

Ahlouna Association and the Saint Joseph University of Beirut Launch the Ahlouna Scholarship Fund, to Support USJ Students of the South Lebanon Campus - Rev. Fr. André Masse, SJ

Wednesday, 29 October 2025

The Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ) and Ahlouna Association entered into a strategic partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding establishing the “Ahlouna Scholarship Fund”. This initiative aims to support financially challenged USJ students enrolled at South Lebanon Campus - Rev. Fr. André Masse, SJ.

The signing ceremony was held at the Rectorate in the presence of Prof. Salim Daccache, SJ, Rector of USJ, and Mrs. Sahar Jalal El-Dine Jubaily, President of the Association, alongside representatives from both institutions. USJ was represented by Prof. Salah Abou Jaoude, SJ, First Vice-Rector, Prof. Fadi Geara, Vice-Rector for Administration, Prof. Carla Eddé, Vice-Rector for International Relations, Prof. Nadine Riachi Haddad, Secretary-General, Mrs. Cynthia-Maria Ghobril Andréa, Director of *Fondation* USJ, Prof. Dina Sidani, Director of the South Lebanon Campus - Rev. Fr. André Masse, SJ (CLS), Mrs. Ursula Hage, Director of the Career and Placement Office at USJ, and Mr. Danny Maalouly, Fundraising Director at *Fondation* USJ.

Ahlouna Association was represented by several members of its Board of Directors, including Mrs. Mona Kotb, Mrs. Mona Triaki, Mrs. Lina Charif, Mr. Hani Bidawi, and Mr. Yasser Assi.

Prof. Dina Sidani commended this collaboration, which stems from a shared vision to give young people in South Lebanon the means to pursue their studies and fulfill their ambitions despite current economic challenges. She emphasized that this noble initiative reflects a joint commitment to developing long-term partnerships with institutions across the South, aiming to contribute to the educational, cultural, and social development of the region. On this occasion, Prof. Sidani stated: “I commend the mission of Ahlouna Association, which works with dedication in the service of the most disadvantaged. Our collaboration with Ahlouna fully aligns with the third mission of USJ: to offer opportunities to those who need them most, enabling them to access a meaningful education and earn a degree they can be proud of.”

Prof. Daccache highlighted the importance of this new partnership, stating: “Your name says it all – *Ahlouna* – you truly are our own. Together, we are working to bring shared hopes to life. This partnership is invaluable, deeply engaged with the community and its realities, just as USJ has been for nearly half a century in Saida and across South Lebanon.” The Rector recalled that the University counts among its alumni thousands of graduates from the South who continue to serve as proud ambassadors of USJ both in Lebanon and abroad. He added: “We must uphold this

mission of proximity and solidarity, convinced that education remains the most reliable path toward social justice and the foundation for a better future.”

Adding to this, Mrs. Cynthia-Maria Ghobril praised the successful implementation of this project, highlighting the significance of a partnership that embodies the very essence of *Fondation* USJ’s mission. She also expressed gratitude to Ahlouna Association for its trust and commitment to the students of CLS, affirming that such collaborations strengthen the bonds of solidarity between the University and the broader community.

Mrs. Sahar Jalal El-Dine Jubaily expressed her appreciation and pride, stating: “The signing of this agreement marks a milestone in the journey of our association. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Prof. Daccache and Prof. Sidani for their trust and commitment. This is our first collaboration with a private Lebanese university, and we are truly honored.” She recalled that since 2010, Ahlouna has supported more than 425 students through a university loan program covering various higher education institutions in Lebanon, before the economic crisis led to its temporary suspension. “Driven by our belief in the transformative power of education and the essential role of youth in society, we relaunched our academic support program in 2024,” she added, “with an expanded plan for 2025 prioritizing students from public schools in Saida and its surrounding areas.”

Mrs. Jubaily concluded by underscoring the human dimension of this partnership: “We strive to support students, ensuring that no young person is ever forced to abandon their studies for lack of means. This collaboration with USJ gives new depth to our mission and broadens the reach of our action. Thank you for your trust, your solidarity, and your openness.”

Through this fund, USJ and Ahlouna Association reaffirm their shared commitment to an inclusive, accessible, and forward-looking higher education. Together, they mark a new milestone in educational solidarity serving South Lebanon and the nation as a whole.