

AMERICAN MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE *SUCCESS STORY*

ABRAJ-UWS TIMELINE:

- LATE 2010:** · The Oman Oil Company approached American Middle East Institute President Simin Curtis at AMEI's annual conference to help facilitate introductions to leading U.S. energy services companies.
- Abraj, an Oman Oil Company subsidiary, and Universal Well Services begin exploratory talks.
- EARLY 2011:** · Abraj-Universal Well Services venture launched, leading to the successful establishment of Oman's first pressure pumping company.
- EARLY 2013:** · First assembly of equipment shipped to Oman followed by UWS training of Abraj staff.
- JULY 2013:** · Oman begins its first commercial hydraulic fracturing project.



Early 2011: Left to Right, Program Manager Salah AlHarthy of Abraj; Mike Hogan, Hogan Energy; Salman AlShidi of Oman Oil Company; UWS Pres. Roger Willis; Omani team members; and far right, AMEI Pres. Simin Curtis

AMERICAN MIDDLE EAST INSTITUTE (AMEI) FACILITATES \$30 MILLION ENERGY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING DEAL BETWEEN ABRAJ AND VARIOUS ENERGY SERVICE COMPANIES.

At the backdrop of Oman's ambitious quest to transform its Oil & Gas industry, American Middle East Institute President Simin Curtis revealed how she was first approached at AMEI's annual conference in late 2010 by a representative from the Oman Oil Company to help facilitate introductions to leading U.S. energy services companies in order to help Oman develop an indigenous hydraulic fracturing capability.

Curtis responded to the request by contacting a friend in the energy industry, Jeffrey Kupfer who, based on past experience, immediately suggested Universal Well Services (UWS). UWS, a pioneer in the technologies for extracting gas and oil from shale reservoirs has its headquarters in a city, Meadville, just north of AMEI's home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. From there, a remarkable success story would be created, starting with Curtis leading an exploratory group from Oman to meet with President Roger Willis and

his team at UWS. Within a 24-month time period, starting in January 2011, UWS assisted Abraj with the design and outfitting of Oman's first pressure pumping company, and in the process helped to facilitate business dealings between a multitude of American oil and gas equipment, fabrication and product providers.

As a result of the guidance, training and connections provided to Abraj by UWS, Oman began carrying out its first commercial hydraulic fracturing project in July 2013. The pressure pumping industry uses an extraordinary complement of highly specialized and unique equipment to perform the hydraulic fracturing process necessary to unlock the gas and oil from the reservoir rocks deep below the ground surface. A complete package might cost in excess of 30 million dollars and be comprised of hundreds of components including complex computer monitors, high pressure pumps with tens of thousands of horsepower and a system of high pressure piping connecting everything with the well. The equipment needs were carefully specified and ultimately sourced from a variety of vendors located throughout the U.S.

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Roger Willis, president of Universal Well Services, vividly explained how his company assisted Abraj with the creation of a comprehensive business plan that would center on how to develop an indigenous Omani capability to develop their own pressure pumping company. As part of that process, Willis called upon Michael Hogan, a seasoned oil and gas executive and the president of Hogan Energy Consulting LLC to spearhead what would become a remarkably successful project. Under Hogan's day-to-day leadership, a UWS technical team assisted Abraj with all the components it takes to build a company from scratch. Within a year, from issuing requests for proposals, the team had meticulously completed equipment designs, vetted vendors, visited various manufacturing facilities and purchased equipment.

Commenting on the successful cooperation between the two companies, Hogan said, "We took a concept and created a company that we wanted to make sure could compete with anyone in the world." Willis added, "Everyone is going to look at this, and we wanted to make sure that it was done right," noting that "it was very special." In the process, "we became a tight knit group. Once we departed, we all agreed that we could not have had a better time." Attributing the unfolding of this remarkable venture to UWS' unique management culture and entrepreneurial experience, Hogan described how "one company was able to assist another without any competition or adversity," enabling the parties to undergo a successful technology sharing.

"The unique thing is that this is a company that is based in Oman, employs Omanis and is owned by Oman and has a Middle East content," Hogan said. "They've got a team from all over the world but all of its upper management are Omanis." Noting that "this says a lot" about the company's overall capabilities, Hogan believes that with its Middle Eastern leadership and talent, Abraj and its newly founded pressure pumping company will have a clear advantage over its multinational competitors when it comes to competing for business in Oman and in the region at large.

Commenting on the remarkable venture, AMEI President Curtis said: "The Abraj-Universal Well Services project was a breakthrough in U.S.-Oman energy technology cooperation, helping to accelerate Oman's energy revolution with the potential of creating many jobs in the process." Having attended the UWS training course "graduation" for Abraj staff, Curtis added: "In the process of creating Oman's first pressure pumping team, the level of friendship and camaraderie between Omanis and Americans was inspiring to see." The AMEI president and CEO also expressed optimism that her institute would continue to be on the forefront of U.S.-MENA business by helping facilitate similar ventures in the future. "Deepening valuable ties through business, education and culture is what we are all about," Curtis said.



DUQM PORT: A U.S.-OMAN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY?

AMEI has since its 2008 inception been dedicated to advancing U.S.-MENA business relations as the organization believes that valuable relationships through business, education and culture represent a powerful form of diplomacy.

Since 2009, the U.S. and Oman have enjoyed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that seeks to promote robust economic and diplomatic ties between the two close allies. Having brokered a number of multi-million dollar business ventures between American and Middle Eastern businesses, AMEI seeks to showcase Oman's Duqm Port, one of the region's most ambitious economic zones, as a potential U.S.-Oman investment opportunity.

Commenting on the U.S.-Oman FTA, Oman's Ambassador to the United States Hunaina Sultan Al-Mughairy said, "Poised at the gateway to the Arabian Gulf, the Sultanate of Oman is an excellent and strategic location for U.S. businesses. The introduction of policies to facilitate investors' entry, expansion in infrastructure and free trade zones have all contributed significantly to accelerated economic growth making the Sultanate an investment friendly environment and attractive investment destination. Oman is now in the process of upgrading its infrastructure and actively promoting investment in manufacturing, trade and services sectors."