

SAWALEF

WINTER SEASON

NEWSLETTER

WIN
*dinner
for two !*



SPOTLIGHT ON THE CHAIRMAN'S AWARD WINNERS

Contents

A NOTE TO OUR READERS

As always, there is never a dull moment at the Al Habtoor Group. 2012 was a very busy year for all the units of our Group, but the highlight was the launch of our Chairman's autobiography, which no surprise, was a great success! We will be giving away a two signed copies of '*Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor: The Autobiography*' in this issue of Sawalef. For those of you who haven't read it, I can assure you, it is a great read – and has already hit many best-sellers lists!

2013 started with a bang, with the Employee Excellence Awards, one of our biggest events of the year! First of all, congratulations to all the nominees and winners. This year was the most fiercely contested event as the committee received hundreds of nominations. You should ALL be very proud of yourselves.

There were plenty of smiley happy faces at the Awards. Those who attended the ceremony were the final nominees and winners, along with their families and friends. It was lovely to see all the units intermingling. The audience were given a treat as students from EIS performed 'May it be' from the 'Lord of the rings'.

In our 'Meet the Department' section we get to know the 'Administration and Human Resources Department.' Find out who is an avid footballer and who likes hip-hop!!

Finally, we have another competition for you for dinner for two.

NOURA
BADAWI

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AHG the Sawalef team:

Atef Mousa

Gilda Castro

Joanna Andrews

Noura Badawi

Premjit MP

Radwa Wagdi Abd El Salam

Subhro Chakraborti

Photography by:

Karl Jeffs - Gecko Media



ATEF MOUSA
Human Resources Manager

Working at the Head Office of a big group like the Al Habtoor Group has its challenges. However, when you find the owner gives you the right to treat the company as yours, and find all employees as 'one team', this is enough to motivate you to put in your best effort at work. This is what makes you not think about leaving the company for external temptations.

A chance meeting at a football match in 1995 presented an unexpected opportunity for me which turned into the next 17 years of my career! A friend of mine at the time who was the coach of the Metropolitan Hotel's football team invited me to play for them in a hotel tournament. By lucky coincidence Mr. Mohammed Al Habtoor was also playing on the team... Not only did we go on to win the tournament but I was lucky enough to be offered a position at the prestigious Al Habtoor Group by Mr. Al Habtoor himself!

After a few months I transferred to Head Office to establish a new HR Department and at the time there were only around 20 people working at Head Office. Now we have in excess of 80 people. I have seen the company grow considerably since then, and have seen a lot of expats come and go in that time.

Beside my regular responsibilities in Human Resources, it's always a pleasure to fulfill any additional challenges. For example I've been delighted to organise the Al Habtoor Group football championships over the past few years... fulfilling one of my passions.

Our mission in HR is to maintain a fair, equitable, and positive working environment for all employees, in support of the effective operation of the company. It is based upon the belief that the success of any company and its ultimate value is primarily dependent upon its people. Developing the potential of each employee will create job satisfaction and career opportunities which in turn benefit the company.

With the fantastic support from our Chairman we launched the Employee Excellence Awards, which enables us to reward the outstanding performances of our staff.

One of our current aims is to promote and recruit additional talent from UAE nationals as part of our ongoing Emiratisation Program which will be highly beneficial to the company.

ATEF MOUSA



GIVING BACK

Donating blood can save lives. The Al Habtoor Group recently joined in a blood donation campaign in support of the 'My Blood for My Country' initiative which was launched by HH Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai.

The campaign is in collaboration with Dubai Blood Donation Centre (DBDC), part of the Dubai Health Authority. Senior administrative officials and staff from the Al Habtoor Group joined employees from the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa to participate in the campaign on Sunday, January 6th.

"THE CAMPAIGN WAS INSPIRED BY VERSE 32 OF SURAH 5: AND WHOEVER SAVES ONE - IT IS AS IF HE HAD SAVED MANKIND ENTIRELY".

Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Chairman of the Group, stressed that the campaign was aimed at emphasizing the importance of Corporate Social



Abdul Salam puts on a brave face!

Responsibility (CSR) and promoting the humanitarian aspect of the "My Blood for My Country" campaign. He said that blood donation is a noble humanitarian act that contributes to saving the lives of many patients who are in need of blood transfusions.

A large number of Al Habtoor Group employees from various countries donated blood in the campaign that was organized at the Group's Head Office. A fully-equipped van was set up by the Dubai Blood Donation Centre. The

medical staff emphasized the importance of blood donations and provided donors with advice and medical support.

The campaign was inspired by verse 32 of Surah 5: "And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely".



مؤسسة خلف
أحمد الحبتور
للأعمال الخيرية

KHALAF AHMAD
AL HABTOOR
FOUNDATION

THE LAUNCH OF THE KHALAF AHMAD AL HABTOOR FOUNDATION

Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, Chairman of Al Habtoor Group, recently launched the 'Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation'. The foundation focuses mainly on developing and improving human societies in need in the United Arab Emirates. It also aims at providing relief and assistance to communities around the world affected by natural disasters and social calamities, meeting the needs of orphans and improving their welfare, as well as promoting inter-religious and intercultural communication, and enhancing education.

The Head Office of Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation is located in Al Farooq Mosque and Center in Safa (Jumeirah) in Dubai. The official launching ceremony took place in the presence of Sultan Al Habtoor, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Foundation, and the Board members, Prof. Rafia Ghubash, Ahmad Khalaf Al Habtoor, Mohammad Abdallah Al Haj, Jomaa Khalifa Bin Thalith, and Abdul Salam Marzooqi, Secretary General and Director of the Foundation.

Khalaf Al Habtoor said, "I decided to launch Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation to combine all charities I did before and I am doing now in one framework in the long run, in accordance with the Foundation's



Statute that defined its objectives and noble goals." As for the funding source, Al Habtoor explained, "Twenty percent of Al Habtoor Group has been allocated for the Foundation. It is of course separate from Zakat which is mandatory for every Muslim."

He added, "One of the most important goals of Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation is to help and assist all humans in general, and UAE nationals in particular, within a comprehensive and sustainable development approach and

a healthy environment. It will draw on its principles looking towards leadership and excellence."

The charitable activities of Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor Foundation will extend to include support for education and scientific research through establishment of scientific and research chairs named after the Founder within and outside the UAE, support of various sports, and assistance and grants for researchers and scholars in different fields and specialisations.

ADOPT A CAMP CAMPAIGN



Students from Emirates International School-Jumeirah recently offered a helping hand to the community... they collected generous donations for labourers in the UAE and personally hand delivered them.

Living in the UAE we see building popping up all around us, at lightning speed. But too often we forget about the workers building them. However, students at EIS, refused to turn a blind eye.

'Helping Hands' is a student-led afterschool organisation that was initiated in September 2011 at EIS-Jumeirah in order to inspire students to put in their energy, innovation and desire into "giving back" to society.

The student body at 'Helping Hands' believes in playing its role by raising awareness, funds and manpower for charitable or disease-cure research organisations as well as creating an opportunity for students to give back to society in any way they can.

For weeks on end, students tirelessly turned up to 'Helping Hands' meetings and helped organize the 'Adopt a Camp' project. They collected donations from students all over the school including

t-shirts, shaving kits, toothpaste, first aid kits, deodorant, blankets and so on. The response to the initiative was overwhelming.

Philip Burgess, High School Principal, EIS-Jumeirah said, "The initiative has been a great success since inception. It is great to see so many of our students keen to help those in need."

On the final day of the campaign they gathered their donations and created individual boxes for 300 labourers in the UAE. Next stop: the labour camps. The students boarded a bus and personally hand-delivered their donations to the labourers. As the bus pulled into the camp, they were greeted by the many

smiling faces of the workers, who stood patiently in line for their gifts and food donations.

The Principal added, "For the students to personally hand-deliver their donations meant that actually got to understand exactly where their donations went, rather than what they read in the newspapers or see on TV."

Above all, the experience taught them about the fundamentals of happiness and that any form of action, no matter how small or big will etch a mark in society forever.





Competition

WIN DINNER FOR TWO

Al Basha

Al Basha is a traditional Lebanese restaurant offering a wide range of Middle Eastern and Lebanese cuisine set in a cozy setting beside the pool at the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa. Al Basha provides an authentic touch with daily performances by Arabic singers and belly dancers.



Luciano's

Luciano's serves traditional Italian food. It is nestled alongside the garden pool at the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa. The restaurant was named after a notorious Italian-American gangster Charles Luciano. The home-made pizza and pasta are enough to make your mouth water! Luciano's is open daily for indoor or alfresco dining on the picturesque terrace.

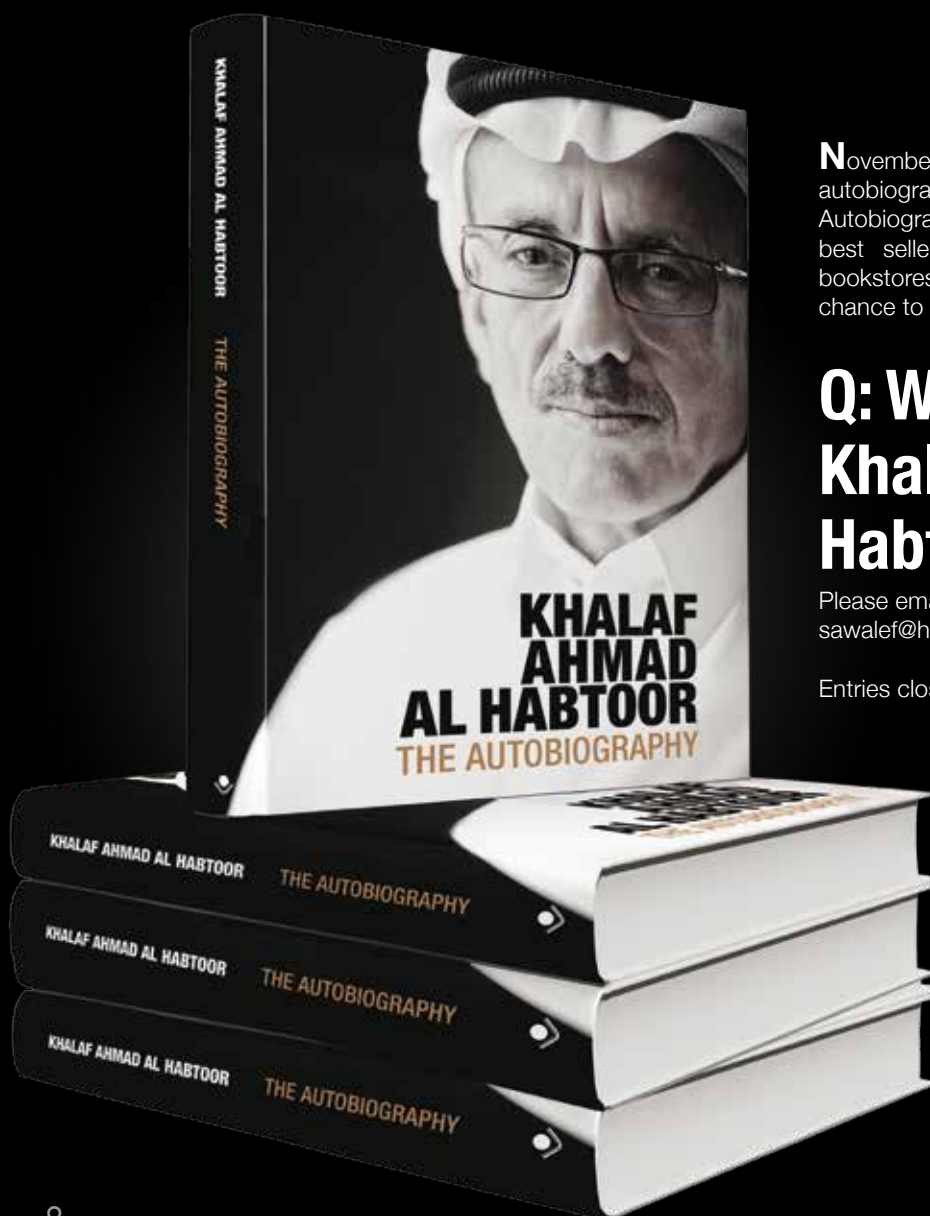
To win. Answer the following question and email the answer to sawalef@habtoor.com
Entries close March 14th, 2013.

Q: In which year was the Employee Excellence Awards launched?

WIN!

KHALAF AHMAD AL HABTOOR THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY

2 SIGNED COPIES



November marked the launch of our Chairman's autobiography, 'Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor: The Autobiography'. The book has already hit numerous best sellers lists in the United Arab Emirates bookstores. Answer the following question for your chance to win a signed copy of the book.

Q: What was Mr Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor's first job?

Please email your answers to sawalef@habtoor.com

Entries close March 14th, 2013.

Ever wondered how the minarets at the **Al Farooq Omar Ibn Al Khattab Mosque** get cleaned? Well here's the answer. If you look very closely, you will see a man scaling the height of the minaret **(back, right)** to keep it in tip top shape. A hazardess job to say the least!



Meet the Department



MEET THE ADMINISTRATION & HR DEPARTMENT

THE SENIOR MANAGEMENT



Maan Abdul Wahab Al Halabi
Executive Director
Joined: 22nd May, 1993



Mohammad Al Mazrooei
Managing Director
Joined: 25th April, 1999



Paul Anthony Rayner
Advisor to the Chairman
Joined: 27 February, 2012

EXECUTIVE OFFICES



Elizabeth Tidd

PA to the Chairman

Joined: 11th November, 1990

Liz got married 13 years ago in England to a Scandinavian man and has two beautiful children. She moved to Dubai when she was 20 years old and has been at the Al Habtoor Group ever since. She loves the great outdoors and has a passion for cycling and walking. Liz likes gardening and drinking tea!



Helen Locking

Executive Secretary

Joined: 28th February, 2009

Helen has been married to Danny for two years. They have a dog called Milo (rescued from the desert in Al Dhaid). Travelling is Helen's major passion. Before moving to Dubai she lived in Australia and Spain. She loves walking her dog, watching movies, paddle boarding and she just took up cycling! Helen likes cooking and is famous for her carrot cake! The Sawalaf team are waiting for a slice!!



Maricar Camille Amor

Executive Secretary

Joined: 10th February, 2007

Camille is a sports lover. She likes to play basketball and is a MASSIVE Miami Heat fan! Camille is an excellent painter. She loves travelling and has been to most places in Europe. Next stop: hopefully South America. She loves dancing (hiphop and techno), and she plays the guitar. She loves singing but admits singing doesn't love her!

HR & ADMIN



Nasser Saeed Nasser

Director of HR & Emiratisation

Joined: 10th July, 2012

Nasser is a proud father of four Khalid (24), Abdulaziz (22), Iman (18) and Nahyang. He loves playing football and other sports activities.



Atef Ahmed Mousa

Human Resources Manager

Joined: 11th March, 1995

Atef has been married for 13 years and has three children; Kareem (13), Rawan (10) and Hala (1). He is known for his love of football and used to be a professional goalie. He likes watching movies, reading and singing. Maybe it is time to consider 'Habtoor has talent!'



Philomina Pereira

PA to the Executive Director

Joined: 15th April, 2008



Josephine Salonga

Secretary to the MD

Joined: 10th November, 2004

Josephine is single. She is the eldest in her family. Josephine claims to be a quiet (yet jolly) home body that loves music. She likes to hang out with her friends at Al Habtoor Group to unwind and when celebrating special occasions.

Meet the Department



Ma Khaing Win
Admin Officer (HR)

Joined: 7th October, 2012
Khaing is married. She likes travelling, cooking and astrology.



Saqr Ali Al Ammari
P.R.O.

Joined: 1st November, 2008
Saqr is married with two boys, Mohammed (6), Hamza (3). He is an avid sportsman. He likes football and running.



Saeed Abdulla Al Balooshi
P.R.O.

Joined: 28th August, 2007



Juliet Monsorate
Telephone Operator

Joined: 19th August, 1995
Juliet is married and has one daughter, Sherlyn, who is 14 years old. Juliet says she loves travelling.



Khamis Almas Al Habtoor
Receptionist

Joined: 20th November, 2005
Khamis has two boys, Abdul-Aziz (30) and Mousa (26). He likes fishing and desert safari's.



Faysal Bouchikhi
Receptionist

Joined: 1st November 2000
Faysal is married with one child, Marwan, age 3... and another one on the way!



Riham Abdelraouf
Guest Relation & Reception Officer

Joined: 18th December, 2011
Riham has two daughters, 12-year old Delara and 9-year old Robina. Riham loves travelling and is an avid skier!



Kamal Jaber
Receptionist

Joined: 14th July, 2011



Sreekumaran Mundengat
Security Officer
Joined: 18 March, 2004



Muhammed Nawaz
Office Boy
Joined: 1st March, 1996
Nawas has four children;
Numan (12), Alishba (9), Alina
(6), Alyana (3). Outside of
work he plays cricket (bowler).



Rafeek Pettayil
Office Boy
Joined: 5th November, 2006



Sandeep Patil
Office Boy
Joined: 22nd March, 2008



Mohammed Kutty V.K
Driver
Joined: 10th March
2003



Nazar Panthalan
Kunnan S.**Driver**
Joined: 7th November,
2012



Shafi Channengadan
Driver
Joined: 12th
November, 2009



Manojkumar P. Appu
Driver
Joined: 19th April,
2011



Pulakkal M.Ebrahim
Driver
Joined: 10th September,
1989

Emiratisation ahead

As the UAE pushes ahead with its Emiratisation programme, the Al Habtoor Group is doing its part in the government initiative...

Emiratis traditionally are employed in the public sector. But that's about to change. The UAE government plans to significantly increase the number of Emiratis in the private sector this year. It's part of an Emiratisation initiative launched by the President His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, called 'Absher'.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, said recently, "The year 2013 will be a year of creating jobs for UAE nationals. This will be a national priority for which all efforts must unite".

The Absher Initiative calls on the private sector to take part (voluntarily)

in advancing Emiratisation. The initiative is based on four pillars:

- Job creation
- Training
- Encouraging nationals to the private sector
- Introducing incentives in the private sector.





Nasser Al Ali

Director, HR & Emiratisation

Joanna Andrews caught up with Nasser Al Ali, Director, HR & Emiratisation to find out what the Al Habtoor Group is doing to entice Emiratis to the company.

What proactive approach are you taking?

We are working on strengthening our ties with universities and colleges in the UAE to promote the Al Habtoor Group among the graduates of these institutes.

We are also strengthening our ties with the technical schools and institutes in the UAE targeting candidates for the technical entry level jobs.

What are the benefits of the government's Emiratisation programme?

To give options to job seekers and reduce unemployment among Emiratis.

What are the main challenges for the private sector in increasing the number of UAE nationals in their workforce?

There are some challenges competing with government and semi-government organisation. Mind you, the Emiratis working in these organisations on Federal level make up less than (30%) of the total workforce, so they will be first choice for the Emiratis.

The organisational environment needs to be improved to fit Emiratis by increasing employee awareness.

Training and development needs to be introduced for all employees – especially Emiratis.

Is the programme part of an effort to become less reliant on foreigners in the country?

No, simply because the demography is not there, i.e. the local population can't meet the demand of the industries, not even in 50 years time.

The programme is a national priority for 2013. How important is it for the national economy?

It is very important due to the fact that it will minimize the expenditure on things like social aid, unemployment aid etc. and maybe redirect these funds towards more useful matters.

Why have the majority of

Emirati job-seekers avoided the private sector in the past?

This is due to a lack of a holistic vision in the sense that it addresses the various aspects associated such as the legal framework, training and development, employment terms, etc.

What efforts are you doing to entice Emirati graduates to the Group?

We are promoting the project among the Group's business units to ensure that they are partners in it. We are devising a pay scale specifically to attract Emiratis. We are promoting the Al Habtoor Group as an employer of choice among universities and colleges.





The winning team!

AWARDING EXCELLENCE

The Al Habtoor Group hosted the Employee Excellence Awards at the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa on Tuesday, January 22. The purpose of the Awards is to recognise and reward high achievers within the Group.

The ceremony was attended by Mr Khalaf Al Habtoor, Chairman, Al Habtoor Group, Mr Riad Sadik, Chairman, Habtoor Leighton Group, Mr Sultan Al Habtoor, President, Al Habtoor Motors, Mr Mohammed Al Habtoor, Vice Chairman and CEO, Al Habtoor Group and all the senior management across the Group.

Khalaf Al Habtoor, said, "I launched the Employee Excellence Awards in 2007 because I believe it is important to recognise employees who excel. Our employees are the company's biggest asset."

Al Habtoor emphasized that part of the Group's success was down to

the growth of the UAE's economy. He said, "The UAE employs hundreds of different nationalities, as does the Al Habtoor Group. People are drawn here because of the UAE's safe haven status. Our economy has recovered from the financial crisis much quicker than others."

He added, "Much of the developed world remains in crisis. Whereas we have an economy which is growing. I would like to take this opportunity to stress the fact that we are in a very unique position right now."

There Employee Excellence Awards were broken into six categories:

- The Individual Excellence Award
- The Distinction Award
- The Milestone Award
- The Business Unit Award
- The Departmental Award
- The Chairman's Award

There were a total of 22 awards

handed out by the Chairman. Each of the winners were given an engraved trophy and a certificate of appreciation. The Employee Excellence Awards groups together all the company's units, including employees from the Al Habtoor head office, Habtoor Hotels, Al Habtoor Motors, Diamondlease and Emirates International Schools (Jumeirah and Meadows).

THE AWARDS

The Individual Excellence Awards were open to all employees with less than 15 years of service, while the Milestone Awards were for all employees exceeding 15 years of service. There were more than 70 nominations in the Individual category selected from hundreds of entries from around the Group. Three of the winners were from Al Habtoor Motors, three from Diamondlease, two from Emirates International Schools, three from the hotels and one from the head office.



Employee Excellence Awards 2013



There were two winners in the Milestone category. Krishnan Puthiyaveetil from Al Habtoor Motors. Krishnan, who works as a Service Reception Supervisor at Al Habtoor Motors. The second winner was Maqbool Hussain Tahir, an Assistant Executive Housekeeper from the Metropolitan Deira Hotel.

Mr Al Habtoor said, "There are many people in the Group who have been with us for 30 or 40 years. The people nominated in the Milestone category are commended for their hard work, their many achievements and ability to adapt to change. It is not just about the number of years they have clocked up."

The Distinction Award, which was hand-picked by the Chairman, went to Martyn Wild, Projects Director at the Al Habtoor Group.

The Departmental Awards are given to departments which demonstrate motivation, innovation, strong leadership and deliver value based on

the foundation of clear vision with a customer focus.

The Business Units Awards were given for showcasing 'Business Excellence' and encouraging businesses to think positively while displaying an entrepreneurial spirit. The winners in this category were the Metropolitan Palace Hotel headed by Sanjay Luthra, the General Manager of the hotel; and Al Habtoor Motors under the direction of Karl Hamer, the Managing Director. Al Habtoor Motors is today one of the leading automobile distributors in the UAE.

The final awards of the evening were the Chairman's Award, which were selected by the Chairman, Khalaf Al Habtoor. This is the most prestigious award an employee can receive.

The winners were Noura Badawi, Director of Media and Communications and R. Venkataraman, Director of Corporate Governance and Risk Management.

The Chairman said, "This year's winners were an easy choice". Ms Badawi has been with the Group for 10 year and has proved to be an invaluable employee. She manages an extremely demanding job and gives more than 100 per cent effort. She is a great asset to the Group."

He added, "Mr Venkat has developed a code of Best Practice within the Group and is always aiming for the top. He has implemented strong guidelines for corporate governance and transparency to ensure the Group can compete on a regional and global platform."

Mr Al Habtoor concluded, "I would like to congratulate all the nominees and winners. We are very proud of our employees across all the units. The Al Habtoor Group plays a vital role in various sectors of the UAE economy. We are growing as a group and each and every one of our employees play a key role in our growth."

INDIVIDUAL AWARD

Geo Abraham
Youssef Hanna
Rajesh Pulparambath
Bevelyn Cabalejo
Nisar Khan
Smitha Radhakrishnan
Mandy Butterworth
Ghouse Mohiuddin
Yashavanth Gowda
Stephen Wellman
Mostafa El Nahas
Radwa Wagdi

Supervisor System Support
Team Leader Operations
Engineering Secretary
Secretary & HR Coordinator
Heavy Duty Driver
Senior Accountant
Dean Of Students
Assistant Manager Inventory
Front Office Manager
Dean Of Studies
Administration Manager
Media & Communications Coordinator

Diamondlease
Diamondlease
Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa
Metropolitan Catering Services
Al Habtoor Motors
Al Habtoor Motors
EIS - Meadows
Al Habtoor Motors
Metropolitan Palace Hotel
EIS - Jumeirah
EIS - Jumeirah
Al Habtoor Group

MILESTONE AWARD

Krishnan Puthiyaveetil
Maqbool Hussain Tahir

Service Reception Supervisor
Assistant Executive Housekeeper

Al Habtoor Motors
Metropolitan Deira Hotel

DISTINCTION AWARD

Martyn Wild

Projects Director

Al Habtoor Group

DEPARTMENTAL AWARD

Debt Collection Department | Diamondlease
Finance and Accounts Department | Al Habtoor Motors
Information Technology Department | Al Habtoor Motors

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD

R. Venkataraman
Noura Badawi

Director of Corporate Governance &
Risk Management
Director, Media & Communications

Al Habtoor Group
Al Habtoor Group



R. Venkataraman

Director Corporate Governance & Risk Management - AHG

Sawalef gets up close and personal with the winners of the Al Habtoor Group's most prestigious award: The Chairman's Award.

Were you surprised to win the Chairman's Award?

Considering that the Group has an abundance of dedicated and competent persons, it was indeed a surprise that I was handed the award - though in essence the award goes out to my entire team, who have worked diligently to establish the current framework. It is especially sweet for my wife since it happened on my 27th wedding anniversary!

What does winning the most prestigious award mean to you?

It is very humbling.

When did you join the Al Habtoor Group?

It is eleven years since I joined the Al Habtoor Group.

Describe the journey to where you are today?

Life has taken me to places in pursuit of

career, be it professional practice, public sector and stock holding companies to massive private conglomerates such as The Al Habtoor Group. It has given me a roller coaster experience in finance and accounting, information technology, insurance operations, negotiations, audit, governance, risk and so on. I was lucky to be in the right place at the right time. Whatever came my way was enchanting and provided enormous learning opportunities. There were many mentors all along to guide me in the right direction, whenever I was treading dangerous altitudes. The experience at Al Habtoor Group is unique in that my professional satisfaction is at its peak due to the unparalleled creative independence I enjoy here. I am looking for ways to fly to the next level of exploration.

What is the biggest challenge in your position?

To keep learning.

What would you say is the secret to a successful career?

It is a secret! It is in spite of me.

What motivates you to succeed?

The thrill of facing new challenges and the rich experience that it brings along is what pushes me to give my best in every endeavor.

What was your first job ever?

When I look back I was an Internal Auditor! Is it accidental that what goes around comes around?

How would you describe yourself?

I always seek to grow, both professionally and personally. I believe that the journey is more rewarding than the final goal.

Tell us something that would surprise us about you?

I am terrified of dogs.



Noura Badawi

Director of Media and Communications - AHG

What does winning the Chairman's Award mean for you?

I always believed that I am a student learning new things, allowed to make mistakes and learn from them. Winning the Chairman's Award means I am now a graduate, a fully responsible adult. I have moved to a different league with new higher standards and new performance criteria. Now I have to up my game to keep up.

It is a great honour to receive this award from Mr. Khalaf, I thank him for it and promise him that I will try my best to never disappoint him.

Were you surprised?

Very! When Mr. Khalaf told me the morning of the event that I needed to prepare a trophy and a certificate for myself I asked him twice if he was sure of his choice. I was over the moon!

How long have you been at the Al Habtoor Group?

I started working for Al Habtoor Group in 2001, I was part of the opening team of the Metropolitan Palace Hotel and moved

to Dubai with the group a year later.

Describe the journey to where you are today?

Educational is what comes to mind first when I think about where I was when I started and where I am now. I say educational because not only did it allow me to grow in the company and develop my work skills, working for Al Habtoor shaped my personality and gave me a lot of confidence.

What do you like most about your job?

I like everything about my job. There is nothing monotonous or repetitive about it. But what I like the most about it is that I am in touch with everyone throughout the Group and that I get to prepare great events for different celebrations in the group.

What is the biggest challenge you faced in the Group and how did you overcome it?

The biggest challenge for me in the beginning was working with highly qualified and highly knowledgeable people, I had to sit there and pretend

I understood what they were talking about! Seriously, it was keeping up with such knowledgeable people.

How would you describe yourself?

Stubborn! Whatever the challenges, if I want something I will not stop until I get it! Perhaps a 'nicer' way of saying it would be determined and focused.

What motivates you to succeed?

Working day after day with Mr. Khalaf Al Habtoor drives me to be a better person every day. I couldn't ask for a better example and a better motivation.

What is the most daring thing you have done in life?

Unfortunately I am not adventurous; most of what I do is calculated... I guess I am boring that way.

Where do you see yourself in five years from now?

I see myself working on more exciting projects as the Al Habtoor Group grows bigger and builds new landmarks. I would also like to see myself winning another Chairman's Award!

Midnight Marathon



These Al Habtoor Group employees should have been tucked up in bed, counting sheep. But instead they took to the streets of Dubai with hundreds of other professionals, volunteers and well-known sporting personalities to take part in the Dubai Midnight Marathon. The event took place in December 2012 and was launched by the Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM).

The group from the Metropolitan Deira Hotel in Dubai gathered at the Burj Khalifa to take part in the 3.2 kilometer race dubbed "No Sun Fun Run."

Khalid Saeed, General Manager of the hotel said, "More than 30 members of staff from the Metropolitan Deira Hotel took part in the Midnight Marathon. There was a great atmosphere."

The fun run was held under the patronage of Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of the Dubai Sports Council and DTCM with the aim of reinforcing Dubai's position as a safe tourist destination. The event was the first sporting event of its kind in the world.

A statement from Khalid bin Sulayem, Director General, DTCM, said, "The Dubai Midnight Marathon is a proclamation to the world of the safe, secure and positive environment that citizens and visitors of Dubai enjoy as per His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum's, Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, strategy for a safe Dubai."

To keep the participants entertained there were famous Arabic and English pop groups keeping their spirits up as they performed at the Burj Khalifa Steps.





L-R: Noura Badawi, Airis Andrea C. Larraga & Joanna Andrews

and the WINNER is... *Airis Andrea C. Larraga*

In the last issue of Sawalef we gave away dinner for two, valued at AED 500, at the Shahjahan Restaurant at the Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa.

The winner was Airis Andrea Capapas-Larraga, Executive Secretary at the Projects & Engineering Department at the Al Habtoor Group Head Office.

Airis said she was "very shocked and surprised" to win the voucher. "I don't usually win anything," she said.


She took her best friend with her and they ate up a feast; "We had chicken

soup, chicken masala, grilled prawns, vegetable pulao, kheema naan and for dessert we had kesar pista kulfi."

"IT WAS DELICIOUS..."

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RESTAURANT SPECIALIZES IN
ROYAL-STYLE INDIAN COOKING,
WHICH WAS RIGHT!**

And the verdict? "It was delicious," she said. "I was told that the restaurant specializes in royal-style Indian cooking, which was right! We were impressed on the service the most. We felt like royalties dining as the waiter was bringing our food and serving it on our plates elegantly."



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