

ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

FOUNDED 1968

Newsletter

Number 124 Spring 1999

1999 ANNUAL FUND
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SEE PG. 2

Palestinian Education: Challenges to be Met

By regional standards, the people of the West Bank and Gaza are highly educated. The average adult literacy rate is 84%. In comparison, in the Middle East and North African region, as a whole, the adult literacy rate is 57%. Unfortunately, the lack of financial investment in education and a growing population threaten Palestinians' ability to maintain these standards in the 21st century.

The public school system and the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency's (UNRWA) schools are overcrowded and over-worked. Buildings and equipment, teacher training programs, textbooks and curricular development are inadequate for today's

1.3 million primary and secondary school students. While the number of students in elementary schools in Gaza is growing at a rate of 6-7% each year, the budget for these schools has grown just 2% in the last two years. To compensate for the population growth and lack of funding, schools' administrative offices and even shipping containers have been converted into every-day classrooms.

Over half of all schools in the West Bank and Gaza, including UNRWA schools, run double shifts. Some even have triple shifts. A student's school day lasts only three to four hours. Teachers work longer hours due to multiple shifts of classes which average

46 students each. This leaves little or no time for one-on-one instruction, preparation for future lessons, or on-going teacher training for 17,000 teachers, half of whom have fewer than two years of post-secondary education.

The repercussions of these pressures on the educational system are numerous.

- ▶ In over-crowded schools, conjunctivitis and other infections spread quickly. The *International Herald Tribune* recently reported that at a boys' school in Jabalya Refugee Camp in Gaza, a third of the 600 students were absent during a single day due to a rampant skin infection.
- ▶ According to a recent report, Palestinian students perform relatively poorly, compared to other Middle East and North African students, in the more complex

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The Palestinian educational system cannot adequately educate Palestinian children, who are half of all Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza.

Scholarship Program's 20th Year

Now in its 20th year, ANERA's Scholarship Program has provided over \$1.25 million dollars to help thousands of students receive a good education and necessary personal care. This year, ANERA's donors have given over 500 scholarships!

Ten months after ANERA's beginning in 1968, the first grants made were to UNRWA for twenty vocational training scholarships for refugees.

Later, in 1979, ANERA donors gave the first 140 scholarships for students at Rawdat El-Zuhur and Dar El-Tifl.

Over the years, seven local Palestinian and Lebanese institutions have benefitted from a dedicated, long-term partnership with ANERA's Schol-

arship Program. Our stability, provided by donors committed to education, has allowed institutions to plan for the future, knowing that we would be there to help make their students' dreams become reality.

The Scholarship Program currently provides \$175 scholarships to poor and needy students at Al-Kafaat Institution for Rehabilitation (Lebanon), Atfaluna Center for Deaf Children (Gaza), Dar El-Yateem orphanage (West Bank), Rawdat El-Zuhur primary school (West Bank), Dar El-Tifl primary and secondary school (West Bank), and the Palestinian Women's Union's Kindergartens in Khan Younis and Rafah (Gaza).

ANERA is grateful to each of the
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reasoning processes of problem-solving and integration.

- Education for students with special physical or mental needs or capabilities cannot be met within a system unable to fulfill the needs of general students.

Palestinian secondary school students in the West Bank and Gaza use different curricula and take different examinations to qualify for post-secondary education. This is making development of a single Palestinian educational system difficult. An observation stated in *Development Under Diversity: The Palestinian Economy in Transition*, points out that it would be inefficient for Palestinians to create their own textbooks in subjects like mathematics and the sciences. However, creating and using Palestinian textbooks on subjects like Arabic and the social sciences will help integrate curriculum while institutionalizing a single Palestinian national identity.

Economic problems underlie the need to improve the educational system. There is insufficient governmental or private financial support for quality education. Furthermore, pressure on families to provide the basic necessities of life — food, shelter and clothing — causes them to pull children from the educational system into the labor market. According to the Palestinian Academic Association Society for the Study of International Affairs, almost 18,000 children, aged 12-16, are working in the West Bank and Gaza. Most working children spend more than 35 hours a week on-the-job and earn an average of \$7.00 a day. Approximately 40% of these 18,000 children are unpaid workers in family-run businesses or farms.

Due to the current economic con-

dition many women work outside their homes. This situation is increasing the need for additional kindergarten and after-school programs to help care for children while their parents are working. However, a United Nations report stated that less than one-third of children aged 3 to 5 attend kindergarten.

The primary goal of Palestinian education, like that of many other nations, is to provide students with the essential education and future potential so they will be able to secure employment with a living wage. West Bank and Gaza schools educate children so they may either obtain higher education or be better prepared to enter the Palestinian workforce whose economic future is centered on manufacturing and service opportunities. Employment in manufacturing and service requires an educated workforce. The Palestinian educational system is varied and extensive, but the expertise, concern and experience is in place to respond to the challenges. ■

Sources:

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In Honor of...

Keith Beebe ■ Thomas W. Binford
■ Andrew H. Dalto ■ Philip
Davies ■ Ms. Louise Ferris ■
Glock-Economy Family ■ the late
great King of Jordan ■ Neddy C.
Jouzy ■ Yousef & Samia Khoury
■ Jim Knight ■ Carol Kinghorn ■
Dr. Ameen al-Majaj ■ Dr. Thomas
Mallison ■ Josephine Maria Nackel
■ Lizzie Nasser ■ John Nogel, Jr.
■ Queen Noor of Jordan ■ Jack &
Virginia Pigott ■ Father Joseph L.
Ryan ■ Dr. Alan H. Stenning ■
Georgiana Stevens ■ Daniel B.
Street, M.D. ■ Marshall Wiley ■
Mr. & Mrs. Evan Wilson ■ Dr.
Richard C. Yorkey ■ Omar
Zakaria ■ Imane Hussan Zein

In Memory of Hussein ibn Talal, King of Jordan

After a long struggle with cancer, H.R.M. King Hussein of Jordan passed away on February 7, 1999.

During his forty-six year reign, Jordan was transformed from an impoverished desert kingdom to a country whose people almost universally have access to potable water, sewage services, electricity, education and health care.

During the 1990-91 Gulf War, Jordan's economy faltered and almost one million refugees and evacuees from Kuwait and Iraq fled to the country. Jordan can only be proud of the way it handled this emergency. Refugees were fed, housed and helped on their way. After the Palestinians and Israel signed the Oslo

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In Memory of Dr. Ameen al-Majaj

Dr. Ameen al-Majaj, a good friend of ANERA, passed away January 4, 1999. His accomplishments were many and include:

- Noted and respected physician, with an M.D. from the American University of Beirut
- Published medical researcher and writer
- Minister of Health in the Jordanian Government
- Director, Augusta Victoria Hospital (Jerusalem)
- Director, Maqassid Hospital (Jerusalem)
- Chairman, YMCA (Jerusalem)
- Chairman, Arab Development Society of Jericho

Dr. Majaj is survived by his wife, Mrs. Betty Majaj, one son and three daughters. ANERA is accepting donations in Dr. Majaj's memory. ■

—By Vicken Kalbian, Chair, ANERA Medical Committee, and Peter Gubser, President, ANERA

Annual Fund at 75%

With your continuing help this spring, we will meet our 1999 Annual Fund goal of \$1.1 million by May 31, the end of our fiscal year! Thanks to your support, we will reach more people through our health, education and job creation projects. ■

Scholarship, continued from page 1

Scholarship Program donors. This year over 200 individuals or couples have made children's education a priority for ANERA. On behalf of the students, ANERA is giving special recognition to donors who have consistently supported the Scholarship Program for the past eleven years: Dr. & Mrs. Samir Abu-Ghazaleh, Mrs. Persis W. Bliss, Miss Helen M. Crawford, Mrs. Ann G. Dinse, Mrs. Virginia W. Dorman, Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin H. Dorsey, Mr. Amand N. Kasimatis, Mrs. Hendrine Kleinjan, Ms. Margaret J. Leyonmark, Ms. Nevine Madkour, Mr. John G. McCarthy, Mr. & Mrs. John L. Merriam, Mrs. Hobart Reimann, Mr. & Mrs. Donald P. Ryan, Mr. & Mrs. Hassan Shatila, Mr. & Mrs. John K. Taylor, Ms. Susan A. Thompson, Rev. & Mrs. John A. Zunes, and 17 additional donors. We also thank the many other donors to this important program. ■

Hussein, continued from page 2

Accords in 1993, Jordan and Israel immediately started peace negotiations which culminated in the 1994 Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty.

King Hussein's wisdom, guidance and courage will be missed. ■

—By Peter Gubser, President, ANERA

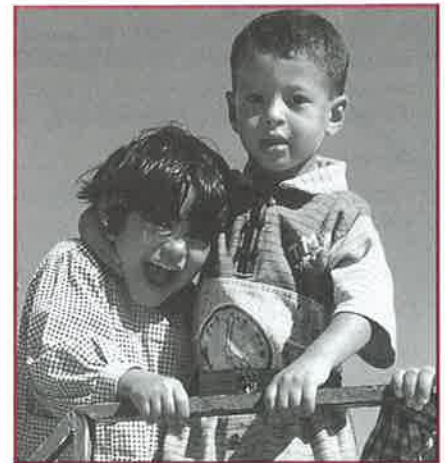
PWU Joins ANERA's Scholarship Program

The Palestinian Women's Union's (PWU) kindergartens in Khan Younis and Rafah are the newest schools in ANERA's Scholarship Program.

The PWU improves women's economic, social and health conditions, while assisting needy families and supporting orphans. In the absence of pre-school facilities for children in Gaza, the PWU established four kindergartens in Gaza City (1978), Khan Younis (1969), Rafah (1972) and Beit Hanoun (1981).

There is little local financial support for the schools and only a portion of the students' fees are paid. This past September food donations to the Khan Younis kindergarten, which provided lunch for the children, ended. With the support of ANERA's scholarship donors, the school may provide the children a simple lunch of juice and falafel, repair broken playground equipment repaired, and/or provide the children transportation between their homes and the school.

The Rafah kindergarten is located in the Shabura Refugee Camp. All 32 children are taught in one overcrowded classroom. When the children break into small groups, some of



Doris Warrnell

During playtime, students at the Khan Younis kindergarten pause at the top of the slide.

them work while sitting on the floor in the corridor. With financial assistance, the kindergarten may move to a larger facility and hire a second teacher. This would allow twice as many students to attend.

If you want to provide a child at one of these kindergartens, or at any of the other institutions participating in the Scholarship Program, with a \$175 scholarship, please contact me at (202) 347-2558 or use the coupon below. ■



Dar El-Tijl

YES, I want to help the people of the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon!

I want to give:

- \$200 for General Programs
- \$175 Gaza/West Bank Fund
- \$100 Lebanon Relief
- \$75 A scholarship (\$175 each) for a child:
- \$50 at the school with the Greatest Need
- \$35 in Lebanon
- Other in West Bank/Jerusalem
- _____ in Gaza

Scholarship Donors receive a student's photo and letters from their school.

- I have remembered ANERA in my will.

I want to support ANERA's work by being a:

- Founder: \$10,000 or above
- Builder: \$5,000 to \$9,999
- Benefactor: \$2,500 to \$4,999
- Sponsor: \$1,000 to \$2,499
- Sustainer: \$500 to \$999
- Creator: \$250 to \$499

Donors giving \$250 or more to this year's Annual Fund will be recognized by category in ANERA's 1999 Annual Report.

Please charge to my credit card: Visa Mastercard

Account Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Your donation is tax-deductible.

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ANERA's Peace Plan

Yes, I want to join ANERA's Peace Plan.

Here is my monthly gift of: \$100 \$50 \$25 \$10 \$5

I authorize my bank to transfer the amount above from my account each month. A record of each contribution will appear on my bank statement and serve as my receipt. I understand that I may stop my contribution at any time, by contacting ANERA at 1522 K. St., NW, Suite 202, Washington, DC 20005-1270, (202) 347-2558, or my bank.

Signature _____ Date _____

I have enclosed a check for my first monthly contribution, made payable to ANERA.

Through *ANERA's Peace Plan*, you can be part of the solution to the troubled peace efforts in the Middle East. Consider making a modest monthly donation through our automatic giving program. In the past 30 years we learned that ANERA's programs cannot run in a stop-and-go fashion. Our programs require dependable resources over a sustained period of time. By joining *ANERA's Peace Plan*, you will play a significant role in our work to bolster Palestinian and Lebanese long-term economic and community development, and education and health programs.

► Decide how much you would like to give, send

us the coupon above with your check for the first monthly gift, and we will take care of the rest!

► Each month your bank will automatically deduct the amount from your account and deposit it into ANERA's account. Donations will be clearly listed on your bank statement. You can change or stop your donation at any time.

► Not only does this make donating to ANERA quick and easy, it also helps to lower our administrative costs.

Your personal commitment makes a difference in the lives of others!

Abu Ahmad Hijazi Scholarship Established

Ahmad Hijazi, an ANERA donor and Board member, has established the **Abu Ahmad Hijazi Scholarship**. The scholarship is named for his father, Abu Ahmad Hijazi.

The scholarship is for high performing students graduating from Tamra High School who plan to attend college or university and need financial help. Mr. Hijazi was born in Tamra, a Palestinian village in Galilee near Acre. He hopes this scholarship

will encourage bright students to seek higher education and improve their ability to contribute to their families and society.

Mr. Hijazi's donation will be matched by the Duke Energy Foundation Matching Gifts Program and administered by ANERA. The Duke Energy Corporation is the successor of Texas Eastern Corporation from which Mr. Hijazi retired. ■

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The *ANERA Newsletter* is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to reducing poverty and relieving suffering in the Middle East.

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ISSN 1966-3584

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PALESTINIAN EDUCATION: CHALLENGES TO BE MET

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