

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>		<i>ix</i>
<i>Preface</i>		<i>xiii</i>
Chapter 1:	Introduction <i>Azam Othman</i>	1
Chapter 2:	Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws (AIKOL) Homegrown, and Thankful for It! <i>Majdah Zawawi</i>	7
	So Much with that Pride <i>Sonny Zulhada</i>	
	The Meaning of Being an IIUM Alumnus <i>Yazid Zul Kepli</i>	
Chapter 3:	Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences (KENMS)	23
	The Nostalgic Experience <i>Mohd Nahar Mohd Arshad</i>	
	Beyond Boundaries <i>Yasmin Mohd Ramzi</i>	
Chapter 4:	Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS) <i>Murshid Kassim</i>	35
Chapter 5:	AbdulHamid AbuSulayman Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (AHAS KIRKHS) <i>Tunku Mohar Mohktar</i> <i>Mohd Feham Md Ghalib</i>	40
Chapter 6:	Kulliyah of Education (KOED) How KOED Transformed My Life <i>Haniza Rais</i>	54

- My Journey with the Kulliyah of Education
Suhailah Hussein
- Chapter 7: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation
(ISTAC)
A Brief History of ISTAC
Thameem Ushama
- My Learning Journey at ISTAC
Ssekamanya Siraje Abdallah
- Chapter 8: Kulliyah of Engineering (KOE)
- IIUM's Achievements
Ahmad Faris Ismail
- My Journey with the Kulliyah of Engineering
Fadly Jashi Darsivan
- Chapter 9: Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design
(KAED)
Syakir Amir Ab Rahman
Mansor Ibrahim
- Chapter 10: Kulliyah of Medicine (KOM)
- How the Kulliyah of Medicine Came to be Established
Taher Azhar
- Recollections of a Former Student
Gafoor Mubarak
- Chapter 11: Kulliyah of Pharmacy (KOP)
- A Journey of Becoming a Muslim Health Professional
Fahmi Hassan
- My Experience with the Kulliyah of Pharmacy
Nor Hidayah Mohd Taufek
- If I Could Turn Back Time
Syed Mohd Syahmi

CONTENTS

Chapter 12:	Kulliyah of Science (KOS) <i>Iskandar Bahari</i> <i>Zakuan Azizi Shamsul Harumain</i> <i>Siti Fatimah Zakaria</i>	130
Chapter 13:	Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology (KICT) <i>Shuhaili Talib</i>	136
Chapter 14:	Kulliyah of Allied Health Sciences (KAHS) History of the Kulliyah's Establishment <i>Suzanah Abdul Rahman</i> My Beautiful Life-Changing Journey in IIUM <i>Mohd Radzi Hilmi</i>	144
Chapter 15:	Kulliyah of Nursing (KON) <i>Firdaus Ismail</i>	156
Chapter 16:	IIUM Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance (IiBF) <i>Salina Kassim</i>	162
Chapter 17:	Kulliyah of Dentistry (KOD) The Reality of a Dentist's Journey <i>Abdul Rahman Fauzi</i> <i>Ahmad Badruddin</i> Recollections and Reflections <i>Rafiq Khalid</i>	168
Chapter 18:	Kulliyah of Languages and Mangement (KLM) <i>Muhammad Izzat</i>	175
Chapter 19:	Dar Al-Hikmah Library <i>Sarifah Binti Abdullah</i>	180
Chapter 20:	Concluding Remarks	189
	<i>Contributors</i>	191
	<i>Index</i>	198

FOREWORD

Bismillaah al-Rahmaan al-Rahim

Annalaamu 'alaikum Warahmatullaah Wabarakaatuh

As members of the IIUM community, it is important for us to understand how we, as a responsible institution of higher learning, have impacted our society and the world at large. Highlighting and documenting the impacts that our blessed University has had on its alumni (through the vigorous exercise of our University's philosophy, mission, and vision) is an important effort to better understand our institutional contributions to the Muslim community (ummah) and the world. Such documentation helps us to see the ways in which we have made a difference in the world through our alumni and their activities and achievements. Thus, I really appreciate the effort made by the Alumni Relations Division in preparing this book entitled, "The Garden of Knowledge and Virtue—Alumni Memories and Reflections."

I am honoured and pleased to be given this opportunity to write a foreword for this momentous book. The content of this partly historical book focuses mainly on our various IIUM alumni's reflections on their learning journeys with their respective kulliyahs. Looking back at the history of the University's establishment, we are reminded that the birth of Islamic educational institutions, such as the IIUM, was part of the Muslim ummah's dream, especially in Malaysia in the early decades of the 20th century. It came with a clear vision and mission, that is, to improve the education of Muslims worldwide and produce graduates who are experts in both the religious and worldly sciences. The establishment of an Islamic university in Malaysia was needed for the empowerment of Muslim societies—to render them less dependent on Western educational institutions, Western thought and expertise, and secular knowledge. Hence, 37 years after the establishment of the IIUM in 1983, the graduates are henceforth expected to act as change agents—socially, economically, and politically—in the Muslim world and global communities.

The book contains meaningful reflections from prominent IIUM alumni from all kulliyahs and centres in IIUM, i.e., the Ahmad Ibrahim Kulliyah of Laws (AIKOL), Kulliyah of Islamic Revealed Knowledge and Human Sciences (KIRKHS), Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED), Kulliyah of Allied Health Science (KAHS), Kulliyah of Economics and Management Sciences (KENMS), Kulliyah of Information and Communication Technology (KICT), Kulliyah of Languages and Management (KLM), Kulliyah of Dentistry (KOD), Kulliyah of Engineering (KOE), Kulliyah of Education (KOED), Kulliyah of Nursing (KON), Kulliyah of Pharmacy (KOP), Kulliyah of Science (KOS), Kulliyah of Medicine (KOM), the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC), Centre for Foundation Studies (CFS), and the Dar Al-Hikmah Library.

In their various narratives and anecdotes, the alumni shared their beautiful stories and reflected upon their experiences during their years at this blessed institution. Through their stories, we can see how the IIUM evolved into a prestigious university over the decades. To those who wish to learn and be reminded about the history of IIUM, this book is a good place to start.

To contribute to the larger ummah in meaningful ways, every IIUM student must have the spirit of giving and serving the community in which they live. In this sense, coming to IIUM means they are ready to spend and sacrifice their time, energy, and resources for the betterment of the ummah. In addition, IIUM graduates are expected to be global leaders who can initiate and galvanise the transformation of education where change is needed, starting first with themselves, and then moving forward to serving their respective communities.

Specifically, the main objectives of this book are to highlight the impacts of IIUM's philosophy, mission and vision on its alumni; to preserve the important details of IIUM's history and contributions; and to explore how the University has moulded its alumni into professional and dedicated Muslims, lifelong learners, dignified members of the Prophet Muhammad SAW's ummah, and servants of the Almighty Allah (SWT). It is my belief that the University's mission and vision are underlain by a very profound and solid philosophy. Currently, we have taken measures to strengthen our vision and mission by re-articulating the seven mission statements to support our efforts of "Humanising Education through the Maqasid Syariah." The seven missions are:

1. To undertake the special and greatly needed task of reforming the contemporary Muslim mentality and integrating Islamic revealed knowledge with the human sciences in a positive manner.
2. To produce better quality Muslim intellectuals, professionals, and scholars who have the combined qualities of faith (iman), knowledge ('ilm), and good character (akhlak) in their persons so they may serve as agents of comprehensive and balanced progress and sustainable development in Malaysia and the Muslim world.
3. To Islamise the ethics to be practised by all IIUM staff—both academic and administrative—and certain aspects of human knowledge, particularly those in the social sciences and humanities, with the aim of making them more useful and relevant to the Muslim ummah.
4. To cultivate holistic excellence based on Islamic moral and spiritual values into the University's processes of learning, teaching, research, consultancy, publication and administration, as well as into student life.
5. To exemplify an international community of dedicated intellectuals, scholars, professionals, officers, and workers who are motivated by the Islamic worldview and code of ethics as an integral part of their work culture.
6. To enhance intercultural understanding and foster civilisation dialogues in Malaysia and across communities and nations.
7. To develop an environment that instils a commitment to lifelong learning and a deep sense of social responsibility among staff and students.

Given our decade-long presence in the Muslim world, this book is timely and significant, especially for the future generations of IIUM students and staff who wish to know about the University's history and origin, and the myriad contributions and achievements of IIUM alumni. With this knowledge, they can assess the University's performance in many different aspects.

I must extend my appreciation and many thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azam Othman, the Director of Alumni Relations Division, and the ARD team, who worked terribly hard to gather all the information in this book and contacted prominent alumni to share their stories and experiences so this book could become rich with their reflections and anecdotes on the years they spent as students at this Garden of Knowledge and Virtue. I am grateful to all contributors who spent their valuable time to pen down their memories and experiences of the years spent at the IIUM.

Finally, I hope this book will commemorate the IIUM's rich history from the diverse perspectives of its alumni, adding to its vast credentials as a higher learning institution. The personal stories capture the thoughts, ideas, aspirations, and reflections of the University's alumni, specifically in terms of how the IIUM has impacted their lives and shaped their attitudes and worldviews. Their rich perspectives may also attract students and academicians from around the world to be part of IIUM's illustrious legacy.

The information contained in this book is an invaluable resource for the University's continuous efforts in documenting its long-standing contributions. It will be a useful point of reference for the University's future generations to continue its legacy of educating and leading the ummah toward a life filled with knowledge, wisdom, good values, and divine blessings. This book, in all that it has to offer, is a precious gift to us all, especially to our future generations, in commemorating the 40th anniversary of this beloved University.

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Mohd Feham Md Ghalib was born in Muar Johor, Malaysia. He secured his first degree in Arabic Language and Literature from the IIUM and later completed his master's and doctoral degrees at the American University in Cairo in 1999 and Universiti Sains Malaysia in 2006, respectively. He has more than 25 years of experience in the use of technology for teaching and learning the Arabic language. He was actively involved in the development of the University's learning management system (iTaleem) and was a committee member of the IIUM MOOCs. Dr Feham has written and published many articles in various reputable journals, such as the Journal of Jordanian Arabic Academy, the Journal of Linguistic and Literary, the Journal of Islamic and Arabic Education, the Malaysian Journal of Distance Education, and the World Applied Sciences Journal. He is a member of the CALL and Graduateness research units and a trainer of IIUM Educator 4.0, a university programme that facilitates e-learning training and workshops for academic staff. Currently, Dr. Feham is an Associate Professor in Instructional Technology at the Department of Arabic Language and Literature and the Deputy Dean of ISTAC (Academic and Internationalisation), IIUM.

Mohd Nahar Mohd Arshad, an Associate Professor at IIUM's KENMS, is not your average academician. He is also an author, columnist, and YouTuber. From 2016 to 2017, Dr Mohd Nahar served as the Head of the Economics Department and the Associate Editor of the Kulliyah's journal, i.e., the International Journal of Economics, Management and Accounting (IJEMA), from 2017 to 2019. He was one of the writers of the renowned textbook, *Islamic Economics: Principles and Analysis*, published by the International Shari'ah Research Academy for Islamic Finance (ISRA), and has authored many articles on Islamic economics and finance. Dr Nahar publishes monthly YouTube videos on Islamic Economics on his channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/sonnahar>.