



AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
RAMALLAH
— PALESTINE —
COMMUNITY REPORT



**A Great and Generous
Supporter of AFRP and
the Palestinian People.**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE FEDERATION PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

Since 1959, the success of the American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine (AFRP) can be measured by the relentless efforts of those who have given of their time and talent to ensure the sustainability of our Christian Palestinian heritage lives on from generation to generation.

Headquartered in Westland, Michigan, the AFRP was founded with the purpose of serving as the link between all the Ramallah families in the U.S., to support our people in Palestine and to develop our beloved city. Established as a nonprofit charitable, social, educational and cultural organization, it boasts a current membership of approximately 40,000 people living in major U.S. cities.

Members can trace their ancestry to the 1,500s to five brothers whose families are the original inhabitants of the West Bank city of Ramallah, Palestine, located 10 miles north of Jerusalem.

In the late 1940s, many of the Ramallah families began to immigrate to the U.S., largely due to the Arab-Israeli conflict. These new immigrants remained determined to work for the just cause of the Palestinian people. They engaged every sect of the American society demanding justice and freedom for their people, all the while, supporting their people living under occupation in Palestine. They provided scholarships, built and supported educational institutions. They built the first hospital in Ramallah and continue to fund many of its projects, including the annual medical mission trips that are designed to educate medical professionals and treat patients in Palestine. They are credited to the fast economic growth their city witnessed through the different projects they invested. Today, their sons and daughters continue to carry that mission and serve as ambassadors for the Palestinian people. They currently support the city financially, educationally and invest in diverse sectors.

Many of these families have witnessed three or more generations born in the U.S. Mindful that with each new generation, cultural assimilation is a spontaneous and an expected process. The programs and initiatives highlighted in this report showcase the importance of safeguarding our heritage while assimilating in our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you some of the highlights of the AFRP.

Hanna Hanania, DDS





AMERICAN FEDERATION OF RAMALLAH, PALESTINE

The American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine (AFRP) is a nonprofit, social, charitable and educational organization established in 1959, whose membership descends from the original Christian family of Rashid Haddadin and his sons, who settled in the city of Ramallah, Palestine in the mid-1500s.

The mission of the AFRP is to perpetuate and promote the rich, cultural Palestinian heritage to the Ramallah family and their descendants in diaspora — estimated at approximately 40,000 in the U.S. — by providing programs that foster cultural and social interaction, as well as educational, humanitarian, civic and charitable opportunities.

These efforts are achieved through the implementation of a multitude of sources, including the bimonthly publication, *Hathihe Ramallah* magazine (This is Ramallah) — established in 1952 as the communications link among the Ramallah communities worldwide; the annual conventions/family reunions, which began in 1958; the Ramallah Business and Professional Network; the nationwide Palestine Day Celebration, Medical Mission trips and others.

Currently, there are 20 chapter Ramallah Clubs and affiliates located in cities throughout the United States and who operate under the guidance of the AFRP. These individual Ramallah Clubs and affiliates are encouraged to promote the Palestinian cultural heritage to their members as well as to others through cultural events, civic and service-based activities, volunteerism and other events within their communities.



The theme of our new logo invokes the Palestinian olive tree which represents peace. The tree has five branches which symbolize the original five families of Ramallah, while the tree's root symbolizes our heritage and history. The "sensileh" or old walls of stones are built by Palestinian farmers to protect their land and is a method of re-use in which a farmer removes stones from the ground and builds an architectural wall, also called "Hakura." Another purpose is to construct agricultural terraces to protect the land from soil erosion.

Logo design by Rami Razook; Community Report written by Joy Batteh-Freiha and Janan Saba, and designed by Steve Ghannam

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BUILDING OUR FUTURE YOUTH-FOCUSED PROGRAMS

Representing a significant segment of the Ramallah family is our youth. Realizing that for us to preserve our Palestinian culture from generation to generation, we must forge a sense of identity and community among all Ramallah people, but especially our youth. These young people have an essential role in transforming and strengthening the longevity of the AFRP and its mission. Various AFRP-supported and endorsed youth development programs help prepare our young people to become leaders and active stakeholders within their communities in the U.S., as well as in Palestine.

Project Hope

Project Hope began in 1997 as a means of furthering the AFRP's four founding principles of charity, culture, education, and society — principles that have guided the AFRP's coalition of clubs since 1958. Students and young adults from various Ramallah communities throughout the U.S. partake in a two-week, full-immersion, hands-on program in Palestine, performing service-oriented projects such as planting olive trees, helping build parks and play areas, and serving as camp counselors. To date, more than 250 young people have participated in this worthwhile project.





Brittany Azzouz

I participated in Leadership Ramallah back in 2015 when it was held in Houston, Texas. I had always been involved in my local club and attended conventions regularly, but had never participated in a Federation event such as this. Since attending this conference, I have been more involved in the Federation. I have attended each mid-year meeting in order to regroup with my fellow leadership alumni and have participated in the Youth Summit, which is held in DC each fall.

Leadership Ramallah has encouraged me to take on more of a leadership role within the Federation as well as in my personal life. I have had the chance to work with a variety of individuals on different projects that will benefit the AFRP. On a personal level, Leadership has allowed me to meet so many new people - I have built friendships with members from across the nation that will last a lifetime.

Leadership Ramallah allows young adults who might not have been previously involved in the Federation to get involved, meet new people and grow as a leader. The increase in participation since I did leadership is amazing. This conference opens the door for young adults to get involved, and by having regular meet ups, allows them to stay involved. Leadership was such a worthwhile experience for a variety of reasons and I encourage every young adult to attend.

Leadership Ramallah

The AFRP has always relied on the thoughts and innovation of its younger generation; their importance to our organization is immeasurable. To create future leaders of our organization and the world, the AFRP introduced this program in 2012. Geared to young adults, ages 20-40, Leadership Ramallah encourages professional development of aspiring leaders in the Ramallah-American community and helps them build-upon their present leadership skills. This two-day conference is held in conjunction with the Mid-year Meeting and includes leadership building skills, motivational lectures and peer-to-peer discussion led by professional leaders in the industry.



The Educational and Scholarship Fund

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." – Nelson Mandela

As a longtime advocate of higher education, the AFRP is proud to offer students financial assistance to help further their higher education goals. We are recognized as one of the largest scholarship-assistance programs among Arab American organizations. Established in 1961, the Scholarship Fund has awarded approximately \$3 million to more than 1,500 worthy students. Recipients have earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, education, engineering, science, business administration, law and many other disciplines.

Outstanding High School Senior Award

The Outstanding High School Senior Awards program was established in 2014 as a way to recognize the efforts of high school seniors, whose parents are members in good standing with the AFRP, with a technology scholarship. Recipients are selected based on community service, leadership skills and a written essay.

Cultural Responsibility

"He who denies his heritage, has no heritage." – Khalil Gibran

The AFRP makes a conscious effort to preserve our rich traditions and heritage for future generations. One way is through the annual Youth Debke Contest. Each year during the annual Mid-year Meeting/Convention, the AFRP sponsors the friendly Debke – traditional Palestinian folk dance – Contest. Youth groups from chapter Ramallah Clubs perform routines on the final day of the Meeting, each vying for the Best Youth Debke Group designation. While the competition is fierce but healthy, the intention is to enrich and instill a love of Palestinian tradition to our youth.

As with the annual Debke competition, the Mil'aab is a centuries-old, chant-filled folk dance performed primarily by men, but some women have learned the good-wishes chants as well. It is considered one of the most treasured of traditions for Palestinians.



Nicholas Khalaf

I was sincerely honored and grateful to have been selected as a scholarship recipient. Your recognition of my hard work and accomplishments gives me even further motivation to continue to strive for success. I welcome the opportunity to proudly represent organizations that make these types of scholarships possible. The importance of the award goes well beyond the monetary value, as it shows that members of our community are willing to support their aspiring youth to go on to do great things. This is a symbol of their commitment to the next generation; to ensure we are successful and meaningful contributors to society. I will work hard to benefit from this award and the valuable experience that college brings. Finally, I truly believe in helping others and paying things forward and I will certainly strive for ways to have this same impact on people in the future.





CIVIC, CHARITABLE AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

Medical Mission

Health and wellness education is an integral part of the AFRP's community outreach; the Charitable Medical Mission team promotes healthy lifestyle, nutrition and overall good health. The purpose of the Medical Mission is to bring a new level of training, education and awareness to the healthcare system in Palestine. Volunteer teams include physicians, para-medical professionals and support staff who assist in administering health care, deliver donated medical equipment, medicines and supplies to hospitals throughout Palestine.

Greening of Ramallah

The olive tree is a symbol of pride and existence to all Palestinians. The Greening Project provides an opportunity for Ramallah people living throughout the United States to plant a tree in memory or in honor of a loved one as a way to replace the thousands of trees destroyed because of the occupation. Planting trees promotes a greener, safer, cleaner and more environmentally friendly Ramallah. This project allows interested parties to adopt a tree or plant one as a way to help Ramallah expand its parks and green spaces.

Helping Hands

"No act of kindness, however small, is ever wasted." - Aesop

Paying it forward is not just a statement, it is an obligation. Many chapter Ramallah Clubs around the U.S. participate in the National Day of Charity held each year in September; however, many of our chapter clubs organize charitable and civic events throughout the year, from providing tutoring services for youth, to filling backpacks for back-to-school drives, participating in the American Cancer Society's nationwide Relay for Life campaign, coordinating food and clothing drives, feeding the needy, and so much more.

Ramallah Immigrant Memory Project

Every immigrant has a unique story to tell, and that is especially true of our Ramallah family. The purpose of the Ramallah Immigrant Project is to document the unique stories and first-hand experiences of our parents and grandparents who immigrated to the U.S. These videotaped oral interviews serve as a reminder to future generations of the sacrifices made by our ancestors to make a better life for their families.

Palestine Day

An annual event, Palestine Day celebrations are part of an international day of solidarity with the Palestinian people. In the U.S., the events are held in various cities and organized by individual chapter clubs or affiliations and include Palestinian culture, food, dance and more. Many of the chapter clubs offer an educational element to the celebration with noted guest speakers, musicians and poets.

Business and Professional Society

The AFRP Business and Professional Society is a national network of business professionals dedicated to promoting and enhancing their businesses/careers through shared affiliation. The Society promotes professional development, management training and mentorship/shadowing programs.

The American Ramallah Federation Educational and Charitable Fund (ARFECF)

This charitable nonprofit 501c3 (ARFECF) corporation is chartered in the state of Michigan and is a separate entity of the Federation. Under the guidance of nine board members, the ARFECF's mission is to provide financial aid for the education and training of deserving students, as well as to contribute to educational institutions and civic organizations to further educational causes, and to provide for charitable and relief projects. Tax-deductible contributions fund this program.



2017 - AFRP
Debka Competition Winners



At some point during our mission trip in Palestine I emailed my prioress, Sister Attracta Kelly, thanking her for suggesting that I apply for membership in this mission. This is the “best Easter of my life,” I said, because in so many places and in so many ways the meaning of resurrection was lived again and again. The root of the word “resurrection” means to “stand up again.” Resurrection is made real when the people - young and old, Christian and Muslim alike - of a city under occupation turn out on a cold rainy day to “stand up” for who they are and are loud and proud in a parade of youth and spiritual heritage. Resurrection is real when a young man (still a boy really at 18) three months out of prison can ignore our questions about his personal pain and eagerly perform a “rap” on the oppression of his people. Resurrection is a conservatory of music teaching young people to make beautiful music in a city (Jerusalem) where the occupying force is “systematically” (illustrated by the power point presentation) trying to destroy not only the Palestinian culture but the very Palestinian presence in the city. Resurrection is a weekly demonstration to protest the land grab of settlements and the closing of roads. Resurrection is standing up again and again and again. Thank you for the experience of resurrection in the people of Ramallah and Palestine. Like the patroness of my Dominican order, Mary of Magdala, I am committed to telling this story of resurrection.

**Sister Cheryl Liske,
Executive Director
Gamaliel of Michigan
Detroit, MI**

CULTURAL AND EDUCATION MISSION

The AFRP Education and Cultural Exchange Program

Established in 2015, this important educational program offers the American public an opportunity to travel to Palestine to gain a better understanding and witness themselves the struggles Palestinians face daily. To date, three mission trips have taken place. The first was geared to members of religious communities, and the second consisted of journalists and communications graduate students. Future trips are planned for educators, public officials, and others.



CULTURAL AND EDUCATION MISSION



When first I first arrived in Ramallah it was hard for me to imagine the suffering of occupation that I would later see. Although I never believed all the negative stereotypes that I had seen and heard about Palestinians in the media, it was not until I witnessed and experienced it for myself that my eyes were truly opened to the beauty as well as the horrifying treatment of the Palestinian people. My heart was touched, my mind was transformed, and my faith and courage strengthened. It was a blessing to experience the life and wonderful culture of Palestinians through the people we met and the places we visited. No doubt it was powerful to meet with the people of Ramallah and enjoy insightful and challenging discussion over delicious meals and unforgettable hospitality. It was more evident that the life of Palestinians is difficult, especially while traveling through the many checkpoints that not only inconvenienced people but harassed and degraded them. I have always tried to understand all sides of a situation, but it is hard to deny that the occupation is a systematic effort by Israel to claim all Palestinian land. It was made clear as we drove around and saw how settlements were growing everywhere. I kept saying to myself, "This is unbelievable" and "This is crazy." And after talking to community leaders, community members, and those living in refugee camps, it was clear that the only way things will change is for people to understand and do something about the injustices of occupation, especially Americans. No doubt this is a herculean task. Because of our trip to Palestine, there is at least one more person who is working on the huge and difficult task of ending the occupation in Palestine. And I am that one additional person. This trip that was made possible by the American Federation of Ramallah Palestine was another very powerful way to begin building those relationships for change in the name of justice and peace. The seeds planted will not only grow, but produce more seeds of change and justice. I thank the AFRP, the leaders of our trip Basem Hishmeh and Johnny Rukab, Elham, and all who helped us experience what we did and to build relationships for understanding and change.

Rev. Taek Ki
(Congregation Church)
(City, State)

RAMALLAH, PALESTINE –

THE BRIDE OF PALESTINE

Named one of the *100 Resilient Cities* in the world by the Rockefeller Foundation, Ramallah is known as the jewel of the West Bank, even though it has its share of struggles.

Separated from Jerusalem by a wall that limits normal everyday living such as mobility and commerce for the Palestinian people, Ramallah is experiencing rapid growth in the face of these challenges and others.

However, undaunted by the illegal occupation of Israel, proud Palestinians go about their business in the “new normal”- providing for their families, protecting their city, building upon infrastructure, etc. For this and more, Ramallah was recognized by the Rockefeller Foundation for their resiliency to flourish in spite of the stresses of everyday living.

Ramallah, Palestine is proud to be recognized as one of first *100 Resilient Cities* of the world.



AFFILIATED PROGRAMS



Human Services Network

A non-governmental organization (NGO), this nonprofit 501c3 is designed to promote the quality of life and health initiatives in rural and urban communities around the U.S. and abroad. From job training to scholarships for vocational and skill-trade schools and institutions to funding the Charitable Medical Mission trips, this program also provides opportunities for social, educational and recreational programs for senior citizens and others.

More recently, the Network partnered with the American Near East Refugee Aid (ANERA), an NGO, to raise funds for the construction of community playgrounds in Ramallah — the Al-Bayyara Playground Project.

Proudly, the Network received approval by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to continue this work overseas.

HATHIHE RAMALLAH MAGAZINE – THIS IS RAMALLAH

One of the most anticipated means of communications for the Ramallah community in diaspora is the bimonthly, *Hathihe Ramallah Magazine*.

Founded in 1952 by six young, ardent men – recent immigrants from Ramallah, Palestine – who were attending Wayne State University in Detroit at the time, and who were hungry for a sense of connection to family spread throughout communities in the U.S. and abroad. They aspired to unify the Ramallah communities through a newsletter.

What started out as a 12-page newsletter written in Arabic, and with an approximate circulation of 500 in 1952 is now a full-color, glossy, 28-page magazine written in both Arabic and English with a circulation of more than 5,000.

Correspondents representing each of the Ramallah Club chapters around the U.S. and in Ramallah, were added and report on their community's activities including weddings, birth announcements, deaths, graduations, charitable projects, AFRP news, political commentary, and other important news.

Through the annual subscription rate as well as other gifts from donors, *Hathihe Ramallah* magazine serves as the quintessential source of unity for Ramallah communities.



HISTORY OF THE RAMALLAH FOUNDATION INC.

The Ramallah Foundation, Inc. is an independent, charitable, non-profit 501(c) (3) organization, registered in the State of New York. It was established in 1943 by a few Ramallah individuals to provide health, education and social services to the people of Ramallah, Palestine and surrounding communities. In the early years, the Foundation grew from yearly dues and donations from many individuals.

In 1964, a hospital was built on land purchased by the Foundation, a dream of the late Farid Shatara and Eissa Abdulla Bateh. This dream was vigorously pursued by the late Azeez Shaheen, who was instrumental in collecting additional donations and was involved in supervising the building of the Hospital. In addition, the use of a building on purchased land was given to the Women's Arab Union of Ramallah, Palestine, to operate a home for senior citizens. A scholarship program was initiated, as well, to help needy Ramallah students to pursue a university education.

In 2000, a Trauma Center was added to the Medical Complex. The Foundation allocated additional land and conducted a vigorous campaign to raise funds, which resulted in the building of this new Ramallah Hospital in 2000, currently known as the Sheikh Zayed Hospital.

Over the years, an additional two hospitals and a two-story laboratory were built. The Foundation continued its commitment by donating monies for furnishings, equipment, and the expansion of the entire Medical Complex. In 2015, the Foundation partnered with the United Palestine Appeal to create two state-of-the-art surgical and recovery rooms to address cleft lip and other cranial anomalies. Expansions and special projects are considered on an on-going basis.



In addition to the health initiatives, the Foundation continues to provide scholarships in conjunction with the American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine. The Foundation also donates funds, as necessary, to expand and renovate the senior citizens home and helps to fund special activities, including a weekly lunch program.

From its origins in 1943, the Foundation continues to operate with pride from New York. The Foundation oversees representatives in Ramallah to manage Board decisions and continually reviews proposals to build upon its mission to serve the Ramallah community.

Medical Mission AFRHSN

The Charitable Medical Mission to Palestine is a humanitarian, nonprofit and nonpolitical endeavor approved by the AFRP, whose purpose is to provide medical education, training, support and supplies to people living in Palestine. Volunteers include physicians, nurses and other healthcare providers who are appropriately credentialed and held to the highest professional U.S. standards. Each year, two 2-week trips are scheduled with volunteers typically paying their own travel expenses, including lodging and other accommodations. Volunteers work side by side with their counterparts and others to administer medical care—mostly free of charge to hundreds of people in need, as well as invaluable training and education.

Funding for Medical Mission comes from private donations, the AFRP, various fundraisers held by chapter Ramallah Clubs and affiliations, the Bank of Palestine, and an annual golf tournament sponsored by the Ramallah Club of San Francisco, California. International organizations such as Heart of Mercy International, a California-based nonprofit, that assists in coordinating logistical support with transporting needed medical equipment and supplies to Ramallah and other areas of the West Bank.

Program Director, Mr. Bajis Katwan, has been instrumental in raising awareness of this much needed program in Palestine, and says future plans for the Medical Mission team include developing Centers of Excellence and Best Practices guidelines, telemedicine capabilities and other initiatives.

For more information or to donate, please contact charitablemedicalmission@gmail.com.



AFRP Representative



In my capacity as Representative of the AFRP, I would like to highlight the important role of the Federation and how greatly appreciated by the Palestinian community at-large and in particular, the people of your hometown Ramallah. Ever since the Federation started in the US, it had been very supportive of the Palestinian community and their interests and activities had developed over the years. The Federation projects in Ramallah include, the scholarship fund, Project Hope, Medical Mission, Al Bayara, cultural and educational programs, annual donations to various organizations, helping needy families, and brightening young children's hearts at Christmas with the annual Christmas party and presents, as well as the Ramallah Hospital, owned by the Ramallah Foundation.

Another aspect greatly appreciated by the community are your investments in projects in Ramallah and procuring housing which encourage the younger generation born in US to think of Ramallah as home.

We hope with the passage of time, your investments and procurements of properties in Ramallah will increase.

Needless to say it gives all of us in Ramallah, great pleasure that visits on your part to our area are increasing. This strengthens the feeling of community between us while distance separate us.

The 2014 Convention was held in Ramallah, and it brought a lot of life to the community culturally and economically. We look forward to the 60th annual convention in 2018 in Ramallah

Thank you always, for your support of our beloved hometown of Ramallah.

Nijmeh Ganim



Aziz Shaheen

December 6, 1894 – January 10, 1996

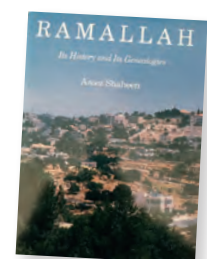


We would be remiss, as a Ramallah community in diaspora, not to recognize the philanthropic deeds of a Ramallah son, the late Mr. Aziz Shaheen, for his numerous contributions to the Ramallah community in the U.S. and in his beloved Palestine.

Mr. Shaheen was a dominant member of the Ramallah Hospital Foundation, Inc., overseeing the construction of the renowned Ramallah Hospital. He willingly and generously gave of his time, talents and wealth to charitable organizations for the betterment of children, the elderly, and needy of his community. He was a staunch supporter of education, providing generous scholarships so that eligible students could further their educational careers. The Aziz Shaheen School for Girls in Ramallah is named in his honor, as is the Aziz Shaheen Building for Humanities at Birzeit University.

Also, Mr. Shaheen worked diligently tracing the original Ramallah families' genealogies, customs and traditions, and in 1982, published *Ramallah, Its History and Genealogies*. His son, Naseeb Shaheen, has continued the work of his father with a pictorial history.

In addition, Mr. Shaheen's other sons, Shaheen, Shouky and Tawfeek, have carried on their father's charitable benevolent legacy, giving graciously to benefit others.



FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

It takes hard work, volunteers, energy, generosity, time, faith and passion for a worthy cause to make something happen. These individuals are but a few of the many who live and breathe these very qualities.



Sam and Janet Alley

At the age of 14 and the oldest of five brothers, Sam Alley moved from the small town of Ramallah, Palestine to Rose City, Arkansas with his family. Inspired by mentors, he found a passion for engineering and directed his schooling towards a degree in civil engineering when he was in high school.

While still in college at the University of Arkansas, Sam began working for Pickens Bond Construction Company. After graduation, he was hired as a project manager in 1979. Over the next few years, Sam gained experience in the field and married his wife, Janet, who was born in Jacksonville, Florida, and later moved to Arkansas where she became a licensed real estate agent. Inspired by his father, who was an entrepreneur, Sam co-founded VCC in 1987, on his 31st birthday.

The next decades would see a time of incredible growth both personal and professionally. Janet decided to invest much of her time and energy into her children—Jessica, Derek, and Adrianna—leaving the general workforce to dedicate herself to the more difficult and more rewarding occupation of motherhood. Sam remained the family breadwinner, and his efforts paid off. Sam is now recognized as one of the top engineering and construction professionals in the United States. Under his guidance, VCC is listed as number 94 of the top 400 contractors by the Engineering News Record, and recognized as the largest retail contractor in the country.

With gratitude for all of their blessings, both Sam and Janet are heavily invested in the community. Sam serves on the steering committee for Campaign Arkansas, and is a member of the Arkansas Academy of Civil Engineering. His service to numerous civic groups has earned recognition, including being named a lifetime Board member and Youth Home's Board Member of the Year in 1994 and Arkansas Business Executive of the Year for 2013. Most recently Sam was honored with the Patriot Award in recognition of his support of our service men and women. Janet also serve in a variety of fundraising positions for various organizations including Youth Home, Easter Seals, Arkansas Children's Hospital, and the Greek Orthodox Church. Janet has served on the Board of Directors for the Arkansas Arts Center. Janet also took on leadership roles at the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Church where she and her family attended, the YWCA Board, the Arkansas Children's Hospital, the Arkansas Symphony Guild and others.

Sam and Janet credit their success to a strong family, supportive community and the great opportunities this country provides. Despite his great pride in VCC, both Sam and Janet are most proud of their children, nieces and nephews who have grown into fine, upstanding adults. Their family continues to grow with the newest addition of their granddaughter, Vivienne, and they cannot wait to see what more the future holds for them.

Shouky Aziz Shaheen

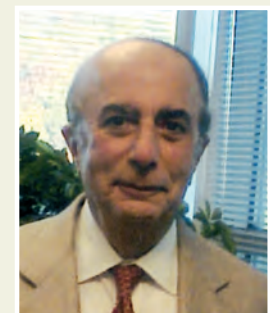
Shouky is the second son of the Late Aziz Shaheen, the father of Ramallah genealogy book, together with his siblings Shaheen Shaheen, Naseeb Shaheen and his youngest brother Tawfeek Shaheen.

Shouky has been active in the commercial real estate development business for 55 years in the Atlanta area.

Shouky lived in Ramallah from 1935-1938, and still have the same closeness to Ramallah and its original inhabitants. He also visited Ramallah annually to see his father who moved there since his retirement. At such time when his father started the famous Ramallah Book/Aziz Shaheen book.

The major contribution to Ramallah was the donation of a building at Birzeit University called Aziz Shaheen Humanities building. In addition Shouky donates to Ramallah Charities, Birzeit University and the Federation annually.

The Ramallah Federation is proud to call Shouky a son of Ramallah. May God give him health and bless him for what he does for our people in Palestine.



FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS

It takes hard work, volunteers, energy, generosity, time, faith and passion for a worthy cause to make something happen. These individuals are but a few of the many who live and breathe these very qualities.



Farouk Shami

Farouk Shami came to America in 1965 with \$71 in his pocket and through determination achieved the American dream. He is the Founder and Chairman of Farouk Systems, Inc. a multinational corporation that manufactures the world renowned brands BioSilk and CHI. These lines are currently sold in 106 countries which has given Farouk a unique perspective on global business and how to succeed in the 21st century. As an entrepreneur, educator, employer, manufacturer, and problem solver Farouk has talents that no one can match.

Farouk's story begins more than 44 years ago when he came to the United States on a scholarship. Originally, he intended to follow in his father's footsteps and pursue a career in Education. While enrolled, he began working part time as a hairdresser and discovered his true calling when he became a salon owner. Being an entrepreneur and small business owner gave Farouk an opportunity to create better, more efficient tools to perfect his craft. In 1986, he enjoyed a major breakthrough, the first of many, when he invented the first ammonia-free hair lightener and coloring system. From that moment, Farouk's mission became environment, education and ethics, creating a company that is environmentally responsible, promoting education and adhering to the highest ethical standards. It is how Farouk lives his life and the quality of the products that his company makes reflects his passion for perfection.

Farouk never forgot his hometown of Ramallah with his generous contributions to The Friends School in Ramallah and his unwavering support for Ramallah Federation with its many programs.

What has followed is a truly American success story with the invention of the CHI line of ceramic thermal tools, hairdryers with low EMF (electromagnetic fields) and a line of hair tools that features nano silver, which eliminates up to 650 forms of bacteria, making salons healthier for customers and stylists.



Paul Dudum

"In Memory" October 28, 1933 - November 11, 2016

Paul Dudum was a remarkable self-made man, who was known for his generosity and kindness. At the age of 13, he came to the U.S. with his mother to join his father in San Francisco, CA. He graduated from Balboa High School and attended San Francisco City College. Paul also served in the U.S. Army in 1953-1955, as well as the Army reserves until 1961. In 1955 he married Afaf Khalaf and raised four children until moving to Hillsborough, Ca in 1972.

Paul and his cousins were partners in Ramallah Wholesale, which was a major textile distributor on the West Coast. Through their steadfast dedication and relentless work ethic, they made Ramallah Wholesale a tremendously successful company.

Paul was good man with a kind and compassionate heart. He generously contributed to churches in Ramallah and the U.S., but always insisted on remaining anonymous. He also contributed to the AFRP Education Fund that provides many scholarships to students in Palestine and the U.S. He was a great supporter of the Palestinian people in the U.S. and abroad.

The Ramallah community was saddened to hear of Paul's passing, but his legacy of kindness and generosity lives on. Memory Eternal.



Sareyyet Ramallah – First Ramallah Group

A Palestinian national treasure, this non-governmental, community-based and cultural organization based in the heart of Ramallah, serves as a source of pride and unity for the Ramallah people. The facility, donated by one of the original Ramallah families, operates the well-known Ramallah Scout troops — Cub Scouts, Brownie Scouts, and the Boys and Girls Scouts.

In recent years, Sareyyet Ramallah has expanded their services by offering Palestinian youth artistic and cultural services.

Another addition is the world-famous Sareyyet Ramallah Dance Company. This professional dance troupe has wowed audiences around the globe with their traditional and authentic songs and dances.

The AFRP is a proud supporter of Sareyyet Ramallah and the positive work they do on behalf of Palestinian children.



IN APPRECIATION

A special thank you to our affiliate clubs, members, volunteers, board, staff and all donors for their generous support of the American Federation of Ramallah, Palestine, particularly in helping to fulfill its mission to promote the rich cultural Palestinian heritage through programs that foster cultural and social interaction, as well as educational, humanitarian, civic and charitable opportunities.

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