



2018 GABR FELLOWS AT THE MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE IN WASHINGTON, DC WITH DR. PAUL SALEM, PRESIDENT, AND MS. MIRETTE MABROUK, SENIOR FELLOW

*The 2018 Gabr Fellows had a life-changing visit to the United States between September 30<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>, concluding this year's Fellowship exchange, although the program continues. During their time in the US, they had the opportunity to meet with Brian Sullivan from CNBC, the president of Drew University, Members of the US House of Representatives and Senate, past and present military officials, a Vice President at the World Bank, current and former Ambassadors from the US and Egypt, and many more distinguished speakers. Through this visit, Fellows obtained a significant understanding of America, its values, challenges, and culture. With the visit came friendship, networking, and new insights.*

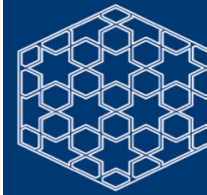
As perceptions and assumptions were challenged, greater focus took hold and the foundation was laid for each and every one of the Fellows to serve as intercultural ambassadors.

During their visit, a range of topics were discussed, including but not limited to, financial journalism, the role of multinational institutions like the UN and the International Monetary Fund in an ever-changing world, the strategic interests of the United States in an evolving Middle East region, intercultural negotiation strategies, Orientalist art, and the evolution of new technologies.

Moving forward, these young leaders will be tasked with forging their own paths as leaders that celebrate, not shy away from, differences and recognize the ties that bind the world's citizenry together. From their action projects, to taking the next steps in their professional development, and serving as beacons of hope in their communities, I am confident that this impressive cohort of game-changers will make their mark on the world.

Please visit the Foundation's website at [www.eastwestdialogue.org](http://www.eastwestdialogue.org) for ongoing updates about our activities and the progress that the more than 120-person strong Gabr Fellowship community is making in building a more equitable and prosperous world.

M. Shafik Gabr



The  
SHAFIK GABR  
Foundation

# The Gabr Fellowship Newsletter

November 2018, Issue 16

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## News and Updates...

### Katie Applebaum Completes Her Master's Program



**Katie Applebaum (2018 Gabr Fellow)** successfully passed her thesis defense to complete her Master's requirements for a post-graduate degree in Security Studies from Johns Hopkins University. Her thesis explored the adoption of the Nuclear Peace Treaty in the United States. Katie was taking classes in the evening while simultaneously serving as a Policy Associate at Business Executives for National Security. Katie received her Bachelor's Degree in Global and International Politics from the University at Albany.

### Ibrahim Hammouda Interns with Congressman Alex Mooney



**Ibrahim Hammouda (2017 Gabr Fellow)** began his internship in the Office of Congressman Alex Mooney (R-WV). In this capacity, he engages with constituents who call the Congressman and provides tours to people visiting Congress and the Capitol. This is a great opportunity for him to engage firsthand with US politics and get a front seat during the midterm electoral process.

### Sarah Derdowski Welcomes a Child



**Sarah Derdowski (2014 Gabr Fellow)** and her husband Justin welcomed their first child Wyatt Derdowski. Sarah currently serves as the Executive Director of the Global Energy Management Program at the University of Colorado Denver Business School. She previously served as the program's Director of Operations and she received her Master's Degree in International Administration from the University of Denver.

### Zeyad Elkelani Receives Certificate of Achievement



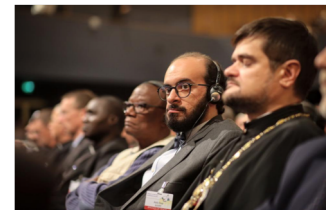
**Zeyad Elkelani (2014 Gabr Fellow)** received a Certificate of Achievement from the Department of International Studies for his work as a Research Assistant for the 2017-2018 academic year at Claremont Graduate University. He is currently pursuing his PhD in world politics and computational analytics and working at the university.

### Karim El Sharkawy Appointed as Teaching Assistant



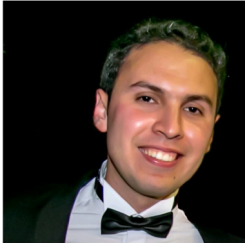
**Karim El Sharkawy (2018 Gabr Fellow)** was appointed as a teaching assistant in Global Affairs and Public Policy at the American University in Cairo (AUC). He currently serves as a diplomatic attaché at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Cairo, where he focuses on regional and international security, globalization and trade, and sustainable development. He is also currently pursuing his Master's Degree in Global Affairs with a concentration on International Security at AUC.

### Anis Issa Presents at Peace Bridges Forum



**Anis Issa (2016 Gabr Fellow)** participated in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Edition of the Peace Bridges Forum, an annual gathering organized by the International Community of Sant'Egidio. The 2018 gathering was held in Bologna with the theme of Religion and Cultures in Dialogue. Anis presented during a panel discussion on the topic of 'Historical Misconceptions of Coexistence.' Over 200 individuals attended the event this year, representing different faiths, cultures, and backgrounds.

## Aly Salem Participates in International Law Program



**Aly Salem (2017 Gabr Fellow)** is currently working with Latham & Watkins law firm in the UK, as part of the International Lawyers for Africa flagship program, an annual initiative that places lawyers practicing in Africa with top law firms in London, Paris, and Dubai. He is the first Egyptian to be selected for the program and is receiving advanced legal training through workshops and seminars at Oxford and Cambridge.

## Ola Yousry Welcomes a Son



**Ola Yousry (2015 Gabr Fellow)** and her husband Amr Essam welcomed a son named Malek in early September. She currently serves as an architect at Dar Al Handasah Multi-national Engineering Consultancy Group. She has participated in several mega projects throughout the Middle East and Gulf Regions, and looks to start her own business. Ola graduated from the Faculty of Engineering at Ain Shams University.

## Ahmed Aransho to Participate in the Global Forum of Young Diplomats



**Ahmed Aransho (2015 Gabr Fellow)** has been selected by Egypt's Foreign Ministry's Committee to represent it in the Global Forum of Young Diplomats, to be held in November in Sochi, Russia. This initiative is an intensive, weeklong program of practical sessions, workshops, policy exercises, and institutional visits delivered by leading experts in order to empower the next generation of diplomats. Ahmed currently works as a Diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## Soaad Hossam to Speak at Regional Conference



**Soaad Hossam (2018 Gabr Fellow)** will speak at a regional conference entitled "Enhancing Regional Approaches to Investment Protection and Facilitation for Sustainable Development" in Casablanca, Morocco in December. The conference is organized by the United Nations and the Islamic Development Bank, and she will discuss the Arab Investment Court.

## RJ Johnson Completes 3-Year Leadership Term



**RJ Johnson (2018 Gabr Fellow)** successfully completed his 3-year term on the World Federation of United Nations Association's Youth Advisory Council representing North America. He was the first American to be elected to serve in this role, advising the Secretary-General on youth issues and developing and promoting capacity building within the youth movement. He continues to serve as the National Vice Chair of UNA-USA and delivered the keynote address during the 2018 Global Leaders Summit at Florida State University.

## 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 *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt* by Toby Wilkinson and *Rise of the Robots: Technology and the Threat of a Jobless Future* by Martin Ford. We hope you enjoy these books and stay tuned for the next iteration of recommended books.

## 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: Which party will be the majority in the US Congress after the November 6<sup>th</sup> elections?**

Democrats: 40% of respondents

Republicans: 40% of respondents

I don't know: 20% of respondents

### **Question 2: Do you think Egypt should give priority access to the United States in the Suez Canal, despite the cancellation of cash flow financing?**

Yes: 36% of respondents

No: 51% of respondents

I don't know: 13% of respondents

### **Question 3: Do you think tech companies like Google and Facebook should be held financially liable for security breaches?**

Yes: 74% of respondents

No: 13% of respondents

I don't know: 13% of respondents

### **Question 4: Should the US support Egypt with sophisticated technologies to fight terrorism on its borders?**

Yes: 67% of respondents

No: 20% of respondents

I don't know: 13% of respondents

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

## Reflections on the 2018 Gabr Fellowship US Program

*With almost a month since the conclusion of the 2018 Gabr Fellowship program, the Fellows have had a chance to reflect on the experience and how they will use their newfound knowledge moving forward.*

"I was humbled by the people, their generosity, and their pride in their country. I had some of the most interesting conversations with a great cohort of influential speakers." – **Maram, Egyptian Fellow**

"The US portion of the Fellowship provided a different perspective to US foreign policy and helped me see New York and Washington through the lens of our Egyptian Fellows." – **Julie, American Fellow**

"I re-discovered my home country Egypt and explored the United States from different points of view through various meetings, discussions, and visits."- **Marwa, Egyptian Fellow**

"It was exciting to show my Egyptian colleagues American culture, politics, economics, and landmarks. The Fellowship allowed us to expose the Egyptians to the best America has to offer and created a deep-level cross-cultural understanding between the East and West." **Allison, American Fellow**

"This has helped me to think far beyond the law, adopt a more global perspective, and connect with the goals I have for the short and long-term. This is absolutely a win."- **Soaad, Egyptian Fellow**

"I don't think the impact that the Fellowship had on my worldview can be understated. Through this cultural cross-pollination, I have found myself with different ideas and impressions of the Middle East and those that call it home." – **Charles, American Fellow**

"I believe this experience allowed me to rethink and break the stereotypes and prejudices I had about so many topics and learn to be more empathetic towards other people and their ideas." **Hanan, Egyptian Fellow**

"The Gabr Fellowship is an unparalleled experience in terms of knowledge building, new friendships, and pure exhaustion. I left the US leg even more inspired than ever, and am looking forward to collaboratively working with my Egyptian and American colleagues for many years to come." – **Hayley, American Fellow**

"This Fellowship has been an eye-opening opportunity of how important a cultural exchange of ideas is. I've gained experiences that I don't think I would have gained from reading hundreds of books."- **Yara, Egyptian Fellow**

"The US portion of the program allowed me to hear from leaders in our own national security community and learn further the most pressing matters to our country and the US-Egypt relationship." – **Katie, American Fellow**

"As I continue to process the Gabr Fellowship experience, I find myself more and more grateful for this once in a lifetime opportunity. To experience not only Egypt and its unique and rich culture, but also the US through the lens of this program, is an invaluable opportunity that I will benefit from for years to come."- **Lauren, American Fellow**

"This is a life changing experience. The Fellowship opens new perspectives to the Fellows through unparalleled exposure and engagement, to learn, understand, and share." – **Karim, Egyptian Fellow**

"The Gabr Fellowship has given me the strength, knowledge, and vision to transcend all that I am so I can achieve my very deepest dreams in life. What an amazing experience. I am so grateful for the 19 new friends I've made and for joining the Gabr Family."-**Fabrice, American Fellow**

"The Fellowship allowed us to build real bridges of understanding and learning. This was an unforgettable, eye-opening, and unique experience that I wish I could repeat again and again." – **Shady, Egyptian Fellow**

## ***Egypt in a Cup of Tea, Fabrice Guerrier, 2018 Fellow***

Fabrice's debut collection of poetry through his company Syllble Studios was inspired by his 2018 travels to Egypt during the Gabr Fellowship. This book is dedicated to the 2018 Fellows and the Shafik Gabr Foundation. Below are selected experts from the collection and the full book can be purchased on Amazon: [www.amazon.com/dp/B07JNVTXH8](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B07JNVTXH8)



### **Lost Treasures You Are**

How dare you? How dare you! How dare you.. It asked with a blues like deja vu? How dare you seek the deepest treasures of Egypt's ancient view? When it's lost knowledge this whole whole time has lived greatly right before your eyes, as it foretold an only truth, the only destined path to take my young wild youth, yes, to the secrets of your wonderland, to the mysteries of yourself, to the lost treasures you are, to this great work reaching your cosmic gold, those things that seep through cracks of gold, shining your joys of tears, your deepest and darkest fears, your marching armies soul, your dancing your truth to give. Stop and stop and seek not those lost treasures in Pyramids but discover the Myth of yourself! Unearth it from the sandy filled grounds below, design it with your hands, build it with all your might, repaint this great cavern of the soul, this reflection of the cosmos whole.

### **My Sweet Arab Tea**

My sweet sweet arab tea, Koshary hot from morning to night, I sailed your waters with a chanting decree, I sipped and sipped your blissful herbal sea which brought my tidal waves to standstill like a tree, all my dreams Hibiscus bee, all my hopes a will supreme. Your porcelain white heating vapors, I too must sing you a final plea - your dark tan waters softens my tastes, awakes flavors to the deepest of my base, from distant fields you harvest mint, that merchants lives forever Shai, wooden tables hunched my back, my sweet sweet arab tea, reflecting life's forever jazz.

### **The Fortunes Will Tell**

When your soul is in it. When your heart is in it. When you think deeply these things always on your mind. The fortunes will tell! The fortunes will tell! The timelines will flow! The hidden pathways will be revealed and the veil will fall in mysterious ways.

When your soul breaths truth to who you are and how you live. When your heart dances and is filled fully with the actions you take. When your mind is clear, then your moon will bring the tides to the way of the heavens. Your sun will shine the rising cosmos within and will sing clear the things that pull all your heart strings. The fortune will tell! The fortune will tell!

## In Focus...

### Breaking Gender Norms from the Nile to the Red Sea Dalia Younis, 2017 Gabr Fellow

*Disclaimer: The views presented in this article are the authors' alone and do not represent the opinion of the Foundation. This article was originally published on [UNICEF's website](#).*

Donia Zakareya, 24, is a Nubian girl who was born in Qena, a city on the Nile just a few kilometers north of Luxor, in the Valley of the Kings. Though the area is known for its rich culture, it also holds to strict traditions, including common practices that do not create an empowering environment for girls and women. Many girls are deprived of an education and discouraged from leaving their hometowns to pursue their studies or careers.

"Being a girl was the biggest challenge I faced in my career," says Donia.

But with the help of a supportive, open-minded family, she would grow up to become the first female landscaping engineer in an Egyptian tourist resort.

It all started at the railroad ties factory where Donia's father, Yehia Zakareya, has worked since she was a child.

"She was four years old when she came here for the first time, and she was all over the place," says Yehia. "Everybody here loved her and helped me keep her away from the machinery."

As she grew, her father became her mentor. "He showed me how to write official letters, develop work sheets and other stuff," Donia says. "This gave me an edge in all the student activities and volunteer work I joined later."

Donia went on to study Agriculture at university and faced her first big gender clash when she chose Landscaping as a major.

"Landscaping and field work in general, which I loved the most, were considered exclusively for males," says Donia.

"There was a general belief among my peers that my only career options in Agriculture were administrative jobs because I am a girl."

But Donia's professors were supportive, and encouraged her to pursue her dream.

As graduation approached, Donia knew that to stand out in the job market, she would need more hands-on experience so she joined a series of skills development trainings in Qena.

The trainings were offered through [Meshwary](#) ("My journey"), a UNICEF-supported project in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sports and funded by USAID.

After six months, through [Meshwary](#), Donia was given an opportunity that would change her life: an interview at a large tourist resort. But there was one catch – it was over 300 miles away.

"A girl working and living far away from home is a frowned-upon concept in Upper Egypt. Some fathers won't even let their daughters work in the same governorate," she says.

Donia was also worried that her interviewers would look down on her gender and background.

"I mean, who would agree to transport, accommodate and give a girl extensive training in landscape engineering, a male-dominant field, in an international hotel?"

But to her surprise, she was accepted.

"I went directly to my dad and told him this was my dream opportunity," says Donia.

Yehia was convinced to take up another fight for her against taboos.

"You go work there, and I will deal with your critics here," he said.

Donia started her training at the Hilton Waterfalls in Sharm El-Sheikh in March 2018. A month later, she received a job offer as a landscaping engineer at the same resort.

Despite it being her dream job, the decision wasn't an easy one.

"Moving to Sharm El-Sheikh, which is far away from my family home, was the biggest decision I had to make in my life," she says.

"I thought about my some of my peers from Upper Egypt who also got job offers [in other fields] at Hilton, but couldn't accept them because their parents wouldn't allow them to move out to Sharm El-Sheikh," she says. "I suddenly had a strong feeling that I needed to go and achieve something out there not for myself, but for my supportive parents. I wanted to make them feel that their struggle against social norms and traditions to empower and defend me were worth it."

Today, Donia is thriving in her new job. Her initial worries that she would be given mainly administrative tasks did not materialize.

"The greatest thing happened- we all had equal chances. Our capabilities, determination, and interest were the only criteria of our assignments."

**To read the rest of the article and to see please visit <https://www.unicef.org/stories/breaking-gender-norms-nile-red-sea>. 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 earlier itineraries of the US program, please see the previous years' reports at <https://eastwestdialogue.org/fellowship/brochures/>



*The Faithful at Prayer*, Charles Roberston

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