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The very first sentence of the editorial of the previous issue started with “... and the living is easy” certainly doesn’t hold true for “summertime” 2023 simply because of a heat wave that we were experiencing back then. Maybe this applies more to the current issue with all the injustice, brutality, and inhumanity that we have been experiencing during the past few months. Yes, ‘the’ living is not easy at all. It is extremely demanding when confronted with so much suffering to focus on our essential duties like teaching let alone less crucial duties, writing and editing. This is the main reason for combining the fall and winter issues, but we must persevere and as Fairuz puts it [“Yes, there is hope.”](#) This issue highlights a departmental activity that was intended to alleviate some of the anxiety and anger that unites us all these days, the remarkable presence of the department at the largest OBS/GYN congress globally and the establishment of the “Dr. Roland Jamil Tannous Award.” Once again, the Department of OBS/GYN has lost a dear colleague and friend, Dr. Saad Eddin Itani whose biography is summarized below. You will also enjoy some interesting random short facts in the “Did You Know?” section. We hope that you enjoy reading this issue.

*Sincerely,
Anwar Nassar, M.D.
Editor-in-Chief*



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A COZY AND ENCHANTING NIGHT

Despite our sad local and regional circumstances, the department's medical, nursing, and administrative staff insisted on celebrating the holidays. This was a way to relieve some of the sadness and anger that is commonplace during this terrible time. For that, a dinner was held on December 14, 2023, at "The Wooden Cellar" in Mar Mikhael. All those present enjoyed the holiday vibes in the restaurant's cozy ambience, and spent an enchanting evening combined with great food and nostalgic songs and tunes. The night shed light on the singing talent of some department members who joined the entertainer in his performance. The photos speak for themselves.



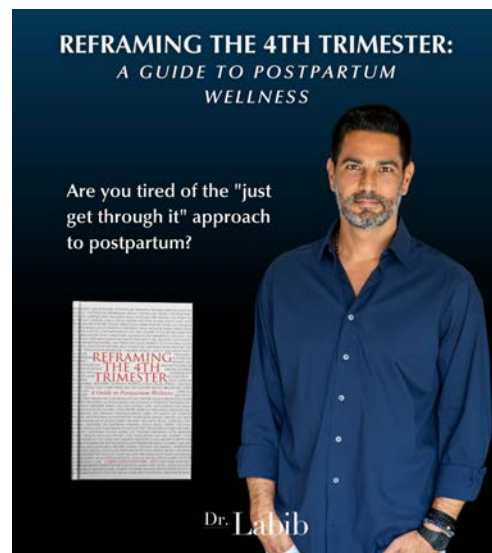
ANOTHER STAR FALLING: DR. SAAD EDDIN ITANI



On February 22, 2024, the OBS/GYN community sadly lost a dedicated and prominent colleague. Dr. Saad Eddin Itani, a past president of Lebanese Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (LSOG), Chair of OBS/GYN at Makassed, and an actively practicing physician, has been an exemplary leader progressing the welfare of our OBS/GYN society through rigorous scientific activities and community engagement. In all his responsibilities, which he excelled in, Dr. Itani has made a significant impact and heartwarming memories. His sudden departure has left a void, but he will always be remembered by all of us, his patients, and those who worked with him across his walks. We offer our sincere condolences and sympathy to his family, relatives, and loved ones. Dr. Saad, you will be missed as a friendly supportive and suave colleague.

REFRAMING THE 4TH TRIMESTER: A NEW BOOK

Dr. Labib Ghulmiyyah, a former faculty member at AUBMC for 13 years and a maternal–fetal medicine specialist now based in Miami, Florida has recently published his book “Reframing the 4th Trimester: A Guide to Postpartum Wellness.” This book is an essential read for all women who have recently given birth, as well as for any woman who cares about her overall health. With over 20 years of experience, Dr. Ghulmiyyah, who continues to have strong ties with the department, offers a comprehensive and innovative guide to postpartum recovery, focusing on the crucial, often-neglected fourth trimester. This book not only emphasizes physical and emotional self-care and the importance of a strong support system but also advocates for an integrative approach to sustained wellness. Dr. Ghulmiyyah’s blend of evidence-based advice with functional methods makes this guide a must-read, serving as an invaluable tool for thriving during the postpartum period and beyond. The book will be available in the Lebanese market by the time this issue is released.



IN REMEMBRANCE OF ROLAND



The Department of OBS/GYN and a group of Dr. Roland Tannous’s friends, classmates and colleagues joined together to lead an initiative to establish an annual award in the memory of Dr. Roland Tannous, who we lost on January 28, 2023.

The “Roland Tannous Award” will be bestowed yearly on an OBS/GYN resident at the American University of Beirut who exemplifies the core values and the human touch that Dr. Tannous embodied during his short yet fruitful journey. We invite everyone who knew, and admired Dr. Tannous to support this initiative.

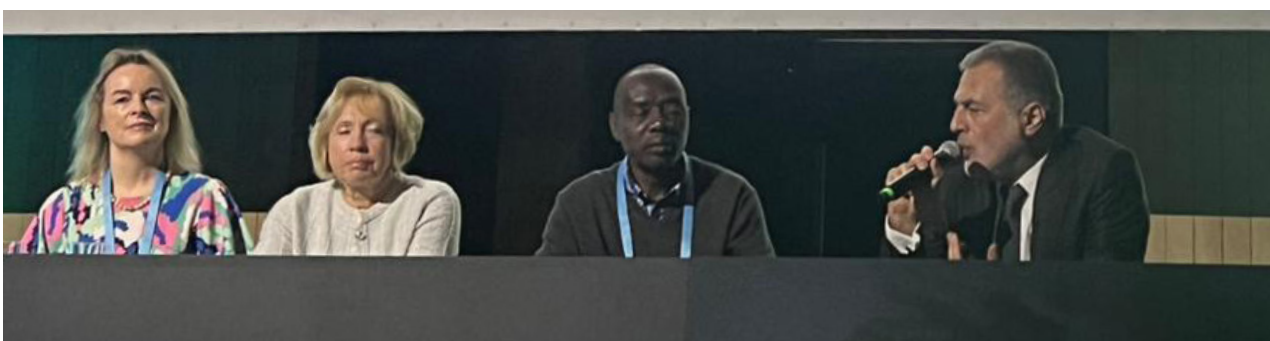
Dr. Tannous will always be remembered for his humility, loving nature, easy-going personality, and – more than anything else – for always having a smile on his face.

For more details, please visit the [website](#).

REMARKABLE PRESENCE OF OBS/GYN FACULTY AT FIGO WORLD CONGRESS

The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) biennial World Congress was held in Paris, France, on October 9–12, 2023. This year, it attracted more than 8,000 people from over 110 countries, making it undoubtedly the largest OBS/GYN Congress. What was particularly remarkable this year was the noticeable presence of the Department of OBS/GYN at this important venue that brings together diverse professionals in women’s health care from across the globe. Not only did 5 OBS/GYN faculty members attend, but 2 were invited speakers joined by one senior resident who could also be there in the city of light.

Dr. Anwar Nassar presented on “Getting to the right caesarean delivery rates: proposed solutions” and “Epidemiology of Sars–CoV2.” Dr. Faysal El–Kak presented on “Female genital pain” in the Pre–congress workshop and on “Genitopelvic pain, and reproductive sexual health among vulnerable population in the Middle East” during the congress.



VACCINATION CAN PREVENT A CANCER

The American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) and the Women's Integrated Sexual Health (WISH) Program at the Department of OBS/GYN are proud to announce that they will be leading a 3-year project on cervical cancer prevention, education, and awareness through a campaign titled "Towards a Future Free of Cervical Cancer."

The project aims to contribute to global, regional, and local efforts, namely World Health Organization's (WHO) strategic goals to eliminate cervical cancer, a potentially preventable disease, through education, public awareness, and primary prevention. This will be achieved through enhancing human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine uptake among AUB community of students, faculty, staff, trainees, and patients. This project is in line with AUB's educational mission, as AUB president Fadlo Khuri highlighted in his address during the campaign launching on February 20, 2024.

The event was also attended by Caretaker Minister of Health, Dr. Firass Abiad, Raja N. Khuri Dean of the Faculty of Medicine & VP for Medical Affairs, Dr. Raymond Sawaya, and faculty members from AUBMC.

During the period 2024–2027, several student, staff, and clinic-led activities, campaigns, and HPV vaccine facilitation, will be implemented and executed under the WISH Program to enhance primary prevention of cervical cancer, which continues to rank as the fourth most common cancer among women worldwide. The aim of the campaign is to achieve at least 80% uptake of the vaccine among university community members by 2027. In addition, it aims to reach out to all medical schools and universities in Lebanon, to ensure targeted annual increase in immunization. This project will set a model for other institutions and agencies.



ACADEMIC NEWS

Dr. Anwar Nassar was invited for an expert opinion during the Eastern Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EEMEA) Maternal Health Expert Input Forum 2023 that took place virtually on November 9, 2023, to discuss the pre-launch of the novel vacuum-induced postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) control system. He was also invited by Wiley publishers to join as a Key Opinion Leader for the production of a new education resource on the latest research updates in PPH. The project aims to create awareness about PPH, and update and inform relevant healthcare professionals (HCPs) on the latest research and treatment guidelines available. You can watch the [video summary here](#).

Dr. Antoine Hannoun participated in the Lebanese International Fertility Summit (LIFE) 2023 that was organized by the Lebanese Fertility Society as the chair of the scientific committee. The meeting was held in Beirut, Lebanon on September 29–30, 2023.

Dr. Faysal El Kak presented on “Menopause updates,” during the Congress of the Iraqi Society of OBS/GYN, that was held in September 2023 in Baghdad, Iraq and on “Androgen excess in adolescence” during the 19th Emirates Obstetricians Gynaecology & Fertility Forum that was held in Dubai, UAE on October 21–22, 2023. Dr. El Kak was also an invited speaker on “Female sexual dysfunction” during the World Association of Sexual Health (WAS) World Congress that was held on Nov 2–5, 2023, in Antalya, Turkey. Lastly, he participated in the International Society for Sexual Medicine (ISSM) meeting that was held in Dubai on Dec 14–17, 2023, as a speaker and a co-chair of a session.

Dr. Abdallah Adra was an invited speaker to the 3rd International Congress of Obstetricians–Gynecologists and Perinatologists of the South Caucasus, that was held on October 20–21, 2023, in Tbilisi, Georgia and to the 8th International Birth Congress that was held on December 14–16, 2023, in Dubai, UAE. In addition, he was part of a specialized workshop on postpartum hemorrhage (PPH), where he presented on a novel & promising tool for the rapid treatment of PPH.

Dr. Reem Abdallah was an invited speaker at the 2023 Annual Meeting 7th GO & 7th MEMAGO Middle East & Mediterranean Association of Gynecologic Oncologists which was held on December 7–8, 2023 in Cairo, Egypt. The title of her talk was “Updates on the management of borderline ovarian tumors.”

Dr. Sandrine Atallah was an invited speaker at several conferences including the 8th Congress of the Tunisian Society of Clinical Sexology, that was held in Tunis, Tunisia on October 6–8, 2023, the 43rd Annual Congress of the International Society of Urology that was held on December 12–14, 2023, in Istanbul, Turkey: 12–14 Dec 2023 where she discussed the “Prevalence and Causes of Female Sexual Dysfunction”, and the 24th World Meeting on Sexual Medicine that was held in Dubai, UAE on December 15–16, 2023 where she had two presentations including one on the role of social media to promote sexual education. Her latest series of presentations was at the European Society for Sexual Medicine (ESSM) Congress 2024 that was held on February 8–10, 2024, in Bari, Italy where she presented on 3 topics including “Ethical and cultural sensitive approach to sexual trauma.”

WISH PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

A workshop for Iraqi gynecologists on Female Sexual Function/Dysfunction was conducted in Baghdad, Iraq during the Annual Meeting of the Iraqi Society of OBS/GYN on September 21–23, 2023.

A series of awareness activities during cervical cancer awareness month (January 2024) was conducted in AUB in collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine and NKBCI.



CONGRATULATIONS

On September 30, 2023, Dr. Nabil El Khoury, our newest recruit, tied the knot with Miss Amal Nader in a private ceremony attended by several faculty members and trainees.



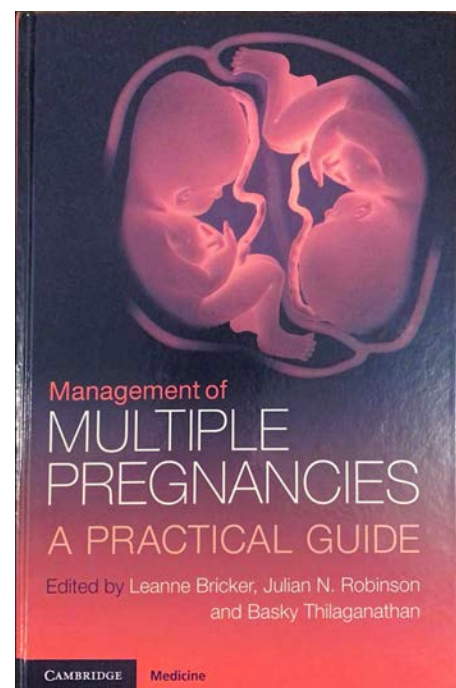
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Dimassi H, Alameddine M, Sabra N, El Arnaout N, Harb R, Hamadeh R, El Kak F, et al. Maternal health outcomes in the context of fragility: A retrospective study from Lebanon. *Confl Health* 2023 Dec 13;17(1):59.

Ramasauskaite D, Nassar A, Ubom AE, Nicholson W; FIGO Childbirth and Postpartum Hemorrhage Committee. FIGO good practice recommendations for cesarean delivery on maternal request: Challenges for medical staff and families. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* 2023 Oct.

Visser GHA, Ubom AE, Neji K, Nassar A, Jacobsson B, Nicholson W; FIGO Childbirth and Postpartum Hemorrhage Committee. FIGO opinion paper: Drivers and solutions to the cesarean delivery epidemic with emphasis on the increasing rates in Africa and Southeastern Europe. *Int J Gynaecol Obstet* 2023 Oct;163.

Dr. Abdallah Adra published a book chapter entitled "Prevention of Preterm Birth in Multiple Pregnancies" in "Management of Multiple Pregnancies: A Practical Guide," edited by Bricker, Robinson & Thilaganathan, that was recently released by Cambridge Medicine.





MEET THE ALUMNI

Dr. Rola Nakhal graduated in 2010 after completing a 4-year residency in Obstetrics and Gynecology at AUB. She then pursued her fellowship in Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology at University College London Hospitals in the UK where she gained great experience in a unique subspecialty which she felt is still lacking in Lebanon and the Middle East. She also had the chance to publish several articles in that field. She then returned to Lebanon and established her private practice at Clemenceau Medical Center and Bellevue Medical Center. But unfortunately, last year due to the situation in Lebanon, she had to move with her family to Dubai where she is currently a Consultant in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib medical group. Besides being a doctor, Dr. Nakhal enjoys being a mom and spends most of her time with her husband and two sons, Imad and Mazen.

Dr. Dib Sassine graduated in 2018 after completing his OBS/GYN residency at AUB. Following that, he did a 6-month minimally invasive surgery training at Simone Veil hospital in Paris, France followed by a one-month gynecologic oncology and sarcoma training at University Cancer Institute of Toulouse before leaving for New York where he completed a 2-year surgical gynecologic oncology fellowship at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. After completing his fellowship, he decided to repeat his residency in OBS/GYN, and he is currently a 3rd year resident at New York Presbyterian Columbia in New York. He is newly engaged to Dr. Diamond Ghieh whom he met at AUBMC. She will be joining him soon for her abdominal imaging fellowship in New York.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The two highest IQ scores in recorded history belong to women.
- Around 60 million girls worldwide are married before the age of 18.
- Venus is the only planet to spin clockwise.
- "Stewardesses" is the longest word typed with only the left hand.
- Human teeth are the only body part that cannot self-heal.
- Bees can fly higher than Mount Everest.
- Ketchup was once sold as a medicine to cure diarrhea, indigestion, and jaundice.
- Women over-survive men by an average of 2-5 years.
- Penicillin was first called the "mold juice."
- Africa is the only continent in all four hemispheres.
- Bananas glow blue under black lights.
- Gustave Eiffel originally submitted his design of Eiffel Tower to Barcelona, but the city turned it down.
- The Pope can't donate his body organs.
- Japan has one vending machine for every 40 people.
- James Cameron sold the rights to 'Terminator' back in the '80s for \$1 to be allowed to direct the movie.
- In 2004, a barber sold Neil Armstrong's hair clippings that he collected from the floor of his shop for \$3,000.
- Finland has more saunas than cars.
- Women make up 80% of all refugees and displaced people.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Shirine Tabbara

Q: When did you join the Department of OBS/GYN?

A: I joined in August 2011.

Q: What is your title?

A: Teller at the Women's Health Center.

Q: What are your main duties?

A: Apart from cashing, I provide support to the hospital front desk by helping patients with information regarding the facility's services and following up on insurance claims.

Q: Prior to joining this department, what were you doing?

A: I was an administrative assistant in an event planning company.

Q: If you were not doing this job, what would you have chosen to do?

A: I would have chosen to be a reporter, lawyer, or investigator.

Q: What is most enjoyable about your job?

A: The daily interaction with different people.

Q: What do you find most challenging about your job?

A: To keep my stable rhythm while multitasking and delivering a flawless job especially for difficult patients.

Q: If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you choose to go and why?

A: I choose to come back home where my family is, no place in the world makes me feel safer and happier.

Q: What do you enjoy doing during your free time?

A: Watching movies and enjoying the beach during summer.

Q: What is something that most people don't know about you?

A: I cry a lot when I am alone.

Q: What is your point of weakness?

A: My youngest daughter Alma.

Q: Who is your favorite artist?

A: I cannot point to a single artist as many are my favorites.

Q: What is your favorite song these days?

A: "My Immortal" for Evanescence.

Q: What is the movie or book you recently enjoyed watching or reading?

A: I enjoyed watching "The Mother," a film that stars Jennifer Lopez and is directed by Niki Caro.

