

Fulfilling the Promise

LAU Campaign for Academic Excellence

Lebanese American University (LAU) is on a journey, with the destination being recognition of our University as a world-class institution. It is an ambitious undertaking, and we know we have a challenging path ahead of us.

In 2007 LAU began making major strides along this road when we began our first-ever comprehensive campaign. Over the course of this fundraising initiative we inaugurated our School of Medicine and School of Nursing, earned U.S. accreditation of our academic programs, secured millions of dollars for student financial aid, and reached our financial goal a full year ahead of schedule.

The title of that fundraising effort, “The Legacy and the Promise,” was inspirational to us. It reminded us at every turn that our alumni, students, professors, administrators and donors are part of an unbroken chain of dedicated individuals – reaching back to our founder Sarah Huntington Smith – who share a vision of what American education can mean for current and future generations of young people and what it can mean for the future of a prosperous, stable Lebanon. Our campaign title also kept us aware that we have promises to keep to those who have entrusted the University to our care.

But, “The Legacy and the Promise” has taken us only part of the way to our destination. We must now turn our efforts to consolidating the progress we’ve made and bringing a new focus to academics – the heart of any great university.

With this in mind, the University community has come together over the past two years to create a new vision for LAU. The result has been the creation and adoption of the “Strategic Plan: 2011 – 2016.” This document has become our roadmap to academic excellence. The pillars of the Strategic Plan all directly relate to building and furthering academic excellence at LAU, recognizing that this is the path to becoming a world-class institution.



FACILITIES:

GOAL: \$38,000,000

Demand for an LAU education has reached unprecedented levels in the past 10 years. Consider that in 2001 our student population was 5,572, while we began the academic year 2011 – 2012 with 8,273 students – an enrollment increase of 48% in a decade. Unfortunately, our facilities have not grown commensurately. In order to provide our students with a learning environment equal to the quality of instruction they receive, we must construct several critically important facilities.

Among the most important projects before us are the construction of a new Arts & Sciences complex on our Beirut campus and a new Library and an Engineering laboratory building on our Byblos campus.

In addition, we have set for ourselves a goal of having 70% of our professors as full-time members of our faculty. In some academic disciplines we have already reached this level, but in other schools and departments we are not yet there. Full-time faculty members require office space, and this is creating the need for renovation of existing campus facilities in order to meet this demand.

At the same time, athletic and fitness facilities are lacking on both the Beirut and Byblos campuses. Today's students rightly place high value on physical well-being, and athletics – both intercollegiate and intramural – have long been recognized as part of a well-rounded educational experience.

Below are some of the facilities-related projects we have identified as being of critical importance in "Fulfilling the Promise." We welcome the opportunity to speak to you about gifts in support of these, and other, projects. Donors will have the opportunity to make gifts that will name these buildings or name specific spaces within these facilities.

A unique opportunity is available to name the new Arts & Sciences building on the Beirut campus. We are prepared to discuss this initiative with a donor who shares our passion for this project. Opportunities are also available to name laboratories, classrooms, and performance spaces within this new facility.

The new Library to be constructed on our Byblos campus provides an unparalleled opportunity for a donor to make a difference in the lives of LAU students. An outstanding library is the heart of every campus, and a dedicated



donor can name the Byblos campus Library in return for a leadership gift. Numerous opportunities are also available to name key spaces within the Library.

The new Engineering Workshop, also situated on our Byblos Campus, will provide our students with state-of-the-art facilities and equipment. This structure is available to be named by a donor, and numerous opportunities exist for contributors to name laboratories or provide equipment.

ENDOWED CHAIRS:

GOAL: \$12,000,000

Great universities require a great professoriate. LAU is dedicated both to retaining outstanding professors who are already on campus and to recruiting professors who have distinguished themselves at other institutions. Endowed chairs are vital to building this corps of faculty members who can provide leadership in teaching and research, inspire their colleagues and change the lives of students.

Through endowments of \$2 million each, we can create endowed chair positions across the university that will greatly enhance our ability to attract scholars from around the world who have distinguished themselves at the highest level of research and teaching. The need for endowed chairs spans all disciplines at LAU, and the need is particularly acute as we look toward the creation of selected doctoral degree programs in the next few years.

Another benefit of endowed chairs is the ability they give LAU to retain top-ranked members of our faculty. We are committed to rewarding our current faculty members who are taking international leadership roles in teaching and research, and it is clearly in our best interest to do our utmost to ensure that our best professors are not lured away by competing institutions. To that end, endowed chairs provide an important reward for the best and brightest among us.

We invite visionary supporters of LAU to consider investments of \$2 million to create new endowed chairs.

Each endowed chair created with a \$2 million gift will bear the name of the donor and will be held by an outstanding scholar, teacher and researcher. The income realized through endowed chairs underwrites a portion of an individual professor's salary while also providing research funds.



STUDENT SUPPORT:

GOAL \$11,000,000

Students are the reason that LAU exists. Not only are we dedicated to providing to our students the best faculty and facilities possible, as outlined above, we also believe unequivocally that every qualified student should have access to an LAU education. To that end, we have made the commitment that ability, not ability to pay, must be the criterion by which every student applicant is judged.

In order to keep this commitment, we must continue to provide adequate levels of financial assistance to our students. We need additional merit scholarships to award to our brightest students, and we must secure more need-based scholarships to ensure that all qualified students have access to the life-changing opportunity of an American education at LAU.

Last year, from our own resources, the University made available nearly \$12 million in financial assistance to our students. Scholarship funds contributed by donors, and support provided by the U.S. government, raised the total amount of available student assistance to over \$15 million. From experience, we know that the need for student financial assistance will continue to grow.

An endowed scholarship, bearing the donor's name, can be created beginning at \$25,000. A scholarship that fully pays the tuition of an undergraduate student on an annual basis can be established for \$250,000.

We continue to need the especially generous support of our alumni and friends in this area. Scholarship donors may specify the school to which the scholarship is to be directed and have the opportunity to work with the University to set criteria that must be met by the student recipient.

RESEARCH:

GOAL: \$23,000,000

It is through research that faculty members stay current in their fields of expertise and assert themselves as leaders in their academic disciplines. Faculty research also creates opportunities for student involvement in research projects, thereby exposing undergraduates to this important aspect of higher education and preparing them for the rigors of post-graduate studies.



Senior faculty members have established themselves in their fields and, as a result, often can secure grants and other sources of external research funds. However, faculty members who are in the early stages of their careers have less chance of obtaining these forms of funding. For this reason, our promising young faculty members need access to University-based research funds in order to advance themselves professionally.

Because faculty research accrues to the benefit of our university, LAU is seeking donors who will create “seed grant” funds. These seed grants will allow young faculty members to initiate research projects and nurture those projects to the point where they can apply for larger external grants that will take their research to the next level. Opportunities exist in every school, and the areas of research are nearly unlimited.

Donors can help create research seed grants with gifts of \$10,000 or more, or with named endowments of \$200,000 and up.

Research is also integral to the University’s goal of enhancing our graduate-level programs and putting in place a selected number of doctoral degree programs. To support this enhanced level of research on campus, the University also needs to staff the newly created office of Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

The Dean’s position is a \$3 million endowment opportunity for a visionary donor.

Funds are also needed to support school-based research councils that will 1) complement the University Research Council, 2) bring coordinated oversight to research projects and 3) encourage research projects in areas where LAU is perceived to have a competitive advantage. As part of this emphasis on research, a university-wide committee is developing a Strategic Plan for Graduate Studies and Research that will, among other things, identify more opportunities for donor participation in this initiative, including graduate assistantships.

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

GOAL \$10,000,000



SPECIAL INITIATIVES:

GOAL \$6,000,000

LAU is fortunate to have extraordinary strengths in a number of curricular and extra-curricular areas. For example, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World is an international leader in promoting women's rights, while two institutes on campus have outstanding credentials in the areas of conflict resolution, mediation, and peace studies. We also reach out into the broader community through our creative and performing arts programs, as well as through our Model United Nations and Model Arab League initiatives – just to name a few examples.

Our Strategic Plan 2011 – 2016 recognizes these strengths and calls for us to further build on these programs, in order that we can not only serve our students but also form bonds with those who live around us in Beirut, Byblos, as well as in all of Lebanon and the region. Specifically, we have set the following goals:

Gender Studies

Drawing on the renown and resources of our Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World, we are in the process of integrating gender-related studies across our undergraduate curriculum, as well as instituting a Master's Degree in Gender Studies. These two initiatives will firmly secure LAU's standing at the forefront of this important field and identify us as the leader in women's rights and gender equality across the Middle East.

We would welcome donor support for an annual university-wide conference on gender studies, a guest speaker series, and research funds. Endowments and annual support are needed.

Green Curriculum

Water shortages, desertification, and overall environmental sustainability are matters of critical importance in this region of the world. Several schools within the University offer courses addressing these, and other, environmental issues. Building on these courses, our vision is to integrate a "green curriculum" across the University, leading to complementary courses, coordinated research, and a new degree in Environmental Studies. Closely linked to this initiative is our desire to create a "green campus" featuring state-of-the-art designs that ensure environmental sustainability of our buildings.

Donors with a passion for preservation of the environment have opportunities to provide scholarship support for outstanding students, either as permanent



endowments or annual support. We also need endowed chairs and faculty support in the form of research funds.

Peace Building

Eleanor Roosevelt once said, *“It isn’t enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn’t enough to believe in it. One must work at it.”* LAU is fortunate to have two dynamic, regionally recognized institutes that are promoting peace: the Institute for Peace and Justice Education and the Institute for Diplomacy and Conflict Transformation. The university’s Strategic Plan calls for us to capitalize on our leadership role in this field. Our vision includes a graduate-level program, the integration of conflict resolution courses across the undergraduate curriculum, international student exchange opportunities, and faculty/student research initiatives.

Donor support is needed to support practical, hands-on programs in this field, as well as to provide research funds and scholarship support for degree-seeking students.

Community Outreach

Unique to LAU is the Office of Civic Engagement. Created less than two years ago, this office is already engaging more than 800 students in community outreach programs, and that number continues to grow rapidly. OCE’s crown jewels are the Model United Nations program and the Model Arab League programs, both of which involve many of our students and bring hundreds of Lebanese high school students to campus.

We also have more than a dozen active centers and institutes on campus that each year offer programs, conferences and lectures on a broad range of topics that draw both local and international participation and give LAU visibility far beyond our campus gates.

LAU also touches the community through our creative and performing arts programs. Each academic year, on-campus performances and exhibitions attract hundreds of our Beirut and Byblos neighbors. However, of particular concern to us are the absence of facilities for such disciplines as dance, and the deterioration of existing performance venues. Plans exist for modern facilities in the new School of Arts and Sciences building, but in the meantime our creative and performing arts programs need additional financial support.

Important endowment opportunities exist for donors who wish to support a particular institute or center, underwrite our program in the arts, sponsor annual



exhibitions and performances, or provide funds that will allow OCE to expand its outreach programs.

CONCLUSION

The incredible growth in students and academic programs that LAU has experienced over the past decade has created both enviable institutional momentum and urgent campus challenges. Over the next few years we must seize this momentum and use it to help us address the challenges confronting us. Our success in meeting these challenges will be determined in great part by our ability to inspire our alumni and friends to share our vision of LAU's future and to become active partners in turning possibilities into realities.

As is apparent to those who have read this Case Statement, among our most critical needs is space to house our growing programs, and resources that will enable our faculty to help take us to world-class status. Along the way we must also have more scholarship assistance available to our students, more research funds, and more financial support for new programs and projects. Today there are opportunities for donors of all means to make a difference at LAU. Leadership gifts are of critical importance as we reach for our \$100 million goal, but we celebrate every gift as an endorsement of our mission and a confirmation of our goals.

We invite you to consider how you can make your own personal difference at LAU and to join us in Fulfilling the Promise.