



# ANERA News

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**ANERA**  
AMERICAN NEAR EAST REFUGEE AID

Since 1968 منذ ١٩٦٨

## School's Out, Work Goes On

Imagine living in a nylon tent in 100°F heat or a 10 x 20-foot metal box with your whole extended family. Imagine living in a small village cut off from the world by a wall and checkpoints or being surrounded every day by scenes of destruction and rubble.

This is reality for many children living in the West Bank, Gaza and Lebanon. It is certainly the reality for the children pictured above. They live in Gaza and the picture was taken in February at their preschool after the bombings stopped and classes resumed. For these children, "summer break" is not necessarily a cause for celebration.

School often means a clean building filled with friends and caring teachers where there are fun activities and interesting things to learn every day. School may also mean looking forward to a healthy lunch or lessons on a favorite musical instrument.

For 41 years, ANERA has recognized the important role that education has played in the lives of young people in the Middle East.

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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:** Children at a Gaza preschool are happy to return after the 22 long days of war ended. ©ANERA | Mona Abu Ramadan, February 2009

## by the Numbers

### EDUCATION – GAZA & THE WEST BANK

Literacy rate: **99%**

Percentage of grade 12 students who pass the *Tawhiji* (final exam) and go on to some kind of post-secondary education or training: **80%**

Percentage of Palestinians between 15-17 years of age in school: **87.5%**

Total number of schools: **2,415**

Projected number of students, 2009/2010: **1,441,455**

Number of schools conducting morning and afternoon shifts to accommodate all of their students: **548 (481 in Gaza)**

Number of preschools: **935**

Total number of children in preschool: **77, 142**

Preschool student to teacher ratio: **25/1**

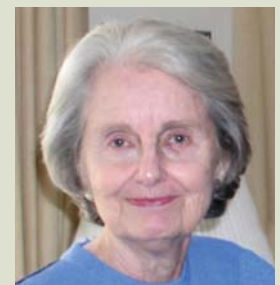
Physical space inside preschool for each student: **~1 square meter**

## Nancy Finnie's ANERA Legacy

Throughout her life, the late Nancy Finnie was a model supporter of ANERA's work. She was generous with her time, energy and financial resources.

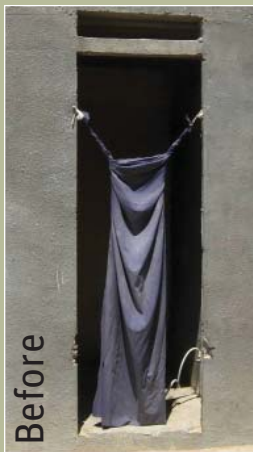
Nancy's connection to ANERA started in 1968 when her husband David, along with a dozen other men, formed ANERA's first Board of Directors. Some years later, Nancy herself served on the Board and, in 1999, she and other Board members traveled to the West Bank and Gaza to see ANERA's work first-hand.

Education projects were of special interest for Nancy. She saw a desolate patch of ground adjacent to the Dar El Tifl school for girls in Jerusalem and, through her imagination and generosity, it was transformed into a beautiful sports field where girls now play basketball and soccer. When ANERA needed seed funding to launch an I.T. Center of Excellence in the West Bank, Nancy not only contributed, she convinced others to do so, as well.



Although we mourned Nancy Finnie's passing in 2007, ANERA continues to benefit from her generous spirit. Through a bequest gift, Nancy once again demonstrated her commitment to ANERA's work and set an example for others.





## Gaza Preschool Rehab

In June 2009, ANERA did some much needed renovation work at Amjad Preschool, located in Khan Younis, Gaza.

With small amounts of cement, limited because of the soaring prices for this rare commodity, we installed new tiles and sinks, placing them at children's height. Doors were needed for the latrines as well as the classrooms and, because they are not available new on the market, ANERA bought them from homeowners, whose houses were destroyed during the January war, and refurbished them for use in the school.

This is one of many preschools in Gaza scheduled for renovation work this summer, in preparation for the 2009-2010 academic year.



## School's Out, Work Goes On

(continued from page 1)

To these students and their parents, school is not just a respite from the harshness of daily life. It empowers and offers real opportunities to see a future beyond otherwise limiting environments.

Our education work spans from preschool to post-graduate studies. We build new schools and classrooms, promote after-school programs, teach information technology and help disadvantaged children go to school.

Many of our education activities do not stop during schools' summer breaks. This summer, young people in Lebanon will participate in fun and colorful health education festivals through ANERA's Creative Health Campaign. We will continue building and repairing schools, getting them ready for fall. Our psychosocial program in Gaza will continue to offer a supportive environment to thousands of children suffering from loss and the effects of an assault on their homes. And, summer sessions will be taking place at preschools in Gaza, as part of our Milk for Preschoolers program.

School is out, but we'll be working all summer to ensure there are smiles on many more faces throughout the next school year.

### ANERA EDUCATION REPORT CARD

In academic year 2008-2009, ANERA –

- ★ delivered psychosocial help to 6,500 children, ages 8-14, in war-ravaged areas of Gaza
- ★ constructed and renovated 16 kindergartens and secondary schools across the West Bank
- ★ supported over 200 children at eight Scholarship Program schools in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon and Jordan
- ★ through fun parades and theatrical activities, spread the word about living healthily to over 4,000 youngsters in Lebanon's refugee camps and other poor communities
- ★ installed 2 playgrounds and athletic fields in Lebanon's refugee camps



# 2008-2009 REPORT CARD IN PICTURES

Education work in academic  
year 2008-2009



Built a new kindergarten in Almdawar, a West Bank farming village



Supported music education in the West Bank and Gaza



Installed a soccer field in Nahr el Bared Refugee Camp, Lebanon



Provided psychosocial assistance to 6,500 children in Gaza



Began supporting a school for deaf children in Bethlehem





Educated more than 4,000 children in Lebanon on living healthily



Upgraded the water systems in 11 West Bank schools



Finished 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 4<sup>th</sup> I.T. Center of Excellence in the West Bank



Supported the education of hundreds of children with special needs



Celebrated the 30-year anniversary of the Scholarship Program



Delivered nutritious milk and biscuits to 25,200 Gaza preschools



# Building Schools, Transforming Lives



**H**iba, a student at Rawdat el Zahur, a long-time ANERA partner in Jerusalem, is leaving her beloved elementary school this year. In her seven years at Rawdat she has grown up quite a lot and has seen the school change too, with ANERA's help.

6-year-old Hiba, now confident and smiling, also enjoys studying English and French, in addition to Arabic.

Even as a first grade student, Hiba gets to go to the new computer lab provided by ANERA where she learns computer skills and increases her language vocabulary.



2002



5-year-old Hiba starts school, wide-eyed and a little over 3 feet tall, feeling a bit frightened at her new school but really enjoying her Arabic lessons.

2003

Hiba is lucky because part of her school expenses will be paid by a generous ANERA donor through the Scholarship Program.

2004



7 years old and growing quickly, a braided Hiba is enjoying the music classes at Rawdat.

2005

8-year-old Hiba has discovered a love for basketball.

On winter days, Hiba is grateful to the ANERA donors who paid for a heating system in the school; she no longer has to wear her winter coat and mittens while she is sitting in her classroom.



Financial contributions from ANERA donors help Rawdat buy musical instruments and cover the additional costs of special music instructors.

2006



9 years old and tackling the more difficult classes in fourth grade, Hiba continues to make good marks and is especially enjoying her French classes.

10-year-old Hiba, growing taller, continues to enjoy her language classes and is getting great marks in English.

On those days when Hiba doesn't feel very well, there is now a new "nurse's room" where she can rest or get some first aid—a room created and supplied with funds from ANERA.



2007

Some of the walls in Hiba's school look different this year. Over the summer ANERA paid for renovations and new paint.

2008



11 years old and completing sixth grade, her final year, Hiba has decided she wants to become a teacher. Maybe she'll come back, as many others have, to teach at her beloved elementary school.

2009



2009

# Annual Dinner

Friday, October 2, 2009

Capital Hilton  
1001 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC



## Hand-in-Hand

**Building Schools, Transforming Lives**

*Our dinner will raise funds so we can continue to build and repair schools, bringing education to more children.*

### MAKE A RESERVATION

or make a donation in support of our education work, by going to [www.anera.org/dinner](http://www.anera.org/dinner).

### QUESTIONS?

[dinner@anera.org](mailto:dinner@anera.org)  
or 202-842-2766

# LEGACY



## Leave a legacy.

Your legacy – and the future of thousands of families who need your help – will be secure.

You can help, even now.

Your bequest gift means ANERA will be here tomorrow, so people throughout the Middle East may live with the dignity we all deserve. A portion of bequests is contributed to ANERA's endowment.

For more information about making a gift from your estate, please email Mary Kate Chaath ([mkchaath@anera.org](mailto:mkchaath@anera.org)) or Nancy Nye ([nnye@anera.org](mailto:nnye@anera.org)), or call 202-842-2766.



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

Dear Friend of ANERA:

I'm very happy to share with you a newsletter filled with pictures of smiling children. We all want the very best for these children and their families. Most live with more struggle than any of us have ever endured.

Together we're giving them a chance to transcend the deep poverty and political realities that might otherwise be holding them down. Together, we're giving them lives filled with opportunities and reminders that a better future can be built.

Whether we are helping them through pain and loss, or in awe of the joy their smiles can bring to a newly renovated school, brick by brick, student by student, we are sending a message to the world that children throughout the Middle East deserve what we want for all children: a blissful existence.

Thank you for all you do,

*Bill Corcoran*

**ANERA**  
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