



# THE OLIVE PRESS

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Ramallah Friends School's Monthly Newsletter

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Designed by: Mohamed A. Daoud



## Our Quaker Testimonies

**Simplicity**  
Friends believe that the most important things in life aren't things.

**Peace**  
Friends believe that there is always a path that brings peace, justice, dignity and respect.

**Integrity**  
Friends believe that our words and actions must reflect our truest selves.

**Community**  
Friends believe that we need each other, since each and every one of us is precious to our community.

**Equality**  
Friends believe that every person is equally beloved by God, no matter what.

**Stewardship**  
Friends believe that all God's gifts are entrusted to us for the sake of future generations.

## Quaker Education

Letter from Head of School

What is distinctive about a Friends education? The Friends Council on Education identifies six distinctive characteristics of Quaker education. They are learning through inquiry, reflection, collaboration and service. It also identifies that Friends schools have a culture of respect and identifies teachers as partners in the learning process.

At RFS we provide a rich and challenging education based on Quaker values.

The programs of the International Baccalaureate use inquiry based learning which encourages reflection and partnership between the students and the teachers in the learning process.

We also believe in community, responsibility, integrity and stewardship. We believe that all God's gifts are entrusted to us for the sake of future generations which is why we educate our students to care for their environment. We believe that every student has unique gifts and talents and so we encourage our students to develop their own voices and interests. We believe in values education and that character, that is, the kind of people our students are becoming is just as important as their academic growth.

An important feature of a Friends education is the concept of silence. This year throughout the school silent meeting has become a regular part of the school week. We gather together each week for shared silent meeting. Silent meeting offers our students valuable opportunities to be still and open to their inner life. Shared community silence offers a sense of closeness and connection to one another. It gives our students time to reflect free from the intrusion of the noise of everyday life and the demands of others.

We believe that RFS is present to provide a profound sense of hope in Palestine and that the education we provide for our students develops the students' individual abilities to create positive change here in Palestine and beyond.\*

Adrian Moody - Head of School



Middle School's first Silent Meeting

## Friends United Meeting Delegation Visits Ramallah

Lama Murra – Communications Officer

During September, a delegation from Friends United Meeting (FUM) visited RFS campuses for two weeks. RFS community welcomed new FUM General Secretary Kelly Kellum; as well as Eden Grace - Global Ministries Director, Dan Kasztelan - Communications Director, and Andy Albertini - RFS Advancement Officer.

We interviewed Kelly Kellum upon the ending of his first visit to Palestine and RFS. He said:

"A person can't come here and go back to their home and be the same, because this is a place that transforms lives. I am blessed by the Palestinian hospitality and the kindness that was shown to us, which is a gift to carry with me."

A longtime Friend and Quaker, Kellum began his service as the FUM's General Secretary last July. When asked about his new role Kellum said he is excited to serve FUM and its global community of Friends that serve across the globe through various outreach programs such as providing oversight and support to schools and hospitals. And he proceeded to explain the connection between Quakerism and education in specific:

"Quakerism is rooted in the values, values that transcend culture and all components of life and these are the values we try to implant in every student that comes into a Friends School."

FUM believes that a good education is one of the best approaches to rooting Quaker values in any community.



FUM delegation meets 3rd graders in their new classrooms

When asked about the school, Kellum explained that FUM is committed to support all efforts that are under progress at RFS, specifically when it comes to the school allying with its Quaker heritage and identity. FUM also remains committed to all forms of support towards RFS including financial support as well as developing the school endowment.

On his impression after visiting RFS, Kellum said: "Very impressed that RFS is an IB school that promotes academic excellence, but at the same time a school that cares for all students and also has a program for students with disabilities and learning challenges. This is a reflection of Quaker values, how to promote the very best in all of us but also not to leave other people behind."\*



## Alumni in the Spotlight

By Lama Murra  
Communications Officer

Meet RFS alumnus, Class of 2001, and Palestinian jewelry designer Ramzi Ewais, establisher and owner of Ramzi Jewelry store in Ramallah. After graduating from RFS, Ramzi received a BA degree in Finance from Al-Ahliyya Amman University and became one of the few certified brokers in the Palestinian Stock Market.

When asked about being a student at RFS, Ramzi told the OP:

"We knew at the time that we were provided with the best educational experience in Palestine, which affected our lives and professional careers."

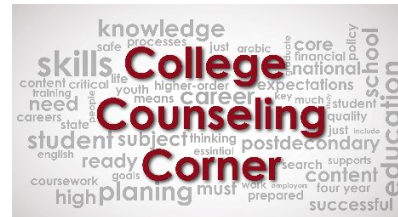
In 2007, Ramzi decided to follow his personal passion which runs in line with the family business; making jewelry. He began by joining his father in running the family business, but because of the differences in goals and aims, he decided to pursue his career in jewelry, individually. Then he started taking workshops, design classes and courses all around the world. And in 2008, he initiated the Ramzi Jewelry project; where he would design and sell outstanding pieces. His latest initiative was "Lady of the Earth" project, launched more than a month ago. In the form of a unisex ring, Lady of the Earth represents the story of our people by stamping eight of Palestine's most unique and famous landmarks unified together on the ring itself.

When remembering his experience at RFS, Ramzi expressed his gratitude and appreciation to his school saying:

"The school was more than an educational institution for us, we learned how to be committed, responsible and accountable for our actions. The school created a sense of community between us as students and faculty. At the same time it allowed us to be creative and think out of the box."

Ramzi ended our interview with a few words to future RFS alumni saying: "If you are RFS alumni, you're able to do anything!"\*





## A Glimpse of Friends United Meeting's Fall Visit to RFS



By Chris Akel – College Counselor

### Upcoming Deadline Dates:

October 10: 10th & 11th grade PSAT (sign ups start October 1)  
 October 15: RFS Canadian Nomination Application Deadline (released on October 1).  
 October 15: Cambridge, Oxford, and UK Medical Schools Application Due  
 October 15: Some US Early Deadlines (UNC, etc.)

### Upcoming Events/Announcements:

October 1 & 2: 10th and 11th grades College Board full-day workshops  
 October 3 TBD: (Subject to change)  
 RFS CC Workshop: Personal Statements, (sign up with Chris)  
 October 8 TBD: (Subject to change)  
 RFS CC Workshop: College Research 101 - Regions Around the World (sign up with Chris)  
 October 16: Swarthmore College Admissions Visit (3pm, Chapel)  
 October 22: Linden Tours US College Fair (15+ institutions, 3pm, Upper School Middle School library)  
 October 23: Gulf Tours US College Fair in Amman, Jordan (contact Chris for more information)  
 October 23-26: Chris out of office; no meetings.

### College Counseling General:

Personal Statements and Recommendations - 1 month before deadlines: All students applying to schools anywhere in the world will likely need to ask their teachers for a recommendation, and many will develop a personal statement. However, students MUST request their recommendation 1 month in advance from their teachers and if they want feedback from Chris, they MUST submit the personal statement to his email at least 2 weeks before their deadline (preferably also 1 month - 8 students have already submitted).

2018-19 CC Handbook: Last year's [College Counseling Handbook](#) has everything you need to know to apply to college and use the CC Office!

Contact Chris and the CC Office: [cakel@rfs.edu.ps](mailto:cakel@rfs.edu.ps)

## Middle School Library Book

By Cheryl Engel – Middle School Librarian

This month we are featuring the book entitled, *Paths to Quaker Parenting Using Quaker Beliefs, Testimonies, and Practice*.

Authors: Harriet Heath and Daniel Beauvais  
 Find on Amazon.com

Parents have many questions raising their children. How should I respond to my three year old's whining for a cookie at three in the morning? How do I deal with my anger when my teenager rolls his/her eyes and doesn't do what I ask? Should my nine year old have a cell phone and an I-Pod? This book is a sharing of a group of parents who have struggled with concerns like these and have found strength and guidance in Quaker faith and practice.\*



## HALLOWEEN READING CAMPAIGN

Halloween is celebrated on October 31, and the Ramallah Friends Middle School Library would like to celebrate by inviting all interested readers to submit a paragraph about any book they read during the month of October with a spooky or suspenseful theme or idea.

**Interested students may bring their paragraphs to the library anytime before October 31.**

## Cross that Bridge

By Mai Zaru – Learning Support Teacher  
 Upper Campus

Over the years, many of us have attempted to cruise through life while slamming the brakes. While car savvy folks refer to it as a Rockford turn, Palestinians just call it driving. More often than not, slamming the brakes became a coping mechanism for life's unexpected twists and turns. A flashback can take us as far back as 50 years ago to a historical period of unexpected spiral twists and rocky turns. During this time, triumphs and tragedies wrapped the earth like a blanket with the abrupt increase of Palestinian refugees and the strike on the Beirut International Airport. Throughout the terror and loss of the 1967 war, a pharmacist, a chemistry teacher, and most importantly a humble Palestinian father took a steep turn to what became the most prominent 20 years of his life as the principal of Ramallah Friends School. For those of you who don't know, his name was Fuad Zaru. Often times, despite the hardships, people ought to cross the bridge when they get there. The time has come, where I had to cross that bridge, however, for me, it's the King Hussein Bridge on my way home. Being at RFS, means being



able to walk alongside the footsteps immersed into the depth of this campus as a Palestinian, a Quaker and a Zaru. It took half a century from my grandfather's time, for me to join this campus as a teacher, to sit amongst the students in Silent Meeting, to witness their growth, and to continue to grow myself in the presence of influential leaders.\*



Every person has the abilities to accomplish their goals, I believe that our best days are ahead of us, and my hope is that we as members of the RFS community will work hard together with positive energy to accomplish our goals, letting our success make noise for the world to hear."

*Sandy Ziadeh – PYP Coordinator / Lower Campus*

## BREAST Cancer Awareness Month

### BREAST CANCER AWARENESS WORKSHOP

WHERE: RFS Middle School Library, a learning community gathering place on the Upper Campus (El-Bireh).

WHO: Nissreen Luessi from Ministry of Health and US Nurse

WHEN: Thursday October 18th, 2018

TIME: 1:00 - 3:00 P.M

Please email Cheryl Engel at [cengel@rfsedu.ps](mailto:cengel@rfsedu.ps) to sign up if you wish to join. We look forward to seeing you!

## Upcoming Dates & Events

\*\*\* LS – Lower School  
 \*\*\* US – Upper School

Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>  
 Half-day for students due to Professional Development workshops for staff.

Oct. 8<sup>th</sup>  
 US – Student Council Elections – *Voting day!*

Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>  
 PSAT Exam for 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>  
 Tuition payments due (Plans B & C)

Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>  
 Last day of 1<sup>st</sup> quarter

Oct. 29<sup>th</sup>  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter begins.

Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup>  
 End of 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter – no school

Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>  
 US: Report Cards distribution

When everything seems dark, consider you may be the light.  
*Quaker Proverb*

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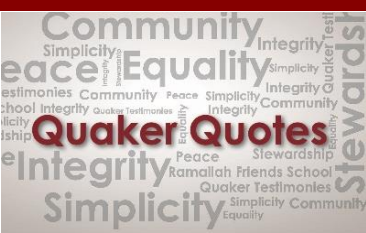
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 CHILD IS  
 HONORED  
 AT A  
 FRIENDS  
 SCHOOL,

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