



SHEIKH SAUD BIN SAQR AL QASIMI  
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

# Annual Report 2015



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## Managing Director's Message

As we reflect on the Al Qasimi Foundation's sixth year of research and outreach, we can't help but be grateful. The Foundation team continues to embody commitment to the people of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates and to partner with our community to bolster education, public health, and urban development efforts in the region.

One of the chief ways that the Foundation has supported the sustainable growth of these efforts is through the research that it has conducted this year. Talented visiting scholars and new researchers have made 2015's collection of studies and publications the Foundation's most diverse body of research findings to date. The practical implications of this are that its policy recommendations are both robust and relevant to Ras Al Khaimah's aspiration for sustained development.

At the same time, the Foundation has spent 2015 collaborating with local and international partners to apply this compelling research to capacity development and community engagement initiatives. Medical screenings, tuition support, cultural exchange, and professional development opportunities represent a fraction of the resources that the Foundation has provided to its stakeholders as the result of its research endeavors.

The Foundation shares with national leaders a vision of the UAE as a competitive and innovative nation that is thriving across its economic, social, and cultural landscapes. Evidence-based research is key to making policy decisions that help our community reach its long-term potential. To that end, we believe that what we have accomplished this year challenges us to strive further in 2016, to embrace stewardship and excellence as part of the values of Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE.

**Dr. Mohamed Abdulatif Khalifa**

Managing Director

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research



## Executive Director's Message

The Al Qasimi Foundation spent 2015 investing in its research and programmatic endeavors, deepening and widening our engagement in issues related to education, public health, and urban development. While pursuing these focus areas, though, we also took a closer look at our relationships with stakeholders, who motivate us and help us to remain committed to research and development initiatives.

The work that the Foundation has done this year cannot be separated from the community for whom we do it—Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates. The individuals who contribute to and benefit from our efforts include teachers, students, academics, policymakers, youth, artists, and local community members.

This year, the Foundation's ongoing research has built relationships with educators and faculty at Columbia University in New York, medical researchers at the University of Sydney, and non-profit foundations across the UAE. Long-term, it is hoped that these connections will produce additional research on education in the northern emirates, improve breast cancer awareness and diagnosis among Arab women, and increase collaboration among community members.

Our engagement activities have also been varied and fruitful. We hosted a Fulbright scholar who brought dozens of healthcare experts together to explore the intersection of medicine and human resource needs in Dubai and Ras Al Khaimah. In 2015, the Foundation's experience in offering teacher professional development courses inspired it to explore other approaches to school reform. The establishment of a community advisory council, which brings a variety of Ras Al Khaimah's education stakeholders together to begin evaluating and improving local schools, has been one of the first tangible steps in a whole school renewal project. Meanwhile, the Community Gathering events that have become staples in Ras Al Khaimah introduced local residents to fitness, health, and artistic experiences as well as to one another.

Relationships like these have renewed our commitment to strengthening the economic, social, and cultural sustainability of Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE through relevant research and evidence-based policy recommendations. Our team looks forward to working with our neighbors both here and abroad for a 2016 dedicated to the improvement of education, public health, and urban development in the UAE and beyond.

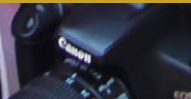
**Dr. Natasha Ridge**

Executive Director

Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research



# Who We Serve: Our Community



The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research was established in 2009 to aid in the social, cultural, and economic development of Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Foundation seeks to support public and private sectors by helping them to ground policy decisions firmly in relevant bodies of research that reflect the best thinking in the world as well as the local Ras Al Khaimah and U.A.E. contexts.

All of the Foundation's efforts are designed to support progress in our emirate and nation, and our activities impact a broad range of local and international stakeholders. From partnering with academics at New York's Columbia University to collaborating with educational stakeholders in Kuala Lumpur and medical researchers in Sydney, all of our initiatives remain focused on our community. The Al Qasimi Foundation is grateful for the opportunity to partner with the people of Ras Al Khaimah and remains dedicated to championing their best interests through its research, capacity development, and community outreach efforts.





# What We've Done: Our Progress in 2015



# Research

As part of its mandate to support evidenced-based planning among the region's policymakers, the Al Qasimi Foundation views research as the cornerstone of its mission. The Foundation both conducts and promotes—through diverse grant offerings—high-quality research focused on Ras Al Khaimah, the United Arab Emirates, and the broader Gulf region. The Foundation collaborates with scholars and esteemed universities across the globe and works to connect these researchers with relevant policymakers. The result has been progressive, applied research in the areas of education, health and well-being, and community development.

**4 Seed Grants**  
awarded

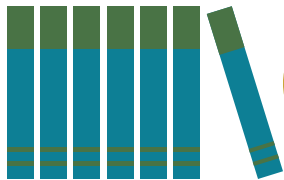


**2 Doctoral Scholars**  
sponsored



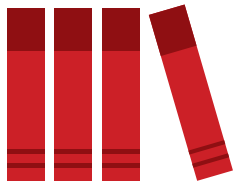
**FULBRIGHT**

**1 Resident Fulbright Scholar**



**7**

**In-house Research**  
projects



**4**

**Working Papers**  
published



**3**

**Policy Papers**  
published



**16**

**Presentations**  
delivered

**2**

**Faculty Scholars**  
sponsored



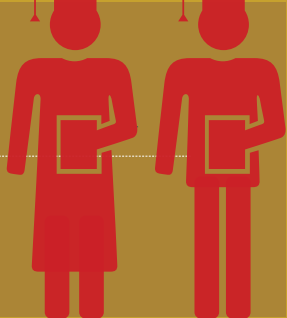


# Capacity Development

One way that the Al Qasimi Foundation stewards its research findings is by developing and providing strategic services and support in order to build individual and local capacity across public sectors. These capacity development efforts cultivate local talent and support institutional improvements through evidence-based initiatives related to education, health, and urban development. This year, the Foundation has focused on improving teacher quality, promoting school development, developing gifted and talented students, and serving at-risk youth through supplemental vocational education.

**7** Secondary students sent on **summer experiences** to US and UK

**227** Students participating in the **Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program**



**30** Scholarships awarded through the **Sheikh Saqr Overseas Scholarship Program**



**2** Schools piloting the **Hands on Learning** initiative


**2 School Grants** awarded



**5 Teacher Scholarships** awarded



**13** Members of **Advisory Council** for Whole School Renewal Program




**276** Teachers enrolled in professional development programs (peer-to-peer)

**8** Professional development courses & workshop offered



**14** Participants in **Ras Al Khaimah Teacher Exchange** to Malaysia



**1281**



**Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network** members

**137**



Inmates attending **development courses**



# Community Engagement

Investing in people means nurturing collaboration and advancing a spirit of community while demonstrating a transparency in all of our operations. The Foundation therefore remains committed to inclusiveness, open-source (public) information, and straightforward communication as pillars of our community engagement activities. The Foundation's primary avenues of outreach include its Community Gathering events, Majlis events, Ras Al Khaimah Teachers Network, and Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival.



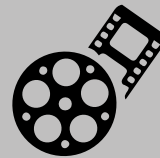
**1** Holistic website development and redesign



**27** Foundation appearances in local and international news coverage



**9** **Community Gathering events** engage the public in activities related to heritage, health, and arts and culture



**70** **Art and film pieces** featured in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival



**62** **Artists** participating in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival



**24** **Nationalities** represented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival



**800+**  
**Guests at Foundation events**



**4,000+**

Local and international recipients of quarterly newsletters

**5**

**Majlis events** connect researchers to policymakers interested in their work



**65**

**Care packages** donated and distributed to local laborers



**2**

**Fact Sheets** about Ras Al Khaimah published



**300 +**

**Books** collected for the Ras Al Khaimah Book Swap





# What We Do: Our Focus

# Education

Education was the original and remains a chief research priority of the Al Qasimi Foundation as education is the key to the sustainable health and growth of our emirate and our nation. Community advancement requires investments in public education and related social services, and the Foundation focuses its educational activities on primary stakeholder groups including students and educators.

## Students

- February 2015  
Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program begins spring semester for students in grades 10 and 11
- March 2015  
Literature Festival allows students in the Sheikh Saqr Program to learn from published authors and discover new books
- May 2015  
Majlis: International Higher Education in Ras Al Khaimah: Between Commercialization, Regulation, and Innovation
- May 2015  
Hands on Learning program successfully completes pilot year in Ras Al Khaimah schools
- July-August 2015  
Seven Emirati students take part in summer English programs in the United States and United Kingdom
- September 2015  
Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program begins fall semester for students in grades 10, 11, and 12
- September 2015  
Hands on Learning begins fall semester of vocational learning and student support
- September 2015  
Ras Al Khaimah Prison Project begins new set of professional development courses at men's facility
- October 2015  
Sheikh Saqr Student Enrichment Program takes grade 11 and 12 students to Najah College and Career Fair in Abu Dhabi
- December 2015  
Majlis: Higher Education Aspirations of Youth in the Gulf

## Educators

- February 2015  
Teacher professional development semester begins and introduce new courses
- April 2015  
Ras Al Khaimah Teacher Exchange Program partners with Malaysia's Ministry of Education to take delegation of local educators to conduct research in Kuala Lumpur
- April 2015  
6th Annual Gulf Comparative Education Society Symposium held in Dubai, UAE
- April 2015  
Majlis: Values, Creativity, Borrowing, and the Comparative Education Menagerie: What Sort of Strange Animal are You?
- June 2015  
Four recipients of the Foundation's Teacher Scholarships graduate with master's degrees in education
- September 2015  
Teacher professional development semester begins, offers classic courses



# Health & Well-being

In 2015, the Al Qasimi Foundation engaged in more public health research, education, and community awareness endeavors than ever before. Initiatives ranged from international research collaborations to interactive sports events.

## January 2015

Majlis: Infant and Child Mental Health: Understanding and Managing Behavior Problems in Children

## January-December 2015

Seed Grant supports breast cancer research conducted among Ras Al Khaimah's female community

## May 2015

Majlis: Hub Healthcare: A Human Resources Perspective on Medical Tourism in the UAE

## June 2015

Community Gathering: Moroccan Cooking for Everyone gives guests a hands-on introduction to making this traditional fare

## July 2015

Foundation staff donate 65 gift packages and distribute them to local laborers as part of sadaqa tradition

## September 2015

Community Gathering: Zumba for Ladies invites women to experience a new form of dance fitness







# Community Development

This year saw the publication of the Foundation's first comprehensive look at urban planning in Ras Al Khaimah and the UAE. In addition, Foundation programs offered residents an array of opportunities to appreciate and create artistic expressions and to explore the region's heritage.

## Arts & Culture

February 2015

3rd Annual Ras Al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival welcomes international artists and art-lovers to the northern emirates

April 2015

Community Gathering: Art for Everyone explores color and composition through decoupage

July 2015

Community Gathering: Iftar for Everyone invites guests to experience a traditional Iftar celebration in an Emirati home

July 2015

Ras Al Khaimah Prison Project facilitates Ramadan celebrations for inmates and their families

October 2015

Community Gathering: Interior Design for Everyone focuses on creating attractive and functional homes

November 2015

Community Gathering: A Musical Evening with Najmaat acquaints guests with the oud, a traditional Middle Eastern instrument

December 2015

Community Gathering: Holiday Feast for Everyone creates a forum through which community members interact with Ras Al Khaimah residents' diverse holiday traditions

## Urban Planning

March 2015

Community Gathering: Kayaking for Everyone encourages appreciation of Ras Al Khaimah's native mangroves

July-August 2015

Ras Al Khaimah Book Swap, with support from the Al Qasimi Foundation, promotes community reading by providing free book-sharing kiosks along the emirate's Corniche







# What We've Learned: Our Publications

## Working Papers:

Detail our research studies and findings

- **January 2015** Private Education in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar: Implications and Challenges
- **April 2015** Exploring Under-Representation of Young Emirati Adults in the UAE Private Sector by Examining Emirati Job Satisfaction
- **November 2015** Hub Healthcare: Medical Travel and Health Equity in the UAE
- **December 2015** To Cheat or Not To Cheat: Evidence on Ethical Decision-Making from a Study of Arab Youth

## Policy Papers:

Examine what our research findings mean for our stakeholders

- **May 2015** Who Teaches English in Ras Al Khaimah? Implications for the Recruitment and Development of Male English Teachers
- **June 2015** Who Benefits from Private Education in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar?
- **December 2015** International and Commercial Higher Education in Ras Al Khaimah: Policies, Problem Areas, and Promise

## Fact Sheets:

Provide an overview of a development area and highlight potential research opportunities

- **March 2015** Public Health in the United Arab Emirates and Ras Al Khaimah
- **August 2015** Urban Development in the United Arab Emirates and Ras Al Khaimah

## Reports:

Present updates on our work and community

- **February 2015** Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation for Policy Research 2014 Annual Report.

g Global Minds  
Identities revisited



What We've Shared:  
Our Presentations

## Infant and Child Mental Health: Understanding and Managing Behavior Problems in Children

**Occasion:** Majlis Series

**Date:** January 18, 2015

**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Bryn Williams

## International Higher Education for Whom? A Closer Look at Internationalization, Marketing Practices, and Opportunity Structures in the UAE's Northern Emirates

**Occasion:** 6th Annual Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) Symposium, Dubai Middlesex University

**Date:** April 16-17, 2015

**Location:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Lee Rensimer

## Privatisation in Education Research Initiative (PERI)

**Occasion:** 6th Annual Gulf Comparative Education Society (GCES) Symposium, Dubai Middlesex University

**Date:** April 16-17, 2015

**Location:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Soha Shami

## Values, Creativity, Borrowing, and the Comparative Education Menagerie: What Sort of Strange Animal are You?

**Occasion:** Majlis Series

**Date:** April 19, 2015

**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Jeremy Rapplewe

## The Career Development Professional Perspective: Challenges and Gaps in Youth Employability

**Occasion:** 3rd Middle East Career Development Conference, Canadian University Dubai

**Date:** April 30, 2015

**Location:** Dubai, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Natasha Ridge

## Hub Healthcare: A Human Resources Perspective on Medical Tourism in the UAE

**Occasion:** Majlis Series

**Date:** May 3, 2015

**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Sararth Ganji

## International Higher Education in Ras Al Khaimah: Between Commercialization, Regulation, and Innovation

**Occasion:** Majlis Series

**Date:** May 17, 2015

**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

**Presenter:** Lee Rensimer

## The Rise and Role of State Philanthropy in the United Arab Emirates

**Occasion:** Gulf Research Center Cambridge

**Date:** August 26, 2015

**Location:** Cambridge, England

**Presenters:** Natasha Ridge, Susan Kippels

## Integration Program for Study Abroad Students (Lectures on Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates)

**Occasion:** Lecture series, NYU New York and NYU Shanghai  
**Date:** September-October 2015  
**Location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
**Presenter:** Matthew MacLean

## Conceptualizing the Role and Impact of Fathers in the Arab World

**Occasion:** 2nd China-Arab States University Academic Seminar  
**Date:** September 12, 2015  
**Location:** Ningxia, China  
**Presenter:** Soohyun Jeon

## Whole School Renewal Program: Advisory Council

**Occasion:** Advisory Council Launch  
**Date:** October 20, 2015  
**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates  
**Presenters:** Natasha Ridge, Brian Chung

## Farming, Expertise, and Commercialization in the Northern Trucial States: The Agricultural Trials Station at Digdagga, 1955-1969

**Occasion:** Academic seminar, Paris-Sorbonne Abu Dhabi  
**Date:** November 3, 2015  
**Location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
**Presenter:** Matthew MacLean

## Conceptualizing the Role and Impact of Fathers in the Arab World

**Occasion:** Georgetown University/Silatech Youth in the Middle East Working Group II  
**Date:** November 8, 2015  
**Location:** Doha, Qatar  
**Presenters:** Soohyun Jeon, Brian Chung

## The Commercialization of Agriculture and the National Development of the Trucial States/UAE: The Transformation of Digdagga, Ras Al Khaimah

**Occasion:** Middle East Studies Association Conference  
**Date:** November 23, 2015  
**Location:** Denver, Colorado, United States  
**Presenter:** Matthew MacLean

## Higher Education Aspirations of Youth in the Gulf

**Occasion:** Majlis Series  
**Date:** December 6, 2015  
**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates  
**Presenter:** Woohyang Sim

## Global Identity in Multicultural and International Educational Contexts

**Occasion:** Majlis Series  
**Date:** December 9, 2015  
**Location:** Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates  
**Presenter:** Nigel Bagnall







# Who We Are: Our Team

# Countries represented in our team:



## What's new:

5

New Team Members

11

Interns

3

Visiting Scholars

# Collaborators



Tessa Ayson

**Research Intern**

Tessa is a senior at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD). She is studying economics with a concentration in psychology, writes for NYUAD's newspaper, and is an editor at its Journal of Social Sciences. Tessa is fascinated by education and education policy, especially in non-Western contexts and conducted public education research in Abu Dhabi before working with the Foundation.



Sarath Ganji

**Fulbright Scholar**

Sarath Ganji came to the Foundation as a Fulbright Scholar. His research focused on medical tourism and high-skilled labor migration in Ras Al Khaimah and Dubai. Prior to the Foundation, he worked on Gulf economic and security policy with the U.S. Department of State and on health policy and intellectual property rights with the Woodrow Wilson Center.



Ananya Huria

**Community Engagement & Outreach Intern**

Ananya Huria is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). She has been a research student at UNCG, producing studies on the topics of branding and entrepreneurship in international communities. Within the Foundation, she has worked on building and maintaining the digital and social media content and preparing for a communications study.



Devin Lightner

**Community Engagement & Outreach Intern**

Devin Lightner hails from Virginia State University (VSU), where he is studying mass communication with a minor in business marketing. As a photographer and cinematographer, Devin assisted with several video projects and social media tools.





## Matthew MacLean

### Doctoral Scholar

Matthew MacLean is a PhD candidate in the joint program in history and Middle Eastern and Islamic studies at New York University (NYU). His dissertation research is on the spatial transformation of the Trucial States and United Arab Emirates in the second half of the twentieth century, with a focus on Ras Al Khaimah.



## Ann-Christine Niepelt

### Research Intern

Ann-Christine Niepelt is a graduate student at Humboldt-University in Berlin, Germany, where she is majoring in international education research with a focus on comparative education. Her research interests are related to globalization and modernity in the context of education. In her time with the Foundation, Ann-Christine contributed to projects related to family structures and current trends in philanthropy across the UAE.



## Lee Rensimer

### Doctoral Scholar

Lee Rensimer is a doctoral researcher of educational policy studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a visiting scholar at the Al Qasimi Foundation. His research focuses on international branch campuses, strategic partnerships, and innovative policymaking in the United Arab Emirates' higher education sector.



## Woohyang Sim

### Research Intern

Woohyang Sim is a PhD candidate at WASEDA University in Japan. Her field of study is higher education and sociology of education, with a particular focus on the GCC countries. Ms. Sim's master's thesis focused on the Arab identity of a young generation that studies abroad. Currently, she is expanding her research target to other GCC countries in order to investigate the factors that influence young people's educational aspirations and career plans and what function higher education plays in those societies.



## Aliz Toth

### Research Intern

Aliz Toth is an undergraduate student at New York University Abu Dhabi (NYUAD), where she is majoring in political science. Her research interests lie at the intersection of political economy of development and globalization. At the Al Qasimi Foundation, Aliz deepened her interests in education policy and practices in policy research and evaluation.





Sheikh Saïd bin Sultan Al Qasbi  
FOUNDATION FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Whole School Renewal Project (WSRP)  
Advisory Council





# Partners

The Al Qasimi Foundation values collaboration as a key to building a stronger community. Therefore, the Foundation remains grateful and honored to partner with esteemed organizations who remain dedicated to research, development, and outreach initiatives in Ras Al Khaimah and the United Arab Emirates.

## Government Partners



منطقة رأس الخيمة التعليمية  
RAK Educational Zone



هيئة الحكومة الإلكترونية  
Electronic Government Authority



كليات التقنية العليا  
HIGHER COLLEGES OF TECHNOLOGY  
RAS AL KHAIMAH



RAK Correctional Facility



RAK Project Management Office

Al Ghail  
Youth Centre



برنامج الشيخ صقر للتميز الحكومي  
Sheikh Saqr Program for Government Excellence



RAK Civil Services Department



Ras Al-Khaimah Municipality



Young Men Social Foster Home  
(Fujairah)

## Organizational Partners

CLIFFORD  
CHANCE



## Other Partners



الجامعة الأمريكية رأس الخيمة  
American University of Ras al Khaimah

AMIDEAST  
امديست



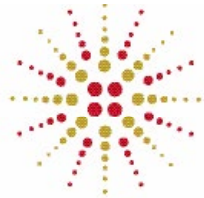
BON EDUCATION  
A Learning & Development Company



GEORGETOWN  
UNIVERSITY







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