



**Al Bireh 2018 Orlando, Florida
Convention Program Book**



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VIA US MAIL

Al Bireh Society
P.O. Box 780267
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September 7, 2018

RE: Donation from Ruby Enterprises

My husband, Mohammad Esmail, myself, Nadia Esmail, and my three children, Alaa Esmail, Dhiya Esmail, and Ruba Esmail, are one of IHOP's Managing/Developer Franchisee in the New Orleans, LA and Jackson, MI areas. We are proudly pursuing this family-oriented business, with hard work and Allah's (SWT) guidance as Ruba Enterprises Inc. We have been in business for over 15 years and we are humbled that our Ruby family continues to grow with currently 14 locations and one in progress, Alhamdulillah.

In our family and in our business, we take pride in where we come from. We hold the same values as our family and friends in the Al Bireh Society and are happy to be a part of this organization. We believe in the Al Bireh Society and what it has to offer for our community, giving people and the youth the tools and networking opportunities to thrive and be empowered in this challenging world. Our family is honored to support the work that the Al Bireh Society has done for our community and Inshallah they can continue to progress in developing our community.

Yours truly,
Nadia Esmail

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Honor the Past - Own the Future Al Bireh 2016 Convention Agenda



Thursday, December 20th

EVENT	TIME
Early Registration Check-In and Meet & Greet	7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Friday, December 21st

Registration	9:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Basketball Registration	10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Adult Kahwa	10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Bazaar	10:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Friday Jumaa Prayer	11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Young Adult Assembly (Under 30)	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Youth Hangout (Gaming, Movies)	1:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Working Session for General Assembly	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Asr Prayer	2:45 p.m. – 3:15 p.m.
Childcare/Kids/Tween Activities	7:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Honor the Past Al Bireh Welcoming Banquet	6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Baladna NC Debkeh Performance	7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Birawiya Thob Fashion Show Gala	7:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Honor the Past Al Bireh Indoor Entertainment	8:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.
Magrib/Isha Prayer	6:30 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.
Honor the Past Al Bireh Outside Hookah	9:30 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.

Saturday, December 22nd

Fajr	5:20 a.m. – 5:30 a.m.
Registration	9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Bazaar	9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Basketball Tournament	8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Childcare, Kids/Tween Activities Camp Omni 1 (Pre-registration required)	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
General Assembly Meeting	9:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Birawi's Got Talent	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Professional Networking Mixer	10:00 p.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Al Quds Bank Private Meeting	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Legal Landscape in Palestine	1:00 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.
Childcare, Kids/Tween Activities Camp Omni 2 (Pre-registration required)	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Youth Hangout	10:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Adult Kahwa	11:00 a.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Career Panel	11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Empowering Arab Women	1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Debka 101 (Kids, Youth and Adult Sessions)	1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Palestine Leadership Conference	2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Duhur/Asr Prayer	1:50 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Own the Future Al Bireh Banquet	6:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.
Keynote Address– Dr. Hanan Ashrawi	7:10 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Indoor Entertainment Ameer Dandan Concert	8:30 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.
Maghrib/Isha Prayer	6:00 p.m. – 6:45 p.m.

Sunday, December 23rd

Own the Future Al Bireh Brunch	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Last Chance Bazaar	10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Elected Member Closed Meeting	12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

*Refer to Registration Convention Program Schedule for Updated and Detailed Sched-

Letter from the Board

On behalf of the Al Bireh Society National Board, we welcome you to another amazing year of celebrating our roots and reconnecting with our friends and family. This year's theme, "Honor the Past, Own the Future" resonates with each of us as we continue to nurture the love for our roots with our children while balancing our lives in the United States. While we embrace our home here, we never lose sight of where we and our parents came from – and that's what makes us so unique.

The last eighteen months have been filled with lots of hard work in preparing for this convention, but each one of us believe in the mission of the Al Bireh Society. We encourage you to take part in keeping this tradition alive, whether it's through attending this event or running for the board - we need your help to keep this initiative going.

We are excited to announce the passing of the Al Bireh Society By-Laws, a task that has been in the works for a few years now. We appreciate the time that each member from past boards and committees have contributed toward its development. With the help of our distinguished scholarship committee, the board has established, for the first time, a scholarship fund that will be awarded at every convention to students attending higher education institutions.

We have also fulfilled our obligations as a non-profit organization in donating to charitable causes to ensure a better future for those in need.

Planning a convention is no easy feat, but we were able to make it happen with the help of many community members, in particular those from Florida. We thank them for their time, input and hard work. Our Florida chapter members continue to show us what true hospitality looks like, and for that, we thank you.

Our goals moving forward with a new board are plentiful. We envision a summer youth camp in Al Bireh Palestine one day. We hope to organize a successful Young Professionals' Network for internships, mentoring and job placements. We hope to increase membership and continue to keep our roots alive through the younger generation - and we can do these things with your help. Get involved today!

Thank you all for your attendance at the 2018 Al Bireh Society Convention here in Orlando. We encourage you all to stay involved and participate in the wonderful panels this weekend, enjoy our guests and keynote speakers, have some laughs with our comedic relief friend, Muna, dance the night away with our amazing entertainment, Amir Dandan, and don't forget to catch up with everyone so you can build beautiful memories that will last a lifetime!

Sincerely,
Al Bireh Society National
Board of Directors

Fadi Afaneh
Basel Bahhour
Summer Hamad Hamdan
Reema Nasser-Khan
Maysoon Suleiman-Khatib
Reem Odeh
Maref Arafat Quran
Dr. Reema Wahdan



Nov 1, 2018



Letter from the Honorable Mayor of Al Bireh, Palestine

Our dearest expatriates,

We would like to extend our warm greeting and peace from our homeland Palestine laden with breeze of love and ground chastity of aroma.

It is my pleasure to send you from the heart of your city (Al Bireh), the gate of Jerusalem and its trusted neighbor, the best regards, warm greetings, gratitude and appreciation of its citizens as well as its municipal council as of conducting your conference these days in Orlando. We are looking forward to foster and promote the joint relationship with our brothers' expatriates for the benefit and interest of the city and its citizens. We do further anxiously looking for more meetings and build bridges of continued communication where the brotherhood covenant can't be broken by distances and will never be subject to time calamities.

The expatriates of Al Bireh had at all times formed supportive shield for the development of city institutions whether it was on the cultural and educational level such as building of schools and community associations or other various charitable acts where all of this support has contributed to the city development and stabilizing of citizens steadfastness on their land challenging and confronting the ongoing blockage and closures imposed by the Zionist occupation against our people.

We, Al Bireh Municipality, are looking forward with full of passion to establish a concrete base for communication and rapprochement with our expatriate brothers whom they are not only considered as a significant cultural, civilized and economic feeders to Al Bireh city but also to Palestine in general.

Proceeding from this robust and strong belief of the role played by our expatriate brothers, the Municipality's duty is to lovingly seek and exert its endeavors to make services available with more flexibility and accessibility to any of our expatriates who may require as far as possible for maintaining their interests within the city in cooperation with co-institutions.

We are calling the expatriates to keep in contact with the municipality through the social media in order to provide them with all services, trustful advices and tackling their different cases.

Let us work together for the interest of Al Bireh through promoting and supporting investment within the city and conducting goal-oriented various economic, cultural, artistic and social events to support the city and properly demonstrate the city on the internal and external levels and to take its ordinary place and status on the national map as distinct commercial, economic and touristic city.

We do kindly hope of every success to your conference for our city of Al Bireh

Azam Ismail





أهلنا الأحبة في بلاد الغربية.

يطيرُ السَّلامُ لكم من أرض الوطنفلسطين، محمَّلاً بنسائمِ الحبِّ، وأريجِ الثرى الطهور. أما بعد:

فإنه ليسرني أن أبعث إليكم من قلبمدينتكم البيرة؛ بوابة القدسوجارتها الأمانة، أجمل التحياتوأعذب الأمنيات، وأرقَّ جُمَل المحبةوالتقدير من مواطني مدينة البيرة،ومجلسها البلدي وأسرة البلدية،بمناسبة انعقاد مؤتمرهم في أورلاندوهذه الأيام...وإننا إذ نتطلع إلى تعزيز العلاقة المشتركة مع إخوانناالمغتربين؛ لما فيه مصلحة المدينةومواطنيها. فإننا نرنو إلى مزيد مناللقاءات، ومدِّ جسور التواصل التيبتقطع ، حيث إنَّ العهد بين الإخوةلن تكسر خيوطه المسافات، ولن يكون لقمَّة سهلةً لعاديات الزمن. إن مغتربي مدينة البيرة شكّلوا دائمدادعا مساندا في تطوير مؤسساتالمدينة ودعمها، سواء كان ذلك علالصعيد الثقافي التربوي، مثل بناء المدارس والمؤسسات المجتمعية،أو أعمال خيرية مختلفة، حيثأسهم كل ذلك في تطوير المدينة،وتثبيت مواطنيها بالصمود فيأرضهم، أمام تواصل الحصاروالإغلاقات المستمرة التي يفرضهاالاحتلال الصهيوني ضد أبناء شعبناالمرابط.

إننا في بلدية البيرة نتطلع بكلشغفٍ لتأسيس قاعدة متينةللاتصال والتواصل مع إخوانناالمغتربين، والذين يشكّلون رافدًاثقافيًا وحضاريًا واقتصاديًا مهمًالمدينة البيرة، بل لفلسطين بشكلعام. وانطلاقًا من هذا الإيمانالراسخ بدور إخوانناالمغتربين، فإنهم واجبنا في البلدية أن نسعى بكلحُبِّ لتوفير الخدمات بصورة سهلةومرنة، لكل من يطلبها من أهلناالمغتربين، وذلك رعاية لمصالحهمفي المدينة، بالتعاون مع المؤسسات الشريكة بقدرالمستطاع.

إننا نناشد المغتربين التواصل معالبلدية من خلال مواقع التواصلالاجتماعي؛ لتقديم الخدمات كافة،والاستشارات الأمانة لهم، ومعالجةقضاياهم المختلفة.

لنعمل معا من أجل البيرة من خلالتشجيع الاستثمار المدروس فيهاودعمه، وإقامة الفعاليات والأنشطةالاقتصادية والثقافية والفنيةوالاجتماعية الهادفة؛ لدعم المدينة وإظهارها بالشكل اللائق علالساحة الخارجية والداخلية، وحتتناخذ مكانتها الطبيعية على الخارطةالوطنية كمدينة مهمة ذات مركزتجاري واقتصادي وسياحي مميز.



كل أمنيات التوفيق لكم

Al-Bireh Historical Review



Our beloved city of Al Bireh carries a Canannite name meaning 'the wells', and is a result of the many water springs that are located in the city of Al Bireh¹. Origins of Al Bireh dates from 4500 B.C. and is located approximately 20 miles from Jerusalem². Established in 1928, Al Bireh and its residents are descendants of the city's native citizens. As a central hub for many Palestinians shared with its sister city Ramallah, Al Bireh serves as a strategic central hub for many businesses, transportation, and trade. Al Bireh is located east of Ramallah City and bordered by Beitin, Burqa and 'Ein Yabrud, Qaddura Camp, Kafr 'Aqab, and Rafat villages². Historical and archeological sties identify a number of mosques in the city, including the Al Bireh Grand Mosque, Al Khulafa', Al 'Ein, and many more. The city has a number of archeological sites that have been recognized internationally including: Shiban, Naiem and

Abu Mujahid Shrines, the Church of the Holy Family, Al Khan (an inn) and At Tall Mountain².

Al Bireh has been governed by a Municipal council which is currently administrated by members appointed by the Palestinian National Authority. As a prosperous city, real-estate development as wells as economic forecasts for our beloved city has been strong. As Al Bireh Society looks to build strong relationships with our municipality and local organizations within Al Bireh, we will continue to foster a cooperative network to enhance and elevate our beloved city of Al Bireh Palestine.

Forever in our hearts– Al Bireh Palestine.



Footnotes: ¹Al Bireh Municipality Annual Report 2012

²http://vprofile.arij.org/ramallah/pdfs/vprofile/Al%20Bireh_tp_en.pdf

Al Bireh Society Orlando Convention Committee

Al Bireh Society Convention Planning Committee

Al Bireh Society would like to acknowledge the Orlando Convention Planning committee and their volunteers for their commitment and devoted hard work in bringing the

Honor the Past-Own the Future convention to fruition. Thank you!

Al Bireh Society National Board of Directors

Fadi Afaneh * Basel Bahhour * Maref Arafat Quran

Summer Hamad Hamdan * Maysoon Suleiman-Khatib

Reema Nasser-Khan * Reem Odeh * Dr. Reema Wahdan

Orlando Convention Planning Committee

Anas Amireh * Somoud Hamad * Camer Hamad Hasan* Nadia Hamad Abed

Maha Hamad * Brenda Hasan Hamad * Hanan Handoush * Tamam Mahmoud

*RJ Khalaf *Zuhdiah (Zuzu) Sarhan *Baladna Debkeh

Exclusive Sponsor



Special Thanks to All Our Members

2018 Al Bireh Convention Highlights

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, Scholar, Activist, Al Bireh Society Keynote Speaker 2018

Dr. Hanan Ashrawi is a distinguished Palestinian leader, legislator, activist, and scholar who served as a member of the Leadership Committee and as an official spokesperson of the Palestinian delegation to the Middle East peace process, beginning with the Madrid Peace Conference of 1991. In 1996, Dr. Ashrawi was appointed as the Palestinian Authority Minister of Higher Education and Research. Prior to that, she was Dean of the Faculty of Arts at Birzeit University and head of its Legal Aid Committee since the mid-1970s.

Dr. Ashrawi was elected to the Palestinian Legislative Council representing Jerusalem in 1996, and she was re-elected for the “Third Way” bloc ticket in 2006. Making history as the first woman to hold a seat in the highest executive body in Palestine, she was elected as member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in 2009 and 2018.

As a civil society activist, she founded the Independent Commission for Human Rights (ICHR) in 1994 and served as its Commissioner-General until 1995. In 1998, she also founded MIFTAH, the Palestinian Initiative for the Promotion of Global Dialogue and Democracy and continues to serve as head of its Board of Directors. In 1999, Dr. Ashrawi founded the National Coalition for Accountability and Integrity (AMAN).

She also serves on many advisory and international boards, which include: Birzeit University—Palestine; Council for Arab and International Relations—Kuwait; Atlantic Council - Hariri Centre—USA; The Palestinian Institute for Public Diplomacy (PIPD)—Palestine; Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation (HCEF) - Know Thy Heritage—USA; The Institute for Palestine Studies (IPS)—Lebanon; US Middle East Project (USMEP)—USA.

Dr. Ashrawi is the recipient of numerous awards from all over the world, including the distinguished French decoration, “d'Officier de l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur” (2016); the 2005 Mahatma Gandhi International Award for Peace and Reconciliation; the 2003 Sydney Peace Prize; the 2002 Olof Palme Prize; the 1999 International Women of Hope “Bread and Roses”; the Defender of Democracy Award – Parliamentarians for Global Action; the 50 Women of the Century; the 1996 Jane Addams International Women’s Leadership Award; the Pearl S. Buck Foundation Women’s Award; the 1994 Pio Manzu Gold Medal Peace Award; and the 1992 Marissa Bellisario International Peace Award.

She is the author of several books, articles, poems and short stories on Palestinian politics, culture and literature. Her book *This Side of Peace* (Simon & Schuster, 1995) earned worldwide recognition. Dr. Ashrawi received both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees from the American University of Beirut and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Medieval and Comparative Literature from the University of Virginia in the United States. Moreover, she is the recipient of eleven honorary doctorates from universities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and the Arab world.

She is married to Emile Ashrawi and has two daughters, Amal and Zeina.



2018 Al-Bireh Convention Highlights

Legal Landscape of Al Bireh and Palestine

Dr. Riyadh H. Mansour

Ambassador, Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the UN

Dr. Riyadh H. Mansour was born to a refugee family that lived in the city of Ramallah in the Occupied West Bank. In 1967, Dr. Mansour started his college education in the United States. Since his youth, he has always been involved in Palestinian politics and began his career in the Palestinian diplomatic service in 1983 at the Permanent Observer Mission of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) to the United Nations (UN). He was appointed Ambassador and Permanent Observer of Palestine to the UN in 2005 and since 29 November 2012 he has been Ambassador and Permanent Observer to the State of Palestine to the UN. He represented Palestine in several committees and bodies of the UN. In 1994, he joined the private sector accepting a position as Vice-President for Intram Investments, Inc. Orlando, Florida.



Munif Treish, Advocate

Munif has served the city of Al Bireh in several capacities throughout his long career. He was Al Bireh municipality engineer for 30 years and was in charge of several projects that successfully installed water treatment facilities, roads, and other infrastructure for the city. Munif also led the development of Al Eرسال Center, which will grow to become Palestine's business hub in the heart of Al Bireh City. He currently serves as a member of the Al_Bireh municipality council advising the municipality on city planning and infrastructure matters. In this capacity, Munif heads the joint services council, a body comprised of Al Bireh, Ramallah, Beitunia and several other smaller municipalities in the region which focus on joint projects aimed to develop the region.



Yousif Shawkat, Attorney

Advocate, Yousif Shawkat, is the owner and the managing director of Shawkat Lawyer's Office based in Ramallah, Palestine. He specializes in commerce and trading of lands and lease affairs in the Palestinian territory.

Yousif established the Shawkat Lawyer's Office in 2003 in Ramallah to meet the needs of Palestinians (home and abroad) and includes a number of the best specialized attorneys and consultants in the land registry process. His firm also is qualified to handle commercial cases, which include every step in selling and buying, as well as other specializations to meet the needs of their customers.



Comedy and Birawis Got Talent

Mona Aburmishan, Comedian

Palestinian-American, Mona Aburmishan is an international comedian based in her hometown of Chicago. She has performed, emceed and produced comedy shows, competitions and events in major clubs, theatres and universities around the world. In addition to her comedy, Mona is a sought-after speaker for her experience using stand-comedy to bring joy and affinity in various socio-political topics in the United States, Europe, Africa and the Arab World. She became the first Arab and Muslim woman to perform stand-up comedy in the nation's most prestigious institutions: Twice at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, DC and Carnegie Hall in New York. Mona completed her 2018 summer tour throughout the West Bank, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; in addition, she is a sought-after headliner on the African continent as well. For more information, please visit monacomedy.com



2018 Al-Bireh Convention Highlights

Palestine Leadership Workshop

Linda Sarsour, Activist, Organizer

Linda Sarsour is an award winning racial justice and civil rights activist, community organizer, and mother of three. She is a Palestinian-Muslim-American born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. She is the co-founder of Muslim online organizing platform, MPower Change. Linda has held a number of leadership roles including the Executive Director of the Arab American Association of New York, co-chair of the Womens March, named 500 most influential muslims in the world and Fortune's 50 Great Leaders. She is a frequent media commentator on issues impacting Muslim communities, Middle East affairs and criminal justice reform and most recognized for her transformative intersectional organizing work and movement building.



Tarek Abuata, Lawyer and Executive Director FOSNA

Born into a Palestinian Christian family in Bethlehem, Tarek Abuata moved to Texas during the first Palestinian Intifada when he was 12. After graduating from the University of Texas Law School, Tarek started his career working for the Negotiations Support Unit of the Palestinian Authority, researching legal and policy issues. As a former coordinator for the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron www.cpt.org and served as the representative of Rev. Bernard LaFayette (protégé of Dr. King) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bernard_Lafayette training Palestinian youth in nonviolence principles and steps. Currently, Tarek serves as the Executive Director of Friends of Sabeel North America www.fosna.org



Sam Rasoul, Business Owner, Politician

Sam Rasoul, a Palestinian-American politician whose parents, Ralph and Jenny Rasoul, hail from Al Bireh. He serves as a Democratic member of the Virginia House of Delegates, representing District 11 in Roanoke, Virginia. First elected to the chamber in a special election on January 7, 2014, Sam was re-elected to a new term in 2017, and became the first Virginia legislator to no longer accept donations from special interest PACs (Political Action Committees), or from registered lobbyists. Sam became a small business owner and later the Chief Financial Officer and Chief Operating officer of a non-profit healthcare firm. He channeled his passion for healthcare reform into finding more compassionate ways to care for our seniors and helping with maternal and child health in East Africa. Sam lives in Virginia with his wife, Layaly, and their three children.



Fadi Quran, Senior Campaigner, Lawyer and Activist

Fadi Quran is a Senior Campaigner at Avaaz and a Popular Struggle community organizer in Palestine, where he works on building power in key Palestinian communities to help resist and stay steadfast against the occupation. He previously served as UN Advocacy Officer with Al-Haq's legal research and advocacy unit. Apart from his work in advocacy and international law, Fadi is also an entrepreneur in the alternative energy field, where he has founded two companies bringing wind and solar energy to Palestine and other countries in the region. Fadi holds degrees in Physics and International Relations from Stanford University.



2018 Al-Bireh Convention Highlights

Empowering Arab American Women

Manal Deeb, Artist

Manal Deeb (www.manaldeeb.com) is a Palestinian-American artist who was born in Ramallah, Palestine, and currently resides in the Washington DC area, USA. Her mission and main subjects are: humanity, Palestine, the Palestinian people, global cultures, creating bridges between religions, Arab women, and identity. Manal's work focuses on preserving her Palestinian identity, while at the same time attempting to reach a conscious happiness away from home (in exile).

Manal studied Studio Arts at the University of Illinois in Chicago, and got her Bachelor Degree in Interdisciplinary Studies with concentration in Psychology of Art from George Mason University in Virginia. She is a resident artist at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, VA USA.



Dr. Goldberg Bashi, PhD

For over a decade, Dr. Bashi has designed and taught interdisciplinary courses on various aspects of medieval and modern history of the Near East, as well as Islamic Art, Critical Methodologies in Middle Eastern Studies, Comparative Human Rights, Gender in the Muslim World, and Representations of Race, Gender and Ethnicity in "Western" Media and Popular Culture.

Born in Iran and raised in Sweden, her childhood experiences of the Iraq-Iran war and life in Sweden as a refugee turned her into an advocate for diversity in children's literature and media. In 2016, she was nominated for the "Wonder Woman Award" by the U.S. toy industry in the Designer/Inventor category for advancing early childhood education through play for languages using the Arabic and Persian-scripts. Her first children's book, *P is for Palestine: A Palestine Alphabet Book*, was published to critical acclaim in November, 2017. She received her doctoral degree from Columbia University in the City of New York in 2010. You can learn more about Dr. Bashi's projects at www.drbashi.com



Wafa Ghnaim, Author

Wafa Ghnaim is an American-born Palestinian businesswoman, writer, and artist. Wafa began learning Palestinian embroidery from her mother when she was two years old. Throughout her life, Wafa traveled alongside her mother for various exhibitions, lectures and demonstrations around the U.S. from folklore festivals in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to elementary schools in southeast Portland, Oregon. She assisted her mother by preparing materials for lectures, modeling embroidery outfits created by her mother, demonstrating needlework techniques at large-scale festivals, and curating exhibits.

Tatreez & Tea has grown into an initiative that provides ongoing arts education programming on Palestinian embroidery across the United States and Canada. Wafa teaches various curricula that is centered on traditional Palestinian cross-stitch embroidery in order to keep the traditional art alive in the Palestinian diaspora.



2018 Al Bireh Convention Highlights

Career Panel

Seana Abdelmajid, Businesswoman, Realtor

Seana has been living in South Florida for the past 15 years where she is a Florida licensed real estate agent with La Rosa Realty and an investor. She owns her company, Panther Home Solutions and is a co-owner of MVP House Buyers, a professional, real estate solutions company that buys and sells properties throughout Florida and North Carolina. They specialize in purchasing distressed homes at a discount, renovating and reselling them to retail home buyers and landlords.



Dr. Suhad A. Hadi, Medicine, DPM, FACFAS

Suhad is a Podiatrist with the Veterans Administration in Akron, Ohio and fulfills her love of speaking with “Educate the Educators” as she coordinates resident educator courses. She believes that Podiatry has given her much more from a medical career than she could have asked for, as it addresses her passion for limb salvage and fulfilled her desire for a career allowing her to educate others at every level and stage of learning.

She obtained her Bachelor’s Degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry, and pursued her Doctorate in Podiatric Medicine (DPM) at the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine (OCPM), now known as the Kent State College of Podiatric Medicine (KSCPM).



Sameer “Sam” Hasan, Attorney

As an attorney, Sam has spent the last 15 years building his law practice, assisting other attorneys and acting as counsel in thousands of appeals before the Executive Office of Immigration Review, the Board of Immigration Appeals, and the United States Federal Courts of Appeals. While he concentrates a large portion of his practice on immigration appellate issues, he maintains a small portion of his practice to business transactional issues.

Sam prepared for law school by getting his undergraduate degree from George Mason University, majoring in Finance. He later attained his Juris Doctor from Seton Hall University School of Law.



Shatha Odeh, Educator

Shatha is Literature and Writing teacher for a high school in the Suburbs of Chicago. This is her sixteenth year of commitment to education, believing that our children deserve the best in education in order to achieve their personal and professional goals.

She received her undergraduate degree in English Literature from Saint Xavier University in Chicago, and two master’s degrees in Education from Concordia University.



Samer Joudeh, Businessman, Restaurateur

Samer is an entrepreneur/restaurateur in the great State of Illinois. Since 2003, he, along with his business partner, have successfully grown their popular restaurant, Mezza, to six locations and their Habanero brand in three locations, all in the popular Chicago Loop. Prior to entering the restaurant world, Samer started his career on the floor of the Chicago Board Options Exchange as an Options Trader.

He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Illinois, majoring in Finance, and went on to attain his MBA from St. Xavier University with an emphasis in International Finance.



2018 Al Bireh Convention Highlights

Career Panel (Cont)

Maher Naser, Senior Agent, Artists' Division Ford Models, Inc.

Maher is a Senior Agent in the artists' division for Ford Models, Inc. His clients include Landsend, Nike, Target, Lord and Taylor to name a few. While holding the position of senior manager position on the FORD Artists board, he managed work for over 70 stylists in photography, wardrobe, hair and makeup, prop stylists and art directors field.

He received his bachelors of Arts, Entertainment and Media Management at Columbia College Chicago in 2006 with a focus fashion business.



Professional Networking Session: Balancing Your Professional and Personal Life: Navigating Your Rights in Activism and the Law

Vivian Khalaf, Attorney

Vivian R. Khalaf is a founding partner of Khalaf & Abuzir, LLC, and its affiliate office in Ramallah, Palestine, "Agility Services". Ms. Khalaf has over 20 years of immigration law experience and practices both family and business immigration. She is also well-versed in family law, with an emphasis on Islamic matrimonial issues.

Born in Jerusalem, Vivian R. Khalaf obtained her B.A. degree from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1987 and her J.D. from Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago-Kent College of Law in 1991. Ms. Khalaf is fluent in the Arabic language and represents a multitude of individuals and corporate clients from various regions in the Middle East. She has resided in both Palestine and Jordan and travels to the region on a regular basis.



Linda Sarsour, Activist, Organizer

(Biography previously provided)

Amer Zahr, Professor of Law, Comedian, Activist

Amer Zahr is an Arab-American comedian, speaker, writer, academic, and adjunct professor at University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. Having performed throughout the Middle East and North America, He has produced and headlined in numerous shows, including "1001 Laughs Comedy Tour," "We're Not White," and "In 1948." Amer is also the master-mind behind the documentary film, "We're Not White," a comedic and informative approach to the Arab-American struggle to get a box on the United States Census Form. He is also the author of the well-read blog "The Civil Arab," as well as his first book, "Being Palestinian Makes Me Smile," a collection of his writings relating to being Palestinian.

Amer holds a Master's Degree in Middle East Studies and a JD (law degree), both from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He writes and speaks widely on political and social affairs, and has appeared on radio and television, and has had numerous published pieces.



Al Bireh Society

Youth Movement



Rafat (RJ) Khalaf, Advocate

Rafat (RJ) Khalaf is a recent graduate of New York University where he majored in Politics, Rights, and Development and minored in Social Entrepreneurship. He is the founder of LEAD Palestine, an organization that works to inspire, motivate, and empower the next generation of Palestine's youth. He loves all things Palestine and is constantly inspired by the spirit and resilience of the Palestinian people.



Zuhdiah (Zuzu) Sarhan, Public Health Analyst

Zuhdiah Sarhan is a public health analyst by day and multimedia creative by night. Based out of Northern Virginia, her creative work focuses on the stories of Muslim women and youth in the 21st century. She believes in the power of community building to create positive change.



Al Bireh Society Young Adult Program & Youth Movement

The Al Bireh Society Young Adult Program and Youth Movement will be discussed at this year's Al Bireh Society Convention at the Young Adult General Assembly on December 21, 2018. The Al Bireh Societies Youth Movement aims to achieve two primary goals. To connect the Birawi diaspora in the U.S. with each other in order to build a greater sense of community and to strengthen the sense of Palestinian identity for generations to come. We are excited to present this year's program which contains a diverse range of activities that will appeal to the wide range of interests in our community. Some highlights are included in this pamphlet, such as a Debkeh workshop, a Career Panel, and much more. Come sound off your voice and participate in leadership training as we actively participate in Palestine Leadership Workshop that is designed to invigorate and enlighten the next leaders in our community. We look forward to seeing everyone and making this year's convention the best one yet!

We are starting a movement that will require all our members to actively take a seat at the table and participate in discussions and a forum where we can bring our community to a higher level. Please look at the young adult program and register for these events as this will be a convention that will enlighten and motivate you to take action in your local community. To join the youth movement please visit our facebook page or the Al Bireh Society Page. We look forward to meeting you soon!

Youth Program

Friday, Dec 21

Location: Poinciana A & B

1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

General Young Adult Assembly Meeting

Saturday, Dec 22

Location: Heritage

1:30 PM to 2:30 PM

Debkeh 101

Saturday, Dec 22

Location: The Grand Salon

2:30 PM to 4:00 PM

Palestine Leadership Conference

Ongoing- Everyday

Location: Kissimmee

12: PM to 12 AM

Youth Hangout Room

Other Recommended Events for Youth:

Saturday, Dec 22

Location: OSCEOLA E

10:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Birawis Got Talent

Saturday, Dec 22

Location: Poinciana

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Professional Networking Lunch/Career Panel



AL BIREH SOCIETY

Former Presidents of Al Bireh Society

- Abdel Latif Suleiman
- Izzidin Rushdi Naser
- Ghazi Hamad
- Nitham Hasan
- Hasan Awadallah Hasan
- Ismael Sarsour
- Dr. Rafeek Mahmoud Farah

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

SURELY WE BELONG TO ALLAH AND
TO HIM SHALL WE RETURN

In Loving Memory to Previous Presidents of the Al-Bireh Society

Nitham Hasan, Abu Osama (Dar Hamayel, 1927- 2016). He was 88, the eldest of 8 siblings and the first to pass away. Abu Osama was a great man who will be missed by so many. It was said of him “He leaves a void that is hard to fill and a legacy that is hard to match.” Abu Osama attended the Hashimite School and learned the trade as a tailor in Jerusalem in 1948. He was an active member in his local community even at a young age. In 1953, he was dedicated to his religion and wanted to teach more people about Islam. He taught at different cultural centers and institutions with the common goal of enhancing peoples spirituality and devotion to Islam. Abu Osama came to the U.S. and opened a number of different business such as a real estate office, taxi cab office, and helped out at the travel agency. One week after arriving in the US, Abu Osama received news that Israel was occupying Palestine during the 1948 Nakbah and had to work to get his wife and children out. It was a troubling ordeal for him and his family because they were unable to get the necessary information about the safety of his family back home. Since then, his devotion to this family and his community continued to strengthen over time. Abu Osama was one of the founding members of the Mosque in Cleveland which he helped open in 1968 where he served as Imam. He also helped establish the Islamic Center in Pompano Beach in 1984 and served in a leadership position for 30 years. He was involved with the Al -Bireh Society USA from its inception and served as president for many terms until he handed over the responsibility to the next generation. All that remember Abu Osama remember him for his patience, wiliness to listen, professional demeanor and his punctuality. When one passes there are three things that will benefit them in the hearafter: 1) to raise righteous child, 2) to have taught others, 3) to have established a continuous charity. Amu Nitham has succeeded in all three of these things and is a honorable respected pillar of our community that will be sadly missed. – Rose Hamid, bint Hashem Hasan



Izzidin Rushdi Naser (Daar Abed 1943-2014) was born in AL-Bireh, Palestine and had very early ties to our community, presiding over the Al-Bireh Scouts in 1967. Through his commitment, dedication, and passion Izzidin, helped form the Al-Bireh Scouts, which become a true home of the youth of the city. Izzidin's cordial and righteous interaction with individuals and other organizations was exemplary. He was able to fairly and successfully bridge all sectors of our society with the respect of other community members and leaders. Later in life, Izzidin became one of the strongest pillars of the Palestinian community in Chicago. He raised a wonderful immediate family but also took part in raising a larger family, the community of Palestinians who by choice or not, called Chicago their home. He and his wife Um Naser opened their homes to those who did not have family in Chicago. In addition, Izzidin Naser was a distinguished member and a leader in the Arab Community Center, which served thousands of Palestinians in Chicago. The Arab Community Center provided tremendous amount of support and preservation of our Palestinian heritage. Izzidin "Abu Naser" would have been proud to see the "Seeds of Al-Bireh Convention" come to life. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Sumaya; his children Souzan, Naser, Nader, and Maher and grandchildren.



(Hajj) Dr. Rafeek Mahmoud Farah (Dar Taweel), 68, of New Boston, MI, died November 1, 2015 in Trenton, MI following a strong battle of cancer. Dr. Farah is the beloved husband, father and grandfather to his surviving wife, Fatmah, their five children: Mahmoud (Nervana) Farah, Dena Farah, Reem Farah, Ghadah (Terrance) Winfield and Ahmad (Sonya) Farah, and his 21 grandchildren. Dr. Rafeek had a strong faith in Allah and was extremely charitable. His loves included his family, his Palestinian heritage, medicine and digging with his tractor. He always stressed the value of an education, knowledge being essential to prosperous life. Rafeek always pursued advancing himself both spiritually and professionally. He completed the journey to Hajj twice. Rafeek was a very strong and passionate physician who cared for the community for over forty-five years. Dr. Rafeek will always be remembered by his strong support for Al Bireh, Palestine. He was an active founding member of the Al Bireh Society, having served many roles in the society including President. He organized 2 successful Detroit Chapter Conventions in 1986 and 1996. His goal was to unite the people of Al Bireh and to provide knowledge about Palestinian Affairs. It would be a great honor for him and his legacy to see the success of the Al Bireh Society; he was a strong advocate of educating our youth and continuing or strong fight to maintain our homeland. "Where there is a will, there is a way!" Dr. Rafeek will always be in our hearts, please pray for him to have a safe journey into Jennah. Rest in peace Rafeek (Dad), we will always love you. Ahmad Farah (on behalf of the Farah Family)





Al Bireh Scholarships Fund

The Al-Bireh Society, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Our main focus is providing scholarships to support our local youth as well as those abroad. The Al-Bireh Society is creating a scholarship fund in order to expand educational opportunities for those in need. Scholarships will be issued on a yearly basis as funds allow.

This year we will announce the scholarship recipients for the following levels

- 3- High school senior scholarships for \$1000.00 or more
- 2- College student scholarship for \$1000.00 or more
- 1- Graduate student scholarship for \$1000.00 or more
- 2- Students from Al-Bireh, Palestine \$500.00 or more

Special thanks to our scholarship donors:

\$10,000- Dr. Rafik Farah Scholarship

\$5,000- Said, Salim & Rahma Wahdan Scholarship

\$5,000- Al-Kawthar Scholarship

\$5,000- Palestine Development Fund

\$2,500- Arafat Maref Quran Scholarship

\$2,000- Nadim Hasan Scholarship



Al Bireh Society welcomes its attendees to the *Honor the Past-Own the Future* convention in the third largest city in the USA, Orlando, FL. The Al Bireh Society prides itself on uniting and engaging its members annually to collaboratively experience a worthwhile convention rich in Al Bireh culture, heritage, and traditions. The Al Bireh Society would like to extend special thanks to our generous sponsors. Without our sponsors' support and contributions our convention would not have been a success. Thank you.



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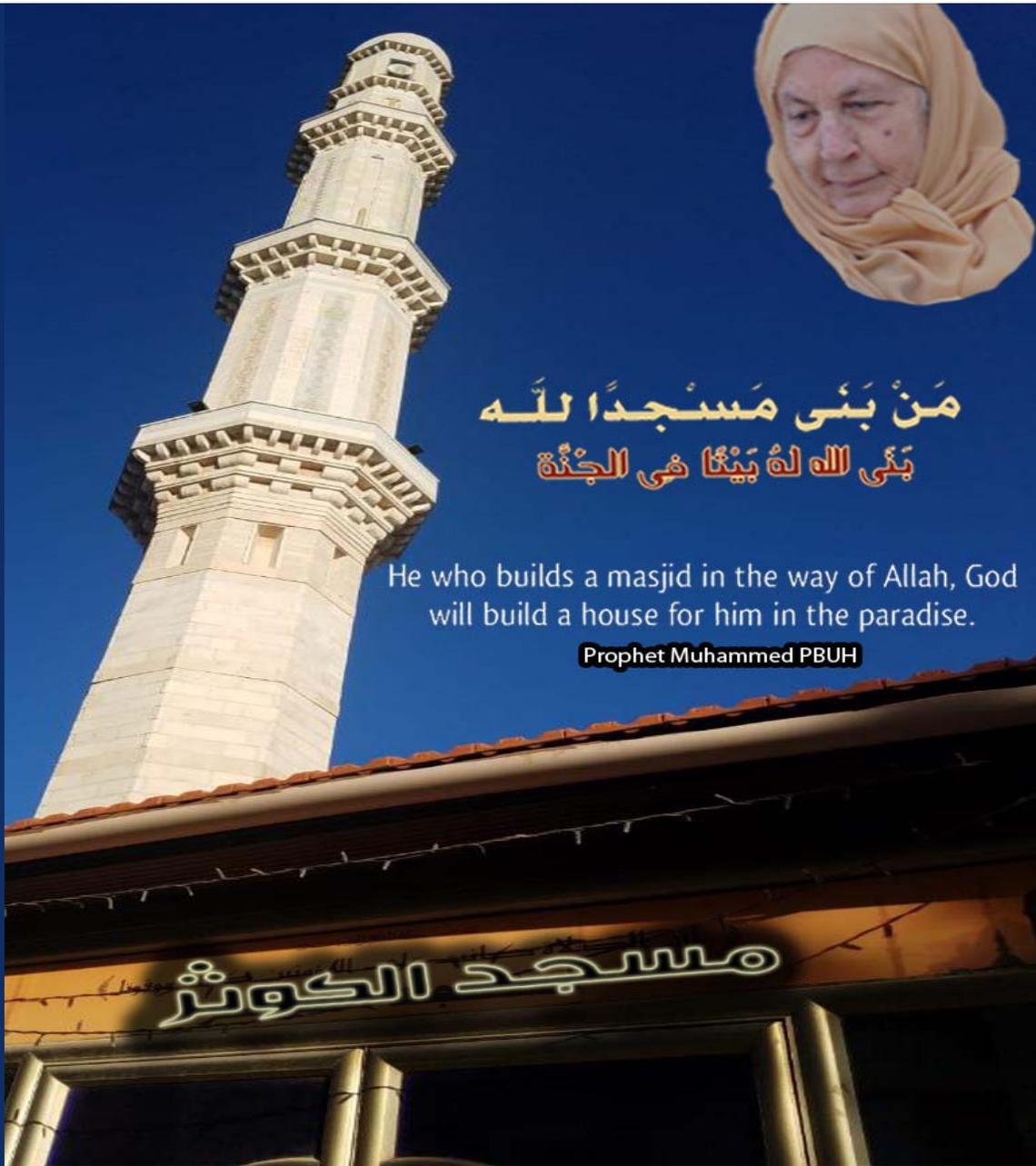
Dakhlallah Kahook & Family

Brotman Nusbaum Ibrahim



Dr. Rafeek Mahmoud Farah Scholarship

As a dedicated Husband, Father, Friend and Mentor Dr. Rafeek Mahmoud Farah Scholarship will be a legacy that his family will honor to a well deserving recipient of the Al Bireh Scholarship Fund. His values of hard work and promoting the Palestinian identity will continue to resonate for future Birawi generations.



مَنْ بَنَى مَسْجِدًا لِلَّهِ
بَنَى اللَّهُ لَهُ بَيْتًا فِي الْجَنَّةِ

He who builds a masjid in the way of Allah, God will build a house for him in the paradise.

Prophet Muhammed PBUH

Al-Kawthar Scholarship was created this year in the hopes of continuing a legacy of people helping one another. While our family knew her as a mother, a wife, a sister, a grandmother and great grandmother, she was also a generous and giving woman; who tried to give in times of need as much as she possibly could. She built a mosque for people to pray and worship in. She spoke of Al-Bireh as being the place she wanted to live out her days and be laid to rest. Our hope is that this scholarship will help students further their education and provide them with the opportunity to pursue their passion and make a difference in this world, just as she did.

In loving memory of Kawthar Ali-Joudeh Khalaf Al-Taweel



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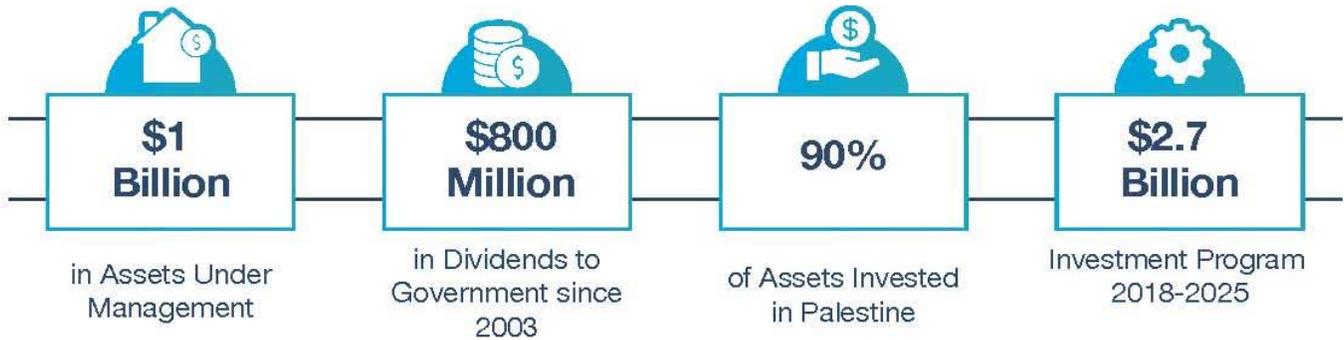
What We Do

PIF invests and mobilizes partnerships in strategic projects in vital, underserved sectors of the Palestinian economy



Partnerships

PIF originates projects and invites local and international partners to co-invest, achieving average leverage ratios of 1:3



Operational Model

Four sector-driven impact investment arms and one asset management group



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 |
 Hotels
 |
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Energy Security
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 Renewable Energy
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 |
 Digital infrastructure



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 |
 Improve market access
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 Optimize crop quality
 |
 Improve access to agricultural inputs



Strategic Investments
 |
 Health care
 |
 Industry
 |
 Telecom

Innovate Palestine

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 Provide access to network & finance
 |
 Build entrepreneurial mindset & skills

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Said Wahdan & Family would like to express their congratulations to the Al Bireh Society for their commitment to the Al Bireh community in the USA and in Palestine.

In Loving Memory of Salim and Rahmeh Wahdan



Said Wahdan Family



The Alaswad Family

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إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

"Indeed we belong to Allah , and indeed
to Him we will return."

(Quran 2:156)

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ



In memory of Arafat and Tamam Quran, our dearly beloved parents, wonderful friends, and a noble man and wife who put the dignity of their family and community first, and sacrificed dearly to ensure their children lived a happy life, were educated, and remained connected to Al-Bireh and it's values. The sons and daughters of Arafat and Tamam: Hazem, Maref, Hani, Muhannad, Yaser, Hala, Aida, and Nuha, in respect of and to keep alive the memory of their dear mother and father for future generations, have decided to fund and support different efforts to strengthen the Al-Bireh community's strength, cohesiveness and resilience.



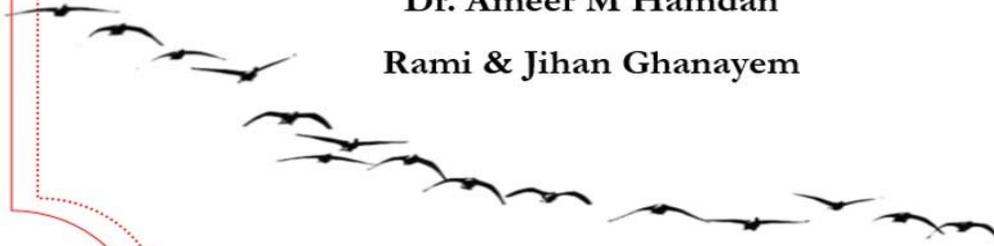
*Together, may we give
our children
Roots to grow
And wings to fly*

Best wishes for a successful convention

Summer Hamad Hamdan

Dr. Ameer M Hamdan

Rami & Jihan Ghanayem



Wishes for a successful
2018 Al Bireh Convention

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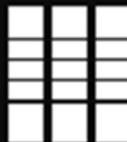


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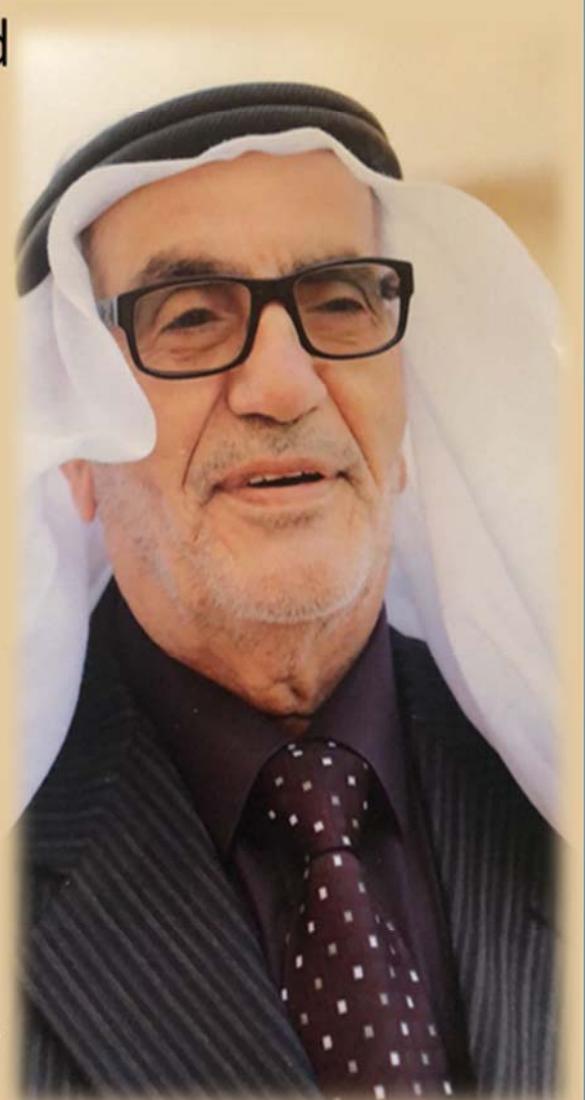


Dear Fellow Birawi Family & Friends

On behalf of our family we would like to congratulate the Al Bireh Society for an outstanding job!

As we all push forward we must always strive to make Al Bireh, Palestine better. We will always stand united with our brothers & sisters. We are always stronger united!

Mr. Dakhilallah Kahook & Family
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Ziad Hamdan



Law Office of Reem Odeh would like to congratulate Al Bireh Society on its 2018 Convention in Orlando Florida.

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reem@odehlaw.com



Congratulations

Dr. Nader Husni Mutaweh Odeh

Husni Mutaweh Odeh and Sameera Odeh, along with their daughters Reem, Summer, Shatha, Ruba and Faten Odeh, as well as their daughter-in-law, Heeba and their grandchildren, congratulate their son, Nader Husni Mutaweh Odeh on the completion of his Doctoral degree in Education. Dr. Nader Odeh received his Doctorate degree from the University of North Carolina-Wilmington and received the highest honors. Dr. Nader Husni Mutaweh Odeh completed his Doctorate degree not only for his family, but also for his beloved city and its people, Al-bireh.

تهنه من القلب للدكتور نادر حسني مطاوع من الوالدين حسني
وسميره والأخوات وزوجته هبه والأولاد وعموم الأهل والأقارب في
مدينه البيره على حصوله على درجه الدكتوراه في التعليم العالي من
جامعه ولمنتون في نورث كارولاينا الف مبروك والى الامام

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

To Family members from Qoorhan, neighbors, And friends, hello to you and your families. I have not seen some of you in 25 years. I'm sorry I cannot be with you at this convention. I will share my joy with you all in spirit. We need to preserve and protect our specific culture and heritage for generations to come. In order to accomplish that, we need to continue our support to institutions such as the Al Bierah Society. Ibn Salma Mutawi Odeh Judeh (Dar Qooragh)

جزاكم الله خيرا

Neil Halim M.D. & Family



Neil Lutfi Halim M.D.
Family Doctor



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in Shreveport, LA.
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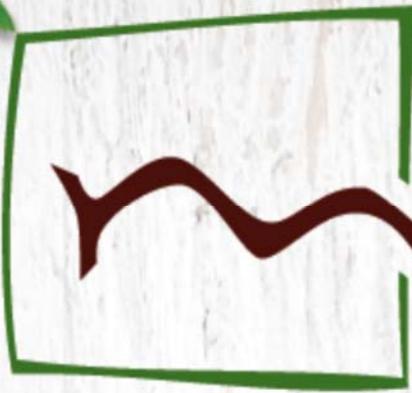
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*Congratulations on the convening of
the 2018 annual Al-Bireh Society
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Dr. Nuha Museitef Nakib and Dr. Randa Samir Nakib congratulate the Orlando Committee of AlBireh Society and the Albireh community in the USA and in Albireh for organizing the Albireh Convention in Orlando Florida.

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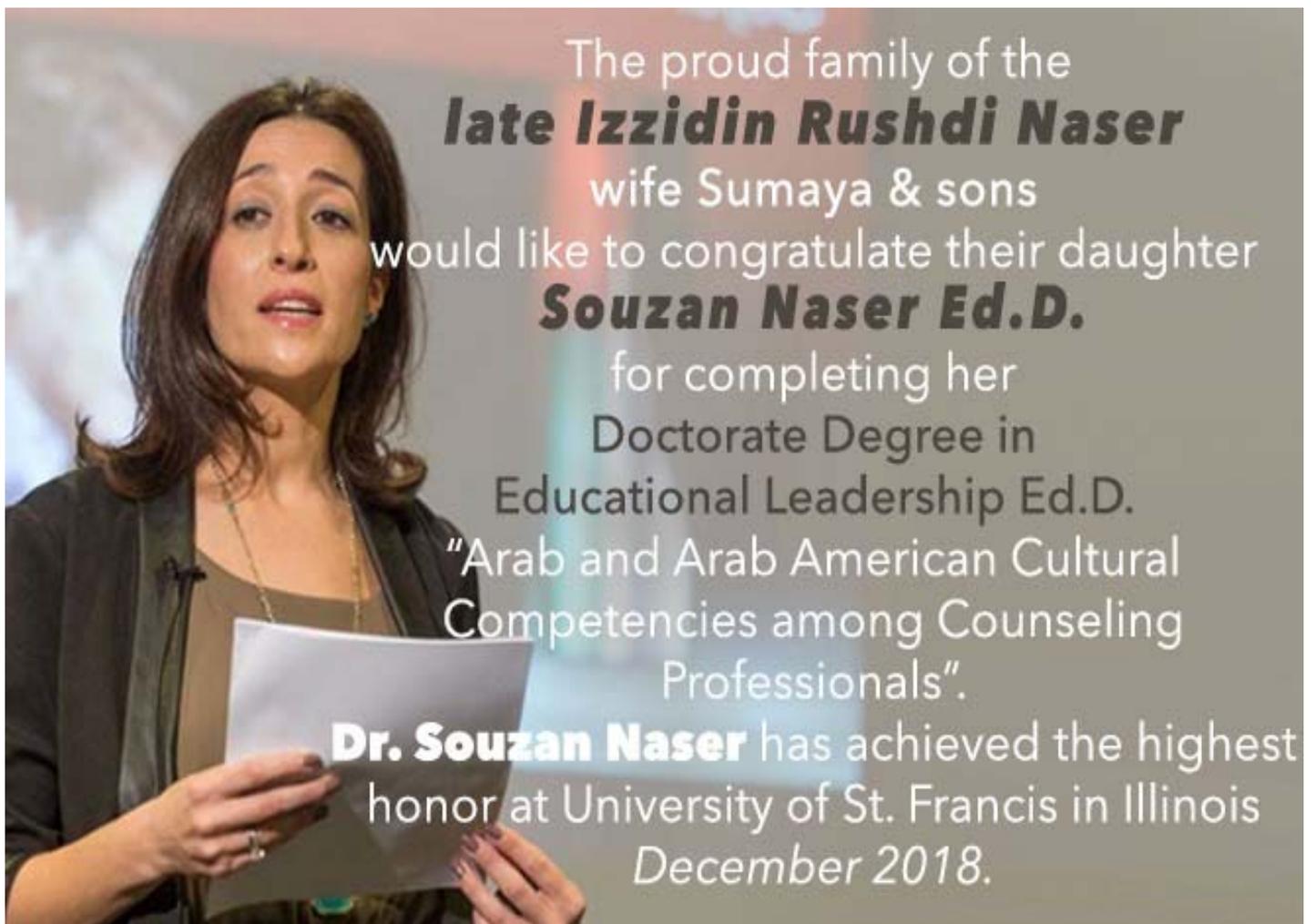
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*Thank you to the
2018 Al Bireh Committee
for all your efforts in making this year's Convention possible.
We wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year, Insha'Allah*

The families of Jawad, Neal and Nader Atway





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*Basem Ali, Reem Ali
And Family
Congratulate
Al Bireh Society Inc.
On the Convention and
wishing all success to the
Convention and all
People in our
Beloved City, Al Bireh*

The Al Bireh Convention
is a “cut” above the rest!
We wish the Al Bireh Society a
successful 2018 Convention!

From: Hasan “الحلاق”, Feda, and
Generations of the Afaneh Family



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الحمد لله رب العالمين * الحمد لله * فإلى يوم الدين * أنا عبدك وأهلك
نسيتعين * أهذا الصراط المستقيم * صراط الذي فضلنا عليه من عبادة
المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين

In loving memory of Rebhia Fahmi Bahur Abedul Hadi and Abed Attieh Abedul Hadi

The Hadi Family would like to congratulate the Al Bireh Society for the **2018** convention



In Loving Memory of
Hasan Awadallah Hasan

And

Samira Akel Hamad

Thank you Al Bireh Convention Committee for your
hard work and for your commitment to continuing
the El Bireh Convention Tradition.

Hani & Amal Hamad and Family



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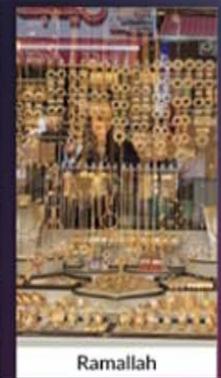
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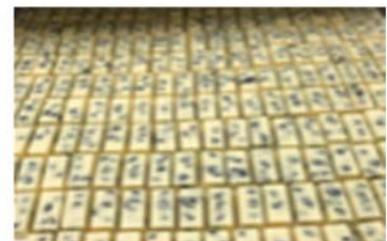
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أم علي، الحاجة رشيدة إسماعيل عبد الجابر حمدان (من اليسار)
أم ثابت، الحاجة فوزية أحمد محمود عمر
ستبقى ذكراهن خالدة إلى الأبد

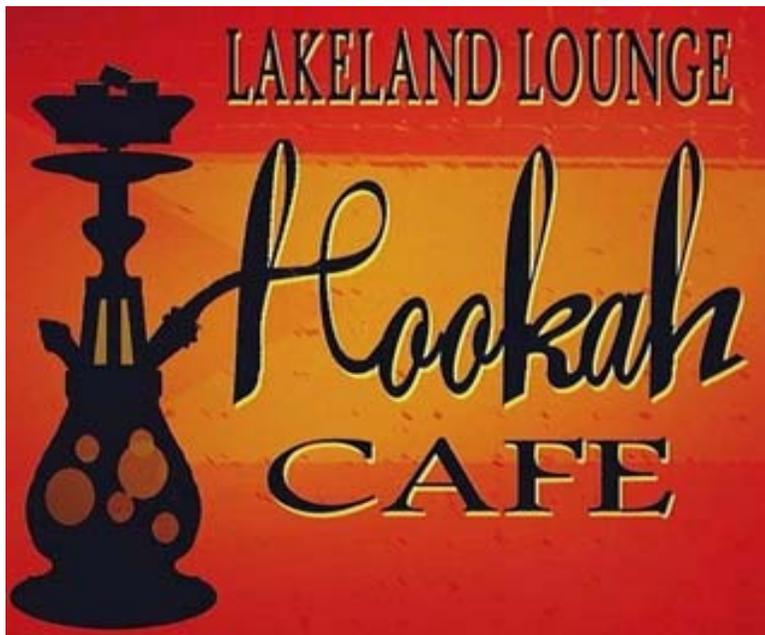
كن من السيدات الفاضلات في البيرة، محبات للجميع، ومحوبات من الجميع
فاعلات للخير، ذوات قلوب مليئة بالطيبة والرحمة والكرم والجود والعطاء والإحسان
الله يرحمهن ويحسن إليهما ويجعل مثواهن الجنة
علي إسماعيل حمدان (أبو نائر)

In Memory of

“Um Ali,” Rasheeda Ismael Abdel Jaber Hamdan (from left)

“Um Thabit,” Fawzya Ahmad Mahmoud Omar

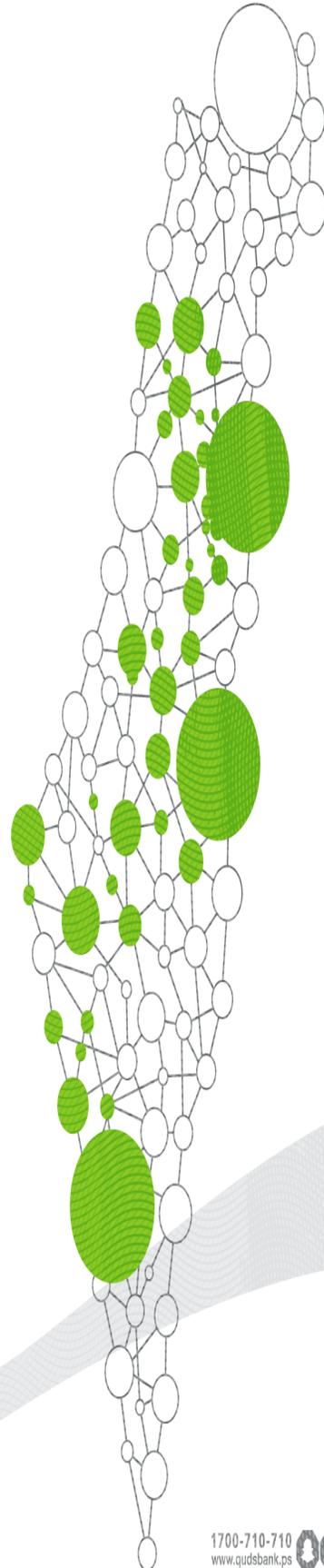
Their piety, love to all, charity, kindness, and giving will be missed
May God bestow his love and mercy upon their souls, and
enshrine them in His lofty heavens





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