

DUKEENGAGE IN LEBANON

Preparing young people in the Middle East for higher education

Dates: June 22 - August 17, 2018

(Dates subject to change up until the point of departure.)

Service Themes

- Children & Youth Services
- Education & Literacy
- Immigration & Refugees

Program Focus

Becoming team members of the Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP) BRIDGE program; planning for and teaching English and SAT prep courses and offering college and career counseling to capable marginalized Lebanese and refugee students to prepare them for higher education in Lebanon and beyond.

Curricular Connections: While all students are welcome to apply, this program may be of particular interest to students studying Political Science, Middle Eastern Studies, Religious Studies, Global Health, or refugee issues. (See below for additional details about connecting this program to your academic work.)

Program Leader

Abdullah Antepi, Chief Representative of Muslim Affairs and Senior Fellow, Duke Office of Civic Engagement. Imam Antepi completed his basic training and education in his native Turkey. From 1996-2003 he worked on a variety of faith-based humanitarian and relief projects in Myanmar (Burma) and Malaysia with the Association of Social and Economic Solidarity with Pacific Countries. He is the founder and executive board member of the Association of College Muslim Chaplains (ACMC) and a board member of the Association for College and University Religious Affairs (ACURA).

Program Overview

DukeEngage-Lebanon works in partnership with the Lebanese service organization Unite Lebanon Youth Project (ULYP). Based in Beirut for eight weeks, students focus on providing a five-week program that guides and counsels 75 marginalized yet capable high school students and leads them on the path to higher education. The program starts with two weeks of planning and training to prepare the DukeEngage students for their roles teaching English and SAT prep, and concludes with one week of reporting.

Unite Lebanon Youth Project actualizes the human right to education TODAY for marginalized and refugee communities in Lebanon without discrimination on any basis. A disadvantaged child, youth or woman is not synonymous to one with no potential. Through sports, coding, arts, university preparation and English, ULYP allows its beneficiaries to access education immediately and helps them realize that differences are a cause for celebration not conflict. The DukeEngage-Lebanon program focuses on the service of improving the English skills of the students who come from impoverished backgrounds, including the refugee camps and disadvantaged Lebanese areas.

The themes embodied in this project (college preparation education of high school youths, public health issues in the Middle East, and Middle Eastern politics and culture) make Beirut an exemplary site for a DukeEngage program. This is not just a Middle Eastern focused program; it is a program focused on timely and crucial education issues for which Beirut can serve as a model for many other parts of the world. Beirut, long called “the Paris of the Middle East,” has an excellent geographical location on the Mediterranean coastline, and is a vibrant, cosmopolitan city. There has recently

been a great deal of new construction and infrastructure development in Beirut with high rise condominiums along the coastline, shops, restaurants, and the wonderful downtown Saturday morning Farmer's Market.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

This program aims to foster an ethic of service and civic participation in students who will be tomorrow's volunteers and civic leaders. Students will:

- Experience and practice service-learning as a pedagogy to deepen understanding of the Middle East, various political turmoil in the region, and the refugee crisis
- Engage in active learning about relief and humanitarian work that demonstrates the relevance and importance of academic work for their life experience and career choices
- Increase awareness of current societal issues and recent global developments as they relate to students' areas of interest
- Broaden their perspectives on diversity issues and enhance critical thinking skills by exposure to radically different social, economic and cultural settings
- Improve interpersonal skills, which are increasingly viewed as important skills in achieving success in professional and personal spheres, by working as part of a team and with various local partner organizations
- Develop civic responsibility and a stronger sense of civic duty through active community involvement
- Provide substantial human resources to meet educational, human, safety, and environmental needs of local and global communities, especially impoverished ones
- Contribute their energy and enthusiasm to the support of the community partner's vision and mission

Partnership Opportunities

DukeEngage students will work with our community partner, ULYP, for approximately 40 hours a week while contributing to the mission and needs of the organization and its beneficiaries. DukeEngage Lebanon participants will benefit from the expertise of ULYP in offering such a program and add to the program their expertise and experiences as Duke students. The planning and reporting weeks are hosted at the ULYP office in the heart of Beirut and the teaching weeks are hosted on the ULYP campus just south of Beirut in the beautiful area of Dibbiyeh. Participants will work in teams of two per classroom and will become mentors for their students, overseeing their progress on an almost daily basis.

DukeEngage students will arrive in Lebanon at the end of the holy month of Ramadan, and will spend the first two weeks planning the BRIDGE program. Then the program is launched and the students start the teaching weeks. Teaching takes place four days a week, Monday through Thursday, and Friday is a reflection and planning day. After the five-week teaching program, students will be involved with reporting and wrapping up their work with ULYP.

Program Requirements

Language: None required, but an interest in or basic-to-advanced experience with Arabic or French language is an advantage. Opportunity to practice Arabic or French language is abundant. All Lebanese high school graduates have undergone French and English immersion courses, so are typically tri-lingual (Arabic, French, English).

Coursework: None.

Other Skills: ULYP has identified technical skills, such as IT skills for lesson planning and reporting, preparing presentations and teaching some basic IT skills to the students, as advantageous for this program.

Personal Qualities:

- Ability to manage stress in novel environments; seeks to recognize and regulate stress reactions in themselves and calmly practices coping strategies that work for them; seeks help from others when they feel overwhelmed.
- Ability to work productively on a supervised team; responds to feedback and critique from co-workers and supervisors with maturity and openness to improvement; listens actively and communicates courteously; responds with patience and perseverance to new or unanticipated situations and obstacles; accepts responsibility for their

actions; balances their personal expectations of the DukeEngage volunteer experience with the realities of working on short-term projects in cultural and workplace settings that are new to them.

- Self-reliance and self-confidence; understands and meets their own physical and emotional needs in new environments with an age-appropriate mixture of optimism and realism.
- Empathy and cultural sensitivity; effectively and respectfully communicates and interacts with people of different ages, races, religions, and cultures; demonstrates curiosity about the lives of others without judgment.
- Self-awareness; possesses an age-appropriate understanding of the personal strengths and weaknesses they bring to a DukeEngage project/program; able to articulate their beliefs and values, and to state authentically their personal motivation to serve as a volunteer; demonstrates an awareness of how others may view them in a variety of cultural settings.
- Problem solving and goal orientations; possesses strong analytical skills and an interest in producing deliverable end-projects for a community partner organization, e.g., preparation of manual of teaching strategies and learning activities used, ability to engage students in the content of the classes, ability to maintain control of students in classroom, etc.

Curricular Connections

The opportunities afforded through this program should appeal to students working in areas of Arabic or French foreign language studies, psychology, education, political science, and cultural studies. The program director and DukeEngage staff can help direct students to courses, research projects, and faculty members connected to the themes of this program upon students' return.

Program Details

Description of Community: Beirut is a city made for walking and exploring. You will see many Lebanese walking along the Mediterranean waterfront (called the Corniche) each morning. Hamra and Gemmayze are bustling neighborhoods with shops and restaurants. Beirut is an easy city for walking from Gemmayze to Hamra past downtown along the waterfront. This is also a great jogging route for students so inclined. The city has a fascinating history and the Lebanese people are warm, charming, and welcoming. To experience the culture of Lebanon, students will participate in several organized enrichment activities in Beirut and other areas of Lebanon.

Housing and Meals: It is expected that students will live at Bayt Em Nazeh in the Hamra district of Beirut.

<https://www.hamragardens.com/en/> Students will live in 2- or 4-bedroom suites, in either single or shared rooms, sharing one bathroom/shower. Students will have electricity, air conditioning, and wireless internet. There are laundry facilities on-site, or a pick-up/drop off service is available for a small fee. The facility also has a well-equipped gym. If you do not eat certain types of food for cultural, religious or personal reasons, please contact the DukeEngage office, dukeengage@duke.edu, to discuss whether your dietary needs can be reasonably accommodated at this program site.

Bayt Em Nazeh is located in an urban suburb of Beirut called Hamra, which is the mostly Sunni-Muslim neighborhood west of downtown. Bayt Em Nazeh is close to multiple forms of public transportation, restaurants, and shops in the western section of Beirut, is within walking distance from the American University of Beirut campus, and is a short drive to downtown Beirut. This location has been chosen so students experience the culture and diversity of the city of Beirut, and meet other students from around the world who are staying at Bayt Em Nazeh during the summer.

Breakfast is included in room-and-board fees at Bayt Em Nazeh in the downstairs open-air restaurant, Café Nazih, known for delicious manouches! Students will be given a stipend to cover the costs of daily lunch/dinner meals during the program. There will be no access to a kitchen, but the café also serves lunch and dinner, and students are free to take advantage of the many coffee shops, cafes, and restaurants close by. There are also many small family-run grocery stores in the area. Because the American University of Beirut-AUB campus is so close, there are many coffee shops, corner stores, and a host of student-oriented restaurants along Bliss Avenue. Except on the nights of our group dinners when we eat together as a group, students may choose to shop and eat together or in small groups.

Transportation: Beirut is a very walkable city, but public buses or taxis are also readily available. Students will travel to their placement via public bus or taxi during the first and last weeks while working in Hamra. After that time, there will be a ULYP bus that will pick up students to transport them to the ULYP campus outside of Beirut. The commute from Bayt Em Nazeh to the ULYP campus takes about 45 minutes. For transportation to their work placement, the cost will be paid by the DukeEngage Lebanon budget. For all other personal activities, students will either walk or travel by bus or taxi at their own cost. There is a taxi stand one block from Bayt Em Nazeh and a bus stop about two blocks away. During program field trips, students will be driven in rental vans by program staff or guides.

Communication: Students are encouraged to bring a laptop for their personal use. They will not need their laptops outside of the planning and reporting weeks when working at the ULYP offices. There are desktop computers at the ULYP campus where classes will be held. Internet access in Lebanon is notoriously slow. There is wireless at Bayt Em Nazeh, but this can be slow. Alternately, there are plenty of cafes and restaurants that offer free wifi. Most placements will involve some time in front of a computer and students should have some internet access while at their placement. Students will also be provided a Lebanese cell phone during their stay in Beirut. Students are provided one cell phone with renewable minutes for their use during the duration of the program, and if lost, must be replaced out of student contingency fees. Cell phone calls are very expensive in Lebanon, so texting is the normal way of communicating.

Local Safety and Security; Cultural Norms, Mores and Practices: As part of their planning, DukeEngage strongly advises all prospective applicants to familiarize themselves with the common challenges travelers encounter at this program site in order to make an informed application decision that is right for them. We recommend starting with these two resources:

- the International SOS (ISOS) portal for up-to-the-minute travel, health and security advice ([Log in to the Duke ISOS portal](#) with your Duke NetID)
- the [Diversity, Identity and Global Travel](#) section of the DukeEngage website.

Opportunities for Reflection: The site coordinator and or/program director will lead regular reflection sessions in which students will be expected to participate. Each student will be asked to maintain a personal reflective journal of his/her experience, as well participate in regular postings on the program's blog site. As a group, we will meet weekly for reflection sessions to discuss work experiences, as well as occasional individual sessions with the site coordinator/faculty member as opportunities arise. We will also meet as a group for a weekly dinner at one of Beirut's many restaurants to learn more about Lebanese culture and the role that food/meals play in that culture. Students will also have the opportunity to interact with multiple speakers during the program who will talk to us about topics such as Middle Eastern politics, women's roles in business in Lebanon, and public health issues in the Middle East.

Other Opportunities: Students will be working in their placements Monday-Friday from approximately 9am to 4pm (as well as occasional evenings when a special event requires their participation). There will also be times that grading student papers will need to be done over a weekend. Group dinners and reflection (one night) are scheduled for evenings during the week. This schedule has been designed to ensure that students have some limited free time to pursue social activities or relax, as well as time for service and language studies. The group will also likely be invited to numerous community events and in-home gatherings. While there will be some downtime, students should not anticipate a great deal of autonomy. Ocean swimming will not be allowed in any DukeEngage program.

More Information

Books:

- *From Beirut to Jerusalem* by Thomas Friedman (1989). An older book, but it has been recently updated. It gives an overview of some of the historical conflicts that provide background for students on issues currently taking place in Lebanon, Israel, and Syria today.
- *Beware of Small States: Lebanon, Battleground of the Middle East* by David Hirst (2010)
- *House of Many Mansions* by Kamal Salibi
- *Pity the Nation* by Robert Fisk (2002). Robert Fisk's explosive *Pity the Nation* recounts Sharon and Arafat's first deadly encounter in Lebanon in the early 1980s and explains why the Israel-Palestine relationship seems so

intractable. A remarkable combination of war reporting and analysis by an author who has witnessed the carnage of Beirut for 25 years, Fisk, the first journalist to whom bin Laden announced his jihad against the U.S., is one of the world's most fearless and honored foreign correspondents. He spares no one in this saga of the civil war and subsequent Israeli invasion: the PLO, whose thuggish behavior alienated most Lebanese; the various Lebanese factions, whose appalling brutality spared no one; the Syrians, who supported first the Christians and then the Muslims in their attempt to control Lebanon; and the Israelis, who tried to install their own puppets and, with their 1982 invasion, committed massive war crimes of their own. It includes a moving finale that recounts the travails of Fisk's friend Terry Anderson who was kidnapped by Hezbollah and spent 2,454 days in captivity. Fully updated to include the Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and Ariel Sharon's electoral victory over Ehud Barak, this edition has 60 pages of new material and a new preface. This is a long book, but even if you read one chapter you would be more knowledgeable about the history and politics of Lebanon and the Middle East.

Movies:

- West Beirut (1998). A drama about the Civil War in Lebanon (1975-1991).
- Where do we go now? Or "Et maintenant on va où?" [original title] (2011). By renowned Lebanese director, Nadine Labaki. A group of Lebanese women try to ease religious tensions between Christians and Muslims in their village.
- Incendies (2010). Twins journey to the Middle East to discover their family history, and fulfill their mother's last wishes.