

# News

## Lecture on “Political Progress of Women: Breaking Traditional Barriers”

The Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University (IWSAW-LAU) in cooperation with the Embassy of the United States of America hosted on Tuesday, December 1, 2009, H.E. Ambassador Swanee Hunt who gave a lecture titled “Political Progress of Women: Breaking Traditional Barriers”.

The talk focused on the participation of women in politics in different countries around the world and in the United States, highlighting similarities and differences. Hunt underscored the fact that to this day women are still underrepresented in governments worldwide. Hunt explained that the need to have more women as politicians stems from the fact that, when in politics, women bring significant changes to women’s rights. In addition, she emphasized that research has shown that countries where women are present in politics experience lower levels of corruption and bribery, as well as economic welfare due to renewed public trust in the government. According to her, the main reason why women lag behind in politics is that women themselves are reluctant to run for office because they view politics as a “dirty game” and women tend to often undermine their leadership capacities. At the same time, the many roles society expects women to play, the stereotypes, political party gatekeepers, and lack of resources, are among the other barriers that continue to block women’s attempts to become political leaders.

## Seminar on: “Literary Readings in the Holy Bible and the Qur’an”

On the occasion of ‘Beirut’s designation as the World Book Capital for 2009’, the Institute for Women’s Studies in the Arab World at the Lebanese American University, and the Association of Lebanese Researchers, in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture, organized a seminar on December 3, 2009 entitled: “Literary Readings in the Holy Bible and the Qur’an”.

The opening ceremony was under the patronage and presence of H.E. Salim Wardeh, Minister of Culture. Researchers and experts in the field of religious and cultural studies, affiliated to prominent local universities and institutions, participated in the seminar.



From left to right: Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, IWSAW Director, H.E. Salim Wardeh, Minister of Culture, Dr. Joseph Jabbra, LAU president, & Dr. Hosn Abboud.

## International Women's Day: Signing the Memorandum of Understanding & Launching the "Who Is She" online Database

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW-LAU) held a ceremony on March 2, 2010 to launch the "Who Is She" in Lebanon online database. The database is a collaborative project between IWSAW and the Danish Centre for Information on Women and Gender (KVINFO).

The ceremony also included the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between LAU and the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW).

The evening ended with a short film of young Lebanese citizens being asked about some of Lebanon's most influential women. Although the short film was light-hearted, the message was serious: Lebanon's pioneering women are absent from the country's consciousness.

The First Lady of the Lebanese Republic, Mrs. Wafa Michel Suleiman, was the guest of honor for this year and she was offered an LAU shield by Dr. Joseph Jabbra, LAU president, in recognition of her efforts to empower women in Lebanon.

Ministers, deputies, ambassadors, representatives from the Internal Security Forces and the Lebanese Army, prominent Lebanese women, as well as representatives from different NGO's attended the ceremony.



Dr. Joseph Jabbra, LAU president and Dr. Dima Dabbous-Sensenig, IWSAW Director, handing the LAU shield to First Lady Mrs. Wafa Michel Suleiman.



Maitre Fadi Karam and Dr. Joseph Jabbra signing the Memorandum of Understanding between LAU and NCLW.



## About Who Is She in Lebanon Online Database

The Who Is She in Lebanon online database is a project that started in 2008 following a bilateral partnership between the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University (LAU), and the Danish Centre for Information on Women and Gender (KVINFO), a grant-maintained selfgoverning institution under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture in Denmark.

The aim behind this project is to establish a user-friendly online database that provides access to biographical information on leading and noteworthy contemporary Lebanese women from a range of areas of expertise, including opinion leaders, senior managers, politicians, professionals, artists, and researchers.

IWSAW aims to make the Who Is She in Lebanon online database as comprehensive as possible by being thoroughly representative of the achievements of women in Lebanon. At the same time, the database will be duly selective to reflect a high level of achievement by every woman listed, depending on her field of expertise.

## Accessing the Who Is She in Lebanon Online Database

The Who Is She in Lebanon online database can be accessed from anywhere in the world at: <http://whoisshe.lau.edu.lb>

## Using the Who Is She in Lebanon Online Database

You can browse the online database by typing the name of an expert in the search box, and then click on "search" to reveal a list of results. To view the profile of a listed expert, simply double click on her name.

The image shows a sample web profile for Leila Serhan. The profile is titled "Who Is She in Lebanon?" and includes a header with the LAU logo and the IWSAW logo. The profile is divided into several sections: Personal information (Title: General Manager), Contact information (work) (Organization/Institution: Microsoft Lebanon and Emerging Markets, Phone: 961 1 983344 ext. 321 & 323, Fax: 961 1 983349, Mobile phone: 961 3 772201, Work email address: Leila.Serhan@microsoft.com), Education (Bachelor degree, Business Administration, 1996, American University of Beirut, Lebanon), Areas of Expertise (Information and Communication Technologies, Gender, Corporate Social Responsibility), Languages (French, English, Arabic), Work history (General Manager, 2009 - present, Microsoft Lebanon and Emerging Markets; Regional Business Manager, 2007-2009, Microsoft North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and Pakistan; Small & Medium Enterprises Manager, 2006 - 2007, Microsoft Eastern Mediterranean and Pakistan; Marketing Director, 2002 - 2006, Microsoft Eastern Mediterranean and Pakistan; Finance Manager, 1996 - 2002, LibanCell S.A.L.), and Honorary office and memberships (Vice President of Women in IT, 2010 - present; Active Member in Women in IT, 2007 - 2010). There is also a photo of Leila Serhan and a list of tags: Company, Manager, Vice President, Business, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Marketing.

Sample web profile from Who is She database.

If the search does not lead to any results, or to the information you want, you can proceed using one of three other alternative search modes:

1. Guided Search: To view the names of all the experts in the database.
2. Keyword Search: To search names in specific fields of expertise, professions, or organizations.
3. Alphabetic Search: To browse names of experts in alphabetical order.

## Staying informed: Browsing Recently Added Profiles

To the right side of the home page of the Who Is She in Lebanon online database, users can directly view and browse the most recently added profiles.