

Albuquerque International Association

presents

Lebanon and Beyond: An Overview of the New Garden at the Albuquerque Botanic Gardens

Robert & Monika Ghattas

ABQ business owners and community leaders,
longtime AIA members, and creators of the new garden

Thursday, April 23, 2026 4:00 p.m.

*Program will be held in the beautiful new garden space at the
ABQ Botanic Garden, 2601 Central Ave NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104*

AIA's April lecture will feature Robert and Monika Ghattas who will speak about *Lebanon and Beyond*, the new garden at the Albuquerque Botanic Garden. Monika will detail how the idea of a Lebanese garden came about and how it became a reality after several years of planning and discussions. The goal of this garden is to introduce the plants, the culture, and landscape of Lebanon to the Albuquerque community. Architectural features of Lebanese gardens were included in the design, like the water fountain, a communal area for visiting, and the arches.

The selection of appropriate plants, flowers, and trees was the job of Robert and Maria Thomas, the Biopark's Curator of Plants. He will describe the selection criteria for everything that will eventually be planted in the Garden, as well as the difficulties in finding appropriate plants suitable for the Albuquerque environment. Plants that are both native to New Mexico and Lebanon were especially sought.

Robert came from a small village in Lebanon to the University of New Mexico in the 1950s. He graduated with a degree in pharmacy and eventually bought Duran's Pharmacy and operated it for more than fifty years. His lifelong hobby of gardening became a full-time interest in his retirement. Monika is retired from a career teaching European and Far East history at CNM and currently serves as an AIA board member and chair of the AIA Book Club.

Please note: Attendees who arrive after 3:30 will receive free admission to the BioPark. Before 3:30, full admission fee will be charged.

\$15 for AIA Members; \$20 for Non-Members; Students are Free!

***Register on our website at www.abqinternational.org or mail check by April 21 to:
AIA, PO Box 92921, Albuquerque, NM 87199.***