

Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace & Justice

WINTER 2013 NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends, Supporters, and Fellow Activists,

At this time every year we ask you to extend and increase your commitment to peace with justice in Palestine and Israel, and to do so by lending your support to our work at the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice. In 2013, we have urged you to communicate with legislators, to participate in letter writing campaigns, to share photos and stories, and to volunteer your time, talents, and gifts. This month, after finishing your Thanksgiving meal with family and friends, we ask you to take a moment to think again of those living under occupation. Those who are suffering but resisting. Those who are grieving the loss of life and of a homeland. Those who are separated from their family and cannot share meals together. **We ask you to mark the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, November 29th, by reflecting and reaffirming your commitment to a peaceful and just end to the occupation.**

In 1977, the United Nations inaugurated this annual observance reflecting the November 29, 1947, adoption of UN General Assembly resolution 181 (II). The "Partition Resolution," as it came to be known, divided Palestine into a "Jewish State" and an "Arab State," with Jerusalem as a separated body under special international rule. Its implementation failed. The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People has come to provide opportunity for the world to focus attention on the fact that the question of Palestine remains unresolved and that the Palestinian people have yet to attain their inalienable rights as defined by the UN General Assembly – namely, the right to self-determination without external interference, the right to national independence and sovereignty, and the right to return to their homes and property from which they were displaced.

At the Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice, we stand in solidarity with the Palestinian people on November 29th and throughout the year. With education, advocacy, connection, and use of art and the written word, we build awareness and demand change for our Palestinian friends in Gaza, the West Bank, Israel and beyond – change that will result in a better world for all in the Middle East and for us, too! Our Gaza projects, annual Peace Works events, scholarship programs, and education and advocacy efforts are all long-standing successes. **We are particularly delighted that as we prepare this message, we have just welcomed Anees Mansour of Rafah, Gaza – our first Leadership Studies Fellow – to Olympia for a three-month program of shared learning!** With persistence and with dedicated support from YOU, we are able to realize efforts like this one, and many more. Please take a moment to review our 2013 list of accomplishments (page 3) and as you mark this International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, consider how you can help the Rachel Corrie Foundation to continue our significant and necessary work. All that we do is possible only through your care and generosity. Thank you for helping us to continue Rachel's work for these past ten years and to spread the message of peace with justice for Palestine! We are tremendously grateful for and inspired by the support you provide, and for the work you do in your communities as activists.

This holiday season, as you reflect on your commitment to Palestine, and as you stand in solidarity, we ask that you make a [tax deductible donation](#) to the Rachel Corrie Foundation. **Our efforts these past ten years have depended greatly on volunteer commitments of time and energy from Craig and Cindy Corrie and members of our local community.** As we aim for sustainability and for the ability to increase our outreach and impact, we need and ask for your help! Whatever you can contribute will make a difference! Thank you for considering the Rachel Corrie Foundation during this season of giving. Warmest holiday wishes to you all!

In Solidarity,
Jennifer Martinez
For the Rachel Corrie Foundation Staff and Board of Directors

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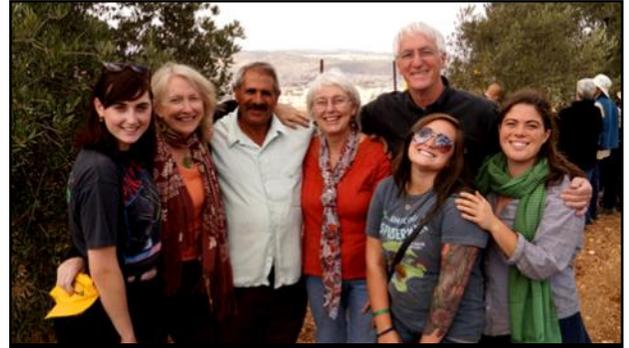
UW Graduates confronting commencement speaker John Huntsman of Caterpillar Inc.



A Tale of Two Systems

Andrew Nepstad — RCF Student Intern

Traveling can be full of petty indignities: removing your shoes, waiting in lines, the inability to carry liquids; but when going to Israel or Palestine there's yet another degradation to add to the list: racial discrimination. The U.S. Department of State reports that "some U.S. citizens holding Israeli nationality, possessing a Palestinian identity card, or of Arab or Muslim origin have experienced significant difficulties entering or exiting Israel or the West Bank." Nour Joudah, a Palestinian-American educator, was denied entry to Palestine while trying to return to her workplace, the Friends School in Ramallah, where she was responsible for educating 90 children. She was denied entry because she refused to answer questions detailing the names of young Palestinians she had met, and their phone numbers. She refused to become an informant. Americans, like Joudah, have been regularly subjected to discriminatory practices when trying to enter Israel/Palestine.



2012 Interfaith Peace Builders Delegation

"U.S. citizens whom Israeli authorities suspect of being Arab, Middle Eastern or Muslim origin may face additional, often time-consuming, and probing questioning by immigration"

The U.S. Department of State writes that "U.S. citizens are advised that all persons applying for entry into Israel, the West Bank, or Gaza ... may be denied entry or exit without explanation." They find that "U.S. citizens whom Israeli authorities suspect of being Arab, Middle Eastern or Muslim origin may face additional, often time-consuming, and probing questioning by immigration and border authorities, or may be denied entry."

Yet in the face of this blatant discrimination, certain members of Congress are actually working to make this problem worse. The United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2013, introduced to the U.S. Senate with 51 cosponsors, would as originally written allow Israeli citizens to visit America for short periods of time without a visa and without harsh inquiry – without ensuring all American citizens the same dignity when they travel to Israel.

**Join us for the First Annual
Community Celebration of Human Rights:
a dinner and silent auction benefit for the
Rachel Corrie Foundation for Peace and Justice.**

**Join us for a joyous evening of celebration as we mark
International Human Rights Day with drinks and hors
d'oeuvres provided by Bayou on Bay of Bellingham,
silent auction, and dancing to the music of BEVY!**

**Tickets are \$30 per person, and can be purchased at
www.RachelCorrieFoundation.org
or by calling 360-754-3998**

Tuesday, December 10, 2013

6:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Abigail Stuart House

1002 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA



The Visa Waiver program has existed for 27 years. It allows all Americans, regardless of any cultural or social group membership, the privilege of traveling between the U.S. and countries like France, Japan, and Australia without having to obtain a travel visa. The U.S. reciprocates when visitors from those countries visit here. The Visa Waiver, if granted to Israel, as proposed in legislation earlier this year, would allow Israeli travelers to visit America for up to 90 days without a visa and in accordance with non-discriminatory U.S. entry policies. But there would not be full reciprocity for all U.S. citizens traveling to Israel, unless current discriminatory Israeli security measures are altered.

Even Secretary of State John Kerry has urged Congress to reject the visa waiver in instances where countries, like Israel, do not reciprocate appropriately for U.S. citizens. Depending on the language eventually passed in Congress, this piece of legislation could potentially make the abhorrent racial profiling practices of Israeli border security legally accepted in the U.S.

There is no excuse for Israel to practice policies that clearly discriminate against the citizens of the world, especially citizens of the country that provides them with more financial support than any other nation. Some have called Israel America's greatest ally, yet that ally regularly discriminates against some American travelers, and violates the basic human rights of many more.

To learn more about the issue of the Visa Waiver for Israel and how you can help challenge the unfair treatment of U.S. citizens at Israel's borders, please visit www.endtheoccupation.org.

2013 Accomplishments

EVENTS EDUCATION

- ✧ RCF continued to spread the word with talks by Cindy and Craig Corrie at colleges and universities, conferences, performances of *My Name is Rachel Corrie*, for Palestine Awareness and Israeli Apartheid weeks, and at dedication of Olympia artist Ross Matteson's sculptures on peace – throughout North America in Calgary, Edmonton, Cedar Falls, Chicago, New Britain, Bridgewater, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, San Diego, Phoenix, Portland, Washington DC, and more!
- ✧ Hosted [2013 Peace Works](#), commemorating the 10th anniversary of Rachel in Gaza, with a dynamic day of social action, speakers, music, dance, food, remembrance and community. Rallied in Sylvester Park calling for freedom for Palestinians and accountability for U.S. military funding. Were inspired by speakers Phyllis Bennis (Institute of Policy Studies) and Ramzy Baroud (The Palestine Chronicle) in *Rachel Corrie & Freedom for Palestine: 10 Years - Looking Back, Moving Forward*, moderated by Dr. Steve Niva.
- ✧ Sponsored “*Exiting the Open Air Prison*” with Ayman Nijim of Gaza, at Traditions Cafe, Olympia.
- ✧ With TESC Students for Justice in Palestine, co-hosted a cultural journey through Gaza cuisine with Laila El-Haddad, author of [The Gaza Kitchen](#).
- ✧ Commemorated the Nakba with [conversations and a display](#) of destroyed villages at Sylvester Park.

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

- ✧ We've been in the media! At the National Press Club in DC; on RT's [Breaking the Set](#); *National Public Radio*; [Veterans for Peace Forum: Portland](#); TCTV's [Mission Nonprofit](#); *Works in Progress*; *Olympia Power and Light*; *The Olympian*; national TV affiliates, and more!
- ✧ Inaugurated our Leadership Studies Fellowship with our first Fellow from Gaza – read about it on page 5.
- ✧ Administered Iraqi Student Solidarity Committee (ISSC) grant funds for an Iraqi refugee student at The Evergreen State College (TESC) and coordinated celebration for our first graduate, [Andrew Birwari](#).
- ✧ Awarded the annual Rachel Corrie Memorial Scholarship at TESC for a student dedicated to gaining a better understanding of the Middle East and peace.
- ✧ Informed, mobilized, and networked with thousands of supporters and newcomers through our website, e-newsletters, Facebook, Twitter, and personal outreach!

CONNECTION AND NETWORKING

- ✧ Partnered with Palestine-Israel Working Group of Nevada County and the Middle East Children's Alliance, to provide a Maia water purification unit for a Gaza kindergarten!
- ✧ Organized for and supported the annual Rachel Corrie [Ramadan Football Tournament](#) in Rafah, Gaza.
- ✧ Welcomed educator Amani Inshasi from Gaza for a week's visit and a speaking event at Traditions Cafe.
- ✧ Provided cosponsorship for screenings of *5 Broken Cameras* at South Puget Sound Community College and JVP-Tacoma, with guests Iyad Burnat and Fida Qishta; for Archbishop Elias Chacour's tour of Puget Sound; for Tree of Life conferences in Portland; and for other events.
- ✧ Joined other coalition members for learning, networking, and

planning at the 2013 U.S. Campaign to End the Occupation Annual Meeting in Washington DC.

- ✧ Cosponsored, connected, and educated at area festivals - the Vancouver Peace and Justice Fair, Global Fest in Federal Way, and Seattle Arab Festival.
- ✧ Partnered with local organizations to organize a weekend of International Day of Peace events.
- ✧ Brought our staff to the Seattle Race Conference.

ART FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

- ✧ Partnered with Break the Silence Media and Art Project to maintain, rededicate, and utilize the [Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural](#), read more on page 4.
- ✧ Participated in Olympia's biannual Arts Walks – A spring showcase of [River of Life](#) drawings by Gaza physicians challenged by hospitals overcrowded with psychosomatic patients; A fall showcase of student photography: [Jenin through the Eyes of Youth](#), a Freedom Theatre project.
- ✧ Brought Palestinian filmmaker Fida Qishta to Olympia for screening and discussion of her film from Operation Cast Lead – *Where Should the Bird's Fly?*
- ✧ Sponsored *International Experimental Shorts* at the Olympia Film Festival featuring Palestinian Basma Alsharif and her film *Home Movies Gaza*.
- ✧ Hosted discussion following the Olympia Film Society screening of *The Gatekeepers*, an award-winning Dror Moreh film with interviews from six former heads of Shin Bet.

ADVOCACY, BDS, & GRASSROOTS ACTIVISM

- ✧ Attended Expose AIPAC training and actions in D.C.
- ✧ Reached out to public officials. With partner organizations, met first-term Congressman Denny Heck and discussed U.S. militarism and the Middle East. Met with new staff from offices of local Congressmen, and provided info to state employees at WA State Combined Fund Drive tabling events.
- ✧ Educated our state legislators and their staffs about Rachel Corrie's case, and lack of accountability for U.S. funding to Israel, with information packets to every office and a [briefing in the WA State Capitol](#) featuring former Congressman Brian Baird, Phyllis Bennis and the parents of Rachel Corrie.
- ✧ Partnered with University of Washington SUPER students to [challenge Caterpillar Inc.](#) board member Jon Huntsman's appearance as speaker at the 2013 commencement.
- ✧ Joined BDS efforts: To support Judith Butler and Omar Barghouti at Brooklyn College, UC Irvine and Santa Barbara divestment resolutions, calls for Alicia Keys, Stevie Wonder, Stephen Hawking, and Morgan Freeman to honor the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel, and to oppose the Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's collaboration with Batsheva Dance Company and Israel blood diamonds.
- ✧ Partnered actively with Northwest Regional BDS Coalition and local student and community BDS groups.
- ✧ Sponsored Remi Kenazi in Olympia for performance and workshop on Academic and Cultural Boycott.
- ✧ Placed ads inside a dozen Thurston County Intercity Transit buses, as part of a regional ad campaign calling for “Equal Rights for Palestinians, the Way to Peace.”
- ✧ Supported and used the talents of seven student interns and over 100 volunteers who made this all happen!

Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project, Turning a New Leaf

It is with great excitement that the [Olympia-Rafah Solidarity Mural Project](#) (ORSMP) writes to introduce its new Olympia Outreach Coordinator. Welcome Josh Elliott! Josh has worked with ORSMP since 2009 when he coordinated leaf installation on the mural. Guided by Break the Silence Media and Art Project, in collaboration with the Rachel Corrie Foundation, the mural, with Josh's help, will continue to develop by using art as a tool for community organizing.



Since its inception in 2008, ORSMP has been a community hub for celebrating and coming together for art and social change activities. As an educational tool, city tours and classes from The Evergreen State College (TESC) and other institutions visit the mural as a resource for art and history. ORSMP will build on these steps to make the educational components of the mural stronger and more accessible. This includes revamping and upgrading the audio component where the viewer can 'call the wall' and hear from each of the participants in the mural.

ORSMP was the Rachel Corrie Foundation's location for the fourth consecutive year for both Spring and Fall 'Arts Walk' weekends. RCF

once again brought together wonderful visual arts programming to educate and share experiences from Palestine. October's exhibit featured youth photography from the Jenin Freedom Theatre in the West Bank. The exhibit included thoughtful perspectives and themes on life under military occupation. There have been live performances at the wall, too – like the Old Growth Poetry Collective that entertained and inspired during an Arts Walk evening this fall.

We thank everyone who contributes to the work of the Rachel Corrie Foundation. Without the unwavering support and commitment of RCF, and yourselves,

ORSMP would not be around. Big thanks go, as well, to the Labor Temple, Peace Development Fund, Middle East Children's Alliance, and Left Tilt Foundation.

As we turn the page of another year, our organizing includes developing our internship program, lighting the mural with solar energy, and further developing educational materials, mural tours, and the media components of ORSMP. Our new internship program with TESC aims to strengthen our role as a project that fosters the development of new organizers who can continue the struggle for justice in Palestine and everywhere.

In solidarity,

Josh Elliot & Susan Green, ORSMP

Rachel Corrie Memorial Dedicated at Evergreen!

Andrew Miles — RCF Volunteer

The Evergreen State College community (faculty, students, alumni, and friends) participated in an inspiring dedication marking the permanent installation of a sculptural tribute to Rachel Corrie entitled Reflecting on Peace and Justice. The artwork, by internationally renowned sculptor and Evergreen alumnus Ross Matteson, is a bronze dove resting atop a polished steel pyramid. Evergreen faculty, staff, and students spoke to a large gathering on the third floor of the College Activities Building where the sculpture will be on permanent display. They shared how Rachel's message of peace and justice had affected them and how it continues to reverberate throughout the Evergreen community and beyond. Current and former students read stories, poems, and excerpts of Rachel's writing while faculty reminisced about their time with her over ten years ago. Ross Matteson closed the event speaking about the piece's significance – that we should reflect upon ourselves and our shared bonds of humanity.



The full audio of the event is available [here](#).

**We are proud to announce
the 2nd Olympia Arab
Festival: Shuruq!
Join us October 4th, 2014!**

**Interested in helping to organize the event, showcase Arab art, or participate as a vendor or performer?
Contact us today at
info@rachelcorriefoundation.org**

Leadership Studies Fellow Arrives from Gaza!

Matt Velky — RCF Student Intern

2013 marks the inaugural run of the Rachel Corrie Foundation [Leadership Studies Fellowship](#) (LSF). Our selected participant, Mahmoud (Anees) Mansour journeyed from Gaza to the U.S., arriving in Olympia November 4th to train and study for three months. He will interact with a host of local nonprofit organizations through a curriculum that encourages experiential and self-directed learning. While in Olympia, LSF participants have home-stays, and unique opportunities and encouragement to make lasting connections throughout the community.

During the past months, as we worked to bring our first Fellow to the U.S., we witnessed the unfortunate realities that Palestinians face when trying to leave Gaza. This year's program was initially slated for summer 2013 but was complicated by the deteriorating situation in Egypt. Rafah Crossing, the only exit from Gaza to Egypt was subject to frequent and unpredictable closings. When open, hours of operation were severely reduced to approximately four hours a day. The number of people allowed through was cut dramatically. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reported that on average, 113 people were able to cross daily in the month of September. Additionally, a set of strict criteria was imposed to determine who would be allowed to pass.

Our Leadership Studies Fellow, Anees Mansour, was subject to months of difficulties. He was unable several times to attend his scheduled visa appointments at the American Embassy in Cairo, due to inability to move through the Egyptian border. This was a source of considerable frustration for Anees, as it is for far too many others in similar situations. Disruption of movement is a harsh form of collective punishment that affects the lives of everyone in Gaza. Medical patients find themselves unable to leave to receive adequate treatment for serious illnesses. Students trying to exit are frequently held up for weeks or longer and risk losing scholarships they have obtained abroad.

The challenges are not over when Gaza travelers get through the border into Egypt. They are looked upon with greater scrutiny by Egyptian authorities and are often allowed only reduced stays in Egypt, making the often lengthy process of obtaining a visa to travel further abroad even more difficult. If the stars align somehow, and these travelers get through the border and are able to complete visa interviews, they may still be denied visas, or run into difficulties staying in Egypt long enough to receive the visa and to travel beyond.

Throughout the more than nine-week travel process for our Leadership Studies Fellow, Anees Mansour, to ensure the best chance for him to gain permission to travel from Gaza to Egypt timed with an American Embassy visa appointment, we initiated and maintained contact with numerous authorities, including those at the Department of State and American Embassy. We are delighted that through his careful preparation and persistence, and through the support of numerous advocates, Anees eventually reached Egypt, completed a successful visa interview, and traveled to the U.S. We have enthusiastically welcomed him to Olympia and look forward in the very near future to sharing his experiences in this new program with you!

Israeli Supreme Court to Review Corrie Trial Outcome in 2014 — Craig and Cindy Corrie

On August 28, 2012, Judge Oded Gershon ruled in the civil lawsuit Corrie vs. State of Israel that our daughter Rachel was killed as an act of war. He absolved the Israeli military of any responsibility, blamed Rachel for her own killing, and saluted the military police investigation of the matter. Our family and many others found the conclusion to the Haifa District Court proceedings very disturbing. The ruling was widely condemned by legal and human rights advocates around the globe including President Jimmy Carter, the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and others, all pointing to the climate of impunity enjoyed by the Israeli military and the court's thumbing its nose at the Geneva Conventions.



Cindy & Craig Corrie & Sarah Corrie Simpson in Haifa 2012, ©Sam McNeil

For over ten years, our family has pursued truth, accountability, and justice in the United States and Israel. In seeking this, we believe the diplomatic process between the United States and Israel failed an American citizen. With the outcome in 2012 in our civil lawsuit, the Israeli court system failed itself, the world, and Rachel. The verdict ignores the evidence, runs dangerously counter to international law, and demonstrates contempt in its complete disregard for the protection of civilians and human-rights observers. We continue to believe that regardless of the personal outcome for our

family, this verdict and others like it stemming from the Israeli justice system must be challenged. We have appealed to the Israeli Supreme Court which is currently scheduled to hear oral argument in the case on May 21, 2014, in the high court in Jerusalem. This will be preceded by written argument by attorneys for our family and the Israeli state. We will provide updates about the course of the case and our evaluation of it as they are available, while continuing our advocacy for the protection of all human rights monitors.



Board members, friends, and interns welcome Anees to Olympia.

WINTER 2013 NEWSLETTER: RACHEL CORRIE FOUNDATION

Peace Works 2014 Tackles Prisoners in Palestine and at Home

Mairin McKnight-Slottee — RCF Student Intern

Peace Works is an annual project of the Rachel Corrie Foundation that seeks to generate exploration and action in the pursuit of justice and peace in social, economic, and political aspects of life across the globe. For 2014, we are proud to announce that Peace Works will be a one-day conference focusing on the realities of incarceration in Palestine as well as within the United States. **Please watch for updates!**

The United States has the highest per capita rate of incarceration in the world. With less than 5% of the world's population, this country houses almost one quarter of the world's prisoners. Moreover, people of color in the U.S. prison population are disproportionately represented compared to their numbers in the general population. The racially discriminatory themes that underlie our legal and judicial system are as well documented as the rapid growth of the prison-industrial complex premised on the flawed belief that prison is the most effective response to social problems. Hunger strikes across the U.S. prison system protesting conditions have sparked a national discussion and raised awareness about the marginalization and at times inhumane conditions in some correctional institutions.



A closer examination of the realities of incarceration leads to questions about the ethics that govern the current U.S. system as well as the viability of incarceration as an element of justice. Practices such as solitary confinement and the death penalty are grave threats to the dignity of both the incarcerated and the incarcerators. As responsible, ethical beings, we must critically and honestly reflect on their purpose and place in society.

The incarceration of Palestinians by the authority of the Israeli Military Judicial System is one of many platforms in Palestine where advocates seek to rectify unchecked violations of human rights. Groups such as Addameer (addameer.org), work for greater transparency in the rule of law as it is applied in Palestine and to guarantee basic freedoms now routinely denied to Palestinian prisoners. The most abhorrent of these is the continuing practice of torture during interrogation and cruel and inhuman punishments such as sleep deprivation and stress positioning inflicted on prisoners.

The stifled voice of the Palestinian people, especially that of the incarcerated, necessitates international examination of current standards, practices, and courses of actions. **Join us this coming April at Peace Works 2014 for discussion and reflection on the pursuit of peace and justice within the prison systems of Israel and their similarities to our own.**

WWW.RACHELCORRIEFOUNDATION.ORG

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 **Rachel Corrie**
Foundation for Peace & Justice
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Olympia, WA 98501

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