

Beyster Institute At The Rady School Offers Entrepreneurship Training To Further Middle East Reform Efforts

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The Beyster Institute at the Rady School, UC San Diego, today welcomed 35 business executives from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to San Diego to participate in the Middle East Entrepreneur Training program in the U.S. (MEET U.S.). MEET U.S. is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) office. The program brings owners and executives of growth companies from 15 MENA countries to the United States to receive advanced business training and to participate in networking activities that promote economic reform, growth and opportunity in the MENA region.

While in San Diego, participants will attend a 10-day executive business seminar conducted by renowned entrepreneurship experts, and will also have the opportunity to network with local business leaders and Rady School students. Four of the participants will also speak at a public forum on "Doing Business in the Middle East."

"The changing demographics of the MENA region underscore the importance of fostering entrepreneurship and job creation," said Dr. Ray Smilor, executive director of the Beyster Institute. "The companies participating in the MEET U.S. program have the potential to significantly contribute to the region's economic development, engage women and youth in the process, and offer hope and choice for thousands of current and future employees."

The MEET U.S. program will continue into 2005, when the Beyster Institute will conduct three additional seminars focusing on specific industry sectors of importance in the region. Upon return to their home countries, participants will attend alumni events to reinforce training, develop business associations and build business networks. In May 2005, a Business Women's Summit will be held in Tunisia to assist women-owned businesses in all 15 MENA countries. Overall, more than 200 executives and entrepreneurs will participate in the program.

The United States Department of State's MEPI office selected the Beyster Institute to implement the MEET U.S. program in order to advance economic reform in the MENA region. MEPI is a presidential initiative that in addition to economic reform also supports political and educational reform efforts in the MENA region. In addition, MEPI places a strong emphasis on providing opportunities for the women and youth of the region. America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) and U. S. embassies in the region worked with the Beyster Institute to select participants for the MEET U.S. program. The Entrepreneurial Management Center at San Diego State University assisted with program development and will provide instructors for the program.

The Beyster Institute at the Rady School focuses on training, education and consulting to advance entrepreneurship and employee ownership as tools for building strong, high-performing enterprises worldwide. The Institute is involved in promoting entrepreneurship, policy advocacy and regional economic development. It also actively assists individual companies in creating or enhancing employee ownership and participation programs. The Beyster Institute, located in La Jolla, California, serves as the key center for entrepreneurial thought and activity at the Rady School and is the only such university-based center to integrate both employee ownership and entrepreneurship.

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