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Welcome to the Fourth issue of Get Connected!

"How does it feel to return to your home country after a superb time spent in the United States and after the new relationships have been forged?" This was what everyone kept asking the MEPI interns during the last weeks of their internship at Cisco. While we are reading this issue from our "home" in the United States, Sabah Bugasmi, Anoud Braik, Merwad Abdallah and our fellow friends at Intel are reading it back home and sharing it with their loved ones. Although it appears to everyone that the count down of our internship is approaching its end, from our perspective, a new future is about to start.



Birthday Chat August 1st: John Chambers (center) with Ingrid Salloum (left) & Patricia Khoder (right)

This issue introduces us to the only Lebanese-American Vice President at Cisco who shares his academic/professional background and provides us with information related to emerging technologies. It also includes an article written by Majid Karam, Program Manager for the Partnership for Lebanon, who is very involved in the internship program. In addition, it highlights success stories that the interns would like to share with the readers and some of the projects they have been assigned as well as pictures from their social activities during the month of August.

Insight from an Insider

The following article has been written following an interview with Didier Moretti, a Lebanese-American who recently joined Cisco as Vice President, Emerging Technology Incubation.

Let us start by introducing you to Didier. Didier was born in Beirut and completed most of his schooling at the Lycee, before moving to France in 1975, after the onset of the civil war. After graduating from high school in France, Didier enrolled in a preparatory school in Lyons for two years. He then graduated from Ecole Polytechnique, a leading engineering school in Paris. He then moved to the United States and graduated from MIT with a masters in computer science and a masters in an inter-disciplinary program in business administration.

After graduation, Didier developed an interest in computer networking and moved to the Bay Area to join a networking startup, UB Networks. Didier spent more than 10 years with UB Networks, where he held positions in engineering and management, before becoming a VP and general manager for one of the company's businesses.

"I developed several breakthrough products and was fortunate to be promoted quickly and to be given a chance to run a business early on in my career," said Didier.

After three successful years as General Manager, Didier left to become the CEO of Cambio Networks, a network management startup. He then founded Annuncio Software, an internet marketing company, which he ran for five years before selling the company to PeopleSoft. More recently, Didier was CEO of RedSeal Systems, an early stage startup in security risk management, and led a management consulting business assisting startups with product and go-to-market strategies.

At Cisco, Didier leads the business incubation team in the Emerging Technology Group. Didier's team is responsible for selecting, developing and shepherding the company's next \$1B businesses, from the concept stage all the way to a successful business unit.

"I am fortunate as this is a very unique and exciting job in a unique company, at an exciting time," said Didier. According to Didier, the IT industry is on the cusp of a significant transformation, with technologies such as participative collaboration and rich media about to change the way we work in profound ways. It all starts with the network, which is why Cisco has the opportunity to lead in enabling the change, and emerge as the undisputed leader in the IT and communications industries. The Emerging Technology Group is playing a critical role in bringing about a set of innovative products, services, and ways of doing business that will contribute to Cisco re-inventing itself over the next 3 to 5 years.

Didier is planning to have a session with the San Jose and Phoenix interns next month to discuss innovation at Cisco and beyond. The session will be held on TelePresence, a new product that was incubated by the Emerging Technology Group. In closing, he offers these words of wisdom to the interns:

"I know that Lebanon is going through a difficult time, during which it is challenging for young people to find rewarding jobs and career opportunities. Still, I encourage you to pursue your passion, and not to be afraid to experiment to find what it is that you are really passionate about. If you have an entrepreneurial bent this is an opportunity to start a business – with the internet the entire world can be your market, and you can leverage relationships you have established in Silicon Valley during your internship. Cisco as you know is investing in Lebanon, and there are now several venture capital funds in Lebanon as well, eager to find entrepreneurs and new ideas. In light of current economic and social challenges, I believe that entrepreneurs are all the more critical to creating growth and opportunities in Lebanon."

"You have learned great things here – no matter what you do when you go back, be leaders in your own way, help others in big and small ways."



Didier Moretti (left), Vice President of ET Incubation, with two interns (center) and Michel Basmaji (right) during the LebNet gathering on June 26.

In the following section of "Get Connected" interns will share information about some of their assigned projects for the internship.



I am part of the Creative Design Services (CDS) team under IT flexible Services at Cisco. CDS provides clients with creative design solutions such as posters, banners, Flash, Power-point, and e-mail templates. We are engaged through an on-demand, client-funded, short turnaround model, and we deliver high quality, timely and cost effective results based on Cisco's Brand Identity system. The major ongoing project that I have been involved with is developing my units' growth strategy for FY08. With the guidance of my manager, I have been researching various models for growth, including analyzing demand data and categorizing project requests in order to come up with a comprehensive catalogue of services. I have also been involved in putting together and updating the terms and conditions document, and the Client Organizational Level Agreement (OLAs). I am very excited to be part of the evolution of my team, helping mature the services we are offering by applying knowledge from my experience as a designer as well as from business skills acquired through the Executive Education program at Wharton.

Merwad Abdallah



Multitasking is typical to Cisco's work environment. Therefore, as a Computer and Communication Engineer joining Cisco Networking Academy, I have been enrolled in different technical projects simultaneously. My responsibilities and related deliverables vary but all lay in the technical field. I am working on regression testing for CCNA Discovery and Exploration, and CCNP to identify new errors emerging as a result of products upgrade. Moreover, I was the project lead for the skills competition that took place during the three NetAcad conferences, a team-based competition for instructors for entry and advanced networking level. In addition, I assisted in the Small Market Trial SMT for quality assurance for the new Discovery CCNA course. Currently I am driving the way to deliver an IPSec protocol presentation and I am a team member in the technical help desk team which is boosting my technical skills.

My passion to contribute in such a positive environment has made it easier to work on different tasks.

Ultimately, commitment, team work and the "know how" to prioritize assessments constitute a valuable ticket I can confirm that I have earned.

Shady Youssef



I am a MEPI intern working in the Commercial Mid-Market Campaign group, I have been assigned to different projects described below:

1. Nowadays, virtual business is one of the most popular and fastest growing industries. Therefore, Cisco should build more awareness regarding its importance and how it can contribute in supporting start-ups of this sort. In this regard, I am in the process of creating a PowerPoint presentation showing facts and numbers about the growth of virtual business. My presentation also includes Cisco's part in offering solutions and supporting the infra-structure of these businesses, the means to do it, and concludes with some recommendations.
2. I have analyzed a sample of 361 banks and financial service providers to build a "Sales Matrix", using their own feedback to prove the efficiency of the programs and systems bought from Cisco and their positive tangible impact on their businesses.
3. I analyzed 46 survey forms that were distributed at "Chief Information Officer Decisions" La Costa Summit June 2007, in order to have good insight around where these CIOs shop for information, their top business initiatives, and associations/forums.

Anoud Braik

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

In the August/ September birthday chat, John Chambers, Chairman & CEO of Cisco, was asked about his favorite Cisco product, his answer was: "Telepresence". Telepresence is a virtual presence experience that uses advanced visual, audio, and interactive technologies to create an "in person" experience between people, over the network. This technology allows you to conduct face to face meetings without being in the same room, and without feeling like you are talking on a video phone. This creates enormous time and cost benefits, as well as a reduced impact on the environment due to decreased air travel.

If you would like to know more about this technology, Cisco has an extensive section on its website about Telepresence, or you can internally access the following link: <http://wwwin.cisco.com/europe/tmo/uc/telepresence/>.

But, what is next? What is the future vision of the Telepresence 3D system?

3D Telepresence is a revolutionary technology. It consists of a room with one wall completely covered by a display surface. A virtual extension of the real room is projected on this surface. When the local participant moves, his location is tracked. Therefore, it allows the artificial copied scene to be delivered with the correct perspective. We encourage you all to further search this technology as it will be having an important impact in our future business life.

Patricia Khoder

Always Remember to: Think Positive

Traveling, working for the first time, leaving my family and friends, putting my masters studies on hold, missing out on many cultural/social events, coming into an American surrounding knowing that I am French educated and many more, were my arguments that I was considering before deciding to accept the experience I am living today. It was difficult to leave everything I am attached and accustomed to behind and embark on this journey. I have never thought that being here would change my life. I have never imagined that this experience would be so valuable and precious. This journey was made a lot easier through the solid friendships I have built with some people from different nationalities. Moreover, it has introduced me to new perceptions, life styles, cultures, and work related experiences. It gave me the chance to build my network and to benefit from many opportunities. Most importantly, I have learned that it is not the environment that builds a person; it is rather the person himself who alters all the givens and circumstances by thinking positive.

Sarah el Charif

An Experience to Highlight

The article I will share with you is one of my Cisco internship success stories; I was given the opportunity to work as a project manager with six MBA interns of the Human Resource Leadership Program under the mentorship of Deborah Casaubon, Human Resource Director. Our target was to present to Brian Schipper, Senior Vice President of Human Resource and his direct reports on “maximizing Cisco Human Resource memberships with Corporate Executive Board (CEB)” by July 31. This was a challenge for me from the binging of the internship. It was all based on teamwork and collaboration between us (the interns) and other internal and external stakeholders. The recommendations presented, received very positive feedback.

Here are some learning points that I have gained from working on this project:

1. Developing my project management skills
2. Enhancing my management and leadership skills
3. Being exposed to executive level management

In closing, I would like to thank Deborah Casaubon and Leanna Prosser, HR Directors, for their trust and support. Without their guidance, this would not have been a successful experience.

Sabah H. Bogasmi

Welcome to Cisco

Orientation week was the first encounter we all had with Cisco, a multinational pioneering company I have never imagined I could, one day, be a part of. It was an exciting week which has played a fundamental role in forming our perception of Cisco and the American culture.

I felt welcomed, with open arms, to the Cisco family which is built on diversity and respect. I was positively surprised by the level of care which was dedicated to us. I consider myself fortunate as I am aware that new hires are not guided and helped as much as we were. All this warmth has motivated and encouraged me to deploy the best of my abilities in the projects that have been assigned to me and in search to prove that we, 19 young individuals, are ready to venture into this one of a kind experience.

As a final note, I would like to mention a quote which Barbara Batlouni, Country Director/ AMIDEAST Lebanon, shared with us before entering to Cisco office in Beirut: “You never have a second chance at making a first impression.”

Cisco has definitely succeeded in that!

Ahmad Kalash

From the Land of the Cedars

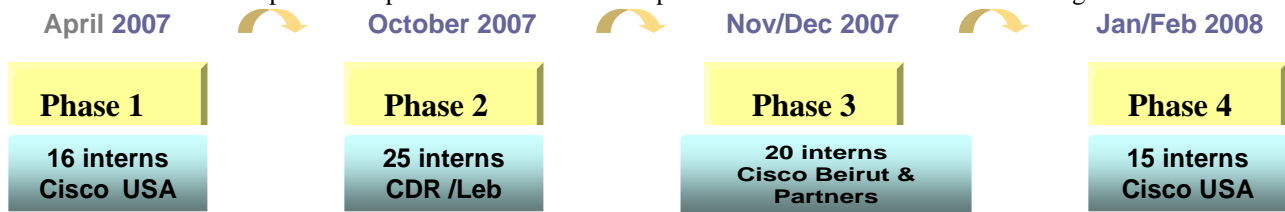
The following article was written by Majid Karam, Program Manager in the Partnership for Lebanon.

Majid, along with other Partnership for Lebanon team members visited Lebanon in August.

It was my second trip to Lebanon in 16 years. Seeing my parents and relatives in my country of birth was an emotional experience. Even though the political situation remains unstable, my country has transformed mostly for the better after a long absence. It has risen from the ashes time and time again, and after meeting the *generation L* - you, the interns who will shape the future of our country - I am optimistic that it will return to its glory days in the near future.

The purpose of this trip was primarily to meet with the different stakeholders of the Partnership for Lebanon; Non-Governmental Organizations and partners.

In this regard, a three-day OPS review was held at the Phoenicia Hotel in downtown Beirut where participants presented their organization's status for the five work streams. I had the pleasure to present the Cisco Internship Initiative within the Workforce Training and Education work stream.



Considering this was my first business trip to Lebanon in the Program, I had to balance my engagement with the OPS review and my focus on ensuring that phase 1 in the Workforce Training and Education work stream concludes successfully. We are working hard to ensure that the Lebanese interns who are currently in the United States will return home with interviews or jobs by the end of their internship in mid October.

In this regard, a significant amount of time was dedicated to meet with members of Center for Development and Reconstruction (CDR), Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR) and AMIDEAST (the NGO helping us with the recruitment).

In addition, I had the pleasure of meeting with various members of the Cisco Beirut office who were very eager to hear more about the interns' news that is briefly stated in “Get Connected”. During the OPS review and the meeting with my Cisco colleagues in Beirut, I could not hide my excitement about our Lebanese interns who are currently working at Cisco in San Jose and Phoenix. I am extremely proud to see how well all the interns are doing and I am continuously impressed with the superb image generation L has portrayed of our country, Lebanon. I believe the interns perfectly sum up the Cisco Human Network with the relationships they forge amongst themselves and with their co-workers and customers everyday.

Farewell to MEPI Friends

Good Luck in your professional and personal paths.

We will Miss You ...



*August 23rd
Farewell MEPI*



July 24th
Baseball game – Arizona Diamondbacks Stadium



July 28th
The day we were invited at Silvio Bou Ghazale's Premise



July 24th
San Francisco Bay Cruise & Dinner



July 22th
Peace & Freedom Fundraiser Families - Fairuz Restaurant



August 3 - 5
Viva Las Vegas!



July 28th
Volunteering at RAFT

An Interesting Fact!

TYPEWRITER is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

<http://www.dysan.net/weird/show/646.html>



Charbel Nasrallah

Intern Recognition: Congratulation Charbel Nasrallah!

Charbel has been a wonderful addition to the Networking Academy team. He displays the rare characteristics of a quiet, confident leader that not only gets the job done, but assists others with doing the same. He is always available to support others who need help, and does so in a low key, one on one approach. Charbel is always willing to take on any task, from the technically challenging to the necessary, yet less appealing tasks needed to get the job done. His independent and highly capable talents will be missed when the internship ends!!!!

Recommendations:

- ✚ Sinbad Restaurant San Mateo: **Cafe and Market serving authentic Lebanese Cuisine, (650-347-6060) 140 East 4th Ave, 94401**
- ✚ Montezuma Castle National Monument **Yavapai County, Arizona, <http://www.nps.gov/moca/>**

Calendar of Events

Events Dated September 2007

Fri 7- Sun 9
Yosemite Camp
Social event for San Jose interns

Sat 8, 11:00 am - 9:00 pm
Sun 9, 12:00 am - 8:00 pm
Church of the Redeemer
380 Magdalena Avenue
Los Altos Hills
Middle Eastern Food & Cultural Event

Wed 19, All day event
San Francisco, CA
Race – JP Morgan Chase
Corporate Challenge

Sat 29, 7:00 pm
Forester's Banquet Hall
1240 Middlefield Rd.,
Redwood City, CA
Celebrate Fall

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