



# Oasis of Peace

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

2019-2020

## ANNUAL REPORT



“ Oasis of Peace was started during ‘impossible’ times, and it continues to grow and thrive and make a difference even in these ‘impossible’ times. The rest of the world has much to learn about that process. ”

—Judith Kramer, Palo Alto, CA



# Oasis of Peace

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS

### **Honorary Council**

David Hitchcock

Khalil Jahshan

Hani Masri

Naomi Shihab Nye

Shibley Telhami

### **Board of Directors**

Joan Waller

Co-President

Rev. Gordon Webster

Co-President

Deborah First  
Secretary

Judy Dubin  
Vice-President

Ted First  
Treasurer

Herb Adelman

Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels

Gordie Fellman

Richard Goodwin

Robert Green

Ashraf Hussein

Rola Karam

Barbara Ridberg

Judith Tuller

Susan Lurie Zaslavsky

Abir Elzowidi,

Director of the

American Friends/

NSWAS National office

Dear Friends,

This has been an extraordinary year, one of unprecedented challenges as well as singular hope. At home and across the globe, even as the COVID-19 pandemic has upended daily life, struggles for justice, equality, and peace have endured.

In 2020, your support of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam (“Oasis of Peace” in Hebrew and Arabic) wasn’t just an important lifeline for the village—it brightened a beacon of hope for the world.

This remarkable community, where more than 70 Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian-Israeli families live and work side-by-side amid ongoing social and political strife, continues to model ways of bridging differences and building empathy that we can all learn from in these challenging times.

Because of your unwavering generosity, the American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam was able to provide over \$350,000 to Oasis of Peace towards their most pressing needs, from accessible innovative education and scholarships to inclusive dialogue, the arts and humanitarian aid. We are immensely grateful for your partnership, and we are thrilled to share just a few of the ways your support has impacted the lives of all those touched by Oasis of Peace programs as well as the global community of peace-seekers building a more just and equitable world for all.

In heartfelt thanks and solidarity,

Joan Waller and Gordon Webster

Co-Presidents, American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam



# Outreach and Education

## We Brought Lessons Home

In addition to supporting the Village and its initiatives, American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam ensures that the lessons of peace are delivered here at home. As we as a nation struggle to unite a polarized electorate and secure the health, safety, and well-being of all, Oasis of Peace offers critical tools for helping us address our most pressing problems.

American Friends is committed to sharing the story of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam as an inspiring, successful, achievable model for peaceful coexistence within a region of deep-rooted discord. Pandemic conditions have inhibited our mediation and conflict-resolution assistance to schools and community groups enabled by your donations, including our free, four-part high school curriculum drawing on techniques developed by the School for Peace, helping teens from differing backgrounds and perspectives bridge differences through constructive dialogue. Your support during the pandemic brings virtual access to lectures and presentations to community groups, clergy, and congregations across the nation that are interested in learning about the Village as well as providing resources and support for independent researchers interested in using Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam as starting point for their own work as agents of change.



“ In these troubled times across our globe, a light that shines our way forward towards justice and peace has never been more essential. It has been a long -time honor to support the Oasis of Peace and a blessing to move together in keeping hope alive. ”

—Paula Rayman and Richard Herman, Watertown, MA



# The Primary School



## We Met Unprecedented Challenges

Throughout 2020, the American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam provided critical support during incredibly challenging times. In March, the Village's Primary School—the first school in Israel where children learn together in Hebrew and Arabic—transitioned to distance learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The shutdown affected approximately 315 students, ages kindergarten through sixth grade, from more than a dozen communities throughout the region, many of whom were not equipped with the technology necessary to participate in virtual classrooms. And, as the pandemic raged, families whose jobs were affected found themselves no longer able to afford tuition.

American Friends immediately took up a call to action, instituting the Adopt-a-Scholar program to underwrite tuition for approximately 30 students, raising over \$35,000 towards the effort. Your donations also ensured that every Primary School student had the internet access and computer needed to join their classmates online. In a year of upheaval, your generosity brought much-needed security and continuity to these children's education, friendships, and routines.

---

**AFNSWAS provided  
\$240,403 to the  
Primary School  
in 2019-20.**

---

“ *Since my first visit to the village in 1983, I have admired the founding families of NSWAS and their deep passion for creating peace. Their unswerving commitment to a life of co-existence and dialogue is a vital beacon of hope that inspires people around the globe.* ”

*Jennifer Kane, Napa, CA*



# The School for Peace

## We Proved Dialogue Is Possible

The programs and initiatives developed at Oasis of Peace since the Village's founding in 1970 have consistently demonstrated that even those with the most deep-seated differences can learn to hear each other, understand each other, and live together joyfully. Over the past year, your generosity has been critical to sustaining a range of peace-building activities and dialogues, including artistic collaborations between Arab and Jewish teens, illuminating conversations between filmmakers and their audiences, and passionate debates about environmental justice, healthcare, and human rights. Among the highlights:



The School for Peace celebrated its 30th year offering graduate-level courses in conflict resolution to universities in Israel, including Tel Aviv University, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Haifa University and Ruppin College.

**AFNSWAS provided  
\$100,000 to the  
SFP in 2019-20.**

“ I believe our shared destiny will evolve in one of two ways: either we will remain together in this darkness of pain, or we will choose to reconcile and build a new shared reality that might help awaken all the people on this planet to our common humanity. This is what we have been doing as best we can at Oasis of Peace. ”

— Rayek Rizek, resident of the Village since 1984





# Humanitarian Aid Program

## We Saved Lives

In 2020, COVID-19 worsened an already strained health care system in the Gaza Strip. By July, Gaza Hospital was facing a 50 percent shortage of medicines required for patients suffering from chronic illnesses, including kidney disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Your donations to Oasis of Peace's Humanitarian Aid Program, which provides needed medical services as well as in-kind donations for Palestinians living under occupation, sent thousands of dollars' worth of medicine directly to the hospital. They also facilitated the purchase a water generator for Gaza's second largest hospital. Due to the salinization of the coastal aquifer, producing fresh water in Gaza has become increasingly difficult, and this generator is crucial to the hospital's ability to care for patients—by converting air to water, it produces approximately 1,320 gallons of clean water per day.

As the pandemic continues to devastate vulnerable communities around the world, your generosity is easing the suffering of those in the Gaza Strip stricken with COVID-19, supplying basic equipment such as the Facial CPAP mask, which provides relief for patients prior to the stage at which a full ventilator is required.

**AFNSWAS provided  
\$10,000 to the  
Humanitarian Aid Program  
in 2019-20.**



“ In the chaos of occupation, the Humanitarian Aid Committee continues to step up and deliver needed resources to those whose lives have been so terribly disrupted. American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam helped make all of this work possible. Our gratitude is enormous. ”

—Dr. Raid Haj Yehia, Physicians for Human Rights



# The Nadi - Youth Club



The Nadi Youth Center teamed up with the film school of Tel Aviv University to offer filmmaking classes to Arab and Jewish youth. The project resulted in a documentary film about Oasis of Peace residents that premiered in the Village and went on to screen in locations across Israel.

---

**AFNSWAS provided  
\$15,000 to the Nadi  
in 2019-20.**

---





# Doumia-Sakinah/Pluralistic Spiritual Center, Peace Museum



The Pluralistic Spiritual Center's Cinema in the Community brought leading Jewish and Palestinian directors to the Village to talk about their films, which deal with social issues and relations between Arabs and Jews, Israelis and Palestinians.

---

**AFNSWAS provided \$12,500 to the  
Doumia-Sakinah/Pluralistic Spiritual Center,  
Peace Museum, and Oasis Art Gallery in 2019-20.**

---





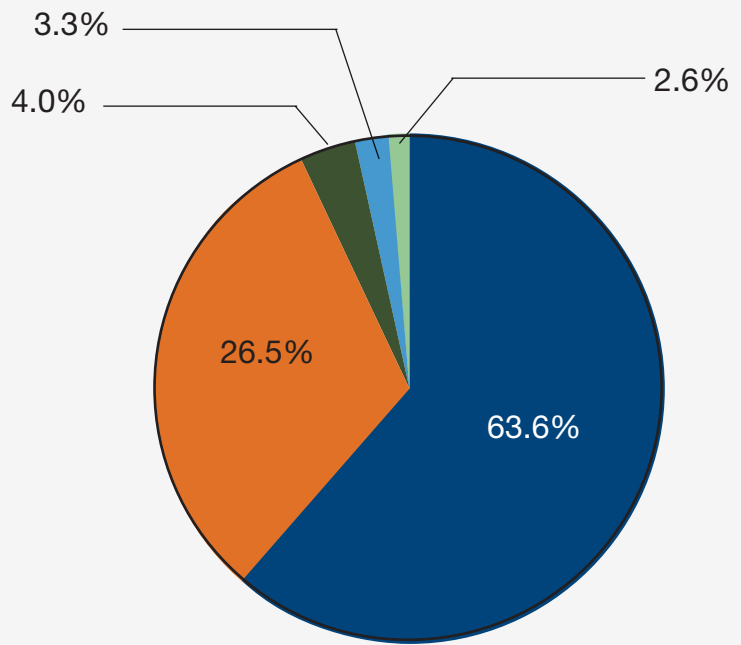
# Oasis Art Gallery

The Oasis Art Gallery's exhibition "WAS/NS During the Coronavirus Period" highlighted the different perspectives and experiences of Villagers during the pandemic, strengthening community by creating space for discussion and reflection during a difficult time.



**Total Grants  
2019-2020:  
\$377,903**

- Primary School
- The School for Peace
- Humanitarian Aid Program
- Pluralistic Spiritual Center/  
Oasis Art Gallery
- Nadi-Youth Club



“ My visit to Neve Shalom in the 1980s was the highlight of a memorable trip to Israel. I left feeling that the only hope for Israel is at Neve Shalom. Over the years, I’ve come to see my thinking then was too narrow: that Neve Shalom is the beacon of hope for all of our divided world. It’s not merely the Middle East that falls into “us” and “them” thinking, intensifying rivalries and demonize the “other.” It’s all of us. The Neve Shalom community reminds us that we’re all in this together. They show us how to live according to the Better Angels of our nature— if only we pay attention. ”

—Carol DeChant, Sarasota FL

**AMERICAN FRIENDS OF NEVE SHALOM/WAHAT AL-SALAM, INC.  
STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

	<u>August 31,</u>	
	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash	\$ 171,386	\$ 159,357
<b>BOARD DESIGNATED ASSETS</b>		
Investments - board designated	252,609	237,392
<b>DONOR RESTRICTED ASSETS</b>		
Investments held for endowment purposes	557,098	509,424
<b>OTHER ASSETS</b>		
Promises to give	50,000	50,000
Security deposits	800	800
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,031,893</b>	<b>\$ 956,973</b>
<b><u>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</u></b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accrued retirement contribution	\$ 1,133	\$ 1,074
Small Business Administration, PPP loan	19,200	-
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>20,333</b>	<b>1,074</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	201,853	209,083
Board designated	252,609	237,392
With donor restrictions	557,098	509,424
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>1,011,560</b>	<b>955,899</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 1,031,893</b>	<b>\$ 956,973</b>

See accompanying independent auditor's report and notes to financial statements.



**AMERICAN FRIENDS OF NEVE SHALOM/WAHAT AL-SALAM, INC.  
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS**

	<b>Year Ended August 31,</b>	
	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>NET ASSETS WITHOUT DONOR RESTRICTIONS:</b>		
Operating revenues and other support:		
Contributions	\$ 578,853	\$ 634,885
Interest and dividends	8,005	10,142
Grant - SBA EIDL Advance	2,000	-
Other operating revenue	214	654
<b>Total operating revenues and other support</b>	<b>589,072</b>	<b>645,681</b>
Operating expenses:		
Program services	500,005	496,424
Support	35,774	46,205
Fundraising	52,518	48,506
<b>Total operating expenses</b>	<b>588,297</b>	<b>591,135</b>
<b>Operating income</b>	<b>775</b>	<b>54,546</b>
Other :		
Realized and unrealized gains (losses) on investments	7,212	(6,057)
Net assets released from restrictions	-	15,000
<b>Increase in net assets without donor restrictions</b>	<b>7,987</b>	<b>63,489</b>
<b>NET ASSETS WITH DONOR RESTRICTIONS:</b>		
Investment income from donor restricted investments	47,674	1,475
Net assets released from restrictions	-	(15,000)
<b>Increase (decrease) in net assets with donor restrictions</b>	<b>47,674</b>	<b>(13,525)</b>
<b>Change in net assets</b>	<b>55,661</b>	<b>49,964</b>
<b>Net assets at beginning of year</b>	<b>955,899</b>	<b>905,935</b>
<b>Net assets at end of year</b>	<b>\$ 1,011,560</b>	<b>\$ 955,899</b>

See accompanying independent auditor's report and notes to financial statements.



**AFNSWAS Financial Management:** AFNSWAS a 501(c)(3) organization in good standing, fully compliant with provisions required under the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 and is independently audited, annually, by James Vanstrom & Company of Falconer, NY which has consistently reported satisfactory results. Internal controls are implemented through an internal Audit Committee. The Board of Directors exercises full discretion and control over all grants to Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam through a multi-stage process that begins when the Board and the AFNSWAS staff meet with NSWAS representatives. The Board decides, from a list of potential projects, what it should solicit funding for and then, after a careful consideration of the formal grant proposals submitted to AFNSWAS by NSWAS, determines which grants, and how much, will get funded. The Board, through on-site visits by individual directors and through extensive reporting by NSWAS, ensures that the funds have been used as intended.



**You can find our newsletters and activity reports on our website:**  
<http://oasisofpeace.org/newsletters>

**All the photos in this publication are pre-pandemic**



# Oasis of Peace

American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

229 North Central Ave, Ste 401, Glendale, CA 91203

Tel: (818) 662-8883 • [afnswas@oasisofpeace.org](mailto:afnswas@oasisofpeace.org) • [www.oasisofpeace.org](http://www.oasisofpeace.org) • <https://www.facebook.com/oasisofpeaceNeveShalom>

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. American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam