LAU
School of **Architecture and Design**

Top of the Class

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

MAHER ABDEL RAHIM
B.A. Architecture '05

Rahim is an associate at Bousfields, Inc., a highly regarded planning and urban design firm in Toronto. Having worked for prominent firms Dar Al-Handasah and Khatib & Alami his experience includes a range of projects varying in type and scale, one of which won third prize in a United Nations-organized competition.

Currently, he's a senior urban designer on a mega-project for Toronto's entertainment district, which will integrate legendary architect Frank Gehry's designs. Though he is glad for the opportunity, his own architectural dreams are in Lebanon. He would like to design a villa overlooking the Mediterranean, a technical school in the city of el-Mina, and "combine historic preservation, sound urban design and necessary initiatives to renew old mid-rise buildings and integrate them within new high-rise buildings" in Beirut, thus contributing to its future while respecting its past.

Rahim credits LAU with helping him build the fundamentals of his architectural skills. "In order to propose something new, you have to absorb what already exists and then use that knowledge, along with contemporary thinking, to design something innovative," he says.

ELIE ABS
B.A. Architecture '97

During his time at LAU, Abs gained a first-rate "theoretical, conceptual and technical base" in architecture, which served him well as he went on to obtain his master's in Architecture and Urbanism from the Architectural Association in London. He subsequently worked for the renowned firm Kohn Pedersen Fox, one of the largest architecture firms in the world. He currently puts his degree to use as co-founder and principal architect at Accent Design Group, a highly successful firm that provides design consultancy services in the Arab region. The firm recently won a wide-reaching competition to build a residential building in Beirut's Gemmayze district, which Abs says is an effort to "translate the typological richness of Gemmayze into a playful volumetric composition."

His willingness to experiment is another trait that stems from his experience at LAU, where he says his ideas were allowed free range, "which is extremely important in developing an architectural personality." Abs considers this freedom essential and hopes to see it imparted to all future generations of architects.

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