

FAU Conducts Professional Development in Egypt



Dilys Schoorman, Maysaa Barakat, Jennifer Freeland and John Hardman, at the platform of the Keops (Khufu) the oldest of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World in Giza, Egypt



Florida Atlantic University professors traveled to Egypt to deliver intensive professional development to hand-picked educators in Cairo. The workshop resulted from a Memorandum of Understanding signed between FAU University and the Balanced Education Company (BalancEd).

BalancEd is spearheading teacher professional development in Egypt. FAU College of Education and BalancEd plan for the future development of partnerships to include an annual workshop series, the completion of a teacher leadership certificate, and masters degrees in Educational Leadership or Curriculum and Instruction.

Maysaa Barakat, Ph.D., an assistant professor in Educational Leadership and Research Methodology and a proud native of Egypt, spearheaded the project in collaboration with Salma El Bakry, Ph.D. and Mahmoud Hamza, Ph.D., cofounders of BalancEd. Michelle Vaughan, Ed.D., assistant professor in Curriculum, Culture and Educational Inquiry, and Dilys Schoorman, Ph.D., chair of Curriculum, Culture and Educational Inquiry, were involved in a six-month long planning and development phase producing six curriculum modules and the ongoing research project. This culminated in the first ongoing series of professional development sessions offered in Cairo by FAU faculty members. Ira Bogotch, Ed.D. and Pat Maslin Ostrowski Ed.D. served as research partners on the project with Robert Shockley, Ph.D. representing the College of Education as project administrator.

Maysaa Barakat, Ph.D., Jennifer Freeland, Ph.D., John Hardman, Ph.D. and Dilys Schoorman, Ph.D. traveled to Cairo to lead workshops with 16 Egyptian educators who had been handpicked to participate in twelve days of intensive professional development. These 16 educators were tasked with leading teacher professional development for public school teachers in Cairo.

Reflecting on her learning experience during the sessions Isabelle Simon, one of the trainees, said "As I pass by the drama room, I remember the good days we had with the FAU Team. All the learning and understanding, all the confusion and questions, reflection time, all the good times together are deeply embedded in our memories. The shift of the mind-set is being transferred to our teachers and inside their classrooms."

Reflecting on the impact of the experience, Dilys Schoorman noted, "I was elated to see genuine shift in the mind-set of educators towards a comfort with active and engaged learning. We were able to achieve in Cairo what many of us struggle to achieve here in the USA. I am hopeful that we will be able to replicate the results achieved in Egypt in our work in Broward and Palm Beach Counties."

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