

2nd Annual Public Health Conference:

Bringing Tufts and Al-Quds Closer Together

On April 25th, 2013, RECA sponsored, jointly organized, and collaborated with Tufts University and the Department of Public Health at Al-Quds University to hold the 2nd Public Health conference entitled: Public Health in Palestine: Challenges, Research and Implications on the Al-Quds University, Abu Dis Campus in Jerusalem.

Quds University gave introductory speeches. Prof. Mark Nehring, Chair Dept. of Public Health of Tufts University, represented Tufts University through opening remarks videotaped halfway across the world in Boston Massachusetts. Dr Nehring discussed how the public health conference was the inaugural event of bringing together Al-Quds



Opening Remarks by Prof. Mark Nehring,
Chair of Department of Public Health, Tufts University

Prof. Hani Abdeen, the Minister of Health, gave the opening words. Representing Al-Quds University, Prof. Sari Nusseibeh, President of Al-Quds University, and Dr. Motasem Hamdan, Dean School of Public Health at Al-

University and Tufts University through scholar and information exchange.

This one day conference was designed to hit the pertinent health care concerns of Palestine. Over 300 people affiliated with Jerusalem,

Education Penetrates Barriers

Dear Readers,

I am pleased to share with you the first RECA newsletter. This newsletter is designed to keep you updated on the recent accomplishments and current projects of RECA. To begin, I would like to introduce our recent shining accomplishment: funding and sponsoring the 2nd Annual Public Health Conference at Al-Quds University.

We are pleased that RECA could sponsor this event because health and education are invaluable. It was so amazing to see a diverse group of people from Palestine, United States, and beyond come together to discuss the health issues of the region without barriers or obstacles. This conference created a place for consulting, sharing, and connecting to one another. We wish everybody could have access to health services to create good health for all. Hopefully, through the work from this public health conference and the work to come, this wish will come true.

Thank you.
-Anan Fareed
Founder and President of RECA

Gaza, and beyond attended the conference.

Keynote speakers from Dr. Asad Ramlawi, from the Ministry of Health, to Prof. John Morgan of Tufts University discussed needs and challenges as well as strategies and health promotion of public health in Palestine.

Three overarching themes were designated: community public health, health policy and management, and community mental health. Under these headings, workshops pertaining to each were held. In a community public health workshop, Dr. Yehia Abed focused on “visions towards communicable diseases control in the Gaza Strip – Palestine.” Mr. Mohamad Khleif discussed the “quality of life of Palestinian cancer patients in the absence of palliative care service” during the health policy and management workshop. In one of the community mental health workshops, Dr. Omar Al-Buhaisi talked about the “psychological effects and coping strategies among Palestinian adolescents exposed to war on Gaza.”

Between workshops, participants’ time was filled with poster presentations on other public health topics of research. The day ended with a full panel discussion and conference recommendations for public health projects and needed research.



Panelists from the Conference

Behind the scenes, Tufts University and Al-Quds University were able to collaborate and create opportunities for further academic exchange. Dr. John Morgan of Tufts University flew to Al-Quds days before the conference to train and teach qualitative research skills to the Dental School and Public Health School. Dr. Morgan also worked with Al-Quds faculty to review online class curriculum that will be used by both Tufts University and Al-Quds University to teach and bring together thousands of students that

have thousands of miles between them.

RECA’s sponsorship of this conference was what enabled all this to come together. Without the multiple donations made to RECA, the success of this conference would not have been possible. We would like to extend a large thank you to all the donors that provided money to make this conference possible. Your donations were able to cover conference costs and travel expenses that allowed the face to face collaboration between the universities and the addressing of prominent health concerns. RECA appreciates what you have done.

RECA encourages current donors and new donors to consider supporting next year’s public health conference with your financial donations, so we may continue the work that has begun to bring better healthcare and education opportunities to Al-Quds University, U.S. Universities, and Palestine.

Textbook Challenge:

Donations needed to Complete Goal

Textbooks are a constant need for a higher education institution to aid professors and teach students the core concepts, models, and topics that are within a given field. Al-Quds University has been working hard to give students every opportunity to succeed. The Department of Social Work has particularly been focused on this ideal, through pursuing the certification requirements needed for their

students to be recognized as licensed practitioners by the Israel Government. The one challenge keeping the university from achieving this goal is the lack of textbooks and electronic journals for students.

RECA has taken on the challenge with Al-Quds University to purchase the required textbooks. So far \$1,600 dollars has been collected to help this cause. However, RECA is still far away from meeting the \$15,000 dollars needed to purchase the textbooks and access to the electronic

journals. A search for grants and other funding options has been taken on by RECA, but help from other sources is still needed. Readers like you can help.

Any donation you could provide to help us achieve our goal in purchasing these textbooks would be much appreciated. Donations can be made on our website:

<http://www.recaquds.org/donate.html> and checks can be made out to RECA and mailed to the address above. Any questions or comments can be emailed to RECAQuds@gmail.com

Dr. John Morgan's Letter:

Notes and Comments from the 2nd Annual Public Health Conference

Dr. John Morgan wrote a letter to RECA conveying his great appreciation for the opportunity to collaborate to promote health and education. Here is an excerpt of this letter:

"I am so appreciative to RECA for supporting the 2nd Annual Public Health Conference April 2013 at Al Quds University, which I actively participated in the conference by representing Tufts University School of Dental Medicine as a speaker at the opening session. I was given the opportunity to visit

Al Quds and be exposed to the high quality informative research conducted at the University.



Over the next several days I visited clinics and classrooms and met with students and administrative leaders at the School of Public Health and the

Dental School. The talent, determination and pride at Al Quds was so refreshing. We discussed our collaboration for research and education. The personal connection with my hosts and their hospitality was amazing. A special thanks to Anan Fareed, Founder and President of RECA, for making this possible."

RECA SOWS SUCCESS:

Stories of Scholarship Recipients

RECA takes the initiative to help aspiring and motivated students and faculty that need financial assistance to complete their academic goals. We support students and faculty through locating scholarships, grants, and other funding sources that provide financial stability to those in need. Here are two success stories from RECA scholarship recipients:

Azeezh Ammouri: *6th year Medical Student*

Azeezh grew up seeing her family struggle to get the needed health-care for her sister, who became disabled after a tragic accident. Seeing her family's struggle from attaining healthcare to the impatient behavior of the doctors providing care for her sister, Azeezh knew she wanted to become a doctor that would allow her to give the care and attention that patients need. She especially wanted to provide care for women.

Aspiring to be a medical doctor from a young age, Azeezh

worked hard to do well in school in order to be accepted to Al-Quds University for medical school. The only barrier holding her back was finances. RECA Scholarship was able to alleviate the financial burden to allow Azeezh to be the best she can be.



Here is what Azeezh has to say: "My name is Azeezh S. Amouri, a 6th year medical student from Palestine. I have had the opportunity to complete my elective course in the orthopedic department at The City Hospital – UAE. I have been training in the orthopedic clinic under supervision of Dr. Ali Belooshi & Dr. Said Ethani, who are two of the orthopedic surgeons. I have worked collaboratively with 5 research projects dealing with BMI-TKA complication. I have also been working on 4 validation studies, which have just finished at the beginning of September 2013.

Al-Quds has opened that door for me and the continued financial support from RECA will make my dream a reality. Thank you Al-Quds University and RECA for your support and believing in my dreams.

Kamal Zein: *Law School student*

Kamal Zein is a law student at Al-Quds University. To reach this goal of becoming a law student, Kamal had to overcome an obstacle that many of us do not encounter. Being born blind has challenged Kamal to navigate an educational system designed for non-visually impaired. His perseverance and with the financial support of RECA, Kamal has found himself at Al-Quds University: "Receiving this scholarship from RECA and studying law at Al-Quds has helped me overcome my disability and access my right to an education. Despite the obstacles that my school and I face, the invaluable support from RECA has helped ease the difficulties."

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RECA

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