

CEEMAN Responsible Management Educator of the Year 2024

Nurken A. Aubakir

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From a camp counselor and a school teacher at the beginning of his career over 15 years ago to being a Dean at AlmaU (Almaty Management University) Nurken Aubakir has long been part of the education system. With a proven track record of success in academia and his management roles, Nurken initiated and led the development of the brand-new School of Transformative Humanities from the ground up at AlmaU. His vision was to redesign the core curriculum to align with contemporary needs more dynamically. The new program named “Tolyq Adam” (a holistic person, translation from Kazakh) is meticulously crafted to cultivate holistic development. It integrates the principles of the UN’s SDGs, thus preparing students to contribute meaningfully to global and local challenges. Nurken has excelled in managing a diverse team of around 50 faculty and staff, establishing a workplace culture characterized by innovation, openness, and excellence. His leadership is a cornerstone of the school’s ability to maintain high academic standards and a supportive, collaborative environment. Nurken has also significantly transformed the EU/UNDP project “Supporting Economic Empowerment of Afghan Women through Education and Training in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan”. Under his leadership, the newly developed and launched foundation language program at AlmaU has provided education to 100 Afghan women, strategically empowering them through specialized education and training.

His time in the 2023-2024 academic year as a visiting scholar at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign significantly deepened his understanding of various educational frameworks, further amplifying his capacity to weave international perspectives into the fabric of local educational systems.

Nurken Aubakir’s biography is a testament to the unshakable power of education and the unwavering belief that everyone can significantly contribute to the academic world. His journey continues, with each chapter filled with discoveries, challenges, and growth opportunities.