

Haigazian University

Monday, October 13, 2014

Founders' Day

Launching of the 60th Anniversary events

President's Remarks

Minister Joreije,

Your Excellencies,

Reverends,

Dear Academic Community, students and friends,

It is known about diamonds that they are enduring, and that the atoms in a diamond have a strong bonding. Natural diamonds are formed at high temperature and pressure in the depths of the earth.

Diamond has value and merit not because of its looks, nor because of its owners, but because it has been tested by nature and time, and has developed strong qualities.

Sixtieth anniversaries are diamond anniversaries, and indeed the heritage on which our university was founded has been tested with fire, and the 60 years have further deepened the qualities. Everything about Haigazian University has proven that it is merit, not chance nor favoritism that leads one to quality and success.

Armenag Haigazian, in whose name we are founded was a victim of the Genocide himself. The founders and donors had not inherited much from their parents but had turned tragedy into creative life in Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Beirut. Our university started with minimal funds, ten rooms, 43 students, a few hundred books. But within six years, its students had literally entered the scientific space race. Other graduates had started their own schools. That is diamond, it is real merit, and we celebrate it today with pride. We are founded on values that focus on hard work, overcoming obstacles, openness towards others, and valuing all forms of life, knowing well that it is in the depth of the God-given soul that human and social diamonds are shaped. Even with limited resources, our people had broken the chains of their boundaries into the free space of knowledge, professionalism and service.

Therefore, with diamonds in mind, I have the pleasure today of launching Haigazian University's 60th anniversary events.

In this program, we will remain true to our motto: Truth, Freedom, and Service. We are therefore honoring two valuable people of the past, and many people of the future.

His Excellency, Ghassan Tueini, and Photojournalist Harry Koundakjian, had proven that talent, dedication, selflessness, hard work, combined with a passion for sharing

the truth with others, are the recipe for greatness and lasting merit in this world. The pen was for Tueini what the lens was for Koundakjian. And the simple truth was exposed to the global audience.

We also honored our young people of the present, rather the leaders of tomorrow, who prove year after year that a university degree alone is not sufficient for making a difference in the world. It is not your rich uncle, nor your ethnicity, not your name that will guarantee value in the future. Rather, alongside academic endeavor, student experience in teams and clubs, in initiatives and projects, community service and skill development all of these will guarantee the formation of a well-rounded personality and later accomplishment in the world. We want our students today, our leaders of tomorrow, to be proud that they have earned what they enjoy, just as their university prides in merit in every sense.

It is our hope that our current generation will be inspired by people like Ghassan Tueini and Harry Koundakjian, by what they did and how they did it, more than what denomination they belonged to, or what political party they favored or did not favor. It has been Haigazian's policy to always look beyond the limitations of people and the narrow aspects of people's identity. Indeed, Lebanon and the world will continue to need the Tueini's for sharp yet tolerant minds, strong, yet enlightening words. Lebanon and the world will need shocking yet truthful images of reality out there, as photojournalist like Koundakjian did.

Quite natural for us was therefore, to enjoy the presence of the Minister of Information, Mr. Ramzi Joreige, with his legal, public and educational profile, to celebrate with us the launching of the 60th anniversary and the honoring of the two personalities of the Lebanese media. And I am pleased that a number of public and journalistic personalities are here with us today.

In closing, allow me to invite the Minister to receive a plaque of friendship and cooperation on this occasion.

Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D.

President