



הקרן לירושלים
مؤسسة صندوق القدس
THE JERUSALEM FOUNDATION



Stories from Jerusalem

Dear Friends,

It may already seem like distant history – but not so long ago everything looked very different here. Jerusalem was again at the center of world news, and there were difficult days. But from the perspective of two months later the city has almost returned to normal...

Last week we experienced magical nights in Jerusalem, a full moon was shining over the city, wonderful early summer weather offered cool breezes and thousands of residents and visitors came out to enjoy an incredible creative atmosphere that Jerusalem uniquely inspires and the Jerusalem Foundation promotes and supports. One of the highlights of last week was the Jazz Festival in the Billy Rose Sculpture Garden of the Israel Museum.

Jerusalem at its best, Jerusalem that excites, encourages and inspires... that is exactly what I want to share. For this “Stories from Jerusalem” I chose three tales of “normalcy” at the beginning of summer. And about the full moon, you will read more in just a moment...

Neil Armstrong from Ras al-Amud

If in 20 years the first astronaut from East Jerusalem takes off into space, do not be surprised to hear where he grew up. I have no doubt that he will come from the Ashbal Al-Quds School in Ras al-Amud, at the foot of the Mount of Olives.

Muhammad Arbouk is the principal of this amazing school specializing in science, technology, robotics and space. Yes, an ambitious list especially for an elementary school, but one that is well-deserved.

The city of Jerusalem is looking for educational leaders like Muhammad. The school's reputation has already spread, and students come from all neighborhoods of the city - from Tsur Baher in the south to Shuafat and Beit Hanina in the north, even if it is an hour's drive each way.

The Jerusalem Foundation got to know the school through "Al-Mada" - a program to promote science and math studies in elementary schools that we support and mentor together with our partner IASA/ICEE (Israel Center for Excellence through Education). As part of the program we work with teachers and students in Jerusalem schools from all sectors, enhancing tools for engaging, effective teaching of science and math. We work long-term with each school and have already seen the rewards.

It is an inspiring experience to walk around the school with Muhammad, meeting the teachers and students from the robotics lab which makes me wish I was a student again. The young children already know how to build tiny robots from Lego and to program them. The members of the Al-Mada steering committee were deeply amazed and impressed during our visit, since even the respected academic leaders among us do not have a clue how to program a robot. Academic excellence exists in every corner of the School. The learning atmosphere and the dedicated teaching staff radiate confidence and calm.

In the evening, after visiting the School, an early summer full moon rose over Jerusalem and I knew where the first Palestinian astronaut to land on the moon would come from: the Ras al-Amud School of science, technology, robotics and... space!



Shai Doron,
Jerusalem Foundation President