

# NKBCI

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# NEWSLETTER

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Our lives are dedicated to yours



## AMALOUNA and LBCF Participate in Beirut Marathon 2016

On November 13, 2016, people gathered to run the annual Beirut Marathon for different causes. For the third consecutive year, AMALOUNA, an AUB-affiliated educational organization, and the Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation (LBCF), in collaboration with Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) ran for their cause to raise awareness about cancer prevention, education, and research. AMALOUNA, LBCF, and NKBCI have been embarking on ongoing journeys to try and prevent cancer, raise awareness about the disease, empower cancer research in Lebanon, and reduce the burden of cancer in both Lebanon and the region.

More than 400 supporters ran not only for the purpose of spreading awareness about cancer but also to highlight the effectiveness of running as a low-cost and safe alternative to prevent cancer itself. Hence, the Beirut Marathon Association provided us with the opportunity to spread hope to our society as well as encourage fitness and exercise.

This year, runners mainly AUB students, alumni, and faculty along with students from several Lebanese schools and private institutions, ran to challenge and fight cancer, thus encouraging people to be survivors rather than victims. Supporters ran with the mindset that cancer is not to be feared; instead, they advocated optimism as a key in fighting and curing it.

"Cancer may have started the fight, but we will finish it" was one of the many slogans runners advocated. Therefore, to spread cancer awareness, our goals revolve around investing in what causes miracles to happen.



# Council for Scientific Research Award

To recognize scientists who have excelled in conducting research in different scientific disciplines in Lebanon and as part of its policy to reinforce scientific research and innovation across the country and the region, the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS) established an annual award for research excellence in many different disciplines. On November 24, 2016 at the Grand Serail in Downtown Beirut, the sixth edition award was presented to seven distinguished individuals, including our very own, Dr. Ali Taher for his fundamental contribution in the field of Hematology & Oncology and in improving patients' quality of life.



# Another Generous Donation by LBCF and the Breast Center of Excellence at AUBMC

The Lebanese Breast Cancer Foundation (LBCF), in partnership with the Breast Center of Excellence at the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute, donated a sum of 268.054.000 Lebanese Pounds to cover the costs of mammography, imaging, radiation therapy, surgery and chemotherapy administration of breast cancer patients in dire need and who are treated at AUBMC. The check was presented in the presence of Executive VP for Medicine and Global Strategy and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine Dr. Mohamed H. Sayegh and AUBMC Medical Center Director and Chief Medical Officer and the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute Breast Center of Excellence (NKBCI) Medical Director, Dr. Hassan El-Solh in addition to the NKBCI faculty.



President of LBCF and Director of Breast Center of Excellence at NKBCI, AUBMC, Dr. Nagi El-Saghir, said that LBCF and NKBCI annually organize awareness and early detection campaigns during the month of October in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. They also extend their efforts throughout the year by holding lectures and meetings all over Lebanon. "In 2016, we went to Tripoli, Baalbeck, Sin-El-Fil, Achrafieh, Saida, Aley and many other places and schools. We also organized fundraising movie premieres and brunches and arranged for several agreements with various companies and stores to donate a percentage of their profits and sales to help breast cancer patients. We had donations from Al-Waleed Bin Talal Foundation, Nestle, ABC, City Mall, Chateau Musar, Virgin, GS, Malia group, Kairouz Bakeries as well as many individuals from our clinics and at our fundraising events. Other companies donated smaller amounts and we have them listed on LBCF website," Dr. El Saghir explained.

Donations are allotted through the Social Service Department and the Needy Breast Cancer Fund at AUBMC. The 268, 054, 000 Lebanese Pounds were donated and dispensed in 2016. Since 2013, LBCF has actively supported more than 1100 breast cancer patients by covering their diagnosis, surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy at AUBMC with a total amount of \$468.889.00 (USD). Fifty two percent of these patients were young mothers below age 50, and more than half of them lived with less than LBP 750,000 per month. Thanks to the dedication of LBCF volunteers and the generosity of donors, patients are treated with dignity and many of them are cured.

In addition, LBCF and NKBCI Breast Center of Excellence provide free natural wigs for all cancer patients on chemotherapy, as well as psychological support group sessions for breast cancer patients.

Breast cancer is a major health issue in Lebanon and the Middle East. NKBCI has been leading the way in advancing cancer therapy with ground-breaking research, continuing medical education for physicians and healthcare providers. The collaboration between NKBCI and LBCF is making a great positive impact advocating for patients' rights and well-being, supporting underprivileged cancer patients in their treatment, and raising awareness within the Lebanese community.

On behalf of AUBMC, Dr. Mohamad Sayegh and Dr. Hassan El-Solh thanked the LBCF for the donation acknowledging the work of Dr. El Saghir, Vice-president of LBCF Ms. Mirna Hoballah and all the volunteers for their superb efforts in delivering better care to patients with breast cancer. They emphasized that AUBMC's vision is to provide support for all patients irrespective of their financial resources, and that they will continue to make sure that AUBMC physicians are heavily and positively involved in community service and health awareness.

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# Movember and Men's Health

The month of November is dedicated to raising awareness on men's health issues and the importance of early screening and regular checkups for early detection. A legitimate movement for men's health has been a global act worldwide under the title of "Movember", a ritual, whereby men around the world shave their beards but keep their moustaches throughout the month of November.

To raise much needed awareness on key men's health issues such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer and other men's health issues and prompt them to take the necessary steps that would protect them from diseases, the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute at the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) in collaboration with the Harley Owners Group (HOG), Lebanon Chapter organized "Beards on Wheels" event on November 27, 2016.

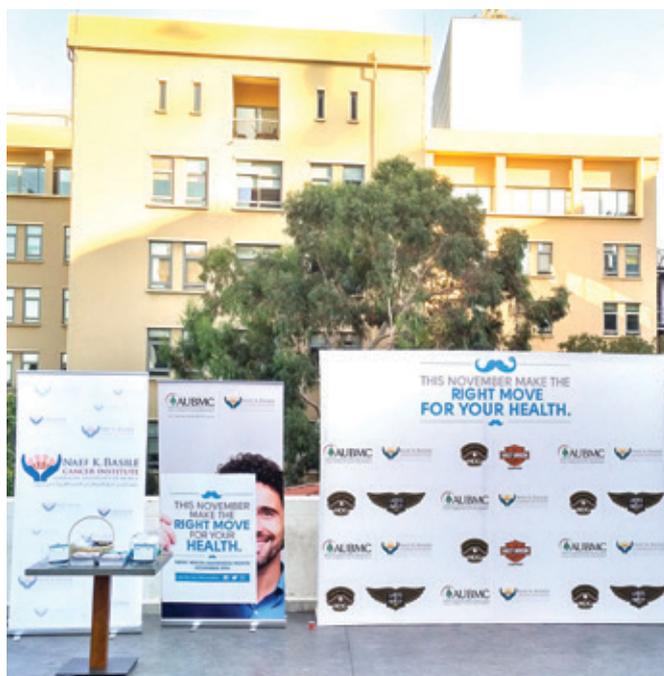
The Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI), founded in 2007, is a center of excellence committed through its multidisciplinary specialized team to providing world class services for adults - above 18 years of age. Dr. Ali Taher, Professor of Medicine and Associate Chair of Research, Division of Hematology/ Oncology, Deputy Director of Research and Academic Activities at Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute briefed the attendees on the ongoing cancer campaign since 2015 and said, "Since initiation of our campaign in 2015, we have held several educational and awareness sessions in different areas of Lebanon including malls, universities, and municipalities. Our event here today is part of our initiation of fundraising activities to help support adult cancer needy patients."

The event which extended over a period of three hours at the Saab Medical Library included several activities and was a great success. Dr. Mohamad Bulbul, Clinical Professor of Surgery -Department of Urology at AUBMC gave a presentation on prostate cancer at Issam Fares Lecture Hall where several Urology residents and faculty presented a short video about the topic as well. Other activities included a professional dabke show and a Jump Start Rider Experience along with several other games. The event was concluded with a prize for the most creative moustache.

Assistant Professor of Medical Oncology, Dr. Deborah Mukherji welcomed the attendees to the first- of-its-kind AUBMC Movember Men's Health Awareness Event to be held in collaboration with the Harley Davidson Club of Lebanon and praised such campaigns for prompting men to check their health regularly

HOG Lebanon Chapter Director, Mr. Roger Chahine, indicated that he is proud to be part of this activity and looks forward for future collaboration between HOG and AUBMC.

Ms. Rania Hashash, Ladies of Harley officer, added and welcomed the attendees in her turn and stressed on the importance of having health checkups for early detection of any lurking disease before spreading. "I remember a time when people were afraid of even mentioning the word cancer. Thanks to awareness campaigns, people now are more mindful of such diseases. Every family should encourage its men to screen before it's too late," Ms. Hashash concluded.





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## NKBCI Holds Its Annual Staff Dinner 2016

The NKBCI annual dinner is always the best time of the year for faculty and staff to celebrate their achievements. Held on December 18, 2016 at Mosaic Restaurant – Phoenicia Hotel, Beirut, we had the chance to honor - Mr. Ahmad Abbass, Orderly - one of NKBCI's dedicated staff who has served AUBMC for over 40 years before retiring in 2016. Attendees enjoyed the entertainment and the food served during dinner.



## Proceeds of Book Signing to Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute

Under the patronage of Mrs. Randa Berri and in the presence of faculty members from the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute, and other medical, political, cultural, and social parties, Ms. Manana signed her book, entitled "Wa Bi Amal" – I have Hope, with proceeds back to the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI). Ms. Mirna Manana is a breast cancer survivor who was treated at NKBCI at AUBMC. She believes that her hope has always helped her get over the difficulties and pain every cancer patient passes through. Mrs. Manana wanted to express all her feelings, emotions, and hope through writing her first book.

During the ceremony, Dr. Arafat Tfayli, Professor of Hematology Oncology at NKBCI and Mrs. Manana's treating physician at AUBMC, stressed on the importance of cooperation between governments, civil society, and health institutions in the fight against cancer and praised Mrs. Manana for her initiative.

In her speech, Mrs. Manana thanked Mrs. Berry for her sponsorship of the book signing and discussed the content of the book and the reasons behind her write up. She indicated that she is neither a writer nor a poet and that the purpose behind this book was to contribute and support NKBCI in a creative way.

In turn, Mrs. Berry gave a speech emphasizing the importance of resisting any challenge to the human health and the environment and in any aspect of life holding the weapon of hope, faith, science, awareness, and patience.

Mrs. Manana then presented the cheque with the proceeds of her book to NKBCI Director, Dr. Hassan El Solh in a small ceremony at AUBMC. Dr. El Solh thanked her on behalf of all faculty and staff at NKBCI and AUBMC administration for her initiative and for being a model for many cancer patients.





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## Radiation Oncology Day

Under the leadership of Dr. Fady Geara, Chairman, the Department of Radiation Oncology at AUBMC celebrated its first Annual Radiation Oncology and Medical Physics Day on Wednesday, November 2, 2016 under the theme "Radiating Hope for a Healthy Tomorrow". This celebration, to be scheduled during the month of November every year, will commemorate the anniversary of the x-ray's discovery by Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen on Nov. 8, 1895 and honor Marie Sklodowska-Curie, born in Poland on November 7, 1867, who is known for her pioneering research on radioactivity.

The events for the day included an open house and a tour for AUBMC staff in the Department of Radiation Oncology. It also set a photo booth for Radiation Oncology patients and organized a special entertainment show for the NKBCI inpatients on the AUBMC 8<sup>th</sup> floor. The show was held by radiation oncology staff and star, Mr. Wissam Kiwan. Patients and staff were very touched by the event, and they enjoyed this very special and memorable day.



## Visit of UPP students at AUB to NKBCI

To expose students to cutting edge research occurring at AUB, the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) welcomed a group of twenty four students in its premises and answered most of their questions related to cancer prevention and treatments.

As part of its tradition, AUB provides students registered in the University Preparatory Program and namely in the UPSC (English for Science) course with in-depth information, about cancer including overview, types, causes, symptoms, prevention, and currently available treatments. The initiative (or program) helps students broaden their perspectives towards how they can make an impact in their communities irrespective of the career path they will choose as they step into their undergraduate studies. Students who visited the Institute were introduced to devices and clinical research occurring at AUBMC.

Specialized faculty from the NKBCI included Drs. Ali Shamseddine, Arafat Tfayli, and Hazem Assi.



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