

Saturday, July 4, 2009

## World traveler says OU felt like home

For a more than a century, the hope of the American dream has inspired and fascinated people across the globe. Asmaa "Annette" Jamil, SBA '95, MIS '00, feels that she's been fortunate enough to live it.

She and her family emigrated from Iraq to the United States when she was a child, seeking economic opportunity in the 1970s. More than 30 years later, she is helping others from the Middle East to follow the same path.

"I have a passion to encourage development in that region of the world and to help individuals succeed," says Jamil. "My knowledge, experience and heritage are very helpful in this pursuit."

Helpful is an understatement. By day, Jamil is a manager for Daimler Financial Services, where she evaluates global business units and operations, and makes recommendations about consolidation, standardization and outsourcing opportunities. This work takes her abroad nearly every other week, yet she still finds time for humanitarian efforts.

In 2006, Jamil taught a seminar in Yemen to more than 100 entrepreneurs. Upon completion of the session, the students participated in a two-week internship in the United States. The program was a success, thanks to the efforts of the American-Arab Chamber of Commerce, where Jamil served as a board member.

"It was the proudest moment of my professional and personal accomplishments," says Jamil. "I loved every minute of it ... every aspect of it."

She also lent a hand to the American Middle East Economic Affairs Committee, which supports and encourages Arab women to succeed in business. As part of the leadership team in 2006, she introduced its Women's Business Council at the U.S.-Arab Economic Forum in Houston.

It's a full schedule with professional pursuits, international travel and volunteer efforts. But that doesn't stop Jamil from faithfully teaching First Communion classes at her Chaldean Catholic Church. For 13 years she's held the responsibility close to her heart.

Jamil's interest in humanitarian efforts first surfaced while attending OU. "The professors cared about each student," Jamil says. "That philosophy has stayed with me. I think of everyone as a person, and I try to help them in any way that I can."

Jamil chose OU for her undergraduate studies because it was a convenient commute from her home in Oak Park, Mich. Before long, she realized that OU wasn't just close to home, it felt like home. That's quite a compliment, considering all the places Jamil has visited around the world.

Reflecting on her education at OU, Jamil is thankful for small classes with fewer than 30 students. "It allowed me to interact with professors and students, providing a great foundation for professional networking and lasting friendships."

A solid foundation and endless opportunities — for Jamil, it's not just the American dream. It's a reality.

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### SUMMARY

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