ALBA Students Win USF International Competition

A group of four ALBA students, Antoun Rizk, Cynthia Jreige, Michael Najjar, and Chadi Hijazi, won the first prize at the International Competition organized by Urbanistes Sans Frontières (USF) on 25 January 2014 in Paris entitled “Ecological Restructuring of a Slum and Adaptation to Climate Change”. The competition dealt with slums, an urban figure increasingly common among major cities of the Third World. Four countries (Lebanon, Mali, India, and Armenia) were selected as finalists from a group of 36 countries that participated in the event. Students from l’École d’Architecture and the Institut d’Urbanisme (IUA) at ALBA worked collaboratively on the Sabra El Horch region, and were supervised by ALBA instructors. The various projects were presented under the supervision of the participating universities, and in coordination with the mayors and people living in the selected regions, in accordance with the specifications and rules of the competition.

Layal Boustany, a Multitasking Person

After obtaining her Master’s Degree in Environmental Sciences in 2012, Layal Boustany worked in several fields. She has installed and managed native tree nurseries, been involved in a quarry rehabilitation project, worked as an eco-guide, taught unschooled children several subjects and founded and managed a café. She has found her calling working for Mada Association, a local NGO in the marginalized district of Akkar, under a project funded by the European Union and aiming at improving the conditions of women through various training sessions. The training is given by local women who are selected and trained to become trainers to develop a small plan for a micro-project of their choice, with the assistance of Mada and other partners. This project also aims to develop a proposal for the elimination of sexual discrimination from all Lebanese laws. The women themselves will review and approve this document, discuss it with local municipalities, and present it to the concerned NGOs and donors. Although her priority is now in social work, Layal is also involved in reforestation, agriculture, and environmental awareness projects.