

## I aspire to work at the highest level

Our Gaza students are phenomenal: they command our utmost respect. During 2025, through our key Gaza partner, Mona El Farra (currently in the UK) and with the help of Adham Talal Abu Shawish (in Gaza) we managed to contact many of the young women we had been supporting before October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023. What we discovered was that a good number of them had signed up to continue their studies online, or they wanted to, but lacked the funds. In a powerful act of resistance, these young women were refusing to give up on their education. Despite being displaced from their homes, despite suffering the loss of family members and friends and the Israeli army continuing to kill Palestinian men, women and children, they were asserting their right to a future, not only for themselves but for Palestine.

We are immensely proud to have awarded **38** scholarships in Gaza in 2025 (see page 8-9 for more details). We made direct payments to two universities (where 21 of our students are enrolled) and by late autumn our long-standing partner—the non-governmental organisation, Afaq Jadeeda—was up and running again and could distribute the remaining funds.

Very sadly, we have not been able to reach twenty of our Gaza students. They may have been killed, or displaced within Gaza or abroad, or they may simply no longer have access to a phone or laptop. We just do not know. We very much hope that in time we will be able to trace them.

Meanwhile, we wish our thirty-eight, amazing Gaza students all the very best.



Malak Al-Daour

### Eight of our students graduate!

Heartfelt congratulations go to the **8** Scholarship Fund students who **graduated** in Gaza in 2025: a truly remarkable achievement. Malak Al-Daour (left) graduated in law from Al Azhar University. Malak has featured in previous newsletters, and in January 2026 we messaged her through her friend Sue Piper (from Saddleworth Palestine Women's Scholarship Fund) and we asked Malak about her plans. This was her reply:

Hello to my dear Scholarship Fund ladies

I graduated thanks to you and I now volunteer in the field to help our people in the tents in the north of the Gaza Strip. I am also seeking a scholarship to study for a master's degree abroad and I need to be evacuated to be able to complete my educational journey.

I aspire to work at the highest level and I hope that you will pray for me to achieve my dream of completing my master's degree.

Thank you for checking in with me.

**Malak** from the Gaza Strip

# Education and Freedom

*The struggle is not only over land and people, but over the future—and education is central to defining and being that future.* Dr Rania Jawad, Bir Zeit University

Education in Palestine is being systematically targeted by the Israeli government. Universities in Gaza and the West Bank have been destroyed, raided, or rendered inaccessible; students and academics face displacement, arrest, and death; and educational infrastructure has been deliberately dismantled and destroyed. Yet education endures. Teaching, if necessary, takes place in tents, hospitals, and WhatsApp classrooms, as Palestinian universities continue to

nurture community, knowledge, care, and resistance.

At an international webinar on Educational Freedom in Palestine, hosted by the Campaign for Higher Education in February 2026, Palestinian academics and student activists made it clear: Palestinian universities are targeted because they foster imagination and political possibility. Notwithstanding checkpoints, mass incarceration, and surveillance, the university remains one of the few places where Palestinians can gather across divides. It is why students are targeted and



Israeli army at the entrance to Bir Zeit University in the West Bank on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
Photo: Right to Education Campaign, Bir Zeit Uni

criminalised simply for trying to learn. As one of the student activists at the webinar explained: *For Palestinian students, learning does not begin in the classroom. It begins on the road, at the checkpoint, and in the constant calculation of risk... Despite these conditions, I continue pursuing education as a means of asserting continuity against the fragmentation of life.*

## The Value of Scholarships

International bodies, such as the UN refugee agency (UNWRA) and UNESCO, are reporting that scholarships are now vital in Palestine. Financial pressures force many Palestinian students to suspend or abandon their studies. Scholarships reduce inequality of access to higher education.

Scholarships also support Palestinian universities, which rely heavily on student fees. Scholarships help preserve academic programmes and teaching capacity. This material and moral support is welcomed by Palestinian universities: defending education is inseparable from defending Palestinian existence, imagination, and the right to a future.



Dua Haboub signing her scholarship agreement with SPWSF in 2024

## Meet our new West Bank students

*This year the West Bank Scholarship Fund Committee selected students from the Tubas and Tulkarem areas: areas that have been the target of severe and sustained Israeli military operations. There were intensive raids in Tubas throughout 2025 and large numbers of families were displaced, impacting on the education of tens of thousands. In 2023–2024 repeated incursions into neighbouring Tulkarem, and its refugee camps, resulted in mass displacement and the situation for families and students remains unstable and uncertain.*



### **Aya Daraghmeh**

*First year nursing student at the Arab American University, Jenin*

For Aya Daraghmeh nursing is a unique profession, combining science, ethics, and humanity. Her passion for nursing stems from a strong desire to ease suffering, to give compassionate care, and to stand beside people in their most difficult moments.

From an early age, Aya saw education as a powerful tool for creating positive change—both in individuals and in society. But Aya’s academic journey has not been easy. She comes from a family of ten—all living in a small home—and her father has not been able to work for more than 14 years after he suffered a stroke that caused complete vision loss. Aya’s mother earns only a modest income as a teacher, and none of Aya’s siblings are working (they are in school or studying at university). So the family often struggles to meet basic needs.

Receiving a scholarship has been transformative for Aya. The financial burden on her family is relieved, and she can focus fully on her education—without the fear that financial hardship might derail her future.

Looking ahead to when she graduates, Aya hopes to work in hospitals and health centres across Palestine, using her knowledge and professionalism and empathy to improve patient care. She also plans to specialise in an area such as critical care, or maternal and child health. In the long term, she envisions herself as a leader in nursing and an advocate for patients’ rights, health education, and preventive care within her community.

Above all, Aya aspires to be a role model for young Palestinian women—proof that determination, faith, and education can overcome even the most difficult circumstances.

### **Jana Salama**

*First year student at Al Najah University, Nablus, studying computer engineering*

Jana was one of the top students in her school and across the whole Tulkarem region. Fascinated by technology from a young age, she has always had a strong desire to understand how computers work with such speed and precision. She believes technology is a vital tool for



development and she plans to use her knowledge to help her own community and Palestine as a whole. Even whilst at university, she hopes she'll get the opportunity to engage in hands-on projects, teamwork, and real-world applications.

Jana's family has a limited and irregular income (salaries are not always paid on time) and with a sibling already enrolled in university and younger siblings still in school, Jana knew she was going to struggle to meet the costs of going to university, especially as these are always rising. Being awarded a scholarship has made a profound difference. Jana can now undertake her studies without financial anxiety and without placing additional burdens on her family.

After she graduates, Jana aspires to build her own technology-based project. She hopes to achieve financial independence and to support her siblings to gain a higher education. At the same time, she plans to continue her own studies and has a long-term goal of completing a master's and a doctoral degree.



**Masa Abu Rub**

*First year student of engineering at the Arab American University in Jenin*

From an early age, Masa has been driven by curiosity: a desire to understand how ideas can take physical shape. It was this curiosity that led Masa to pursue engineering.

It was a defining moment for Masa to be offered a place in the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Jenin. The Faculty is known for its research excellence and for its commitment to sustainability and real-world application. These values strongly align with Masa's own. Masa believes education is the foundation for bringing about meaningful change that can empower communities.

Masa has faced significant financial hardship. Her father is currently unemployed and the family has no fixed income. These circumstances made it difficult for Masa at school—she had very limited access to any additional academic support. But through perseverance and self-discipline she excelled academically.

Receiving a scholarship means that economic hardship has not stood in the way of Masa's potential. Once she graduates, Masa hopes to work on engineering projects related to renewable energy, infrastructure improvement, and environmentally sustainable construction—all areas of urgent need in the region. She is also deeply committed to inspiring young girls to pursue science and engineering, serving as a role model for future generations.

**Sadeel Ghanem**

*First year nursing student at the Arab American University in Jenin*

Sadeel Ghanem believes nursing is not merely a profession, but a humanitarian mission. She is inspired by the power of compassion—by the ability to ease pain, offer comfort, and bring hope to patients and



their families, even in the smallest acts of care. For Sadeel, every patient has a story, and every moment of care truly matters.

At university Sadeel will gain the scientific knowledge and the practical skills she needs to serve her community. She hopes to become a nurse who works not only with expertise, but also from the heart—someone who treats patients with dignity and kindness whilst supporting them during their most difficult moments.

Sadeel's family has a very limited income and Sadeel has two elder sisters already at university. The family were going to really struggle to meet the financial demands of higher education for a third daughter—with the cost of tuition fees, transportation, and daily living expenses.

Being awarded a scholarship means Sadeel can now focus fully on her education without constant money worries. Her determination and talent— rather than financial limitations— will shape her future.

Looking ahead, Sadeel hopes to use her education to support her family and to serve her community. She is committed to becoming an active, positive presence in society—to be someone who gives back through service, care, and dedication.



**Sara Abu Dawas**

*First year student at the Arab American University in Jenin, studying English Translation*

Sara Abu Dawas achieved an average of **97.3%** in her end of school (Tawjihi) exams: an outstanding achievement made even more remarkable by the personal difficulties she had endured during her final year of secondary school.

Within a short period, Sara lost several close family members: two brothers, a cousin, and an aunt. Her home became a place of mourning and Sara was deeply affected. However, with faith, family support, and her own unwavering focus, Sara transformed her grief into strength and emerged as one of the top students in the local area.

Sara has a lifelong passion for language, reading, and learning. Since childhood she has immersed herself in books— novels, science and psychology books, and encyclopaedias, in both Arabic and English.

For Sara, language is more than a skill. It is a bridge between cultures and a tool for understanding the world. In the future she hopes to work with international organizations such as the United Nations, using translation to support dialogue, education, and humanitarian efforts. Sara also has a long-term goal of earning a PhD in translation so she can contribute to academic research that might benefit both her community and society.

Sara's family has only one source of income—her mother's pension. It would have been very difficult for the family to cover Sara's university expenses, and it was a real turning point when Sara was awarded a scholarship. She told us she is seeking not only personal achievement but the ability to make a meaningful contribution to the world.

 I was so happy! I was dancing!

In November 2025 a group of new and second-year Scholarship Fund students gathered at the Arab American University in Jenin to share what it meant to them to be awarded a scholarship.



You can see some of the students in the photo above, with Dr Imad, Dean of Students Affairs. He is standing on the left next to Ghada Rabah, a West Bank Scholarship Fund committee member. Kirsty Wright, also a committee member, stands at the other end of the row.

First to speak was **Noor Ghabariyeh** (*fifth from the right in the photo*), a second-year Computer Systems Engineering student: “I want to sincerely thank you for helping us continue our studies. You’re offering scholarships to students who truly need them. It helps us a lot and motivates us to keep moving forward in our education. Thank you.” And when asked about university life, she smiled: “It’s very nice, thank God.”

Next was **Sara Abu Dawas**, a new student, who expressed herself in English: “Thank you for helping support our education. That’s a really big thing to do. It’s supportive, and it motivates me to learn more and to be a better person in society. Thank you.”

**Yumna Hamdeh** (*sixth from the right*), a second-year nursing student the Arab American University, said: “I’d like to thank you for these scholarships that help us continue our studies. We appreciate all your efforts, and we will get high grades, God willing. The main obstacles we face are political and security related. That’s the reality of the city.”

For **Doaa Haboob** (*sixth from the left*), a second-year student of Islamic Law and Political Studies at Al-Quds Open University, the scholarship has been decisive. “Without it, I wouldn’t have been able to enrol. It gave me a lot of motivation to study. Thank you so much.”

Second-year Physical Therapy student, **Shujoon Abu Tobeikh** (*second from the right*), emphasised not only the personal benefit but the community impact: “The scholarship has helped me a lot—it covers most of my tuition. And if you look at the needs of the country, in fields like physical therapy and nursing, your support means even more. Thank you.”

One of the most heartfelt testimonies came from **Masa Abu Al-Rub** (*fifth from the left*), a first-year Computer Engineering student: “I’d like to thank you for your support to us personally and your general support for the Palestinian cause. This motivates us to study and get high grades. When they told me I had received a scholarship, I was dancing. I was so happy.”

## Congratulations to our West Bank Graduates!

*In 2025 four of our West Bank students graduated. They face an uncertain future. The war and the displacement of communities have led to a severe economic downturn in the West Bank. Unemployment is high in both the public and private sectors. Nonetheless, we wish our new graduates every success in finding a job, and fulfilment in their professional and personal lives.*

My name is **Qamar Abu Kharoub** (*right*) and I graduated in December 2025 with a degree in Information Technology from Al-Quds Open University. My academic journey was not without challenges. I postponed a semester due to marriage and it took me four years to complete my degree. But I was determined to continue, and by God's grace, I succeeded.

The scholarship had a deep impact on my life, especially during the difficult times of war. It supported me financially and emotionally and it helped me stay focused on completing my education when things felt most difficult. Because of this support, I was able to finish my studies and graduate successfully. I am truly grateful to everyone who believed in me and supported me. I encourage future students to stay hopeful and persistent—this support can truly make a difference and open the door to a better future, even in the hardest circumstances.



My name is **Asma Dakheel** (*left*) and I graduated with a degree in nursing from Abu Dis University in Jerusalem in 2025. I completed my studies in September and I passed the nursing licensing exam in December, so I am now a licensed nurse eligible to work in hospitals, clinics, and medical centres.

I am currently looking for a job to begin my professional career. I am deeply grateful for your support and for the scholarship that helped me continue my studies. I hope your support will encourage other students in the future.



**Eman Al Najjar** (*left*) graduated from the University of Hebron as an Arabic language teacher. We do not know if she has found a job.

**Nagham al Khalayleh** (*right*) graduated in nursing in September 2025 and hopes to find a work as a nurse.



# This year's students

In 2025-6 we are funding **53** scholarships for women in Palestine: **38** in Gaza and **15** in the West Bank. In Gaza all learning is online and we have provided a small number of phones and laptops to students who would otherwise have been unable to access their courses.

GAZA				
No	Student Name	University	University Course	2025-26 fees in \$
1	Deema Hashem Hussein Barakat	Al Azhar University	Pharmacy	863
2	Dena Abu Raheel	Al Azhar University	Commerce and Business Administration	150
3	Jihan Jehad Al Nahhal	Al Azhar University	Laboratory Medicine	711
4	Nahid Salah Salah	Al Azhar University	Nursing	468
5	Shahid Mohammed Wishah	Al Azhar University	Nursing	666
6	Nada Tamim Ahmed Al-Salmi	Al Azhar University	Medicine	685
7	Dima Nader Ezzat Zamo	Al Azhar University	Business management	670
8	Hajer Hatem Almasry	Al Azhar University	Engineering	804
9	Mona Mohamed Banat	Al Azhar University	Computer Engineering	635
10	Zekra Ezat Abu Sweerih	Al Azhar University	Computer engineering	1425
11	Deena Huseen Ahmed Moussa	Al Aqsa University	Primary Education	268
12	Enas Bassam Shaath	Al Aqsa University	Counselling Psychology	268
13	Farah Mohamed Abu Hasaneen	Al Aqsa University	Psychological Counseling	268
14	Hadeel Mahmoud Abu Shawish	Al Aqsa University	English Translation	268
15	Hayah Nafez Alsaiede	Al Aqsa University	Accounting	330
16	Manar Nehro Hesamawy	Al Aqsa University	English language Education	226
17	Nesma Abdel Fatah Ahmed Al Sharafi	Al Aqsa University	Teaching Arabic Language	Still to register
18	Raghd Mahler Sweidan	Al Aqsa University	Computer Engineering	592
19	Safa Foud Salama	Al Aqsa University	Psychological Counseling	268
20	Sara Saied Alamasasi	Al Aqsa University	Graphic design	Still to register
21	Samiha Rajib Tanjarah	Al Aqsa University	Psychology	268

22	Shahed Ismail Ibrahim Qandil	Al Aqsa University	Applied Technology	268
23	Shahed Khaled Hassan Shaheen	Al Aqsa University	Digital and Education Arts	322
24	Hamalwy Mai Hasan	Islamic University	Multimedia	106
25	Abu Eman Mohamed Teema	Islamic University	Teaching English	120
26	Abed Kareem Reeham Zaky	Islamic University	Arabic language	247
27	Abu Rashid Waed Salman	Islamic University	General nursing	298
28	Ahmed Hana Hani	Islamic University	Multimedia	106
29	Mohammed Raneem Harara	Islamic University	Digital media	247
30	Mohammed Abu Fatima Swerih	Islamic University	Engineering	374
31	Al-Hady Nasser Doaa Abed	Al Israa University	E-commerce and Digital Marketing	451
32	Abu Asser Susan Jawad	Al Israa University	Office management	508
33	Amal Abdhaleem Ashoor	University of Palestine	Pharmacy Medicine	339
34	Dina Asaad Saqer	University of Palestine	Dentistry	846
35	Shadia Yasir Ahmed	University of Palestine	Primary Education	127
36	Shahd Zeiad Darwish	University of Palestine	Pharmacy Medicine	339
37	Maram Fadel Darwish	Palestine Technical College	Computer Engineering	300
38	Salha Mona Atef	Palestine Technical College	Computer Engineering	198
<b>Gaza graduates 2025*</b>				
1	Randa Rami Fathy Al-Dawahid	Al-Aqsa University	Mathematics	
2	Bayan Yoseef Abdelala	Al-Aqsa University	Nursing	
3	Dima Darwish Abdel-Razek Al Majdalawi	Al-Quds University	Computer Information Technology	
4	Engy Nedal Shaheen	Al-Aqsa University	Management Information System	
5	Lama Ayman Khidr	Al-Azhar University	English Language - minor French	
6	Malak Hassan Al-Daour	Al-Azhar University	Law	
7	Marwa Mamdouh Baalousha	Al-Azhar University	Engineering	
8	Zekra Ezat Abu Sweerih	Al-Azhar University	Computer Engineering	

\*We have paid the fees for 5 of our graduate students and are doing all we can to follow up the remaining students so we can reimburse them for any outstanding fees.

<b>WEST BANK</b>				
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Annual fee \$</b>
1	Yomna Hamda	Nursing	Arab American University, Jenin	1,600
2	Tala Ighbariye	Medical imaging	Arab American University, Jenin	1,150
3	Shojoun Abu Tubeikh	Physical therapy	Arab American University, Jenin	800
4	Rawa Omar	Fashion design	Al Najah, Nablus	1,250
5	Rash Khateeb	Dental Technician	Arab American University, Jenin	2,300
6	Rasha Badaweyeh	Teaching	Al Quds Open University, Jenin	1,260
7	Noor Ighbariya	Computer engineering	Arab American University, Jenin	1,250
8	Malak Amouri	Computer engineering	Arab American University, Jenin	1,250
9	Dua'a Haboub	Legal Administration	Al Rawda University College, Nablus	1,400
<b>New students</b>				<b>First semester</b>
10	Aya Daragmeh	Nursing	Arab American University, Jenin	1,400
11	Jana Salama	Computer Engineering	Al Najah University, Nablus	900
12	Masa Abu Rub	Computer Engineering	Arab American University, Jenin	1,065
13	Sara Abu Darras	Translation	Arab American University, Jenin	865
14	Sadeel Ghanem	Nursing	Arab American University, Jenin	770
15	Maryam Zaghloul	Law and International Relations	An-Najah University	900*
<b>West Bank Graduates 2025</b>				
1	Asma Basil Fathallah Dakheel	Nursing	Al Quds University (Abu Dis)	
2	Qamar Abu Kharoub	IT	Al Quds Open University	
3.	Nagham al Khalayleh	Nursing	Hebron University	
4.	Eman Al Najjar	Arabic Language Teaching	Al Quds University (Abu Dis)	

\* Maryam Zaghloul was awarded a scholarship to cover the final semester of her degree course.



Abdallah Ghazi Jarrar (left) and Abeer Smoudi TCC staff

## Thank you to the Teachers Creativity Centre

The **Teachers Creativity Centre (TCC)** is a key Scholarship Fund partner in the West Bank. TCC staff help to administer our scholarships (without charging a fee), and they keep in close contact with our students, feeding back any concerns to the West Bank Scholarship Fund committee.

The **Teachers Creativity Centre** is a Palestinian educational organisation dedicated to strengthening public education. Based in Ramallah, it works to support teachers as agents of change, promoting student-centred learning, and defending the right to quality education under occupation. Over the years, it has worked with **thousands of teachers and hundreds of schools across the West Bank**, delivering training programmes, educational research, and advocacy that have had a lasting impact on classroom practice and educational policy.

“**We Are Still Here**” is an anthology of “resilience, grief and unshattered hope” written by Gaza university students. Edited by Zahid Pranjol and Jacob Norris, it was published in 2025 by Daraja Press and is available from:

<https://darajapress.com/publication/we-are-still-here/>



## Bolton Socialist Club

As in the previous few years, Bolton Socialist Club has directed its support and fund-raising this last year to a range of Palestinian causes. Our members are involved in regular protests locally, regionally and nationally. Many take part in a one-hour vigil, held very Friday morning outside Bolton Town Hall, that attracts quite wide support and publicity.

At the same time the Club has remained committed to the Women’s Scholarship Fund. We organised two fund-raising events over the last year and raised a total of £1,150 for the Fund. We circulate our members with the information we receive from Sheffield about the Fund’s students in both Gaza and the West Bank, so members can be aware of the amazing progress students have managed to make, despite the virtually impossible conditions they face.

We would like to take this opportunity to applaud and thank the organisers of the Sheffield Palestine Women’s Scholarship Fund for the incredible work you continue to do, providing support to so many extremely brave and determined Palestinian women.

**Neil Duffield**

# Saddleworth Palestine Women's Scholarship Fund

Over the last year, as much of the world looked away, the genocide in Gaza has ground on, whilst the situation in the West Bank has worsened. But even when information on our scholarship students has been thin on the ground, we have been humbled by the trust and backing our group has continued to receive from our local community and beyond. Supporters have continued to come to events, make donations, raise funds themselves, and contribute via standing orders.

We ran four Saddleworth Scholarship Fund events during 2025 and—with the regular standing orders we receive and individual donations—we raised around £12,000.

Our first event, in March, organised in partnership with the Palestine Support Network Huddersfield (PSNH) and the Electric Theatre Company, was a screening in Marsden of the film 'No Other Land'. The screening raised over £600 for the Scholarship Fund and was an opportunity to make links with other supportive organisations and to reach a new audience. We hope to build on these links and are particularly grateful to Kate Smith and Vicky Minton from PSNH for leading this event.



Imran Bashir teaching photography

Our second event, in April, was a Mobile Photography Workshop, led by one of our long-term supporters, Imran Bashir. Attendees were treated to some expert tuition from Imran and to samosas and homemade cake provided by Imran's wife and daughter. The event was limited to 20 people and raised £640. We would like to thank Imran for his time, skills and commitment to the Fund.

In June, following the exciting news that one of our students, Dalya Ramadan, from the West Bank would be visiting the UK, we

arranged an event entitled: 'We will not be silenced'. It was to feature Dalya as well as the Fund's key partner from Gaza Mona El Farra,

who is currently based in Manchester, and Sondos

Ghalayini, her daughter. Despite having been issued with a

UK visa, Dalya was unable to be with us on the night, as she was denied the right to travel by the Israeli government. But Dalya's voice was not silenced! She generously made a video about life in the West Bank, which we played on the night. Mona also spoke powerfully about the



Supporters watching Dalya's video

importance of continuing our work and Sondos read some of her own poetry and spoke of her experiences. All three speakers gave us a powerful reminder of the oppressive system under which Palestinians live. We are grateful to them. The event raised almost £2000.

Finally, in November, we held our last event of the year, which doubled as our AGM. We were delighted to be joined by professor



Sondos Ghalayini

and performer, Susie Miles, whose autobiographical show told stories of her years of living in Southern Africa during the 1980s. An interesting Question & Answer session followed, in which comparisons were drawn between

Apartheid South Africa and occupied Palestine. Over £1,500 was raised. We would like to thank Susie for her contribution to a very successful afternoon.

Our events often include stalls selling homemade products as well as Palestinian goods.

This year we are particularly grateful to Greater Manchester Friends of Palestine (for bringing Palestinian goods to sell), to Gunhild and David Wilcock (for bringing preserves), and committee member Magda Sachs (for bringing her knitted hats).

Additional funds (around £2,300) were raised this year through generous one-off donations—in the form of legacies, birthday money, and a guided history walk. We give a special thank you to both longstanding and new supporters, who donate regularly via Standing Order—this makes up a large proportion of the money we raise each year (approximately £5,000).

In March this year our treasurer Jacqui Greenfield stepped back from her role due to ill health. Jacqui is one of the founders of the Saddleworth group and a good friend of many of us. We miss her terribly and wish her a good recovery. We are grateful to committee member Sarah Hey, who is doing a sterling job as our temporary treasurer.

As always, on behalf of the committee, we thank everyone who supports us by attending our fundraising events and taking out standing orders. We thank our volunteer helpers and all who donate time, ideas, skills and goods to sell. We would like to give special thanks to Dayla Ramadan, whose words inspired and motivated us whilst reminding us of the horrors that students in the West Bank as well as Gaza face.

Women in Gaza and the West Bank show us the way to carry on and look to the future.

**Michele Abendstern** (for Saddleworth PWSF)

Committee members: Catherine Holland (Chair), Sarah Hey (Treasurer), Michele Abendstern (Secretary), Jacqui Burke, Jacqui Greenfield, Maggie Magner, Sue Piper, Marie Price, Jamilla Rashid, Magda Sachs, Sue Warrington.



Mona El Farra



Susie Miles



## Small Park BIG RUN 2025

Every year Small Park BIG RUN has a theme and in 2025 it was education and play. We raised £10,070 for the Scholarship Fund and a similar amount went to children's projects and emergency aid in Gaza.

Expressing our solidarity with the people of Palestine was, as always, the most important part of the event. Solidarity is now more vital than ever. Palestinians—in both Gaza and the West Bank—are still under attack despite the apparent 'ceasefire'. So whilst it was a wonderful weekend, celebrating Palestinian people and culture, our focus remained on solidarity and on the need to end the UK's government's complicity in genocide.

From the opening speech by Alexi Diamond, a local Green Party councillor and long-term supporter of Palestine liberation, to the Fun Run, to the closing—and very moving—BIG SING, there was a perfect mix of sadness at the suffering in Palestine, anger at what is happening, and also joy in community and solidarity.



The two days were packed with interesting and inspiring events and the BIG RUN, as always, was awesome. There were hundreds of runners, a small number running the full 24 hours, some running a 1K lap for the first time. They ranged from the very young to much older people and it was a brilliant community event for all. There was also a Palestine Voices tent, a Tatreez (Palestinian embroidery) workshop, craft events run by Families for Gaza, a lantern workshop followed by a lantern walk, a poetry writing session, a Solidarity Supper, a buskers' hour, and a moving torch-lit procession of remembrance on the Saturday evening. The BIG SING on Sunday closed the event. This was a mass solidarity sing: over 200 voices led by 12 Sheffield-based choirs. At the end we all sang "You'll Never Walk Alone" to our friends in Gaza in a wonderful expression of hope and solidarity.



Moshier El Farra, chair of the Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign, addresses the crowd at the start of the BIG SING

This year, Small Park BIG RUN will be celebrating its tenth year! See

<https://spbr.org.uk/> for details. We hope you'll join us: on 20th/21st June 2026 in Meersbrook Park, Sheffield.

**Caroline Poland**



# A BIG thank you

In 2025 we sent **£27,277** to Gaza to cover 38 scholarships. Funding for 23 scholarships went directly to Al Aqsa and Al Azhar Universities and the remainder was sent to Afaq Jadeeda, our community-based partner organisation in Gaza, and was given to our students. In 2025 we sent **£19,107** to the Teachers Creativity Centre (TCC) in the West Bank to cover 15 scholarships. TCC is the organisation that administers the Fund's scholarships in the West Bank (for no fee).

We thank everyone who contributed to making these scholarships possible, including:

- ✚ All those who have maintained or taken out a standing order. These regular donations are, as always, the backbone of the Fund and enable us to plan.
- ✚ Our highly valued partners: Saddleworth Palestine Women's Scholarship Fund, Bolton Socialist Club, Rotherham Friends of Palestine, and the Derbyshire Dales Palestine Women's Scholarship Fund.
- ✚ Anyone who has made a one-off or annual donation or who has made a gift to the Fund in memory of friends and family. We are grateful for all of the donations we receive through Give As You Live, Benevity (salary deduction scheme), the Charitable Giving Foundation, the UK Online Giving Foundation and Charities Aid Foundation.
- ✚ Ashram Community Centre for their very generous donation after the closure of the Centre.
- ✚ Any organisation that has supported the Fund this year, including Wooldale Quakers.
- ✚ Kevin Hanson for donating the proceeds from his new poetry book *Wind & Rain*.
- ✚ Everyone who took part in the **Small Park BIG RUN** in June 2025. See page 14 for more details and <https://en-gb.facebook.com/smallparkbigrun/>

Please get in touch if you are in an organisation and would like someone from the Scholarship Fund to speak at a meeting.



## Thinking of raising sponsorship for the Scholarship Fund?

We are registered on the fundraising platform **Give As You Live**. It's very easy. You can set up a fundraising page or simply donate. Go to

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/sheffield-palestine-womens-scholarship-fund/1133499/0>

## How the Fund works

The Scholarship Fund is managed in Sheffield by a small coalition of women working in partnership with the Sheffield Palestine Solidarity Campaign. In Gaza, the Fund has been managed for many years by a panel drawn from the Board of Directors of the Red Crescent Society and the Union of Health Work Committee. Admin support has been provided by the community organisation, Afaq Jadeeda. In West Bank, we work with a committee of women, who are active around women's education and employment. We route our payments for scholarships through the Teachers Creativity Centre based in Ramallah.

Up until 2024, candidates for scholarships in Gaza were nominated by their local community centre when they were ready to start university or when they were in the first or second year of a course and unable to continue for financial reasons. There have always been strict selection criteria for the Scholarship Fund in Gaza, which include having attained 65% or above in high school grades, socio-economic background, commitment to the community, and personal and family circumstances such as a recent home demolition, or war injuries.

Our partners in the West Bank adapted these criteria for their own student selection process and, as in Gaza, they keep in contact with the scholarship students and help them overcome problems in completing their courses, i.e. not being able to afford transport, books, equipment etc. Our partners can sometimes access other small amounts of funding to cover these additional costs. Recently, we have covered the costs of phones and laptops—vital to online learning—if Gaza students do not have them.

In Britain the Fund's supporters make donations or monthly contributions through a standing order and/or by organising or taking part in fundraising events. Any contribution is much appreciated. Standing orders are particularly welcome as they enable us to estimate our income more accurately and to plan.



*The Fund's organising group*

### How to contact us

You can contact the Scholarship Fund on [sheffieldpwsf@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:sheffieldpwsf@yahoo.co.uk) or by writing to SPWSF, 124 Cliffe Road, Sheffield S8 9DN.

If you wish to take out a standing order with your bank, our bank details are:  
**Yorkshire Bank**, account name: Sheffield Palestine Women's Scholarship Fund  
**Sort code: 05 08 68**  
**Account number: 33288777**  
**Reference:** your name.

Please contact us if you do take out a standing order. In order for the Fund to claim back any tax you may have paid on your donation/standing order, can you please supply your name, address and postcode and indicate that you are a taxpayer and wish the Fund to claim gift aid. Our charity number is 1133499.