



Oasis of Peace

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

Spring 2022 Newsletter

Striving Onward Together in Hope

To our cherished friends and supporters,

For so many of us, current events can make it feel as if mounting crises lurk in nearly every direction. The consequences of violence, prejudice, hatred, and war can make it seem easier to become frozen in heartbreak at the present state of affairs. But that is not the way of the people of Neve Shalom/ Wahat Al-Salam. For half a century, the people of NSWAS have worked faithfully and creatively to build toward a lasting peace, creating strategies and practices which have been utilized across the globe. For the American Friends of the Oasis of Peace, there is no balm for the troubles of the world more powerful than the opportunity to take an active part in these solutions through our support.

As the School for Peace enters a second generation of leadership and the Primary School educates and nurtures a third, bilingual and bicultural generation of young peace ambassadors, it is not an exaggeration to say that the village, its people, and their unflinching dedication to a building toward lasting peace in Israel, has become a personal beacon of hope for me and, I expect, for you as well. It is our deepest joy to share news, photos, and encouragement from the village with you. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions you have about any of the Village's programs - success is only possible when we travel the road to peace together. Thank you, as always, for traveling with us.

In solidarity,
Joan Waller, Co-President



Students Benefit from New Perspectives



Change Agents course graduates pose with their certificates.

The flagship program of the SFP is its Change Agents courses. Built for a variety of professional fields, these multi-part courses aim to give participants tools with which to change the socio-political reality. The Human Rights Lawyers Change Agents course concluded after 11 meetings featuring binational and uni-national dialogue, lectures on theory and practice, and two study tours, leaving the six Palestinian and nine Jewish participants with a renewed sense of purpose and practical tools to create change.

The SFP also plans to expand the availability of its University courses, building on 30 years of success at Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Ben Gurion Universities, and Rupin College. The SFP has well-developed courses that examine the Jewish/ Israeli -Arab/ Palestinian conflict through the lenses of behavioral science, psychology, nursing, architecture, political science, and more. The SFP's model recognizes that working towards peace requires the expertise and will of dedicated people across professions.

Primary School: Learning and Growing Together



Space Day

“What does our Solar System look like?”

“What makes a planet?”

“What does it feel like to leave the Earth's atmosphere?”

Fifth-grade students explored these questions and more at the first annual “Space Day” at the Primary School (PS), sharing their projects and presentations with the entire school, creating a unique learning experience.

Fifth-grade students present what they've learned about space.



Students Activate Through Art



"IF WE ALL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY... YOU AND I CAN CONTRIBUTE TO CHANGING HUMANITY'S FUTURE."

- Gallery Curator,
Dyana Shaloufi Rizek



Primary School students engage in workshops to better understand the Art Gallery's "Global Climate Scream" exhibition.

While NSWAS's Oasis Art Gallery is open to all, ensuring the young people of the community have opportunities to engage with the exhibitions and artists on display is a particular priority. To that end, the opening of the "Global Climate Scream" art exhibition included recycling and nature-based art projects for PS students in the gallery's courtyard. Featured artists Andres Gurwicz, Nihad Dabeet, Michal Mozes, Alex Erez, and Primary School art teacher Polly Fernhout Soffer met with the young people of NSWAS to help them to discover their own ability to take action to help save a changing planet.



Dyana and a student discuss the "Global Climate Scream" art exhibition.

**Right-sized envelopes were unavailable at print-time.
Please use the form below with your envelope to send your donation
Or Visit <http://www.oasisofpeace.org/donate>**

Please make checks payable to
American Friends of NSWAS, and mail

**American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam
229 North Central Ave., Suite #401
Glendale, CA 91203-3541**

YES! HERE'S MY SUPPORT FOR THESE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS OF THE OASIS OF PEACE WITH A GIFT OF: **Thank you for your gift!**

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 \$2,000 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Comments: _____

Credit Card: Visa Master Card # _____/_____/_____/_____ Expiration Date: ____/____

Signature: _____

PLEASE help us save resources too and provide your email address below.

Email: _____

**HELP US GET THE
WORD OUT AND TELL
A FRIEND ABOUT THE
OASIS OF PEACE.**

Friend's Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

The Pluralistic Spiritual Center: Honoring and Celebrating Together



The women of NSWAS share laughter and community on IWD 2022.

Finding Joy and Laughter on International Women's Day

Although International Women's Day is an important opportunity to recognize how far we are from true gender equality, it is also imperative to celebrate the resilience and ingenuity of women around the world. This year's International Women's Day Celebration at the Pluralistic Spiritual Center focused on women's humor, with special appearances from Noam Shuster, who was born in the village and whose US tour was recently featured in the New Yorker, and the actress Khawlah Hag-Debsey, also a village member and the first Arab woman to be appointed head of a national theater.

Scenes of Hope and Solidarity on International Rescuers Day

On March 10th, the Pluralistic Spiritual Center held its annual commemoration of International Rescuers Day. On this special day, villagers gather to recognize the sacrifice of those who stand up for what is right, although it is often difficult and dangerous. This year's ceremony honored the Ta'ayush organization, a grassroots volunteer organization founded in 2000 by a joint network of Palestinians and Israelis to counter nationalist reactionary actions, and Afghan journalist Atefa Ghafory.



Village members of all ages gather to commemorate International Rescuers Day.

The School for Peace: A Growing Action Network



SFP alums share their expertise and experiences with the community.



In March, the School for Peace (SFP) welcomed 80 alumni of various Change Agent and University courses for “Partnership vs. Separation in Activism,” a conference including lectures, workshops, panel discussions, and a theatrical workshop. Across cultures, disciplines, and experiences, participants shared their challenges and successes in binational and multinational organizing for peace. SFP director Roi Silberberg will make this conference an annual tradition to continue strengthening the network of professionals that make up the SFP alumni.

Putting Training Into Practice

The conference culminated in the awarding of the Dr. Nava Sonnenschein Prize to Bustan Nof Hagalil, a project established in 2018 by a group of Arab and Jewish activists in the Mixed City of Nof Hagalil. The long-range goal of the group is to transform the city from one that is “mixed” to one that is “shared” -through encounters, outreach, and work with the municipality - exactly the sort of multi-disciplinary organizing fostered by SFP courses and alumni events.

Of 16 entrants, 7 other projects encompassing film making, mental health initiatives, work with Bedouin youth, and shared beekeeping were also awarded grant funding. The alumni network has no shortage of ideas and their collaborative work continues to remove barriers to action across Israel and Palestine.

“THERE WAS A FEELING THAT THE COMMUNITY WAS EMPOWERING AND THAT OUR VOICE COUNTS, IT GIVES HOPE AND REINFORCES THE SENSE THAT WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.”

- Conference Participant



Oasis of Peace

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

229 North Central Ave Ste. 401
Glendale, CA 91203-3541

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Leave a Legacy of Peace

Consider supporting Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam through planned giving. Even the smallest gifts have a big impact over time. Choose to support the areas that mean the most to you—Israeli Jewish/Palestinian conflict transformation, youth leadership, arts initiatives, spiritual encounters, humanitarian aid, and more. Your generosity will sustain the Village’s inspiring work for decades to come.

**THE OPTIONS
INCLUDE:**

- Bequests
- Life Insurance Policies
- Trusts
- Outright Gifts
- IRAs and Retirement Plans
- Life Estates

Planned giving is a powerful way to express your enduring commitment to peace while at the same time achieving both personal and financial security. Planned gifts offer substantial tax savings to donors, especially on appreciated properties and securities, and can reduce income tax and avoid capital gains tax.

Make peace a lasting part of your legacy. For more information, contact The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam by emailing afnswas@oasisofpeace.org or calling (818) 662-8883.

The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is a not-for-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status under the Internal Revenue Service Code. We do not sell, trade, rent or otherwise disclose donor information. Our donor privacy policy is available on our website or by mail. Official registration and financial information of American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.