



For a Better Future

Thomas Jefferson Birthday Commemoration

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During an event commemorating Thomas Jefferson's birthday on Tuesday, April 14, Thomas Jefferson program alumni described their time in the United as an "inspiring life-changing experience, an adventurous journey."

At the Embassy-hosted event, Ambassador Walles joined the alumni to celebrate the achievements of the newly-established Thomas Jefferson Alumni Association, which was founded by the first group of Thomas Jefferson

son program returnees. The Thomas Jefferson alumni presented the Ambassador with a photo collage of the community-service activities in which they have engaged since returning to Tunisia last summer.

ALUMNI CORNER

Global Village by Thomas Jefferson Alumni Association

On Saturday, April 4, the Thomas Jefferson Alumni Association (TJAA) organized a multicultural event called "Global Village" at the Maison des Jeunes in the Tunis suburb of La Marsa. The event brought together different cultural centers and embassies to share with the public different components of their cultures and to introduce the services they provide.



U.S. Embassy Staff in the Event

Staff of the U.S. Embassy Tunis answered questions about the Embassy's various exchange opportunities and

distributed information about different features of the United States.

The TJAA event was a huge success and a great example of the alumni's critical role as cultural ambassadors and global mediators. Thanks to

Maison des Jeunes for hosting the event!

MEPI Leaders for Democracy Alumnus Concluded Training in Beirut

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Ahmed Missaoui is a 2015 alumnus of the Arab Leaders for Democracy Program. He is a civil society activist from Sfax. When he began the program, Ahmed looked forward to learning about democratic principles, rights and freedom, and about how to practice democracy in real life especially in the context of Tunisia's

democratic consolidation.

The impact of the program far exceeded Ahmed's expectations. Thanks to the high-calibre training he received from the American-Lebanese University, he was able to interact with civil society organizations from Lebanon and other Arab countries, and with politicians and

international organizations located in Lebanon. In addition, Ahmed developed a network of people from different Arab countries.

In the future, Ahmed hopes to continue networking within the MENA region. He plans to train Tunisian youth on the different meanings of democracy.

SOUK AT-TANMIA SPOTLIGHT

Souk At-Tanmia Beneficiary Contributes to Economic and Social Development of Chenini

Nedra Boulila, a talented woman from Sfax, uses her skills and innovative ideas to contribute to the development of the remote and picturesque village of Chenini, near Tataouine. Nedra is now attracting a large number of tourists to the village through "Dar Kenza" a charming cottage getaway she launched a few years ago.

Women of Chenini have an ancestral tradition of Berber carpet weaving and Nedra is contributing to the revival of this tradition by empowering and organizing women's work to help them sell their products.

Thanks to Souk At-Tanmia's grant and coaching support, Nedra succeeded in expanding her project. In April 2014 she opened the "Centre de Laine Kenza Chenini" an exhibition center located in one of the traditional caves in the rocks to reach more clients and to help women produce and sell more carpets.

In this way, Nedra was able to empower these women artisans by improving the livelihood of the communities and contributing to the economic and social development of the

village.

"Our village is located in a remote hill; "Kenza Chenini" is the only source of revenue for our families. We trust Nedra who is supporting the artisans to continue this Berber tradition, transmitted from mother to daughter for centuries" said Myriam, one of the women artisans.

The exhibition center attracts an international clientele through "Dar Kenza" which has an average occupancy rate of 70% throughout the year. The center employs four managers for "Dar Kenza" and 20 women who work from home producing the carpets.

Due to the many social and economic benefits of this project, Kenza Chenini participated in a handicraft fair in Paris last January at Pierrefitte-sur-Seine with an exhibition workshop on the Berber weaving of Chenini.

Thanks to the Souk's collaboration



Handmade Carpets

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with local press, recently Nedra participated in the first "Women Entrepreneurs Awards" event organized by Manager Magazine in collaboration with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and she was named the 2015 Best Woman Entrepreneur of the Year. In addition, she received an award in the "Best Price for Tourism and Services category." Nedra received good media coverage for Kenza Chenini project as well as an invitation from the Foundation to visit Germany in order to expand her network and gain access to the German market.

{ Thanks to Souk At-Tanmia's grant, Nedra succeeded to expand her project to become more integrated. }

Bizerte Chamber of Commerce Evolving

During an evaluation of U.S.-funded economic projects in Bizerte, a U.S. Embassy team met with the Chamber of Commerce as part of a project funded through MEPI in partnership with Deloitte to build the capacity of eight Chambers of Commerce.

The feedback of Bizerte Chamber of Commerce on training the staff and

identifying roles and responsibilities is very positive; personnel are more organized and more productive.

Deloitte's analysis of the economic dynamics in Bizerte reveals that the region's economy is mostly based on agriculture and that there is a potential to develop tourism, and the Bizerte Chamber of Commerce is plan-

ning to actively support businesses in this sector. As a first step, the Chamber is working on how to better publicize its services in the region through the media.

For more information on the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Northeast Bizerte, visit their website <http://www.ccibizerte.org/> or call (+216) 72 431 044/ 72 443.

CHALLENGE CORNER

Marketing Challenge

U.S. Embassy staff paid a visit to the south of Tunisia (Tozeur and Gafsa) and met with several women artisans who benefited from U.S.-funded projects. These women were particularly enthusiastic about the opportunity they got through MEPI; they were trained in new handiworks skills and/or to improve their existing knowledge, be more creative, and to produce innovative handicrafts. These women have grown more confi-

dent in their skills, and are more confident about their future success. However, they face major obstacles with regard to advertising and access to markets, such as identifying points of sale where they can gather and exhibit their goods, or even getting access to bank loans.

Do you have any suggestions for how these women might tackle these issues? Have you faced similar challenges and succeeded in overcoming

them? We invite you to share your ideas and stories with us.

Email us at: ForeignAssistanceTunis@state.gov

Help these women thrive!

Do you have a challenge of your own you would like help solving?

Write us!!

ForeignAssistanceTunis@state.gov

U.S. ASSISTANCE

Tunisian High School Girls Developing Mobile Apps

The Technovation program is designed by the U.S. non-profit organization "Iridescent" to help scientists, engineers and technology professionals share their passion with children from under-represented groups, especially young high school girls between the ages of 10 and 18. The program focuses on new

technologies, particularly mobile applications. Thanks to financial support from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Tunisian teams were able to participate in the program for the first time.

As part of this program, 16 Tunisian teams from different regions of the country were formed, each com-

prised of two to five girls. Each group works with a mentor for the development of its mobile application.

A maximum of ten winning teams will be selected among the competing groups to present their ideas in Silicon Valley this summer.

National Police and National Guard Showing More Professionalism when Deployed

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) has been funding a series of ongoing training with the National Police and National Guard in Crowd Control/Tactics and Crowd Control/Commanders in Tunisia. Both courses are in the “train the trainer” format to ensure sustainability within the agencies. Over 1,000 individuals have successfully completed the two-week course. The results in the field

have been positive. INL recently met with the Ministry of Interior’s Commanders who stated, “We see a great

deal of change in the quality and professionalism when deployed.” The Commander cited a recent event in El Hamma (a small city in the south) where a police station recently burned down during an incident of civil unrest. Officers successfully quelled the disturbance using tactics learned in INL-funded training. The Commander further stated that citizen complaints are now down to almost none after utilizing the training tactics in crowd control management.



INL Crowd Control Training

USAID/UNIDO Helping Anis Grow his Business

Fourteen months after graduating from the University of Tunis with a degree in Aerospace Engineering, Anis Assali, 30 years old, found himself unable to find a job. He decided to move back to his home town in El Kef where he saw an opportunity to establish a business and be self-employed.

and the surrounding area.

Although the business was running profitably, Anis faced challenges with marketing and finding reliable suppliers. Thanks to USAID/UNIDO HP-LIFE e-Learning he is now equipped with hands on marketing and IT tools to help his business grow.

global online community Anis is looking forward to meeting like-minded green entrepreneurs and developing new partnerships through the HP LIFE marketplace.

Thanks to USAID/UNIDO HP-LIFE e-Learning Anis is now equipped with

hands on marketing and IT tools

Tunisia is an energy-dependent country and despite the huge potential of solar and wind power, generating electricity from renewable energy has so far been limited. Drawing on his engineering knowledge, Anis established a green business that sells and installs solar panels – providing a renewable source of electricity to numerous families living in El Kef

In the future, Anis plans to expand his service provision to include solar water heating systems so that his customers can also get their hot water from the sun in Tunisia. He also plans to manage the assembly of the technology himself. Now part of the HP LIFE



Anis Assali

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Since the January 2011 revolution, the United States has provided approximately \$550 million to support Tunisia's democratic consolidation, focusing on technical and financial assistance to Tunisia's economic growth, support for peace and stability, and support for civil society and democratic practices.

ON THE WEB SOON!!
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