JAD BARSOUM

ADVISING QUEBEC'S HEAD OF STATE



He is a young lawyer, bold and ferociously ambitious. Now operational advisor for Quebec's 31st premier, Phillippe Couillard, Jad Barsoum has worked his way up.

Barsoum began his career in 2009 as a lawyer at Joli-Coeur Lacasse law firm, based in Quebec City. In 2014, he took the role of advisor to Minister of Justice Stéphanie Vallée. In 2016, he left that post to become an operational advisor on the premier's staff.

As a member of the team serving Premier Couillard, Barsoum participates in the management of all of Premier Couillard's activities, including events, conferences and travel.

Barsoum earned a bachelor's degree in law and a Juris Doctor in common law from the University of Sherbrooke in 2008 and has been a member of the Quebec Bar Association since 2010. He was also president of the Liberal Association and president of a youth congress of the Liberal Party.

Even as a student, Barsoum was a leader. He was vice president of university affairs at the University of Sherbrooke Law Students' Association in the 2007-2008 academic year. In 2008-2009, he served as the president of the Association of Young Lawyers of Sherbrooke.

Born in Montreal, Barsoum grew up in a HOME deeply rooted in Lebanese heritage and values. Very often, he spent summers and Christmas holiday vacations in the land of milk and honey. Lebanon became associated with warm family gatherings, beautiful landscapes and tearful departures.

Although Barsoum seems to be a very pragmatic young man, all it takes to awaken his emotion is a sudden burst of traditional Lebanese music or a delicious whiff of kebbeh. I have seen him on TV defending causes, and I have watched him dancing the dabkeh, the traditional Lebanese dance, with eyes sparkling like stars.

In an interview with HOME, Barsoum talked about the role his Lebanese heritage has played in his life. He shared his thoughts about the influence two cultures — Canadian and Lebanese — have had on his upbringing and character. He is harvesting the rich bounty of both.



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By Frida Anbar

“The stay very often awakens in me a sense of understanding about why our parents chose, at a certain time, to leave Lebanon.

What influences of Lebanese heritage do you see in yourself?
Family values, closeness with others, friendship and the legacy of people who transcended borders.

How do you feel when you visit Lebanon?
We are teleported to another universe. The smell, the food, the horns and the chaos are part of it. But also this crazy desire to stay there and the attachment to the family. Lebanon is full of contradictions. But there is also the dark side — poverty and extremes, not to mention pollution and the political climate. The stay very often awakens in me a sense of understanding about why our parents chose, at a certain time, to leave Lebanon.

How do you manage your dual citizenship? How do you live your "Lebanity" in Quebec?
I am amalgamating the two questions because for me it is not a question of citizenship. For me, I'm from Quebec and Canada. I have Lebanese roots. They guide me in my choices and my decisions. The family education I received straddles the one my parents instilled in me and the one I learned in Quebec. I travel. I am from Quebec. I have origins and roots but, in 2017, who does not? We or our ancestors all came from somewhere else.

Would you like to live in Lebanon one day?
It's a rhetorical question. Who would not like it? But we live where we are planted and do our best with the options before us.

HOME

THE SOUL OF LEBANON



THE BRAND MASTER
ALEXIS NASARD

FEATURED FAMILY
THE OSSEIRANS

FROM LOS ANGELES
JOANNA NACHEF
1ST MAESTRA
OF THE MIDDLE EAST

ADA ABOU FARHAT
ACTRESS OF DEFIANCE & ARTISTRY

AMBASSADOR
EDWARD GABRIEL
AMERICAN TASK FORCE FOR LEBANON PRESIDENT
AT THE FOREFRONT OF DIPLOMACY

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