Omanis to study at German universities

Dr Nicola Huson, Daad Representative in Oman, welcoming the audience

By Manuela Gutberlet

THIS year twenty Omani students have received scholarships of the Ministry of Higher Education for higher studies at different German universities. The students intend to study Medical Technology, Meteorology, Management, Aviation Management, Mechatronics and German as a Foreign Language.

On Wednesday afternoon the Omani students and their families were welcomed by the Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Sultanate, Hans-Christian Freiherr von Reibnitz, as well as by Professor Dr Burkhard Rauhut, Rector of GUtech, and Dr Nicola Huson, representative of the German Academic Exchange Service (Daad), during an info-meeting held at GUtech.

"This is the seventh batch of students who are going to study in Germany. In a joint collaboration between the Ministry of Higher Education and the Daad scholarship holders receive comprehensive support and guidance during their preparations for and during their actual studies in Germany," said Dr Huson, Representative of the Daad and Head of German Department at the German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech).

"At German universities, you will get one of the best higher education in the world. After your Bachelor degree you may continue your studies in Germany or at the German University of Technology in Oman. Germany and Oman enjoy very close links," said Professor Dr Burkhard Rauhut.

The Omani students will travel to Germany in the coming weeks. At the beginning of their stay, the students will study German for six to ten months in Dresden, Marburg, and Heidelberg and then pass a one year Pre-University Programme that will be completed with an assessment test. During their stay in Germany, all Omani students will have rooms in dormitories or shared flats.

Mahmood al Saidi has been studying Business and Engineering at RWTH Aachen University in the past six years. "At the beginning it was a bit difficult. But I studied hard and had different subjects like Chemistry and Mathematics during the Foundation Year," said Mahmood who is fluent in German.

As an additional support and for networking Mahmood has created a facebook page for Omani students who live and study in Germany. "I am really looking forward to studying in Germany, at the University of Dresden. I will study Engineering. I know that Germany is very famous for its technology. My sister was trainee in Germany and advised me to study at a German University," said 18-year-old Ahmed Ibrahim al Farsi from Sohar.

During the short introduction the students learned that German is easy to learn and that there are many similarities with the English language: "Good Day in German is *Guten Tag*. Dr Nicola Huson stressed, that some German words even have Arabic roots, like the words *Gitarre* and *Zucker*.

Currently 176 Omani scholarship holders along with many more self-paying students are studying at different German universities.

Dr Burkhard Rauhut

Deborah Hart-Serafini, Public Affairs Officer

US Embassy welcomes new Public Affairs Officer

THE US Embassy recently hosted a dinner to welcome Deborah Hart-Serafini, Public Affairs Officer (PAO), at the Muscat Grand Hyatt Hotel. W Johann Schmonsees, Chargé D'Affaires of the US Embassy, as well as distinguished members of the press and media, joined the event to welcome Ms Hart-Serafini.

"We are delighted to introduce Deborah to the members of the Omani media community," said Schmonsees. "Oman enjoys a robust and diverse print and electronic media which contributes greatly to the country's progress."

Prior to her assignment in Oman, Deborah served in Turkey, Iraq, and Liberia, among other countries. Previous to her current position as Public Affairs Officer in Oman, Deborah was the Middle East Partnership Initiative (Mepi) Co-ordinator in Kuwait.

"I look forward to meeting Omanis from all sectors as our Public Affairs Section organises programmes to promote mutual understanding between our two countries. Oman is a very beautiful and welcoming country, and I hope that more Americans will be able to discover the treasures of Oman and observe its extraordinary progress firsthand."

Harley-Davidson partners with WFP to feed schoolchildren

Open Weekend for all Harley and Non-Harley bikers in Oman

AFTER the success of "Make Every Day Count" in 2011 — Harley-Davidson's unique Open House Day concept that acted as a platform to introduce the new range of Harley-Davidson motorcycles for 2012 — Harley-Davidson Middle East and North Africa (Mena) has announced the 2012 Open House Days in Mena under the theme "Join the Ride, Change Lives" inviting both riders and non-riders in countries including Oman, UAE (Dubai, Abu Dhabi), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, KSA (Riyadh, Jeddah, Dahran, Jubail), Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco.

'Join the Ride, Change Lives" Open House Day will be held on the weekend of October 11-14, 2012 where Harley-Davidson's newest 2013 models will be revealed. This event will also raise funds for the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting global hunger and feeding over 90 million people in over 70 countries on average each year. All riders will be invited to buy Harley Davidson pins, with each pin sold generating sufficient funds to feed over 30 underprivileged schoolchildren a day.

"Our customers are our biggest group of friends, and we are always on the lookout for opportunities to expand our social circle. At the Open Day, both riders and non-riders will be able to experience the exhilarating spirit of Harley-Davidson. We look forward to seeing the entire community in Oman gather to have fun and celebrate the arrival of our 2013 motorcycles while supporting a good cause. It's not just an invite for riders, but anyone who wants to participate, contribute, and be part of the close-knit Harley-Davidson community," said Peter Grimshaw, Harley Davidson, Muscat's Dealer Principal.

"The WFP school meals programme is instrumental in providing underprivileged children with nutritious meals at school. These not only ensure physical and mental development but also improve school enrolment by offering parents an incentive to send their children to school," said Elise Bijon, Partnerships & Business Development Manager for WFP in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and Eastern Europe.

"In 2011, WFP provided school meals to around 26 million children in 60 countries across the world, and we are delighted to be partnering with Harley-Davidson to raise funds towards this endeavour. Events like the Harley-Davidson Open Day show how powerful the community can be in gathering together for a worthwhile cause."

On September 22, 2011 Harley-Davidson Mena submitted a cheque amounting to $20,600 to the United Nations World Food Programme after the great success of the charity ride "Make Every Day Count", which took place in September 2011 in 9 countries (UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi, Qatar, Morocco, Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt).

To celebrate the launch of the 2012 new models, Harley-Davidson Middle East and North Africa invited the community to participate in a ride to experience the true spirit of brotherhood that Harley-Davidson embodies. This spirit of brotherhood lived strong with the participation of the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), whereby proceeds from sales across all dealers of network for "Make Every Day Count" day helped impoverished women in Africa to stand on their own feet.

"Harley-Davidson is a global icon embodying the spirit of camaraderie. The 2012 Open House invitation goes out to everyone, whether Harley owners, non-riders or just motorcycle aficionados, to participate, enjoy a day out, expand their social circle and make lifelong friends, all while supporting an excellent cause," said Paul De Jongh, Harley Davidson's Country Manager Middle East and North Africa.

Customers and enthusiasts interested in participating in the Harley-Davidson"Join the Ride, Change Lives" or to be updated on the latest news for the Open Day can visit their facebook page http://www.facebook.com/HarleyDavidsonMENA for more information.

Spanish concert, Zarzuela recital on September 24

Cristina Lucio-Villegas

THE Embassy of Spain in Muscat is presenting an exciting concert featuring Spanish songs and a Zarzuela recital by soprano Dolores Lahuerta and pianist Cristina Lucio-Villegas. The event will take place at the American British Academy (ABA), Al Khuwair, on Monday, September 24, 2012 at 7 pm.

After attending the Centre de Perfeccionament Plácido Domingo of Palau de les Arts in Valencia and the Chapelle Musicale Reine Elisabeth in Brussels, the Valencian soprano Dolores Lahuerta has performed at a number of major venues, including the Teatro de la Zarzuela in Madrid, Palau de la Música and Palau de les Arts in Valencia, Teatro alla Scala (Ridotto "Arturo Toscanini") in Milan, Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels, Cairo Opera House and Ewart Memorial Hall in Cairo, and other theatres in Spain

Dolores has teamed up with renowned conductors like Alberto Zedda, Lorin Maazel, Valeri Guerguiev, Leo Hussain, José Miguel Pérez Sierra, Ahmed El Saedi and stage directors like Fura dels Baus, Mariusz Trelinski, Damiano Michieletto, Frederic Wake-Walker, Francisco Negrín and Ignacio García.

Among her stand-out performance are *Lucia (Lucia di Lammermoor)*, *Violetta Valéry (La Traviata)*, *Konstanze (Die Entführung aus dem Serail)*, *Königin der Nacht (Die Zauberflöte)*, *Rosina (Il barbiere di Siviglia)*, *Giulia (La scala di seta)*, *Regina Isabella (Una cosa rara)*, *María (Gloria y peluca)* and *Marola (La Tabernera del Puerto)*. Her repertoire includes the roles of *Ilia (Idomeneo)*, *Susanna (Le nozze di Figaro)*, *Pamina (Die Zauberflöte)*, *Adina (L'elisir d'amore)*, *Gilda (Rigoletto)*, *Juliette (Roméo et Juliette)*, *Manon (Manon)*, *Micaëla (Carmen)* and *Marenka (Prodaná Nevesta)*.

In addition to her operatic career, she regularly performs in concert, especially Spanish Art Song and French Mélodie. After graduating the Conservatorio Superior de Música Joaquín Rodrigo in her home city, she has been awarded prizes in international opera competitions such as Colmenar Viejo (Madrid), Francisco Viñas (Barcelona) and Torneo Internazionale di Musica (Verona).

Dolores studied piano and singing with Gloria Fabuel, and has attended masterclasses by Ileana Cotrubas, Dalton Baldwin, Teresa Berganza, José van Dam, Katia Kabaivanska, Ernesto Palacio, June Anderson, François Le Roux and Wolfram Rieger.

Born in Santander (Spain), Lucio-Villegas studied at the Madrid Royal Conservatory of Music with A Guijarro (graduating with Honours in 2003) and from 2003 to 2008 at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki with T Hakkila and E Heinonen (Master's degree in 2008, receiving the highest marks). From 2008 to 2011 she studied the Artist Diploma Module at the Queen Elisabeth College of Music (Waterloo, Belgium) under the direction of A R El Bacha, graduating with "Greatest Distinction". She has also participated in several international master-classes with prestigious professors (Dimitri Bashkirov, Rita Wagner, Ferenc Rados, Dominique Weber, among others).

Dolores Lahuerta

Cristina has won several prizes in national and international piano and chamber music competitions (Manuel del Águila Piano Competition, Medal and Special Prize "Instituto Cervantes" in the 54th International Music Competition Maria Canals of Barcelona and "José Roca" Piano Competition).

She has performed as soloist and chamber musician in many important venues in Europe, America and Asia: Auditorio Nacional de Música (Madrid), Sibelius Academy Concert Hall (Helsinki), Palais des Beaux Arts (Bozar) of Brussels, Lille Opera House, and Santa Isabel Theatre (Recife, Brazil). She has been accompanied by orchestras such as National Orchestra of Belgium, Seville Royal Symphony Orchestra and Bari Symphony Orchestra. From 1999 to 2003 she has been the pianist at the National Youth Orchestra of Spain (Jonde). Among her future engagements there is a recital in Seville's Maestranza Theatre.

Dolores studied piano and singing with Gloria Fabuel, and has attended masterclasses while Cristina has won several prizes in national and international piano and chamber music competitions

Radisson Blu announces Sept delights

A MONTH of culinary delights and leisurely pursuits makes Radisson Blu Hotel Muscat the place to be this September. The Olivos Restaurant & Terrace is back with its popular Bubbly Brunch every Thursdays, with grilling BBQ Night on Wednesdays.

For the ladies, there is the scintillating Ladies Night every Monday 'Omalleys', where guests get to relax in an authentic Irish setting right in the heart of Muscat. Foodies can enjoy Al Tajin Grill's delectable fare or Steak House's selection of excellent grilled dishes. Early bird discounts and unlimited selected house beverages await visitors.

Guests are invited to unwind under palms at Lazy Lizard Garden and check out fruity flavoured shishas. The outdoors setting is also a perfect venue for social gatherings. Desserts at the Grind Floor or exotic beverages at the Coral are all part of this month's exciting offerings at the Radisson Blue Hotel Muscat.