

Gulf Trip Celebrates BU Excellence

Graduates from six nations inaugurate BU Alumni Association of the Gulf Cooperation Council



At the gala, (from left) René Beil (SHA'97, MET'04), President Robert A. Brown, and Khaled Jaouni (ENG'95).

PHOTOGRAPHS BY FELIX WILSON

BOSTON UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT Robert A. Brown and his wife, Beverly Brown, led an executive delegation to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in January, celebrating the accomplishments of BU's alumni, parents, and friends in the region.

The first leg of the trip was Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where the BU delegation was hosted by BU Trustee Sheikh Bahaa Hariri

THE DELEGATION FROM BOSTON UNIVERSITY MET WITH ALUMNI, PARENTS, AND FRIENDS.

(SMG'89). The group visited leading universities and met with BU parents, alumni, and key government officials. The executive delegation then traveled to Dubai, to attend Celebrating Excellence: Boston University and the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council). During the two-day event, a gala dinner celebration, on January 16, drew more than 200 alumni to the Burj Al Arab, the hotel that sponsored the event.

"Boston University has amazingly distinguished alumni worldwide," says Brown. "We are working to enhance our network with alumni and strengthen their ties to the University. The alumni events in Dubai in January were part of our ongoing efforts to network our alumni through events and renewed energy in local alumni clubs. The events brought together alumni from all over the Middle East

and demonstrated the truly global reach of the University."

The delegation, which also visited the new Boston University Dental Health Center in Dubai, included Robert A. Knox (CAS'74, GSM'75), chair of BU's Board of Trustees; Ed Fuller (SMG'68), a member

of the BU Board of Overseers; David Hollowell (ENG'69,'72, GSM'74), president-elect of the BU Alumni Association; Scott Nichols, BU vice president for development and alumni relations; Steve Hall, BU associate vice president for alumni relations; Jeffrey Hutter, dean of the Goldman School of Dental Medicine; Farouk El-Baz, a BU research professor and director of the University's Center for Remote Sensing; and William Straughn (GSM'98), senior international development officer.

Knox, who is chair and CEO of Cornerstone Equity Investors, moderated a January 17 business forum of alumni who are recognized leaders in their fields: Basim Al Saie (ENG'88), managing director of Installux Gulf, Bahrain; Fuller, president and managing director of Marriot International USA; Khaled Jaouni (ENG'95), a partner at Ithmar Capital, Dubai; Tasneem Mayet (CAS'94), senior vice president of FORSA, Dubai; and Salaam Al Shaksy (CAS'85, GSM'91,'92),

CEO of Dubai Banking Group. There was also a time for networking and reconnecting with friends and a talk by Brown about BU's plans in the region and around the world.

In addition, BU alumni from the six nations that share Arabian Gulf coastline — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates — came together to officially inaugurate the BU Alumni Association of the GCC.

"The alumni gathering in Dubai, representing well over 200 guests from twenty different countries, showcased the important work our graduates are doing and connected our alumni with each other," says Nichols. "Our future prospects for stronger connections in the Middle East, as well as elsewhere, are bright indeed."

"We owe a token of gratitude to the Boston University leadership team for flying halfway across the world just to be with us and to help inaugurate the official launch of the GCC BU Alumni Association," says René Beil (SHA'97, MET'04), vice president for asset management with Dubai Investment Group and vice president of the association. "This level of support for international alumni is unparalleled at any institution and clearly demonstrates the level of commitment of BU to this region."

Jaouni, the association's president, agrees. "This event was a launch pad for a much more active alumni community in the region," he says.

To see photos of the event or to learn more, visit www.bu.edu/gcc, or write to gcc@bu.edu. CKB



Robert Knox (CAS'74, GSM'75) (far left) with Ed Fuller (SMG'68) and Faisal Belhoul (ENG'02).