



## Layla Al-Amri

"We are in a technology era," says Layla Al-Amri, a young woman born and raised in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Layla recently completed a Women In Technology (WIT) training course in Information Technology and professional development at Effat College in Jeddah. While she holds a Bachelors degree in Economics, she feels that her limited computer skills have posed a significant obstacle in finding a job.

Currently, Layla is a housewife, but she is earning her Masters degree and plans to pursue a Ph.D. "For me, learning is unlimited," she says. "The more you learn, the more you become significant in society." Her dream job is to work in scientific research, a field in which she can avoid the dull routine of a secretarial and administrative job, and in which the learning never ends.

To improve her computer skills and her chances in the job market, Layla signed up for the WIT training course after she heard about it from her sister, an employee at Effat College. No one else in her family is formally trained in the IT field, but they have been supportive, "both financially and spiritually," throughout the course.

For Layla, the future is full of changes in the age of technology, which is why she says it is "very important" for Saudi women to be well equipped with computer skills. The ideal woman is an educated woman, Layla says. "I don't think I'm much different than my mother, because she loves knowledge," says Layla, "But I think my daughter will be different, since we are in a time of technology and constant development."

November 21, 2007

INSTITUTE OF  
INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATION

Microsoft



Women in Technology (WIT) for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is funded by the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) of the U.S. Department of State, managed by the Institute of International Education (IIE) West Coast Center, and implemented in collaboration with local partners in nine countries: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

WIT MENA delivers five core activities to Partner Organizations and Participants, including **Professional Development Workshops**, **IT Training through Microsoft's Unlimited Potential (UP) Curriculum**, **Business Planning for Sustainability Workshops**, **Professional Development Networks for Women** and **Professional Exchange and Capacity Building**.

For more information on the WIT program, please visit [www.witmena.org](http://www.witmena.org)