

President's Message: Time to Transition

Friday, May 15, 2009

I had the privilege to serve as President of the Lebanese Collegiate Network for the past two years. It has been an exciting journey of growth for both the LCN and myself. It has been a trail of successes starting with our first event, the fundraiser dinner in Los Angeles. We have been able to provide 4 awards amounting to more than \$2000. We have sustained a budget of over \$30,000 in the past two years. We have subsidized convention costs of over \$4000 for our membership. We have held more than 24 board meetings, contacted more than 10 media outlets, established relationships with more than 7 Lebanese American organizations, added more than 15 University Lebanese Clubs (ULCs), had more than 3000 unique visits to www.mylcn.org, and organized more than 4 resume workshops... However insightful these numbers might be, they are not the true measure of the LCN.

LCN is about its people. We are building a community of positive leaders who believe in academic and professional advancement through transparent action based on laws under a constitution. My favorite measures are moments that can't be quantified or tracked. These are moments that leave an impact on the life of every student or alumni that has been a part of the LCN. I want to leave you with a few stories that have impacted my life.

Less than a week after attending the 2009 Convention, Cal Poly Pomona had a regular board meeting. Leina Saikali, President of the Lebanese Student Association, was ecstatic: "We had our most efficient meeting yet. My board members were introducing motions and assigning action items at the meeting. All of this because of what we heard and saw at the LCN convention."

Arizona State University's Lebanese Club had not heard about the LCN by the end of 2008. In January of 2009, Jeff Malkoun was able to convince 2 of his club members to drive all the way from Phoenix to Los Angeles in a last minute decision to attend the LCN fundraiser dinner. Later on in March, we saw more than 7 ASU attendees at our 2009 convention. Today, Jeff and his team are one of the most active ULC members in the nation. Our hope is that all of our activities will pave a new path for our Lebanese American community. This is a community project and everyone's commitment is necessary to continue to make LCN a success.

I will be stepping down as President of the LCN as of June 1st 2009, but this does not mean an end to my full commitment to the goals and values of the LCN. I hope to be involved in many committees next year and support the fine board that is going to lead LCN. I know this is a philosophy shared by all previous board members who have served the LCN. Ramzi Nasr will also be stepping down this year after two years of exemplary service to our membership. I look forward to working with Ramzi Nasr this upcoming year to support our dream, the LCN.

Serge Haddad, President Elect, has been a friend/mentor/colleague to me for the past 3 years. We have been through a lot together and I am confident in his leadership and vision. Serge and the other 6 members of the board, Sevag Sislian, Lara Saikali, Diana Ayoub, Thalia Jarjour, Rami Haddad, and Karim Khoury will continue to serve you. LCN will continue to be a strong proponent of academic and professional development in our community. LCN will continue to foster positive leaders.

This is not a goodbye. This is my promise to continue my involvement by taking on a different role within LCN.

Patrick Sislian
President
Lebanese Collegiate Network