

## ***LERC Honors Mr. and Mrs. Daher of the Ninawa Daher Foundation, Argentina***

***Jasmin Lilian Diab, LERC***

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Under the auspices of His Excellency Mr. Ricardo S. Larriera, Argentinian Ambassador to Lebanon, the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLPS) at Notre Dame University-Louaize (NDU) in collaboration with the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) honored Mr. Ghandour Daher and Mrs. Alicia Daher of the Ninawa Daher Foundation in Argentina for their indispensable contributions to the promotion and preservation of Lebanese Culture in Argentina.

The LERC established the Acknowledgment Award in 2005 with the aim to recognize Lebanese or people of Lebanese descent who serve the community and promote Lebanon in their respective country of migration. In addition, this award is also granted to those who have been helpful and supportive of the LERC Mission and who have contributed in either cash or kind to LERC projects.



***(from left) Dr. Hourani, Ms. Daher, Mr. Matar, Dr. Bou-Saber, and H.E. Mr. Larriera (Abou Khater Auditorium, NDU - March, 2015)***

Mr. and Mrs. Daher are prominent members of the Lebanese community in Argentina, particularly in Buenos Aires where they established strong contacts with the government and officials of Argentina. The family is close to Pope Francis who knew them and their late daughter, Nínawa, in person. Nínawa, who passed away in a car accident at the age of 31, was a well-known lawyer and a newscaster in Argentina. Under the foundation, which her parents established after Nínawa's tragic passing, many activities related to Lebanon and the Middle East are promoted.

The city of Buenos Aires passed a law in December 2014, unanimously approving the declaration of her birthday (October 3) as a national day for young Argentineans of Lebanese descent. Mr. Daher is a political analyst and an interpreter who serves various embassies and government agencies in Argentina and who travels with the presidents of Argentina to the Arabic-speaking countries. Mrs. Daher was once a psychologist and today serves as the President of the Nínawa Daher Foundation. The couple is relentless in supporting Lebanon and anything related to their homeland in Argentina. They not only organize events and activities but also support fund-raising activities and events organized by the Lebanese embassy, the church, and various organizations. They support Lebanese descendants' youth activities. They open doors to visitors from Lebanon with the Argentinian government, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the media, and academia, including the president and many ministers, the patriarch, the World Lebanese Cultural Union (WLCU), the LERC, and the NDU Lebanon Dialogue Initiative, among others. Selfless, generous, and humble, they are unwavering supporters of the Maronite Church and Lebanon in Argentina and always ready to serve.



*Latin American and Caribbean Ambassadors surround Ms. Daher along with attendees at the ceremony (Abou Khater Auditorium, NDU- March, 2015)*

Following both the Lebanese and Argentinian national anthems, Mr. Suheil Matar, Vice-President for Public Affairs and Communications at NDU, opened the ceremony, welcoming the attendees and honorees to the University. This followed by a word from the Dean of the FLPS Dr. Maan Bou-Saber, as well as a word from the Director of the LERC Dr. Guita Hourani, before Ambassador Larriera delivered his speech.

The award ceremony was attended by H.E. Mr. Jamie Garcia Amaral, Ambassador of Mexico to Lebanon, H.E. Dr. Marta Pizzanelli, Ambassador of Uruguay to Lebanon; H.E. Mr. José Miguel Menchaca, Ambassador of Chili to Lebanon; and H.E. Mrs. Georgina al-Shaer Mallat, Ambassador of Colombia to Lebanon.

Argentinian Archbishop Habib Chamieh, Mr. Ghassan Houssami, Secretary of the Association of Alhoussami in Lebanon, NDU/LERC staff, and professors from the FLPS also attended the ceremony.

A tour of the LERC Nucleus Museum and a small cocktail concluded the ceremony.