

# *Brown University professor deported after visiting family in Lebanon*

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Boston, March 16 (RHC)-- A Brown University professor and Rhode Island Hospital physician, legally residing in the United States, was detained by the US Customs and Border Protection officials at Boston's Logan airport and deported to Lebanon.

Dr. Rasha Alawieh was barred from reentry into the US on Thursday by the CBP officials despite having a visa. A federal court order that would have stopped the deportation of Dr. Alawieh was issued on Friday, said Dr. Basma Merhi, a family friend and colleague.

The departing airplane was on the tarmac at Boston's Logan International Airport. The CBP officials disregarded the court order, the airplane took off and carried Dr. Alawieh to Lebanon.

"They did not do anything to stop the plane ... So, clearly, they wanted to deport her regardless of if there was a judge's order or not. She did not do anything wrong," said Dr. Merhi.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has arrested a second student linked to pro-Palestinian protests at Columbia University as part of the Trump administration's zero-tolerance crackdown on such activism in U.S. universities.

Dr. Alawieh had a valid H-1B visa she had recently received from the U.S. consulate in Beirut. The visa

allowed her to be lawfully in the US until the middle of 2027.

An H-1B visa allows employers to hire non-American workers for positions that require specialty knowledge.

In addition to her professorship at Brown University, Dr. Alawieh has been working for Brown Medicine's Division of Kidney Disease and Hypertension. Her filing has revealed that the State Department and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service had approved her visa, and the reason why she was being held by the CBP has remained unclear.

The incident is the latest amid a nationwide crackdown on immigration by the Trump administration, especially against students and other academia-affiliated individuals.

On Friday, the Department of Homeland Security arrested Leqaa Kordia, a Palestinian student at Columbia University, for allegedly overstaying her F-1 student visa.

Last Saturday, Mahmoud Khalil, a well-known Palestinian campus activist and a green-card holder, was detained by federal immigration authorities and has been facing deportation.

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