

New Narratives Engage Communities

The AFRP Educational & Cultural Exchange Fellowship

In 2025, the Educational and Cultural Exchange Mission's Palestine Fellowship — awarded to **Jennifer Mogannam, Ph.D.** and **Nadine Foty** — became a powerful testament to how AFRP's support is shaping the way new generations understand and engage with the Palestinian story.

The Fellowship is a competitive \$5,000 grant to help foster educational and cultural exchange through interactive engagement. It's an initiative of the AFRP Educational and Cultural Exchange Mission with the objective to support our community's thought leaders whose projects and ideas are positioned for growth and community engagement with Fellowship support.

Author, professor, oral historian, ethnographer and cultural critic, Dr. Jennifer Mogannam, devoted her Fellowship to "Villages in Exile" a Palestinian oral history collection and training project for families from Ramallah and Birzeit in central California. With Fellowship support, Dr. Mogannam interviewed community members and held oral history workshops about her project and training efforts at the San Francisco Ramallah Club in April 2025 and at the 2025 AFRP Convention in nearby Burlingame. Her website, which she says is a work in progress, documents her efforts at www.villagesinexile.com (password Ramallah). Plans are to continue with oral history collection to preserve histories for future generations and potentially expand the methodology to other communities. Dr. Mogannam, an assistant professor in the Department of Critical Race and Ethnic Studies and a faculty affiliate



Teacher Nadine Foty and her father, Fuad, teach Palestinian music to pre-K students.

at the Center for the Middle East and North Africa at University of California, Santa Cruz, said the Fellowship "is a gesture to young people in our community. . . that there is a place for them here. I truly believe this Fellowship can reach and energize a new demographic of our community. I am excited to see that happen and I am grateful for the opportunity."

Nadine Foty is an actor, musician, author and public elementary school teacher in Washington, D.C. She used her Fellowship to develop Palestinian and social justice themed activities and lessons for elementary school children.

Her "Palestine in Our Schools (PIOS) videos inform, inspire and support educators who teach young students about Palestinian culture. To Nadine, the Fellowship support was essential to expanding her program and outreach. Already, she has reached thousands of views online, and counting. "The videos serve as evidence of the effective nature of teaching kids core values of empathy, love, and tolerance through discussing Palestine alongside other social justice issues," she said. Her YouTube videos can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/@burnoutteachers6567/videos>

Also in 2025, AFCEM awarded a \$10,000 grant for a 10-day solidarity visit to Palestine led by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). The delegation of 13 bishops, pastors and lay people from Latin America and the U.S. travelled in November 2025. The visit sought to amplify and centralize the Palestinian Christian struggle for justice.

The 2026 Palestine Fellowship awardees have also been selected and they are artist **Samar Hussaini** of West Orange, New Jersey and fashion designer **Rami Kashou** of Los Angeles, California. The duo, with roots in Ramallah, are collaborating in a mixed media and design exhibition to be held in 2027 at the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, titled "Threads that Bind Us."



Samar Hussaini



Rami Kashou