DDC Landscapes the New Cairo Campus

When I applied for the Presidential Internship Program, I was not expecting to end up in the middle of a construction site surrounded by 7,000 workers and heavy machinery. When I arrived in Cairo, however, I realized that the construction of the new campus would play a major role in my internship year.

In preparation for my interview for the internship, I visited the Web site of the Desert Development Center (DDC), where I saw dozens of photos and stories about farming in the desert. I knew nothing about agriculture, but when I arrived in Cairo, I was excited to learn about crops, livestock and irrigation. In addition to the DDC’s continuous work researching desert technologies and serving desert farmers, it is responsible for all the landscaping on AUC’s New Cairo Campus. Once completed, there will be more than 7,000 trees and palm trees, and tens of thousands more shrubs and ground covers. Fortunately, not all of this planting and planning have occurred during my single year here.

Continued on page 3

Intern Helps St. Andrew’s Provide Hope to Refugees

By Kelsey Norman
Staff writer

Heading north of downtown and walking toward Boulak can be an overwhelming experience. Shouts of “behalash! behalash! kamaa gignaa!” sound shockingly quiet compared to the perpetual honking, screaming and screeching that create a general atmosphere of chaos along 26th of July street, under the 6th of October bridge. Yet somehow, nestled in a small courtyard just next to the Abdul Nasser metro stop exists an oasis of tranquility, calm and possibly, the friendliest smiles to be found in the whole of Cairo.

St. Andrews School for Refugees is a peaceful haven of learning and community for several hundred refugees. The students range from young children to adults, and most of them come from the Horn of Africa countries (Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti). In 2005, the United Nations essentially halted the granting of refugee status to migrants from this area, leaving the refugee population in a strangled position and unable to obtain work, attend public schools or return to their countries. With little chance of resettlement and recent outbreaks of violence toward refugees in Egypt, the role of St. Andrew’s as a safe haven and community is more important than ever.

St. Andrew’s has several incredibly dedicated full-time staff members, but relies heavily on volunteers to work as either teachers or tutors for its 800 students. Because it is not affiliated with the Egyptian government and is not accredited, St. Andrew’s cannot grant degrees. However, for the first time this year, several high school students were funded to sit for the General Certificate of Secondary Education exams (the British equivalent of the General Educational Development tests) in hopes that this documentation might allow them to qualify for scholarships or be able to obtain jobs. I had the privilege of teaching a high-school class of several students aged 16 to 22 in order to prepare them for their GCSE in biology.

continued on next page
Groundbreaking New Project at the SRC
Implementing Conditional Cash Transfers in Egypt

By Kristina Hallez
Staff goddess

The Social Research Center (SRC), in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Solidarity, is in the process of designing a conditional cash transfer (CCT) scheme to be implemented in Egypt.

Dubbed the Ain El-Sira Project, the proposal is to pilot a system for granting cash transfers to low-income families in the impoverished Cairo area of Ain El-Sira. Receipt of the transfer, however, is contingent on the beneficiary households fulfilling certain conditions, including the enrollment of children between the ages of 3 and 15 in school, as well as attending regular health check-ups. This use of CCTs is intended to provide both short-term economic relief to poor families while enabling investment in human capital to yield long-term results. Support programs, such as job training, will be offered through participating civil society organizations, and the Ministry of Social Solidarity will employ social workers to aid each family in securing the services it desperately needs.

Although CCT programs have been implemented globally (especially in Latin America) and are producing successful results, Turkey remains the only country in the Middle East and North Africa region to have experimented with such a design. The Ain El-Sira Project aims to adapt an approach that had largely positive effects on impoverished communities in both middle and low-income countries.

The conditional cash transfer pilot program to be implemented in Ain El-Sira is designed to pool existing human and material resources, namely the Ministry of Social Solidarity, CSOs and the private sector, to endow impoverished families in an urban setting with developmental capabilities. The SRC functions as the Middle East hub of the research consortium Pathways of Women's Empowerment, which is funded by the UK Department of International Development, has been developing the pilot in this capacity. Because a working relationship has been established with the Ministry of Social Solidarity, the pilot will serve as a model that the ministry intends to implement on a larger scale in Egypt.

On January 30 and 31, 2008, the SRC hosted a workshop titled “Introducing Empowering Conditional Cash Transfers to Egypt,” to garner insights and experiences of colleagues, both local and international, pertaining to the design and future implementation of the Ain El-Sira Project. Foreign presenters included a range of experts from Latin America and the United Kingdom. These experts have worked closely on such projects, including the two largest and longest-running CCT programs to date: Oportunidades in Mexico and Bolsa Família in Brazil. Directly following the workshop, participants were invited to meet with the Minister of Social Solidarity Ali El Mostohly to discuss the advantages and challenges of employing CCTs within the Egyptian context. Throughout the summer, the SRC has been working to finalize design plans in order to begin implementation of the pilot program toward the end of the year.

Continued from page 1

When I first visited St. Andrew’s in September 2007, the adult program administrator, Fiona, informed me that the school was sorely in need of a science teacher. Having studied political science in college, I explained that I was completely unqualified to teach natural sciences, but Fiona was insistent that there was no one else and I nervously agreed. She also promised that textbooks would be available as soon as they arrived from England, but that for now, I should just make up the curriculum as I saw fit.

For my first lesson, I had the students naming and drawing plant and animal cells, and by the end of an hour they had memorized all of the organelles and their functions and could recite the differences between the two types of cells. I was amazed at their abilities and quickly realized that, with their rate of retention, I was going to need to do a lot more planning and revision in order to keep up with them.

The textbooks didn’t arrive until December (thanks to bureaucratic complications), so for the first three months I was left to research, write lesson plans and haphazardly teach incredibly bright students what I believed were the fundamentals of biology.

"The textbooks didn’t arrive until December (thanks to bureaucratic complications), so for the first three months I was left to research, write lesson plans and haphazardly teach incredibly bright students what I believed were the fundamentals of biology."
AUC On the Move, In the Theater

On May 15, 2008, AUC interns thrilled audiences with a theatrical vision of next year's relocation to the New Cairo Campus. The play, dubbed AUC On The Move, was performed in Egyptian colloquial Arabic in front of a packed audience in the Falaki Mainstage Theatre.

The performance was part of a larger initiative by the student life office aimed at encouraging Arabic drama productions in foreign language classes. In addition to the play performed by the interns, another play, the Key of Life, was written and directed by Mahmoud Hamza.

Interns humorously portrayed a possible bus stop scene, lightly parodying common AUC stereotypes. Peter Wieben’s rendition of a "Gucci girl" was popular with the audience, as was Kelsey Norman’s portrayal of a clueless study-abroad student from Georgetown University. Scott Nelson and Kristina Haliez played depressed cats; Gaetan Damberg-Ott portrayed a "smooth" male AUC student, and Celia Smalls performed as her boss, President David Arnold.

The interns had only four days to write the script, and they were nervous about performing publically.

Originally led to believe that the Arabic play they created was a class exercise, they were convinced to participate in the show by their persuasive Arabic teacher Mariam Hamdy.

Although feeling slightly conned by their Arabic teacher, interns were pleased with the experience. "We were duped, but it turned out to be fun," said Haliez. "I hope this becomes a yearly intern tradition."

"With bulldozers and dump trucks being driven around the New Cairo Campus and with the usual Cairene driving habits, the DDC has been limited to planting in areas where construction is nearly finished."
**Weekend Getaways**

*Interns share their favorite retreats away from the bustle and bustle of Cairo*

**Basata: Beach Hippie Dreamland**

BY FAUZIA DAWOOD  
Staff writer

If there’s one thing that four years of college in Manhattan had taught me, it’s that the beach hippie’s lifestyle is the way to go. Discovering Basata, a pretty rad eco lodge on the Gulf of Aqaba on the Red Sea, was by far my one and only calling when I moved to Cairo. Within two months of being here, I, along with the six other interns, had ventured out on the drive (which takes eight hours by bus and four hours by taxi) across the Sinai peninsula to sleep in beach huts, wake up to the Saudi mountains pouring in over us and the sound of ... absolutely nothing. This simplistic beach haven, Basata, has become my sanctuary, my escape from the Cairo horns, smog and traffic hell.

Established in 1986 by Egyptian engineer and conservationist Sherif El Ghanrawy, Basata offers a unique experience for tourists looking for something other than fancy hotels and lush resorts. A simple, environmentally friendly lodge, Basata offers various kinds of accommodations: chalets, huts, and tent camping. The staff members are friendly and helpful; most speak English, German and Arabic. The eco lodge offers bike rentals, snorkeling, safari trips, and affordable private taxis to and from Cairo as well as to and from St. Catherine’s Monastery and Mount Sinai.

I spent as many weekends as I could living in Basata. Finally, my beach hippie dreams had been realized.

**Ismailia: Sun and Suez**

Although small, Ismailia can provide a much-desired refuge from the heat and intensity of Cairo. The tree-lined promenades are a welcome change of scenery as families galavant and frolic, especially during the dusk hours. Both men and women take advantage of wide streets by running and biking. The Nadi Shata (admission for LE 10 per day) proved a popular hangout for Ismailians looking to take a dip in the Suez or lounge on the grassy open spaces. Men dominate the swimming scene, and though a few women were spotted in modest maillots, ladies should probably avoid the water.

Nights can be spent cruising the strip (Sharia El Sawra) in search of cheap seafood (Nefertiti restaurant has delicious calamari) and perhaps indulging in an overpriced brew at George’s Pub, where a bottle of Stella costs LE 20. Those looking for ful and taamiya-type Egyptian fare can find it at Africano, but do stay away from the canned peach juice. Lodging seems to be a bit on the expensive side (New Palace Hotel was LE 175 for a triple room), unless you can snag a room at the supposedly cheaper Youth Hostel a few kilometers from town. That said, the New Palace was clean, with air conditioning units in each room, as well as friendly staff members who enjoyed a Barbara Streisand film with us over breakfast (included) one morning.

If you are a woman who would like to swim, the Red Sea may be a better destination for you. However, if you want little more than some good food and quiet, a trip to Ismailia can be a perfect gateway from Cairo. It is close, affordable priced and full of the fresh air and greenery that is in short supply in the overcrowded city.

**More Egyptian Getaway Recommendations:**

- Siwa Oasis  
- Alexandria  
- Dahab  
- Minya  
- Black and White Deserts  
- RockSea Resort  
- Marina  
- Bahariyya Oasis

**The Zewail House: Bucolic Bliss**

BY KRISTINA HALLEZ  
Staff goddess

Interns were fortunate enough to have a retreat iftar at the Zewail House in Manawat during Ramadan. Owned by Nobel Prize winner and AUC Trustee Ahmed Zewail, the house is administered by the Autonomous Underwater Vehicle and provides a critical central meeting place for thinkers, educators and guests dedicated to addressing the most pressing issues affecting Egypt and the world.

With its lush and relaxing surroundings, the home is a quiet place to focus, far from the unrelenting noise of Cairo. It is located an hour away from the Tahrir Square Campus, making it accessible and convenient for day travel. Yet its bucolic and calm surroundings are a world away from the city and a welcome retreat for interns. Its farm surroundings provide a glimpse into a simple Egyptian past, while the house provides all of the modern comforts interns could possibly desire.
**Intern Update**

**Alex Dessouky**
1996 - 97

Alex welcomed his daughter, Lyle Dahlia Dessouky, into the world on February 14, 2008. He reported that he and Hilary were “spellbound,” but sleepy in the days after Lyle’s birth.

**Robtel Pailey**
2004 - 05

Last year, Robtel Pailey earned a master’s in African studies from the University of Oxford in England. Upon completion of her degree, she accepted a position to work in the new administration of Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. She currently serves as special assistant for communications in the Ministry of State/Office of the President.

**Sean Brooks**
2004 - 05

Sean found his way back to Cairo in the summer of 2008, dedicating this return to intensive Fusha lessons and research for his master’s thesis in international relations from Johns Hopkins University’s School for Advanced International Studies. Since finishing his AUC internship, Sean has been working with the Save Darfur Coalition in Washington, D.C. as an international associate, a position he retains part-time while back in school now. Over the last year, Sean has helped the Darfuri diaspora in the United States and worldwide build a network of activist leaders to advocate for peace and protection in Darfur and throughout Sudan.

**Jessica Pouchet**
2006 - 07

In June 2008, Jessie embarked on a cross-country bicycle ride to benefit affordable housing efforts through the Bike & Build organization. Jessie began fundraising for the endeavor while in Cairo, where she was working for the DDC after completing her presidential internship. For more information on Jessie’s experience, visit jessiestride.blogspot.com or read her blog under her name at www.bikeandbuild.org

**Anders Blewett**
2003 - 04

After spending a few months in Cairo in late 2007, Anders returned to his home state of Montana and began a campaign for the House District 21 of the Montana State Legislature. Having faced Republican challenger Rick Tryon, Anders won the state seat in November 2008.

---

**LET US KNOW WHAT YOU ARE UP TO!**

Contact Rowaida Saad-El-Din, director of the AUC Presidential Internship Program, with news on the important milestones in your life.

r.saadeldin@aucegypt.edu
- 1981-82 -
  Frank Packard
  Harvard University

- 1982-83 -
  Elizabeth Thompson
  Harvard University
  Heather Grady
  Harvard University
  Roy Oppenheim
  Princeton University

- 1983-84 -
  Joseph Brown
  Georgetown University
  Eve Troutt
  Harvard University
  John Marks
  Kenyon College
  Heather Skilling
  Williams College

- 1984-85 -
  Ted G. Osius
  Harvard University
  Janina Safran
  Harvard University
  Clifford Cole
  Harvard University
  Maria Luis Fernandez
  Harvard University
  William Haynes
  Princeton University
  Jane Bliss
  Harvard University
  Rebecca Gagnon
  Harvard University
  Ann Reed
  Harvard University

- 1985-86 -
  Susan L. Gibbs
  Brown University
  Mary Ann Fay
  Georgetown University
  Barry Ford
  Harvard University
  Elizabeth Lightfoot
  Harvard University
  Moye Thompson
  Harvard University
  Brett O'Brien
  Harvard University
  Sarah Albee
  Harvard University
  Joseph W. Warren
  Princeton University
  Karen P. Boyle
  Princeton University
  Carter Abel
  Princeton University

- 1986-87 -
  Ian Todreas
  Brown University
  Catherine Stryker
  Georgetown University
  Peter Miller
  Harvard University
  Kathleen Hanson
  Harvard University
  Eliza Morss
  Harvard University
  Raymond Fisher
  Harvard University
  David Blackmore
  Harvard University
  Lois Johnson
  Harvard University
  Arthur Fuscaldo
  Harvard University
  Syed Sadiq Reza
  Princeton University
  Prinities Goodman
  Princeton University

- 1987-88 -
  Jamie Wiesman
  Brown University
  James Kershaw
  Dartmouth College
  Bridget McNamee
  Harvard University
  Alicia Sams
  Harvard University
  Linda Bishai
  Harvard University
  Regan E. Ralph
  Harvard University
  Susanna Shankland
  Harvard University
  Chuck O. Gnaedinger
  Stanford University
  David S. Johanson
  Stanford University
  Nicholas Griffin
  University of Notre Dame

- 1988-89 -
  Jennifer Tower
  Columbia University
  Roberta Dougherty
  Georgetown University
  Adrian Goldstein
  Harvard University
  Beverly Gordon
  Harvard University
  Carol Emert
  Harvard University
  Lisa Patton
  Harvard University
  Susan Arena
  Harvard University
  Lisa Scholnick
  Harvard University
  Bryce Giddens
  Princeton University
  Tara Joseph
  Smith College
  Nathan Martin
  Stanford University

- 1989-90 -
  Katherine Bennison
  Cambridge University
  Lori Duke
  Cornell University
  William Rowe
  Georgetown University
  Nagla Bassiouni
  Georgetown University
  Elizabeth Logsdon
  Harvard University
  Peter Vrooman
  Harvard University
  Suzanne Malveaux
  Harvard University
  Karin Andersd
  Harvard University
  Karen Jacobson
  Stanford University
  Michele Smart
  U. of California, Berkeley

- 1990-91 -
  George DuPre
  Georgetown University
  Ryan Minor
  Harvard University
  Sharon Epperson
  Harvard University
  Tina Lount
  Harvard University
  Christian Dean
  Mount Holyoke College
  John Oei
  Northwestern University
  Sean McCann
  Princeton University

- 1991-92 -
  Sutherland Miller III
  Brown University
  Arah Erickson
  Brown University
  Hanif Vanjara
  Duke University
  Patricia Lally
  Fordham University
  Michael Vollmer
  Harvard University
  Kathryn Hanser
  Princeton University
  Hillary Chua
  Smith College
  Bradley Johnson
  Stanford University
  William Hill
  Texas A&M University
  Traci Hill
  Texas A&M University
  Jennifer Wiernman
  University of Massachusetts

- 1992-93 -
  Mitra Mehr
  Brown University
  Mark Kennedy
  Brown University
  Patricia Smith
  Brown University
  John Speaks
  Columbia University
  Simon O'Rourke
  Connecticut College
  David Taveres
  Harvard University
  Betsey Johnson
  Oberlin College
  Vivian Henein
  Smith College
  Susan Fry
  Stanford University
  Michael Barsa
  Stanford University
  Anjum Akhtar
  University of Kansas
  Elizabeth Smith
  University of Wisconsin
President Interns 1981 - 2007 continued

- 1993-94 -
Mary Nachtrieb
  College of William and Mary

Jehanne Henry
  Columbia University

Otavio Peixoto
  Georgetown University

Robert Oden III
  Harvard University

Christopher Bell
  Harvard University

Elizabeth Miller
  Harvard University

- 1993-94 -
Randa Kayali
  Oberlin College

Celka Straughn
  Stanford University

Pamela Lee
  Texas A&M University

Rebecca Holub
  Texas A&M University

Anne Marie Dea1
  University of Chicago

- 1994-95 -
Jennifer Kimpton
  Brown University

Stephanie Ray
  Connecticut College

Alliniee Taylor
  Florida A&M University

Lynn Burke
  Harvard University

Caton Gates
  Haverford College

Sombrin Davis
  Texas A&M University

Willa Thayer
  Victoria University

- 1995-96 -
Sarah Sullivan
  Georgetown University

Heather Henyon
  Connectic College

Kristine McNeil
  Stanford University

Junaud Rana
  Texas A&M University

Royceyn Bolden
  Texas A&M University

Brendhan Hight
  U. of California, San Diego

- 1996-97 -
Eric Winograd

Fariba Nawa
  Hampshire College

Alexa Alonzo
  Harvard University

Alex Dessouky
  Middlebury College

Lisa Bernasek
  Princeton University

Rachel Anderson
  Smith College

Mara Kronenfeld
  Stanford College

Daniel Olson
  Texas A&M University

- 1997-98 -
Marcie Handler
  Dartmouth College

Alanna Shaikh
  Georgetown University

Michelle Garrett
  Hampshire College

Sarah Thompson
  Smith College

Michael McCain
  Texas A&M University

Christine Prince
  University of Virginia

Charles Duhigg
  Yale University

- 1998-99 -
George Farag
  College of New Jersey

Dwan Dixon
  Brown University

Jaqueline Funk
  Cornell University

Elizabeth Magnier
  Dartmouth College

Beth Turk
  Dartmouth College

Lucy Ellenbogen
  Georgetown University

Eliot Foster
  Stanford University

- 1999-00 -
Kelsey Bostwick
  Dartmouth College

Sarah E. Havens
  Brown University

Antony Hudek
  Dartmouth College

Danica Lo
  Dartmouth College

Peggy Pope
  Wellesley College

Franklin Yates
  Brown University

- 2000-01 -
Michael Allan
  Brown University

Abigail Jones
  U. of New Hampshire

Lana Krotolica
  U. of Southern California

Alan Lowinger
  U. of Pennsylvania

Phung Pham
  U. of California, Davis

Veronica Rodriguez
  U. of California, Berkeley

Stephanie C. Sines
  Smith College

- 2001-02 -
Negar Azimi
  Stanford University

Frank Cho
  U. of Pennsylvania

Ryan Greene-Roesel
  College of William & Mary

Diana Heise
  Vassar College

Nadia Matar
  U. of Pennsylvania

Kristin Mendoza
  Yale University

JoEllen Saeli
  Saint Anselm College

Heidi Saman
  U. of California, San Diego

- 2002-03 -
Kristin Eakins
  Arizona State University

Seth Smith
  U. of Massachusetts

Emily Gomez
  Dartmouth College

Amber Acosta
  Fordham University

Luke Dunlap
  U. of Texas at Austin

Dominique Kaschak
  Amherst College

Geoffrey Gresh
  Lafayette College

Graeme Wood
  Harvard University

- 2003-04 -
Michele Jackson
  Williams College

Sameer Ahmed
  Stanford University

Anders Blewett
  Harvard University

Anand Balakrishnan
  Brown University

Erica Gaston
  Stanford University

Brad Humphreys
  University of Virginia

Rojan Taghari
  Boston College

Lucy Jones
  Mount Holyoke College

- 2004-05 -
Sean Brooks
  Davidson College

Karis Eklund
  Stanford University

Caroline Foster
  Connecticut College

Courtney Mosby
  Howard University

Robtel Pailey
  Howard University

Christopher Raftery
  Harvard University

- 2005-06 -
Juliet Frecking
  Stanford University

Dominic Bocci
  U. of California, Berkeley

Lily Hindy
  Smith College

Benjamin Danforth
  Cornell University

Masha Kirasirova
  Brown University

- 2006-07 -
Alexandra Halsema
  Dartmouth College

Catherine Baylin
  Stanford University

Brian Kelly
  U. of California, San Diego

Larissa Lawrence
  Fordham University

Alison Damick
  Middlebury College

Jessica Pouchet
  Brown University

Taylor Valore
  Carlton College
THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY IN CAIRO

New Cairo
The American University in Cairo
AUC Avenue, P.O. Box 74
New Cairo 11835
Egypt
tel +20.2.2615.1515
fax +20.2.2795.7565

New York
420 Fifth Avenue, Third Floor
New York, NY 10018 - 2729
tel +212.730.8800
fax +212.730.1600

---

2007 - 2008 Internship Program

Program Director
Rowaida Saad-El-Din
Office of the President

Scott Nelson
Desert Development Center

Interns
Gaeten Damberg-Ott
Office of the Vice President
for Planning and Administration

Kelsey Norman
Institutional Planning,
Assessment, Research and Testing

Fauzia Dawood
John D. Gerhart Center for Philanthropy and Civic Engagement

Celia Smalls
Office of the President

Kristina Hallez
Social Research Center

Peter Wieben
Office of Communications and Marketing

---

Rowaida models the latest fashion from the Solar Boat Museum

Rowaida and Kelsey admire the architectural features of the
doorway

Kristina shares a joke over dinner with Celia