



FUM 2019 Summer Mission Project

“Everyone Welcome”

Ramallah Friends School
150th
Anniversary

In 1867, Sybil and Eli Jones, American Friends from New England, embarked on a ministry that included visits to missions in Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Egypt. One night, after a meeting in Ramallah, they were approached by a fifteen-year-old Palestinian girl named Miriam Karam, who asked them to start a school for girls. Though Miriam had received some schooling in Jerusalem, there was nowhere in the area around Ramallah where girls could be educated. When Eli asked who would teach in a girls school, Miriam replied, “I will.”

In 1869, supported by New England Yearly Meeting, the Jones and other Friends opened a day school in Ramallah, as well as several smaller village schools. Miriam began teaching in the Ramallah school. Within just a few years, fifty girls were going to school—a remarkable achievement! We honor both the courage of Miriam in making her request and the responsiveness of Eli and Sybil Jones to the divine call.

At the time, this region of the world was still part of the Ottoman Empire. It has seen many political shifts since then, but the Ramallah Friends School has remained a hub of peace and compassion.



Have you checked out the Ramallah Friends School website? You can read more about their history here:

www.rfs.edu.ps/en/page/history



Goal: \$18,300

This year's Summer Mission Project Goal is raising \$18,300 for physical improvements at the School which will augment the Learning Support Programs. Here's how RFS would like to improve their facility:

- **Wooden Ramp for the entrance of the Administration Building: \$3,500.**
This ramp will allow students with physical disabilities to enter the building.
- **Escalator Chair between the 1st and 2nd floors of the Administration Building: \$9,000.**
The chair will give all students access to the second floor, where music and art are taught and where the computer labs and the library are housed.
- **Gym Ball Chairs: \$3,000.**
These chairs allow students to wiggle without being disruptive, and are effective in helping students with attention disorders to focus.
- **Accessible Bathrooms: \$2,800.**
This will cover converting four bathrooms at the Lower School and three at the Upper School.

Did you know that Ramallah Friends School exists on two separate campuses? They are known today as the Upper and Lower Schools. The Lower School is for students in grades K-5, and the Upper School houses the Middle and High School programs. Prior to 1990, the School was not co-educational: the campus that is now the Upper School held the boys' classes, and girls' classes were held in the building that is now the Lower School.



A pioneer model in inclusive education in Palestine.

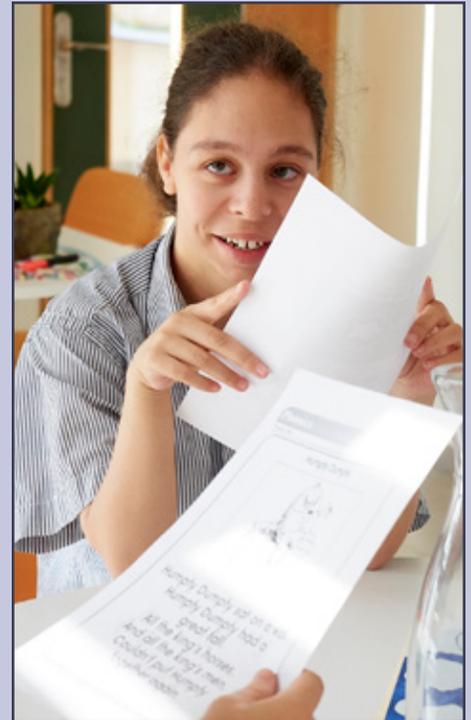
Adrian Moody, Head of School, writes:

Ramallah Friends School (RFS) started the first and continues to operate the only inclusive education program in Palestine. Our aim is to care for each child's specific needs, including educational, physical, behavioral, emotional, and social needs. In 1995, the Learning Support (Special Educational Needs) Program was introduced. Over the years, it has developed into a pioneer model for inclusive education in Palestine.

The Learning Support program at RFS has adopted an inclusive philosophy from its beginning. Inclusion is a value that supports the rights of children, regardless of their diverse abilities, to participate actively and naturally with others. Our school is proud to celebrate diversity by the inclusion of around one hundred students within the overall school community, students whose differences range from physical difficulties such as palsy, visual impairment, hearing impairment, to general learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties (dyslexia, dyspraxia), ADHD, autistim spectrum disorders, Kabuki syndrome, and Down Syndrome.



The Ramallah city center.



In 1999, the School became accredited by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), offering students in Palestine, for the first time, an IB Diploma Program. Today, after receiving, in 2012, the IB authorization of the Middle Years Program for grades 6 through 10, and, in 2018, authorization for the Primary Years Program for grades Lower Kindergarten through 5th, the Ramallah Friends School is a recognized IB World School. Only 5,000 schools worldwide have this accreditation!

For more resources and info, visit
[www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/
connect/summer-mission-project](http://www.friendsunitedmeeting.org/connect/summer-mission-project)

Implementing the program complements both RFS' philosophy and Quaker values, particularly the values of **equality** and **integrity**:

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EQUALITY

We believe in equality for every child. Everyone should have an equal opportunity to learn. Inclusion recognizes that every person is equally beloved by God, and therefore each child is taught to treat others with parity, regardless of background or circumstance.



INTEGRITY

RFS recognizes that inclusive education serves an integral role in raising standards of civility and acceptance. We provide education for all, which teaches our students to respect and deal honestly with everyone within the school environment.

As we build knowledge to meet the needs of children with challenges we improve the quality of education for all children in the classroom. We feel that a successful inclusive school must, above all, provide a caring and trusting environment. Reflecting Quaker values, inclusive schools help the development of communities where all people are equally valued and have the same opportunities for participation.

