

September 2014

# RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Yasmine Saqer

Dear Friends,

This month the Renaissance Project and its scholarship students gathered in Amman, Jordan for a training session addressing necessary skills for today's job market.

To bring light to the incredible work of the Renaissance team and its students, you'll find that this month's newsletter celebrates our **student program**.

In an interview with one of our very own students, **Ghada Shkokani**, we learn and discuss **critical thinking** and **problem solving**—two important skills that were highlighted in this month's training session.

We also hear from our founder, **Mohamed Al Qadhi**, who tells us more about the student program and what it's done and plans to do.

As always, we thank you for your support.

Best,

Yasmine Saqer

## A Look at Work Skills with Ghada Shkokani



*Ghada Shkokani, a second year nuclear engineering student at Jordan University of Science Technology, tells us what she learned from the session and her aspirations for the future.*

***This month's training session discussed critical thinking and problem solving, what can you say you learned about these two skills that you didn't already know?***

From the practice we've made in the session, I now think about problems in a very different and organized way, understand their root causes and look for a creative solution. In addition to

that, I learned how to think critically, not to take any information for granted, and to notice the assumption errors that the speaker might make.

***Surveys show that critical thinking and problem solving are said to be the most desired skills by employers, why do you think these are important skills to have?***

These important skills are very desired by employers because each company has to find new creative ideas to beat its rivals with the best profit and products' quality. And, of course, to minimize the time and effort that are needed to solve any problem they could confront.

***How can someone in your field of study apply these two skills?***

We as nuclear engineers need the skill of both problem solving and critical thinking very much, because there are always problems need to be solved with the least risks and loss. Also, we need to think creatively to come up with new ideas that develop and improve the field.

***What kind of job or career do you hope to attain?***

I hope to work at CERN Accelerators, or maybe at a nuclear power plant in the control department.

***How has the Renaissance Project helped you in your studies and preparation for the future?***

The Renaissance Project has helped me in my study and preparation for the future by teaching me the best ways to obtain such skills which are essentials for my study itself and for getting a better job. Moreover, it taught me how to express my ideas freely and encouraged me to stop thinking naively, but rather critically and innovatively.

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## What We Do...

*By Mohamed Al Qadi, Founder*



The Renaissance Project is proud to have carried out many great initiatives since its establishment, including several charity events, and even our own monthly newsletter. One of which we are especially proud of is our **scholarship program**.

However, it's come to our attention that what we actually do for our students has not been properly explained. To classify our program as nothing more than a scholarship program is a great injustice to the program itself and the effort that tens of people have put in to make it truly unique. Yes, we do offer scholarships to students, but that is only a small part of the student program.

*What else do we do, you may ask? What is the program all about?*

The program is **not just about sponsoring student education, it's about human capital development**. It is about selecting youth with significant potential and ensuring they overcome their social disadvantages and reach their full potential. This involves a rigorous selection process, sponsorship of education, training programs that enhance skills and competencies necessary for future employment, assistance in preparing CVs, prepping students for interviews, funding their business ideas, finding them job employment opportunities worthy of their caliber, and finally, creating a community of achievers able to assist and collectively create change in the Arab World.

A good example of what we did outside the realm of scholarships is the training program we ran on September 1<sup>st</sup> that was specifically designed, with the help of **Sarah Al Omran**, to address the students' **critical thinking and problem solving skills**. The aim of the program was not to teach students critical thinking or problem solving (our students already have that skill), but to encourage its **application in academics and real world problems** by providing them with frameworks, tools, common errors and pitfalls, and an overall structural approach. Much of the day was spent on applying these principles to real world examples, pushing our students to think critically about things like scientific findings, business rational, economic analysis, and engineering problems. The session was a resounding success and we are currently discussing the possibility of rolling it out to students that are not part of our program.



I hope this article has clarified the scope of our student program and the incredible effort and work that volunteers and employees alike have put into its development.

If you would like to know more, please contact me directly at anytime.