

# ANERA News

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## Remembering Peter Gubser

Excerpted from a tribute delivered at ANERA's Annual Dinner on October 1 by Amb. Philip Wilcox, president of the Foundation for Middle East Peace.



All of us hope to leave this world a little better than when we entered it. Few have done more to accomplish this than Peter Gubser, ANERA president from 1978 to 2007, who died at the age of 69 on September 2, 2010.

The ANERA community knew Peter as a friend and colleague, for his modesty, generosity, and selflessness. In Peter, there was no trace of ego or self aggrandizement. He glowed with warmth and good humor. He was great fun to be with.

Yet Peter was tough and strict in the standards he set, and a person of strength and integrity. Always calm, even-tempered, steady, and totally focused, he had great discipline and a large capacity for work. He stood out, impressively, as a leader.

# ANERA News

The ANERA newsletter is published quarterly by American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), a non-profit agency established in 1968 and dedicated to providing development, health, education and employment programs to Palestinian communities and impoverished families throughout the Middle East.

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Editor: Liz Demarest

Contributing Writers:  
Bill Corcoran, Liz Demarest, Julie Dorsey, Nancy Nye, Phil Wilcox

Contributing Photographers:  
Nada Dajani, Rania Elhilou,  
Yasmine Qutob, Dave Snyder

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ISSN 1966-3584

ANERA  
1111 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, #400  
Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: 202-266-9700  
anera@anera.org • www.anera.org

**COVER PHOTOS:** A selection of pictures of Peter Gubser during his years as ANERA's president

## by the Numbers ANERA in Education

Year ANERA helped establish the first and only four-year college of nursing in the West Bank: **1980**

Number of Gaza preschools ANERA renovated in fiscal year 2010: **33**

Employment rate for the thousands of students graduating from ANERA's four IT Centers of Excellence in the West Bank: **over 80%**

Number of youth each year in Lebanon's Nahr El Bared refugee camp who will have access to classes in high-demand skills such as carpentry and nursing because ANERA constructed a vocational training center: **400**

Number of Iraqi and Jordanian students ANERA provides with after-school tutoring in Amman and Zarqa, Jordan: **1,200**

Number of safe play spaces ANERA has created in partnership with Playgrounds for Palestine in Lebanon, the West Bank and Gaza: **15**

Number of students benefiting from ANERA's USAID-funded construction or rehabilitation of 15 West Bank schools since 2009: **11,000**



Peter visiting a preschool in Gaza, 2006.

“The big picture may be slow to change, but to the person receiving a textbook, the future is immediately better.”

— Peter Gubser

Peter Gubser was passionate about providing quality education for Palestinians, starting as early as preschool. In honor of his commitment, this issue's "by the numbers" and pages 4-5 are dedicated to ANERA's education work.

## A Summer Well Spent

In answer to that old question, “How did you spend your summer vacation?,” Claire Sams, a tenth-grade student at Washington International School could quite honestly reply, “I became a part of ANERA!”

Claire's summer project for high school included multiple steps:

- Every afternoon for one month, Claire volunteered at ANERA's Washington office, doing everything from stuffing envelopes to preparing PowerPoint presentations.
- At the same time, Claire was learning the craft of jewelry-making and preparing items for a fall sale.
- Finally, Claire hosted a sale of her jewelry and gave the very generous proceeds to ANERA to support education projects in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan.



ANERA staff were overjoyed to have Claire's assistance this summer, but the real beneficiaries of her efforts are the school children in the Middle East. **Thanks, Claire!**

## Remembering Peter Gubser

(continued from page 1)

We all know the frustration, the turmoil and the heartbreak of the unresolved Palestinian quest for dignity, freedom and self-determination. Many of us have seen people who have been passionately attracted to this cause, but who have retreated in anger and resignation.

But not Peter. He never gave up. He never lost hope. And he never surrendered to anger and despair, which he knew were obstacles in the way of practical accomplishment.

Many have remarked on Peter's and ANERA's work in winning friends for America in Palestine. I have witnessed at close hand – for 25 years – how ANERA's superb education, development and humanitarian work has touched the hearts and minds of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians and displayed the best values of our country. In this way, through improving the lives of Palestinians, ANERA, while scrupulously

apolitical, has helped carry the flag for America in Palestine.

Peter owed much of his success to his beloved wife and partner Annie and their two daughters. Only they fully realized that Peter was not just an accomplished leader of ANERA, a scholar, author of books, and expert who also served on the boards of other Middle East related organizations. He was also a community leader in the US and was deeply involved in his daughters' school.

So Peter, you left this world too early, but you left it a better place. For you, your work was its own reward. But we hope, as we know you did, that someday there will be peace between Palestinians and Israelis.

Thank you for your friendship, for your brilliant legacy, and for the wonderful example you set.



## Early Childhood Education

ANERA has identified a need in the West Bank for more attention to active learning and developmental play at the preschool level. In response, the ECE initiative was formed to offer curriculum and national standards development; training and mentoring programs for teachers in coordination with West Bank universities; and upgrading infrastructure at preschools.

**Pictured:** youngsters enjoy their breakfast in their Bethlehem preschool that ANERA recently renovated



## Telemedicine Classes

In partnership with Al Quds and Johns Hopkins universities, ANERA is conducting bi-weekly education sessions for medical practitioners in the West Bank and Gaza who want to gain access to the most recent developments in medicine, as presented by Johns Hopkins faculty. Themes range from diagnosing common conditions to surgical treatments for advanced illnesses.

**Pictured:** medical practitioners at Al Quds University Media Center talking to Johns Hopkins and ANERA representatives (on screen) at the first telemedicine session



# This academic year, ANERA has many exciting educational projects in the works. Here are four.

In Lebanon where the unemployment rate is soaring, ANERA has been committed to providing vocational training opportunities for jobless youth in need of skills. Among other activities, we have rebuilt a vocational training center adjacent to the Nahr El Bared refugee camp and are supporting training programs of the Amel Association aimed at helping students to find employment either with established businesses or to earn extra income from their homes.

**Pictured:** young students in Beirut participating in a five-month long hairdressing course, which meets three days a week



## Vocational Education

ANERA is giving young people access to learning opportunities in clean, safe and stimulating environments. ANERA builds new schools, adds extensions to existing structures, upgrades water and sanitation systems, and makes a host of other improvements. In the past 12 months alone, we have renovated 33 preschools in Gaza and added 22 classrooms onto five West Bank schools.

**Pictured:** (top) Beit Ijza Co-ed School in the West Bank under construction — using USAID funds; (bottom) the completed school, which will house 200+ students



## School Infrastructure

# The Annual Dinner 2010: Families · Farms · Food

**A**NERA's Annual Dinner and Fundraiser in Washington, DC on Friday, October 1, was a great success on many levels.

Five narratives (*hakawati*) from Middle Eastern farming communities captivated the dinner guests. ANERA applauds Hani Almadhoun, Noura Erakat, and Omar and Nancy Kader for their touching and emotional renditions of those stories which were collected by ANERA staff this past summer.

We were proud to honor the States of Qatar and Kuwait as well as the Firedoll Foundation for their generous support of ANERA's programs in Gaza.

We also were pleased to have on stage Deborah Amos, National Public Radio (NPR) journalist, who interviewed ANERA's chief agronomist in the West

Bank, Naser Qadous, about the challenges facing West Bank and Gaza farmers and the ways that ANERA is working with them to improve their situation.

The Dinner broke all previous records in attendance and dollars raised. Some 460 guests enjoyed the evening and 42 contributors officially sponsored the event at \$15,000, \$10,000, \$5,000 and \$2,000 levels.

Because the event was so successful as a fundraiser, ANERA will be able to commit \$300,000 in the next 12 months to planting trees in Lebanon, creating household gardens in Gaza, and establishing farm cooperatives in the West Bank.

Season to season, ANERA's community of dedicated donors is making a difference to farming families in the Middle East.

# YOUR GIFT WILL GO FAR...

Consider how far your dollar will go when you give to ANERA.

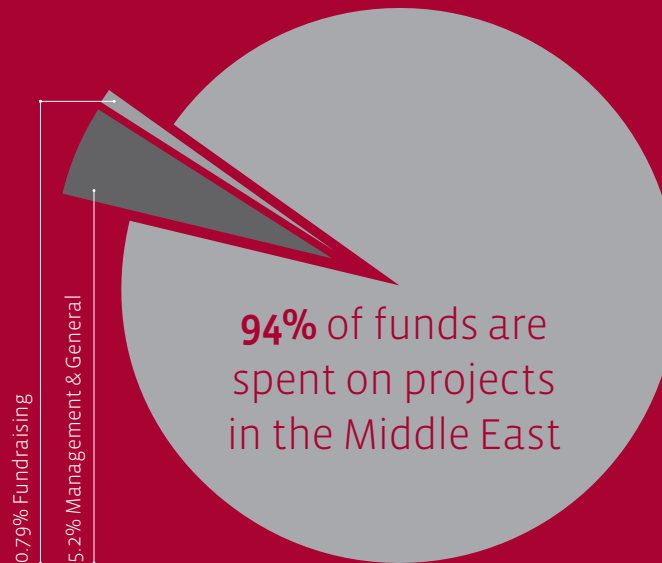
Not just how far it is stretched, with **94% of every dollar** helping a family in need, but how far it travels.

We have worked for **42 years** in the Middle East.

Our **85 Palestinian, Lebanese and Jordanian staff** members have expertise in engineering, psychology, education, nutrition, and sustainable development.



## ...TO FAMILIES LIVING IN THE MIDDLE EAST.



Help us reach more families **BEFORE** the end of the year.

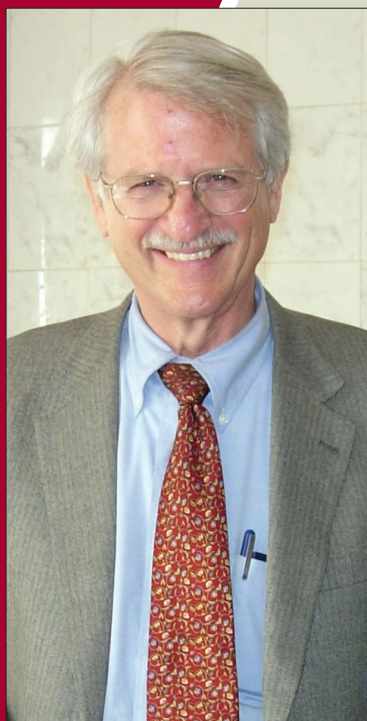


**PHOTOS** (from the far left, clockwise): Noura Erakat tells the story of Om Sobhi, a mother in Gaza, who lost her home and one of her children in the 2008-2009 bombings. There was a capacity crowd at the dinner, with 460 in attendance. ANERA President Bill Corcoran congratulates Sabah Almograbi for her 25 years of work in ANERA's Gaza office. Deb Amos, of NPR, interviews Naser Qadous, an ANERA agronomist, about challenges farmers face in the West Bank and Gaza.

**Make your end-of-year tax-deductible contribution today.**

Complete the enclosed envelope or visit [www.nera.org/donate](http://www.nera.org/donate)

## Remembering Peter Gubser



**Peter A. Gubser**  
May 9, 1941 - September 2, 2010

### *from the desk of* **Bill Corcoran, President**

Dear Friend of ANERA:

As many of you know, the ANERA community has been deeply grieved by the passing of our former president of 29 years, Peter Gubser.

This newsletter is a tribute to him, from the heart-felt words of his friend and colleague Ambassador Philip Wilcox, to the focus we place on ANERA's achievements in education, an area of particular commitment for Peter.

We include a report of the tremendous success of our 2010 Annual Dinner and Fundraiser, which I believe is also a tribute to Peter's legacy. ANERA broke every record for attendance and donations. None of it would have been possible without the history behind the organization, and Peter was integral to ANERA's growth and good reputation through the majority of that history.

We are forever grateful for the standards Peter Gubser set and the very real difference he has made to lives in the Middle East. We will miss him, but his spirit will live on always with ANERA.

*Bill Corcoran*