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ANERA *25* years of service Newsletter

American Near East Refugee Aid

Number 121 Summer 1998

Off and Running: ANERA's Sports Program

We are all aware of the particular benefits of physical activity for both youth and adults: improved physical coordination and general health, discipline, increased self-esteem, tactical thinking and teamwork. For Palestinian girls and boys, ANERA's Sports Fund makes the joys and benefits of sports real.

ANERA's Sports Fund was established in 1993 to provide recreational opportunities for young Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza who grew up during the turbulent years of the Intifada. The Sports Fund, with the support of the Foundation for Middle East Peace, is a legacy of the late Merle Thorpe, a

long-time ANERA Board member. It has grown into an important part of ANERA's educational programs.

ANERA's Sports Fund began with ANERA's Gaza Soccer Project. Since the Oslo peace process began, Gaza has seen a proliferation of sports organizations, especially soccer clubs. ANERA has outfitted and equipped many of their teams. These clubs compete in both Middle Eastern and European events. In 1997, a junior girls' team competed internationally for the first time -- in Norway. This year, ANERA's Gaza Soccer Project gave internationally certified training videotapes in addition to equipment. Notably generous contribu-



William Carter

Two boys are going to soccer practice in Ein El Helweh Camp, Lebanon.

tions from the Foundation of Middle East Peace, ANERA staff member Cyril Bindah, and others provide on-going support for this project.

A second major activity in Gaza emphasized the development of track and field programs, and gymnastics. ANERA donated equipment for Palestinian track and field associations and the Palestinian Olympic Gymnastics Committee. The gear, including that for high jump and pole-vaulting, is used intensively. Until several years ago, few women engaged in the track and field events. Now their participation flourishes. High-profile female track and field athletes from the Middle East, such as Ghada Shouaa of Syria, who won a gold medal in the heptathlon in the 1996 Olympic Games, have impacted the popularity of these events.

Recently, ANERA has expanded its sports program into the West Bank,

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Nasreen Kheira receives the long-distance championship trophy during the Palestinian Olympic Day Run, now held annually in Gaza.

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helping to equip numerous sports clubs. This year, ANERA's West Bank focus was to develop sports facilities for women in the underserved south of the West Bank. Accordingly, we have made a grant to the Hebron Young Women's Center. Staffed and run by women, the Center encourages girls to develop their potential through sports, social and cultural programs. While there are 20 sports clubs for men, this center is the only organization providing such activities for women.

With the ANERA grant, the Center is launching a physical fitness program for women of all ages. The grant is covering the renovation of a designated area in the Center, the purchase of fitness equipment, and two new, high-quality ping-pong tables. The Center hopes to begin its fitness program this summer. They have just hired a female fitness trainer who is currently being trained in the proper use of the apparatuses by the supplier of the equipment. The Center will promote this new program among its 1,100 members and the community at large.

The Center's ping-pong and karate programs (for 6 to 24 year olds) are very popular. Many schools send girls to the ping-pong program, where they train, and compete under the supervision of two trainers. The Center's karate program attracts 50 students a year, who train under two specialists. Several members, who have black belts, compete in Arab regional competitions.

ANERA is gratified and proud to be contributing to these activities. Young people, including girls who so often have been left out, have a need for this opportunity to exercise physically and mentally in a structured social environment. Increasingly we see positive results and become aware of how much more there is to do. ANERA has long hoped to expand its sports program in the West Bank and Gaza, and to encourage the further development of young women's centers. We know that every step already taken has helped a young girl or boy gain strength and maturity, and every step from this point on will help more young Palestinians learn to play and work together. ■

Lilienthal Foundation for Palestinian Children Gives to ANERA

ANERA recently received a generous donation of \$40,000 from the newly established Lilienthal Foundation for Palestinian Children. This Foundation is a gift of Dr. Alfred Lilienthal, a renowned author-historian who has devoted a lifetime to the quest for a peaceful and just solution to the Middle East conflict. Combining commitment, experience and action, the Foundation uses education to reach hundreds of children in Gaza, the West Bank and Lebanon.

On May 22, local members of ANERA's Development Committee, a

committee of ANERA's Board of Directors, gathered at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. to recognize Dr. Lilienthal and his donation to ANERA. Dr. Lilienthal was presented with an album of photographs and information on the many children he is helping.

This was a wonderful occasion to celebrate ANERA's work in education, made possible by the generosity of our donors. Our thanks to Dr. Lilienthal, our Scholarship Program donors, and all our supporters who have expressed their concern for education. ■



Frances Stickle

During dinner, Jane W. Schweiker, Treasurer of ANERA's Board of Directors (left) and Dr. Lilienthal (right) review a photo album of students the Foundation for Palestinian Children helps through ANERA.

In Honor of...

Laura Bailey ■ Laurice Bordcosh ■ Mary D. Copeland ■ Marco & Biancamaria Diccio ■ Mr. & Mrs. Simon & Victoria Estfan ■ Lucy P. Guilbeau ■ Aref & Barbara Jabr ■ Heinz & Else Kappes ■ Elaine Karne ■ Mrs. Astgig Kevorkian ■ James V. Knight ■ Leo & Lili ■ Tom Mallison ■ Lynn Martin ■ Barbara Ann Mishriki ■ Mr. & Mrs. P. J. Perece ■ Ms. Evelyn Sanders ■ Amb. Marshall W. Wiley ■ Dr. HovsepYeni-Komshian.

Sports and Development Go Hand in Hand

Sports can provide excellent educational opportunities for children's social development. Many of the social and moral requirements for participation in sports, such as respect for others and cooperative work, parallel how individuals must function in law-abiding societies. The positive development of youth in organized sports can only occur through sports that foster positive and minimize negative experiences.

The research literature on the influence of exercise on mental health suggests that there is ample evidence that a definite relationship exists between exercise and improved mental health. This is particularly evident in the case of a reduction of anxiety and depression, conditions faced by many individuals exposed to the violence of war or military occupation.

Although there is a great deal of information available about the importance of sport experiences for males, there is far less research and even fewer advocates for sports experiences for females. Girls, of many cultures, have an additional burden of balancing social expectations of them which are sometimes in stark contrast with the health benefits of regular exercise. Involvement in sport and physical activities contribute to girls' physical abilities, health, development of their

values and ethical behaviors, and their personal development of a unique identity.

The physical benefits of exercise, such as motor skills development, better immune responses, and improved body structure, can be promoted hand in hand with psychological and social benefits

"Because physical activity is so directly related to preventing disease and premature death and to maintain a high quality of life, we must accord it the same level of attention that we give other public health practices."

*Audrey F. Manley,
Surgeon General (Acting),
July 1996.*

such as improved self-image, emotional well-being and social competence. Children who have witnessed widespread violence, such as the children of Lebanon and Palestine, are in critical need of the comprehensive benefits of sport and physical activities. Healthier children are better equipped for learning, and may develop habits of physical activity that will help them be healthier adults. ■

ANERA thanks The President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports whose Research Digest helped greatly in the writing of this article.

Staff Transitions

In February we said goodbye to **Kathryn Powell**, ANERA's Director of Donor Development for 7 and half years. Her dedication to the people of Palestine and Lebanon, and her commitment to ANERA's supporters was strong and fruitful. Kathryn took a wonderful position as Director of Planning & Development with Women, Law & Development International, a women's human rights organization. We congratulate her and wish her the best in her new work.

Shay Raugh joined us in April as our new Director of Donor Development. Previously she worked on a capital campaign for St. Paul's School for Girls in Baltimore, Maryland, and has expertise in fundraising and direct mail marketing. Shay is looking forward to getting to know ANERA's donors and helping them support the people of Palestine and Lebanon.

Jamal El-Aref is ANERA's Deputy Middle East Representative in Jerusalem. Mr. El-Aref has over 15 years of project management experience. Most recently he served as the General Manager of the Palestinian Housing Council and as Vice President for Administration with the Arab Bank. Mr. El-Aref holds degrees in civil engineering (B.S. from the University of Jordan) and project management (M.A. from Leeds University, UK).

Vice President for Administration with the Arab Bank. Mr. El-Aref holds degrees in civil engineering and project management.

Fadi Hindo, in the Jerusalem office, is our new Project Accountant. ■

Andy Tuck/PWS



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

\$200 \$100 \$75 \$50 \$35 \$25 Other _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

- General Programs
- Gaza/West Bank Fund
- Lebanon Relief
- Scholarship:

I would like to provide a one year scholarship (\$175 per child) for a:

- West Bank/Jerusalem
- Gaza Lebanon
- Where need most

Scholarship Donors receive a photo of the child and letters from the child's school.

Giving Service: Volunteers & Interns

Throughout the year many individuals help the people of Palestine and Lebanon by giving their time and talent to ANERA. Our appreciation and thanks go to Anne O. Knight and Margy W. Werling, our volunteers. We also wish to thank our dedicated interns: Elisabeth Kalayil, Jennifer Crawford, Marisa Katz, Abdelkader and Blanca Madani, Massimo Marolo, Robert Mosrie, Jessica Powell, Arthur Price and Luzia de la Torre. ■

Your Legacy

Through a bequest in your will or trust, you can extend your support for Palestinians and Lebanese in need and the worthy institutions that help them, beyond your lifetime. We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity. *Please use ANERA's full name "American Near East Refugee Aid" in your bequest documents, followed by our address.* For information on the ANERA Legacy Society or bequests to ANERA, please contact Nina Dodge at (202) 347-2558. ■

ANERA's Peace Plan

Through our monthly giving program, *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 have learned that ANERA's programs cannot run in a stop-and-go fashion. These programs require dependable resources over a sustained period of time. By joining *ANERA's Peace Plan*, you play a significant role in our work to bolster Palestinian and Lebanese long-term economic and community development, education and health programs.

► Decide how much you would like to give, send us the coupon below 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!

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

Here is my monthly gift of: \$54 \$36 \$27 \$14 \$10 Other \$ _____

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.



ANERA

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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