



2018 GABR FELLOWS WITH MAJOR GENERAL MOHAMED ELKESHKY, DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENSE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

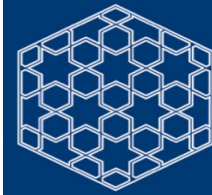
***Our 2018 American and Egyptian Fellows had a successful trip to Egypt between August 31<sup>st</sup> and September 8<sup>th</sup>. During this visit, they had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Tourism, the Deputy Minister of Defense for Foreign Affairs, the President of the American University in Cairo, and many more. Through this experience, insights were gained, deep knowledge was ascended, new friendships were cemented, tough questions were answered, and substantive discussions were facilitated. The second portion of the 2018 Fellowship is taking place in the United States between September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 6<sup>th</sup> in New York City, New Jersey, and Washington, DC. Through another intensive week, our Fellows will continue dialogue about a very wide spectrum of subjects.***

In the United States, the 2018 Fellows are privileged to meet with some of the top leaders in government, business, non-profit organizations, media, and multilateral institutions. Speakers range from a world-renowned anchor at CNBC, members of the Senate and House of Representatives, executives at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, senior leadership at the Department of Defense and the Department of State, and much more.

The Gabr Fellowship will also provide an opportunity for the Fellows to finalize their action project proposals. These action projects are meant to test the Fellows as intercultural ambassadors and visionaries that can apply what they learned through this Fellowship to their own communities and networks. I am looking forward to hearing their proposals and am confident that they will leave this program better prepared to build a more peaceful and inclusive world.

I hope you enjoy the latest edition of the Newsletter. Please stay tuned for even more updates from the Fellowship community.

**M. Shafik Gabr**



The  
SHAFIK GABR  
Foundation

# The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

October 2018, Issue 15

## IN THIS ISSUE

### In Brief...

- Nick Thomas in last 50 days of Congressional campaign
- Basma El Baz completes media management training
- Abdelrahman Amr begins graduate school
- Wesley Rogerson to give keynote speech at TAIMUN
- Dalia Ihab Younis performs at a local church
- Yasser El Zahhar secures business deal
- Kemp Gouldin makes visit to Egypt
- Muhammad Nagi receives large investment
- Mr. Shafik Gabr meets with Egyptian Fellows
- Gabr Foundation reading corner
- Gabr Foundation question of the month
- 2018 Fellows Egypt reflections
- Michael Matthiesen and Abdelrahman Amr explore the state of refugees in Egypt

## News and Updates...

### Nick Thomas in Home Stretch of Congressional Campaign



**Nick Thomas (2015 Gabr Fellow)** is currently running as an independent candidate for US Congress in Colorado. He was interviewed on [TYTs](#) and launched a podcast titled "[The Last 50 Days: An Independent Campaign for US Congress](#)". He also completed a 15 state, 25 + city tour and participated in his tenth forum and debate. Prior to his run for Congress, Nick worked in government, education, nonprofits, and private businesses and start-ups. In addition to being a 2015 Gabr Fellow, he is a member of the U.S. Leadership Coalition and a 2008 U.S. Congressional Youth Ambassador to South Korea.

### Basma El Baz Completed Media Management Training



**Basma El Baz (2015 Gabr Fellow)** completed a six-month media management training, which focused on helping media managers gain extensive understanding of media management and formulating strong business practices. She also finalized a training of trainers workshop with the same institution, providing her with a certificate in media consulting. Basma currently works with Nile Radio Productions.

### Abdelrahman Amr Pursues Master's Degree in Canada



**Abdelrahman Amr (2017 Gabr Fellow)** will pursue his Master's degree in Global Communication at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada. This one-year program offers a combination of core and elective courses, research papers, and field placement to strike a balance between professional development and preparation for advanced doctoral studies.

### Wesley Rogerson to Give Keynote Speech



**Wesley Rogerson (2018 Gabr Fellow)** was selected as the keynote speaker for TAIMUN XVI in Taichung in Taiwan in April 2019. This Model United Nations exercise provides students with the opportunity to step into the role of United Nations Ambassadors to debate current issues in order to promote international cooperation and problem solving. More than 350 students from a variety of Asian countries are expected to participate.

### Dalia Ihab Younis Performs at a Church



**Dalia Ihab Younis (2017 Gabr Fellow)** performed at St. Joseph's Church in Downtown Cairo during The Lady Feast. She was the first veiled woman to perform in the Church as a means to promote interfaith dialogue. As part of her work to bridge divides through music, she shot a video at the Church, which also included a call to action to revive an old tradition of flowery parades of the Virgin Mary. The video can be seen here: <https://www.facebook.com/dalia.ihab.younis/videos/308245383279801/>.

## Yasser El Zahhar Secures Business Deal



**Yasser El Zahhar (2016 Gabr Fellow)** is the CEO of Gedety Healthy Catering Company. He recently secured a deal with one of the biggest software companies in Egypt, the most significant deal his company has ever made. This deal will help strengthen his company's value proposition of offering healthy catering options to corporations and their employees. He is also confident that he will be able to continue to grow his company, in spite of the growth of online food companies in Egypt.

## Kemp Gouldin Visits Egypt



**Kemp Gouldin (2015 Gabr Fellow)** who launched his action project, *Because Baseball*, through the Gabr Fellowship, recently visited Egypt. He completed a brief visit to Cairo to organize logistics for the next baseball season. The inaugural Egypt youth baseball league launched in 2017 and had more than 120 youth between the ages of 8 and 12 participate. The program also concluded a Spring 2018 baseball coaching exchange in Virginia. For more information, visit:

<https://www.becausebaseball.org>

## Muhammad Nagi Recieves Funding from Cairo Angels



**Muhammad Nagi (2015 Gabr Fellow)** is the CEO and Co-Founder of AlMaqarr, a coworking space with three locations across Egypt. It received investment from Cairo Angels, marking the first investment by the Cairo Angels in this sector. With this investment, AlMaqarr is now well-capitalized to expand to new locations, enhance its operations, and provide more products and services to its fast growing base of customers. This investment provides much needed infrastructure support to help empower SMEs and startups throughout Egypt.

## Chairman Convenes Meeting with Gabr Fellows in Cairo



During Chairman Gabr's recent visit to Cairo, he met with the Egyptian Fellows to discuss a variety of social, cultural, and political topics. The meeting also included business development lessons for Egyptian Fellows Muhammad Nagi and Yasser El Zahhar, who both recently achieved milestones in their business careers. Mr. Gabr asserted that branding and acquiring are the two keys to survive and thrive in the world of business and that it is necessary to adopt a strategic thinking approach. Emerging leaders must be proactive and action oriented in order to achieve success. The Fellows also celebrated other personal and professional achievements and they offered advice to the 2018 Egyptian Fellows as they prepare to depart for the start of the US Program.

## Gabr Foundation Reading Corner



The Foundation Reading Corner is encouraging Fellows to critique the books that have been recommended over the past many issues. For this issue, Mr. Gabr recommends *Thinking the Unthinkable: A New Imperative for Leadership in a Disruptive Age* by Nik Gowing and Chris Langdon and *1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Civilization* by Salim Al-Hassani.

## Question of the Month: A Pulse of the Gabr Fellowship Community



As the Gabr Fellows enter into leadership roles — in business, diplomacy, government, finance, and more — they will continue to grapple with significant challenges, magnified by an increased pace in technological advancement, the potential for ramped up global inequalities, and changes in governance and economic structures.

To better understand the pulse of the Gabr Fellowship community and to begin to articulate substantive dialogue, the Foundation polls the Fellows each month on the key issues facing their respective countries and the global community at large.

### **Question 1: Is the United Nations an effective organization?**

Yes: 33% of respondents

No: 62% of respondents

I don't know: 5% of respondents

### **Question 2: Is the US cutting the budget of UNRWA, which supports 5 million people, an effective strategy to bring peace between the Palestinians and Israelis?**

Yes: 9% of respondents

No: 82% of respondents

I don't know: 9% of respondents

### **Question 3: Is the Arab League an effective organization in bringing peace to the Arab world?**

Yes: 9% of respondents

No: 71% of respondents

I don't know: 20% of respondents

### **Question 4: Do you believe local NGOs should be foreign funded with political objectives?**

Yes: 17% of respondents

No: 56% of respondents

I don't know: 27% of respondents

Stay tuned for November's question of the month and the Gabr Fellows' takes on current events, as our community of future leaders grapples with the most pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

## Reflections on the 2018 Gabr Fellowship Egypt Program

With almost a month since the Egypt program, the Fellows have taken the time to reflect and plan for the US Fellowship. Throughout an intensive week in Egypt, they were exposed to different viewpoints and participated in substantive dialogue with thought leaders from a variety of sectors. Please find their reactions to the first part of the Fellowship program below:

*"It was empowering to question everything I learned and accepted as granted, to re-learn about my own country and culture, and to see it from a whole new perspective."* – **Maram Osama, Egyptian Fellow**

*"Having the opportunity to connect with the leaders of today and tomorrow has been an eye-opening experience that gives me hope for the future of U.S.-Middle East relations."* – **Wesley Rogerson, American Fellow**

*"The Egyptian part of the East-West Fellowship was truly exceptional. It allowed me to re-discover my country, understand the most pressing issues in the region, and also build friendships and networks with some of the most brilliant leaders of today and tomorrow."* - **Hanan Khayal, Egyptian Fellow**

*"Through the Gabr Fellowship, I have built a strong background in Egyptian history, politics, economy and culture in just a short time. More importantly, I developed a strong network of professional and personal contacts in the US and Egypt that will be a part of my life for years to come."*- **Allison Feikes, American Fellow**

*"I have had cultural exchanges before, but nothing comes close to the exposure, engagement and experience that the East-West: The Art of Dialogue has provided me. It was an incredible, well-organized experience that will change my life forever."*- **Karim El Sharkawy, Egyptian Fellow**

*"The Gabr Fellowship enabled me to experience Egypt's rich culture and reinforced my belief that Egypt plays a critical role in advancing global peace and security."* – **Julie Yang, American Fellow**

*"I consider the Gabr Fellowship an eye-opening experience that has helped me connect with fellow emerging leaders from the other side of the globe. I hope that each emerging leader, either from the United States or Egypt, will have the opportunity to live with this transformative experience."*- **Yara El-Braidy, Egyptian Fellow**

*"8 days, 37 meetings, and 19 new friends later, the first leg of the Fellowship left me exhausted, enlightened, and inspired to delve into today's issues with creativity, collaboration and a passion to match those of my inspiring colleagues."* – **Hayley Rose, American Fellow**

*"It is an outstanding experience that proves that barriers between East and West are not that big and engagement is the only way forward."*- **Ahmed Mostafa, Egyptian Fellow**

*"The program not only exposed me to a brand new culture and society than I grew up with, but it was a valuable education and allowed me to create friendships and memories with people I normally do not have the opportunity to meet."* – **Katie Applebaum, American Fellow**

*"Just one week was enough to change my whole thinking and even my life. I felt like we are really doing something positive and can really make a good impact and open new windows or dialogue with other cultures."*- **Shady Saleh, Egyptian Fellow**

*"I had a pleasant experience being a part of the East-West: The Art of Dialogue Fellowship. I truly appreciate every moment of the program, during which I re-discovered my home country from different points of view."* – **Marwa Abdalla Elsayed, Egyptian Fellow**

*"This was an enriching and fruitful experience that gave me the opportunity to discover myself and new horizons."* -**Muhammad El Hawary, Egyptian Fellow**

## In Focus...

### If U.S. can't be like Europe, then be more like Egypt Abdelrahman Amr and Michael Matthiesen, 2017 Gabr Fellows

*Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the authors' alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation.*

I saw two Syrian middle-aged men quickly gathering basic kitchen utensils, washing vegetables and preparing sandwiches to be sold after Friday prayers in a small shop at the corner of the street where I lived in Cairo, Egypt. It was 2015, and this was the modest start of a very successful string of Syrian food sandwich restaurants with over three branches in different parts of Egypt. This small example of a simple business a couple of refugees started has been multiplied hundreds of times, ensuring the social cohesion and integration that Egypt can provide refugees. It's stories like these that show Egypt has something to teach the West—although, a lesson Florida has already learned.

In regards to the United States, the country that once asked the world to give them its “tired, poor and huddled masses yearning to breathe free” as is enshrined on the Statue of Liberty, is now trying to deport those masses back. At the same time, other countries are stepping up where America is stepping down. In October 2015, Canada accepted over 50,000 Syrian refugees and over 27,000 former-US refugees have fled America since President Donald Trump was elected. Since 2015, the European Union has accepted over 1 million refugees, with Germany resettling the most within its borders.

However, during the 2016 election, the US has had a public debate about Europe's and Canada's immigration policies and rejected them. After all, immigration hardliners in the US can easily point out that Canada and the

EU are now facing an immigration crisis because of those policies, and these crises can only empower their far-right political bases, like Britain's UK Independent Party and Italy's 5 Star Party.

So if the US refuses to adopt refugee policies from Canada or Europe, then adopt Egypt's.

Even with the political turmoil and horrific economic struggle that Egypt has been facing since the 25<sup>th</sup> of January revolution, the country still shelters thousands of refugees. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that over 250,000 “persons of concern” were in Egypt at the end of 2015. Egypt also helped Syrian refugees acclimate by easing laws and regulations for education and employment without resorting to the heartless temporary and ineffective resolution of refugee camps employed by Europe.

Christine Beshay, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Assistant Communications Officer, echoed this by assuring that the Egyptian government's open-door policy has resulted in the protection of thousands of refugees and asylum-seekers on Egyptian soil.

“In terms of access to services, the government grants Syrians access to primary health care at public health institutions and access to education at public schools on equal footing as Egyptians and at the same cost,” Beshay said.

As a matter of fact, the acceptance of Syrian refugees within Egyptian communities helped the development of businesses between Egyptians and Syrians, with a total estimated capital invested since 2011 at nearly \$800 million.

Egypt is proving that accepting refugees isn't only economically beneficial for a country, but it's the right thing to do. Florida has a similar history of success to Egypt with the immigrant communities we've welcomed from Latin America. Therefore, Florida has a lot to lose in a less-refugee welcome America—especially considering that some of the biggest American companies: Tesla, Google, Yahoo, eBay, PayPal, Comcast, LinkedIn, and even General Electric were all built by immigrants who came to the US.

The success of cities like Tampa, Orlando, and especially Miami can be attributed to ingenuity and entrepreneurship of those who came from countries in turmoil like Cuba, Venezuela, and Colombia, who were searching for a better life in the US. Florida is one of the go-to states for refugees to resettle their lives and start businesses. If we reject them en masse, our entire state economy would be at stake.

A fact lost to the pages of American history is that the French first offered Egypt the Statue of Liberty before giving it to the U.S. If the U.S. can't do a better job of providing refuge to the world's homeless and tempted-tossed, then give Lady Liberty to a country that is doing that job.

**To read the rest of the article please visit**

**<https://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/os-op-make-us-more-like-egypt-20180919-story.html#>. Stay tuned for more articles and thoughts from Gabr Fellows in the next newsletter.**

# The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

For more information on the Shafik Gabr Foundation and its *East-West: The Art of Dialogue* Initiative, please visit the website <https://eastwestdialogue.org/>.

For past itineraries of the US program, please see the previous years' reports at <https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



Karel Ooms, *The Woman of Cairo*, Oil on Canvas

Connect with us



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