Message from the President

Dear Friends of LAU,

Last year was a watershed year for us, as we completed our first five-year strategic plan and received accreditation from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). This year we have moved quickly to consolidate and build on this success. From its earliest roots in 1835 as the “first edifice built as a school for girls in the Turkish Empire” to its current status as one of the region’s preeminent academic institutions, LAU has always been known for boldly breaking new ground. That said, this is palpably a new era for the university.

In March of this year, the Board of Trustees approved the university’s new strategic plan for 2011-2016. This new five-year plan is dedicated to taking LAU to the next level of academic excellence. It emphasizes integrated university planning, and was designed with input from a large number of participants representing LAU faculty, staff, students, and administrators, reflecting the culture of inclusiveness for which we have been repeatedly praised by visiting accreditation committees. The years of preparation for NEASC accreditation rigorously refined our self-review processes. Moreover, the newly established Institutional Research and Assessment Office and the Center for Program and Learning Assessment will be central to the new strategic plan’s goal of raising LAU to new academic heights.

I am also pleased to report progress on other academic fronts. After receiving a glowing initial review last year from a visiting ABET team, all five bachelor’s degree programs in the School of Engineering (Civil, Computer, Electrical, Industrial and Mechanical) this year received full ABET accreditation, as did our computer science program in the School of Arts and Sciences. Other professional programs have initiated the accreditation process while still others have been reaccredited. We have just welcomed new deans to the schools of Business and Arts & Sciences, and continue to recruit top-notch full-time faculty for our rising schools of Medicine and Nursing, as well as for our LAU-affiliated University Medical Center—Rizk Hospital.
Even as we strengthen our reputation for academic excellence, we have renewed and redoubled our commitment to community — at the local, national, and regional level. We have established several major new programs providing full scholarships to hundreds of brilliant but economically disadvantaged students — from Lebanon’s rural regions as well as its refugee camps, and from numerous countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Guided by the canons of social consciousness and merit, our university is open to all, regardless of means. We are proud of our strong commitment to promoting civic leadership and genuine citizenship outside the classroom, indeed beyond the campus walls.

Our financial base remains strong. Our first comprehensive five-year comprehensive campaign, the Legacy and the Promise, has met its goal of $65 million, indeed one year ahead of time. We continue to improve and expand our infrastructure on both campuses, with renovation of existing buildings as well as planning of multi-million-dollar, visionary new constructions.

This is a time to take stock of our success, extend our gratitude to all those who made it possible, and then put our shoulders to the wheel to maintain this momentum. My colleagues and friends of the university, it is with great pleasure that I present you with my 2011 President’s Report.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph G. Jabbra, Ph.D.
President