

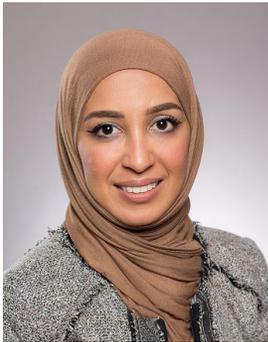


The UAE Celebrate Emirati Women's Day: 3 Stories of Success from Boston

By Nadine Salib, Consulate General of the United Arab Emirates, Boston, MA

Each year, the United Arab Emirates celebrate the Emirati Women's Day on August 28. That day marks the anniversary of the establishment of the General Women's Union in 1975. It is a national celebration to recognize the contribution of the country's women in advancing the UAE's interests and promoting its initiatives.

Emirati women excelled not only in the UAE but also abroad. So, the Consulate has created an internship program for undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in learning more about the mission and the UAE. Moreover, amongst many stories of success, the UAE Consulate General in Boston was pleased to interview three Emirati women based in Boston who shared about their experiences, challenges and dreams.



Dr. Noura Alshaibani

Emergency Medicine physician, MD Fellowship, Center for Medical Simulation, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Boston, MA

"Without a goal, you can't score". - Casey Neistat

Brave, smart and knowledgeable. Noura is an Emirati woman who excels in multitasking environments and is fully trained in providing clinical simulation and medical education using Simulation to improve safety, quality, and education in healthcare.

She traveled to Boston in 2016 to complete a clinical simulation fellowship program at center for medical simulation. Experienced in diagnosing difficult cases, Noura focused her attention on putting her patients at ease while continuing to build upon her skills and those of her team. With exceptional communication and relationship building skills, Noura was apt in crisis management strategies and procedures, communicating these to both medical and non-medical individuals. She collaborates well with other medical professionals to ensure her patients receive the highest level of quality care.

When asked about how the UAE has empowered her to become who she is today, she said "Both the UAE government and my parents supported me, appreciated what I plan to achieve, respected my dreams and helped me to make them come true". She added "they trusted me a lot which empowered me and pushed me to succeed. I am proud to represent my country abroad".

Noura's experience in Boston made her even stronger and more persistent to achieve her goals. She mentioned "This experience made me explore my strength and focus on what I need to accomplish. It helped me reframe my weakness".



Her stay in Boston offered her a variety of ways to meet, exchange and learn from everyone in her field.

Her next step after graduation is to return to the UAE and effectively integrate the knowledge she gained into her work as a clinical educator in an academic hospital. Her dream is to develop an innovative simulation program with Abu Dhabi Health Services Company (SEHA) to prepare students for optimal health outcomes for patients, help them to become competent, compassionate, independent, and collaborative clinicians.

Dr. Noura Alshaibani, obtained her medical degree in 2007 and went onto completing an internship before beginning her emergency medicine residency program, which she completed in 2013. She spent two years teaching residents and medical students clinically and didactically after she becomes site coordinator for the emergency residency program within Alain Hospital. Noura is the first Emirati woman to receive two boards: the Arab board and the Jordanian Board in Emergency Medicine. Noura became a member of the core faculty in the emergency medicine residency at Tawam Hospital in 2015. In 2016 Noura traveled to Boston to completed clinical simulation fellowship program at center for medical simulation, and in 2017 she joined ACEP teaching fellowship program in Texas.



Ms. Tuka Alhanai

PhD in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Boston, MA

*"What is knowledge? You won't know unless you seek it,
and if done for the sake of it, it can become a best friend in
the quest for truth." - Anon*

Tuka has achieved a lot over her six years in Boston! Straight after she graduated with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering from The Petroleum Institute in Abu Dhabi in 2011, she travelled to Boston to pursue her masters. She received her M.S. in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science from MIT in 2014. She is currently pursuing her PhD in the same program at MIT. She is affiliated with one of the largest labs at MIT, the Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab (CSAIL), where she is conducting research on speech and language processing technologies.

When asked about how her country has empowered her, she said “I am really blessed to have supportive parents and family, and to come from a country that appreciates and encourages higher education. I am very grateful for the support provided by the Abu Dhabi Education Council over the years, and until today, that has allowed me to pursue research in cutting-edge fields, and learning at a premier research university. Additionally, the culture, mindset, and environment created by the leaders of the UAE, of optimism for the future (Mission to Mars, Vision of the UAE, Renewable Energy, etc.), and the expectation that the best can be achieved, has had a big influence and motivation for me when pursuing my educational and research endeavors”.



Tuka's experience in Boston has shaped her in several ways. According to her, she is better able to appreciate the resources available in both the UAE and Boston. She was exposed to colleagues from different cultures and with a wide range of experiences which enriched her knowledge and expertise. "Boston is famous for its running culture, so over the years I've had the chance to run its 10K (which I did while fasting during Ramadan) and half-marathon races, which require a lot of discipline I found out, just like research" said Tuka. She looks forward to giving back to the UAE, and being with her family.

Tuka Alhanai is a PhD candidate in the department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at MIT, where she focuses on the development of machine learning algorithms in the context of speech and language processing with experience in pronunciation, language, and acoustic modeling, as well as sentiment analysis. Tuka's current work leverages multi-modal data to develop automated tools that assess an individual's emotional and mental well-being, such as depression and dementia, and is currently collaborating with the Framingham Heart Study in this line of research. Tuka was awarded an MIT Legatum Fellowship (2016) for pursuing entrepreneurial ventures in the developing world, was a semi-finalist in the Verizon Powerful Answers Competition (2015), and was a recipient of the UAE MOHESR Pioneers of Innovation Award (2015). Her work has been published in top artificial intelligence venues, and featured in several media outlets including The Wall Street Journal, BBC, Newsweek, Wired, and TechCrunch.



Ms. Fatima Al Qubaisi

"Wealth is not money. Wealth lies in mankind. This is where true power lies, the power we value. This is what has convinced us to direct all our resources to building the individual, and to using the wealth which God has provided us in the service of the nation." - H.H. Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan

"I became a lawyer because I wanted to make a difference" says Fatima who is known for being the first Emirati woman to graduate from Harvard School of Law.

Like many young Emirati, she has put education as her priority in life. She noted "I have always strived to learn and to make the most of the many opportunities that the UAE has to offer its young Emirati nationals".

According to her, the UAE has given her many tools which brought her to Harvard. In school, there were various competitions encouraging her to excel. The Mother of the Nation H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak organized competitions such as the Reading Competition, where students choose to read 30, 60 or 90 books in the school year and according to that a prize was awarded. Fatima says "I also was very fortunate to have been a part of H.H. Sheikha Fatima's Award for Excellence which covered my tuition for an entire year and focused on rewarding girls not only for academic excellence but also social, environmental and global citizenship".



The UAE is a country where there are endless possibilities and the rulers set an example for this nation. It is clear that society is eager for young Emiratis to take advantage of the opportunities out there and to contribute towards society.

Her experience at Harvard has made her an inspiration for young Emirati women in the UAE. She added “I think that studying at Harvard Law School has enabled me to meet incredible people, sit in classrooms that have left me speechless and to better understand the law”.

When asked about her next step after obtaining for diploma she said “I will return to work for the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority. I also hope to promote women and young people with various projects”. Fatima hopes to become an internationally qualified lawyer after having qualified in the UAE and to keep being the first Emirati woman at many things and to witness the first Emirati woman in many more fields.