



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## TWO PDI FELLOWS AT BOEING PARTICIPATE IN DELIVERY CEREMONY FOR KUWAIT AIRWAYS' 10th 777

**Everett, WA** – Two young professionals from Kuwait, part of the [Professional Development Initiative](#) (PDI), recently participated in a commercial airplane delivery ceremony to Kuwait Airways. PDI Fellows Ayoub Ali Ashkanani and Sarah Gharib, Boeing employees, recently joined company executives for the tenth and final 777 delivery to Kuwait Airways.

Hosted by Jeff Klemann, Boeing's Vice President of Everett Delivery Center in Washington State, Ashkanani and Gharib participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony and luncheon, where Klemann presented Kuwait Airways representatives with a wooden model of the B&W, the first airplane designed by Boeing, in 1916. Boeing is the world's largest aerospace company and leading manufacturer of commercial airplanes and defense, space and security systems.

"Our PDI Fellows have proven to be great additions to our Boeing team," said George Paddleford, International Human Resources Senior Manager at The Boeing Company. "This program has allowed us to seamlessly integrate high-quality, highly-skilled employees into our workforce, and we are grateful for their dedication and enthusiasm throughout their fellowships."

The objective of the PDI is to build U.S.-Kuwait commercial relationships and to offer professional work experience for highly qualified Kuwaiti students as they graduate from American universities. Now entering its fourth year, PDI is a joint program developed by the [National U.S. – Arab Chamber of Commerce](#) (NUSACC), the [Embassy of Kuwait](#) in Washington, Kuwait's [Ministry of Higher Education](#), and the [Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences](#) (KFAS).



Sarah Gharib (left), Industrial Hygienist at Boeing in Everett, WA; Ayoub Ali Ashkanani (right), Industrial Engineer at Boeing in St. Louis, MO.

*(Photo Credit: Boeing)*

## “The Experience of a Lifetime”

“I have had the experience of a lifetime,” said Ayoub Ali Ashkanani, who is working as a Boeing 777X industrial engineer in St. Louis, Missouri. Of his visit to Boeing’s Everett site before the delivery ceremony, Ashkanani said, “It was fascinating to explore the different mechanical aspects of the planes, whether it be a 777 or a 787, and I was impressed to see how commodities produced in our St. Louis site are going to be fitted on the next generation of 777s, the B777X.”

He went on to say, “I was proud to be an ambassador for my beloved Kuwait and for the special PDI program at this memorable event, an experience that I shall never forget. It was also a great networking opportunity, enabling me to meet Boeing officials and top representatives of Kuwait Airways, ALAFCO and the DGCA. The days I spent at the Everett site made me take pride in the work I do, playing a role in building the future of the 777 family.” Ashkanani completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Miami and received his Master’s degree from the University of Central Florida.



Boeing’s Everett Delivery Center in Washington State hosted the tenth and final 777 delivery to Kuwait Airways. Ayoub Ashkanani (fourth from right) and Sarah Gharib (fifth from right) represented the PDI.

*(Photo Credit: Boeing)*

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“As an industrial hygienist at the Boeing Everett factory, I had the privilege of witnessing the Kuwait Airways Boeing 777-300ER from its initial assembly stages to its final departure from the Everett factory,” noted Sarah Gharib. “As I walk through the factory, I am always impressed by the amount of care and hard work that goes into building a Boeing aircraft. Viewing this brand new airplane on the flight-line made me very proud of my country and my company, Boeing. It was a great honor to attend the delivery ceremony in Everett and then to deliver the airplane at the Kuwait International Airport. My parents were very proud.”

She went on to say, “As a PDI fellow, I have benefited greatly by gaining knowledge and experience through this internship, as well as participating in this major event in Kuwait Airways’ history.” Gharib graduated from Pennsylvania State University in December 2016. She is working as an Industrial Hygiene Intern in Everett, Washington, where she is focused protecting employee health and maintaining regulatory compliance through sampling and evaluating workplace hazards.

So far, Boeing has accepted two PDI Fellows in programs lasting 12 - 24 months, and the aerospace firm is currently in discussions to place additional Fellows later this year.

## The Class of 2017 PDI Summer & Winter Fellows

The Class of 2017 summer and winter PDI Fellows includes:



**Abdullah Alrashdan**

MS, Mechanical Engineering  
Loyola Marymount University

Interested in the aerospace,  
automotive, electronics, and  
energy sectors.



**Alia Ghloom**

MS, Civil & Infrastructure  
Engineering  
George Mason University

Interested in infrastructure  
and water engineering.



**Faisal AlAbulmuhsen**

BS, Business Administration  
Bryant University

Working as Northeast Sales  
Support Analyst at BlueWave  
in Boston, MA.



**Farah Alkharji**

MS, Industrial Engineering  
University of Miami

Interested in construction  
sector industrial  
engineering.



**Hamad Alabdulkader**

BA, Finance  
Arizona State University

Interested in corporate  
finance.



**Maryam AlZayed**

BS, Industrial Engineering  
Arizona State University

Working as Industrial  
Engineer at Dow Chemical,  
Midland, MI.



**Saoud ("Sam") Almulla**

MS, Electrical Engineering  
University of Illinois

Interested in semiconductor  
device physics, photonics,  
and nanotechnology.



**Yousef Alsharif**

MS, Civil Engineering  
Northeastern University

Interested in traffic &  
transportation planning in  
the civil engineering sector.

With each new group of PDI Fellows, comprised of a summer cohort and a winter cohort, there is increased enthusiasm and a greater level of commitment to working in the United States. Moreover, the program is very attractive to university graduates because it includes not only job placement, but also interview coaching, mentorship, monthly training forums, and 24/7 support from NUSACC's PDI team, led by Director Cynthia Douglass and Mr. Ahmad Al Sayed, who was raised in Kuwait.

**Applications for the summer 2018 PDI term are open to Kuwaiti students until October 31, 2017.**

For U.S. companies interested in developing their commercial ties with Kuwait through the PDI, please visit [pdi-nusacc.org](http://pdi-nusacc.org) or contact Cynthia Douglass at [cdouglass@nusacc.org](mailto:cdouglass@nusacc.org).

### **PDI: Building Bridges Between Kuwait and the USA**

In an [Expert Roundtable](#) hosted by NUSACC earlier this year, U.S. Ambassador Lawrence Silverman offered to host a reception for PDI Fellows upon their return to Kuwait. PDI, he said, is part of America's efforts to build bridges to younger generations, not only at home, but also abroad.

"American products sell themselves in Kuwait," Silverman suggested, "but we don't take the relationship for granted." He cited education and training as important ways to foster and sustain mutually beneficial relations between our peoples and our countries: "We are

actively promoting the United States as a destination for Kuwaiti students. I am proud that we have over 15,000 Kuwaitis now studying in the United States, more than double the number of students from just a few years ago.”



U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait, Lawrence Silverman (left), and NUSACC President & CEO, David Hamod (right), during NUSACC's recent Expert Roundtable on commercial opportunities in Kuwait.



Kuwait Airways 777 on its inaugural flight from Everett, WA to Kuwait.

(Photo Credit: Boeing)

*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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