



GABR FELLOWS -- TOP ROW: EZEMUDI REDWOOD (2015), THOMAS HANNA (2016), HEIDI GREEN (2016), SHERIF SOLIMAN (2017), LAUREN ZIEGLER (2018); MIDDLE ROW: REEM SOLIMAN (2013), SARAH WALKER (2018), MUHAMMAD NAGI (2015), YARA ALBRAIDY (2018), CHASE BOWMAN (2014), ALEX GOLDMARK (2013), JEFF WALLS (2013), BRYAN GRIFFIN (2017), BECCA DOTEN (20013), MARWA ELSAYED (2018)

Gabr Fellows 2020

In early 2012 I launched my Foundation's East-West: The Art of Dialogue initiative. The program selects 20-22 emerging leaders from the US and Egypt and brings them together in an intensive exchange program across Egypt and the US.

The selected candidates have to meet strict criteria. It is a tough and intense selection process that takes close to 60 days. We end up with 20-22 Gabr Fellows; half American, half Egyptian, half men, half women. In certain years, third nationality applicants were added (UK-Lebanon-Jordan).

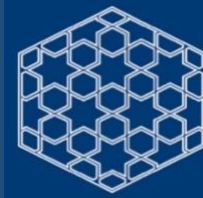
Over the years as I crisscrossed the world, I noticed the increasing lack of understanding between the West and the East. This manifested itself in conflicts, sanctions, embargoes, trade wars and more. At a time when the world needs more cooperation and shared interest we are faced with the phenomenon of each man (nation) for himself. Not the best script for the Covid-19 phase of history we are encountering now.

As I write this there are 120 Gabr Fellows that have been through the program and continue to be part of the family. The experience has been transformative in their lives and they have become beacons of light and positive change.

Today we have over 110 applicants from Egypt and the US and applicants from the UK, France and Jordan. Under normal circumstances we would have started the interviews on May 15th but that does not seem to be happening. With the uncertainty of the necessary face to face interviews, we will continue monitoring the situation but considering the Fellowship is meant to begin in August, it is possible that these dates will be pushed back. If this is the path we will follow, all applications from this period will be kept for the Gabr Fellows 2020 and considered for the new dates.

I know some have said, what about Skype, Zoom, etc. Whilst these great technological instruments are very efficient and effective they do not meet the key crux of the East-West Dialogue initiative which is face-to-face interaction and the opportunity to know the other via human experience, sharing culture and first-hand knowledge. Only by enhanced human interaction (minus all viruses), will we be able to understand each other and contribute to a better world.

M Shafik Gabr



The
SHAFIK GABR
Foundation

The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

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News and Updates...

Muhammad Nagi's Startup Goes Digital



2015 Gabr Fellow Muhammad Nagi's popular Egyptian co-working startup Al Maqarr launched <https://stayhome.almaqarr.com> as a way to mitigate the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic on their business which has resulted in the temporary closing all of their locations.

Their focus has been on cash flow and developing strategies for cash management as part of their overall business risk and continuity plans. Nagi anticipates Al Maqarr's newly-signed locations will be allowed to open by September.

Menna Farouk Wins Entry into Leadership Program



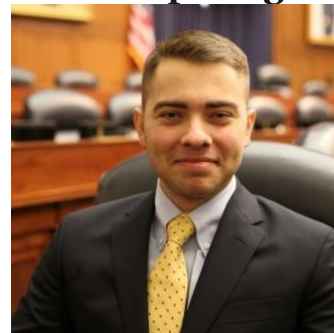
2017 Gabr Fellow Menna Farouk's startup was selected by the Swedish Institute for its She Entrepreneurs program. She Entrepreneurs is a leadership program for highly motivated women entrepreneurs in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) who are building successful and sustainable businesses with the potential to make a difference in their societies. Due to COVID-10, the program will be held online in June with expectations to hold its second part in November in Stockholm.

Alexis Taylor Helps Local Government Tackle COVID-19



2016 Gabr Fellow Alexis Taylor wrote COVID-19 recommendations to her local City Council in Austin, Texas, where she serves as a Commissioner for Economic Prosperity. Alexis recently began working with the Global Entrepreneurship Network as the Director for Global Engagement.

Charles Truxall Selected for Fellowship Program



2018 Gabr Fellow Charles Truxall was selected for the George C. Marshall Fellowship at the Heritage Foundation. The program provides exceptional young professionals with the opportunity to appreciate the development of grand strategy and the practice of strategic leadership with a focus on national security.

Abdelrahman Amr Prepares Thesis Defense



2017 Gabr Fellow Abdelrahman Amr is completing his thesis at the Communication University of China in Global Communication and preparing for his thesis defense later this month. Due to COVID-19, and his inability to enter China, his defense will be presented online.

Heidi Green Learns Arabic Sign Language



2016 Gabr Fellow Heidi Green has been working from home and picked up a new hobby: Arabic sign language. Heidi already speaks Arabic at near-fluency levels. She is also a sign language interpreter on a part-time basis.

Erika Witt Works on Doctoral Thesis



2014 Gabr Fellow Erika Witt been working on her Doctoral Thesis on Tracing the Appreciation of Traditional African Arts in Cultural Institutions at Louisiana State University in New Orleans, where she lives. All of her classes have transitioned to online. She has started up beading and creating waist beads which is traditional in ancient Egypt and African societies.

Judson Moore Helps Launch COVID-19 Tracking App



2017 Gabr Fellow Judson Moore has been heavily involved in a project called [Trace to Zero](#). It's an app-based contact tracing solution to help people get notified when (and where) they have come into contact with people who have tested positive for coronavirus. They are working in collaboration with MIT and the WHO to address privacy concerns, as well as a variety of other partners who have offered us a wealth of resources and access to the required technology to build this solution. The app will be available in the US iOS and Android app stores this month.

Michael Matthiesen Gets Published



2017 Gabr Fellow Michael Matthiesen is working on publishing an article on improving gateway math pass rates corresponding with a Florida 2013 law and U.S. Department of Education funding interests which makes remedial classes optional. Michael is also engaging in finals at Florida International University's College of Law where he is pursuing his Juris Doctor (JD) degree.

Ezemudi Redwood Sells Startup



2015 Gabr Fellow Ezemudi Redwood's startup LV8 was acquired by Lillian James Creative. Eze started LV8 with a friend. It is focused on solving hard problems including reducing crime and helping small businesses scale. Lillian James is a virtual outsource marketing department for companies. a strategy and marketing consultancy. Eze also co-owns two artisan wings restaurant in Kansas City called [Wings Cafe](#).

Dalia Younis Creates Online Music Space



2017 Gabr Fellow Dalis Younis started an online initiative to collaborate with musicians to create covers of famous songs. Dalia has over 64,000 followers on her fan page. Here is a link to the playlist: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/dalia.ihab.younis/695052714368121/>. For years, Dalia's music has helped build bridges between cultures. In her fulltime capacity, Dalia serves as a Communications Officer at UNICEF.

Katherine Tan Helps Gates Foundation Tackle Coronavirus



2016 Gabr Fellow Katherine Tan works as a program officer at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation which is putting money and effort into medical interventions that are needed to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. A lot of her work is focused on how to collectively – with governments -- finance the global response to COVID-19 particularly in terms of medical intervention like vaccines, therapeutics, diagnostics and improving health systems around the world.

Meet the Gabr Fellows

Bryan Griffin, 2017 Gabr Fellow, U.S.

Name: Bryan Griffin

Profession: Director, Maccabee Task Force

Since my fellowship, I have moved back to my hometown of Tampa, Florida from Las Vegas. I purchased my first home, a 120-year-old Victorian, and have slowly been fixing it up myself. I continue to work as the director for the Maccabee Task Force, and we have expanded our partnership roster to 120 campuses both nationally and overseas. Work now brings me all over Europe, South Africa, and Australia -- in addition to regular trips to Israel and the Palestinian Territories. In Tampa, I have founded two companies: The Griffin Organization, which specializes in real estate development and sales, and Flower Crown Kombucha, which brews and sells fermented tea products. In 2019 I was selected to participate in the Warsaw Security Forum as a middle east policy specialist of the [New Security Leaders](#) cohort.

Three years after my experience with the Gabr Fellowship, I still fondly look back on my time and consistently engage with my fellow 2017 participants. I consider much of my cohort to be friends for life. The Gabr Fellowship provided an incredible opportunity to form an important foundational knowledge on regional issues and Egyptian history and politics, which I call upon frequently in my line of work. My experience gave me the ability to speak personally and intelligently about issues facing the Egyptian, Arab, Muslim, and Coptic Christian communities in the Middle East. It also gave me a network of Egyptian friends whom I can call upon for perspective and to exchange thoughts on current affairs. More importantly, I care about the continued well-being of my classmates and the Gabr professionals I met, so I am frequently in touch to catch-up. What was once a foreign part of the world now seems familiar and holds many close friends. The personal growth I experienced and relationships I built in the Fellowship are incredibly dear to me and I am so thankful for the opportunity given to me by Mr. Gabr.



Karim El Sharkawy, 2018 Gabr Fellow, Egypt

Name: Karim El Sharkawy

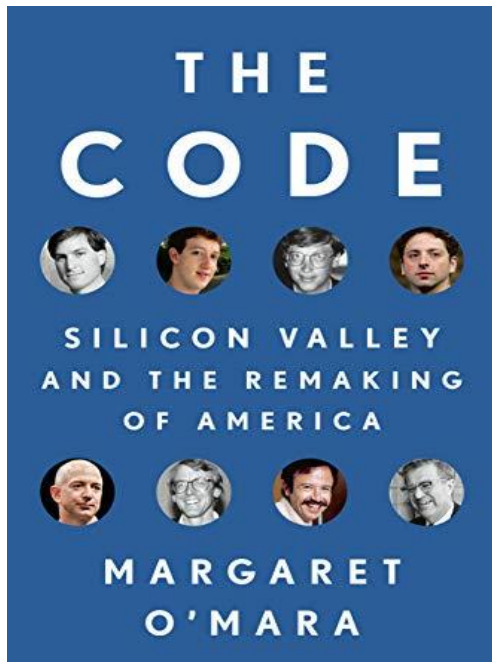
Profession: Diplomatic Attaché at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

I am a diplomatic attaché at the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, currently assigned to the Israeli department. Before seeking a career in diplomacy, I worked with startups and NGOs pertaining to climate change and renewable energy. During my undergraduate tenure, I founded Metal Blast; a startup that organized alternative music festivals in Cairo.

The Gabr Fellowship has influenced my life in many ways. It gave me a proper introduction to American culture. Being able to spend time with Fellows from different states and backgrounds, and visiting the United States for the first time shaped my perspective towards it. Moreover, the Fellowship helped me in honing many of my skills. In particular, the Fellowship taught me the importance of networking which is central to my career. Yet, my favorite part remains in the Alumni program and our monthly meetings. Constantly engaging with Mr. Gabr and the other Fellows gives me insights to many different perspectives on many different topics. But, most importantly, it feels like family, and it underlines the importance of supporting one another for me.



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 “The Code: Silicon Valley and the Remaking of America,” by Margaret O’Mara; a woman who is seen as one of the most consequential historians of the American-led digital revolution.

The book tells the story of how the Department of Defense bankrolled Silicon Valley and helped turn it into the behemoth it is today. O’Mara digs into the infamous region’s past and walks the reader through the critical role Stanford University played in acting as a vessel to distribute these defense dollars and building the region up to its current namesake including the role of an electrical engineer, Fred Terman, who in the immediate postwar era persuaded several businesses to move to the area including Hewlett-Packard, the co-inventor of the transistor, and the man who would go on to become the founder of Intel.

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.](#)



Seek Help, say Middle East women's group as domestic violence surges



By: Menna A. Farouk

AMMAN/CAIRO (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Coronavirus lockdowns have brought a surge in reports of domestic violence in the Middle East, women's groups have said, warning hard-won gains in protection for victims are at risk.

In Lebanon, calls to a government domestic violence hotline have doubled; in Tunisia, authorities say cases have increased five-fold, while in Jordan, a video of a victim tearfully describing her abuse under lockdown has gone viral.

Countries all over the world have reported increases in domestic violence as families are cooped up together at home, prompting the head of the United Nations Antonio Guterres to call for urgent government action.

But the situation in the Middle East is particularly worrying, say women's rights activists, because governments have recently stepped up protections for those at risk.

Some fear those fragile gains are being jeopardised by restrictions on movement to

curb the spread of the coronavirus that have forced women behind closed doors.

"We're seeing the nature of the violence become more severe and there are more death threats," said Ghida Anani, founder and director of ABAAD, which runs shelters for women in Lebanon.

"With the cases that are turning up at the shelters right now, we're seeing a violence more severe than before the financial crisis and even during the revolution."

Domestic violence cases are up about 20% since the lockdown started in March, Anani told the Thomson Reuters Foundation from Lebanon, where authorities have closed all but essential businesses.

The lockdown has exacerbated the difficulties faced by many households in Lebanon, where a financial crisis led to a mass uprising in October 2019, with money worries a common factor in domestic violence.

ABAAD is running Skype counselling sessions both for victims and for men with a history of violence.

The group has also teamed up with the government to distribute family aid kits containing household essentials, family support brochures and helpline contacts, Anani said.

Authorities are also playing a key role in Tunisia, where authorities say cases increased five-fold under a strict curfew that is being enforced by the army and has been extended until April 19.

The government has allocated eight shelters for victims and their children with additional

facilities planned, said Tigris al-Qatiri, who heads Tunisia's department for combating violence against women.

The Association of Tunisian Women for Research and Development, a women's group, started a solidarity and awareness campaign under the slogan "you are not alone" in an effort to reach isolated victims.

GOVERNMENTS OVERWHELMED

Across the region, women's groups are desperately trying to get the message out to victims in isolation, with governments' attention diverted by the coronavirus crisis.

Suad Abu-Dayyeh, consultant for women's rights campaigners Equality Now, said governments in the region had "completely forgotten the whole issue of the violence against women aspect of coronavirus".

"I imagine there's a lot of pressure on governments, but they have to take into consideration how to work with civil society organisations to deal with violence against women."

In Morocco, where a 2019 government survey found more than half of women experienced violence but less than 7% had reported it, advocacy group Mobilising for Rights Associates has launched an emergency response site with details of support services.

Founding partner Stephanie Willman Bordat said violence was now being driven by men in lockdown with their families after long periods away.

"Because police resources are taken up with other things like enforcing the curfew... the men think they can get away with violence with impunity," she added.

Women's groups have also had to intervene in Jordan, where the government's family protection department has been overwhelmed.

But Salma Nims, secretary general of the Jordanian National Commission for Women, said the restrictions on movement meant they could offer only limited help - even as the problem grew.

"Usually the abuser is not at home, or the victim can leave the house to work or go to school but mitigation is now more difficult because they're stuck at home," Nims said from Amman, where a strict curfew has been in place since March 21.

The issue was thrown into relief in Jordan when a video of a woman detailing how the abuse she had long faced became worse under lockdown went viral on social media.

Nims said local groups were offering support over the phone and online, and sharing helpline numbers on social media with the message "do not hesitate," encouraging victims to seek help in a country where two thirds of women never do.

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.**

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. Do you agree with President Trump's decision to cut aid to the World Health Organization after news broke that the WHO was conspiring with China?

Yes: 25%

No: 70%

I don't know: 5%

2. With the failure of mediation in talks between Egypt, Ethiopia, and Sudan over the Nile River and building of a controversial dam, could this development result in an all-out war?

Yes: 25%

No: 43%

I don't know: 32%

3. Do you agree with President Trump's decision to open the American economy again amid the coronavirus pandemic?

Yes: 34%

No: 59%

I don't know: 7%

4. How long will it take Egypt's economy to recover from the economic damage caused by COVID-19?

6 months: 14%

1 year: 42%

2 years: 44%

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



May 1: **Ola Ali**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



May 7: **Ahmed El Habibi**, 2013 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



May 10: **Nayra Gadallah**, 2016 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



May 11: **Hani El Zoumor**, 2016 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



May 18: **Hanan Khayal**, 2018 Gabr Fellow, Egypt



May 18: **Kristina Ryan**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



May 22: **Chase Bowman**, 2014 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



May 23: **Michelle Matus**, 2015 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



May 25: **Courtney Joline**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



May 30: **RJ Johnson**, 2017 Gabr Fellow, U.S.



May 30: **Yasser El Zahar**, 2016 Gabr Fellow, Egypt

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 – In the Souk, Tunis, 1874, The Shafik Gabr Collection

Connect with us



<https://eastwestdialogue.org/>

info@shafikgabrfoundation.org

The Shafik Gabr Foundation
400 North Capitol Street NW, Suite 585
Washington, DC 20001

7 Hassan Al-Akbar Street
Cairo, Egypt, 11571