ANERA Opens First IT Center of Excellence

The Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al Quds University is the first of three planned for the West Bank. ANERA’s IT initiative enhances IT skills and business opportunities and the development of business skills, in order to encourage investors in professional job creation. “In tandem with businesses,” states Dr. Badie Sartawi, ANERA’s IT Project Director, “this is the first time universities here have developed contracts with the private sector. All of this reflects on the curriculum at Al Quds University and the fact that we are in the market.” Currently, there are 50 students using the IT Center’s services to run 22 different projects, including opportunities to sell their idea or have it adopted by others. This also provides them with the basic elements to become an entrepreneur and help develop their idea or product. The Center works as a bridge between students and businesses. To this end, the IT Center of Excellence brings together a unique combination of technical and business support, and guidance.

ANERA Officers 2003-2004
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Peter Gerson, President
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“It has been a real pleasure working with such committed and enthusiastic volunteers. We wish them all the best.” — Alfonso Wright, ANERA’s Assistant Accountant for the past seven years, will take over the Senior Accountant position.

In Honor Of

ANERA Receives Kahlil Gibran Award

Creating Opportunities for Change

Opportunities for Change

In East Jerusalem, the Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al Quds University is generating hope for a better future for Palestinians. Opened in March, the IT Center brings state-of-the-art training in information technology (IT) to aspiring business professionals.

Launched through ANERA’s IT initiatives in Palestine, this IT Center of Excellence brings together a unique curriculum with competitive certificate programs and business incubation services. It has four labs, each equipped with 16 computers, available for such courses. “Art training in IT skills, more individuals are equipped to start their own business,” says Muneer, shaking his head.

Launched through ANERA’s IT initiatives in Palestine, this IT Center of Excellence brings together a unique curriculum with competitive certificate programs and business incubation services. It has four labs, each equipped with 16 computers, available for such courses. “Art training in IT skills, more individuals are equipped to start their own business,” says Muneer, shaking his head.

Muneer contrasted his viewpoint. “Compared to what it could be,” he says Munzer, shaking his head. “Still, out of the 225 registered students in my class, only four could pay for the course.” The cost is $500. When asked what measures he feels will improving the IT sector in Palestine, he says he would love to see an IT Center of Excellence in Gaza with support for both university students and IT businesses. “People in Gaza are very clever, and they have the abilities to improve things. But equally support, now under these desperate conditions, we can use as much support as possible from the outside.”

Grants

Staff Change

ANERA is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Middle East.

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The Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence is part of ANERA’s IT Initiative in Palestine. The initiative enhances IT skills and business opportunities for Palestinians. The center aims to equip the Palestinian IT industry and expanding employment opportunities.

“The center is a pioneer in connecting universities with businesses,” states Dr. Badie Sartawi, ANERA’s IT Project Director. “This is the first time universities here have developed contracts with the private sector. All of this reflects on the curriculum at Al Quds University and encourages investors in professional job creation.”

In honor of Murray Gart's contributions to the ANERA community, he was inducted into the ANERA Hall of Honor.

Staff Change

Cyril Bindah, ANERA’s Senior Accountant, is retiring after 24 years. Cyril provides an example of the kind of local talent that can give them whatever they need to achieve.”

ANERA Officers 2003-2004

Lisa Auers, Chair
Alfonso Wright, Secretary
Lisa Auers, Chair
Les Janka, Chair
CyrilBindah,Senior Accountant
Lisa Auers, Vice Chair
Peter Green, Treasurer
Lisa Auers, Vice Chair
CyrilBindah,Senior Accountant

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In Memoriam: Murray Gart

Murray Gart was a devoted and dedicated volunteer, a bridge between ANERA and the community, and a constant source of encouragement and support to the organization.

In Honor Of...

Staff Change

ANERA does exchange our mailing list with similar organizations.

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Scholarship Profile

Jatiala, a student of Hamid Zoubair

IT Graduate Profile: Marwan

In Memoriam: Manny Gart

Zinc Building Projects in

Dien Efstratiopoulos

ANERA’s Benefit Award

In Honor Of...

Staff Change...
Muneer spends two to three hours each day walking on the beach during stressful times in his life. He lives in Gaza City, where the term “straddled” can describe a multitude of scenarios, the least of which is road closures. Muneer remembers when he was an undergraduate student five years ago and the journey from his home in Deir al Balah to the Islamic University of Gaza ( IUG ) took only fifteen minutes, but now it sometimes takes two hours. As the road to the university is closed, Muneer and hundreds of others must walk four to five kilometers along the beach.

In an ANERA-sponsored certification course in database administration, called Oracle Developer 2006, Muneer gained exam training. The course, originally expected to last three to four months, took Muneer a year to complete because of closures and curfews, but already it has taught him skills in database administration.

Muneer currently works as the chief computer engineer of the IT department at IUG, developing and maintaining programs that enable students to register for courses and receive their grades by logging into the university database on the web to “review students’ files,” he explain. Considering the access problems facing residents of Gaza, these measures can save students hours or even days of travel. In regard to the development of IT in Palestine, Muneer points out that there are many people in both Gaza and the West Bank who are highly intelligent and quick to learn, but because the economic situation is so bad (over 60% of Gaza residents live on less than $2 per day), they cannot afford the training needed. A course like the one ANERA offered can run up to $1,000 merely for the certification exam and travel costs incurred by a student. But through ANERA, the course fees are only $100.

“I know the value of this course. I did that in four months, and it cost me $100.”

Five years ago, Zena worked in an industrial zone sewing textiles. The job took hours to reach, paid a meager wage, and provided nothing for her family. In 2005, Zena boldly left the factory and started her own business with a $1,000 loan from GWLF. She began raising chickens and turkeys, which are in regular demand locally. With two additional loans—$2,000 for housing, and $5,000 for production—Zena raises chickens, turkeys, ducks, pigeons, and geese—all bringing her earnings that would not have been possible working in the industrial zone. Zena rates with pride that she has been able to support her home and produce needed appliance loans. Over 2,000 women in Gaza have benefited from loans by the GWLF program. The loan amount for new borrowers is $1,000, and for repeat borrowers, $2,000–$5,000. Loans are granted to women with new or pre-existing businesses ranging from home gardening, food processing, and retail to livestock projects such as Zena's. In 1995, ANERA—in partnership with the Culture and Free Thought Association, a Palestinian women's organization in Gaza—began the GWLF program. Using small loans, $300 loans, ANERA continues to strengthen and expand the GWLF program to help women provide for the basic needs of their families and hopes for a better future.
IT Graduate Profile: Muneer

Muneer spends two to three hours each day walking on the beach during stressful times in his life. He lives in Gaza City, where the term “stressful” can describe a multitude of scenarios, the least of which are road closures. Muneer remembers when he was an undergraduate student five years ago and the journey from his home in Deir El Balah to the Islamic University of Gaza (IUG) took only five minutes. Walking to class now sometimes takes two hours. If the road to the university is closed, Muneer and hundreds of others must walk four to five kilometers along the beach.

In an ANERA-sponsored certification course in database administration, called Oracle Developer 2006, Muneer gained oracle training. The course, originally expected to last three to four months, took Muneer a year to complete because of closures and curfews, but already it has assisted him as an intern in database administration.

Muneer currently works as the chief computer engineer of the IT department at IUG, developing and maintaining programs that enable students to register for courses and receive their grades by logging into the university database on the web. “My job is to make sure that the students’ lives easy,” he explains. Considering the access problems facing residents of Gaza, these measures can save students hours or even days of travel.

In regard to the development of IT in Palestine, Muneer points out that there are many people in both Gaza and the West Bank who are highly intelligent and quick to learn, but the economic situation is so bad (over 60% of Gaza residents live on less than $2 per day) they cannot afford the training needed. A course like Oracle Developer 2006 can cost up to $1,000 merely for the books and a certificate. Muneer, therefore, has focused on the costs incurred by a student. But through ANERA, the course fee can now be only $100.

“I know the value of this course. I feel that it is free, and for rich and poor students, $200-$2,500. Loans are granted to women with new or pre-

Zena’s Bustling Business in Deir El Balah Refugee Camp

In January 2004

Zena’s customers have a large selection of livestock from which to choose at her booth in the Deir El Balah refugee camp in central Gaza. Zena’s hard work has led to a strong business and success in the local market. It is a prime example of the officiousness of micro-loans from the Women’s Microfinance Programme. Not only has she sold a variety of animals, Zena is able to support her four children during a time of widespread unemployment and poverty in the Gaza Strip.

Five years ago, Zena worked in an industrial zone sewing textiles. The job took hours to reach, paid a meager wage, and provided no benefits for her family. In 2000, Zena boldly left the factory and started her own business with the help of the GWLF program. The loan amount for new purchase needed appliances with her new earnings.

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Munzer spends two to three hours each day walking on the beach during stressful times in his life. He lives in Gaza City, where the term "street" can describe a multitude of scenarios, the least of which are road closures. 

Munzer remembers when he was an undergraduate student five years ago and the journey from his home in Deir El Balah to the Islamic University of Gaza (IUG) took only fifteen minutes. Today, the same route takes two hours. "If the road to the university is closed, Munzer and hundreds of others must walk four to five kilometers along the beach."

In an ANERA-sponsored certification course in database administration, called Oracle Developer 2006, Munzer gained report creation. The course, originally expected to last three to four months, took Munzer a year to complete because of closures and curfews, but already it has given him an edge in database administration. 

Munzer currently works as the chief computer engineer of the IT department at IUG, developing and maintaining programs that enable students to register for courses and receive their grades by logging into the university database on the web. "My job is to make sure that students' lives' ease," he explains. Considering the access problems facing residents of Gaza, these measures can save students hours or even days of travel.

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"I know the value of this course. I feel that it is free."

More than ten percent of IUG’s 9,000 students at any given time receive ANERA’s Scholarship Program. The ANERA 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 the ANERA Scholarship Program, contact Assistant Director, Scholarship Program, at (202) 547-5098 or at scholarships@anera.org.

Zena’s customers have a large selection of livestock from which to choose at her door in the Deir El Balah refugee camp in central Gaza. Zena’s hard work has led to a strong business and success in the local market. It is a prime example of the oft-cliched micro-loans from that Islamic University of Gaza and, in fact, that business has taken off. 

Ms. Gart was the leader in ANERA’s Information Technology awards, who has trained IT Centers of Excellence at universities in the West Bank and Gaza, and in 2001 received an ANERA award. 

Ms. Gart was a writing journalist for Decatur, a correspondent, senior editor, and later, chief of correspondents for the National Geographic Society and the chief editor of the former Washington Star.

During his career, he interviewed world leaders including Yasser Arafat, Ariel Sharon, and five U.S. presidents. During the Palestinian intifada in the late 1980s, Mr. Gart spent months living in the refugee camps, chronicling the powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “...we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true powerlessness and a disconnect from the world. Working with the ideals exemplified by Arab American poet and philosopher Kahlil Gibran, Mr. Gart was a leader in ANERA’s award, and said “…we know that our only true
Opportunities for Change

by Robyn Long

The Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al Quds University, is the first of three planned for the West Bank. ANERA

is launching a Business Incubator Center. The idea is to give any talented individual the chance to try a business. The Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al Quds University is generating hope for a better future for Palestinians.

In East Jerusalem, the Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence at Al Quds University is generating hope for a better future for Palestinians. Opened in March, the IT Center brings state-of-the-

art training in information technology (IT) to aspiring business professionals.

In 2004, through ANERA’s IT initiative in Palestine, the Said T. Khoury Information Technology Center of Excellence brings together a unique curriculum with competitive certificate programs and business incubation services. It has four labs, each equipped with 16 computers, available for such courses. “Acquiring IT skills, many individuals are interested in starting their own business. This center also offers technical and business support,” explains Robert E. Wright, Office Manager of the IT Center. “We can give them whatever they need to achieve.”

Undoubtedly, students and professionals have immense opportunity for obtaining new skills at the IT Center. But what makes it distinctive is its Business Incubation Center (BI Center), which connects those finishing their degrees or certificates with business opportunities. The curriculum equips students to obtain internationally recognized certificates from Oracle, CISCO, and Microsoft, all of which are in high demand, and includes the flexibility to offer training courses requested by students, instructors, or other community members. As community IT needs arise, training courses are created.

“We focus on specialization, so people can develop professional skills,” states Omar Daher, Coordinator of the IT Center. He explains, “This basic idea of the BI Center is to give any talented individual the chance to develop their idea or product. The IT Center works as a link between the students and the market—we give them the basic elements to become an entrepreneur and help them build strong relationships. This provides them the opportunity to sell their idea or have it adopted by others in the market.” Currently, there are 10 students using the BI Center’s services to run 22 different projects, including

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Staff Change

Cyril Bindah, ANERA’s Senior Accountant, is retiring after 24 years with the agency. He has been a key partner in the Middle East. Cyril has dedicated videos and soccer balls to support the development of a Palestinian soccer team built on his own experience as a youth sports star. We wish him only the best.

Alfonso Wright, ANERA Assistant Accountant for the past seven years, will take over the Senior Accountant position. We recently have hired Ms. Lisa Ransome, as the Assistant Accountant. A native of the Washington, D.C. area, who comes to ANERA with four years accounting experience.

IT Graduate Profile: Muneer

Muneer received his B.S. in Information Technology at Al-Quds University. He is pursuing his M.S. in Telecommunications at the American University of the Middle East. Muneer has developed contracts with the private sector. All of these reflect on the curriculum at Al-Quds University and encourage investors in professional job creation. In tandem with the IT Center’s sustainable approach in training and the development of business skills, is the advancement of both individual opportunities and stimulation of the IT market—a promising combination for prompting positive change throughout Palestinian communities.

When asked what measures he feels will improve the IT sector in Palestine, he says he would love to see an IT Center of Excellence in Gaza with support for both university students and IT businesses. “People in Gaza are very clever, and they have the ability to improve things. But equally, now under these desperate conditions, we can use as much support as possible from the outside.”

“After acquiring IT skills, many individuals are interested in starting their own business. We can give them whatever they need to achieve.”

More successful is generating hope for a better future for Palestinians.

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