

Update on JAEP scholars

The John Aves Educational Project (JAEP) continues to provide undergraduate scholarships for students at Al Quds University. Here is an update on our latest seven scholars.

In 2011, the John Aves Educational Project (JAEP) supported Mr Anan Odeh in his final year of studies to obtain his undergraduate degree in Law, which he has successfully completed. Anan is now pursuing his postgraduate studies in Law (at Birzeit University). Also in 2011, JAEP agreed to support Ms Naba Zahran for two years to complete her BA degree in Physics at the Faculty of Science and Technology, Al Quds university. Naba continued to excel and remain on the Honour List, with her final semester average at 95.8 (Very impressive!). She graduated in June 2013 with an "Excellent" evaluation and has just started her postgraduate studies, also in Physics and at Al Quds University.

Academic year 2012/2013 saw the addition of three JAEP scholars. Ms Marwah Assarasrah will be supported in her medical studies for six years. Mr Fadi Ramadan is being supported for three years, until 2015 when he is due to obtain his undergraduate degree in Biology (pre-medicine). Ms Nibal Radwan was awarded a two-year scholarship from JAEP for the completion of her undergraduate degree in Computer Engineering, expected in 2014.

We are pleased to welcome our two latest scholars Ms Mai Al Khatib-Qaraq and Ms Layla Radwan Qaraq. Mai is being supported for one year to complete a degree in Sports, while Layla will be supported for two years until the completion of her Midwifery degree. Both Mai and Layla are active in their communities. Mai volunteers at summer camps where she trains children and youth in volleyball and basketball. Layla is especially active with Diabetes Friends Society, in her role as a health educator and also in providing emotional support to children with Diabetes.

All the Committee members of the John Aves Educational Project would like to wish our supporters a Peaceful and Happy Christmas.

John Aves Educational Project Newsletter

Welcome to the 2013 edition of our Newsletter.
The highlights of the year have been –

- Further students are being sponsored.
- Our new website is complete. Please visit at www.jaep.org.uk
- We have designed an Application Form for students to complete when requesting grants. This provides the JAEP with ample background information and ensures that your valuable financial support reaches the right students.
- Anne Aves visit to Deheishe Camp.
- Successful Fund Raising in The Bishop's Garden.
- Updated leaflet and Gift Aid envelopes produced.
- Thank you for your continued support. We have raised over £56,000 since our inception.

Please continue to support us with your feedback and financial help. Because we offer sponsorship over a period of years we have to ensure we have sufficient funds to cover this entire period. We are especially looking to have more regular donors and even £3 a month will make a positive difference. Typical University tuition fees for one year in the Holy Land are £1,200.

We still wish to co-opt onto our committee a person who can lead our fundraising. Of course the more funds we can secure then the more young students we can support. **Are you in need of a challenge that helps to change the lives of so many young people?** We anticipate that most of this task will be in writing to other Educational Trusts and local businesses, maintaining contact details of our existing supporters and assisting with our biennial events.

Anne returned to Dheisheh, Al Quds in April 2013

REPORT

The purpose of the visit was to spend time with the tutors at Al Quds and Bethlehem university that I had met in November 2011, to meet the students we're currently sponsoring. For part of my visit I stayed in IBDA in Dheisheh. I also filmed around Dheisheh and Al Quds so we could prepare a video to upload to the website and also show during fundraising events. I joined Nouar (Al Quds) and her husband for a meal at a local restaurant. We continued our conversations about the importance of retraining university teaching staff to better prepare students to debate about their situation. Hala (Bethlehem) spent an afternoon with me including taking me to Aida another camp in Bethlehem. Her students had a deadline for the end of the week to complete an assignment so our conversations were interrupted many times with students, asking for help, asking for extensions, notes for classes they had missed, we could have been in any educational establishment worldwide!

At Al Quds I met all of the four students, Nibal, Marwah, Fadi, Naba, we are currently sponsoring. We talked for a while and then videoed an interview. We are currently completing the editing of these to upload to the website. All students expressed their gratitude for our support. Their determination to succeed in spite of a lack of funding, troubles at check points, hardship of life with in camp shone through. One of the students invited me to an evening meal at his home. The extent of the spread and delicate flavours of the dishes prepared for visits to Palestinian homes is overwhelming.



Because of the evening curfew at checkpoints I decided to stay for part of my visit in Dheisheh. Again I stayed in IBDA, (John lived and worked here). As soon as I arrived I was met by Khalid the leader of IBDA and his son Aysar. (John had spent lots of time talking to Khalid and Aysar was one of his students). Aysar now a very engaging young man of 25 who knows everyone in the camp was to be my guide during my stay. On my first evening I joined him to be part

of his evening broadcast on Bethlehem radio!. He came with me to both universities, took over the videoing, spoke to the students in Arabic when they couldn't find the English. Aysar and other students John taught are now part of a project Campus in Camps funded by Al Quds and the German government to explore concepts they are taught at school and university which have very little meaning for the life they lead, for example sustainability when the camp was supposed to be temporary, citizenship when they have none. They too have realised that students need to be taught in a more discursive less prescriptive way.

A very successful visit with many rich and extensive discussions, more can be found on the video uploaded to our website.

FUND-RAISING EVENING

7 June 2013, Bishops Garden & Granary Court

Thank you to our patron, Bishop Graham and his wife for kindly opening their garden and offering us Granary Court for our fundraising evening. Over 100 people listened to Ben Bradshaw MP and Bishop Graham spent time in conversation about the Middle East covering a wide range of topics, from the impact of the current Middle East situation on the lives of Palestinians and especially those in the camps. Both spoke knowledgeably about the area and their fears for the future, for example the continued growth of settlements. But also about the importance of grass roots projects such as JAEP who by working with the local population give them hope for a future and also that they are not forgotten by the wider world. The purpose of the evening, our most successful to date, was to raise awareness of our project, to thank our sponsors, to provide an update and show a video of Anne's recent visit to Dheisheh & Al Quds.



Bishop Graham & Ben in conversation.