either because they are related to them, or they (or their families) have a good peer connection to them.

Nevertheless, they might just prefer this candidate over others because they have put in the time and the effort into listening to their ideas and researching their achievements and educational records. However, I must say a minority actually did this. Reason being, our culturally-devoted society is so attached to family and peer commitment that it has overcome their reasoning, logic and wisdom in making the choices for our country's benefits. Voting for a candidate based on an emotional attachment due to a promise or giving your word to a family member or a friend makes it a very much biased choice, regardless of who knows best. Citizens need to understand that inside the locked in 4-walled voting room on election day, the only people that are in it are the individual voters, and judges behind individual counters that have no right to interfere with the little piece of paper that consists of candidate names. No-one can see or know, so why the emotional commitment? Why are voters promising to vote without doing well-enough research or hearing out their candidates? It starts with our youth, our younger better educated and more experienced youth, they have the better advantage to do the better research, to take note and hear out what the candidates have to say, it is in the hands of the youth to differentiate between the well benefits for our country and the cons that can harm it. The youth may not know this, but they are the guide to educating the society with the right choices.

Other aspects that affect choice-making is the inevitable tribal

and religious stereotypical belief. Voters think that if the candidates that relate to their tribe or religion, they will be more beneficial to them as a religious or tribal group. Little do they know that voting merely for the sake of stereotype is not only a selfish act, but if this choice is bound to benefit only a certain sector of the society, then it is bound to cause rioting and uprising in other sectors that are not treated equally, and therefore permanently eliminating the idea of equality, justice and even peace within the society.

The main idea is, our youth and our generation should be more educated and aware with today's world of politics. It should start in academic places, such as the university, for example, allowing the students' voices and opinions to be heard with respect to an opposing opinion or suggestion from peers and staff alike, or getting students involved with political movements and events (and I have to say that the American University of Kuwait is doing a very good job at this). However, with that being said, there are a few things the university should bear in mind; some clubs and organizations can or even may (although they may not seem to be) represent a stereotypical group, which can cause an uprising and discrimination amongst students. Universities should be aware of the clubs and organizations on campus and what they may represent. After all, the main goal is to keep our youth in an academic environment that promotes justice, equality, freedom of speech and free will for the better future of our people, country and even our world.

## Q8 Raft Competition Friday, April 27 Marina Crescent



Come Watch and Support Team AUK



## Where There's a War, There's a Virtual Museum

BY FARAH AL-SHAMALI, AUK ALUM '11

Thirty years on and the Louvre Museum is still in possession of priceless Egyptian artifacts. I may just be beating a dead horse but Egyptian authorities should consider materializing their rightful return. You have instances such as this, when historical objects are flagrantly stolen without any sort of serious attempts to regain them by the party that claims ownership. And then, there are similar issues that are rocked with sensitivity and eons of struggle. Some countries are not equipped for the building of museums and hosting scores of tourists to marvel at national relics. As I carry out this description, one obvious nation should come to mind, the artifacts of which can take up acres upon acres of land. You guessed it: Iraq.

But once again, instability of all forms bar it from achieving the dream of erecting monuments to house their national treasures; when Germany obtained chunks of Babylon at the beginning of the last century with no scruples, Iraq could do nothing more than wave goodbye. Even when the government made an appeal for their return in 2002, one year shy of the catastrophic Iraq War, Germany refused to acknowledge the demand. My reading of the situation is simple: Iraq can run to the end of its chain and bark for all Germany cares because they can always play the card of insecurity in the country of origin.

Presently, there is no way around this predicament for Iraq but there is, believe it or not, an alternative! Sure, it does not measure up to the thrilling

experience of walking through a museum's corridors, but allow me to introduce this remarkable substitute: a virtual museum! A work of class, quality and, as we say in Arabic, put together with conscience because they must have surely realized the weight of the project at hand. It was inaugurated by Italy on June 9, 2009 and was something to be proud of: brilliantly introduced with the aid of a video presentation and displaying treasures from as far back as the prehistoric era! It is promoted by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and realized by the Italian National Research Council; simply put, it is a labor of love giving people the opportunity to come in contact with Iraq's archeological heritage.

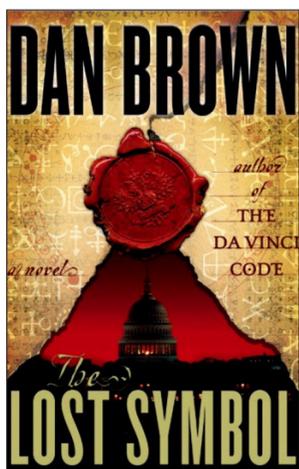
The website is, above all, user-friendly and a feast for the eyes. Upon entering, users are taken to a visual arrangement of the various peoples that inhabited the Fertile Crescent, chronologically. There are several interactive functions that help users to better navigate their way through the website and comprehend the exhibited material. Beautifully composed music plays as well, making for an exhilarating atmosphere all from behind a computer screen. In their own words, the creators of this colossal achievement had this to say: "The Virtual Museum of Iraq portal is a formidable instrument for exploring and learning about a cultural heritage that "disappeared" twice - the first time amidst the heavy layers of the sand of history, the second amidst the violence of the plundering during the war - and

is still awaiting to be viewed by the world."

All of the virtual doors lead into halls with respective artifacts for the user to view and read more about, illuminating when the scroll button is rolled over them with a short description flying into place. There are also accompanying videos that give deeper insight in so many ways, it can double as an educational tool for middle schoolers learning about these civilizations. Beginning with prehistoric times and ending during the golden age of Islam, each of them give the historical/geographical backgrounds of these time periods.

The Babylonian Hall is impeccably crafted and is, like all the others, three-dimensional, so it is as if the user is walking through it. Some of these time-honored artifacts are not really known by the general public, certainly the feeling I got when I clicked on the Islamic Hall. Greeted with the strumming of an oud and various acoustical instrumentation, I read up on some of the displayed items that I never came across in my high school textbooks. That, if anything, is a shame because the seat of Islam may have been in Baghdad but the history belongs to the entire Islamic nation, far beyond its borders. This gargantuan effort is a window into a lost world, one that has been riddled by continuous episodes of war and eclipsed by a narrative of unpredictability that has sadly evolved into the present status quo of Iraq. I invite you all to visit the website: <http://www.virtualmuseumiraq.cnr.it/prehome.htm>. Learn and enjoy!

## The Lost Symbol Book Review



BY NADA EL-BADRY

You might know Dan Brown as the author of the best-selling novel *The Da Vinci Code*, where the main character, Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor and symbologist, finds himself caught up in a once-in-a-lifetime adventure full of ancient symbols and codes that lead

the way to the supposed truth behind a murder. This character had appeared previously in what could be considered a prequel to *The Da Vinci Code* in another successful novel of Dan's, titled *Angels and Demons*. Now, Professor Robert Langdon, swathed in his regular tweed and armed with his trusty Mickey Mouse watch, appears again in Dan Brown's latest novel, *The Lost Symbol*. After being tricked into coming to Washington D.C. under the impression that he was about to give a last-minute lecture at The Capitol Building, Langdon finds out that his oldest friend and mentor, Peter Solomon - a prominent figure and a mason - has been kidnapped, and that he has been summoned by Solomon's kidnapper to find a legendary portal that is supposed to lead to a wealth of knowledge. Presumably, Langdon is the only person who knows the secret to the portal. Much like the rest of

his novels, *The Lost Symbol* is full of thrilling escapades, breathless suspense, fascinating symbols and enthralling, dark secrets.

A real page-turner, this novel is not only filled with riveting facts that you may have never been aware of - I know that most of the information I learned, much like with the rest of his novels, was completely new to me - but the flow of the novel will constantly keep you hooked, as the author often switches from one character's point of view to another, often tapering off the end of his chapter with a cliff hanger and not returning to the scene for another one or two chapters; a technique which, I find, keeps the reader eager to continue reading in order to find out what happens next. Whether you're a closet fan of symbols and ancient artifacts, a thrill-seeking reader, or someone who's just looking for a good book, this is *definitely* the right novel for you.

# Patient 107

BY ALI A. RADY

Hello, my name is... - irrelevant to what I have to say. If you read, you will understand that there's no need for my identity to be declared. Two years ago I hated my life; I hated my friends; I hated my family; I hated myself; I hated every breath of air I took. I blamed fate for every wrong in my life and I had no problem in saying it over and over again. I was depressed and looked for joy in trivial, superficial things.

Two years ago I went to sleep one night and woke up not feeling like myself. The feeling evolved further and deeper. A few days later I was fatally ill. I could not breathe right. I wouldn't eat as my throat was too closed. I could not sleep and when I did I found it very hard to wake back up, like trying to climb off the edge of a very nearing comma. My limbs and neck were extremely stiff to the point where walking to the bathroom was as tiring as running a marathon. I could not believe what was happening to me. In my twisted view of things, it was the last thing I deserved. It was the universe trying to screw me over once more and mess with me just for the sake of watching me scurry around in pain like a mouse stuck in a trap struggling in agony till it meets its doom. My family admitted me to the hospital considering my critical state of health.

If you think I am about to tell you that I found a new appreciation for life because I got sick, then you are most probably very wrong. I hated every second of being there and I blamed fate even more than before. The doctors had no idea whatsoever what was wrong was me. Thus I shrugged in a state of agitation each time a different doctor tried to explain to me what they thought was wrong this time, while having the most awful poker face ever pretending to have the foggiest clue what the hell they were going to do to me. It was like pinning the tail on the donkey, basically. Test after test I started getting sicker and turning from a patient to a lab rat being poked and prodded till they found the answer they wanted, stick a bill to my forehead and send me home.

My depression grew with my pain and my hope faded with my sense of interest in what they wanted to test for next. My hospital room symbolized that I was still sick, that I was still flawed and should be fixed. So, every time I got wheel chaired back in it, and took a glimpse of that sign "Room 107," I cringed in despair and sunk deeper into hopelessness.

One morning after the daily "Breakfast - Throw up your breakfast" routine, I



walked out of the bathroom stall with droopy eyes and dilated pupils. Washing my face in all its saggy, sick-looking horror I heard a man washing his hands in the sink next to me, addressing me in a strong tone of voice saying, "Hey kid, want some sanitizer soap?"

I turned my head in a lazy slow motion to see a short old man in a hospital gown offering me a red soap bar. He did not have a single black hair on his head but all white silver-like hairs. He had a very Albert Einstein sort of look about him: That distinct long shaggy hair and big silver mustache. With an eyebrow raised I kindly refused his offer. Refusing to end the conversation he asked, "So what do you have? You sick or just trying to skip school?" he said with a sarcastic tone.

I replied "They don't know..." with a long slow agitated tone of voice.

"Meh, I am sure you'll get better in no time," he stated as he turned off the tap and walked out of the restroom.

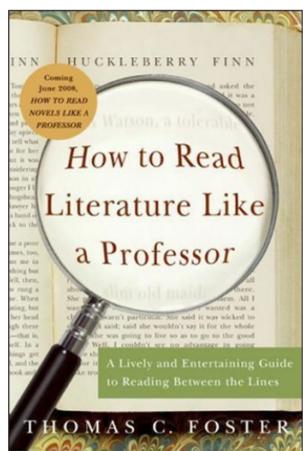
Over the next few days I decided to know more about the guy since I obviously didn't have anything better to do than being sick. He was in the room next to mine and apparently despite his age, he still liked to walk around the hospital as much as the nurses did. From the frequency of conversations he started with me I concluded one thing for sure: He was lonely. One day I walked into his room, and we talked for several hours. As it turned out, he was an ex-military man. He had a son that was out of the country due to work. Over the next month it became a daily ritual to talk for long hours at a time. We talked about everything from women to ancient literature. Funnily enough, he thought that all literature was made pretty much because of women. About two weeks into this ritual of highly intellectual random conversations, I realized I didn't know his name. Too embarrassed to ask it at this point, I jokingly called him

"Silver Mustache" and he liked it and insisted on me to keep calling him that for some reason beyond my understanding.

I got less sick with time but it wasn't easy at all. I had to literally learn to walk all over again, since I had lost all balance in my body. A foot seemed like a mile to me. As I got better I learned the true meaning of suffering to get to somewhere better than your current status. I learned not to take things for granted, as clichéd as it sounds. I learned that there's no such thing as injustice as long as you make your own rules on what justice really is. I learned that God can take everything away from you at any given second, and you can't do a damn thing about it. At first this concept scared me, but it really meant that you should make the best of everything and everyone you've got. I learned that you are not your name, you are not what you have in your pocket, you are not how much money you have in the bank, you are not what kind of car you drive or how much sport you play. You are a decaying piece of carbon with a soul; sharing that soul is the only thing that makes you different than a rock.

Finally, walking out of the hospital door I learned that death is a part of life. I learned that fact struggling with steps to the car, as I saw "Silver Mustache" being rushed back to the hospital on a stretcher, with blood running down the side of his mouth. It's been two years since Silver Mustache died. I got his son's number from a nurse that, let's just say, owed me a favor; but that's another story. I am having lunch with his son today, since he just got back from where he had gone to work. I asked his son specifically not to tell me his father's name and to always refer to him as either "dad" or the nickname, which his son quite hated. When he finally came to ask me what my own name was. I smirked and after a long silence and some thought, I finally answered, "I am Patient 107."

## Start Reading Like a Professor



read Professor Thomas C. Foster's absolutely amazing and insightful book "How To Read Literature Like A Professor"; you'll be reading literature with completely different eyes.

The main concept that Dr. Foster discusses is "intertextuality", the fact that no work or piece of literature is 100% original, that's why you have to look for patterns when reading. Intertextuality helps you understand the work you're reading more, therefore adding depth to your reading. He states that all allusions and inspirations are either Biblical, Shakespearean, from Greek or Roman mythology, or folktales. Examples include the story of creation of Adam and Eve, or Jesus Christ; Julius Caesar or Hamlet; Persephone and her pomegranate seeds, or Cinderella and Hansel and Gretel. Even if you don't know these allusions, Professor Foster explains the main ones in a very explicit way that would give you the basic knowledge; in addition there is a list of books at the end that would help you with it.

This book is one that you really won't regret reading, one where you'll have many "aha!" moments. That's why you should go and give it a try. And just keep in mind that "irony trumps everything." ]

BY DINA AL-QASSER

Have you ever wondered why Harry has a scar on his forehead, and Quasimodo is a hunchback? Why Lysander and Hermia decide to run away during the summer and not in the winter? Why the 33 year-old shepherd who is good with children ends up being injured, maybe even crucified? OK, maybe you haven't thought about that before, but you definitely should start listening to what the author is subliminally trying to tell you. Although you might enjoy a book without understanding these connections, recognizing them would make your reading far more enjoyable. And I promise it's not as boring as it seems! Well, at least if you

## Recycled from an Old Voice Article

BY DR. CAROL ROSS

I love the Spring! The sun is shining; weather is warmer. Those spring and summer fashions from the magazines will soon be all the rage at AUK. Before you get on that Catwalk, think about the appropriateness of your fashion statement. Please remember that we have a DRESS CODE. There are VOLUNTEER FASHION POLICE responsible for ensuring that students abide by the CODE! We have a CODE because not everyone can wear all the latest fashions not because you may not look good in that style made for a bean pole and you have a pear shape, but because modesty is the order of the day. Guys can wear short shorts, which actually should be against the law, but female shorts must be of appropriate length. Guys can go sleeveless even though the abundance of hair is not the most attractive look; women should cover their shoulders. Those really cute mini-skirts should not be worn without the appropriate leggings or jeans that actually make you look fatter because you are layering clothes, and who wants extra pounds when you have not even eaten in a week (that is also called an eating disorder!)? But you get my drift. Not to mention the smocks, probably dating myself by the name, but they should be worn with leggings if the smock ends right past the hips no matter how hot it is this summer! Violations can expect a shout out from the FASHION POLICEMAN who

will discuss the appropriateness of your dress. Depending upon your reaction, you may be issued a warning or a citation. Too many citations will land you in Student Conduct Court. On many levels, it just does not seem fair.

Am I kidding?! Yes and no, so...BREATHE! Yes, we do have a dress code but there are no fashion police. And for those self-appointed fashion police officers that feel compelled to speak to community members about the appropriateness of their outfit, please leave that consciousness to the individual. It is not your place to judge whether someone is appropriately dressed. And please note that you are infringing upon their rights. Do not find yourself in violation of the Code of Conduct for harassment. At the risk of sounding old fashioned and too conservative, I am simply asking that when dressing for the upcoming hot seasons, use common sense. You can still be fly, fashionable and fabulous while maintaining and respecting the values and cultures of our community. You are AUK students; you look good in anything you wear. Just wear it modestly!

GET A LIFE! IT SEEMS THAT STUDENTS ARE MISSING FROM STUDENT ACTIVITIES! DON'T LET THESE COLLEGE DAYS PASS YOU BY. GET INVOLVED; GET ACTIVE; GET A LIFE!

Have a trend-setting term!  
dcars



## 7 Tips for Student Writers

BY THE WRITING CENTER

1. Start writing early: free write, outline, map ideas, type notes, start writing at the place in your paper where you have the most information, have a conversation about your paper topic with a classmate or professor, and read as much as you can about your topic.
2. Make sure your paper is organized. Give it a clear beginning, middle, and end. Use transitions and let your reader follow your ideas.
3. Follow directions!!!! Read the assignment sheet carefully. If there is no assignment sheet, visit your professor's office hours and verify her or his expectations. Make sure your essay answers the questions, or follows the assigned tasks in the assigned format. If you don't know what these are - ASK!
4. First impressions matter: make the first page sparkle. If a reader struggles to understand your thesis, or any of your ideas because of wording, grammar, or unclear sentences, or if your readers see typos or obvious mistakes, especially on the first page, they might immediately make judgments about the entire essay. Start strong! (Of course, continue strong, and finish strong!)
5. Get feedback: go to a professor, a classmate, or the Writing Center for their responses to your writing.
6. Revise: revise from a printed out hard copy, read your work out loud to yourself, have a dictionary and your writer's handbook (don't have one? Get one!).
7. Walk in the footsteps of the masters: Read more! Look for examples of writing that you like or respect, and analyze what makes this writing good. Try to identify some of the things you notice these writers doing in their work, and try to use these techniques in your own writing. Writing is a craft. It takes practice. It is also a way of exploring ideas, and sharing what you learned with others. It is a way of building communities. It is a way of building knowledge, which is the ultimate goal of any university.

## This Is Your Life...This Is Your Lens

BY THE WRITING CENTER

Some of you have heard about this competition and want to know more. "Your Life...Your Lens" competition is an opportunity for you to showcase your video projects. Maybe you have unexpectedly captured something amazing on your phone. Maybe you like to develop your own videos. Maybe you have paintings, or photographs that you can put on a slideshow. Maybe you are a musician or a poet, and can use video to capture a performance. If any of these things apply to you—enter the competition! On April 29th, we will have an open screening where we will show all entries into the competition in the auditorium. It will give a chance for you to invite your friends to see your creation. It also puts you in running for a chance to win prizes! How do I enter the contest? The sign-up sheet is outside the Writing Center. How do I submit my video? Burn your video onto a CD or a DVD, and submit it to the Writing Center. What format should I use? We accept most formats. Test your CD or DVD in a school computer. If it plays...then we can use it! I want to enter the contest and I have video but I don't know how put it on a CD: Stop by the Writing Center, we will find someone to help you. Why would a Writing Center host a video competition? In our digital age, we have become more and more visual in our methods of communication. Putting together a video is a form of new media literacy. Good luck! Brought to you by the

**This Is Your Life... This Is Your Lens**

AUK's Graphic Design Club & The Writing Center announce a VIDEO COMPETITION

**Rules:**

1. Videos must be shorter than 2 minutes
2. Videos are due: April 19, 2012
3. Videos cannot include any copyrighted material, AUK campus, AUK logo/signage
4. ALL Videos Due On CDs or DVDs only

Sign-up by April 1, 2012 at the Writing Center A207

AUK Premiere Screening - 5pm April 29, 2012  
Red Carpet Awards Ceremony - TBA

Questions? Come to the Writing Center A207 for more information

## Sign up at the Writing Center



**It's in you  
to give!**

**Please support  
the Voice of AUK's  
Spring 2012 Blood Drive**

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**Donor beds will be  
fully segregated.**

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**Pre-donation screening  
process takes time, so  
please come early.**

**THE  
VOICE**   
**OF AUK**

**Thursday 03 May 10am-4pm  
Multipurpose Room**