

Johnson Enthusiastic About WKU's Impact On International Journalism Through IJMMT

November 13, 2007

Bowling Green, Ky. - Dr. Pam Johnson, Director of Western Kentucky University's School of Journalism and Broadcasting, returned from Jordan enthusiastic about WKU's international impact through the International Journalism and Media Management Training program (IJMMT).

Dr. Johnson conducted a consultancy at Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan, to facilitate curriculum development within Yarmouk's Journalism and Mass Communication department. During the session, Dr. Johnson and her Yarmouk peers developed a study plan to prepare students for a career in media. The work continues the partnership between WKU and Yarmouk University that has included hands on training and academic exchange undertaken in Jordan and in Bowling Green. It is the culmination nearly two years of work by IJMMT.

Dr. Johnson hopes that WKU and Yarmouk will be able to "build mutually beneficial partnerships such as student and faculty exchanges."

The work centers on Yarmouk FM, the first university-operated, community radio station in Jordan. The new study plan will integrate Yarmouk FM into the radio courses to reinvigorate the radio curriculum in order to meet the new challenges and opportunities of the Jordanian broadcast industry.

Dr. Johnson visited Yarmouk University in May 2006 and March 2007 prior to this final session at the end of October 2007. From her perspective, Yarmouk FM's status as a community radio station "could have a profound impact in providing a full volume voice for the community and become a model for all of Jordan," she said, adding she feels that the IJMMT provides a "bridge between WKU and Yarmouk to build the radio station and help to fine-tune the curriculum to include Yarmouk FM in radio broadcast curriculum."

The IJMMT is a collaboration between WKU and Internews Network, an international non-profit organization that supports open media worldwide. WKU and Internews have previously partnered to train broadcast and print journalists, editors and managers from Indonesia, Cambodia and Egypt. Yarmouk University and the IJMMT built Yarmouk FM, the first-ever student-oriented radio station in Jordan, to give students hands-on experience in journalism.

Since July of 2001, the IJMMT has been a unique international exchange for working journalists and media managers engaging in an intensive program of journalism study and internship. The IJMMT program offers a combination of strong U.S.-based and in-country training components.

WKU's department of Educational Telecommunications manages the IJMMT. This current program is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY) recognized the collaborative possibilities

of WKU and Internews and was instrumental in bringing the partners together and in the continuing support for this program. For more information, contact Jerry Barnaby, 1-800-599-2424, or email ijmmt@wku.edu.

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