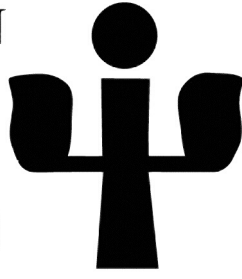


A M E R I C A N
Neve Shalom

נווה שלום

O A S I S



F R I E N D S O F
Wahat al-Salam

واحة السلام

O F P E A C E

Fall 2019 Newsletter



Three Generations: Elenora Edlund, her father Tom, and her grandmother Ety celebrate Elenora's graduation. Tom was part of the first graduating class of the Primary School, 35 years ago, and Ety was one of the founders.

Sections

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A New Year: Expansions and Developments for the Primary School

This year is the Primary School's biggest yet! Fifty-four new students have joined the school, bringing the total number of children enrolled up to 314. This is the largest that the school has ever been. The Primary School's growth represents both increasing interest in bilingual and multicultural education and the Primary School's stellar academic record. To accommodate the school's expanding student body, seven new teachers have been hired.

As the Primary School grows and becomes more diverse, funding needs for the school have increased. The Education Ministry recently cut the amount of tuition that the Primary School was allowed to ask for, producing a \$130,000 deficit last year and significantly

decreasing the amount of subsidy that the Primary School was able to provide for student transportation and supply costs. Friends organizations from around the world are doing what they can to help the Primary School continue to be accessible and affordable for years to come.

As teachers and administrators at the Primary School prepared for their new students, they were also hard at work launching a project that has been in the works for the past three years. The Primary School's groundbreaking multicultural and bilingual curricula have been collected and developed into a program that can be adapted for use in schools throughout the country and the world. The Primary School, with help from Israel's Center for Educational Technology, has created an educational resource with the potential to revolutionize education for thousands of students.

The Primary School will be translating the material into English over the next few months and increasing their digital presence, including a website on which the curricula will be available for schools and all others interested in learning more about bilingual and multicultural education.

AFNSWAS raised \$13,172.00 for the Primary School this summer as part of the Adopt-a-Class program. Thank you for your dedication to these children and their education.



A group of students pose for a photo under the rainbow arch on their first day of school.

'Shared Cities' Change Agents Make Their Mark

The Shared Cities Leadership Course cohort of 2018/19 graduated this summer in an event well attended by both current and previous students. During the final meeting, several alumni came forward to speak about how the course has changed their professional and personal lives. Naif Abu Suis spoke about how the course inspired him to stand against illegal construction and housing discrimination as a city council member. Ayala Shalev, another alum, spoke about her activism and creating

Alternative Memorial Day events.

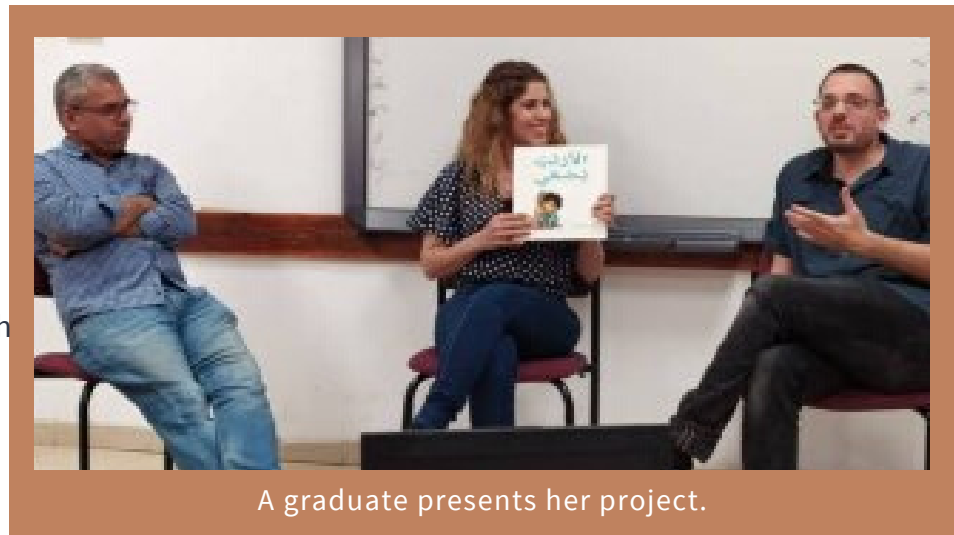
This year's graduates also highlighted the initiatives they developed during the course, several of which have blossomed into long-term projects. The Database Project, spearheaded by new

graduate Rebecca, collects information on bilingual performance material and artists who will provide bilingual performances for primary schools. The database, which was inspired by Rebeca's work with Hand in Hand schools, will be open to the public starting later this year.

The Follow Project, led by Ophir and Dinah, works with 12th grade students to address the dearth of opportunities for Arab students and Jewish students who do not enlist in military service. They are partnering with several community centers to build student skills, foster relationships between individuals and the community, and provide volunteering and career opportunities after graduation.

The Social Entrepreneurship Project, created by Gili, is the first endeavor by entrepreneurial organization Hackaveret to promote and support Arab entrepreneurs. A consultation and crowdsourcing session was held shortly after the graduation which brought Arab professionals together with Hackaveret to create a long-term plan for increasing social entrepreneurship in the under-represented community.

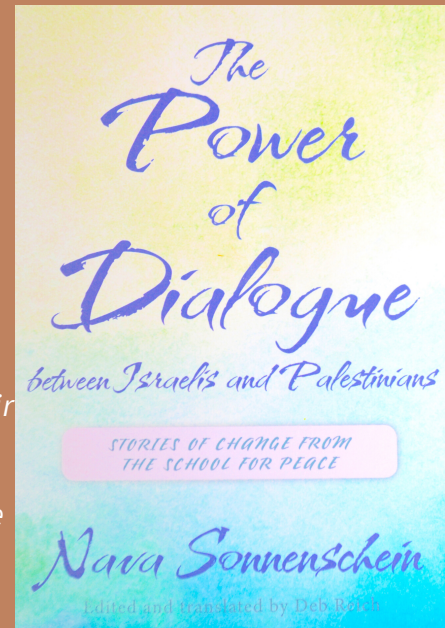
By coming together to learn and grow, the Shared Cities graduates have begun



A graduate presents her project.

something much greater than the sum of its parts. These initiatives, along with the many others that the Change Agents have started or will soon put into motion, have the potential to affect entire communities and create positive momentum for hundreds if not thousands of people, changing lives for years to come.

The School for Peace works in many areas of life. From doctors to architects, politicians to city planners, the School for Peace teaches professionals the skills they need to create a better future. Hundreds of participants spend 15 to 18 months learning how to solve serious problems as partners, not enemies. In Nava Sonnenschein's new book, 'The Power of Dialogue', she interviews several School for Peace graduates about their experiences during their programs and how that experience has shaped their lives in the years since. 'The Power of Dialogue' is now available in the AFNSWAS online shop or your local bookstore.



“I recommend that everyone, in any society, undergo a process like the one that the SFP course offers. It’s not about being Israeli or Palestinian. It brings you into a social discourse.”
Slieman Halabi, SFP graduate

Art and Artists

The arts provide a unique way to interact with and understand one another. A compelling work can draw forth emotions, prompt dialogue, and create bonds between people despite the barriers between them. Two village programs, Cinema in the Community and Artists Hosting Artists, are poignant examples of this connection. The most recent Artists Hosting Artists workshop took place in Nazareth. Twenty Palestinian and Jewish participants spent the morning getting to know each other while working with natural clay. The event, hosted at Mosmar Pottery by Bassam Mosmar, began with discussion interspersed with the singing and storytelling of Naila Azaam Libies. Artists were given a tour of the workshop and began to create, experimenting with the clay and trying the techniques they had seen earlier. After the workshop, a large number of the participants went on to tour the city’s historic

center and a local art gallery that featured works from Bassam's grandfather as well as one of the participants, Juhaina Habibi. At the end of the day, contact information was exchanged and both personal and professional connections were made.

The Cinema in the Community program held three engaging and thought-provoking films, each followed by conversation with the director. 'Write down, I am an Arab' by Ibtisam Mara'ana about Palestinian national poet Mahmoud Darwish was the first film in the series. Mara'ana's discussion touched on themes of artistic freedom and speaking truth to power, drawing insightful comments from both Jewish and Palestinian participants. 'The Ancestral Sin' by David Deri

was next, a gripping documentary on the development towns of Israel and the prejudices that informed their creation. The long-lasting ramifications of those policies formed the backbone of the intense discussion that followed. The final film, 'Born in Deir Yassin', explored the massacre of Deir Yassin and the site's subsequent transformation into a hospital for the mentally ill. Neta Shoshani, the director, spoke further on the tragedy in a discussion filled with hard questions and difficult subject matter. The films in this year's series were created and directed by, and focused on, both Jewish and Palestinian artists and concerns.

As these programs continue to grow and develop, participants are forever changed by their experiences. Whether through creating or witnessing it, art can create avenues of conversation that might never have otherwise existed.



Participants at Artists Hosting Artists got to know each other as they worked.

"These are not easy times for peace seekers, but I still think the persistent, resilient seekers are our best hope. Thank you to all at AFNSWAS and to all the sensible, persistent, resilient peace seekers at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam."

--Judy Livingston, supporter

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Together We are Making Peace a Reality

Supporting the projects of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, strengthening a shared society between Palestinians and Jews through education, engagement and activism.

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