



NATIONAL U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

غرفة التجارة الأمريكية العربية الوطنية

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12 PDI FELLOWS ATTEND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP AT NUSACC

Kuwaiti Fellows at Dow, GE, and Other U.S. Firms Gain On-the-Job Experience

Kuwaiti Ambassador: "These are some of the best and brightest Kuwaiti young professionals," offering U.S. companies an opportunity to "help train the next generation of business leaders in our country."

Washington, DC – Twelve Kuwaiti Fellows who are participating in one-year professional internships with U.S. companies have just completed a two-day intensive training course as part of a joint program developed by the [National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce \(NUSACC\)](#), the [Embassy of the State of Kuwait](#) in Washington, Kuwait's [Ministry of Higher Education](#), and the [Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences \(KFAS\)](#).

The Fellows, young leaders in the Professional Development Initiative (PDI), flew to Washington DC from all over the United States to participate in a course that was designed



The PDI Fellows, staff, and VIP guests. Front row (left to right): Dr. Mohammad Al Jeragh, Cultural Counselor at the Embassy of Kuwait; Dr. Aseel Alawadhi, Director of the Kuwait Cultural Office; H.E. Nawaf Al-Enezi, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Kuwait; Mr. David Hamod, President & CEO of NUSACC; Cynthia Douglass, PDI Director; and Janine Colon, PDI Manager.

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especially for them. Training was conducted by: Brad Barton, Founder of [Brad Barton Speaks](#), past president of the National Speakers Association, and author of *Beyond Illusions*; and Dr. Ruediger Fox, Founder of the [Gross Corporate Happiness Institute](#) and a partner at Second Muse.



H.E. Sheikh Salem Al Sabah, Kuwaiti Ambassador: “PDI Fellows like these represent some of the ‘best and the brightest’ Kuwaiti young professionals in the United States.”

The intensive training was kicked off by: H.E. Nawaf Al-Enezi, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Kuwait; Dr. Aseel Alawadhi, Director of the Kuwait Cultural Office; Dr. Mohammad Al Jeragh, Cultural Counselor at the Embassy of Kuwait; and Mr. David Hamod, President & CEO of NUSACC.

“We want Kuwait to remain very competitive in the region, with one of the best workforces in the entire Middle East,” said Mr. Al-Enezi. “The PDI program enables these Fellows to gain valuable employment experience and knowledge here in the United States, and then to bring that expertise back home to Kuwait.”

Dr. Alawadhi suggested that by positioning themselves for private sector careers, PDI Fellows are “swimming against the current” in Kuwait, where the vast majority of graduates opt for government jobs. “With the opportunity that you are getting through the PDI,” she noted, “we are confident that you will make a difference and help to drive change in Kuwait. This experience will help you to become pioneers in drafting the future of our country.”

Gaining “Real World” Workplace Experience

Now in its third year, the Professional Development Initiative is a signature program that is helping Kuwaiti young professionals to gain “real world” experience in the workplace. At a time when Arab nations are undergoing a historic transition from hydrocarbon-based economies to knowledge-based economies, PDI is helping select Kuwaiti graduates of U.S. universities to build capacity at American companies.



Trainer Brad Barton threads a needle through a balloon as he discusses how to overcome negative illusions and improve mental conditioning.

To date, the PDI program has placed Fellows with such firms as Dow Chemical Company, General Electric, 1776 (entrepreneurship), AIGA (professional association for designers), BlueWave Capital, MetLife, Philadelphia International Medicine, Langan International, and others.

For more information about PDI, please visit:
www.pdi-nusacc.org

Host companies employ PDI Fellows for a period of one year, fully immersing them in the firm's corporate culture. The experience is intended to prepare Fellows for international markets, including the State of Kuwait. American firms have an opportunity to work with Fellows on a "trial" (internship) basis for one year and, at the end of that time, they are invited to explore a longer-term hire.

PDI is especially attractive to U.S. employers because the Government of Kuwait provides a monthly stipend and health insurance to the Fellows. There are two cohorts of PDI graduates per year – one in the summer and one in the winter – so there is an ongoing pipeline of pre-screened candidates with degrees in such fields as engineering, design, business, public relations, finance, and the arts.



Trainer Dr. Ruediger Fox uses the U.S. Declaration of Independence to discuss life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness in the workplace.

Testimonials of Current PDI Fellows

PDI Fellows delivered compelling presentations at the training session.

"I have gone further than I thought I could because of the PDI program," said Mohammad Molani, who just completed a one-year PDI term with The Dow Chemical Company in Freeport, Texas as a maintenance engineer. "The PDI program is having a huge impact on my life and my career. It enhanced many of my skills and knowledge, from creativity, motivation, leadership, adaptability, flexibility, goal achievements, and strategies, to masterminding new skills."



PDI Fellow Mohammad Molani (center) during a ceremony honoring him for his achievements at The Dow Chemical Company.

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Sean Wasko, Dow Chemical's Texas Operations Polyurethanes Reliability Zones Leader, had high praise for Molani. "Mohammad came up with an 'outside the box' solution on one project for Dow. The project had been stalled until Mohammad took over. He overcame the challenges, and he got traction on moving forward. He's had a great attitude and leadership, and he has been instrumental in making this project successful. He became an important part of the team."

Molani's PDI colleague, Abdulaziz Akbar, is halfway through his PDI experience at Dow. He noted, "The PDI situated me well for my work at Dow, showing me how to be more successful, to achieve more, and to push my limits." He continued, "It has also motivated me through the PDI monthly leadership forums. My work experience at Dow is giving me real-world experience that I need to know today, to prepare for tomorrow."



Abdu Albusairi (right) presents his yearlong project to the PDI Fellows, staff, trainers, and VIP guests, including (from left to right): Dr. Aseel Alawadhi, Director of the Kuwait Cultural Office; H.E. Nawaf Al-Enezi, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy of Kuwait; and Mr. David Hamod, President & CEO of NUSACC.

BlueWave, a solar energy company, founded on a mission "to protect our planet by expanding access to solar for everyone, everywhere," employed Abdulrahman "Abdu" Albusairi for one year as a Site Acquisitions Analyst in Boston, Massachusetts. Andrew Buckley, Senior Associate, commended Albusairi for proactively taking initiative. "Abdu has come a long way ... which comes with practice," Buckley noted. "He's done

a great job. He has set a high bar. 'Grab what you can and run with it' is the mentality around here, and Abdu has done just that."

Albusairi responded, "I didn't treat the job as just a one-year opportunity; as a result, I tried to minimize the training period and maximize the contribution period. For example, I took an online business and finance course at Harvard University to gain business skills that would help me in my work at BlueWave."

Albusairi went on to say, "The things I learned through PDI were very valuable; they propelled me in my role at BlueWave, and they added a great depth to my year there. From time management to bringing innovative ideas into the workplace to increasing my value as an employee, the PDI leadership forums and training were all very helpful. I am proud to be part of the PDI program."

Ms. Alymamah Rashed recently began her PDI year, and she had this to say: "The experience I've gained so far from my work experience in New York City has been amazing. I'm a stronger person, and I've formed a wonderful community, not only with my colleagues and friends, but also with the PDI staff and trainers." She concluded, "I feel a great sense of freedom from the leadership training. Join the program!"

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To hear from current and former PDI Fellows about the program, click [HERE](#).

Up Next: The 2017 Winter Class of PDI Fellows

The next “class” of PDI Fellows, who become available for employment in January 2017, includes:

[Abdulrahman Alaiban](#), BS Mechanical Engineering/Leadership Development

[Omar AlAli](#), BS Mechanical Engineering/Leadership Development

[Ayoub Ali](#), MS Industrial Engineering

[Sarah Gharib](#), BS Environmental Systems Engineering/Health & Safety

“PDI Fellows like these represent some of the ‘best and the brightest’ Kuwaiti young professionals in the United States,” said H.E. Sheikh Salem Al Sabah, Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States and a driving force behind the program. “U.S. companies are doing billions of dollars’ worth of business in Kuwait, and PDI offers these companies an opportunity to ‘give back’ to Kuwait by helping to train the next generation of business leaders in our country.”

Another PDI partner, the [Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences](#), is closely connected to Kuwait’s scientific and business communities. KFAS is widely regarded as a focal point for promoting STEM education and R&D capabilities in Kuwait while playing an important role as a bridge between Kuwait’s public and private sectors. KFAS’s vision is nationally-focused and draws on valuable resources to successfully position Kuwait to compete in a knowledge-based economy in the future. The KFAS mission is to stimulate, support, and invest in initiatives and human resources that contribute to building a strong science technology and innovation system and culture while fostering an enabling environment.

Dr. Adnan Shihab Eldin, Director General of KFAS, suggests that the corporate culture that PDI instills in these young Fellows will serve them throughout their professional lives. “These PDI Fellows have received some of the best professional training in the world... on the job, but also as part of the PDI monthly training sessions,” he noted. “That experience is invaluable – whether they go to work for a multinational company or a Kuwaiti firm. KFAS is proud to be part of this innovative program that is building capacity among Kuwait’s young professionals.”



The inaugural class of PDI Fellows and VIPs are hosted by H.E. Sheikh Salem Al Sabah (front right), Kuwait’s Ambassador to the United States

David Hamod, NUSACC President & CEO, said, “These PDI Fellows combine academic excellence with bilingual fluency, a deep understanding of the Arab world, and a commitment to hard work. For U.S. companies, this is an exceptional opportunity to impart knowledge, but also to gain knowledge from young leaders who are steeped in two cultures, Kuwaiti and American.” He concluded, “This is the only program of its kind in the Arab world. PDI is only three years old, but it is already having a discernable impact on U.S. – Kuwait commercial relations.”



The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, widely regarded as the voice of American business in the Arab world, is in touch with business communities across the United States and serves as the U.S. point of contact for the national chambers of commerce in the 22 Arab nations. On a daily basis, NUSACC works closely with leaders throughout the Arab world, as well as high-level decision makers in the U.S. business community, public policy research centers, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the U.S. Government.

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