

Crossing to the Forefront of Student Programming

Case of the Lebanese Club @ MIT

2nd LCL Student Convention
San Diego, California

[Original presentation curtailed and adapted for printing needs. Animations, pictures, and hidden slides used in live presentation discarded in compatible print-ready version. Graphics resolution impaired due to conversion and size considerations.]



Loai Naamani

<http://web.mit.edu/lebanon>

Overview



- **About the LCM: Mission & Structure**
- Key Programs & Achievements
- 12 Golden Eggs for Other Clubs
- 3 More Eggs for the LCL

[general disclaimer regarding dog-&-pony presentation objective/style]

LCM > About the Club



- Established in early 70's !? (*controversial like everything else in Lebanon!*) with a two-fold objective:
 - Fostering a sense of community among the Lebanese, namely students
 - Promoting Lebanese culture and concerns in the Greater Boston area
 - **Maximizing number of Lebanese student admissions per year in all fields**
- Run by an LCM Government of 5 elected Executive Board Officers and appointed Committee Chairs (horizontal vs. vertical duties)
- Events and programs traverse areas of culture, arts, recreation, politics, history, philanthropy, among others
- Sources of funding include MIT(-affiliate), alumni, corporate sponsorships, NGOs, personal donations, in-kind donations, & profit proceeds
- The LCM is non-profit, non-political, & non-partisan; membership includes non-Lebanese, non-students, & non-MIT affiliates

LCM > Evolving...



Why and how has LCM evolved into one of New England's most accomplished, visible, connected, & financially endowed organizations promoting Lebanon?

- *Award-winning events...*
- *Record-breaking fiscal performance at MIT...*
- *Official proclamations by the Mayors of Boston & Cambridge...*
- *Official endorsements by the Lebanese Council of Ministers...*
- *Dozen of national & international media outlet features...*
- *...*

Yes, but how?

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[listed chronologically]

LCM > Libanissimo III-VI

(entertainment)



- Now in its 7th installment; has become a legacy event awaited in Boston every year!
- Free dabkeh and belly-dancing tutorial and performance (along with food, DJ, etc...)
- Only 20% of attendance are Lebanese; party becomes an ethnic melting pot, even though it's advertised as Lebanese
- Received MIT's annual *Best Program of Year 2003* for an "impeccably planned event that sold out" – around 500 people attended (*MIT is not known to be a party place!*)



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LCM > The Arts @ MIT



Focused on promoting the arts at MIT through hosting a variety of Lebanese and international artists & bands:

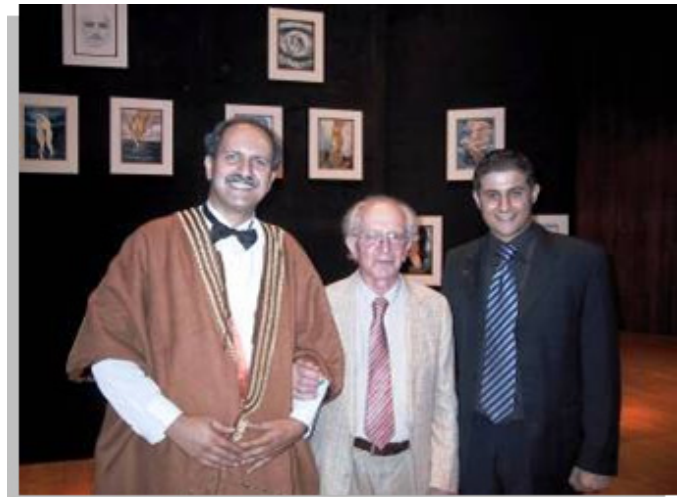
- ◀ **Performing Arts:** Sharq **Arabic** Music Ensemble, **Zaitoun** Dabke Troupe, **Japanese** Taiko Drummer Eaine Fong, **Moroccan** Gnawa with Boujemaa Razgui, South **Indian** Dance w/ Aparna Keshaviah, members of The Boston Camerata Early Music Group, **Berklee** School of Music Student Ensemble
- ◀ **Theatre:** Michel El-Ashkar's "A Child of Life" theatrical monodrama
- ◀ **Film:** tribute to Hollywood director Mustapha Akkad; first public Bosta screenings in US; rising Lebanese talent in Hollywood, director Omar Naïm, in a director's screening
- **Next Months:** Lebanese Pianist Rami Khalife and Syrian Clarinetist Kinan Azmeh in **Sonic Dialogues** (April, 2007), and **Bassam Saba Ensemble** (May, 2007)

LCM > “A Child of Life”

(art/ theatrical)



- Dramatist Michel Ashkar, writer, actor, and director; produced & hosted by LCM
- Received 2 official Khalil Gibran Day proclamations for September 18 from Mayors of Boston and of Cambridge
- Gibran’s 84 year-old godson and cousin was guest of honor; recognized and applauded for his achievements
- Captured attendance of over 400 people and was featured in over 10 articles in Western and Arabic press
- Launched campaign to spread it at universities/clubs; Cornell, UCLA, to date; now working w/ Berkley (LSA@B) & Virginia Tech (CL@VT)



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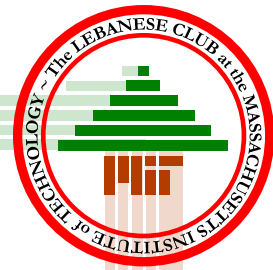
LCM > The Arts @ MIT



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LCM > The Arts @ MIT



naïm's *grand theater* in the
BEIRUT UNCUT FILM SERIES

wednesday . feb 21 . 8pm
at MIT . bldg 54-100
free to general public
donations go to HOSTON LEBANON

web.mit.edu/lebanon
lebanese club @ MIT

Grand Theater
A Tale of Beirut
a film by Omar Naïm

written & directed by omar naïm

in the end he sees everything

naïm's *the final cut* in the
BEIRUT UNCUT FILM SERIES

thursday . feb 22 . 8pm
at MIT . bldg 54-100
free to general public
donations go to HOSTON LEBANON

web.mit.edu/lebanon
lebanese club @ MIT

ROBIN WILLIAMS MIRA SORVINO AND JIM CAVIEZEL

the final cut

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LCM > The Arts @ MIT



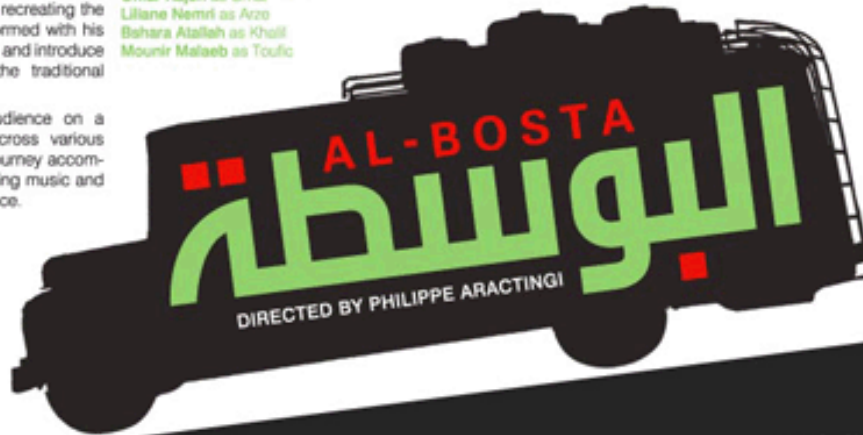
"Beirut Uncut" Film Screening
Wednesday Nov. 15, 2006 @ 8 pm
54-100 MIT Campus, Cambridge MA

After 15 years of exile in France, Kamal returns to Beirut set on recreating the dance group he had formed with his disparate school friends and introduce a Western flavor to the traditional Dabkeh music.

Al-Bosta takes the audience on a wonderful road trip across various Lebanese regions - a journey accompanied by groundbreaking music and this truly pioneering dance.

main cast:
Rodney el Haddad as Kamal
Nadine Labaki as Ali
Nada Abou Farhat as Vola
Omar Rajeh as Omar
Liliane Nemri as Arzo
Bahara Attalah as Khalil
Mounir Moteeb as Toufic

Contributed to featuring Bosta in festivals in Sweden, Qatar, Montreal, Worcester (MA), Germany, Virginia



organized by
Lebanese Club at MIT
Donations will go toward aid in Lebanon

Lebanese Club and Arab Student Organization at MIT proudly present

Tribute to world-acclaimed director

Moustapha Akkad

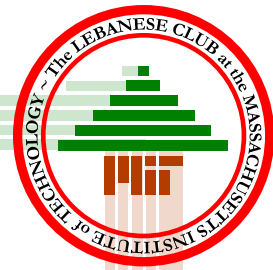
who passed away on the 9th of November 2005 in Jordan's terrorist attacks

Special screening of Akkad's masterpiece "Lion of the Desert"
preceded by a personal commemoration of Akkad by dramatist Michel ElAshkar

7pm on Wednesday, December 7th
56-114



LCM > The Arts @ MIT



Sponsored by the Lebanese Club at MIT, Department of Architecture, and the AKPIA



BERNARD KHOURY/ DW5
COMBAT ARCHITECTURE

7:00 p.m., March 2nd, 2006
MIT, Room 34-101



B018 Beirut, Lebanon



LCM > Lebanese-Syrian Relations

(political)



- 3 experts: Dean **Philip Khoury** (historian on Syria), Prof. **Noam Chomsky** (analyst on US-Syrian relations), and Advisor **Adib Farha** (insider on nuances of relationship)

- All lectures reached hall capacity (total of ~800 persons); 500 on Chomsky alone in overflow rooms, day after assassination

- Event was funded by President's Office given *timeliness* of event!

- **Note:** *LCM is apolitical, yet addresses Lebanese concerns and provides forums for constructive debate without official opinion*



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LCM > Lebanese Awareness Week

(political)



- Annual week-long promotion of Lebanon:
 - Plasma screens and projections
 - Rahbani & Fairuz music
 - Touristic brochures, and books
 - Imported sweets (Hallab)
 - CD giveaways courtesy of MEA
- Flag signed by over 2,000 people previously mistaking Lebanon for Albania!
- Invited to address Boston community on April 13 Unity Dinner



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LCM > CounterPoint & LATT

(collaboration)



- Supported Counterpoint International on its **first two interfaith dialogue-through-music conferences at Harvard** University by providing logistical, publicity, and speaker panel support and helped it stage its first orchestral tour in Lebanon (setup meeting w/ Ziad Rahbani)
- Co-founded the **Harvard-MIT Lebanese Affairs Think Tank**, an independent forum for developing innovative strategies to promote Lebanon's political sustainability, economic advancement, social equity, and progressive role on a regional and international level. Two **events have been held to date on transcending confessionalism and on national leadership archetypes**; a third focusing on the representational system and electoral law is in the planning.



TECHLEB 06

1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT IN LEBANON

MAY 20-21
@ MIT

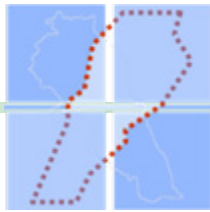


... aims to define the roadmap of development strategies and initiatives essential to making Lebanon a vibrant and sustainable technology hub in the Middle East & North Africa region (MENA)."

- Inclusive (aims to involve/address all players, all building blocks)
- Solution-driven; mission is not to “study/research/...”, but “define...”
- Beyond ICT/Telecom (not follow w/ IT; lead with high-tech)
- Has government in mind from the onset (our “disabling enabler”)
- *By and in the Diaspora; with and for Lebanon*



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TECHLEB 06

1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT IN LEBANON

MAY 20-21
@ MIT



- 52 speakers
- 18 planning committee members
- 41 on-site volunteers
- 15 countries (registrants)
- 20 states (registrants)
- ~\$250K budget
- 18 months planning
- 168 unique organizations
- 36 corporate sponsors
- 1 PM TECHLEB Unit
- 12 concurrent roundtables
- 6 ministers
- ...
- 8,311 emails!



(على علوش)

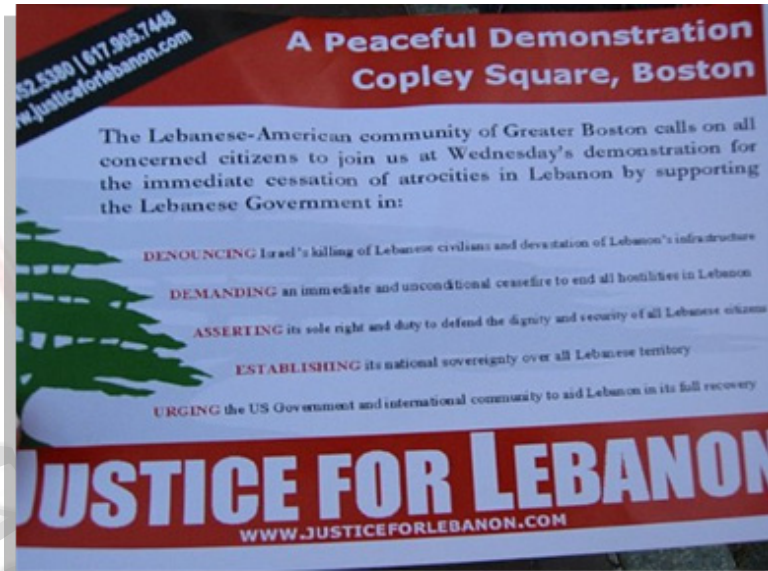
نعماني، حداد، متري، السنيرة، حمادة، اوغاسبيان وأز عور

LCM > *Justice for Lebanon*

(campaigns)



Forged **Boston-wide campaigns** in response to the July War 2006 and the assassination of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri in 2005, resulting in multiple rallies, vigils, fundraisers, and creative action events attracting thousands of peoples; those public events were called for by LCM members and planned at MIT



LCM > BOSTON ♥ LEBANON

(fundraising)



Launched the ongoing **'Boston to Lebanon'** grassroots fundraising campaign to raise public awareness and funds in support of aid efforts for Lebanon, offering donors tax exemption and ensuring direct transfer to local NGOs in Lebanon at no overhead. Target aid areas have ranges from environmental aid (current focus on oil spill), cluster bomb & landmine removal, and relief for the displaced. Around \$50,000 have already been transferred to fund activities conducted by the **Lebanese Red Cross, Bahr Lubnan, Offre Joie, and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG)** in Lebanon.



LCM > Club Finance\$



Exceeded the programming size and scope of most student organizations at MIT by **breaking multiple budgetary records** such as annual operating budget, single event budget, and single deposit after a weekend fundraiser (some records still being validated), culminating in the **LCM's Treasurer, Fadi Kanaan, receiving MIT's Outstanding Treasurer Award for 2006**

Raised money for LCM activities and programs **from club alumni and many corporate sponsors** such as ABC Group, ACT Holdings, ALES, **Al Rifai**, AUB, Bank Audi, Bank Byblos, Banque Libano-Francaise, Berytech, Booz Allen Hamilton, Cambridge Energy Solutions, CSAIL, Cyberia, Diapaper, Dubai Silicon Oasis, Fransabank, Genesis Microchip, Hariri Foundation, Inconet Data Management, Investcom, Kafalat, Kommsult, **Ksara**, LAU, MathWorks, MDS UAE Holdings, Microsoft, Middle East Airlines, Millennium, Mobius Logic, MTC Touch, NavLink, **Patisserie Rafaat Hallab & Sons**, Reebok, SHASS, Sloan School, Solicar, TagLogic, UNDP, UOB, WLCU, among others

LCM > In the Media



Interviewed/featured in major media outlets including:

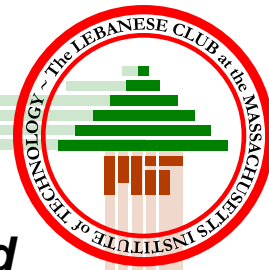
- CNN, MSNBC, NECN
- LBCI (*Kalam el Nas*), Future TV (*Iktisaduna Wal Alam*), AlHurra TV (*iTECH*)
- Boston Globe, Boston Herald, Brookline TAB
- Annahar, Assafir, AlBalad, Daily Star, Dar AlHayat, L'Orient Le Jour
- Lebanon Opportunities, Executive magazines
- Profile News, Eagle Tribute, Tech Talk, the Eagle Tribute, the Tech, Harvard Crimson
- ...

LCM > Guest Speakers



*Hosted top-tier and **executive-level speakers from many corporations, NGOs, and government institutions**; those include Edgar Masri, CEO, 3Com; Linda Rottenberg, CEO, Endeavor; Georges Gemayel, EVP, Genzyme; Fadi Chehade, VP, IBM; Mike Haidar, General Manager, Analog Devices; Nassib Chamoun, CEO, Aspect Medical; Maroun Chammas, CEO, Berytech; Louis Lataif, Dean, BU School of Management; John Cullinane, CEO, Cullinane Group; Tarek Mitri, Minister of Culture; Declan Glynn, Director of R&D, Dublin Institute of Technology; John Chory, Chairman, Hale & Dorr Venture Group; Fawwaz Habbal, Associate Dean, Harvard; Kevin Carroll, VP, IDA (Ireland); Farid Abboud, Ambassador, Lebanon (US); Ramzi El Hafez, Editor-In-Chief, Lebanon Opportunities; Sami Abi Esber, President, MDS UAE Holdings; Salah Dandan, Former Director, Microsoft IP Ventures; Ghassan Bejjani, Managing Partner, Morgan Stanley; Kamal Shehadi, Chairman, Telecom Regulatory Authority (Lebanon); Walid Maalouf, Director, USAID; among others*

LCM > Collaboration



Fostered value-adding collaborations with a multitude of MIT-based and off-campus organizations in joint efforts to hold different events & programs; those included the MIT Lecture Series Committee, MIT Arab Students Organization, MIT Public Services Center, MIT Agha Khan Program on Islamic Architecture, MIT Public Services Center, United Nations Development Program, Kennedy School of Government Arab Caucus, American-Arab Anti Discrimination Committee, American Lebanese Engineering Society, World Lebanese Cultural Union, Network of Arab American Professionals, International Network of Lebanese Entrepreneurs in Technology, Lebanese Campus Link, Evelyn Abdalah Menconi Memorial Committee, among others

“I was already awed by the qualifying process the Club has for evaluating possible programs with other organizations. In my decades of work with student groups, I have never experienced one that established criteria and an evaluative process for collaboration with community groups. The Club officers and members were basically ensuring quality control by demanding the requesting organization to be accountable to a set of principles they deemed important and proper. I confess, I was, to use a common slang expression, “blown away.” – Prof. Emeritus Elaine Hagopian



Advanced club's level of institutionalization through:

- revamped, exhaustive **constitution & bylaws** crystallizing lessons learned from the club's operating experience over the past few years
- original **Activity Point System** to objectively assess, incentivize, and reward members' contribution to the club
- **knowledge-transfer mechanisms** to ensure the smoothest transition of leadership
- **financial checks & balances** to ensure responsible fiscal performance

- among others -

LCM > Membership



*Sustained level of scholarship reflected in LCM members receiving the annual **American Lebanese Engineering Society Graduate Student Scholarship for 4 consecutive years***

*Transcended the boundaries of MIT and the student community by **doubling membership to include active non-student, non-MIT affiliate, and non-Lebanese national/expatriate members***

LCM's Alumni Relations Chair/Committee just completed **tracking the full information of 300+ Lebanese MIT alumni**; designing a campaign to fully engage them in various is underway

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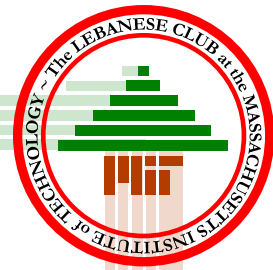
[in random order; idiosyncratic viewpoints reflecting only personal takes]

Golden Eggs > Well from Good



*One should be able to do well from doing good,
as long as one does not do good for
the reward of doing well.*

Golden Eggs > Vision vs. Action



***“Vision without action is a day dream;
action without vision is a nightmare.”***
(a Japanese proverb)

Golden Eggs > Beyond Creation



The act of creation is lonely (from God – the one & only – to the singular patent holder), but that of application/execution/optimization is collective.

Golden Eggs > Success, Projected



To be successful, you should not shy away from projecting an image of success.

Golden Eggs > Chicken & the Cow



*There are 2 ingredients to a beef omelette:
a chicken that is barely involved and
a cow that is totally committed.*

Golden Eggs > Man & the System



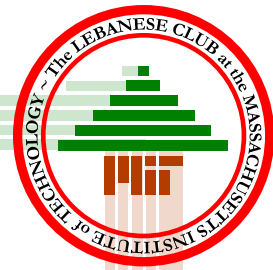
The 'system' in the US may be smarter than the 'individual' and sustains the wellbeing of the whole; the 'individual' in Lebanon may be smarter than the 'system' and does everything possible to outwit it.



Golden Eggs > Force-Walking a Baby

***Experiment-> Assimilate->Institutionalize
But beware of premature institutionalization!***

(babies have to spill before eating,
to fall and toddle before walking.)



***Sustain whatever of your programs/events goes well,
but push yourself to leave your comfort zone
and... innovate!***

(Is Lebanon only about
hafliis, dabke, tabboule, shisha, nightlife, etc.?
Jean Paul Gautier & Angelina Jolie would strongly disagree!)

Golden Eggs > Teachers @ Their Best



The best teacher (and leader) is one who seeks and succeeds in educating the disciple that outperforms him/her.



Golden Eggs > A\$\$ume It's There

*Money is obviously not the objective...
but nor should it be the barrier.*



Golden Eggs > Be Reasonably Unreasonable

***“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world;
the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself.
Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”***
(George Bernard Shaw)



Golden Eggs > Include & Do More

***Some lead by including & outperforming,
while others by isolating & ruling their islands.***

Applies when interacting with new, atypical members, new collaborators, new audiences, etc – We should manifest our essence of being the ‘gateway’, the ‘most hospitable’, the ‘ambassadors of the alphabet’, the ‘most adventurous’, the ‘seamen heading anywhere with anyone’...
And after all, resources – especially Lebanon’s/clubs’ – are finite!



Golden Eggs > Beyond the Passion

It's not enough to love Lebanon, you need to earn the status of defending/promoting/helping it ... and the benchmark for that goes well beyond love/passion/good intention.

Just like how your beloved wouldn't necessarily choose you just because you happen to love him/her more than your 'competitors'.

It's important to know our limits, seek to transcend them... but until that happens and to serve the mission best, empower the 'less limited'.

And there's an F-Matrix and L-Matrix to help assess this, but the terminology is X-rated, so I'd be happy to explain it to anyone interested after the talk.

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[high-level; regarding mission, structure, & image]

LCL > On Mission...

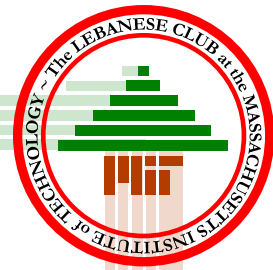


■ Stay away from the all-‘representing’ / ‘foundation’ / ‘umbrella’ role & terminology for 2 reasons: 1) it won’t work due to the peculiarities of ethnic student clubs/programming, and 2) it won’t serve its mission best, as it needs the grassroots efforts of clubs

■ “Lebanese Campus Link” – It’s about linking / connecting / networking / exchange between autonomous organizations:

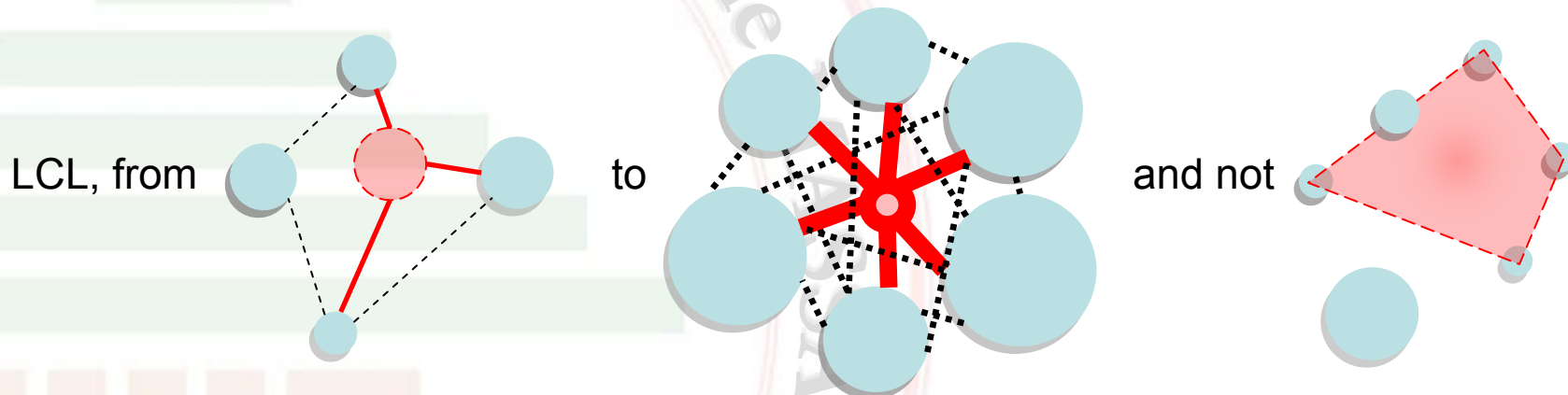
- *Brining them together at a convention*
- *Centralizing information resources on club events in various cities*
- *Creating cross-campus student exchange opportunities*
- *Providing exclusive ‘social network’ a la ‘A Small World’ style*
- *Listing info of interest to traveling students (cheap stays, Lebanese eateries, travel agents, work/internship opportunities)*
- *Bridge for students in Lebanon!*
- ...

LCL > On Structure...



- As flat, as thin, as light, and as agile as possible...
What's the best 'network' out here?

**It's the Internet backbone;
and for those very same reasons!**



[resolution impaired during conversion; animated graphics discarded in print-ready version]

LCL > On Image...



- It's an organization *by* the **students**... and *for* the **students**.
 - *Students should remain the face and the meat*
 - *How can top elected LCL representative be a non-student?*
 - *How can a student convention only feature non-student speakers none of whom are addressing student-related affairs?*
 - *Future conventions could also feature awarding/recognizing excellence in Lebanese students' academic, artistic, sports, etc. accomplishments; bringing in students from Lebanon and linking them with the right stakeholders here; having a call for student papers on Lebanon-related issues; among others*

- Don't take subtle (yet potent) 'image affecting' nuances lightly! Especially when you claim an **apolitical, nonpartisan, nonsectarian** stance... given example(s) on "revival" terminology, "assets to religious (!?) institutions upon dissolution", "FBI lecture/marines honoring", "lebanese lobby" shadow website, among others.

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Many thanks to
Fadi, Daniele, Cyril, & Maurice
LCM Executive Board
lebanon-exec@mit.edu

Zeina, Rami, Dana, Joe, & Georges
LCM Executive Board-Elect

Lebanese Club @ MIT (LCM)
<http://web.mit.edu/lebanon>