

NEWS

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ANERA

AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

Caring for Gaza's Disabled

By Robyn Long

Asma is a three-year-old from Deir Al Balah refugee camp and a regular physiotherapy patient at the Deir Al Balah Rehabilitation Society. She is recovering from a dislocated artificial joint in her hip and learning to walk again through various exercises and relaxation methods. The therapy is critical for her growing little body. "Her muscles are weak from the pain, so the process is delicate," says her nurse Lubna Ma'ane, "but she has a balanced therapy plan and we are glad to see she is improving quickly."

The Rehabilitation Society was established in 1997 initially to teach deaf children in Gaza's middle area. In response to a growing need, the Society created a physiotherapy unit in 2004, for which ANERA purchased all of the specialized equipment. "This equipment and these services are important now as people frequently are unable to travel elsewhere for treatment due to closures. Treatment must be regular for people to benefit—so people cannot afford to miss sessions," explains the director, Khaled Mohammed Abu Shueb.

"We deal with a range of injuries at the center, from people wounded during military incursions to those recovering from surgery, fractured bones, strokes, or living

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In Honor Of 5



ROBYN LONG



SCHOLARSHIP PROFILE

Mohammed from the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf

Twelve year-old Mohammed was born deaf and blind. His supportive family taught him how to feed himself and other simple tasks, but still could not communicate with him. After enrolling him in the deaf-blind unit at the Holy Land Institute for the Deaf in Salt, Jordan three years ago, Mohammed's life began to change.

His teachers describe his improvement as extraordinary. With a hearing aid, Mohammed can hear very loud noises and feel the vibration of music. More importantly, he has learned to sign words, and he "hears" by having others sign in the palm of his hand. A happy child, he loves to tell jokes. How does he know if he is amusing his friends? He touches them to feel their laughter.

The Holy Land Institute for the Deaf (HLID) teaches over 150 students, ages 4-20, and has 120 students living on campus. HLID's mission is for its students to become mature, self-reliant, and productive members of society. This year, 30 students at HLID, including Mohammed, are receiving educational support through ANERA's Scholarship Program.

ANERA's Scholarship Program helps cover the costs of tuition, books, school supplies and medical expenses for 210 students in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon, and Jordan. For more information about how you can help a child in the Scholarship Program, contact Adrian Loucks, Director, at (202) 347-2558 or adrian@anera.org.



We are working to care for handicapped people and those recovering from injuries, while supporting their reintegration into society.

Caring for Gaza's Disabled

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with developmental disorders," states Nurse Ma'ane. Access to physical therapy services for the 322,000 residents in Gaza's middle area has become increasingly difficult over the last four years due to road closures and military incursions. Despite this, the Society pushes forward with its two primary goals, as described by Mr. Abu Shueb. "We are working to care for handicapped people and those recovering from injuries, while supporting their reintegration into society. [This] is an approach to the overall care of people."

To meet these needs, the Society has developed an outreach program to care for people in their homes. "We will either bring them here in wheelchairs or visit their homes to teach therapeutic techniques. This works well because it also teaches their families how to help them at home," explains Mr. Abu Shueb. The Society also donates hearing aids, crutches, eyeglasses, medical beds and other supplies to patients for use in their homes.

The center cares for people of all ages, Asma being one of the youngest patients, and the oldest thus far being 68 years old. "Children are more [challenging] to help because they are afraid of the therapy and treatment can be painful in the beginning," says Nurse Ma'ane. The secret, she reveals, is remaining playful. "It helps to play with them first, to get them to laugh," she says while pulling a ball of silly putty from her coat pocket. "They love this for instance. They will mold it into shapes I can't imagine and it relaxes their minds before therapy."

In conjunction with physiotherapy, therapists at the Society work to reintegrate people into their community. This is particularly important for children, so the center offers programs such as art or music classes for kids with and without disabilities. "Disabled children usually feel excluded from society and it's frustrating for them. Organized events [make children] feel more comfortable with one another," Mr. Abu Shueb says. ▀

Education Kits Open a Door to Learning

By Ghadah Kaleel



PHOTOS BY GHADAH KALEEL

Ula Jumaa, 10 years old, and Mohammed Lahham, 9 years old, are big fans of their new education kits. Each kit contains a small chalkboard, chalk eraser, box of chalk, 3 pencils, pencil sharpener, notebook, and safety scissors, all kept together in a durable cloth bag with a drawstring and velcro closure. Ula can't decide which item is her favorite. She agrees with Mohammed that writing on their own chalkboard is easier to make changes than writing on paper. She also enjoys coloring on the notepad and cutting out shapes.

ANERA received the first donation of education kits from the Latter-day Saint Charities (LDS Charities) in February 2000. Since then LDS Charities has donated seven containers of humanitarian supplies, including 3,500

Ms. Abu Dayyeh's goal is to prepare her students to join regular schools with skills that will allow them to keep up with their peers. The education kits help reach that goal.

more school kits assembled by volunteers at the LDS Charities' warehouse in Salt Lake City. ANERA has put these kits into the hands of needy children in 21 institutions throughout the West Bank, Gaza and Jerusalem.

Ula and Mohammed attend one of these institutions —Nur Al Bara'h Rehabilitation Society. Located in Bethlehem, it addresses the shortage of services for children suffering from hearing problems, developmental delays, as well as speech and language disorders. Since its establishment in 2000, the center has succeeded in providing rehabilitation services to more than 340 children from Bethlehem and surrounding villages and refugee camps.

A creative and passionate individual, Jamileh Abu-Dayyeh, the center's Director, says that Ula and

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ANERA Honors Said T. Khoury, Hasib J. Sabbagh, and the Catholic Medical Mission Board

At its Annual Dinner in September, ANERA honored Mr. Said T. Khoury, Mr. Hasib J. Sabbagh, and the Catholic Medical Mission Board (CMMB) for their partnership and strong commitment to helping the people of West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon.

“It is important that ANERA recognize the fantastic support we receive from our many partners and donors,” stated Les Janka, ANERA’s Board Chair. “Without their help, our work would not be possible. Mr. Khoury, Mr. Sabbagh and CMMB are among ANERA’s most loyal, generous supporters who want to make a beneficial, lasting impact on the future of people in the Middle East.”

Mr. Sabbagh and Mr. Khoury are founding members of Consolidated Contractors Group of Companies (CCC Group), and are current chairman and president, respectively.

Through ANERA, the CCC Group, Mr. Khoury, and Mr. Sabbagh pioneered the construction of the Said Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al-Quds University in Jerusalem. The Center trains Palestinian men and women in IT solutions and serves as a resource for local IT businesses. They also have donated



“It is important that ANERA recognize the fantastic support we receive from our many partners and donors,” stated Les Janka, ANERA’s Board Chair.

generously to ANERA’s Milk for Preschoolers project that addresses acute and chronic malnutrition among children age five and under in Gaza. This project will reach 12,000 children in the 2004-2005 school year.

Over the past four years, CMMB provided ANERA programs in the West Bank, Gaza, and Lebanon with multiple shipments of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies valued at \$4.7 million. These donations were distributed to dozens of clinics and hospitals treating thousands of women and children and low-income families in critical need of health care.

ANERA greatly appreciates the support and contributions of these three donors to its mission to improve the lives of people in the Middle East. ▀



PHOTOS FOR THIS ARTICLE BY ALFONSO WRIGHT

Education Kits

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Mohammed came to Nur al Bara'h at the start of the school year. Although already 9 and 10 years old, they began their studies with first grade curriculum. After a month, they were able to advance to second grade material. Ms. Abu-Dayyeh is careful not to let the students feel like they are behind other children at 'normal' schools. She smiles as both children say they are in fourth grade. Mohammed comments, "They respect us here." Ms. Abu Dayyeh's goal is to prepare her students to join regular schools with skills that will allow them to keep up with their peers. The education kits help reach that goal.

She uses these kits in class as an active teaching tool. Children enjoy writing with their own chalkboard. It makes them feel as 'smart' as the teachers. The notepads are used for drawing and art therapy, along with the scissors. This activity helps develop fine motor coordination and is fun for the children.

With the poverty level in the West Bank and Gaza now at approximately 50%, many families cannot afford to purchase school supplies for their children even though they are available on the market. With these education kits, provided through the ANERA and LDS Charities partnership, children like Ula and Mohammed now feel confident going to school. They can learn because they have the supplies they need. ▶

FREE DVD

Now available! ANERA has created a short DVD about our work in the Middle East. If you would like a copy, you may either fill out and mail the form below, or email us at anera@anera.org with your name, address, and the number of copies you would like, and please type "DVD" in your subject line. Supply is limited.

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1522 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005
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For more information about ANERA's Legacy Society or about a gift from your estate, contact Nina Dodge by email (ndodge@anera.org) or telephone (202-347-2558).

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