



## **8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 Fellows Dinner**

### **Information Statement**



On May 8, 2025, the Shafik Gabr Foundation convened a dinner for Gabr Fellows and special guests at I Ricchi in Washington, DC.

The Chairman of the Shafik Gabr Foundation, Mr. Shafik Gabr, his wife, Mrs. Gigi Gabr, Board Member Mohamed Ramzi, and staff were joined by 15 Fellows and six honored guests. Among the old and new friends of the



Foundation in attendance were Mr. Moon Suflab, Administrator of Information Technology in the office of U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell; Barret Travis, a former U.S. diplomat and his wife Mrs. Deidre Travis; Anna Wheeler, Head of Partner Developments at C4ADS; Mayachel Schaller, Service Specialist at Mayo Clinic; and Savannah Lane, Associate Director of International Partnerships, Aspen Institute.

Referencing the increasing rates of conflict around the world, Mr. Gabr opened the dinner by reflecting on the importance of maintaining interpersonal networks and face-to-face engagement across national, political, and cultural divides. Mr. Gabr emphasized the Foundation's crucial work in nurturing a community of international leaders, where mutual understanding and support can produce real-life social and political solutions.

Throughout the evening, Gabr Fellows shared career and personal updates, including a range of entrepreneurial ventures from Jeremy Pesner, 2022 Fellow, and Dan Sullivan, 2013 Fellow; a resurgence of "Shakespeare in the Park", the public arts program championed by 2015 Fellow Murray Abeles; a fresh career pivot into the medical device industry for Hunter King, 2017 Fellow; an exciting new role for 2018 Fellow Charles S. Truxal as Chief of Staff for a member of the U.S. House of Representatives; 2025 Fellow Alphaeus Hanson attended the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting and attended Mr. Gabr's annual Expecting the Unexpected dinner in Davos, Switzerland; and 2025 Fellow Clara Sherwood's imminent achievement of a Master of Arts in International Affairs from George Washington University.

2015 Fellow Robert "Kemp" Gouldin shared a big update from his Fellowship project: after proposing to use the funding provided by the fellowship to bring baseball to the children of Egypt, Kemp founded the 'Because Baseball' initiative. Now more than ten years later, 'Because Baseball' has helped to develop a Minor League in Egypt, and more than 3,000 Egyptian students have participated in the program. Kemp has secured independent funding beyond the initial support from the Shafik Gabr Foundation, including from professional Major League baseball players.



At the heart of the evening's events was a lively discussion of the future of innovation. The conversation ranged from defining – or disproving – the U.S.'s current innovative edge, structural challenges to technological progress in America, reflections on the inequality of technology access in both the Global South and rural America, and the ethics and possibilities of AI and gene editing. Fellows and guests discussed a variety of local, federal, and foreign policies that may be leveraged to improve basic governance and incentivize innovation for public health, computing, and global communication.

“The leaders of the free world must consider how they position themselves to advance universally beneficial values in the development of frontier technology, intergenerational resource transfer and capital allocation,” reflected Alphaeus Hanson, 2025 Fellow. “The Gabr Foundation advances discussions and practical initiatives that platform emerging leaders across international borders.”

With attendees from diverse fields of art, military service, business, finance, policy, and academia, and hailing both from Egypt and many corners of the U.S., the gathering was a living practice of the Shafik Gabr Foundation's initiative, East-West: The Art of the Dialogue.

Egyptian Fellow Mohamed Ismail Khalil remarked “I have been engaged with the Fellowship since 2015. I now have had the privilege to live in the U.S. for several years now, and Mr. Gabr has always welcomed me to events with the American Fellows, which have been very interesting and useful. I deeply appreciate his bringing Egyptian voices to these tables.”

The Shafik Gabr Foundation holds a minimum of six Fellowship dinners per year around the world as part of its annual programming to develop some of the brightest and creative minds of the next generation and allow them to exchange diverse ideas. For more information or to donate to the Foundation, please contact [sara@shafikgabrgoundation.org](mailto:sara@shafikgabrgoundation.org) or visit our [website](#).