

*LERC honors three personalities contributing to the Japan-Lebanon*

*Rapprochement*

*Rajwane Kafrouni, LERC Intern*

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Under the patronage of the Japanese Embassy in Lebanon and in the presence of His Excellency Seiichi Otsuka, the Japan Ambassador to Lebanon, the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at the University of Notre Dame-Louaize (NDU) honored Professor Marie Rose Abdel Jalil-Ishiguro, Professor Hidemitsu Kuroki from Tokyo University of Foreign Affairs (TUFS), and Ms. Madeleine Abdel Jalil-Umewaka for their respective efforts in promoting academic cooperation and for contributing to the Japan-Lebanon rapprochement.

Ms. Margot Nasir Abdul Jalil, aunt of the Jalil sisters, and their cousin Ms. Jacqueline Maamari accepted the award on their behalf. It is worth mentioning that they both got married to two Japanese men during the Lebanese war and moved to live in Japan, where Professor Marie Rose became a prolific writer on Christianity, Lebanon and the Middle East and where Ms. Madeleine became active in promoting the Japanese Noh Theater and the Lebanese-Japan relations. Dr. Kuroki received the award for advancing academic exchange between Lebanon and Japan and for bringing together Japanese scholars to work on Lebanese migration in the world.



*Ambassador Seiichi Otsuka, Ms. Margot Abdel Jalil, Dr. Antoine Farhat (VPAA) (LERC/NDU May 2014)*

The ceremony was attended by the First Secretary and Cultural Attaché at the Japanese Embassy in Lebanon Mr. Masami Iichi; Dean of the Faculty of Science Dr. George Eid; Dean of the Faculty of Engineering Dr. Michel Hayek; Director of the Office of International Relations Dr. Pierre Gedeon; Director of the LERC Dr. Guita Hourani; Dr. Hani Zugheib, Dr. Roger Hajjar, Mr. Seto Solukdjian, Mr. Nassar Abu Khalil, in addition to LERC staff and interns.

After a brief presentation on the Center, Dr. Hourani read a brief biography about each of the awardees after which Professor Kuroki thanked, on behalf of the three awardees, the gracious gesture of NDU and praised the efforts of the Center and NDU for promoting scientific research on migration and for networking with the Lebanese around the world.

In his speech, the Vice President for Academic Affairs highlighted the importance of communication and exchange with Japan, especially in academic fields.

The Ambassador concluded with a speech thanking Notre Dame University and stressing on the need to continue cooperation between both countries.