Generations of Generosity

Helping Palestinians with cleft lips and palates

Key surgeons involved with the Embracing Life Project—Drs. John van Aalst, Wa’el Al Halaby and Mahmoud Abu Hatab—joined UPA staff, board members and major donors at a dinner celebrating the launch of the project in Washington, DC, on May 19th. To learn more visit: helpupa.org/embracing-life.

We would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to friends of UPA Jordan and Yousef (pictured at right) on their upcoming marriage! In their time of joy, the couple has chosen to celebrate their marriage by improving the lives of others. "We were asleep. They banged on the doors and shouted. Soldiers completely surrounded the neighborhood. There were dogs and aircraft. It was frightening," said Nureddin.

After demolishing the home, the soldiers left with them only memories of the life they once had. Nureddin is the founder and principal of the Siraj al-Quds School for visually impaired and sighted children in Jerusalem. Siraj al-Quds has provided an education for over 120 children ranging in age from four to six years old since opening in Jerusalem in 2007. (continued inside)
Children’s Fund & Food Program Projects: April - June 2015

Al-Malah Charitable Society
Beit Sahour, West Bank

Food Program

With a grant from UPA, Al-Malah promoted healthy eating and physical exercise habits for 18 intellectually challenged youth and their parents.

The project held workshops once per month led by a nutritionist, an occupational therapist and a physical therapist, respectively. Participants learned about proper food intake, food preparation and cooking skills, obesity and other diet related health complications and physical exercise.

The group worked together in preparing meals made from vegetables, fruit, rice, chicken and beef. Over the course of the project, participants began asking for healthier, more diverse foods and practiced portion control.

Community Rehabilitation Center for the Disabled - Gaza Camp
Jerash, Jordan

Children’s Fund

UPA has partnered with the Community Rehabilitation Center (see feature to the left) to improve its sustainability and quality of service for the disabled living in and around Gaza Camp.

To raise community awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, with a focus on women with disabilities, the Center held a six-day summer camp in June with a grant from UPA. Participants included fifty children with a disability, fifty without a disability and twenty young volunteers.

Save Youth Future Society
Gaza City, Gaza Strip

Children’s Fund

In the economically strangled Gaza Strip, Save Youth Future Society has sought to improve the food security of children still displaced by the war last summer. With a grant from UPA, they distributed food parcels to 70 families in which the breadwinner had been injured or killed.

Each parcel included items purchased on the local market, including flour, sugar, rice, olive oil, beans, lentils, milk powder, jam, canned meat and tuna, hummus, cheese and tomato sauce.

The total child beneficiaries reached by the project were 118 girls and 150 boys.

Serving Disabled Refugees (cont.)

Gaza Camp, in Jerash, Jordan, is home to approximately 24,000 Palestinian refugees who fled Gaza after the 1967 war. A key part of the camp is the Community Rehabilitation Center for the Disabled. Established by UNRWA in 1985 with an initial 10-year fund from Ofna, the center provides training and support to people with disabilities.

The Center has struggled to stay open since 2010, when a Swedish charity discontinued its support. The Center currently depends on individual donations and small project grants to continue to provide needed services to the community.

Families benefit from the Center’s special education classes, therapy and community-based rehabilitation services. The Center hosts workshops that raise awareness of the rights of the disabled and ways to integrate the disabled into society.

That is why UPA has stepped in to help the Center become self-sustaining.

Hasan Siam, 31, pictured below, is a key part of that effort. He started training in the Center when he was three and has since become a member of its team.

He defied his deafness by learning sign language, enabling him to go to school. After the seventh grade, he studied carpentry at a vocational center. Since mastering the required skills in 2003, he now trains people in the Center’s carpentry workshop, passing his knowledge on to the next generation.

In 2016, 97% of UPA’s operating expenses went to programs that directly benefited Palestinian communities in need.