

## The Role of the University of Nizwa: Enhancing the Present, Creating a Bright Future

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The 36th National Day of Oman is a glorious day: an occasion to celebrate the landmark accomplishments of Oman since the dawn of the Renaissance launched by His Majesty, Sultan Qaboos bin Saïed. In particular, His Majesty placed human resources development as the number one objective to work towards, and the results have been truly remarkable. This is best reflected in the fact that the total spending on Education as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached 4.8% in 2004, and the number of universities and colleges has risen from 0 to (50) during the past 36 years.

One of the fruits of His Majesty's vision has been the establishment of the University of Nizwa in January, 2004. According to the famous English scholar Alfred Whitehead, the task of the university is to create the future, and we consider below some aspects of the role played by this young and dynamic educational institution in enhancing the present and creating the future.

### A New University Model

The best universities in the world, for example: Harvard University, and Princeton University, are nonprofit private institutions. The University of Nizwa is proud to have introduced such a model in Oman.

Since the vision of the University is to strive to become a center of academic excellence, it is committed to quality. In his speech, on University Day, 3rd May 2005, H.E. the Chancellor of the University elaborated on this point: "Quality (education) featured in our university councils is not just a slogan or a decorative pattern, but a tangible reality to students and society alike. It is a code of behavior and a set of values that mold into a balanced personality, fully conscious of its potential and of the deep-rooted tenets of our society and its wise leadership... Quality that is aware of current and future needs and hence helps learners acquire knowledge and skills that would make them highly competitive in the age of globalization locally, regionally, and internationally."

### Capacity Building

The University of Nizwa currently comprises 4 colleges:

- College of Arts and Sciences
- College of Economics, Management and Information Systems
- College of Engineering and Architecture
- College of Pharmacy and Nursing
- 7 centers:
- Al Khalil Ibn Ahmed Al-Farabi Center
- Center for Information Systems
- Language Center
- Life-long Learning Center
- Career Development Center
- Students Counseling Center
- Human Resource Development Center

with a total academic faculty consisting of (128) members, recognized for their high caliber, the diversity of their cultural backgrounds and educational systems from which they came. They actively engage in scientific research. It is worth mentioning that a salient feature of the University is the bridging program new students join. It consists of the Intensive English Program, and the International computer program ICS. The student is required to obtain a minimum score of 500 in the TOEFL, and pass ICS before graduating.

Currently, the University offers (34) majors at the Bachelor and (25) at the Diploma level. The total number of undergraduate students is (3120): (2563) females, and (557) males. The academic programs aim to develop critical thinking, enhance the student's ability in problem solving, and foster his (her) creative and innovative powers. The student will have acquired the skills demanded by the job market by the time he (she) graduates.

The academic programs follow the semester-based credit system. They emphasize applications and relevance to real life. They have been noted for their high degree of flexibility, and gained recognition from international bodies for their quality.

Undergraduate students enjoy state of the art IT services as well as excellent library and laboratory facilities. Classes are conducted in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Instructors seek to adopt innovative approaches to teaching, and

greatly encourage students' creative interaction.

### Postgraduate Environment:

The University recognizes the crucial role postgraduate students play in the research life of the institution. Hence, in addition to the Higher Diploma in Education which has been running since the establishment of the University in 2004, three Masters Programs have been offered this academic year in:

- Arabic Language and Literature
- Educational Administration
- Counseling and Guidance

The programs have attracted talented Omani youth. The total number of Masters students is (244): (64) females, and (180) males.

In order to achieve further enhancement of the Masters Programs, the University has adopted a Visiting Scholar Program: via this program, many distinguished scholars from reputable universities are invited to participate, as visiting scholars, in the teaching of courses and supervision of theses. It is worth mentioning that the University of Nizwa has signed memoranda of understanding with several reputable universities, inside the Sultanate and abroad.

### New Horizons

Alfred Whitehead defined culture as: "activity of thought, and a receptiveness to beauty and humane feeling". Hence the importance of culture can not be overemphasized, and, therefore, the University of Nizwa is proud to have become Al Dakhliya Region cultural hub. The New Horizons Lecture Series hosts lectures in the arts, sciences and fine arts by eminent scholars from all over the world. Distinguished visitors invited to this program in the past two years include Professor J. Kerdegan, former chancellor of the University of Wisconsin (Oshkosh), and Tella Abuelata, well-known Sudanese novelist.

The University's Cultural Week provides yet another important avenue for the University to interact with the community and raise cultural awareness. In particular, it provides an opportunity for students to display their talents whether artistic, literary, in the field of sports, or otherwise.

Moreover, the University has contributed

significantly to the "Muscat Arab Cultural Capital 2006" program through books, and lectures delivered by distinguished members of staff of the University: the prominent Arab writers and critics Mohamad Lutfi Al Youssif, Ali Al Garbi, and Nabila Al Zarwani.

### The Literate Village at Birkat Al Mouz

This project led by the University of Nizwa is targeting the literacy of 3000 illiterates in Birkat Al Mouz, Nizwa, Dakhliya District, for three years starting from the academic year 2005-2006. The project is estimated to cost OR 74,800. Some of its general aims are:

- Raising the human capacities and increasing the human capital of the society.
- Maintaining and developing the identity of the learners as members of a society whereby there exists solidarity among all the members be they literate or illiterate.
- Meeting the learners' needs especially the women's ones.

It is worth mentioning that the Director, a.d. Division for the Coordination of UN Priorities in Education (UNPSCO) has said that "They (UNESCO) appreciate and recognize the value of the important work being carried out by MEQIT and University of Nizwa" as regards the above project.

### Economic Impact

It is envisaged that on completion of the University Campus it will accommodate a student population of 20,000. Developing human resources on such a scale, the University of Nizwa would be contributing significantly towards the emergence of a knowledge society, and hence knowledge economy in Oman. Even now, while the University is functioning in its temporary campus in Birkat Al Mouz, it has had its impact on the local economy: appreciable rise in land value, about 70% increase in houses rent in the last two years, and the employment of many Omanis.

### Conclusion

The above lines give just a glimpse of the current and potential role of the University of Nizwa. Through partnership with the private and public sectors, and as a research center, the University is bound to have a huge impact on development in Oman.

## الجامعة تشارك في البرنامج الثاني للتلفزيون



استضاف البرنامج الثاني لتلفزيون سلطنة عمان في نقل مباشر من قلعة نزوى الشهباء جامعة نزوى في برنامج خاص بمناسبة العيد الوطني السادس والثلاثين المجيد بحضور عدد من مسؤولي الجامعة وعدد من أساتذتها وموظفيها وطلبتها .

وشارك طلبة الجامعة في تقديم البرنامج ولقاء القاصد الشعري والفن الشعبي بالإضافة إلى لقاءات مع سعادة المكرم الدكتور أحمد بن خلفان الرواحي رئيس الجامعة ونائب رئيس الجامعة للشؤون الإدارية والمالية ونائب الرئيس للشؤون الأكاديمية وعدد من مدراء الدوائر في الجامعة وعدد من الطلبة والطالبات.

وقد حفل البرنامج باستعراض صور عن الجامعة واستعراض مسيرتها التعليمية تأتي هذه المشاركة من أجل التعريف بالجامعة ودورها في تنمية الموارد البشرية ولتعبير عن فرحتها بهذه المناسبة الوطنية أعاده الله على حضرة صاحب الجلالة السلطان قابوس بن سعيد المعظم - حفظه الله ورعاه - وعلى الشعب العماني باليمن والبركات.



## حملة إعلامية لمكافحة الأمراض الوراثية

احتضنت جامعة نزوى تدين الحملة الإعلامية لمكافحة الأمراض الوراثية، التي تنظمها المديرية العامة للخدمات الصحية بالمنطقة الداخلية تحت رعاية سعادة الشيخ سيف بن حمير آل مالك السخي والي نزوى، تهدف الحملة إلى تكتيف التعاون بين مختلف القطاعات الحكومية والأهلية للوقاية من الأمراض الوراثية. ورفع الوعي الصحي لدى أفراد المجتمع حول الأمراض الوراثية وكيفية انتقالها وطرق الوقاية منها، كما تعرف المجتمع بإمكانية الكشف عنها. افتتح البرنامج بتلاوة عطرة من آيات القرآن الكريم، وبدأ بكلمة افتتاحية ألقاها صالح بن سعيد بن ناصر الهادي مدير عام الخدمات الصحية بالمنطقة الداخلية. بعدها قدم د.فرغت عبدالله الصادق مساعد اختصاصي أمراض باطنية بمستشفى نزوى موضوعاً حول توارث أمراض الدم (فقر الدم المنجلي). أما د.بهاء الدين دياب إخصائي طب أطفال بمستشفى نزوى فكان موضوع محاضرتهم حول نقص الخيميرة (الثلاسيميا). بعد ذلك تم استعراض خطة العمل بالمنطقة حول الوقاية من الأمراض الوراثية عرضها د.صالح بن سيف الهنائي مدير دائرة الشؤون الصحية بالمنطقة واختمت الندوة بالرد على استفسارات الحضور من قبل المختصين في المجال.

## عين جامعة نزوى على ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة

طرحت جامعة نزوى لهذا العام تخصصاً متميزاً يطرح لأول مرة في السلطنة تلبية لاحتياجات المجتمع في مجال رياض الأطفال ومجال التربية الخاصة وتواصل مع المجتمع في هذا المجال قام الدكتور ماجد الدفاعي رئيس لجنة المناهج والبرامج الدراسية في قسم التربية في الجامعة والدكتور حسين الياسري الاختصاصي في التربية الخاصة بزيارة لجمعية تدلل المبكر في مسقط بهدف الزيارة إلى التعرف على علاقة مثل هذه الجمعيات بذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة ومعرفة الدور الذي تقوم به هذه الجهات المختصة من الناحية العلمية.

كما نظم قسم التربية زيارة إلى مركز الوفاء الاجتماعي في ولاية إزكي في المنطقة الداخلية وذلك للاطلاع على كيفية قيام المتطوعات بالتعامل مع ذوي الاحتياجات الخاصة والوقوف على احتياجاتهم في الجانب العلمي والتربوي. وسبق أن قام الدكتور ماجد الدفاعي بإلقاء محاضرة للمتطوعات في مراكز الوفاء الاجتماعي بالمنطقة الداخلية بحضور العديد من ولاء وشيوخ وأعيان المنطقة.

## تنوف في الجامعة

قام عدد من طلبة مدرسة تنوف للتعليم الأساسي بزيارة لجامعة نزوى للاطلاع على المختبرات العلمية في الجامعة وعلى التقنيات المتقدمة التي تستخدمها الجامعة في تجهيز تلك المختبرات شملت الزيارة جولة في مختبر الكيمياء ومختبر الحيات ومختبر التربية ومن ثم جولة عامة في مرافق الجامعة المختلفة تأتي هذه الزيارة في إطار فتح أبواب الجامعة أمام المجتمع للتعرف على ما تقدمه الجامعة لطلبتها وما تتميز به من خدمات.



## من المتوقع أن تضم مليون عنوان .. المكتبة على طاولة الاجتماعات

في إطار استعدادات الجامعة للبدء في بناء الحرم الجامعي، عقد رئيس الجامعة سعادة المكرم الدكتور أحمد بن خلفان الرواحي اجتماعاً مع الشركة المنفذة للمشروع لمناقشة مبنى المكتبة الجديد بحضور عدد من الخبراء المتخصصين في مجال المكتبات ونظم المعلومات والمهندسين في هذا المجال. بدأ الاجتماع بعرض قدمته الشركة المنفذة للتصور المبني لمبنى المكتبة، ومن ثم قام الحضور بمناقشة التصور وإضافة التعديلات عليه بما يتناسب مع أهداف مكتبة جامعة نزوى، ويساعد على تقديم خدماتها بشكل أفضل وأسرع.

وتولي إدارة الجامعة اهتماماً كبيراً بمبنى المكتبة فمن ناحية الموقع حرصت على أن يكون في وسط الحرم الدائم للجامعة بحيث تتوسط المكتبة الكليات والمراكز الأخرى فيسهل الوصول إليها، ومن ناحية المبنى من المخطط أن تضم المكتبة ٦ طوابق تضم كافة أقسام الخدمات الفنية والعامة للمكتبة، وأماكن للقراءة والاطلاع تستوعب أكبر عدد من المستفيدين ومن مصادر المعلومات بأشكالها المختلفة، الجدير بالذكر أنه ضمن المخطط لمبنى المكتبة الجديد أن يستوعب حوالي مليون عنوان.

## The Relationship between the University and the community

A university's role is imperative in building a nation. It channels knowledge through vital structures and creates a vigorous link between the community and the global order whereby it disseminates scientific and technical expertise, makes culture available to the general public, and contributes to regional as well as national development. It brings together a diverse range of knowledge, which consists of community members, national and international learners of various disciplines. Historically, the university has long been recognised as an institution with the capacity to combine the world of politics, religion, literature and the sciences. In the modern world it also offers training in the

professions which allow a society to realise its potential in the global village. The interface between a university and its community is complex. The university both inspires and reflects the cultural values of the society it serves. In this respect, University of Nizwa could be recognised as the focal point of the community. The location of the university links the entire region with those of others throughout the country, while in an academic sense it mediates between the various groups within the regional society and subsequently feeds back into what is called the 'National'. The notion of 'National' is a combination of cultural, economic, political and social assets. The University

reflects individual achievements of those separate elements in a collective form; however, its dynamic role within the society ensures that it amounts to a great deal more than the sum of its parts. As the world continues to develop into a network of knowledge-driven communities, increasingly the 'local' interacts with the 'global'. The university can direct and control knowledge in ways which benefit its local community, and also improve its interaction with the wider world. It can influence the sheer flow of information which now controls the destiny of societies and communities across the globe. In the contemporary world, there is global exchange of knowledge

where discoveries are made through the process of collaboration across both academic disciplines and social and geographical boundaries. Therefore, it becomes ever more important for the University to consolidate its potential to sustain the links between the diverse sections of the world's numerous societies. Yet simultaneously, it also plays a part in mediating between the individual and their society. On this basis it becomes evident that the founding of the University of Nizwa has the capacity to mediate between the individual and its society, between local and global cultures, and between the national and international communities. Therefore, the building of a nation and its

identity is underpinned by the civilising influence of its universities. University of Nizwa offers its community a centre of learning which projects civic pride, regional identity, and a link with the international community. Through the establishment of a University in Nizwa, the town confirms its commitment to the furthering of knowledge, so extending the value of education, and therefore becoming a place which generates the ideas which shall shape the future of this country. The link between the University and the community is the basis of a society: knowledge, discipline, character, dedication, authority, and spirit are features of a civilised society.