

April 2014

# RENAISSANCE MONTHLY

Your monthly update on The Renaissance Project



## LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER

Mohamed Al Qadi

## The Renaissance Project's First Student Scholarship Conference

On Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of April 2014, The Renaissance Project hosted its first student scholarship conference in Amman, Jordan. The event was attended by the students of the Renaissance Project Scholarship Fund and their families.



Dear Friends,

I would like to welcome you all to a special edition of our monthly newsletter. In it, we highlight the results of our first ever student scholarship conference. The meeting brought the renaissance project's scholarship students together along with their families to network, interact, and get themselves immersed into our special program.

In addition (see page two), we travel to Andalusia Spain to highlight the story of Al-Zahrawi, one of the most influential scientists and contributors to the advancement of medical knowledge in history. We hope you enjoy our newsletter and I would like to thank you all again for your continued support.

The objectives of the conference were to...

- Provide an opportunity for students and their families to **meet each other and the Renaissance Project team**
- **Build a community** that will support and encourage students in their university and personal life
- **Collect information on students to help create a database** that will be used for student career planning and for fund raising purposes
- Introduce students to the **Renaissance Project's vision, values and future objectives**
- Highlight results of various surveys that identify the skills and competencies sought after by employers in the labor market and **prepare an action plan that will help address some of the skill gaps such as critical thinking, English proficiency, etc**

Best Regards

Mohamed Al Qadi

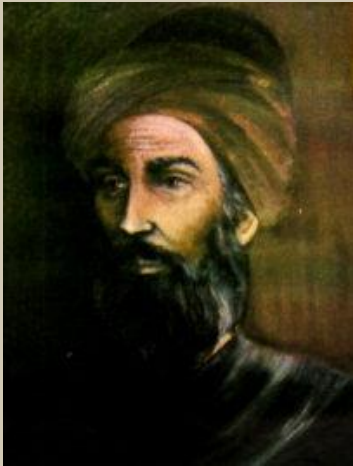
The event was greatly successful. Both the students and their families were excited about the event and the plans we prepared to help develop their career prospects. The students were also able to build strong bonds with one another, form working groups and exchange valuable experiences. Due to the success of the event, I'm glad to announce that further events will be conducted in the near future. Stay tuned

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## “The Pioneer of Modern Surgery” Muslim of the Month By Yasmine Saqer



One of the great figures of Muslim Spain, Abu al-Qasim al-Zahrawi is remembered as Islam’s pioneering medieval surgeon.

The brilliant Al-Zahrawi revolutionized the practice of surgery through his inventions of methods and tools, as well as texts, to help heal patients.

Al-Zahrawi was born in 936 near Cordoba, Spain, when it was part of the Islamic Empire. Recognized for his medical genius, Al-Zahrawi spent the most of his life as a court physician for the Umayyad Caliph al-Hakam II.

Among his countless achievements, Al-Zahrawi is most famously known for his encyclopedia of medicine entitled *al-Tasrif*, comprising of 30 volumes. In each volume, he discusses several different aspects of health science, including sections on nutrition, orthopedics, ophthalmology, pharmacology, and surgery.

In his earlier volumes of *al-Tasrif*, Al-Zahrawi discusses how to diagnose diseases, describing over 300 diseases and their treatments. Not only does he discuss how to treat these diseases, but also how to prevent them.

Promoting personal health, Al-Zahrawi also dedicated many parts of his books to discussing what foods should be avoided, how to maintain a healthy diet, and how to use food as part of a treatment plan. He also notes the effects of alcohol on the body.

The 30<sup>th</sup> volume remains his most influential, as it is dedicated entirely to surgery. In it he included detailed descriptions of numerous surgical procedures, and the use of over 200 surgical instruments, many of which al-Zahrawi himself developed.

Among his surgical discoveries, he was the first to use catgut as the thread for internal stitches. Made from the lining of the intestines of animals, catgut is the only material that can be used for stitches and can still be absorbed by the body, preventing the need for a second surgery to remove internal stitches. He was also the first to use forceps in childbirth, greatly decreasing the mortality rate of babies and mothers. In addition, Al-Zahrawi performed mastectomies for women with breast cancer, a procedure still done today.

As a doctor, Al-Zahrawi always refused to perform dangerous or unknown surgeries that would be physically or emotionally stressful for the patient. He valued human life and sought to extend it as long as possible. His respect and consideration towards his patients set the precedent for all future doctors.

Al-Zahrawi’s encyclopedia became a standard reference in Islamic and European medicine for over 500 years. A man ahead of his time, his abilities and his consistent documentation of procedures helped advance medicine for centuries.

Al-Zahrawi’s legacy is survived in his works, all of which have impacted the medical community to this day.

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