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## The MBI Al Jaber Grand Hall at the University of Westminster



*From left: Vice Chancellor Geoff Petts, Lord Paul and MBI Al Jaber*

*The MBI Al Jaber Foundation is pleased to announce support for a unique project at the University of Westminster which will enable the refurbishment of the birthplace of British cinema.*

Building on a relationship going back to the mid-90s, the Foundation will be making a major gift to the University of Westminster to enable the refurbishment of its Grade II listed entrance on Regent Street in the heart of London's West End, henceforth to be known as the MBI Al Jaber Grand Hall.

The agreement was signed by Foundation Chairman MBI Al Jaber and Vice Chancellor Geoff Petts in the presence of Westminster's Chancellor Lord Paul in July 2009 and is the latest in a series of capital grants made by the Foundation to elite institutions of higher education, including at Corpus Christi, Oxford, and UCL.

The Regent Street address has always been seen as the University of Westminster's flagship, home of the first polytechnic. It is a listed building and contains many historical firsts including the world's first photography school, the first demonstration of the Lumiere brother's Cinematograph, and the birthplace of Cinema in the UK.

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## Message from the Chairman

*This Newsletter coincides with a momentous occasion: the opening of the MBI Al Jaber Building at Corpus Christi, Oxford.*

The Foundation's association with Corpus Christi's building project goes back to 2005 when, recognising that international architecture competitions are expensive to manage, a grant was made to contribute to towards the cost. Architect Rick Mather was chosen, and the project moved on. In 2007, we announced a major grant towards the construction of the building itself and Trustees and staff will attend the opening ceremony on 23rd October 2009 in the presence of the Chancellor of Oxford, Lord Patten of Barnes.

So whilst one project comes to fruition others continue, such as our ongoing Project and Scholarship programmes, and new ones are initiated: this month also sees the announcement of a new major donation to the University of Westminster. You can read about all of these in this Review, or for further details go to our website: [www.mbifoundation.com](http://www.mbifoundation.com)

**Mohamed Bin Issa Al Jaber**  
*Chairman*

# Scholarships

## Latest Intake of Students at MODUL

*Our MODUL scholarship programme for the academic year 2009/2010 proved to be very popular. The reputation of the scheme reached to all parts of the Arab World and North Africa.*



Our candidates for this year come from a wide range of Arab countries and for the first time we are pleased to have students from Algeria. The standard of the students is as high as previous years and the programme attracted many young men and women of great potential who have been working in both public and private sectors in their countries.

This year we have students from Syria, Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Yemen, and Saudi Arabia. They are reading different courses, some the BBA and MBA in Tourism Management, others the MBA in Public Governance and Management or the MBA in New Media Technology and Management.

One thing in common between all of them is that they are all keen to enhance their academic level by attending this prestigious university and they all look forward to starting their studies.

*MBI Scholars and their classmates on the MODUL campus*

Most students have already arrived in Vienna and attended the induction and welcome week. They have started to settle down and familiarise themselves with the cold Austrian climate, however the warmth of the history of this country and the excitement of starting a new page of their lives lifts their hearts and makes them ready for the new adventure. We wish them all a very good start and look forward to reporting on their successful experiences.

## New Programme at Effat University, Saudi Arabia

*As part of the MBI Al Jaber Foundation's vision of the advancement of the education of women in the Arab world we have instituted a new scholarship programme at Effat University, Saudi Arabia.*

Effat University is a leading private higher education institution for women situated in Jeddah, and is the living legacy of Queen Effat's vision for education. The university provides an interdisciplinary environment, conducive to research and life long learning.

Under the new programme, scholarships will be offered to a number of outstanding Saudi nationals who wish to study an undergraduate degree at Effat University.

Students will be able to choose from the range of disciplines offered by the University, and on graduation the best students will be eligible to apply for the broader Foundation Masters' Degree programme in the UK.

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The Regent Street Project will be the first major Capital Project that encapsulates the University of Westminster vision for 2015 set out by the new Vice Chancellor Geoff Petts. The foyer and cinema will be turned into a 'shop window' highlighting the University and the building's historical importance and including a designated area to hold special events, as well as promoting the internationalism and diversity for which the University is renowned through series of public lectures and cinema screenings within the heart of London.

On completion of the project, the Foundation plans to host a Middle East Film Series at the University, acknowledging the important role of film and documentaries in raising awareness and building bridges between cultures.

# Alumni Update

## News from Jordan

*Our Scholarships Officer Suhad Jarrar-Browne caught up with our Alumni on a recent visit to Jordan. Here's an update from two of them, Rana Al Akhal and Tareq Younis who studied two very different courses for their postgraduate degrees.*



Rana followed the LEAD (Leadership in Environmental and Sustainable Development) programme under the auspices of Imperial College London, and Tareq opted for a Masters' Degree in Ethnomusicology at SOAS, University of London. Since graduating they both work in development.

In describing LEAD, the sessions for which were based in Pakistan, Rana says "LEAD was the turning point in my life. I learned more about people, countries, cultures, and personal development in one session than I learnt in all the years of my BA Degree. LEAD taught me the essence of life, how to accept, appreciate, help and tolerate others."

Tareq chose the course at SOAS to focus on composing music whilst at the same time studying the factors that influence the development of melodies, lyrics or musical instruments. He also looked at the importance of documentation. Tareq worked on collecting, archiving and analysing folkloric children's music in Jordan for use in the Family Education Programme in economically deprived areas in coordination with The Information and Research Centre at the King Hussein Foundation.

Both Tareq and Rana are doing a lot for their communities in Jordan. Rana runs her own consultation firm (Medal Consult) and gives training on management, strategic planning and HR. Her goals are "to build a market that understands gender concepts and the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment." Tareq's motto is 'music without borders' and he believes that musicians are educators with responsibility towards the education and development of the young generation in society.



**You can read more about Tareq & Rana in the Alumni section of the Foundation website.**



# Spotlight on Recent Projects



## The King Fahad National Library Book Donation

*In keeping with its previous support for education and the humanities in the Arabian Peninsula, the MBI Al Jaber Foundation is donating the entire collection of Seminar for Arabian Studies Proceedings to the King Fahad National Library, located in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia.*

Papers read at the Foundation-supported Seminar are published annually in the Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies in time for the Seminar of the following year. The Proceedings contain new research on Arabia and reports of new discoveries in the Peninsula in a wide range of disciplines. At the recent Seminar for Arabian Studies at The British Museum in London, the Library had been kind enough to loan the Foundation a range of its own books on archaeology to have on display which proved to be of great interest to the participants. The books will be added to the Library's existing collection of 1,300,000 items of information plus 200,000 historical documents. The

King Fahad National Library, the legal deposit and copyright for Saudi Arabia and its main repository for all books, information and historic materials relating to the Kingdom, aims to preserve and document intellectual work in the Kingdom, making it available to readers and contributing to the enhancement of national culture in the Kingdom.

Trustee Mashael Al Jaber received thanks from the Library on behalf of the Foundation.

## Connecting Cultures 2009: Ambassadors of Change

*The MBI Al Jaber Foundation is proud to announce its continued support as a major sponsor for Connecting Cultures with a grant towards its desert journey in Oman in November 2009.*

This year, Connecting Cultures will take 18 young strangers, western and Arab women, on an expedition together for 5 days in the Oman desert, where they will engage in cultural and educational exchanges to give them a new perspective on the world, and each other. Connecting Cultures hopes to engage thousands of young people on this journey through its interactive website that shares blogs, diaries and videos from the students and a series of downloadable English and Arabic lesson plans for teachers to use in the classroom developed in partnership with UNESCO. In Istanbul at the UN Alliance of Civilisations Market Place of ideas for innovative projects on April 6th 2009, Connecting Cultures was identified as one of the world's most innovative civil society projects in the field of intercultural dialogue. Connecting Cultures' 2009 desert journey is also endorsed and supported by the UNESCO office in Doha and ISESCO.



## Trustees Speak at UCL

*The Autumn term at University College London sees two of the Foundation Trustees giving talks.*

On 22nd October our Patron and Chairman MBI Al Jaber will speak on 'Education, Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy in the 21st Century'. This event follows on from a successful 'in conversation' with Vice-Provost Professor Michael Worton in 2006 at which MBI Al Jaber spoke on 'Educational Reform and the Culture of Democracy in the Arab World'. A podcast of the talk will be available on the MBI Foundation website.

And on 2nd December, Trustee Professor Peter Jones will speak on 'OVE ARUP: Engineer or Philosopher? Or: what really happened at Sydney Opera House'. Prof Jones is the first researcher to have had full access to the vast private Arup archives, and is the author of the first biography of Ove Arup. The talks are part of the ongoing partnership between the MBI Al Jaber Foundation and UCL which also includes a major capital donation from the Foundation.

