

WI'AM ANNUAL REPORT: 2016



PALESTINIAN CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION CENTER

Director: Zoughbi Zoughbi

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A Word from the Director:

From the continued building of illegal settlements, to the election of Trump as POTUS, the future and hope for a sovereign Palestinian state seems to be dwindling by a string. The settlements continue their expansion and the world governments continue to rain down their support for Israel and the injustices it commits under the false name of security. Although much of this year, 2016, has been characterized by uncertainty, fear, pain, and panic, we at Wi'am choose to focus on hope. As Samuel Smiles wrote: "Hope is like the sun, which, as we journey toward it, casts the shadow of our burden behind us." Our burden is real, and it is very heavy, but we carry it through our hope for a better year, in which we tear down many walls of separation and anonymity and we construct bridges of compassion, understanding, and hope in their place. At Wi'am, we continue our struggle toward justice. Our hope comes from the world around us: the trees and flowers blossoming in spite of the skunk water and sewage that poison them, children smiling and laughing in the shadow of the wall, and supporters visiting us regardless of all the warnings and cautions they receive. As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope". We at Wi'am, placed under the shadow of the wall, continue to make the decision to be authors of hope for the hopeless and believe that every challenge and difficulty is a masked opportunity for creativity and planting hope. As Martin Luther King Jr. advises us, we must continue in our hope for justice with sacrifice, suffering, and struggle. To these "3 S's of justice," I would add sustainability as our fourth. No injustice may last forever, and we work towards a sustainable and lasting justice for all. We deeply thank you for your continued advocacy and support. May we one day meet in celebration of our triumph over injustice.

"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals".

-Martin Luther King

With Agape,

Zoughbi Zoughbi

Introduction

In 2016, Wi'am continued working toward its mission of creating space for conflict transformation, nonviolence, youth empowerment, women's activism and childhood creativity. Wi'am Centre has been bustling with a number of exciting events for our community. Our community gatherings have enabled us to engage and exchange among stakeholders. Children's activities, including our summer camp, as well as advocacy campaigns, non-violent trainings, youth activism, women empowerment, mediations and meetings have given all members of our community, old and young, the opportunity to learn and grow. Guided by the values of justice, equality and peace, our mission is to inspire people, especially children and women, to act as agents of social changes. By being role models for them, they themselves may become role models from whom others may learn.

We are at a critical juncture that calls for our best efforts, knowledge, and full drive to influence and foster community change, understanding, hope, and justice for all. Each and every employee, intern, volunteer and activist contributes to our struggle for making our world a place in which we may all live peacefully. Our dedicated staff tackles a variety of cases, many of which involve hard-to-reach actors and social and cultural challenges to peace and resolution. However, we find that even under these troublesome circumstances, it is possible to mitigate conflicts within our community through inclusion, participation, and empathy with the neediest. In our experience, this approach allows for the fostering of remarkable, sustainable, and necessary change which requires tireless perseverance, understanding, and patience.

Our center is dedicated to the manifestation of peace borne out of justice for all. To achieve this goal, we implement innovative education, training research and practice, and nonviolent resistance and advocacy. We provide a forum in which community members may share their histories and experiences in an open and respectful fashion. In this report, we highlight the activities and programs that allow our center to act as a catalyst to bring about social and communal change. At Wi'am, we transform marginalized into equal citizens and residents whose rights are protected and lives valued.

Sulha: Community Based Mediation

Sulha is an Arabic word that refers to peace-making and collective conflict resolution among families. While its roots predate Islam, its efficacy resonates with us today, and so Wi'am aims to implement this tradition of sulha in modern-day Bethlehem. In the past year, Wi'am's mediators have dealt with around 350 cases of community conflicts. 80% of these have engulfed entire families in bitter feuds that have rattled the core of these families and spread animosity among its members. Example of these cases include inter-youth familial conflicts, car accidents, domestic violence, school violence, and land and inheritance disputes. Thus, our staff must be capable of mediating issues as diverse as limited resources, communication problems, individual differences, generational gaps, ideologies, conflict of interests, psychological pressures, and unemployment and economic insecurity.



Here, we provide a short explanation as to Wi'am facilitates sulha. The mediator(s) shuttle back and forth between the disputants, always searching for a middle-ground that can bring the parties

involved together in search for justice, a much needed de-escalation that allows the parties to settle their differences peacefully, and finally to bring the parties, especially the more powerful, to a just resolution. In the shuttle phase, the mediator acts as a sponge, collecting the different views and narratives so that they may work with the disputants to unearth common ground. This delicate process is vital to the progress of the mediation. During the mediation process, the parties gather and share their narratives and discuss the ramifications of the conflict both in its current form and in any future prolongation of it. The parties consider which is best course of action according to their needs. The mediators help facilitate the conversation and ask questions to both parties to affirm their understanding of the chosen course of action and help tie any loose ends with the hope of avoiding future conflict.

Political unrest, resource insecurity, and rampant unemployment rates in Bethlehem, the West Bank, and Palestine in general, afflict the Palestinian milieu. They are in need of sulha. This need is evident in the fact that our caseload has increased in recent years. Waiting times at the courts have only gotten longer and more tedious. Sulha helps us in the prevention and reduction of community conflicts. The key of our mode of sulha is our ability to deploy mediators and counselors to complex situations of conflict at short notice to quell rising tensions before they spill over beyond anyone's control. Though eternal conflict is not inevitable, our work is time-sensitive. Our aim is to become ever-more nimble so that we may quickly identify and defuse communal stresses.

Sulha is long-term approach designed to mediate mistrust and to mend the damages that cycles of violence have wrought. Thus, the goal of sulha is not only to break patterns that have impeded successful reconciliation but also to set up opportunities for more sustained dialogue between individuals and groups. By transforming conflicts using non-violent mechanisms, Wi'am contributes to the fostering of peace among Palestinians. It sends a message that reason and dialogue can yield positive results.

Sulha is an opportunity to yield sustainable justice. Sulha does not seek punitive justice but rather, restorative justice. Wi'am's process does not alienate or exclude any parties; instead sulha gives them the opportunity to right their mistakes and become vibrant members of society.

Real-life Case Study:

Ihab A. and Ibrahim A. are cousins who have been in dispute over a piece of land since the death of their grandmother who left no written will. Ihab A. inherited a piece of land from his grandmother, while his cousin Ibrahim inherited furniture. The land and furniture were not part of any will, but were instead divided by Ihab's father. Ibrahim's father passed away 3 years ago and therefore had no say in the division of inheritance. Ibrahim protested what he thought was an unjust distribution and split and was not well received. This turned Ibrahim and his family towards words of anger, which later spiralled into verbal threats being shared between the cousins and their families. Ibrahim decided that he wanted to go to court and had contacted a lawyer right before Wi'am was asked to intervene. We accepted the invitation sent to us by Ihab and went to Ihab and Ibrahim separately to try and understand the conflict and their stories. While at Ibrahim's house we found out that there had been ill feelings between Ibrahim and Ihab's father over the division of the grandfather's lands and inheritance.

We continued in our shuttle diplomacy and spent a period of close to two months going back and forth between the cousins until we were able to reach a mutual agreement to meet in hopes of resolving this conflict outside of the courts and with both parties' cooperation and input. We met at Ibrahim's house and had a discussion about the meaning of inheritance to both parties. We then zoned in on the value of the inheritance each had received. The general conversation then continued into the shared history of conflict between both families and what each family wanted or envisioned as a plausible solution. After 4 or 5 meetings an agreement was met. Ihab decided that it was an uneven distribution of inheritance and that he would like to help make it more even, but would not like to give up any of his land. Both parties later agreed that Ihab could help Ibrahim cover 30% of the cost of purchasing a similar sized piece of land from the market. Toward the ending of the final meeting, one of our mediators suggested that both meet with a lawyer every few years to set up a living will, so as to avoid such conflicts in the future. In the end, the problem and conflict was solved and the relationship mended and strengthened.

Peer Mediation in Schools

Wi'am's work towards reducing violent behaviors and outburst in schools is manifest in its work with three schools in the Bethlehem area. This work targets approximately 300 students from grades 8, 9, and 10 from Dar El-Nadwa, Terra Sancta and the Shepherd's Schools in Biet Sahour. The goal of the mediation program is to give students the opportunity to resolve conflicts with their peers rather than to have an adult solve their problems. In this way, we empower the students and help them become more conscious of their environment, the causes of conflict, and the role they can play in ameliorating it. As we describe in greater detail below, we have had great success in this program's implementation and are beginning to plan for the expansion of the program. Our students are curious and hungry for more information, and they often have many questions for our trainers regarding mediation, sulha, and the justice systems in place in Palestine.



Mechanism of work and accomplishments

In the process of training, students get to learn the different stages of Mediation process:

1. Agree to Mediate
2. Storytelling and Gathering Points of View
3. Focus on Interests and Needs
4. Create Mutually Beneficial Solutions
5. Evaluate Options
6. Create an Agreement

When disputes arise in schools, student mediators work with the disputing parties to resolve the conflict in a way that benefits both parties. Moreover, our method emphasizes that the parties recognize the cause of the conflict. Once a dispute is referred to mediation, Wi'am assigns a peer mediator to meet with the parties and find a resolution that addresses the root problem.

Part of this program is the establishment of a peer-mediation desk in the schools with student peer mediator. Due to this innovation, we have observed the following benefits:

- Effectively reduced the number of student conflicts
- Strengthened one's self-respect and helped students understand that their peers have a perspective worth listening to, even if it is different than their own
- Created a more positive school environment
- Gave students the skills necessary to face adversity efficiently by allowing them to resolve conflicts and learn from others' experiences
- Helped students realize their own areas of strength and weakness, thereby allowing them to sharpen their skill set, including interpersonal communication and active listening

Furthermore, Wi'am has incorporated drama training in its peer mediations in schools as a tool to help students resolve conflicts they face. Drama has the ability to allow students to creatively express themselves. It can also serve to a means to create a mock conflict that simulates how students can grasp the complexity and interdependent cycle of conflict. Through drama, one can approach the problems that can lock students in conflict. It illuminates the adversary's point of

view not as “evil” or “subhuman” but as distinct. For these reasons, we started training students on popular drama and theatre techniques in combination with facilitating in-depth discussions about the prevalence and forms of violence in schools. Then, each class selected a problem that they encountered in their school and then began developing a theatre show that responded to that problem. Wi'am strives to engage more students in activities to combat school violence. Our programs stress that violence among individuals is not a mere “personal matter,” but rather, it contributes to a culture of violence, which is a societal problem that affects everyone.



Many of the children enjoyed this program and wanted to move forward with it. Fadia R., a 14 year-old student, said that she loved and admired the participation and interaction of her classmates in the program, saying, “We are openly discussing the topics related to conflict, violence and responsibilities and this is making us feel concerned and responsible.” Saeed, a 14 year-old student, expressed interest in participating in the Mediation Desk because he himself had experienced bullying and discrimination in the classroom and had felt helpless at the time. He explained, “I want to help my classmates to survive and rise up against any type of conflict and stereotyping,” adding that he wants to work on a better and violence-free environment at school. For him, this will help establish a better flow of communication between students and create an environment of shared respect.

Nonviolence and Advocacy Program

Wi'am Center presents itself as a Conflict Transformation Center because it believes that every conflict, large or small, can be met with the non violence. This non violence can take on a number of different forms: nonviolent active resistance to expose injustices to conflict mediation that emphasizes listening and understanding. The human mind is full of boundless creative ingenuity. With that faith, we stand strong in our conviction that with enough patience, understanding, and effort, every conflict can be reconciled and transformed in an agreeable fashion, in which one's search for justice does not infringe upon another's rights. This philosophy is why we believe in working on the ground in any and every community that invites us in. We refuse to cast words of hate but instead choose to nurture conflict into opportunities to engage fellow human beings.



Case Study: Candlelight Vigil for Cairo

In cooperation with civic organizations, political groups and social activists, Wi'am organized a

candlelight vigil in April 2017 at the Square in front of the Church of Nativity in solidarity with the victims of the Palm Sunday bomb attack on the Coptic Cathedral compound in Cairo. We unequivocally condemn this heinous crime. The event was joined by numerous Muslim and Christian faith leaders, members of the community, local council members, Scouts, the Counselor at the Egyptian embassy, local activists, women groups and social activists.

At the beginning of the vigil, Wi'am director, Zoughbi Zoughbi, welcomed the participants and denounced this reprehensible violence committed against innocent worshippers at St. Peter's Church in Cairo. These dark forces threaten not only the security of Egypt but also the entire Arab region. Extremist violence inflicts damage to social heritage and interfaith relations between Muslims and Christians..



Father Suhail Fakhoury, the parish priest of the Roman Catholic Church in Beit Sahour, spoke against this terrorist act against the church saying that all the terrorist acts committed by

terrorists in the Arab world undermine Arab societies and threatens their future.

Sheikh Maher Assaf, for his part, also repudiated the terrorist bombing, pointing out that the threat of terrorism is mushrooming in recent years. This wave of violence has diminished the capabilities the Arab and Islamic nations to face future challenge. He called for a worldwide move to repel the risk of terrorist ideologies by focusing on unity, solidarity, and awareness.

To add to this point, the representative of the local political groups expressed the condemnation of the political groups to this crime and called for more unity among the people.

The spokeswoman of the Women's Network in the Bethlehem area said that terrorism and occupation are two sides of the same coin, appealing for an end to crimes committed by the occupation and terrorist groups.

The Counselor of the Egyptian embassy thanked this national stand with the Egyptian people. He said that this stance reflects the depth of the historical ties that link the Egyptian and Palestinian people.



At the end of the solidarity vigil, Father Marwan Di'dis led the participants in reciting a Hymn for St. Francis of Assisi: "Lord, make me a tool for your peace."

Finally, Wi'am staff thanked that participant for their solidarity, humanity and sympathy with the victims sending deep and condolences to the families of the victims and all those who suffer around the world.

Case Study: Educational Excursions

Director Zoughbi led a group of international and local activists to meet with Archbishop Elias Chacour in Upper Galilee and Ibillin towards the end of February, 2016. Bishop Chacour debriefed the group on the socio-economic and political conditions of the Palestinian people since 1948, with particular emphasis on what happened in 1948 to his community, including the destruction of villages like Ikrit and Kufer Biram.

Archbishop Chacour discussed the process of developing Ibillin schools despite obstacles. He is

determined to provide an education for all children in his community. His message focused on reconciliation, forgiveness, and cooperation. Identifying himself as a Palestinian-Arab-Christian-Israeli, he has advocated for interfaith dialogue among neighbors.

After leaving Ibillin, Zoughbi led the group into the occupied Golan Heights territory to meet with two local activists, both of whom were imprisoned by the Israeli authorities for their political activism. Sulieman Maqt was the first Syrian prisoner in the aftermath of the 1967 War, and his son Bisher Maqt spent 22 years in prison. Together, these brave men told their stories of political repression and imprisonment. They discussed the current situation that several of their family members face as they remain in Israeli prisons. Despite remaining under occupation, they expressed their determination to continue fighting for their independence from Israeli rule.

World Peace Week

Tear gas does not discriminate; it affects Archbishops, Muftis, and laypeople, Palestinians and visiting foreigners alike. Clouds of tear gas whirled around us as Wi'am began its prayer service in celebration of the World Week for Peace in March 2016. Those clouds of tear gas were an example of what Wi'am stands in solidarity against. As the tears faded, our resolve only strengthened.

Partnering with the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Forum of the World Council of Churches and the National Coalition of Christian Organizations in Palestine, Wi'am organized a prayer service, with the tagline, "Pray, educate, and advocate for justice in Palestine at Wi'am, whose premises touch the Separation Wall."

Israeli soldiers interrupted the event multiple times by throwing tear gas at the inhabitants of the area and the adjacent Aida Refugee Camp. Fighting through the tears, the choking smell, and the tense atmosphere, the organizers and the participants continued their celebration as an act of defiance and persistence. Peace is always the way and our message of peace will prevail over all injustices.

Community members from all walks of life and women and men of religion from different faiths attended the event. No matter their denomination, they prayed together for peace. They asked God to lead those who do injustice toward the path of peace and humanity. During the event, the speakers reiterated the message that peace without justice is not peace. Wi'am Director Zoughbi and others called for unity based on agape, or divine love, and not on personal interest.

His Emeritus Beatitude Michael Sabbah aptly summarized the underlying rationale behind the event : “The path for freedom and liberation from fear is clear: It is peace, a just and total peace that respects the Palestinian like the Israeli. This is our message!”

As the event concluded, we invited our guests to light a candle in a used tear gas canister and place it in the map of The Holy Land constructed by Wi'am volunteers and staff. They were unified in their desire for peace to prevail in the Holy Land and beyond. The work of Wi'am centers on knocking the physical and psychological barriers that separate from one another.

Women's Program

In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “Injustice anywhere, is a threat to justice everywhere.” While many Palestinians often focus on the injustices lived as a result of the Israeli Occupation, we at Wi’am acknowledge that occupation is not the only source of injustice in our community. There are many local injustices against which we must take a firm stance. Wi’am women’s programs play an active role in combatting sexism, gender-based discrimination, and domestic violence within in Palestinian communities on physical, emotional, communal, and political levels. Wi’am is dedicated to relieving injustices and transforming the traditional patriarchal society of Palestine into a just and fair society in which all residents, regardless of gender, enjoy the same privileges, rights, and opportunities.



Wi'am's work with the women's program is multifaceted, with a focus on joint economic and female empowerment. Economic empowerment is directly connected to women's empowerment, as poverty affects the household and women's traditional domestic sphere. Currently, 25.8% of Palestinians live in poverty. Household food insecurity is on rise; based on the latest 2015 Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics study, food insecurity affects one-third of all households, with another one-third at risk. Our economic empowerment of women involves harnessing, developing, and helping our women market the skills they already have by connecting them with organizations, businesses, and other institutions. Other aspects of this work include developing workshops and training sessions in which we or guest trainers are able to teach basic computer skills, embroidery styles, and cooking techniques that the women may use to find jobs and sources of income. Wi'am is able to directly provide a source of income to these skilled women by welcoming international visitors for a meal and to our 'shopping therapy' store, where the women create and financially benefit from the products sold.

Wi'am's women's empowerment also involves educating our women on their rights and

affirming their vital role in Palestinian society. We reaffirm the influential power that women have; women are powerful, whether they choose to raise children and work at home or assume political office. Our programs give women the opportunity to speak publicly and facilitate conversations regarding controversial and important topics in our society. While the word ‘feminist’ hasn’t quite yet caught fire in the Arab World, we work under feminist principles within our gender justice program. In this manner, we assert that a woman’s struggle for rights as an equal member of society is not to belittle men, rather our dream is that every woman is afforded the same opportunities to pursue and fulfill her own dreams and ambitions as her male counterpart.

Anniversary of the Balfour Declaration

As part of Wiam’s preliminary celebration of Bethlehem as the 2020 Capital of Arab Culture, the Center organized a workshop on the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Both women’s and men’s groups from Bethlehem area were in attendance.

Wi’am’s director, Zoughbi Zoughbi, facilitated the conversation. He presented the historical background of the 1917 Balfour Declaration, which announced the British government’s support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine without regard for the indigenous Palestinian population. Balfour granted approval to the Zionist movement, using the rationale that this was “a land without a people for a people without a land.” The Balfour Declaration was instrumental in the creation of the State of Israel, and it was ratified by all 51 countries of the League of Nations when the Mandate for Palestine was approved in July 1922.

Finally, the participants called on Britain to acknowledge its error and give an open apology to the Palestinians. The hope is that this admission of guilt will open the way to healing and pressuring the occupation into recognizing its aggression.



Case Study: Providing Counseling and Legal Support to a Victim of Domestic Violence

Woman X (name has been withheld to protect privacy) is from a small village in the West Bank, but after marriage, she relocated to Bethlehem, where she lived with her husband, who occupies a high ranking position in the local Authority, and their children. As time went on, the relationship between her and her husband became strained. He became increasingly jealous, assaulting her with nasty words, vulgar expressions, and even physical beatings. During the summer of 2016, she sought our help at Wi'am to help her cope with domestic violence.

We began by conducting a meeting among the Wi'am staff and other thirteen other organizations to develop a plan of action to respond to this case of domestic violence.

The second stage of our work is focused on three parallel levels. The first of these is visiting key informants in the community (the governor, police chief, academics, women groups, social networks, key judges, Independent Human Rights commission, women's coalition groups in Bethlehem, civic activists, legal bodies, and other prominent community members) to discuss the case and garner their support for the victim. This process helps raise awareness of domestic violence within the larger community, decision-makers and the need to protect her.

Wi'am brought her story to the public via mainstream media and social media outlets. In this way, we managed to sway public opinion to sympathize with the woman. Therefore, we put pressure on the local Authority and the legal system to take prompt action to bring her husband to justice.

Then, Wi'am organized in cooperation with local networks and women's groups to lobby and convince decision-makers to take the case of the woman seriously. To this end, we employed two major advocacy campaigns:

1. We protested in front of the court of justice with sixty women and activists to pressure the court and judges to take the case into consideration without an anti-woman bias.
2. We organized another demonstration in front of the hospital. Eighty women, men, human rights activists protested against the hospital issuing a biased report that would acquit the man of his violent actions.

We also organized field visits to the police chief and the governor to press them to make this case a priority. Domestic violence should not fall through the cracks of a labyrinthine bureaucracy.

The third stage focused primarily on providing the woman with counseling and psychotherapeutic services in addition to legal aid to help her take her case to the court. According to the norms of a patriarchal society, it is shameful for a woman should not file a complaint in the courts, but at Wi'am, we believe that health and peace within the home should take priority over societal standards.

The changes within the woman herself were astounding. She was able to raise her voice, representing the voice of the previously voiceless. After resolving the conflict within the court, she built her confidence. She was able to see women supporting her, which empowered her to make her own personal choices that she felt were best for her.

We were able to underscore the importance of the case among members of the public and the legal system. The court classified it as first degree public case, despite the prevailing cultural notion that domestic violence is a taboo. We broke the barrier of silence that engulfs such cases. The woman had a platform to speak out about what happened to her, boosting her self-esteem. By the same token, working on this case helped other women to speak of their situations out loud, and we encouraged the families of these women to support them in this process.

The entanglement of tradition, religion, family, laws, patriarchal mentality, economic situation,

social position complicate domestic violence cases in Palestine. However, as a civic organization, we seek to respond to such cases through counseling, advocacy, mediation, lobbying, networking, and education. Political justice cannot occur without justice within the home.

Women's Political Engagement

Wi'am Center developed a program called "Building a shared commitment/understanding for more vibrant women involvement in local elections." It aims to address obstacles that face women's effective engagement as voters and candidates in local elections. Through this initiative, we have brought together stakeholders from the community to build a shared commitment to encouraging women's political participation, providing a forum for debates on the role of women within politics and the public sphere.



The discussions highlighted the influence of family biases in limiting women's ability to participate in the political process and the lack of societal awareness concerning women's political engagement. The vast majority of women are made to believe that they are not equipped with the knowledge or potential to run for office, subscribing to the creed that politics is solely within the ambit of men. These internal discriminations are compounded by external factors. Participants unanimously agreed that society discriminates against women when it comes to the

electoral process.

Participants discussed solutions to this issue. Strategies included pressuring political parties to create space for women, removing barriers to women's involvement, and empowering gender units within the police, ministries, and other governmental institutions. The meetings culminated in the generation of an plan of action for integrating women in election processes by providing technical support to women, finding new ways to engage the community, and encouraging young females to be active agents in their universities and families.

After this tedious planning, civil society organizations, members of Church Related Organizations, political parties and activists signed unofficial Memorandum of Understanding that give women a quota of 30% in public offices.

16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence

In cooperation with the Women Coalition for Development and the Independent Commission for Human Rights and Al-Harah Theater, Wi'am Center organized a campaign under the name of the international, annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence calling for the elimination of violence against women. We were thankful to have luminaries such as Bethlehem's minister of social development and even the mayor in attendance.

The event commenced with the opening of an art exhibition made by two young artists, Sawsan Qumsiyeh and Bara'a. Their paintings portrayed the plight of women, making the simple plea, "Enough Violence."



While the audience members were treated to the music of Ibda's Choir, the ministers appreciated

the cooperation between civil society and the Mehwar Shelter and Services in preventing violence against women and protecting those who had already been aggrieved. The Mayor of Bethlehem went so far as to say that ending violence against women is not only possible but is "a must." The Independent Commission reinforced this concept, though their focus was on the importance of legislation that protects women.

At the conclusion of the event, Al-Harah Theater performed a play that portrayed the abuse of social media to frame girls and embezzle them. They suggested one possible solution to the problem: family support and awareness. Wi'am Center is honored to be part of that solution.



Wi'am Women's Club

Wi'am hosts weekly meetings that bring together women of all ages for mutual support, education, recreation, and creative activities. Drawing on the resources of the Center as well as the resources each woman can offer, we encourage the women to focus on their own innate gifts. Women engage in classes and activities involving drama, computer skills, craft projects, and creative arts, as well as workshops in the fields of the democratic process, civil society development, reproductive health, gender equality, non-violence, conflict mediation, and domestic violence.

Wi'am's ongoing activities aims to raise awareness concerning gender empowerment among

both women and men. For example, in October, members of Wi'am staff organized a networking and educational excursion for 55 women and men to Nablus and Qalqilya areas. The trip commenced with a visit to the Chamber of Commerce in Qalqilya in which the group met with a member of the Chamber and representatives of a number of women's organizations that work in the field of women's socio-economic/political empowerment. They spoke about their work in community development and the particular challenges that they face in Palestinian society.

Afterward, the group visited "Paradise Nursery" in which they met with Miss Fatima Jadou'a, who spoke about the history of Qalqilya and the socio-political reality in the town. They were thrilled to get to know their country better and network with people from a different part of Palestine.





Dignity, Steadfastness, Challenge, this is our motto on the Land Day and Women International Day” Wi’am Center, in cooperation with the women Coalitions in Bethlehem area, organized a solidarity visit to Susia (a remote Bedouin camp South of Hebron) on the occasion of women's day and the Land Day to express our solidarity with the citizens and the struggle of rural women there. The event hosted a group of women representing different institutions, women's associations, women's groups in Bethlehem/Hebron, as well as the deputy governor of Hebron. After planting some trees as a symbol of resistance, solidarity, challenge and survival in the land around the tents, the participants visited Susiya Elementary Mixed School. The visit included a clown show, fun games, drawing, educational activities, as well as the delivery of seedlings to be planted in the school yard. The interaction between the students, the teachers and the participants were astounding. The smile on the faces of the students was evident through their participation in the activities and interaction with the clown. The activities focused on some of the daily activities that the students do during the day that is related to their physical and psychological health.



One of the participants commented by saying: "I'm happy to participate in this day which bought happiness to us and strengthened our view of our life." Another women from Susia community said: "We are thankful for the solidarity visit which comes as a moral boosting to us and give women the hope and the energy to defy injustices and be stronger in their communities



Wi'am Center had the privilege of hosting a group of Nuns from "Caritas Baby Hospital". The nuns were interested in learning more about the Palestinian women's lives and day to day struggles, challenges, and difficulties. The director, Zoughbi Zoughbi and the Wi'am Staff welcomed them and they were met by the Wi'am's women activists. Lucy Talgieh, the women's coordinator, discussed the varying forms of violence that women and girls suffer from. The varying forms and degrees of psychological, physical, sexual, economic and political violence were discussed alongside overviews of Wi'ams work in helping prevent these forms of injustices and empowering the women and girls in their struggle. It was clear that the problem was widespread on micro and macro levels, but Wi'am is not scared and is steadfast in its commitment to end discrimination in all its form and work towards

bringing about gender justice and equality. The meeting ended with carefully organized questions, which the center and its staff answered, shedding even more light on our work as a center, and on the problem and situation as a whole. Wi'am remains a center of hope and is steadfast in its struggle for justice.²⁷



Youth Empowerment Program

Wi'am believes in a better future, and we invest in that future by helping youth grow into leaders. At our center, we hold weekly youth meetings which consistently draw an average attendance of 30-50 young people each session. We work with young people from many areas of the West Bank and a variety of religious backgrounds and experiences. In these sessions we educate young people to raise awareness of issues of gender inequality and nurture a sense of community, belonging, and volunteerism. We also seek to empower young people economically by strengthening their marketability and networking skills, while exposing them to a diversity of cultures and experiences through our youth exchange programs.



Young people are among the most marginalized and vulnerable groups in society, as their needs are oftentimes left unmet in the face of other pressing familial and social concerns. Because of this, youth are the most frequent victims of poverty, exclusion, neglect, and violence within the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They suffer from acute feelings of hopelessness and helplessness. Young people are at a critical stage in their lives as they develop habits and lifestyles, and many feel that their future is determined by their actions during adolescence, adding an additional source of stress. However, this period also presents great opportunities for positively impacting our youth's future and shaping the ways in which they face difficulties and overcome adversity. Wi'am works with young people to instill a sense of hope and transform their sometimes

troubled pasts into a present in which they are empowered with the skills to defuse tensions, mediate conflicts, and face challenges with creativity, healthy dialogue, and understanding. We are molding a future generation into key actors for conflict resolution, social transformation, community dialogue, and peacebuilding based on justice within their communities.

Leadership Training

Through weekly youth meetings, Wi'am allows young people to encounter different ideas, topics, and cultures. Such exposure helps challenge problematic aspects of Palestinian culture and daily life, such as the patriarchal hierarchy. Many of our young people, especially the young women, come from families which may repress or limit women's roles in society. In response to such realities, Wi'am uses these weekly meetings to show the youth other ways of life, without culturally-imposed hierarchies. We focus on helping all of our youth understand that they are the future of their communities and that they can use this power to directly influence the culture, status quo, and the lives of all who live within their communities. To facilitate these outcomes, we create comfortable spaces to discuss topics of sexism, gender inequality, discrimination, inheritance, and women's rights, as well as the idea of a gender-balanced and just culture, free of patriarchy. Youth in this program have frequently expressed their appreciation for the willingness of our coordinators, staff, and the young people themselves to be honest with each other, generating open and productive dialogue. We create programs that allow each individual to explore their own beliefs and develop their own conclusions. We believe it is vital that our youth are able to process information as individuals and develop convictions informed by their own ideals, morals, and stances. True vision comes from exposure to a variety of experiences and perspectives and one's ability to examine his surroundings in any environment. At Wi'am, we work to provide a safe environment for such critical analysis and reflection, and we foster the development of tomorrow's leaders.



Agape-Satyagraha Leadership Training is a new program that Wi'am implemented in the summer of 2016. The program uses the teachings of Gandhi and Jesus to teach and empower youth with the skills of nonviolent conflict resolution. This program has many levels through which young people progress, and each level has a specific focus. A typical workshop involves asking reflective challenge questions, reading some of Jesus's and Gandhi's teachings, culminating in learning a specific skill that enacts those teachings, and utilizing that skill in practical exercises. Due to our close proximity to the wall, Israeli military personnel disturbances are quite frequent, which has inspired our youth to paint an Agape-Satyagraha mural on the wall, so that all people who pass by may see a message of love and peaceful resistance. These witnesses include both military personnel and ordinary citizens.

This program has built confidence in our young participants. One of our participants, a seventeen year old woman from the area, attributes her increased self confidence and academic achievements in school to this program. She attests, "I feel like I have power and am able to now transform situations from an ugly start to a beautiful or productive end, and this feeling is powerful."

Economic and Network Strengthening

One of the many ramifications of the economic constraints and restrictions placed on the Palestinian economy is a high rate of unemployment. This unemployment rate is highest in our local area of Bethlehem in the West Bank, where it reaches a high of 27% and fluctuates seasonally (Based on the Applied Research Institute- Jerusalem Bethlehem City Profile). Wi'am helps young people combat this problem by building strong, reliable networks connecting youth with individuals from a number of offices and professions, enabling them to volunteer with organizations, institutions, and schools, and establishing connections with partners that may help them realize their entrepreneurial dreams. We also assist students in finding educational opportunities both within and beyond the Palestinian region, helping to link them with the bodies that could finance their education. We even provide financial assistance for education ourselves, when possible.

Another ramification of this underdeveloped market manifests itself in the "brain drain epidemic," in which Palestinians who have attained high levels of education and expertise tend to leave the country in hopes of finding a more prosperous future elsewhere. This problem limits Palestine's ability to develop economically, especially in the information technology sector. To address this phenomena, we forge connections between youth and local networks and continue to foster a sense of belonging and responsibility for their country. We invite entrepreneurs to share their stories and the challenges they overcame, emphasizing the power of ingenuity to teach creative entrepreneurship as a means of nonviolent resistance. This effort, among others, materialized in the creation of a community garden led by our young people and maintained by volunteers of all ages.

Volunteerism

Wi'am believes that community building is a key ingredient in the creation of a loving, prosperous, and thriving society. We provide young people with the opportunity to be directly involved in the wellbeing of their own communities, fostering a sense of belonging and social responsibility. This goal requires both helping our youth network grow and flourish, but also requires that our youth be knowledgeable about difficulties facing our society. It is necessary that

the youth understand the challenges and conflicts facing Palestinian society so that they have the knowledge to creatively and peacefully respond through building a strong community. Directly involving young people in this process allows youth to make meaningful and influential contributions to their communities, thereby increasing their confidence, building character, fostering belonging, and encouraging volunteerism.

To engage local university communities in this community-building process, Zoughbi Zoughbi, the director of Wi'am, invited students from Al-Quds University, Abu Dis, and other universities in the area to participate in a debriefing and workshop. The students learned about the activities that Wi'am offers and the current work of Wi'am in the community. During the meeting, participants discussed volunteerism in Palestinian society and the importance of such social service, regardless of the scale of such efforts. They concluded that even small acts of service encourage responsibility to the community and a commitment to the wellbeing of the society.

For example, one of the yearly activities that the Wi'am youth participate in is beautifying local areas in the community. This process includes clearing trash and other debris from the area, including materials left by Israeli soldiers, such as rubber and live bullets, light and sound grenades, and empty tear gas canisters. At Wi'am, youth volunteers help our staff and volunteers prepare the center's grounds for children's activities and summer camp. This type of volunteerism encourages belonging, responsibility, and leadership, especially for those without younger siblings, as they are volunteering their time to help younger children with little personal connection to them. Our youth live the idea that a community is a circle; sometimes you are on one side of the curve receiving care and help, and other times you are giving it. Our young people recognize that we are all a part of this ever-present cycle, and that the best way forward is with each other, working together and moving in the same direction. We hope that direction is equality and peace, borne out of justice.

Cross Cultural Exchanges

One of the activities our young people enjoy most are our international, national, and local cross-cultural exchanges. Our youth were able to enjoy meeting over 15 international groups this year, most of which were from Western Europe and North America. Each meeting presents

the opportunity for sharing, connecting and learning. Most of these groups discussed the differences and challenges of everyday life in each individual's respective countries, as well as the role of religion, politics, and education on peace, nonviolent resistance, and everyday life. Through these meetings, our youth are able to get a better sense of their own cultural and personal identities by representing it to individuals from other cultures and identities. These meetings help our youth who come from communities often defined by struggle and adversity to become individuals capable of sharing, modifying, and discovering themselves and the ideas that they carry. Instead of allowing our struggle as Palestinian individuals to become our identity, we allow our struggle to inspire action and through our identity create the action that is true to ourselves.

Wi'am had the privilege of sending a delegation to Egypt for the Women's Rights and Role in Arab Society in October, 2016. Our young leaders were able to attend and actively participate in the conversation, and they were even able to respectfully challenge and expose the discriminatory undertones pervading the organization and leadership of the conference. One of the participants, Marcelle Ahlam, said, "I noticed that the women were often ignored and silenced, while the men were hailed as the champions of gender justice and equality. It was ironic and I made sure that the whole conference, from participant to leader, knew it, and my voice would be heard. For those who wait for others to empower themselves will never be free nor truly empowered. For empowerment comes from conviction which lies in our ability to be assertive in our stance against injustice, and second in our courage to put our stance into transformative action."

In short, Wi'am provides the opportunities that allow our future leaders to connect with the future leaders of the world's different regions and areas. We train our youth in nonviolent activism, resistance, and conflict transformation, as well as baptize them in collective responsibility to pave the path towards restorative justice. While we each face unique struggles, we can only enter a better world together, hand in hand and as one collective community that takes pride in its individuals and our collective diversity. To conclude with a quote from Woodrow Wilson, "There must be, not a balance of power, but a community of power; not

organized rivalries, but an organized peace.”

Children’s Programs

Children’s Summer Camp



Children are the most vulnerable stratum of a society. Summer camps contribute to shaping the personalities of children that participate in them by focusing on activities that help develop the physical, mental, psychological, and social aspects of a child’s life.



Wi'am Summer Camp ran from the beginning of July 2016 until the end of it. Volunteers, both local and international, mobilized to help run the activities.

Our aim is to improve the immediate and future quality of life of the children through educational, recreational, and cultural activities. During the Summer Camp we provided opportunities for creativity, freedom of expression, critical thinking, and innovation.

We worked with 120 children age 6-15 years old, coming from Bethlehem District. Generally, these were marginalized children with no access to recreational activities.



The children gathered together to participate in a variety of activities, including drama, dance, and art. These activities were the only means of the children's entertainment. We provided them with the only safe recreational environment they could reach in which they could play freely. The activities focus on nonviolent conflict resolution techniques, peer mediation, matters concerning children's rights, gender equality, Drama, art, and environmental issues.

Testimonies

"I enjoyed the camp, it build my personality, equipped me with skills to deal with problems and mediate peer-conflicts that I face in my school." (Amjad, 8 year old boy)

"It has been an enjoyable Summer Camp in which we have had the chance to interact with our peers and learn new knowledge, information, and games that nourish our mind. We learn the importance of community serving and family values as a way of developing a healthy society." (Shukri, 12 year old boy)



Children Featured in Film

Some of Wi'am's children were featured in [this video](#) produced for 'Under the Same Sky,' an international constellation of projects examining children's rights and the environment.

Christmas Smiles

Several times throughout the Christmas season, a delegation from Wi'am visit to the Bethany Community of the Resurrection of Christ Orphanage to help spread some Christmas Cheer. The delegation from Palestine, and expatriates from France, Belgium, and Germany, were greeted by 16 ecstatic children who were very excited to see our own Santa Claus and the presents that were being carried specially for them.

Moreover, every year, Wi'am center organizes a Christmas festival. In 2016, we hosted 130 children and 60 women from all over Bethlehem and neighboring cities at the Scouts headquarters in Bethlehem. The celebrations started with a word from the director, Zoughbi

Zoughbi, who talked about the meanings of the Christmas season which stem from the foundations of peace and justice which all humans seek. He reminded the participants that the Christmas spirit demands that individuals help the underserved, even and especially if they belong to different ethnic and religious affiliations.

The ceremony commenced with prayers on the occasion of the fourth week of Advent, which reminds us that the real birth is that the Lord is close to humanity and in solidarity with us as savior. Here, in the city of the first nativity, Palestinians pray for mercy, justice and blessings of God that we feel during Christmas more vividly.

Children and women sang carols and hymns that reminded the audience of the serenity of Christmas. Carols embed a spiritual flavor to the holiday which brings all of our participants closer to the meanings of Christmas and the birth of Christ.

Then, we invited a clown to help the children feel at home and give them joy. Life under Occupation is difficult, but we aim to provide some relief to women and children to restore their lost smiles. The clowns and Wi'am volunteers painted on the faces of children as an expression of hope for a better future. By providing the children with some happiness, at least temporarily, we hope to cultivate a sense of optimism within each of them.

At the conclusion of the event, Wi'am staff members and Santa Claus distributed meaningful gifts to children and women, symbolizing our appreciation of their role in the community. We endeavor to be present in the community with our heart, mind and active work to influence change from within, and these physical gifts are only small manifestations of that desire.



Gender Justice Program

As a Palestinian organization staffed by Palestinians, Wi'am is no stranger to the injustices within Palestinian society. While our women's program works towards empowering women and ending domestic violence, our gender justice program works towards helping men, women and children advocate on behalf of all society's members and to work towards a gender just society. It is important for women to be empowered of and by themselves, but it is just as equally important that we empower all who support gender justice and that we help in breaking any and all gender specific misconceptions and stereotypes. For our gender justice program, we work on creating events in which men and women can be brought together to help break the patriarchal system in which we were nurtured and to help in promoting and having conviction in the right of all members of society to participate to the fullest extent of their desires in a safe, supported, and welcomed manner that further promotes community involvement on all levels.



This program manifests itself in Wi'am's general events, but also is present in our work in schools and with peer mediation, as well as in our youth group meetings and activities. We at Wi'am advocate on behalf of Palestinians and the Palestinian struggle, but we cannot hope for a

better and prosperous future for ourselves unless we are able to work and improve our own society, culture, and communities. This is why we work at establishing and helping children and youth think about these topics early on so that they may have conviction and take an active stance against gender based discrimination and work for gender justice. As part of this program Wi'am sends participants to workshops and conferences around these topics when it is able to and is working on developing a conference revolving around gender justice.



In October of 2016, Wi'am's youth took part in a 3 week part discussion on the topics of gender justice, violence, and mainstreaming. Lengthy discussions revolved around who suffers, what is suffered, and what part we can play in ending discrimination and bringing about some sort of justice. The conversations were difficult and often times tiring, but we were able to introduce this topic to many who had not given it thought before, and were able to present it in a way that allowed them to adopt it as an important subject and one that they needed to do work on. Issa S., one of the young men from our youth group thanked us sincerely for working with them and presenting this topic to him and told us: "I never thought or knew that there existed a difference

between sexism and gender based discrimination. Now, I see that patriarchy and the different ideas that come with gender and sex affect everyone, and not just women. More importantly, you've helped me realize that this is a serious topic that I need to care about, even if it didn't affect me personally, because being part of my society makes me responsible and a perpetrator, and I am not comfortable with that."



Citizen Diplomacy: Welcoming Internationals to Palestine and Wi'am

A peaceful and just society can only be built through positive relationships with each other, which is why Wi'am has worked hard for over 20 years to develop friendships with people from around the world. Here, we present a sampling of the meetings we have held with international groups over the past year.

In the summer, Wi'am hosted students from the University of Notre Dame in the United States and Palestinian university students to engage in a workshop that tackled cultural differences, identity, gender issues, stereotypes and peace and conflict resolution. The many nationalities present worked together to discuss how religion can be used as a tool for conflict, and how it can be used as a tool for peace. They shared their life experiences with each other, while sitting outside and enjoying quadra (a dish made with rice and chicken).



On Wednesday, November 9, Zoughbi conducted a workshop on themes of justice, reconciliation and transformation from a biblical perspective to theological students from Sweden. The workshop started with a debriefing on the deteriorating socio-economic and political situation as well as on the mission, vision, and work of Wi'am.



Wi'am also had the pleasure of welcoming the "Pilgrims of 'Iblin Group" from the United States. Zoughbi debriefed them on Wi'am's activities and on the general sociopolitical situation and the injustices that Palestinians endure due to the Occupation. Staff member Usama Nicola oriented them about the geography of the place and the History of the plight of the Palestinian people which incarnates in the Nekkba (the Catastrophe), The Naksa of 1967, the settlements, and the Apartheid Annexation wall. Usama then led the group to Aida Refugee camp, where he

explained the history of its people and showed them the reality of the camp.



It was our honor to host one of our oldest friends, Mrs. Cecily Rose, as well as our friends at Amos Trust. Mrs. Rose was a former volunteer at our Center. We were so happy to renew our friendship with Amos Trust and Mrs. Rose, who give us hope and perseverance as they inspire the next generation of peacebuilders.



A British group of pilgrims from London, lead by Revs. Brian and Karen, also visited Wi'am and learned more about the history of Palestine and the Palestinian people.

Wi'am then hosted a group from Colorado. Zoughbi debriefed them on Wi'am's activities, and

Usama and Tarek, two of our staff members, then led the group to nearby Aida Refugee camp. On the way back to Wi'am, we encountered the Israeli army, who would not allow us to pass, introducing our visitors to the reality of life under Occupation.

Comparative Study of Northern Ireland & Palestine

In the summer of 2016, Celine, a University of Notre Dame student and Wi'am volunteer, gave a brief and informative presentation on the issues of Northern Ireland and its relationship to Palestine. While the citizens of Northern Ireland enjoy many freedoms that we in Palestine are still denied, we sympathize with the continued occupation of the native people and their lands. We noted many similarities and were able to have a very fruitful conversation on the parallels in both conflicts.



Indeed, they too have walls that has pillaged the beauty of that land, torn communities apart, and caused animosity among its citizens. We, as Palestinians and peace-makers, were reignited in our desire to search for justice for all of the world's people, so that walls no longer constrict the free

movement of peoples of any nation.

International Day of Peace

For the International Day of Peace, Wi'am hosted the Baaba Maal company and band, which included managers, light and sound engineers and talented musicians from Senegal.. Dr. Saleem Zoughbi mentioned culture and music and spoke about the role of music in the life of Palestinians as well as the famous works many Palestinian scholars of music have created. We were able to learn a wonderful Senegalese song and taught the group an Arabic folk song.

Moreover, Wi'am and HWPL (Heavenly Culture, World of Peace, Restoration of Light) organized a meeting on the meaning of peace in Palestine and its application in Islam and Christianity. The meeting hosted both the Mufti of Bethlehem, Adb al-Majid Al-Amarneh, and Fr. Issa Thaljieh from the Greek Orthodox Church, and the participation of guests from the community. The speakers focused on ways of achieving a just peace in Palestine in which they highlighted the pivotal role of religion in promoting peace. The speakers focused on the power of the word and dialogue with others who are different to promote cooperation and understanding.

Interfaith Program

Interreligious Dialogue

We had the pleasure of again hosting representatives from Heavenly Culture, World Peace, Restoration of Light (HWPL), who spoke about love between people and love between people and God beginning in the summer of 2016. Volunteers from EAPPI and several local religious figures were also with us to have an open discussion about what love is for them and how it can be interpreted in different ways. As one of the attendees said, “We must find justice, in order to find love, in order to find peace.”

Wi'am hosted a group of visitors who are living in the United Kingdom, but who represent many nationalities and religions. We were glad to be able to provide a space for open discussion about difficult issues, as well as arranging a football (soccer) game with children from the local Aida Refugee Camp.



In the face of conflict, Wi'am believes in peace. In the face of oppression, Wi'am advocates for justice.

Our latest [video](#) describes the positive impact we work for in the Palestinian community.

Advent

Wi'am Center commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ in a special way so as to commemorate a spirit of love and compassion. We believe that this spirit is uplifting and vital to the Palestinian

cause, even if the majority of Palestinians are not Christian.



On the 8th of December, we both celebrate the Second Week of Advent as well as Saint Barbara's Day. Palestinian Christians mark this occasion with the very special Burbarah dish, made with wheat, fruit and candies. It is believed that the dish originated with Saint Barbara, who was imprisoned for her faith in a storeroom and had only these ingredients to eat. This traditional dish is only prepared on this day to honor the sacrifices of Saint Barbara.

We celebrated Third Week of Advent with Rev. Kristen L. Brown from the United Methodist Church and friends. The Third Week of Advent marks the week of love and we reflected on Luke 1:46-55. The day's thoughts centered on the blessings of Virgin Mary and baby Jesus. Not only did Mary passively receive a blessing, but she actively made the decision to take a stand for her faith, despite its dangers. We discussed that no matter how helpless and small you feel, you still have potential to create positive change in your community and in the world.

To celebrate this day, we invited our Women's Group, Wi'am staff, and friends at the United

Methodist Church to pray for peace in the Holy Land, read scripture, and sing Christmas hymns.

Interns and Volunteers

Wi'am's director and staff deeply appreciate the work and the dedication of volunteers and interns who greatly contribute to the work of the center, It is our hope that they too may benefit from the experiences they acquire here in Bethlehem. Wi'am has always been a hospitable center, welcoming volunteers and interns from all over the world who leave a visible mark on the local community, as well as on their home organizations. May all of these volunteers continue their advocacy on behalf of the marginalized and oppressed:

1. Clint Niehus, graduate student 2017, Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.
2. Alyssa Ament, graduate student 2016, American Military University, U.S.A.
3. Ashley Virgin, undergraduate student 2016, Belmont University, U.S.A.
4. Rachel Hobley, undergraduate student 2017, University of Edinburgh, U.K.
5. Sarah Beuter, undergraduate student 2018, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.
6. Celine Marcos, undergraduate student 2017, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.
7. Valeria Hasbun, undergraduate student 2019, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.
8. Thuha Nguyen, undergraduate student 2016, Jonkoping University, Sweden
9. Catharina Holmgren, undergraduate student 2016, Jonkoping University, Sweden
10. Jakob Falk, 2016 high school graduate, Denmark
11. Amber Larson, graduate student 2017, University of Arizona, U.S.A.
12. Paulina Heinke, undergraduate student 2017, Germany
13. Liv Kristine Moe, graduate student 2017, University of Kent, U.K.

Thank you so much to all our volunteers, interns, and supporters. If you or someone you know is interested in interning or volunteering at Wi'am, please e-mail hope@alastah.org and visit our website at www.alastah.org. We look forward to hearing from you.