

## David Matz, Supporter and Board Member since 1982



Thirty-two years ago, David Matz volunteered to serve on the fledgling board of directors of AFNSWAS and has continued his high-energy service whether on the Executive Committee or as president, treasurer or vice president. Since volunteering with the Peace Corps and co-founding the Law School at the University of Liberia, David Matz engaged in a lifetime of work in mediation, dispute resolution and conflict transformation. As part of this work, David has designed and developed mediation and negotiation training for attorneys, health care professionals, prison superintendents, Palestinian judges and attorneys, and mediators in Israel. He has served as consultant on Alternative Dispute resolution for the Ministry of Justice and the High Court of Israel while his parallel commitment has taken him to Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam more times than we can count.

David is currently working on nurturing the development of the Peace College at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam and its new MA program in partnership with Graduate Program in Dispute Resolution of, which he serves as Director, in the Department of Conflict Resolution, Human Security and Global Governance at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. His work in mediation — whether helping to improve communication, eliminating conflicts based on misunderstandings or helping the parties break out of tunnel vision — is an integral part of preventing the escalation or expansion of a conflict, an outcome that moves things in the right direction and gives participants a reason to hope.

David now brings his talents and focus to the new Peace College precisely because it will prepare professionals in all areas of work, using all of the educational opportunities at the Village as a living laboratory. “My work with Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is now in its 33rd year. The Villagers are my heroes because they do the extremely difficult, even painful, day-to-day work of making peace. They may struggle endlessly, but they don't quit.”

For David Matz, his work on behalf of the American Friends of NSWAS is the best way he has found to help these peace-builders do their work.

## Medical Supplies Reach Al-Shifa Hospital

This summer, in response to the war in Gaza, many residents of the village of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam wanted to express their concern and find a way to help the Palestinians living in Gaza. They held a Village-wide meeting, and together decided to take up a collection to assist the wounded by contributing to the Al-Shifa Hospital in Gaza. They invited friends from around the world to contribute to the fund, and jointly raised more than \$50,000. The money raised allowed the Village, aided by NSWAS resident Dr. Raed Haj Yahya, to get medical supplies and equipment to the hospital. Dr. Haj Yahya coordinated the response and delivered surgical sets, ultrasonic cleaners, emergency kits for ambulances, stainless steel and emergency trolleys, and hospital beds. Dr. Haj Yahya arranged the delivery and continues to volunteer at Al-Shifa with Physicians for Human Rights.



The Humanitarian Assistance Project, which includes both first and second generation Villagers, plans to continue its work, first by continuing to work with Al-Shifa and other hospitals and helping get needed equipment, and then, by assisting needy families in Gaza find needed treatment in Israel for their family members.

Rita Boulos, Village member and HAP participant says, *“There is always time for pain and time for healing, we hope the time for pain has passed ... NSWAS and our international friends extend our support to the people in Gaza to help heal their wounds and burns from the recent war.”*

Peace is Still Possible

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## Looking Ahead to a City Near You!

**Between January 26 and February 13, 2015, members of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam will be visiting New York City, Los Angeles, San Diego and San Francisco and we may be able to arrange a stop in the Washington, DC area. Stay tuned for more information.**

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.

### The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam

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Donate: [www.oasisofpeace.org/donate](http://www.oasisofpeace.org/donate)

Please Support  
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Making a Donation!

2014 Year End

AMERICAN FRIENDS OF  
*Neve Shalom*  *Wahat al-Salam*  
OASIS OF PEACE

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Medical Supplies for Gaza Update

## Letter from the President of AFNSWAS

Dear Friends,



Board President Judy Dubin with friend Rami Manaa, whom she met when he was in the Primary School.

What an incredible year it has been at the Village of NSWAS — despite what is going on in the larger Israel/Palestine area. The people in the Village are moving ahead with their lives, working for peace and showing the world how — despite the conflict — people can live together.

I want to share with you my impressions of my recent trip to the Village. Whenever I go to Israel, the Village is my home-base (actually, it feels like my second home). It was exciting to be back in Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam after eight years. It felt familiar and it felt safe.

I went for the Annual General Meeting of the International Friends Association of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam groups, which includes dozens of representatives from throughout Europe and the United States. The meeting is an intensive three-day briefing and up-date on Village activities, including reports from the various educational institutions: the Primary School, the School for Peace, the Pluralistic Spiritual Community Center, the Spiritual Center's Peace Museum and Gallery, and the Nadi Afterschool Youth Leadership Development Program. Included in the Annual General Meeting was a report on the increasing use of and need for the Village's Fred Segal Peace Library, and the developing Peace College. Another highlight was hearing Galia Golan, one of my Israeli heroes and a board member of the Peace College (expected to open in the Fall of 2015), describe plans for its future.

As I walked around the Village and listened to its dedicated leaders, I thought about my investment there, both in time and money. I hugged my special friends. I sat with a few of the kindergartners in their classroom and watched them pick out their names in Arabic and Hebrew and thought about how lucky I am to be connected to this place of sanity and wisdom and to be able to support it. I will return.

The following pages include reports from the educational programs that the American Friends of NSWAS supports in the Village. They describe where your donations go and the impact of your donation on that work. I thank you for your continuing support and commitment, and for being a part of this journey.

Judy Dubin, President of the Board

### Please Support Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam by Making a Donation

The American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam encourages, supports, and publicizes the projects of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, the “Oasis of Peace.” For more than 30 years, NSWAS has been dedicated to dialogue, cooperation, and a genuine and durable peace between Arabs and Jews, Palestinians and Israelis.

Learn about the many ways you can support the programs at [www.oasisofpeace.org](http://www.oasisofpeace.org).

## The Nadi: Where Youth Are Leading the Way

In Israel, schools are segregated according to whether you are Jewish or Arab. But after attending the Primary School at NSWAS, Arab children are allowed to attend a regional high school that welcomes students from Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam. There, both the Jewish and Arab children from the Village encounter a different world, a world where, following the war in Gaza, anti-Arab racism is ever-present and openly accepted. The pressure on Jewish students to join with the dominant culture or be ostracized themselves, or on the Arab students to continue as successful students while enduring racial slurs and threats, is enormous.



All secondary schools in Israel also have youth centers, either Jewish or Arab – but the Village has a youth center that welcomes BOTH Arab and Jewish students, because that is who are our students. In the Village, the Nadi is the space where the youth who live in the Village, most of them graduates of the Primary School, can come together, find their friends, and find mentors who prepare them for dealing pro-actively with the challenges confronting them. At the Nadi they can become mentors to other youth and can model the type of change they want to see in themselves and others. Many of the youth consider the NADI Youth Center a second home, a relaxed and safe place to hang out and reflect on the conflict around them. They come to support one another, to participate in Youth Leadership programs, to study, and to be normal teenagers together in a region that wants them to be separate.

“We sat on the grass and started by asking what the Village wants for us ... Did they understand how important it was for their kids to have strong character for leadership?”

— Karin Guggenheim-Shbeta, 17 yrs

This year, the students at the Nadi are developing a plan for the Primary School to prepare the younger students for unexpected social barriers they are likely to meet. The students have also arranged to work with the principal of the regional high school to reduce racism and the sense of conflict. They are working with individual teachers there to develop classroom strategies for addressing racism when it occurs. The students and teachers at this high school are watching the students from Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam, learning from them, and slowly changing their minds about many of their prejudices. The influence of these teens from the Nadi at Neve Shalom/Wahat al Salam is spreading, slowly and surely, one student, one teacher, one school, at a time.

## The Primary School’s Deep Roots Are Growing Stronger

The Primary School is significantly deepening its focus this year, creating more opportunities in the School’s physical environment. Surrounded by fields, open space and groves of trees, it is truly an oasis. Learning from that environment by connecting the children to local agriculture — whether by making oil from olives or juice from grapes, or by planting edible gardens or building a greenhouse together— helps connect the children and their families more deeply to the land, and in turn to the people around them. The school playground is also integral to both language learning and social integration, so formal plans are being developed and revised to integrate the environmental curriculum with a fully accessible expanded range of play spaces and activities.



Just as the students strengthen their language learning and social integration skills by learning in two languages and two narratives, the teachers also receive in-service training, focusing on issues of coexistence, identity and working together. Their training also takes place in two languages with two narratives. As the new School Principal said recently,

“With the recent war, increasing evidence of intolerance and lack of recognition of multiculturalism in Israeli society, the Primary School’s role has become more important, and its mission to develop curricula that can contribute to an accepting, respectful society more relevant.”

— Carmella Ferber, Principal

What’s next? The principal plans to involve parents in issues of Arab-Jewish relations and to hold seminars on issues of coexistence for parents and teachers together. She is also excited about a multi-year study and evaluation of the student’s language acquisition and skills that will begin in collaboration with Dr. Ora Mor, a bilingualism specialist from Haifa University.

## Pluralistic Spiritual Community Center: Healing Wounds



The staff at the Pluralistic Spiritual Community Center (PSCC) faced many challenges this year due to the Gaza conflict. However, the message is clear that when those who believe in peace are determined to come together, they will — no matter what the circumstances!

With that commitment, the 40 members of the youth group called “Massa-Massar” decided to form two groups, one for 10<sup>th</sup>-graders and another for 18-to-24 year-olds. The PSCC will continue its connection with “Open House Ramle” and create a series of 12 weekly encounters, including a two-day encounter for the 10<sup>th</sup>-graders of the Jewish Givat Brener High School and the Arab Orthodox School in the town of Ramle. The 18-to-

24 year-olds will take part in two-day workshops taking place once every five weeks.

Most recently, 38 youth participants (half Bedouin and half Jewish) from southern communities close to Gaza kicked off their year of volunteer service work at the PSCC with the Arab-Jewish Center for Equality, Empowerment and Cooperation (AJEEC), where facilitated meetings, art, storytelling and nature workshops helped to solidify strong relations for the coming year.

In the near future, and in collaboration with “Open House Ramle” and the Kehilat Birkat Shalom Congregation, the PSCC is planning a four-month long program for 16 to 20 women in the area of Ramle-Lyddah with the goal of creating lasting bonds among women.

In order to create bonds of reconciliation between different worlds, says PSCC Director, Dafna Swartz, “We need to create new tools and a fresh concept of self as it relates to the other. How do we conduct ourselves in separation? How attuned are we to unity? And to what degree can power relations of ‘me or you’ make room for ‘me AND you’?”

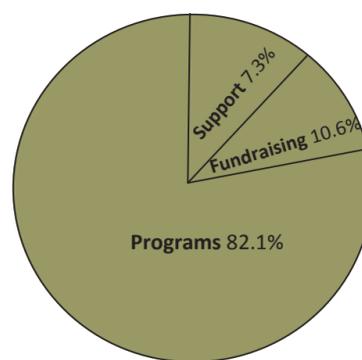
## School for Peace: Taking Action at Home and Branching Out Globally

The School for Peace (SFP) has been hard at work this year, expanding its partnerships and creating new programs in an effort to counteract negative repercussions from the most recent conflict in Gaza. It has added new courses with the Arab Student Unions, which provide tools to deal with the racism and hostility in today’s society. It has also increased the number of courses at Ben Gurion University in the Negev. The SFP has developed a strategic planning committee with Israel’s pro-peace parties, human rights NGOs and its partners in Palestine, and has been hosting meetings and planning on-the-ground activities. The first meeting resulted in a very successful demonstration in the Arab town of Tira, which hundreds of Jews and Arabs attended. In addition to hearing from key figures in the pro-peace community in Israel, the demonstration included speeches by members of the Knesset Muhammed Barcha and Dov Hanin.

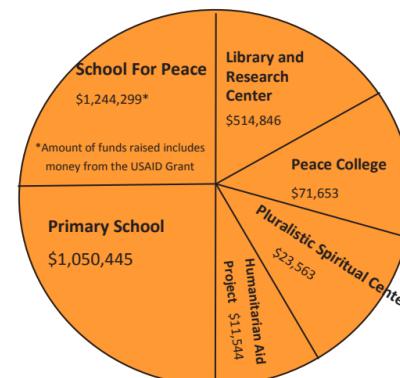
With the goal of influencing those with influence, the SFP is continuing its “Change Agents” courses which are directed at key social sectors. It has also created workshops for youth, teachers and parents of NSWAS Primary School. SFP Director Nava Sonnenschein is also excited to announce plans for a Global Peace Initiative for 24 women from Turkey, Palestine, Israel, India, and South Africa.

In order to ensure steady growth of the SFP and its networks, the SFP held regional forums and meetings for past graduates in Nazareth, Tel Aviv, and Jerusalem. The SFP will focus next on projects that include working with young Arab women as they transition from village to university life, and empowering Arab student unions. The SFP is expanding partnerships with the Arab-Jewish Center for Equality, Empowerment and Cooperation (AJEEC), Tawasul, and the Arab Center for Alternative Planning in the Galilee.

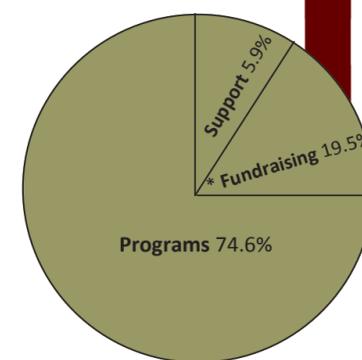
## Where Your Donations Go: AFNSWAS Report



How Our Money Was Allocated in the Last 5 years



How Your Donations Supported the Village in the Last 5 Years



How Our Money Was Allocated For 2013-2014

\*We are investing in growing the development arm of AFNSWAS

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