



Saluting Women Leaders

Forbes Middle East Announces the Most Influential Arab Women in Government and Family Business

Arab women are playing increasingly prominent roles in driving the region's economies and societies into the future. With each passing year, more and more ambitious women are working their way up through the ranks to assume hard-earned leadership positions across a range of sectors and industries. Against this backdrop, and under the theme of '*The Most Influential Arab Women in the MENA Region*' Forbes Middle East has conducted a study on leading Arab women in the realms of family business and government across the Middle East and North Africa.

In developing this ranking, the Forbes Middle East team conducted research into ministries in each country across the region. Using information sourced from official government and company websites, along with Forbes Middle East's extensive pool of resources, relevant data pertaining to women in high-profile business and government roles was collated and analyzed.

Saudi Arabia dominates the Forbes Middle East ranking of '*The Most Influential Arab Women in Family Business*' with 12 companies from a total of 33. The UAE follows in second place with five companies to its name. Though not leading the group in terms of entries, the UAE achieved the top spot with Emirati inspiration, Raja Easa Al Gurg, Managing Director of the Saleh Easa Al Gurg Group in first place, ahead of Saudi Arabia's Lubna Olayan from Olayan Group. Bahrain's Mona Almoayyed, Managing Director of Y.K. Almoayyed & Sons Group followed in third place.

From family prowess to national prosperity, the Arab world's women are also proving themselves more than capable of guiding their countries to economic success and social progress. On the ranking of '*The Most Influential Arab Women in Government*', the UAE once again shines bright, boasting a total of 11 women in government positions or at the helm of high profile government-backed companies.

The Emirates' dominance is illustrated not only in the quantity of its entries on this year's list, but also their high ranks; H.E. Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, Minister of Foreign Trade, Salma Hareb, CEO of JAFZA and Economic Zones World, and Dr. Amina Al Rustamani, Group CEO of TECOM Investments occupied the top three spots. With three entries each, Oman and Kuwait also demonstrated the important role that women are playing in shaping their nations' futures and that of the region at large.

Applauding the achievements and positive impact made by Arab women, Forbes Middle East's Editor-in-Chief, Khuloud Al Omian, commented:

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“Arab women today are equipped with immense untapped potential which if utilized judiciously, will take the future of the Arab world to a greater level of excellence. Forbes Middle East is dedicated to highlighting the substantial achievements of Arab women in two of the region’s most vital sectors — family business and government through its two rankings: The Most Influential Arab Women in Family Business and The Most Influential Arab Women in Government.

Al Omian adds:

“Our study equips key decision makers with vital information that will help identify and provide opportunities to these rising stars in all areas, contributing to the socio-economic development of the region.”

Amidst resounding applause and fanfare Forbes Middle East held a prestigious award ceremony to celebrate the achievements of the most influential women in the MENA region. The exclusive event held at The Meydan Hotel, Dubai, on March 12, 2013 was an unforgettable occasion for all involved, with the UAE and Saudi Arabia taking center stage.

The event was attended by over three hundred honorable guests from across the Arab world. In addition to some of the evening’s awardees such as Raja Easa Al Gurg, Group Managing Director of the Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, and Mona Almoayyed, Managing Director and Board Member of Y.K. Almoayyed & Sons Group in Bahrain, the evening of celebrations was also shared by high profile figures including H.E Sheikha Budour Bint Sultan Al Qasimi, Chairperson of Sharjah Investment and Development Authority, (Shurooq).

On the occasion, Director Middle East, Manchester Business School, Randa Bessiso remarked, “Manchester Business School Middle East is delighted to be supporting the Forbes Middle East initiative in celebrating the achievements and contributions of influential Arab women leaders in two critical sectors in the region - government and family business. We firmly believe that access to world class business education and qualifications can play an important role in facilitating more talented Arab women into fulfilling careers in management and leadership roles in the Middle East and we will be working closely with Forbes to help achieve this.”

Forbes Middle East extends its gratitude to all guests, delegates from the family business and government spheres, and partners including the Al Tayyar Group, Manchester Business School, IFA Hotels & Resorts, SAS, Crabtree & Evelyn and Geelato Abaya.

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