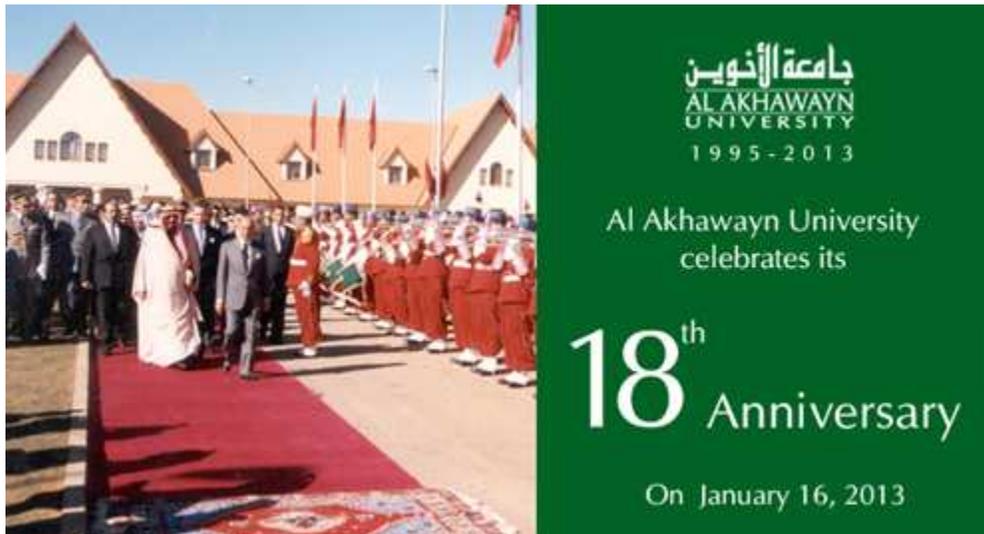


# Al Akhawayn University Newsletter

January 2013



## Al Akhawayn Professor Awarded Innothem Grant



The Research Institute for Solar and New Energies in Morocco awarded the 2012 InnoTherm II grant to Asmae Khaldoun, Assistant Professor of

Physics at Al Akhawayn School of Science and Engineering, for the project "Nanocoating and Testing: A Step Towards the Improvement of CSP Reflectors for Less Intensive Maintenance Both in Terms of Labor and Water."

Presented in Rabat on October 30, 2012, during a national scientific meeting held by the IRESEN, the project is co-worked by Asmae Khaldoun, Al Akhawayn engineering student Dounya Barrit ('13), and Ahmed Ennaoui, from Helmholtz-Zentrum Berlin. The main focus of this research project is the improvement of the quality of concentrated solar power plants by developing new coating materials that are lighter, more durable, energy efficient and more cost-effective; and consequently reducing the need for maintenance while improving the mirrors' efficiency by application of special coating on their surfaces.

## Al Akhawayn Professor Attends UN Expert Group Meeting



Al Akhawayn Professor Driss Kettani was among the 15 world-class researchers convened to the Expert Group Meeting organized by the United Nations Department of

Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) on the topic "United Nations E-Government Survey: E-Government as an Enabler of Collaborative Governance", in New York on December 4-5, 2012.

The meeting, organized by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the UNDESA, was a platform "for discussion to allow the experts to exchange views on emerging trends and issues related to the thematic areas of 2014 United Nations E-Government Survey, with reference to the overall UN development agenda; to review and examine the Survey's methodology; ... The experts will provide recommendations on how to integrate these issues into the next edition of the United Nations E-Government Survey."

Kettani has published a number of articles and book chapters on the topic of e-Government system evaluation methods and metrics. He was the inceptor and leader of the e-Fes System (the first local e-Government system in Morocco)

## Table of Contents

- **Page 1:**
  - Al Akhawayn Professor Awarded Innothem Grant
  - Al Akhawayn Professor Attends the UN Expert Group Meeting (EGM)
- **Page 2:**
  - Saad Benabdellah, CEO of Maroc Export, gives a lecture on « Morocco Going Global »
  - "Fez in World History" Presented in London
  - Inauguration of Building 39 in June 2013
  - Al Akhawayn Students Win National Management Tournament
- **Page 3:**
  - Sound Governance and the Arab Spring Conference
  - "International Relations Theory: Views Beyond the West" Workshop
  - Spotlights
- **Page 4:**
  - Engineering Students Find Solutions for Community Development
  - Introducing Students to Women Development in the Region
  - Panel Discussion on the Video Defaming Prophet Mohammed
- **Page 5:**
  - Reflecting on Liberal Arts
  - Tribute to Ancient Moroccan Traditional Music, Al Ayta

جامعة الأنخوين  
AL AKHAWAYN  
UNIVERSITY



**“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams” said Maroc Export CEO**

## Saad Benabdellah, CEO of Maroc Export, gives a lecture on « Morocco Going Global »

CEO of Maroc Export, a Moroccan center for the promotion of exports, addressed Al Akhawayn business students on Morocco *Going Global* in a lecture organized by Al Akhawayn School of Business Administration on November 21, 2012.

Quoting Eleanor Roosevelt's saying future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams,"

Saad Benabdellah, walked Al Akhawayn students through his success story and reflected on the key factors for an individual to succeed in today's business world, presented the expansion of Maroc Export within the Moroccan and international business context, and reflected on the globalization of the business world and how Morocco's business model grows in accordance with it.

In front of a large attendance, Benabdellah, also talked about his personal, academic, and professional background, drawing on his experiences in the US, Spain, Austria, France, and Morocco.

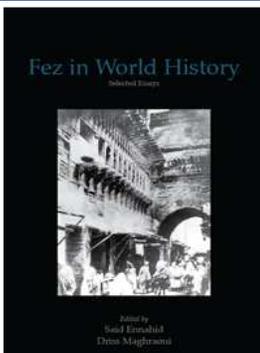
**“Give the best of yourself and keep moving forward. You will face challenges, difficulties, and problems; but the more you believe in yourself, the further ahead you move.”**

Benabdellah worked in public relations, in diplomacy, at the private sector, and at the UN.

“You can have dreams, but the bottom line is that you should believe in yourselves,” he told the

students. “Give the best of yourself and keep moving forward. You will face challenges, difficulties, and problems; but the more you believe in yourself, the further ahead you move.”

Benabdellah underlined how perseverance and the belief in the self helps individuals find their way to success.



## “Fez in World History” Presented in London

*Fez in World History* was presented in London on January 16, 2013.

This book was presented at the Leighton Museum in London in the presence of Morocco's Ambassador to the UK, Her Highness Lalla Jumala, Minister of Tourism, Lahcen Haddad, Dr Susan Miller of the University of California at Davis, Faouzi Skalli head

of “Esprit de Fes” Foundation, and Said Ennahid, Associate Professor of Islamic Art and Civilization at Al Akhawayn School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The Briouel Andalusian Music Group gave a recital on the occasion. Its publication was part of the celebrations of the 1200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the ancient city of Fez.

## Inauguration of Building 39 in June 2013



Providing comfortable living conditions for students, the new student residential building (39) includes 280 beds, common kitchen, lobby, lounge, study room, and laundry services. The new residence hall will be inaugurated by Al Akhawayn Board of Trustees in June 2013.



## Al Akhawayn Students Win National Management Tournament

Four Al Akhawayn Business students won the Treasury Prize of the National Management Competition organized by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of the Regional Council of Casablanca, on November 5, 2012. A very competitive event, the National Management Competition gathered major universities and business schools from all over Morocco.

Coached by Harit Satt, Lecturer of Accounting at the School of Business Administration, Al Akhawayn team members Soumaya Graine ('13), Achraf El Housni ('14), Samy Zaz ('14), and Abdellatif Ait Boumhaout ('14), represented a company in a virtual business environment for the sale of diving suits. All teams were competitors in the virtual market; and each one of them was required to make business decisions based on three challenges: profitability, marketing, and treasury management. The challenges included decisions such as the production capacity, ending inventory, marketing mix, and financing means.

“This competition was a perfect opportunity for us to apply what we learn in the classroom,” said Abdellatif Ait Boumhaout ('14). “It allowed us to discover how strategic planning, operations management, human resource management, and marketing interact to create value and to generate profits in a competitive market. Our forecast of the changes in the cash flow balance was successful and led our team to victory.”



## Sound Governance and the Arab Spring Conference

The Association for Middle Eastern Public Policy and Administration (AMEPPA) organized the 2012 Inaugural Global Conference around sound governance for peace and prosperity in the Middle East on November 8-9, 2012, at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane.

The conference gathered international experts in the field of governance and evaluation of public policies, university students, professors, and researchers from many countries such as Egypt, Germany, Holland, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Palestine, Qatar, Singapore, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, the US, Morocco, and more.

"This conference comes to complement Al Akhawayn University's academic activities in the spirit of providing intellectual fulfillment to our students, and of helping them learn values that would

"This conference comes to complement Al Akhawayn University's academic activities in the spirit of providing intellectual fulfillment to our students."

work for the good of our institution and our country," said Cherif Bel Fekih, Vice President for Student Affairs at Al Akhawayn.

The conference focused on the principles and practices of governance, as well as public policy assessment and constraints within the context of the Arab Spring. The experts reflected on the Middle Eastern and Arab experience, and shed light on the conditions necessary to settle governance and public policy in order to produce effective means of economic and social progress in the area.



## "International Relations Theory: Views Beyond the West" Workshop

Faculty and students from the School of Humanities and Social Sciences met with international faculty in a workshop aimed at producing an international relations theory textbook for students in the global south. Experts came from Brazil, Colombia, India, South Africa, Turkey, and the US to discuss an array of topics, such as Order and Institutions, Dialogic, Foreign Policy, Sovereignty and the State, War and Conflict, and more.

## Spotlights

**Abderrahman Hassi**, Lecturer of Management at Al Akhawayn's School of Business Administration, published an article entitled "Islamic perspectives on training and professional development" in the *Journal of Management Development* (2012), 31:10, pp.1035-1045. The article draws a portrait of training and development ideals and practices from the Islamic perspective.

Three faculty members from Cardiff Metropolitan University (CMU) visited Al Akhawayn University on November 19, 2012 to plan an annual International Cultural Field Trip for CMU Textile Design students, explore and further develop academic research opportunities in material culture, traditional dyeing techniques, and vintage fashion. Keireine Canavan, Helen Watkins, and Sally Grant from the Textile Department in the CMU School of Art and Design gave presentations to Al Akhawayn Students on textiles, research and the language of bedouin weaving.

**Evan Szablowski**, visiting international student at Al Akhawayn University in Spring 2012, was among the 32 American students to receive the prestigious academic Rhodes Scholarship. Szablowski studied one semester at Al Akhawayn under a study abroad arrangement with the United States Military Academy, West Point, where he is pursuing a bachelor's degree in mathematics.

Al Akhawayn Engineering student **Mohammed Taha El Graini** ('13), Assistant Professor of Computer Science **Nasser Assem**, and Associate Professor of Computer Science **Tajjeeddine Rachidi**, presented a paper entitled "Host Intrusion Detection for Long Stealthy System Call Sequences" at the Colloquium on Information Science and Technology held on October 22-24, 2012 at Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University, School of Science, Fez. In the same event, Professor Assem gave a keynote talk on "Business Intelligence: Dimensional Modeling Fundamentals and Challenges."

**Bouziane Zaid**, Assistant Professor of Communication at Al Akhawayn School of Humanities and Social Sciences, presented a paper entitled "Digital Media and Political Activism in Morocco" in *Global Voices Citizen Media Summit* held in Nairobi, Kenya, on June 29-30, 2012, under the theme of "Digital Media and Disruptive Publics." He also presented a paper entitled "Journalism, the Media and Hate Speech in Morocco" in the *Regional Summit on Combating Extremism and Hate Speech in Africa while Protecting Freedom of Expression* held in Saly, Senegal, on October 3-4, 2012.



## WPI Students Present their Community Service Projects to Al Akhawayn Community on October 10, 2012.

## Engineering Students Find Solutions for Community Development

Students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) presented their final projects on the community service work they fulfilled during their academic stay at Al Akhawayn University.

Three teams composed of WPI students performed their community service requirements in the region of Ifrane under the supervision of Professor Bland Addison from WPI, with the contribution of Al Akhawayn University faculty and students. Their projects revolved around Water Management and Conservation in Rural Morocco, Financial Outreach for the Rita Zniber Orphanage, and the Preservation and Progress in Modernizing Zillij Production.

**“The community service projects carried out each year by Al Akhawayn students have helped hundreds of Moroccans facing poverty, illiteracy, ...”**

“The community service projects carried out each year by Al Akhawayn students have helped hundreds of Moroccans facing poverty, illiteracy, lack of education, job opportunities or even homes, as well as dozens of other social problems,” said Addison. “Such opportunities to come face-to-face with the misfortunes and suffering of fellow citizens will leave a lasting humanitarian impulse in the souls of all graduates of Al Akhawayn University.”

## Introducing Students to Women Development in the Region

Al Akhawayn Humanities and Social Science students paid a visit to the local Women Weaving Association during a field trip to the village of Zaouiat d'Ifrane, about 70 kilometers away from the city of Ifrane, on October 20, 2012.

Within the context of the Women and Economic Development course offered at Al Akhawayn School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS), a group of students and faculty visited the Women Weaving Association founded by a group of women from Zaouiat d'Ifrane, a village in the Commune of Wad Ifrane. Students visited the site and interacted with local cooperatives.

**“Our objective is to give students a chance to meet local women and interact with them about relevant issues to help them have hands on how such projects help the women and their families...”**

“Our objective is to give students a chance to meet local women and interact with them about relevant issues to help them have hands on how such projects help the women and their families from the gender and development theoretical approach we discuss in class,” said John Shoup, Professor of Anthropology at the SHSS.

The Women and Economic Development course is one of four gender studies courses offered in the Gender and Development minor program at the SHSS. The course tackles how women are incorporated into the development process with specific emphasis on Morocco in order to give students a chance to grasp how the local associations work in this field. Field trips are organized within this context, in parallel to other courses such as Introduction to Anthropology, Moroccan Cultural Heritage, and Political Anthropology, with the objectives of field practice and research.

## Panel Discussion on the Video Defaming Prophet Mohammed



“The Film Defaming Prophet Mohammed and its Impact on Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue”, such was the theme of a panel discussion organized by Al Akhawayn School of Humanities and Social Sciences on December 13, 2012 at the university campus in Ifrane.

Othmane Al Rawaf, Professor at King Saud University and former member of Majlis Ash-Shura in Saudi Arabia, José Ramírez Del Río, Specialist in Andalusian History at the University of Cordoba in Spain, and Bouziane Zaid, Assistant Professor of Communication Studies at Al Akhawayn University constituted the panel leading the debate on the film entitled *Innocence of Muslims* which was originally known as *Desert Warrior*, and the subsequent reactions in the Arab and Muslim world.

Further to the presentations, questions and answers revolved around the clash of civilizations, freedom of expression and its regulations, Muslims in the US, ownership in media, and more.

## Reflecting on Liberal Arts



Several dozen of Al Akhawayn faculty and staff met with Professor Saul Hillel Benjamin in a conversation about the Liberal Arts entitled *Charting a University's 21st Century Journey*, at the university campus in Ifrane.

First of a series of discussions about Al Akhawayn's globally oriented educational mission planned for 2012-2013, the meeting revolved around defining Liberal Arts. Ideas and reflections about the case of Al Akhawayn University as an institution that chose to base its educational training on Liberal Arts were shared and enriched the discussion. Further questions regarding the definition of the Liberal

Arts concept were explored.

Al Akhawayn University has appointed Saul Hillel Benjamin to serve as Distinguished Visiting Professor of Liberal Arts. Saul brings over twenty-five years of classroom, institutional leadership, and public service experience regarding the role of liberal arts education. For the past six years, Saul has had educational leadership roles in Lebanon, Bosnia, and Germany. Earlier, he served as Headmaster of a multi-cultural high school, the founding Dean and Director of two exemplary Honors Colleges, executive leadership of a successful internet professional development company, and five years at the highest levels of educational and domestic policy-making in the administration of former U.S. President Bill Clinton.

## Tribute to Ancient Moroccan Traditional Music, Al Ayta

Well known Moroccan poet and writer, Hassan Najmi, talked to an Al Akhawayn audience about "Oral Poetry in Morocco: the Art of Al Ayta as an Example" during a lecture organized by the student-run club Writers' Circle.

"Holding this activity at Al Akhawayn University given its good reputation and academic status is in itself a good initiative by an institution to pay tribute to the art of Al Ayta, especially that the event is organized by a group of young students whom I commend for their initiative" said Najmi.



The talk displayed the art, history, structure, and characteristics of the art of Al Ayta. Al Ayta as an art, according to Najmi, is based on anonymous oral poetry that conveys social and human messages, and denounces injustice and tyranny. "Al Ayta is part of the rich cultural and musical heritage of Morocco where more than 52 types of oral expression exist," said Najmi. "Its poetry reflects rich, innate, simple, and impulsive words related to the environment surrounding us."

Audience questions centered on the different types of Al Ayta, their similarities with other music types, the oral heritage dimension, and the necessity to save such heritage. Najmi stressed that Al Ayta along with other types of poetry and music is the expression of the identity of several millions of Moroccans who also cherish Andalusian, Malhoun, Amaziah Hassani and other folkloric music

جامعة الأخوين  
AL AKHAWAYN  
UNIVERSITY

## Al Akhawayn University Mission: Enhancing Morocco and Engaging the World.

Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane is an independent, public, not-for-profit, coeducational, Moroccan university committed to educating future citizen-leaders of Morocco and the world through a globally oriented, English-language, liberal arts curriculum based on the American system.

The university enhances Morocco and engages the world through leading-edge educational and research programs, including continuing and executive education, upholds the highest academic and ethical standards, and promotes equity and social responsibility.



## Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane

Department of Development  
and Communication

P.O. Box 104, Hassan II Avenue,  
53000 Ifrane, Morocco

Phone: +212 535 86 20 00

Fax: +212 535 86 20 09

E-Mail: [AlAkhawayn@aui.ma](mailto:AlAkhawayn@aui.ma)

Web Site: [www.aui.ma](http://www.aui.ma)