

Issue 11 • Summer 2016

- **Food Security Program activities during Ramadan**
- **“How do I know my donation to UPA will make a difference?”**
- **Small Business Development updates in Gaza**

and more...



Letter from the Executive Director

“How do I know my donation to UPA will make a difference?”

Dear Friend of UPA,

If I were to make a list of “frequently asked questions” from donors and prospective donors to UPA, I would place the following near the top of the list:

“How do I know my donation to UPA will make a difference?”

This question gets to the very heart of UPA’s effectiveness and efficiency as a non-profit organization. In answering, I can list metrics, financial details and success stories.

I also point out that several independent organizations are devoted to helping donors make informed decisions about which charities to support based on an extensive list of criteria. In the last month, two of most prominent charity evaluators – Charity Navigator and the Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance – have given UPA their highest endorsement.

For the fifth consecutive year, Charity Navigator – which describes itself as America’s largest independent charity evaluator – has awarded UPA four out of four stars for financial performance, accountability and transparency. They recently expanded the basis of their analysis for several metrics from one year to three years’ of the latest data from annual filings with the IRS.

The Better Business Bureau’s Wise Giving Alliance recently included UPA as a “BBB Accredited Charity” for meeting all 20 of their standards, which address charity governance, effectiveness reporting, finances, fundraising, appeal accuracy and other issues.

This is a credit to the entire organization, including you, our donors and supporters. The competition for charitable dollars has never been greater. Every dollar you give is hard-earned, and it is important to us that you understand how carefully we treat your donations.



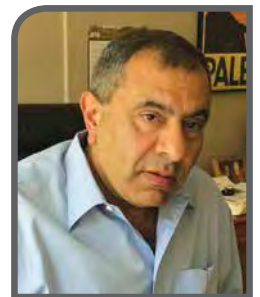
UPA earned these ratings. Our staff and our partners work hard to get the absolute most we can out of every dollar. UPA is able to operate with very low fundraising costs. We can do that, in part, because of the loyalty of our donors. You give because our mission is in harmony with your beliefs, you support UPA because you feel we can put your compassion into action, but most importantly you give because we have earned your trust.

We hope that recognition from organizations such as the BBB and Charity Navigator assure you that that trust is merited. We invite you to learn more about these ratings and use them when encouraging your family and friends to consider UPA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Saleem F. Zaru".

Saleem F. Zaru
Executive Director



What's New in UPA's Programs



The **Embracing Life Project (ELP)** empowers Palestinians to provide self-sufficient, comprehensive care for cleft lips and palates, and other craniofacial anomalies. In addition to providing patients with the best medical treatment available, ELP also ensures that each individual family's needs are met.

This starts with Hassan Zawahrah, UPA's ELP Research Coordinator in the West Bank. He records patient medical information prior to their consultation and is there to answer questions parents have about their child's condition and status. After hours, Hassan answers phone calls from parents and hospitals.

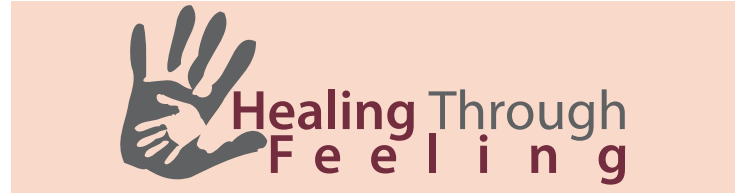
And he makes home visits. In May, Hassan met Muhammad, who was born in Ramallah with a bilateral cleft palate and left cleft lip. His mother, Israa, became distressed when she realized she couldn't feed her baby with a regular bottle. She also worried about her child's future.

Hassan taught her how to feed Muhammad with a special bottle engineered to fit infant cleft lips, and he helped ease her concerns about the journey that lay ahead for her son.

For more information, please visit:

www.helpupa.org/embracing-life/

"I feel great because every mother and father is very important to our team, because they live in hard situations, and people here love to help and support each other," said Hassan.



During the program's pilot phase, Healing Through Feeling has reached seven kindergartens – including **67** teachers and **600** children. Over the summer, UPA plans to hire additional Gaza mental health practitioners to increase the number of teachers, parents and children the program serves.

According to a survey conducted by Save the Children in the wake of the 2014 conflict:

- **7** out of **10** children in the worst hit areas suffer regular nightmares
- **75%** of children in these areas experience bedwetting
- **89%** experience consistent feelings of fear
- Over **50%** of children in certain areas refuse to go to school

Because of the stigma associated with mental health in Palestinian society, the symptoms of trauma often go unaddressed. Healing Through Feeling's solution is to train local mental health practitioners to teach parents and teachers to recognize the symptoms of trauma in children. The program then helps parents and teachers take steps to address the symptoms, and it assesses children to pinpoint those in need of greater support.

UPA is also proud to announce its recent partnership with the **American Psychological Association**, which has granted UPA the right to translate, print and distribute five of its most effective children's books to use with parents, teachers and children.

For more information, please visit:

www.helpupa.org/healing-through-feeling/



Food Security Program

"Thinking of Others" during Ramadan

This Ramadan, through the Food Security Program, UPA distributed food parcels to marginalized families in Gaza and food vouchers to residents of the most impoverished Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan.

UPA staff and partner representatives hand-delivered food parcels to **240** families in Gaza with a focus on female-headed households, families in which at least one member has a disability. Containing a variety of foods, such as meat, fish, cheeses, beans, oils, dates, rice and powdered milk, the parcels supplement and enrich the diet of a family of eight for one month.

With **42%** of Palestinians in Gaza unemployed, families do not have the means to purchase enough nutritious food, leading to a prevalence of malnutrition among marginalized families in Gaza.

UPA also supported Palestinian refugees living in Gaza Camp in Jerash, Jordan with food vouchers for **150** families to buy food and essential items.

"Gaza Camp" was established by refugees from Gaza during the 1967 War. Over half of the camp's **27,000** residents earn less than the national poverty rate in Jordan, roughly **\$3.15** per day.



We'd like to thank our donors for being a *"Candle in the Dark"** this Ramadan.

* The theme of the campaign was inspired by Mahmoud Darwish's poem, *"Think of Others,"* especially the final line, which reads:

*"As you think of others far away, think of yourself
(say: If only I were a candle in the dark)".*



Small businesses with big hope

Following a successful project that promoted entrepreneurship among young unemployed men in Gaza (the new small business owners have fully paid back their small start-up interest-free loans to UPA), UPA has expanded its Small Business Development program to include unemployed women in Gaza, many of whom are the head of their household.

Huda is one of the **13** participants who submitted her proposal to UPA for a small business, and has received the tools and equipment necessary to start it.

A year ago, Huda only had one machine in a small dark room on the roof of her house, and almost in ruins.

Her life has since changed. Huda now runs a garment workshop with sewing machines, materials and space provided by UPA for her to prosper in her business. She sells the products at affordable prices on the local market.

With a smile on her face, Huda said, ***"Look at my workshop now! I have lots of products. I have three machines, materials and a proper clean space for my products. I am also helping my children get quality food and better education."***



Children's Program Partner Highlight

A.M. Qattan Foundation

UPA is proud to partner with the A.M. Qattan Foundation, which works to promote education and culture, primarily among Palestinian children, as well as young artists and teachers.

The ongoing hardships of living in Gaza are especially difficult for children. Headquartered in Ramallah, West Bank, Qattan is also firmly established in Gaza, where it reaches out to young Palestinians seeking a safe place to be and to thrive.

Thanks to your support, UPA is able to help Qattan bring its educational, cultural and artistic activities to areas of Gaza where access to such programming is limited (such as Khan Yunis, Khirbet Al Adas and Wadi al-Salqa).

Qattan offers a variety of activities that promote creative thinking, cooperation, problem-solving, self-expression and public speaking. By engaging in pottery making, "open-mic" poetry performances and large painting projects, among other activities, children discover and explore deeper and richer talents within themselves.



University Scholarship Program

UPAconnect

The gift that cannot be demolished, confiscated or occupied

This fall, the UPA University Scholarship Program will celebrate its 30th anniversary. Because of the generous financial support of individuals like you, UPA has been able to give 2,500 bright, aspiring Palestinians the opportunity to obtain a university education in a field they are passionate about. Donations to UPA over the last three decades have made a tangible difference in the lives of the students, their families, their communities and Palestinian society as a whole.

A UPA scholarship covers a large portion of a student's tuition costs and continues throughout the duration of their degree program. Each year, the Program accepts two new students (one male, one female) from each of eight partner universities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.



"Since I was young, I loved helping people and want to bring smiles to people's faces and ease their pain. That is what motivated me to do a degree in medicine. I plan to specialize in treating tumors. The scholarship means a lot to me. Thank you for helping me." (Wafa (left), 19, Al Quds University)



Team Iqraa, is currently training for its 9th running season in the Washington, DC, area. As a partner of UPA since 2008, Iqraa, which means "read" in Arabic, has raised over **\$188,000** for UPA's University Scholarship Program. Its runners are united in the team's slogan and mission, "running for a brighter Palestine."

Last year, **14** runners trained with Iqraa and raised over **\$27,000**. This year, Iqraa's goal is to raise over **\$30,000** for education in Palestine. In October, its runners will participate in the Baltimore Half-Marathon or the Marine Corps Marathon. (Many also participate in the Baltimore 5K or the Marine Corp 10K.)

Iqraa also partners with the Marathon Charity Cooperation, an umbrella group of locally-based charities, many with international reach. The MCC and its charity partners provide training and race day support, including food and beverages for all member runners. Several Iqraa runners are also MCC coaches and the group meets at about a half-dozen outdoor trails in the metropolitan area on a rotating basis to train.

"Running with Team Iqraa is a great way to get in shape or improve fitness, meet good and dedicated people, and perform selfless charity work for a great cause," said Kirk Campbell, Iqraa Coordinator.



United Palestinian Appeal

1330 New Hampshire Ave NW
Suite 104
Washington, DC 20036 U.S.A.

Non-Profit Org.
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Jacksonville, FL
Permit No. 34

Join the Circle of Hope!

Through UPA's monthly-giving program, you can become a sustaining supporter of UPA's work to alleviate the suffering of Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Jordan.

\$10 per month

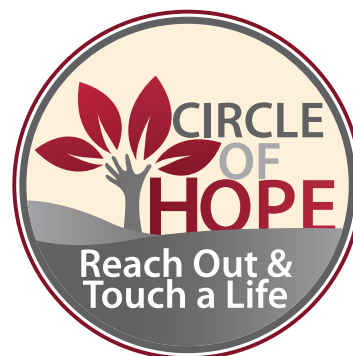
Will provide 3 children with art, music & theater activities OR supplement 1 person's diet.

\$25 per month

Will provide daily hot meals for 1 child OR enable 3 children to be part of the Healing Through Feeling Program.

\$100 per month

Will help a student attend university in the West Bank or Gaza.



• **By Mail:** Fill out the enclosed envelope with your credit card information, amount, and check, "Monthly."

• **Online:** helpupa.org/hope

• **By Phone:** 855-659-5007, ext. 202

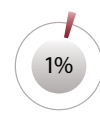
In 2015, 97% of UPA's operating expenses went to programs that directly benefited Palestinian communities in need.



Programs



Management



Fundraising

UPA is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible according to applicable laws.



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