

**Address of
Dr. Michel E. Mawad
at the
Naming Ceremony of Block D—LAU Medical Center—Rizk Hospital
August 21, 2025**

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Madame Mona Nehme

My dear close Family members and close Friends

My Dear Colleagues in the medical profession, especially the faculty members of the LAU School of Medicine, its Medical Students, Residents and Fellows

Members of the Nursing Staff

Members of the staff at both of our hospitals

Distinguished guests

I stand in front of you today with mixed feelings: a feeling of deep gratitude for this honor that the LAU Board of Trustees has bestowed on me in naming Block D, but also with a proud feeling of accomplishment and a genuine feeling of humility.

I stand before you as a former Chairman of a Department, as a former Dean of a Medical School, as a former President of a University **but most importantly my dear friends, I stand before you as one of you: a regular medical doctor.** I am proud of this University and its Medical Centers for having and, for the first time in its history, bestowed the name of a medical doctor and a faculty member on a landmark building.

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This is an honor not only for me personally but an honor and a loud recognition of the professions of Nursing, Pharmacy, and Medicine. These three professions come together, every day the sun comes up, to work, tirelessly, and in unison to provide the best comprehensive care there is for their patients. So please allow me, and on my personal behalf, to co-dedicate this great building to you, my colleagues in all medical professions for everything you do and for every patient you care for.

This particular building has a special meaning for me: As it stands today, it symbolizes the legacy and the vision of the late **Dr. Assaad Rizk**. A great man who built it over 40 years ago to be a leading hospital facility equipped with the best medical and surgical technology. He built it to serve the Lebanese community and to be able to attract and recruit the best there is of physicians and scientists.

Well, I am happy to inform you that, in fact, this particular building is today exactly what Dr. Rizk meant it to be, one of the most advanced medical facilities, not only in Lebanon but, I would venture to say, in the entire Middle East.

Today, this building houses a state-of-the-art **Comprehensive Stroke Center** dedicated specifically for the evaluation and treatment of vascular conditions in the brain, such as cerebral aneurysms, arteriovenous malformations and most importantly, to treat patients presenting with devastating **Acute Ischemic Stroke**.

The comprehensive stroke center that we put together about 8 years ago on the first floor of this building is open 24/7, 7 days a week, and gets referrals from all towns and cities in Lebanon.

The comprehensive stroke center is supported by a multidisciplinary team of physicians from numerous specialties: Neurology, Neurosurgery, Radiology, Neuroradiology, Anesthesiology, Emergency Medicine and Intensivists all working together to provide **timely and urgent care** for patients presenting with acute stroke.

In addition to their professional and medical expertise, the “Stroke Team” uses artificial intelligence in making the right decision within the right ***time window***. As you know, in treating stroke we have a narrow time window to treat these patients who are desperate for help. In acute stroke, ***time is brain***.

I am really proud to inform you that since its inception, the stroke center has treated a total of **745** patients who presented with a stroke, **147** patients who presented with intracranial bleeding and **209** patients who had difficult vascular malformations of the brain. A grand total of 1,101 patients who are alive and well today, walking talking and enjoying life with their families simply because they were lucky enough to have been brought to this facility.

Also, in this building, and in addition to the stroke center, several other life-saving procedures are being performed on a daily basis: For instance, the cardiology team performs state-of-the-art percutaneous TAVI procedures that address and correct difficult and life-threatening diseases of the heart valves with excellent clinical outcomes.

If you visit Block D and go up to the second floor, you will come across a set of three ***brand-new*** and ***fully equipped*** operating rooms dedicated to highly specialized surgeries.

One of these operating rooms is a one-of-a-kind ***“Hybrid Operating Room”*** that was acquired recently through a generous grant from the American People.

The room combines several technologies including X-ray guidance, sophisticated hardware and software and very advanced surgical techniques. This room allows vascular surgeons, cardiologists and radiologists to treat complex diseases of the aorta and its branches such as aneurysms or blockage in a non-invasive way and without having to do open surgery. This kind of modern equipment allows our surgeons to treat life-threatening conditions of the aorta through a needle puncture or a cut down in the groin.

If you continue your trip up in this building, you will come across the new ***13-bed intensive care unit***, which has been designed and equipped with the patient’s utmost well-being and comfort in mind. All ICU rooms are well

separated from each other for privacy and each of them has a large exposure to natural light, which is very important for sick patients staying many days in an ICU room.

On the top two floors of this building, you will find large and cheerful open spaces with brightly lit hallways and a total of **35 large private in-patient rooms** designed such as to provide a **patient-friendly environment** that combines all modern means of patient safety, comfort and **cozy home-like feeling**.

The most important feature in Block D is that it has been designed not only as a safe and modern medical facility for **patient safety** and **well-being** but also for the delivery of **modern medical education**.

LAU and specifically its health science schools have a dual mission; the first mission is to deliver excellent medical care to the community but the second mission, which is just as important, is to deliver modern and comprehensive academic medical education to our health sciences students.

To this end, this hospital has been slowly transformed from a prestigious private clinic founded in 1925 to an **academic medical center**, from a prestigious private clinic into a vibrant hub of medical education celebrating its centennial this year, **and this particular building, Block D** is a great symbol of the excellent academic medicine we strive to deliver to our patients and to transmit to our students.

I leave you, my dear colleagues, with the following parting plea:

I urge you that at any moment you enter this building to care for a patient to please come in with a smile on your face, come in with a feeling of compassion in your heart (**compassion and not pity**), come in with the urge to give care and not to sell it (**remember that we are caregivers**), come in with a sense of giving without expecting anything in return. Come in ready to give medical care but also to **convey hope** even to the sickest or dying patients. Do that to your patients **generously with Joy and Love**.

I ask you that every time you see my name on the entrance of this building, let it evoke in you a deep sense of commitment toward each and every one of

your patients, professional commitment coupled with humility and gentle compassion and with a sense of responsibility towards the education of your juniors.

Thank you, and God bless you all.