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IASA-MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT HAS BIG IDEAS AND IS “DREAMING TOGETHER”

Included below is an excerpt from a letter written by Shai Doron, President of The Jerusalem Foundation (JF). We share to bring a smile to your lips, amid all the turmoil. (There were two other stories included in JF's mailing, however, this one is about IASA's Middle School.)

Best wishes for a safe and Healthy New Year! May we all enjoy 2021 as a better year than 2020.



הקרן לירושלים
مؤسسة صندوق القدس
THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION

Dear Friends,

The past year will be recorded in history as one of the most difficult years we have known. We are at the start of a new year, in the hope that 2021 will usher in a return to routine. A routine that we miss so much. While we are following the difficult and dramatic events in Washington, I would like to share with you three stories from Jerusalem that give hope and inspiration for a more reasonable and optimistic future - a "future" that begins right now, at the start of the new year...

Dreaming Together

Miar is currently an eighth-grade student in the Middle School of IASA, the Israel Arts and Science Academy, or as we like to call it - the "School of Excellence." The school was established with the support of Teddy Kollek and the Jerusalem Foundation 30 years ago in order to bring together, in Jerusalem, the most outstanding science and arts students from all over the country. The teachers, educational approach, level and range of subjects have made the school a beacon of excellence that is famous throughout the country.

We met Miar when she was a sixth grader at the Mallowia Girls' Elementary School in the Old City of Jerusalem. The school was visited by members of the "Learning Together" program - a group of Jewish and Arab school principals who work together to promote joint Jewish-Arab learning and dialogue in Jerusalem schools, through programs for principals, teachers and students.

Shared Living is the basis of the Jerusalem Foundation's work. Anyone who is familiar with the Foundation's work knows how seriously we invest in Shared Learning; "Learning Together" and "Shared Learning Ambassadors" are just a few examples of our initiatives in this area.

Suad Da'as, at that time the principal of the Mallowia School where Miar was studying, is a member of the "Learning Together" group. Another member of the group is Anat Maoz, director of the IASA Middle School. It is not easy to impress the principals, but when Miar introduced herself, she enchanted all the principals - Jews and Arabs – with her poise, and personality and especially with her big dreams for the future. The big ideas of "Learning Together" joined with the big dreams of Miar.

Miar and her family live in the Muslim Quarter of the Old City. It is a single-parent family with financial difficulties. The entire family, including grandmother and grandfather, admire Miar's talents, hard work and strong and captivating personality, and they support and encourage her.

Suad and Anat took it upon themselves to guide Miar on a new path that was difficult and challenging but offered opportunities for great success in the future. With basic Hebrew but good English and lots of confidence, she entered IASA in seventh grade, joining the group of the most outstanding students in Israel.

Today, Miar is already an eighth-grade student at IASA, fluent in three languages - Arabic, Hebrew and English. Thanks to her ambition, determination and hard work, Miar has become one of the student leaders. It has not been an easy or simple road. Even the daily commute from the Old City to the Kiryat Menachem neighborhood is a challenge. Her grandfather offered to take the bus with her every morning and afternoon. Miar is delighted with the new world that has opened up for her; she has integrated socially and academically and keeps in touch regularly with Suad.

Miar's future and dreams are ahead of her, dreams that begin with small moments like the special encounter with the "Learning Together" group.

Shai Doron

Jerusalem Foundation President