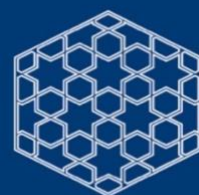




GABR FELLOWS ATTEND 2018 ANNUAL ART OF DIALOGUE RECEPTION IN EGYPT



The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

June 2020, Issue 35

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The Gabr Fellowship of 2020/2021

Eight years ago, I launched the *East-West: The Art of Dialogue* initiative with a vision to connect the East and West by bringing together emerging leaders from the United States and Egypt in an intensive and rewarding cross-cultural exchange program.

Today, our family is strong and growing with over 120 Gabr Fellows. It was with great excitement and anticipation that we received our pool of over 150 applicants—from Egypt, the US, the UK, France and Jordan—for our 2020 cohort.

Unfortunately, several months ago the world saw an unprecedented pause with the global coronavirus pandemic. Given the circumstances, we have decided we must delay our Fellowship program to 2021.

While there had been talk of holding the interview process via Skype, Zoom, etc., the use of technological instruments – while effective and efficient – does not meet the crux nor does it get to the heart of the *East-West Dialogue* initiative which is face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to know the other via human experience, first-hand knowledge, and culture.

That said, all applications for our 2020 program will be kept and considered for the new 2021 dates which will be announced on our website and social media in the coming weeks.

We will write to everyone and those selected will be interviewed, in person, when the circumstances allow for it.

I look forward to providing good news soon and hope you are staying healthy and hopeful during this temporary challenge in our world's history.

M Shafik Gabr

News and Updates...

Marwa Abdalla Interviewed by France 24



2018 Gabr Fellow Marwa Abdalla was interviewed by [France 24 TV](https://youtu.be/7qZ8xdFG4Fs), in Arabic, about how she balances her daily routine under lockdown as a university lecturer and a mother. Her interview is here: <https://youtu.be/7qZ8xdFG4Fs>. Marwa has also begun working on a new academic research paper and is finding time to communicate with friends in between all of her duties.

Nathan Thomas to Host Chair 2021 Conference



2014 Gabr Fellow Nathan Thomas was selected as the host chair for the 2021 American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas. Nathan hosted their first convening in May and he looks forward to solicit session proposals from interested Gabr Fellows. The Clinton Center also released a video featuring Nathan and a colleague detailing the Oval Office for their K12 student visitors. That video can be found here: <https://youtu.be/VsOeTTek3Kw>.

Alexis Taylor Delivers Critical Aid to Businesses



2016 Gabr Fellow Alexis Taylor helped write legislation that allowed for the local City Council in Austin, Texas to allocate \$18 million in critical aid to small businesses that needed it due to COVID-19. Alexis serves as a Commissioner for Economic Prosperity in Austin.

Mike Burgess Trains Youth Leaders in the Balkans



2015 Gabr Fellow Mike Burgess has been delivering training to young activists in the Western Balkans. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mike has been delivering this training by video. Mike is a Manager at Moonshot CVE, a London-based organization that works internationally to counter violent extremism.

Karim Elsharkawy Delivers Master's Defense



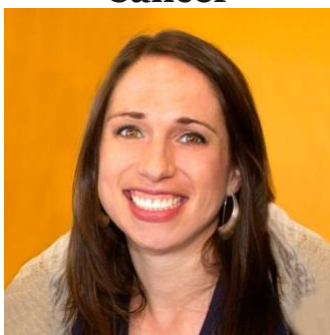
2017 Gabr Fellow Karim Elsharkway turned in his Master's Thesis and delivered his defense in support of his Master's degree in Global Affairs with a concentration on International Security. In addition to this, Karim has been practicing playing the saxophone, a hobby he has had for several years.

Zeyad Elkelani Excels in the World of Academia



2014 Gabr Fellow Zeyad Elkelani defended his PhD Dissertation Proposal on the Impact of Disasters on Socioeconomic and Political Development in the context of UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. He also had his two book chapters published. They are "Middle East in Global Era" edited by Ambassador Sallama Shaker et. al., and "Rise of Regions" edited by Ronald Tammen et. al.

Suzanne Youngner Defeats Cancer



2014 Gabr Fellow Suzanne Youngner has officially overcome her battle with cancer. She is still undergoing treatment for arthritic conditions. We look forward to her having a full recovery very soon.

Abdi Amr Delivers Master's Defense



2015 Gabr Fellow Abdelrahman "Abdi" Amr delivered his Master's Defense. Abdi is pursuing a double Master's degree in Global Communication in both Canada and China at the University of China/Simon Fraser University.

Amr Seda's Company Launches E-Commerce Site



2017 Gabr Fellow Amr Seda's business [Sit Straight](#) launched its e-commerce website enabling customers to order products online with delivery throughout Egypt. Sit Straight manufactures and sells medical spine-support products in the Egyptian market. **Amr is offering a 15% family discount for Gabr Fellows** on all orders made through the website starting June 1st using the code "gabrfriend" upon checkout.

Murray Abeles Helps Families in Need



2015 Gabr Fellow Murray Abeles, in his capacity as the Chief of Administration and Finance for a non-profit called NYC Kids Rise helped provide relief aid directly to families hit hardest by coronavirus in Queens. NYC Kids Rise has raised about \$815k in the last month from Robin Hood, the Gray Foundation and other individuals and provided 5,500 families with \$150 gift cards for emergency needs such as food and other services.

Ola Ali Receives Scholarship for Master's Degree



2015 Gabr Fellow Ola Ali was granted a partial scholarship to complete her Master's Degree in Sustainable Development at the AUC from the Al-Alfi Foundation for Human and Social Development which she will be starting in September.

Leah Moschella Leads Virtual Career Conference



2015 Gabr Fellow Leah Moschella led Boston GLOW in their first virtual career and empowerment conference for hundreds of female attendees across the globe. Leah founded Boston GLOW ten years ago as a nonprofit focused on leadership development and civic engagement for women and girls.

Meet the Gabr Fellows

Jeff Walls, 2013 Gabr Fellow, U.S.

Name: Jeff Walls

Profession: Senior Product Designer at Khan Academy

I am a designer and artist based in Portland, Oregon. In my current role, I serve as a Senior Product Designer at Khan Academy, helping to use technology in new ways in order to provide free educational resources to Khan's 90 million users across 143 countries.

Prior to this, I worked on brand and product design for some of the largest companies in the world including Facebook, Nike, Levi's, Intel, and the NBA. In my spare time, I love to read, play music, go on trail runs near Portland, and spend time with my young daughter, Lucy.

Being a Gabr Fellow has helped open doors for me and given me crucial insights and connections into the world of global business and diplomacy. The skills and knowledge I acquired during the Gabr Fellowship I implement to this day.



Basma Elbaz, 2015 Gabr Fellow, Egypt

Name: Basma Elbaz

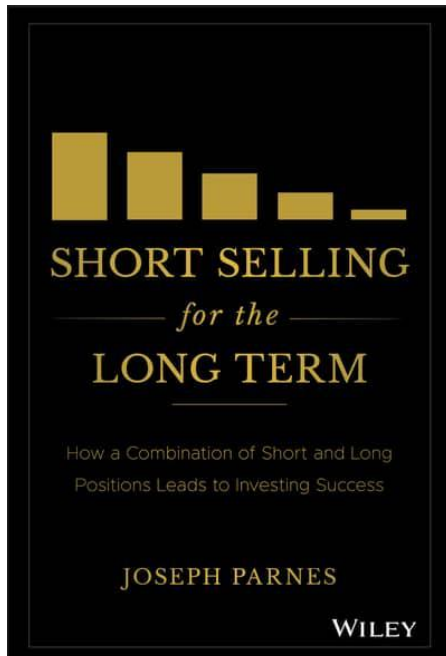
Profession: Editor in Chief of NogoumFM & NileFM

I am currently the Editor in Chief leading Nile Radio Production websites "NRP" (NogoumFM & NileFM). I am also a certified trainer from Deutsche Welle (DW), something which allows me to share my 12+ years of experience with junior journalists.

I joined the Gabr Fellowship back in 2015. It was a great opportunity to share thoughts and experiences with American Fellows at a very sensitive time in Egypt's modern history and especially because it was a time full of fake news about Egypt's situation. I believe this Fellowship could be an important tool to end many of the world's problems which mostly stem from miscommunication, stereotypes and fake or sensational news, because it allows Gabr Fellows to experience how things are on the ground. The Gabr Fellowship was also an opportunity to understand more about American culture and its political system. Mr. Shafik Gabr is truly doing a service to the world with this Fellowship and I hope many businessmen around the world share the goal of bridging gaps of communication and fostering understanding as a way of giving back to their communities and the whole world.



Gabr Foundation Reading Corner



The Foundation Reading Corner encourages Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended to them in each issue. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends “Short Selling for the Long Term: How a Combination of Short and Long Positions Leads to Investing Success,” by Joseph Parnes, President of Technomart which is considered to be one of the top investment advisories in the United States. In what could become one of the leading blueprints for investing, Parnes describes the philosophy and methods he used to obtain consistent returns in the stock market by applying an understandable formula. Parnes also provides insights into the difference between option trading and shorting which make his system useful in both a bull market—one that is on the rise and where the economy is sound—and a bear market, which exists in an economy that is receding and where most stocks are declining in value. Within this framework, Parnes teaches the reader how to profit in a bear market and learn the secrets of long-term short selling strategy among other strategies.

Sponsor a 2020 Gabr Fellow

Sponsoring a Gabr Fellow for the 2020 Fellowship Program goes beyond financial support—it helps build bridges of cross-cultural understanding between the East and the West.

The sponsorship package costs \$35,000 which includes the sponsoring of a Fellow who can carry the name of the individual, organization, or corporation making the contribution.

Sponsors will be recognized in all Foundation publications, marketing materials, and at all events. [You may find information about how to become a Sponsor, Corporate Patron, or provide Unrestricted Support here.](#)



Life stands still in Egypt's City of the Dead as coronavirus fear spreads



By: Menna A. Farouk

CAIRO (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - It is a Friday morning in Egypt's City of the Dead, the day of the week when families usually visit cemeteries to remember their deceased loved ones.

But these days there are barely any visitors in the vast Cairo cemetery, which stretches over four miles and where tens of thousands of people have been living and working among the tombs for decades.

Fearful of catching the novel coronavirus, many Egyptians are staying away from public places like cemeteries, cutting off an essential source of income for the workers who rely on donations from the families of the dead to make a living.

Informal workers across the globe are highly vulnerable to the economic impact of the novel coronavirus outbreak, as people stay home either by choice or by government decree, say labour rights groups like the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF).

About 40% of Egypt's total workforce of 30 million people works in the informal sector, according to Egypt's Manpower Ministry, but groups such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) say the number is closer to 60%.

Gebali el-Maraghi, head of the ETUF, a state-affiliated independent organisation, says two-thirds of Egypt's informal workers have already lost their jobs due to the policies and public fear around the virus.

"Cafes, restaurants, barbershops, beauty salons, among others, are now closed ... taking a toll on their workers," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a phone interview.

Living in inadequate housing, with limited access to healthcare and no alternative source of income, Ahmed said he and other cemetery workers risk falling deeper into poverty the longer people stay away.

SILENT, CAUTIOUS

Built only as a burial site in the 7th century, the City of the Dead has transformed into one of the country's largest slums, home to more than 1.5 million people, according to official figures from 2017 - the latest available.

The families who work in the cemetery digging graves, burying bodies and maintaining the tombs and mausoleums say they have seen a steep drop in their incomes since the Egyptian Government announced a partial lockdown on March 21.

To try to slow the spread of COVID-19, which has infected more than 7,500 Egyptians according to Johns Hopkins University, the Government closed mosques and churches, and implemented a nightly curfew for residents while partially closing cafes, restaurants and shopping malls.

Ibrahim Radwan, 33, a street vendor who sells bread to people visiting the cemeteries at Sayeda Nafisa mosque, a five-minute walk from the City of the Dead, used to get between 15 and 30 customers a day.

Now, he says, he is lucky if he gets four customers over a whole weekend. "It is really devastating for my business," Radwan said. "I do not know how I will be able to feed my children."

Some 1.6 billion informal workers around the world, representing nearly half of the global labour force, are in immediate danger of losing their livelihoods due to the coronavirus pandemic, the ILO said last week.

To help Egypt's informal workers get through the pandemic, the government announced in March that it would give each worker a monthly grant of 500 Egyptian

pounds (\$32) for three months, which critics say is not enough for a family to live on.

NO CASES YET

Cemetery workers say no coronavirus cases have been reported in the City of the Dead and so far, no one with the virus has been buried there.

Ismail Abdel Haq, 59, has bought face masks, but only in case one day he needs to bury someone who had been infected.

“There is no reason yet to wear them. Moreover, it really suffocates me when I wear a mask, especially when I go underground to bury the corpses,” he said.

Haq said he and other workers in the cemetery have been given no guidance on how to protect themselves from contagion while they do their jobs.

“We do not know how to bury people who die of coronavirus,” he said as he washed down one of the tomb markers.

Traditionally, the deceased’s close family members clean the body themselves, before simply wrapping it in a white cloth.

The family then performs the funeral prayer, and male family members, with the help of cemetery workers, bury the body. All of this happens within 24 hours of death.

But in the midst of the outbreak, Egyptians who die after having developed COVID-19 must be buried under the supervision of the country’s health ministry, said Mona Mina, general coordinator of Doctors Without Rights, a lobby group.

The burial must use Government-employed undertakers who take strict precautions as they work, including keeping the body in a mortuary fridge, then disinfecting it using formaldehyde, she explained.

Finally, the body is shrouded in three layers of waterproof plastic and then buried by the family under supervision of ministry representatives, added Mina.

“All the people involved wear protective suits and follow all precautions necessary to avoid getting infected with the virus,” she explained. “Also, the lowest possible number of family members observe the process.”

MASS GRAVES

Some Government officials, such as Mahmoud Fouad, head of the Egyptian Center for the Right to Medicine, have called for mass graves in the desert to bury coronavirus victims and avoid spreading the infection.

Several cities around the world, including New York City, have resorted to using mass graves to accommodate the surge in burials since the start of the outbreak.

But Parliamentarian Mohamed Abdallah Zein el-Deen has said that the country’s coronavirus death toll is not high enough to warrant that step.

“As long as necessary precautionary measures are being taken, there is no need to talk about these mass cemeteries now,” Zein el-Deen said in a statement to the press last month.

A gravedigger said there is still space in the City of the Dead for more burials, but he is not sure how long that will be the case if the contagion rate in the country gets worse.

For now, his only concern is how to afford his family’s needs. He can only hope that the public’s fear of the coronavirus will subside soon, and visitors will return to the cemetery.

“There is no other solution but to get back to normal life,” he said. “If not, people like me will suffer a lot and will eventually die. If we do not die of the virus, we will die of poverty.”

Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the authors’ alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation. This article was originally published in the [Thomson Reuters Foundation](#). Menna A. Farouk is 2017 Gabr Fellow and a journalist for four years and is currently Front-page Editor of The Egyptian Gazette. **Stay tuned for more articles and thoughts from Gabr Fellows in the next newsletter.**

Egyptian Government Sends Critical PPE to America to Help Combat COVID-19

The Egyptian Government donated nearly eight tons of personal protective equipment (PPE), medical supplies, and other materials to “support the United States as it combats coronavirus,” in April. The supplies arrived on an Egyptian military aircraft at Joint Base Andrews on Tuesday.

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) and **Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger** (D-MD), the Republican and Democrat co-chairs of the House Egyptian Caucus, thanked Egypt and its people for this important gesture.



Jeff Fortenberry ✓
@JeffFortenberry

Thank you [@AlsisiOfficial](#) for the generous donation of PPE to our country. That this shipment arrived a day after Sham al Nassim, the ancient [#Egypt](#) holiday celebrating the start of Spring, is a testament to the timeless, authentic relationship between the US and Egyptian people



Dutch Ruppersberger ✓
@Call_Me_Dutch

As co-chair of the [#bipartisan](#) House Egyptian Caucus, I want to thank Egypt and its people for its generous donation of nearly 8 tons of desperately-needed PPE as we combat [t#COVID—19](#), especially as they are amid their own fight against the same outbreak...

The U.S. Embassy in Cairo also [tweeted](#), “On behalf of the American people, the U.S. government, and the U.S. embassy in Cairo, **Ambassador Jonathan Cohen** thanks the government and people of Egypt for their generous contribution of medical supplies which will help us confront the COVID-19 crisis.”



U.S. Embassy Cairo ✓
@USEmbassyCairo

On behalf of the American people, the U.S. government, and the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Ambassador Jonathan Cohen thanks the government and people of Egypt for their generous contribution of medical supplies which will help us confront the COVID-19 crisis. 🇪🇬 🇺🇸

[#usegyptrelations](#)

Question of the Month: A Pulse of the Gabr Fellowship Community



As the Gabr Fellows enter into leadership roles—in business, diplomacy, government, finance, and more—they will continue to grapple with significant challenges, magnified by an increased pace in technological advancement, the potential for ramped up global inequalities, and changes in governance and economic structures.

To better understand the pulse of the Gabr Fellowship community and to begin to articulate substantive dialogue, the Foundation polls the Fellows each month on the key issues facing their respective countries and the global community at large.

1. Did you know Egypt sent a military plane filled with medical aid and personal protective equipment (PPE) to the United States to help with coronavirus?

Yes: 52%

No: 48%

2. Egypt is in a very difficult neighbourhood with civil wars in Libya and a coup in Sudan, terrorist activity in Sinai, and an existential threat from Ethiopia with the Renaissance Dam. President Sisi requested to purchase F-35 aircraft from President Trump who agreed, but none were forthcoming. Egypt went ahead and purchased Su-35 aircraft from Russia. Is there a justification for a US threat to impose sanctions on Egypt?

Yes: 19%

No: 67%

I don't know: 14%

3. Should the U.S. cut military aid to Egypt (the plan is to cut the \$1.3 billion annual aid package by \$300 million) amid reports of human rights violations?

Yes: 56%

No: 37%

I don't know: 7%

4. Do you think President Trump will win reelection in 2020?

Yes: 37%

No: 48%

I don't know: 15%

Stay tuned for next month's question of the month and the Gabr Fellows' takes on current events, as our community of future leaders grapple with the most pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



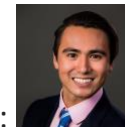
June 1: **Hadir Helal**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 5: **Dalia Ihab**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



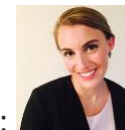
June 5: **Menna Farouk**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 13: **Wes Rogerson**, 2018 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



June 15: **Anis Issa**, 2016 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 19: **Abby Weidenhaefer**, 2016 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



June 23: **Marwa Abdallah**, 2018 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 23: **Sarah Bedar Heshamm**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 25: **Ahmed Aransho**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



June 26: **Elizabeth Dent**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



June 29: **Judson Moore**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, U.S.

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its *East-West: The Art of Dialogue* Initiative, please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>.

For earlier itineraries of the US program, please see the previous years' reports at <https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



Frederick Arthur Bridgman –Preparations for the Wedding, Algiers, 1894, The Shafik Gabr Collection

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