



**Diyar  
2009**

**Life Abundant in Palestine**



**Dar Annadwa  
(The International Center of Bethlehem)**

**Dar al-Kalima  
Community Development**

**Dar al-Kalima  
Academics**



Bethlehem Media Center



Health Clinics



Dar al-Kalima College



Cultural Events



Community Building



Continuous Education



Civic Engagement

Dear Friends,

Salaam from Bethlehem,

2009 was another special year, not because of any political developments, but because of the endless energy and creativity that continues to flow in and through Diyar.

Several new initiatives were launched, tested and started to blossom in 2009:

Two new groups were established. The first is the Diyar Dance Theatre, which produced its first show called “Portraits of Fear” and the second is the Diyar Women Soccer Team, which won the 2nd place in the National Palestinian Soccer Championship.

The first TV show in the Arab world focusing on elderly holistic care was produced at our Bethlehem Media Center and now broadcast on SAT-7.

A new initiative in civic engagement was launched, called “Youth Vote”, focusing on training teachers of civic education in governmental, UNRWA and private schools. The aim of this initiative was to mobilize young people to engage in democratic elections and political participation.

New programs were accredited at Dar Al Kalima College, including music performance and contemporary fine Arts. In addition, the finishing works at the new campus were started, giving final shape to the vision started in 2006 with the establishment of the College.

Last but not least, the Kairos Palestine document that was launched at our center Dar Annadwa in December 2009 started a process that is gaining momentum both locally and internationally.

I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation for all our supporters, both organizations and individuals, and here in Palestine and abroad. It is your help that sustains us and allows us to keep providing life-giving programming to our community.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb  
President  
Diyar Consortium

# Table of Contents

<b>Diyar 2009</b> .....	3
<b>Bethlehem Media Center</b> .....	4
<b>Ad-Dar Events</b> .....	6
<i>Exhibitions</i> .....	10
<b>Civic Engagement</b> .....	12
<i>Palestinian Christians</i> .....	12
<i>Religion &amp; State</i> .....	14
<i>Youth Vote 2009</i> .....	16
<i>Youth Leadership</i> .....	17
<b>Dar al-Kalima Health &amp; Wellness</b> .....	18
<b>Dar al-Kalima Community Building</b> .....	20
<i>Bright Stars Program</i> .....	20
<i>Azwaj</i> .....	21
<i>Ajyal</i> .....	23
<b>Dar al-Kalima College</b> .....	25
<i>Dar al-Kalima College Construction</i> ...	28
<b>Authentic Tourism</b> .....	30
<b>The Cave Gift Shop</b> .....	31



# Bethlehem Media Center

The Bethlehem Media Center (BMC), based at Dar Annadwa in Bethlehem, had a year of unprecedented success in producing new and innovative media for a variety of purposes and audiences. Over 800 minutes of polished television and film were produced in 10 genres and broadcast on satellite channels reaching millions of viewers in Arabic, English and Spanish. A quality



monitoring system was established in order to gather feedback from production experts and ensure that BMC productions meet regional and international standards of aesthetic and technical quality. The BMC expanded technical capabilities through the purchase of advanced production equipment and staff capabilities through increased specialization and intensive training. In all of its efforts, the BMC has sought to increase the level of professionalism in its operations while providing opportunities and training to talented young crew-members, writers and actors.



New genres and production formats kept the BMC staff working throughout the year. One of the major achievements in 2009 was the completion of 14 episodes, each 45 minutes long, of the Ajjal TV Show, a variety magazine program presenting health

information, fitness and nutrition tips, explorations of Palestinian proverbs, and reports featuring elderly people who are active



in the community. A program for the entire family, the Ajjal TV Show challenges the mainstream mentality that life ends at age 60, and gives a platform for elderly people to voice their concerns and talk about their interests. Considered to be the first television program on the elderly in the Arab World to be produced in Palestine, the show is set to be broadcast on the pan-Arab SAT-7 satellite channel in 2010.

Other productions included the educational and social marketing spots created to accompany the Youth Vote project and curriculum. Five videos using 3-D animation explored topics such as responsible citizen-



ship and the freedom and responsibility of the press, while 5 live-action spots explored articles of the International Declaration of Human Rights. Thirteen news reports on Christians in Palestine were broadcast on the “Nafitha Around the World” program and praised for their catchy style and diversity in topics and images. The BMC’s “Celebrating the Faith” is a series of 10 videos exploring Palestinian Christian feasts and holiday observance, which have been translated into English and Spanish and are available on DVD with the bonus feature, “It’s Pales-TIME,” a promotional video encouraging authentic tourism in Palestine. The BMC also produced a promotional film about the new music performance degree offered by Dar al-Kalima College, and provided media services to the Diyar Consortium and other groups for special event documentation and production.

In addition to improving the overall quality of BMC productions, other goals of 2009 included increasing distribution and improving audience relations. Instrumental to success in these areas were the newly-relaunched BMC website ([www.bethlehemmedia.net](http://www.bethlehemmedia.net)) and the new Facebook and YouTube pages. Through these online portals, the BMC is able to reach new audiences and gather feedback from viewers, which the BMC can then use to improve and guide further projects. This way of gathering responses is especially important in Palestine, since there are no established pathways for measuring audiences and gathering feedback. The BMC is also pioneering the use of focus groups both to test ideas and see what particular audiences respond to and are interested in, and to review

productions and see whether the desired outcome and effect was achieved.



The BMC is an integral part of the Diyar Consortium, providing technical and media resources for a variety of events and projects. The BMC partners with another of the Diyar organizations, the Dar al-Kalima (DAK) College, to train and mentor students and recent graduates of the documentary film production course. Through this partnership, DAK College students receive experience and income from their work, and the BMC is able to recruit and offer advanced training to young media professionals.



# Ad-Dar Events

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National and international conferences, musical concerts, theater shows, film and documentary screenings and festivals, and training workshops were among the 109 events that brought a record number of audience members and participants to the Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center in 2009. Audience numbers totaled 20,128 people, exceeding 2008's total by over 25%. The peak month of August, with the week-long 2009 Intercultural Conference, train-



ing sessions for the Palestinian Christians: Strengthening Identity, Activating Potential project, the DAK College graduation ceremony, and two nights screening the popular Egyptian film “Omar and Salma 2” brought 3,588 audience members and participants to Ad-Dar – the largest monthly total in the center’s history.

Greater cooperation with local and international organizations contributed to the increased numbers of audience members and events in 2009. Through concentrated networking and coordination efforts, Ad-Dar was able to both reduce costs and increase the variety and diversity of events offered by co-sponsoring events with other groups. In a small town such as Bethlehem, where Ad-Dar is now the primary cultural center, forging and maintaining these relationships is very important. To this end, in Ad-Dar’s monthly “Where 2 Go & Things 2 Do” booklet there is a page devoted to highlighting the valuable work of another local organization, designated as the “Center of the Month”

Due to the hard work of the events staff and with the unfaltering support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Ad-Dar had a hugely successful year, hosting events in a variety of genres.



Film festivals have become a staple part of Ad-Dar's offerings, with four stand-out festivals in 2009. The Palestine Film Festival, which took place over 3 weeks in February, with support from the General Consulate of France, showed 6 feature films, including "Lesh Sabreen?" by the Bethlehem Media Center's Muayad Alayan. In March, 12 films from Syria were screened as part of Syrian Film Week, held in cooperation with Al Kasaba Theatre and the Cinematheque. In September and October, the final projects from the documentary film production classes at Dar al-Kalima College were shown at Ad-Dar, thrilling the students who saw their work being displayed on the same big screen that shows feature films from their cinematic heroes. Later in October, Ad-Dar hosted 6 films from the Al Kasaba International Film Festival, including "Slumdog Millionaire" and "Amreeka", a feature film by up-and-coming Palestinian woman director, Cherien Dabis.

Cooperation with Palestinian groups from Israel was another hallmark of 2009 for Ad-Dar. Maintaining connections between Palestinians in the West Bank and Palestinian communities in in what is now Israel (an area which many Palestinians refer to as "48") is crucial, as Israel seeks to further divide Pales-



tinians with barriers, road blocks and travel restrictions. Cultural events that revive traditional Palestinian dance, poetry and music are especially important, since they introduce younger generations to their artistic heritage. One theatre group and one dance group, both from Nazareth and both inspired by the writings of poet Khalil Gibran, performed at

Easter and in October. In July, at the fifth annual Dandanat music festival, hip-hop group DAM from Lyd and rock group Khalas from Akka were invited to perform as they did at the first Dandanat festival in 2005.

Local and international conferences have also taken a prominent place among the most



memorable events of 2009. The highlight of the year's conferences was the 5th biennial Intercultural Conference, "The Invention of History: A Century of Interplay between Theology and Politics in Palestine". Held in August, 60 local and international theologians, academics, politicians, sociologists, archaeologists and others gathered to discuss and debate the interaction between theology and politics, and how this relationship affects current realities in Palestine. 2009 marked the first year that participants from Latin America, specifically Puerto Rico, were in attendance.



The Kairos Palestine conference in December, which included three days of discussions and workshops and the official signing and launching of the Kairos Palestine Document, entitled "A Moment of Truth: A Word of

Faith and Hope from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering" was an important and historical event. The document, authored and endorsed by a group of Palestinian Christian theologians, church leaders and community activists, presents a united Palestinian Christian voice and calls for an end to the Israeli Occupation.



Cultural weeks have become a signature event at Ad-Dar, and in 2009 the Danish Cultural Week celebrated building "Bridges to Mutual Inspiration and Understanding". During the week of events there were a number of cross-cultural discussions and debates, workshops for music, art and painting, an exhibition of posters and shared meals incorporating traditional Danish foods. For some, Danish Cultural Week was also an opportu-

nity to see cultural diplomacy in action, as the activities helped to enhance and improve Danish-Arab/Islamic relations that had been strained by the "cartoon" incident in 2005.



A series of conferences and workshops in 2009 focused on Palestinian young people, empowering them to become engaged and active in their communities and providing a forum for their voices to be heard. In July, an intercultural exchange between Palestinian and Danish youth sought to challenge misconceptions and strengthen ties between the young people through workshops, music and dance, and joint visits and tours. Between July and September, the "Sahiroun" conferences focused on leadership training and capacity building in 30 young men and women from Bethlehem, Jerusalem and Ramallah. Around the same time, the



“Palestinian Christians: Strengthening Identity, Activating Potential” program was working to equip 18 young Palestinian Christian men and women with the skills they would need to start up cultural, social and sports-related initiatives in their hometowns. A two-day conference entitled “Religion and State in the Palestinian Context” attracted 43 people, over half of whom were young women, to discuss possible models of the relationship between religion and state in Palestine. Lastly, in December, 45 young men and women from all over Palestine gathered to discuss “The Role of Young Palestinian Christians in Palestinian Society Today” and how their peers could be motivated and encouraged to be more proactive in their communities.

Finally, it is important to mention the kids’ events hosted at Ad-Dar. In a place with few



opportunities for recreation and entertainment within the confines of the city, Ad-Dar feels especially called to minister to the children of Bethlehem through special events just for them. The Palestinian National Theatre presented a theatre play called “Ghandoura and Friends”, and the Palestine Circus School and local magician Elias Hzeineh wowed kids with their shows. The biggest kids’ event of 2009 was the Christmas celebration held in cooperation with the local Al-Harah The-

ater Group, called “Tik Tak... Christmas is Coming”, about Christmas preparations and a competition to win the title of “Best Santa.” The event was attended by 338 children, and sponsored by churches from Puerto Rico. Through their generous donation, each child who came to the celebration received a Christmas package of school supplies and fun activities. It was a huge success, and the smiles on the faces of the kids who attended showed that the Christmas spirit was alive in Bethlehem.



# Exhibitions

Since 1999, the Cave Galleries have been both a meeting space for local and international artists, and a showcase for Palestinian artistic talent. Because Palestinians are isolated from the rest of the world by the machinations of the Israeli occupation, it has been incredibly important to the spirit of culture in Bethlehem for there to be a place where Palestinians can see and experience art from all over the world, and where international visitors can get to know Palestinian art and take in what Palestinian artists have to say.



Eighteen world-class art exhibitions were hosted in the various gallery spaces throughout the year, beginning with Palestinian artist Faten Nastas Mitwasi, who is the chair of

the visual arts department at Dar al-Kalima College. Ms. Mitwasi's show, titled "Home... Exile..." placed the viewer between two video screens on opposite walls, each showing contradicting scenes of openness and closure, home and away, dream and reality.

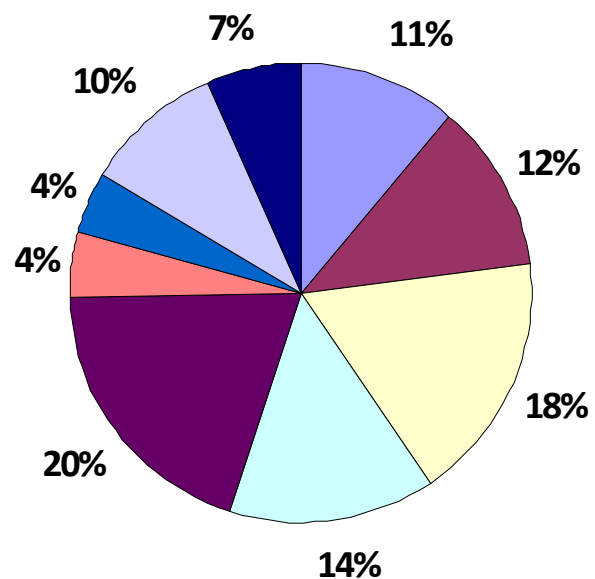


Nine of the exhibitions featured Palestinian artists, including a photo exhibit showing the history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL), the end-of-year exhibition for art students at Dar al-Kalima College, and the annual Christmas exhibition by painter Taleb Dweik. The international artists featured represented the US, the UK, and countries of northern Europe.





# Ad-Dar Events by Category



- Concert
- Theater Play
- Special Event
- Film
- Exhibition
- Kids' Event
- Dance Show
- Workshop/Conference
- Cultural Week/Festival



# Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement is a group of projects designed and implemented by Dar Annadwa that aim to help Palestinians, and especially young Palestinian men and women, to become more active participants in society and government. As over half of the Palestinian population is under the age of 19, one of the primary goals of these projects is to educate and build leadership capacity among children and young adults.



In 2009, the Palestinian Christians project published a study and trained 18 young men and women to develop and implement community-based initiatives in their hometowns. The Religion & State project examined the relationship between the two concepts in four national contexts. The Youth Vote project trained 111 teachers and produced classroom materials that are being used throughout Palestine. And the Youth Leadership group continued to expand their horizons through workshops, conferences, and meetings with international figures, including former First Lady Rosalynn Carter.

## *Palestinian Christians*

Following on the successes of 2008, the “Palestinian Christians: Strengthening Identity, Activating Potential” (PCSIAP) project in 2009 published a comprehensive report, supported the launch of the historic Kairos Palestine document, and witnessed the implementation of a number of community projects conceived by the young men and women who received PCSIAP leadership training.

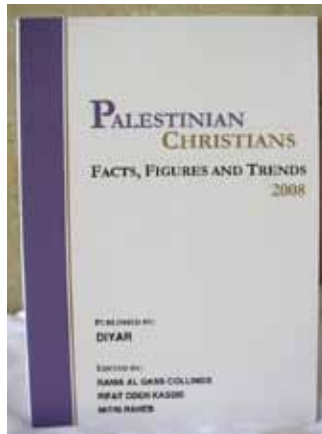
The PCSIAP project is run by the Diyar Consortium, and its aims are to strengthen the social fabric of Palestinian society as a whole, actively maintaining the Christian witness in Palestine and stemming the outward flow of Palestinians from their ancestral lands. As a preliminary step to addressing



the needs of the Christian community, it was first necessary to survey the community and gather information on how many Christians lived in which areas of Palestine, and what support and resources they had available to them. Through mapping the Christian community and investigating their concerns and needs, the causes and consequences of those needs, and their impact in both urban and rural contexts, an accurate picture of the dynamics of Palestinian Christian life emerged. The results of this study so far, along with an



index of contact details and basic information about prominent individuals, churches and church-related organizations (CROs) in the West Bank, were compiled into a booklet and published in May. The booklet was distributed both locally and internationally, to different groups and communities, interested individuals and organizations, churches and CROs, and even the Pope, whose visit in May coincided with the booklet's publication.



Having gained some understanding of the needs of Palestinian Christians, the focus of PCSIAP turned to addressing those needs through a variety of means and on several levels. Creating change on the individual and community levels were groups of young Palestinian Christian men and women from all over the West Bank, who were trained to build and run their own community-based initiatives. The 16 trainees from 2008 implemented three projects: starting a dabke (Palestinian folkloric dance) troupe in Zababdeh (a village near Jenin in the northern West

Bank), establishing a fitness center in Aboud (a village near Ramallah, in the center of the West Bank), and enriching the lives of young people in Taybeh (another village near Ramallah) through culture and sports.

These community initiatives create change in people's lives every day, helping them to live more abundant lives in the face of numerous pressures and obstacles. Addressing these pressures and obstacles, though, requires change on a national and international level. PCSIAP activities on these levels led to the discussions that gave rise to the Kairos Palestine document, which was signed in December at Dar Annadwa, during the three-day Kairos Palestine conference. The document, titled "A Moment of Truth: A Word of Faith and Hope from the Heart of Palestinian Suffering", had been in process



for more than a year, and was authored and endorsed by a group of Palestinian Christian theologians, church leaders and community activists, and partners including Dar Annadwa, the Jerusalem Inter-Church Center, the Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, the al-Liqa Center, Bethlehem University, and Wi'am. The document presents to the world a united Palestinian Christian voice, with a sincere expression of the concerns of the community and their view of what is happening at this moment in history,



vis á vis Palestine. It calls for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land and to all forms of discrimination, identifying these conditions as the only way to a just and lasting peace. The document also presented what Palestinian Christians strongly hope will be the ecumenical strategy for Christian engagement in Palestine.



theater and contemporary dance, and the troupe has already performed at the Olive Harvest Festivals in Beit Sahour and Ramallah and the Rock to Bethlehem festival at Christmas. The group plans to debut the full version of its show, “Portraits of Fear”, in the spring of 2010, and it also hopes to be able to form two new dance groups, one for children ages 6-12, and another for youth ages 13-17.

The Diyar Women’s Soccer Team involves 13 athletes from the Bethlehem and Jerusalem areas, from different backgrounds and religions, competing on a national level. The aim of the team is to show by example that women can be active and empowered through sports, and that they can excel in many fields, including the male-dominated soccer field. To further promote the team and its message, the Bethlehem Media Center is



In 2009 another cycle of 18 trainees in the PCSIAP project developed initiatives to strengthen Palestinian identity and help other young people to become active in their communities. The two most outstanding proposals from this cycle were the Diyar Dance Theater and the Diyar Women’s Soccer Team. The Diyar Dance Theater troupe is made up of 40 talented, enthusiastic and committed young men and women between the ages of 17 and 32. The dance style combines traditional dabke dance with modern

planning in 2010 to produce a film about the captain, Honey Thaljieh, who is the captain of the Palestinian women’s national soccer team and a member of Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem.

## *Religion & State*

Creating a healthy relationship between religion and state first requires an understanding of both “religion” and “state”, which is the focus of the initial phases of the multi-year “Religion & State” project being undertaken in Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt by Dar Annadwa and the Olof Palme International Center, in partnership with the Al-Quds Center for Political Studies in Jordan, the Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue in Lebanon, and the Cultural Development Division of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) in Egypt.

In 2008, the concepts of religion and state were discussed on a regional level, but in 2009 the discussion took place on the national level, investigating the particular interpretations and approaches to these ideas

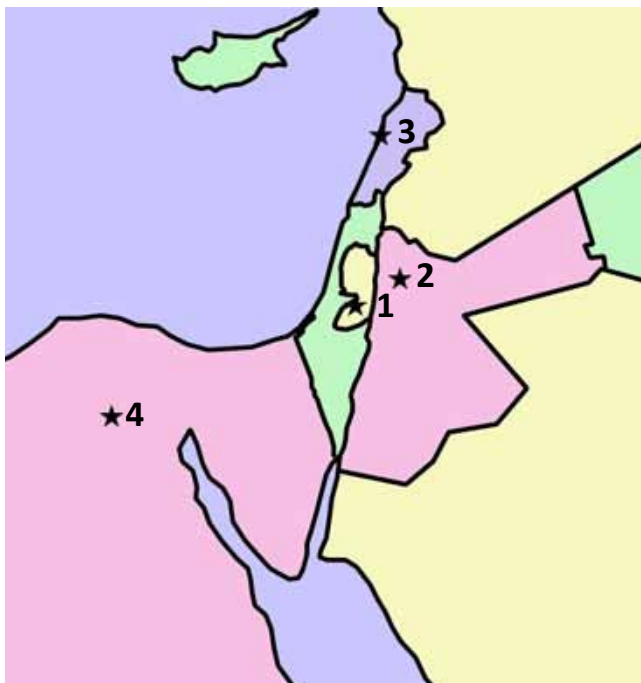


in each country and context. Over the course of the year, four major national gatherings took place under the aegis of the Religion & State project, one in each participating country, with a collective total of 257 participants, 47% of whom were women (in Palestine, 59%). The participants were mostly young leaders and representatives of different NGOs and civil society organizations, teachers and college/university instructors, youth and women activists, parliamentarians and politicians, ministers, government officials, judges and lawyers, community and religious leaders, journalists and media professionals, and intellectuals. The project is especially fo-

cused on enhancing the understanding and involvement of young people, since they are the future leaders of the Middle East, and their understanding of religion and state as concepts and the dynamic relationship between the two will shape the future of the region.

In addition, a study titled “Palestinian Media and ‘Religion and State’ Issues: The Imposition of al-Hijab and the ‘Virtue’ Campaign as Examples” looked at how the relationship between religion and state is treated by the Palestinian media. The two examples chosen involved controversies over conservative

Islamic practices being imposed on large populations by state apparatuses. The study was carried out by two journalists, Ms. Naela Khalil and Mr. Ghazi Beni Odeh, with support from Dar Annadwa.



**1. “Religion & State in the Palestinian Context”**

**Bethlehem, Palestine – December 17-18, 2009**

**34 participants, including a female member of a municipal government**

**2. “Towards a Healthy Relationship between Religion and State: The Case of Jordan”**

**Amman, Jordan – October 31, 2009**

**70 participants, including members of the Jordanian parliament**

**3. “Religion & State National Conference”**

**Beirut, Lebanon – November 21-22, 2009**

**90 participants, including government officials, judges and community leaders**

**4. “Future of the Relationship between Religion and State in Egypt”**

**Alexandria, Egypt – October 27-29, 2009**

**60 participants, including university professors and Muslim and Christian leaders**

# Youth Vote 2009

With hope for Palestinian national elections in 2010 and in recognition of the need for better civic education for Palestinian students, the Youth Vote project was initiated in 2009 to help build an updated civic education curriculum and train teachers how to implement it in their classrooms. In just 9 months, Youth Vote trained 111 teachers of 8th-10th grade classes from public, private and UNRWA schools in different areas of Palestine. Also in that time, Youth Vote published a book in cooperation with the Palestinian Central Elections Committee, and produced 10 video clips with the Bethlehem Media Center, for teachers to use as classroom resources. This work was done with support from the Federal Republic of Germany.



The primary aim of the Youth Vote project was to increase civic participation among young people in Palestine, thereby empowering them to help build the democratic institutions and elements of civil society that will serve Palestine in the future. Emphasis for 2009 was placed on the importance of voting, democratic elections, and political participation. The classroom materials produced reinforce these ideas as they explain the electoral process, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and how young adults can be proactive in their immediate situations.

The books and DVDs of the video clips produced by the Youth Vote project are being distributed beyond the participating schools to the Palestinian Ministry of Education, UNRWA, and local youth organizations, who can use the resources to further spread awareness about the concepts and importance of good citizenship.

Youth Vote is an excellent example of a Diyar project that involves and benefits several different groups of people at the same time. Through Youth Vote, students are receiving high-quality civic education and learning to be pro-active citizens of Palestine, and teachers are receiving professional continuous education and support.



Creating teaching aids based on the recommendations of focus groups of teachers and students is groundbreaking in Palestine, as is using creative media, such as the latest 3D animation technology, to produce classroom resources. It is also important to note here that local actors, script-writers and animators were employed to produce the video clips, one of which won Best External Promotional and Best of Show at the 2nd Annual International Christian Communication Arts Festival in Concordia University Texas at Austin, Texas.

Parallel to the Youth Vote project, two research studies were conducted that are already informing and shaping the ICB's civic engagement strategies. The first study, "Civic



Education and the Promotion of Civic Values among Palestinian Youth in the West Bank and East Jerusalem”, looked at the gap between theory and practice in civic education in schools, and also surveyed attitudes and values among Palestinian young people. The second study, “Political Awareness and Participation of Palestinian Women: A Preliminary Comparative Study between Three Women Generations from the Bethlehem District”, surveyed 150 women in 3 age groups (born in 1930-1949, 1950-1969, and 1970-1990), from a variety of localities and backgrounds, investigating levels of political awareness and participation. The results of these studies challenge assumptions about the levels of political awareness and interest among women and young people, and demonstrate a need for greater involvement and open discussion of social issues that affect these groups.

## *Youth Leadership*

The Leadership Program for young adults seeks to motivate and equip the next generation of Palestinians to be proactive and effective leaders in all sectors of Palestinian society. Through weekly gatherings, special

training and personal development sessions, community service activities, and intercultural exchanges, the Leadership Program is nurturing creativity and talent among these young adults, boosting their self-confidence and helping them learn how to use their particular talents in leadership roles in their communities.



The kinds of leadership roles being performed by members of the Leadership Program are as diverse as the interests of the members themselves. A broad range of topics were discussed in the weekly meetings in 2009, according to monthly themes like youth and media, Palestinian contextual theology, social issues, and management and leadership skills. Further expanding on these topics were two conferences organized by the Leadership Program, one on “Youth and Me-

dia”, and the other on “The Role of Young Christian Leaders in Palestinian Society Today”. The “Youth and Media” conference was held in Jericho in late March, with 27 young media professionals participating in discussions about how the media influences youth, and how media can be used as a tool in shaping future leaders. The second conference, on young Palestinian Christian leaders, was held in Bethlehem in late December with 34 diverse participants between the ages of 18 and 27, from different denominations and a variety of Palestinian locales. Speakers at the conference presented facts and figures



regarding the current situation of Palestinian Christians in both Palestine and Israel, and participants were given opportunities to work in groups to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing their communities. Participants also had the chance to meet some important Christian leaders, including those who worked on the Kairos Palestine document, which had been launched at Dar Annadwa earlier that month.

The Leadership Program is also training young people to be ambassadors – ambassadors of hope to their communities, and ambassadors of their country on the regional and international levels. Members of the Leadership Program traveled extensively in 2009, overcoming travel restrictions imposed by the Israelis inside the West Bank to visit Jericho and the Christian villages of Taybeh (near Ramallah) and Zababdeh (near Nablus). Several members represented the Leadership Group in several national and international conferences, including two in Beirut, Lebanon, and one in faraway Thailand. In addition, two intercultural exchanges took place in 2009, one in Palestine with a group of Danish youth who came to participate in the Danish Cultural Week being held at Dar Annadwa, and one in Bremen, Germany, where seven members of the Leadership Pro-

gram (three men and four women) participated in an educational and cultural leadership training seminar.

The Leadership Program began in 2008 by offering leadership training to 26 young people, ages 21-30. In 2009, in addition to receiving further training themselves, those original 26 young leaders used their acquired leadership skills to develop new leadership groups, recruiting a total of 89 new members. It is the hopeful vision of the Leadership Program that generations of young trainees will continue to train others, spreading throughout Palestinian communities and ensuring a better future for everyone.



# Dar al-Kalima Health & Wellness

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The clinics and wellness programs of the Dar al-Kalima Health and Wellness Center continued in 2009 to provide essential health care and life-enriching services to people of all ages, from Bethlehem and beyond.

The audiology clinic served 3519 patients in 2009, most of whom came from the Bethlehem area but who also traveled in from Hebron, Ramallah, Jerusalem, and other cities further away. The endocrinology clinic served 448 patients, and the diabetes care group had 25 members this year. Members of the diabetes care group receive regular blood sugar checks and counseling on how to stay healthy while living with diabetes.





The psychotherapy clinic served 93 clients, including professionals in the field of psycho-social therapy and social work who received coaching and supervision from Beate Niedermeier, the Wellness Center psychotherapist. Activities carried out through the clinic included group therapy sessions for families and mothers on how to use relaxation techniques to improve family relationships and enhance emotional and cognitive development in children. Psychosocial care was also integrated into the Ajyal program in the form of monthly yoga sessions for the whole group of seniors, and weekly yoga sessions for a smaller group of interested women. The younger women of the Fit For Life group also enjoyed weekly yoga sessions as part of their

program. The Wellness Center and the whole Diyar community will miss Beate when she returns to Germany at the end of the year, after 3 years serving in Bethlehem.

Since 2007, the Fit For Life program has been helping women of all ages to lead healthy lifestyles through both individual- and community-targeted activities. The activities involving individual women revolve around group meetings, where women can exercise and relax, release stress and take time for self care. The activities of the Wellness Center's nutrition clinic have been incorporated into the Fit For Life program, where women can receive health assessments and nutrition counseling. In all, 213 women participated in the program in 2009, mostly married, non-working mothers who live around the Bethlehem area. The community-targeted activities were mainly in the form of media campaigns, through the radio, through posters distributed to local clinics and community centers, and a monthly newsletter with articles and advice on how to build and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The wellness section served approximately 3000 people through various programs and services, including swimming and yoga classes, the Fit For Life program, and massage

therapy. Twice in 2009, the Azwaj program for young families made the Wellness Center their destination for recreation. In March, for Mother's Day, the ladies of Azwaj gathered to use the swimming pool and sauna and receive a 20-minute massage from the Wellness Center's resident massage therapist. In June, Azwaj families came to enjoy a day of swimming and play, topped off with an hour of salsa dance instruction for the couples. Having a place like the Wellness Center, with fun activities and room to run around and stretch, really makes a difference in the lives of these young families!

Several improvements were made to the Wellness Center in 2009, including the purchase of additional exercise equipment for the fitness room and the repainting of the entire center, using colors that are calming and contribute to a relaxing and healthy environment. There is much anticipation for the opening of the Wellness Center extension, which is currently being built as part of the construction on the Dar al-Kalima hill-top campus. With greatly expanded facilities for gym equipment and fitness classes, the Wellness Center will be able to serve more people, including the DAK College students who will be studying close-by.

# Dar al-Kalima Community Building

Dar al-Kalima Community Building is the new name for the cluster of ministries including the Bright Stars Program for children and youth, the Azwaj program for young couples and young families, and the Ajyal elder care program for Bethlehem-area seniors.

## Bright Stars Program

In addition to the regular after-school and Friday clubs for children, the Bright Stars Program welcomed 150 area children for a special Summer Academy “Children’s Rights

and Citizenship” was the theme of the 2009 Bright Stars Summer Academy, which was held from June 22 to July 24 at Dar al-Kalima School. The activities focused on teaching children how to use their talents in areas



like drama, drawing, animation, music, and journalism to advocate for children’s rights and engage as active citizens of Palestine. Participants visited the Dheisheh refugee camp, the Battir village outside Bethlehem, and the SOS Children’s Village orphanage, to meet children in these places and exchange ideas on how to make their voices heard in their communities.

The Summer Academy often welcomes local and international volunteers. This year’s guests included several Danish musicians and actors who were visiting for the Danish

Cultural Week at Dar Annadwa.

In response to one of the major events of 2009, the war on Gaza, the Bright Stars Program and held an art competition that drew submissions from over 1,000 students at 36 schools and community centers in the Bethlehem area. The aim of the project was to encourage children from all of the Bethlehem-area schools to express their feelings and memories of the war through art. The response was overwhelming, and for several weeks in February, student art covered every wall in the lobby of Dar Annadwa. There



were pictures depicting scenes from the TV news, with destroyed buildings and people wounded or dead in the streets. There were pictures of desperate parents trying to protect their children, and pictures of children in hospitals with limbs missing. There were



also pictures with messages of support for the people of Gaza, and messages of hope for all of Palestine.

The opening of the exhibit was covered by the Al-Arabiya news channel, giving several students a chance to explain their artwork to a wider audience and highlighting the value of art as a therapeutic way of dealing with trauma.

To recognize those students whose art was the most expressive and original, an awards ceremony was held at Ad-Dar Hall, and six students were awarded scholarships to participate in the Bright Stars art club.



## Azwaj

Christian families are emigrating from Palestine at a dangerously high rate, citing stress and lack of opportunities due to the Israeli occupation and the resulting economic depression.



The Azwaj program for young couples and families, however, is working to help Christian families stay in Palestine and live fuller, more abundant lives. Azwaj activities not only help strengthen and improve family relationships, they also help reinforce the bond and sense of belonging families have to their communities and their country.



The families of Azwaj are diverse: they come from Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour, and from a variety of Christian denominations. Some are newlyweds, and some already have young children. Some families leave and others join, according to their different needs at different phases of their lives. Yet all of these families join together to offer support, learn from one another, discuss ideas, and share their experiences of family life in Palestine.

Azwaj helps support the physical, social and spiritual health of young families through group activities ranging from educational lectures and wellness days to community field trips and recreational outings. Some of the activities are for the whole family, though others give parents a chance to

gather as a group while their children enjoy special activities just for them. The approach of Azwaj recognizes that part of maintaining healthy families is maintaining a strong marital relationship between spouses, so to this end there have been a number of “couples-only” events and lectures, including one very popular lecture by psychiatrist Dr. Samah Jabr who spoke about how young couples can express their sexuality and have more fulfilling sex lives. Other lectures on the marital relationship included one on gender roles by specialist Ghaida Rahil, one on communication skills and relational priorities by psychologist Galina Bargouth, and one on marital problems and solutions facilitated by therapist Marwa Nasser Metzler.

Family events focused on giving parents and children opportunities to get out into the community and learn and experience new



things. One community field trip was to the newly-opened Arab Dental Center in Bethlehem, and another was to the Ghiras Center in Bethlehem, which is a cultural center that specializes in working with children from all backgrounds and offers a special program for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. A hiking trip to a village north of Bethlehem called Battir was led by a knowledgeable local guide who offered information on the local plants and trees that grow in the area. Bingo was a popular activity at social gatherings, and the most highly-attended events in 2009 were the daylong conference in July and retreat in October, both to Jericho



One of the strengths of the Azwaj program is the high degree of member involvement in planning and organizing the activities. Suggestions for the year’s events were gathered



at a planning meeting in January, and an evaluation was done in October. Azwaj families consistently reported that taking part in the program added some color to their lives, and parents expressed much appreciation for the hiring of two highly qualified care-givers who mind the children while the parents are having activities of their own. More than just baby-sitting, the two women incorporate art, singing, games and story-telling activities into their care, which is received with great joy by both the children and their parents.

2009 was a year of transition for the Azwaj program, saying goodbye to Marwa Nasser Metzler and welcoming Raida Mansour as program manager. Marwa had been the manager since August 2008, and her spirit and dedication to the group will always be remembered with much appreciation.



# Ajyal

Between the two branches of the Ajyal Elder Care Program, Ajyal Central and Ajyal Rural, 500 Bethlehem area seniors received care for their physical, social and spiritual health and wellbeing in 2009.

The Ajyal Central branch is made up of 332 members living in the urban areas of Bethlehem, Beit Jala and Beit Sahour. Of these, 220 are “go-go”s, active seniors who are able to travel to Dar Annadwa regularly for group activities, 80 are “slow-go”s, members who

are able to attend some events on special occasions but mainly stay at home and receive nursing care and follow-up, and 32 “no-go”s, people who are home-bound and depend on family and outside help for daily needs.

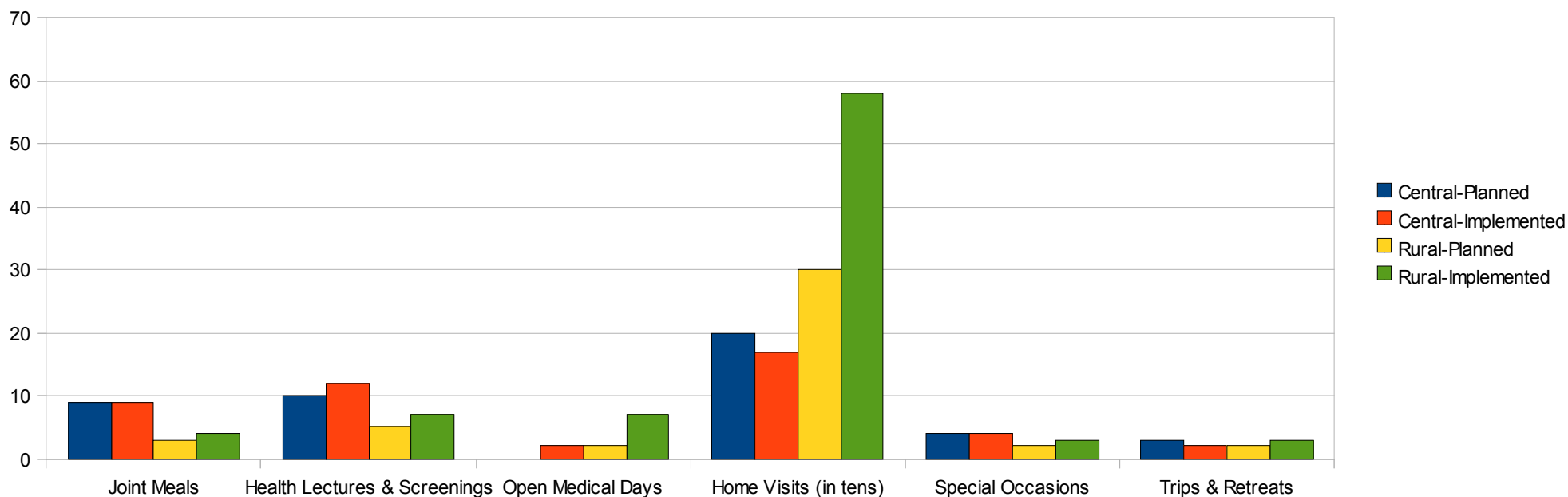
The Ajyal Rural branch serves 168 seniors living in 8 villages in the Bethlehem governorate, most of whom are “slow-go”s and “no-go”s.

Because of the different activity levels of the Ajyal Central and Ajyal Rural groups, the Central group activities tend to focus more on social gatherings, recreation and self-de-

velopment, whereas Rural group activities are primarily health-related. However, both the Central and Rural groups engage in the following core activities: joint meals, health



Ajyal Activities, Planned and Implemented



lectures and screenings, open medical days, home visits, celebrations for special occasions, and trips and retreats.



In addition to these core activities, members of the Ajyal Central group enjoy yoga classes (monthly for the general group and weekly for members who are interested), educational classes in subjects like computers, English, Bible study and first aid, lectures from local clergy on religion and spirituality, and picnics at local parks.

As the above graph shows, the Ajyal Rural branch has been responding to extreme need in the villages for home-based medical care, performing almost twice as many home visits as planned. These home visits are important in maintaining the health of rural seniors whose access to medical care may be limit-

ed by both distance and cost. Ajyal's mobile nurses check blood pressure and blood sugar, monitor any known medical conditions, and offer information to members and their families on topics such as foot care for diabetics. The nurses also deliver essential supplies, including adult diapers, wheelchairs and walking aids, catheters, urine bags, neck braces, and blankets.



The strength of the Ajyal program is that it has grown into the program it is today over a period of three years, responding to the needs and interests of the people it is serving. The program leaders and the steering committee of dedicated members have three years of experience organizing activities and ministering in their community, and unlike many other programs in the Bethlehem area, it is the goal of Ajyal to be self-sustaining through member fees and income-generating projects instead of being dependent on short-term grants.

With its excellent leadership, clear vision and dedicated community of members, the Ajyal program is poised to be one of the main sources of health and social care for elderly in the Bethlehem area for years to come.





# Dar al-Kalima College



The fact that 17 out of this year's 22 graduates are already employed in their fields of study is a testament both to the hard work of the students themselves and to the level of education and practical training they receive at Dar al-Kalima (DAK) College. By expanding the number of full-time degree programs and short term continuous education (CE) courses offered, adding equipment and facilities to the college's infrastructure, hiring and training specialized staff to oversee these things, and implementing a Quality Assurance project to ensure that every aspect of the college meets international standards of excellence, DAK College is making a name for itself nationally, regionally and around the world.

The student body at DAK College is diverse, with men and women coming from

Ramallah, Hebron, Jerusalem and Bethlehem, and even one in Fall 2009 from Belgium. Some students enter DAK College directly from high school, but others are mature students earning their first degree or re-training for a new career. In the Winter and Summer 2009 semesters, DAK College welcomed 63 diploma-track students and 147 CE students; in the Fall 2009 semester, these numbers rose to 75 diploma-track and

163 CE students, due in part to the opening of the Contemporary Fine Arts and Music Performance degree programs.

A number of factors contribute to the quality of instruction offered at DAK College. One factor is the emphasis on practical learning. In order to introduce students the opportunities and expectations of the job market and allow them to earn some income



promotion of vocational educational training in Palestine. DAK College's CE department was approved to run a training program in filming and editing for high school dropouts who had completed the 10th grade. DAK College took an active role in the national awareness-raising campaign that promoted the project, and participated in the open day and exhibition at the Polytechnic University in Hebron on October 19th and 20th.

A second factor is DAK College's relationships with international experts and partnerships with universities in Europe and the US. Through these connections, DAK is able to host visiting lecturers and trainers who share their expertise with DAK students through master classes and workshops. Among the

visiting artists in 2009 were Jannet Carlson, director of the Mullsjö Folk High School in Sweden, who built a Raku kiln (the first ever in Palestine) and taught the Glass & Ceramics students how to use the special Raku firing technique to produce unique works of art. The "Artists



Talk" series was another opportunity for students to dialogue with visitors to the college, among whom were the famous Palestinian filmmaker Rashid Mashharawi, who discussed his film "Tension" and responded to students' questions about his work and the realities of working in Palestinian cinema. Dean Dr. Nuha Khoury and chair of the visual arts department Ms. Faten Nastas Mitwasi traveled to Sweden, Belgium and Germany to meet with departmental leaders at a number of schools, with whom they hope to arrange future exchanges and cooperative efforts. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with Concordia University in St. Paul, USA, and the International Film School in Cologne, Germany.

A third factor is the continuous improvement of human resources and physical infrastructure at DAK College. In 2009 the Continuous Education department was officially established, with the hiring of a dedicated staff member to run the department ensure that the needs of the community and the job market are taken into consideration when formulating programs. Other staff, including a workshop technician, were hired according to the expanding needs of the college, so that there are more people concentrating on more specific sets of tasks, increasing efficiency all

while they study, the college helps students secure commissions for pieces of artwork. Students worked on projects ranging from a set of lampshades for a restaurant on Manger Square to 40 fused glass tiles for a bathroom in a house in Sweden. Vocational training is becoming even more of a focus for DAK College, with the expansion of its Continuous Education (CE) courses and its cooperation with the VET-League and Save the Children on a USAID-funded project for the



around. Also, the quality of the college's library was enhanced materially (an increase from 2,400 unique records in 2008 to 2,911 in 2009) and spatially (adding new shelves, tables, chairs and other equipment), allowing it to better serve the college's students and faculty.

Guiding overall improvement in 2009 was the Quality Assurance Project, undertaken in partnership with Talitha Kumi Community College in Beit Jala and funded by a World Bank grant administered by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MOEHE). This self-assessment



of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats through the well-established SWOT Analysis method was determined to be the first step in the college's strategic planning for the coming years. Based on the findings of the study, project consultants worked to organize training workshops for academic and administrative staff to help them become aware of and follow Quality Assurance Standards for teaching, learning, project management and best use of resources.

The excellence of the students at DAK College is evident through their work, which has been shown at art and film festivals around

Program	1st Year (W/S 2009)	2nd Year (W/S 2009)	Total (W/S 2009)	1st Year (F 2009)	2nd Year (F 2009)	Total (F 2009)
Documentary Film Production	11	14	25	11	9	20
Glass & Ceramics	5	8	13	6	0	6
Palestinian Tour Guides	23	0	23	8	22	30
Jewelry	2	0	2	3	1	4
Contemporary Fine Arts				7	0	7
Music Performance				5	0	5
Graduates Repeating Courses				0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>75</b>

	W/S 2009	F 2009	Total
Continuous Education (45 courses in 2009)	147	163	310

the world. Three student films were shown at the Boston Palestinian Film Festival in September, including “I Am Not Just A Number” by Tha’er al-Azzeh, “Razan” by Hiba Nasser, and “I Want To Live” by Ahmad Hamad. For the exhibition “My Life” held in May in Sacramento, USA, 39 students and artists related to DAK College sent postcard-sized paintings expressing their daily lives as Palestinians, and all 39 paintings were sold. Ten graduate films and eight final glass and ceramics projects were produced; the films

were screened at the Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center on September 29th and 30th, and the glass and ceramic works were displayed in the lobby of Dar Annadwa for the month of July.



As part of the Quality Assurance Project carried out in 2009, three focus groups of students were interviewed to gain feedback about their experience at DAK College. The consensus was that DAK is providing unique educational opportunities not available elsewhere in the Palestinian educational system. The intellectual space and freedom of expression found at DAK has contributed to a dramatic change in the way these students are able to look at and analyze social issues, which in turn will help them become leaders in a strong, pluralistic civil society. For so many young men and women, especially those who could not enter a university but

who can take advantage of continuous education courses, DAK College has been a source of support and empowerment, and a gateway to material and social stability that had been unimagined before.

## *Dar al-Kalima College Construction*

By the end of 2008, the skeleton works on the Dar al-Kalima construction site were nearing completion, with concrete formwork rising 5 stories into the air and the characteristic white limestone facing being installed on the building exteriors.





Tuck-pointing and cladding on the outside of the buildings continued in January 2009, using decoratively chiseled local limestone. Also in January, the foundation slab for the auditorium was poured and finished, and the walls for this final area went up. The auditorium, which drops three levels below ground level, features a large performance stage and seating for several hundred people. In February, the shell of the circular rooftop restaurant was completed, with its pigeon-hole windows, exit to the grounds of the Janneh Nature Reserve, and 360-degree view of the Bethlehem area.



After the concrete for the floors and pillars of the upper levels were completed in March, the remaining work was mostly concerned with the cladding and pointing on the building exteriors, cleaning up the debris from

the site, building the retaining walls for the landscaping around the college site, finishing the parapet walls and coping stone on the roof, and working through the “snag list” of things that needed fixing. In late June, the roofs were prepared for waterproofing with the application of a lightweight screed (concrete mixture), which will help with the rain catchment system.



By the end of July, the exterior work was finished and, after a week of “mobilization” for the finishing contractor to move equipment and materials into place, interior finishing work began on August 1. In August and September, room outlines were laid out with concrete cinder blocks and then the walls themselves were constructed, with allowances for plumbing and electrical and network wiring. In October, the walls were

in place and prepared for finishing, and floor tiles were selected. Floor surfaces were prepared and tile was installed beginning in November and continuing through December.



Due to the global economic crisis, the construction budget was reviewed and some difficult decisions were made. Many aspects of the finishing work had to come under strict scrutiny to ensure that the work could be completed with no corners being cut.

The work is due to be completed in 14 months, by October 2010, but the college will be made a priority so that staff and students can use the building by the beginning of the 2010-11 academic year. College construction is set to be completed on August 1, 2010, with the opening celebration planned for September 15.

# Authentic Tourism

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The Diyar Consortium's Authentic Tourism program seeks to give visitors to the Holy Land a deeper, more enriching experience by introducing them to the "living stones", that is, the people, of Palestine. Groups who visit the Holy Land through Authentic Tourism, instead of being simply bused into Manger Square and back out again, typically spend half a day touring Bethlehem and the ministries of the Diyar Consortium, with lunch at the Il 'Ilyeh Restaurant at Dar Annadwa.

In 2009, 529 tourists in 25 groups visited the ministries of the Diyar Consortium through the Authentic Tourism program. The vast majority of the groups (21/25) came from the United States, but Diyar was glad to welcome two groups from Germany, one from Austria, and one mixed group of people from many different countries.

Because of the worldwide economic downturn, many groups canceled their trips to the



Holy Land for financial reasons. The Diyar Consortium lost 6 groups who had planned to visit, but, compared to other organizations in the area, Diyar still had a relatively good year for tourism. The number quoted above only accounts for the number of tourists who visited through the Authentic Tourism

program; in reality, many more visited with other tours and independently.

Diyar is hopeful that, through new advertising methods and improved communication with past and potential visitors, 2010 will be a great year for Authentic Tourism.



# The Cave Gift Shop

Sometimes when visitors come to Dar Annadwa they like to take a piece of Palestinian art back home with them. With the growing popularity of the Cave Gift Shop and the Cave's cooperation with art students and graduates from Dar al-Kalima (DAK) College, there are now 46 artists producing over 600 unique art items and supporting their families and education through the income they receive from selling their work.

In addition to art pieces, the Cave Gift



Shop also sells books and DVDs from 12 different authors and producers, including a book on Palestinian artist Sliman Mansour, by Faten Nastas Mitwasi, the 2008 study on Palestinian Christians, published as part of the "Palestinian Christians: Strengthening Identity, Activating Potential" project, and "Celebrating the Faith", a DVD of 10 short features on Christian feasts as celebrated in Palestine, produced by the Bethlehem Media Center.



Every month there are new items being produced by Cave artisans. 2009 saw the addition of a new line of gold jewelry to the Cave's jewelry collection, and the creativity of the DAK art students shows in the new glass and ceramic designs they produce. The women of the embroidery group, who have been producing stoles and other church textiles for several years, have started experi-

menting with new products, including a reversible stole with two different colors and patterns stitched back-to-back, a beautifully embroidered chasuble, and glasses cases and mobile phone pouches.



All of these items and more are displayed on the [Cave website](#) and select items are featured in the [2009-10 Gift Shop Catalogue](#), which was published in September and distributed to visitors at Dar Annadwa and international supporters abroad. Cave products and artists have received attention through trade expos in Jordan and Sweden, television reports for international media, and artistic partnerships through projects such as the Hiroshima Project from Japan, which seeks to make Japanese pan flutes from Palestinian olive wood.

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