



AUBMC Special Kids Clinic (ASKC)

Meet the Staff

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PHYSICIANS



ROSE-MARY BOUSTANY, MD

PROFESSOR OF PEDIATRICS AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE,
BIOCHEMISTRY AND MOLECULAR BIOLOGY
DIRECTOR OF THE NEUROGENETICS PROGRAM
DIVISION CHIEF, PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY

Dr. Rose-Mary Boustany is a Professor of Pediatrics and Neurobiology at Duke University. She is the recipient of a Merck Award in Neurosciences in 1992, a Klingenstein Award in 1993, the Raymond D. Adams Lectureship and Award for 2006, a Dubai Harvard Foundation For Medical Research Award in 2008, and the Sidney Carter Award in Pediatric Neurology for 2012.

Dr. Boustany is a pediatric neurologist and geneticist. Her research career has focused on the identification of genetic defects in the neuronal ceroid lipofuscinoses (NCL) and other neurodegenerative and neurodevelopmental disorders. She has uncovered the normal function of NCL genes in neuronal survival, apoptosis, the cancerous phenotype and sphingolipid metabolism. The goal of her research has always been the identification of novel therapies for treatment of these forgotten illnesses. Her work has resulted in three patent applications, two of which have resulted in therapeutic options for the NCLs. Two of these patents have already been issued. Between 2006 and 2009, she was director of the Abu-Haidar Neuroscience Institute, established the first inpatient psychiatry unit at AUBMC, and introduced permanent child psychology, child psychiatry and psychometric services.

More recent interests include the identification of Lebanese Autism Susceptibility genes, and validation of CLN3 overexpression as a biomarker for cancer and as a novel therapeutic target.

Her work with autistic children and premature babies made her acutely aware of the importance of speedy diagnosis and applied early interventions on ultimate physical and cognitive outcomes. Specialized physical, occupational, speech, psychomotor and feeding therapies applied in a multidisciplinary approach have greatly enhanced prognosis for dually disabled kids.

Dr. Boustany is dedicated to the diagnosis, care and long-term treatment of special needs children, particularly those with dual disabilities. She was elected to the Society for Pediatric Research in 1994, the American Neurological Association in 1999, and the American Pediatric Society in 2006. She has served as reviewer for the intramural NIH/NINDS programs on the Developmental and Metabolic Diseases Branch, Clinical Biochemistry, Brain Diseases and Child Neurology as well as reviewer for the Alzheimer Disease Association, the Food and Drug Administration and the Boroughs Welcome Trust. She has authored and coauthored numerous papers, chapters and reviews and co-edited a book entitled Apoptosis in Neurobiology. She is Associate Editor of Annals of Neurology and serves on the Advisory Board of the Batten Disease Support and Research Organization.



OMAR DABBAGH, MD
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR IN PEDIATRICS
AND ADOLESCENT MEDICINE

Dr. Omar Dabbagh graduated from Medical School at the American University of Beirut, after which he completed his Pediatric Training at Georgetown University. He specialized in Pediatric Neurology with Ken Swaiman at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Dr. Dabbagh subsequently took a position at Wayne State University in Detroit before moving to King Faisal Hospital in Riyadh, where he became the Head of Division and Director of the Pediatric Neurology Program. In 2005, he moved back to the US and served as Pediatric Neurologist and Associate Professor with A.I. duPont Medical Center and Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia. He joined AUBMC at the end of 2008.

At all these institutions, Dr. Dabbagh played a major role in pediatric neurology education and organization. Dr. Dabbagh has expansive interests in pediatric neurology and has published widely on epilepsy, neonatal neurology, metabolic disorders and encephalopathies, neurogenetic disorders and other topics.

He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Neurology and an active member of the International Child Neurological Association and the Child Neurology Society, the Epilepsy Society and the Society for Inherited Metabolic Disorders.

He is a reviewer for the Saudi Medical Journal and the Annals of Saudi Medicine. He has lectured on topics of interest both in international and national venues. He has contributed to clinical trials on topiramate and is involved in other epilepsy research as well as research into familial spastic paraparesis, and NCL research.



MONA KRAYEM, BS
CHILD AND ADULT SPEECH THERAPIST

Ms. Mona Krayem is currently the Speech and Language Pathologist at the Special Kids Clinic at the American University of Beirut Medical Center.

Ms. Krayem graduated in 1993 from the Department of Speech and Language Pathology, Faculty of Medicine Paris VI (France) and achieved a post-graduate diploma in Neuropsychology at the Faculty of Medicine Caen (France).

In addition to her experience in the private sector with patients of all age groups suffering from communication, speech, language, voice and neuropsychological disorders in Paris and Beirut, Ms. Krayem has practiced in several hospitals in Lebanon (Hôtel Dieu and Rizk Hospital), Europe (Pitié Salpêtrière and Sainte Perrine Hospital in Paris) and the USA (Jackson Memorial Hospital – Miami/Florida).

She was an active founder of speech therapy departments in both Saint Joseph University and the Lebanese University. She was formerly Instructor of Neuropsychological Disorders in the Speech Therapy Department at Saint Joseph University, and currently is Instructor of Neuroaphasia and Coordinator of the Speech Therapy Care Center at the Faculty of Public Health in the Lebanese University.

Ms. Krayem is a founding member of the Association Libanaise des Orthophonistes (ALO), the Lebanese Speech Therapy Association.



RAMIA NASRALLAH, BS
FEEDING SPECIALIST

Mrs. Ramia Nasrallah received her degree in Speech Therapy from the Lebanese University in 1999. She presently teaches several courses there, supervising 4th year students and assisting them with proposals related to children with special needs.

Mrs. Nasrallah coordinates a team of speech and psychomotor therapists, psychologists, and social workers at the Care Center and conducts workshops for teachers and parents. She has over 12 years of experience in working with special needs infants and toddlers, providing assessments, rehabilitation and parental support for children with neurological disorders, cerebral palsy, autism, mental retardation, metabolic disorders, speech and language delay, and feeding and swallowing difficulties.

She has worked with the SOS Children's Villages, Bhanness Hospital, Ghassan Kanafani Rehabilitation School, and rehabilitation centers in Syria and Kuwait. She has participated in local and international congresses, trainings, and workshops.



ELIAS SALAME, BS
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

Mr. Elias Salame is the current occupational therapist at the Special Kids Clinic at the American University of Beirut Medical Center. He received his Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy from the Lebanese University in 2004.

Immediately after graduation, Mr. Salame traveled to Kuwait, where he worked with children and teenagers who suffered from diverse disorders, such as autism, mental retardation, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, learning difficulties, ADHD, and other neurological disorders.

In 2008, he became a sensory integration certified therapist, after completing the USC/WPS (University of Southern California/Western Psychological Services) comprehensive program in Sensory Integration.

He joined AUBMC in December 2011 after his return to Lebanon. Mr. Salame is a member of the Lebanese Occupational Therapy Association.



SAHAR SALIBA, BS
PSYCHOMOTOR THERAPIST

Ms. Sahar Saliba is currently the Psychomotor Therapist at the Special Kids Clinic at the American University of Beirut Medical Center. She received her BS in Psychomotor Therapy from Saint Joseph University in 2005, and her BS in Psychology from the Lebanese University in 2007.

Ms. Saliba has completed several internships in Lebanon and France. She has worked for four years with toddlers at the SESOBEL nursery in the Mental and Physical Handicaps Unit. She then traveled to Kuwait and worked for two years at the Learning Difficulties Division of Al-Nibras International Bilingual School. She joined AUBMC in December 2011.

She is a member of the Lebanese Association of Psychomotor Therapists and founding member of the Association for the Alumni of the USJ Psychomotor Therapy Institute. She is presently also instructor and training supervisor at the Lebanese University in the Psychomotor Department.



NORMA TABET BOU KHALIL
PHYSICAL THERAPIST

Ms. Norma Tabet Bou Khalil is currently a physical therapist at the AUBMC Special Kids Clinic. She received her Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy from Saint Joseph University, Faculty of Medicine in 1999.

Ms. Bou Khalil passed the colloquium exam in 1999 and joined the Lebanese Order of Physical Therapists. Following graduation, she worked in the Physical Therapy Department at AUBMC as physical therapist until 2004. Between 2004 and 2006, she worked at SESOBEL with kids with special needs.

In 2002, she was part of a multidisciplinary team that worked on building a program targeting the prevention of deformities of the vertebral column and back pain in childhood (a project in collaboration with UNESCO and the Physical Therapy Association of Adma) and gave lectures in different schools to students, teachers and parents. For the past 12 years, she has been working with kids with special needs and physical disabilities in both institutional and private practice settings.



HALA MAACARON, BA, MBA
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Ms. Hala Maacaron is the executive assistant at the Special Kids Clinic and the Neurogenetics Program at the American University of Beirut Medical Center.

Ms. Maacaron received her bachelor's degree in business administration from the Université Saint Esprit - Kaslik, followed by a master's degree in business administration at the same university in 1994. Ms. Maacaron has extensive work experience in the fields of banking, telecommunications and office management, and has been in an academic medical environment at AUBMC for the past six years.



LAUDY MASSAAD, RN, BS
NURSE

Ms. Laudy Massaad graduated from Saint Joseph University with a BS in nursing. She started out as a Nursery Intensive Care Unit RN at AUBMC, where she stayed for 10 years.

Ms. Massaad then spent three years in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit, prior to moving to Ambulatory Pediatrics. She recently joined the Pediatric Neurology/Special Kids Clinic team. Ms. Massaad's vast experience as a pediatric nurse and her sunny and cheerful outlook on life will enhance everyone's experience at the ASKC.



FRIDA ARAMAN, TS
CLINICAL ASSISTANT

Mrs. Frida Araman spent six years as a clinical assistant in the Department of Psychiatry at AUBMC.

Prior to that, Mrs. Araman managed a small, family-owned business after spending six years as an executive assistant at an advertising and printing services company. She began her career as an English teacher to children from grade 1-5, making her ideally suited to be working in a kid-dominated environment.



