



# ANERA News

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## Shoes for Gaza



**I**n the cold and wet months of winter, following the bombardment of Gaza in early 2009, families struggled to meet their children's most basic needs – food, blankets, roofs over their heads. Lower on the list of priorities were shoes, though many children had nothing or next to nothing to wear on their feet. Their shoes were lost with the rest of their belongings in the rubble of their homes.

ANERA's staff working with preschoolers in Gaza were struck by how many children they saw wearing slippers to school. One five-year-old was forced to wear an adult's shoes and carry a purse as a bookbag so she could go to school. When ANERA distributed parcels of food around Gaza, children would come with their parents barefooted in bone-chilling, rainy weather.

These images and stories filtered out of Gaza, through ANERA's website, and donors took notice.

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# 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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**COVER PHOTO:** A happy Gaza preschooler smiles after receiving her brand new sneakers from ANERA.

by the  Numbers

 Last Year's Annual Dinner Report



JABALIA, GAZA

Amount the 2008 Annual Dinner raised for water projects: **\$215,000**

Meters of pipes laid throughout Gaza: **5,100**

Number of people in Gaza connected to water systems: **6,400**

Number of underground water reservoirs installed in the West Bank: **8**

Number of people getting water from those reservoirs: **150**

Number of families in Lebanon's Nahr El Bared Refugee Camp who have water hook-ups in their homes: **265**

Total number of people who now have access to a reliable, clean source of water thanks to the 2008 Annual Dinner: **over 7,800**

(Read about the 2009 Annual Dinner on page 6.)

## Nahr El Bared Playground

**W**hen Arab-American activist Mazen Afifi visited Lebanon in 2007, he came away wanting to do something to help Palestinian children.

Sadly, soon after his trip, Mazen passed away. His wife Mary Lou and son Jamal had promised him they would carry out his plans to help Palestinian children in Lebanon. When they visited in 2008 and saw the destruction at the Nahr El Bared Refugee Camp, they felt that would be the ideal place to make Mazen's wish a reality.

With a \$10,000 donation, ANERA, in partnership with Playgrounds for Palestine, installed a playground and soccer field in the heart of the camp next to buildings pockmarked with bullet holes and temporary housing units built from stacked shipping containers.

"My son and I felt a playground in his honor was the perfect tribute to Mazen," said Mary Lou. "Thanks to ANERA's support and hard work, we were able to make it happen."



### LEAVE A LEGACY.

Your bequest means ANERA will be here tomorrow, so people throughout the Middle East may live with the dignity we all deserve.

For more info, e-mail to [donate@anera.org](mailto:donate@anera.org) or call 202-842-2766.



# Shoes (continued from page 1)

In response to the need, ANERA donor Sharmine Narwani took the initiative to launch a campaign called “Shoes for Gaza” on Facebook over the summer. The campaign set out to raise funds for ANERA staff to purchase shoes on the local market in Gaza for preschoolers who need them. The preschoolers are all in schools that are part of ANERA's Milk for Preschoolers program.

To set the fundraising goal, ANERA contacted staff in Gaza to calculate the costs for each pair of shoes. A figure of \$5,000 was set for the online fundraising campaign, with ANERA matching another \$5,000 to include a purchase of backpacks as well.



This special logo was created for the initiative. It was designed by two talented nine-year-olds from Beirut, Daria Namazi and Na'el Beydoun.

In just a few weeks, Sharmine got the word out to hundreds of Facebook users and created a following of over 700 people to the campaign. She raised the \$5,000 and, with ANERA's matching \$5,000, we were able to purchase 900 pairs of shoes on the local market and distribute them, along with 600 backpacks, to preschoolers across Gaza.

ANERA's Gaza staff put together videos and slideshows of overjoyed children receiving their new items. The inspiring images were sent out through Facebook, ANERA's website, Twitter and YouTube.

Today, 900 children living in Gaza have shoes on their feet because the inspiration and initiative of one person was combined with ANERA connections and capabilities. We are ever grateful for the generous community of donors who made "Shoes for Gaza" a success.



If you have an online fundraising idea, please share it with us. Send an e-mail to [donate@anera.org](mailto:donate@anera.org).



These five-year-olds at the Light of Hope Preschool in the Sha'af area of eastern Gaza are thrilled to be replacing the sandals they were wearing in winter with brand new sneakers.





# The Rawdat El Zuhur dabkeh troupe comes to Washington!

September 27 - October 3, 2009

**Sept. 28:** Visited the ANERA office and had a tour of U.S. Capitol

**Sept. 29:** VIP tour of White House - met Bo!

**Sept. 30:** Air & Space Museum - saw their first 3D movie (about the sun) and rode in the flight simulators

**Oct. 1:** Zoo - got to see the famous pandas

**Oct. 2:** Performed dabkeh dances at ANERA's Annual Dinner

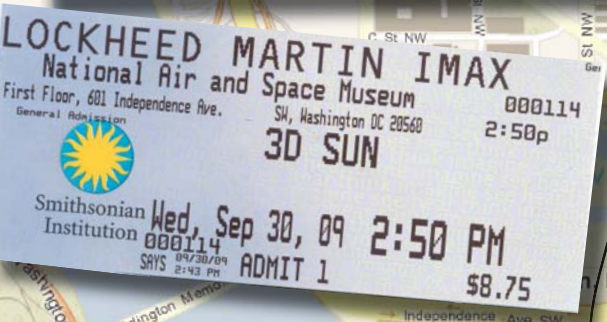
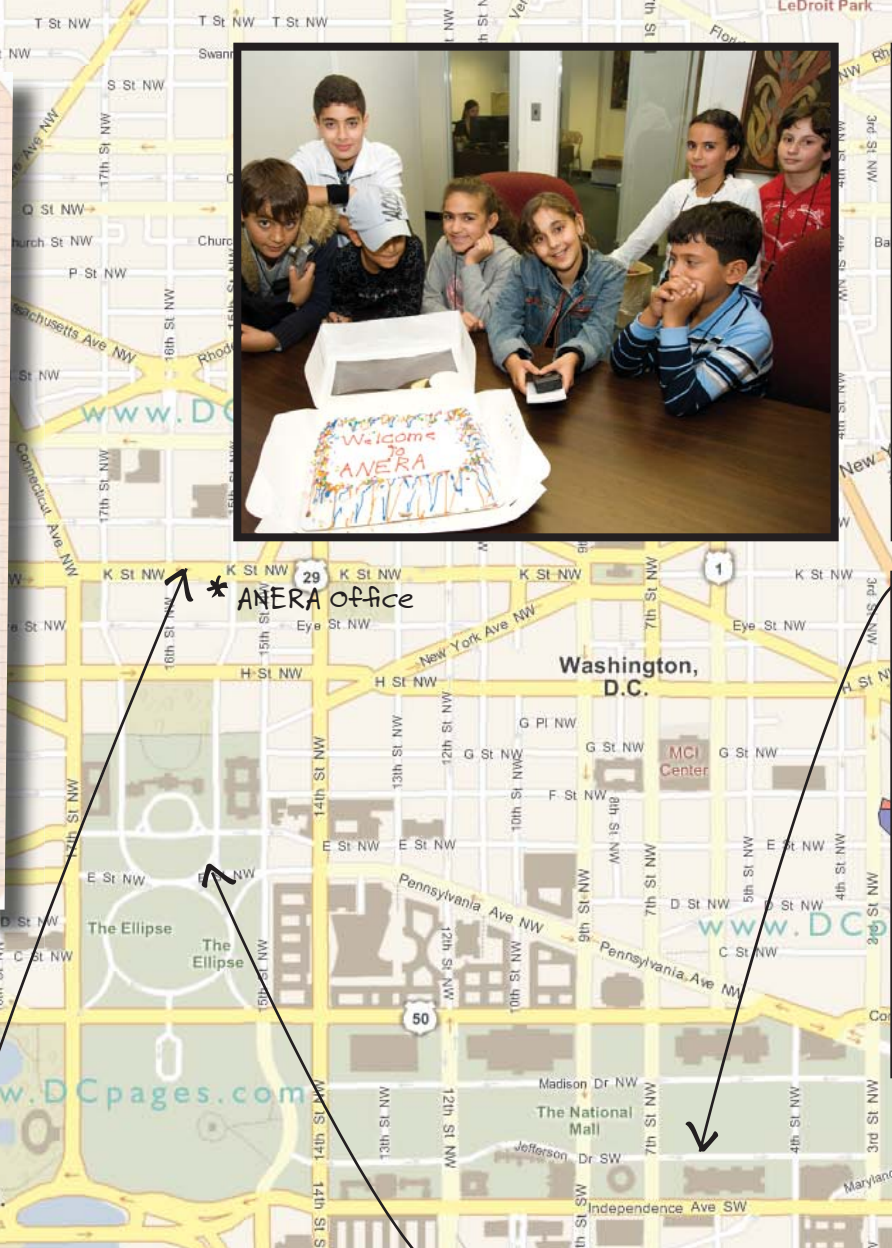
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For 6 of the 8 children, this was the very first time on an airplane.

The kids commented on how friendly and generous their American hosts were.

For most, the visit to the White House was a particularly special treat.

They had the time of their lives!







www.DCpages.com

# TROUPING TO AMERICA

BY HELENE FRANCHINEAU  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

**E**ight Palestinian children have danced their way to Washington. Nada Aboudiab, 11, is half asleep over her almost untouched pizza. Blame it on jet lag. Her schoolmates are still devouring theirs.







# Hand-in-Hand

## Building Schools, Transforming Lives.

“How are you going to top this?” This was the common refrain at ANERA’s Annual Dinner on October 2.

As part of the fundraiser theme of education, ANERA’s 400+ guests were treated to an awe-inspiring performance by the children of Rawdat El Zuhur of East Jerusalem. The eight children – aged 9 to 11 – are members of the elementary school’s award-winning *dabkeh* (Palestinian folkloric dancing) group and had recently won first place in a competition among Palestinian schools in the West Bank. They won an unexpected ‘prize’ when ANERA invited the group to perform at our Annual Dinner to honor Rawdat El Zuhur, Al Kafaat Foundation in Lebanon and Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children in Gaza as part of our work in education.

The kids delighted dinner guests with two *dabkeh* dances and brought cheers and tears when they sang ‘We Shall Overcome.’”

Our guests also were thrilled to meet ANERA field directors who arrived from Beirut, Amman and Jerusalem. Gaza Country Director Salah Sakka – who managed to get a permit to leave Gaza at the last minute – received a well-deserved standing ovation in recognition of our dedicated Gaza staffers and their undaunting commitment to their work despite the hardships they endure every day.

Everyone also took a moment to jot a note of support and love for Palestinian children who often feel forgotten by the world beyond their borders.

### Record Amount Raised

Thank you to our supporters of the dinner. We are proud to announce that the event raised well over a quarter of a million dollars to help ANERA build new schools in the West Bank, renovate preschools in Gaza and equip vocational training centers in Lebanon.

Hand-in-hand, we are transforming lives!

#### PHOTOS (from top to bottom):

*Dabkeh* troupe performing to a rapt audience.

The *dabkeh* children answering questions from staff member Nancy Nye. Myriam Shwayri, Director of Communications at Al Kafaat Foundation in Lebanon, thanks ANERA.

Kuwaiti Ambassador Salim Al-Sabah and his wife, Rima Al-Sabah.



# 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 **96% of every dollar** helping a family in need, but how far it travels.

We have worked for **41 years** in the Middle East.

Our **76 Palestinian and Lebanese staff** members have expertise in engineering, psychology, education, nutrition, and sustainable development.

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

Administration & Fundraising - 4%

**96%** of funds are spent on projects in the Middle East



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

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

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



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

Dear Friend of ANERA:

Last month, eight children came from Jerusalem to dance at our Annual Dinner. The event highlighted the urgent need for more schools in Jerusalem and the West Bank, the deplorable conditions of Gaza's preschools and the lack of vocational training in the Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon.

There is no doubt that the success of our Dinner was due to the presence of this talented group of nine- and ten-year-olds from Rawdat El Zuhur, the elementary school in Jerusalem that has partnered with ANERA for the last 30 years. Their Palestinian folk dancing wowed the 400+ guests, who were also inspired by the potential they saw in the children's open and happy faces.

These children are the reason our education projects are so important. I hope you feel the same way.

Thank you for all you do,

*Bill Corcoran*



■ ■ ■ ■ ■ Shoes for Gaza

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ANERA  
Improving Lives in the Middle East  
Since 1968