

The end of 2006 was the beginning of the story for the **DIYAR Consortium**, the Lutheran-based, ecumenically-oriented group of institutions including the International Center of Bethlehem (ICB), the Dar al-Kalima Health and Wellness Center, and the newest addition, the Dar al-Kalima College. DIYAR (the plural of the Arabic word “dar”, meaning “house”) is the product of a December 2006 staff and board meetings, the goal of which was to start a process of restructuring, in order to keep up with the continuing growth and development of the Lutheran-based ministries here in Bethlehem.

2006 was a challenging year for Palestine. In January, Hamas’ sweep to victory in the Palestinian general elections led to the withholding of aid from international bodies and tax revenue from the Israeli government, leading to fiscal crisis for the Palestinian Authority. Government employees went without salaries for months, and the national infrastructure was substantially weakened. Adding to this hardship was the conflict between Israel and Lebanon in the summer of 2006, and the movement restrictions and general worsening of the situation in Gaza and the West Bank that resulted from increasingly harsh Israeli policies. Though we are geographically removed from the centres of conflict, none of this passed without affecting our work here in Bethlehem.

Yet, even with the Occupation and the Wall around us in Bethlehem, it is the mission of the organisations of DIYAR that our community may “have life and have it abundantly”. Our programmes serve the whole of the community, regardless of gender or religion, and focus especially on lifting up and empowering those who are traditionally in weaker places in society: women, children and youth, and the elderly.

The 2006 Annual Report was compiled, edited, and designed by Faith Rowold, Communications Officer for DIYAR.

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The production of this Annual Report was supervised by the President of DIYAR, Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb.

## 2006 was one of the most important years in the history of our ministry.

2006 was a year full of highlights at the ICB. For one, we have been working hard on developing a new structure that will enable our ministries to reach new heights, in the DIYAR Consortium (see overleaf for details). Other highlights include the opening of the Dar al-Kalima College (p. 14), the outfitting of the Bethlehem Media Center (BMC) studio (p. 6), and the opening of the new health clinics at the Dar al-Kalima Health & Wellness Center (p. 13).

It is by grace that we were able to do all of these things in the same year that the war between Lebanon and Israel created so much strife in so many lives here.

The pages of this annual report are filled with pictures and stories of our work here in Bethlehem. We appreciate you taking the time to read through and witness the amazing things that continue to take place in our Little Town, over 2000 years after Christ's birth began the Christian story in Palestine.

It is your support and prayers which sustain us and enable us to steadfastly work for peace, justice, the wellbeing of our community on Earth, and the glory of the Kingdom of God.



*"It is by grace that we are able to do all these things..."*

### Table of Contents

Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center . . . . .	2
Al-Kahf Arts & Crafts Workshops . . . . .	4
Al-Kahf Gallery . . . . .	5
Bethlehem Media Center (BMC) . . . . .	6
Bethlehem Star Music Programme . . . . .	7
Authentic Tourism . . . . .	8
Abu Gubran Guest House . . . . .	9
IT & Communications . . . . .	9
Bright Stars and the Extra-Curricular Programme . . . . .	10
Bright Stars Summer Academy 2006 . . . . .	11
Dar Al-Kalima Health & Wellness Center . . . . .	12
Dar Al-Kalima College . . . . .	14



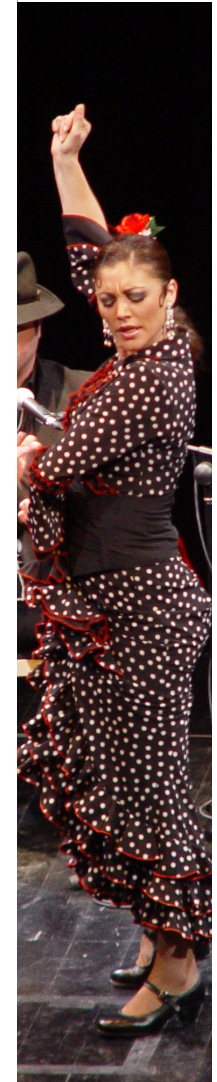
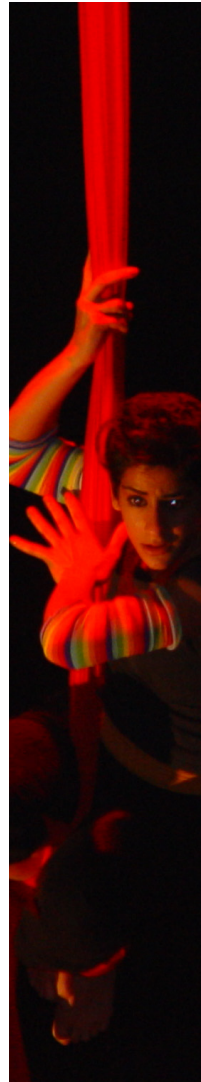
## The Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center

The spectacular Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center hosted a range of diverse events this year in cooperation with many other cultural institutions, entertaining up to 600 people at some of our most popular events. The events varied from hosting festivals to meeting with world-renowned Palestinian writers from the Diaspora. In all, locals and internationals from Bethlehem, the West Bank and abroad enjoyed an array of cultural programmes as well as enriching educational experiences. Highlights included Palestinian poetess Nathalie Handal, the Women Pioneers Film Festival (held in conjunction with Al-Kasaba Theater and Cinemateque), the Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival, and the Dandanat Bethlehem Youth Music Festival, a Cultural Encounter for Palestinian and Swedish youth.



The ongoing system of restrictions and closures under the Israeli government threatens to suffocate Bethlehem, but we remain steadfast in our efforts to provide entertainment and enrichment for our area. The majority of people here have no access to any other city, and are thus unable to establish any contact with the outside world, while others may not be allowed into Bethlehem. The importance of cultural activities in the face of oppression and conflict must not be underestimated – with the help of our international partners, we are able to fund the concerts, festivals and workshops that can make such a remarkable difference to people here.





January	February	March
Concert: Sheibat Film: "Paradise Now" "Youth a-Live" Theater: "Diaries Through the Wall" Dance: Ibdad' Group	Concert: ESNMC Orchestra Poetry Reading: Nathalie Handal Film: "Paradise Now" "Jasmine's Song"	Theater: "Junoon" – Maidan "Ghosts" – Hakawati Dance: Les Ballet Film: Women Pioneers Film Festival
April	May	June
Film: "Improvisation" Dance: "At the Checkpoint; Resto" – Ramallah Contemporary Dance Festival Special: Easter Event	Dance: YWCA Lecture: Souk Okath, Ministry of Education Film: "Football" (Goethe Institute) Concert: Matt Middleton, organist Kantorei Gross Flottbek, German Choir	Special: FIFA World Cup Screening Concert: Dandanat Festival ESNMC Anima Schola – USA
July	August	September
Special: Fashion Show, Fashion & Textile Institute Theater: Ashtar Group Concert: Michael Sajrawy	Film: "The Prophecy of Grenouilles" "Monsieur Ibrahim et les Fleures du Coran" "The Big Losers" Theater: "Haj Siman" – Al-Harah Poetry Reading: Initiative for Youth (YMCA)	Concert: Yalan Group Poetry Reading: Majwan Darwish Theater: "Blood Wedding"
October	November	December
Concert: Turab Group Theater: Al-Rahala Group Save the Children Comedy: Al-Harah Theater	Film: "Luther" "Dunia" Dance: Alhucema Flamenco Group Concert: Solo Oud – Issa Mourad Special: Circus Behind the Wall Special: Japanese Cultural Days	Concert: Daniel Del Pino Bethlehem Star Chorus Theater: Al-Harah Group Special: Christmas Concert, featuring Sheibat





## The Al-Kahf Arts & Crafts Workshops

The highlight of 2006 from the Al-Kahf Arts & Crafts Workshops was the introduction of our new sterling silver olive leaf jewellery collection. Training workshops in silversmithing gave several of our artists the skills and facilities to start producing these exquisite pieces, and the quality and creativity in design of their artwork has only increased with the growing international interest.

The activities of al-Kahf fall into four categories: workshops, courses, projects, and exhibitions.

This year we had five craft workshops with 20 participants:

- stained glass (beginners and advanced) and vitrage with Tareq Yaghmour
- jewellery with Faten Nastas
- ceramics and wheel-throwing with Steve Smith

... and eight art courses with nearly 80 students:

- icon painting with Johnny Andonieh (beginners and advanced)
- basic drawing with Inger Jonasson
- oil painting (beginners and advanced) with Inger Jonasson and Taleb Dweik
- watercolour painting with Maria Ginzburg
- silk painting with Gabriella Baddour
- painting workshop on the topic of human rights with Paula Cox

Projects and special events this year included:

- an exhibition in Cologne, Germany, celebrating 10 years of the "twin city" relationship between Cologne and Bethlehem (artists Rania Andon and Johnny Andonieh representing)
- designing a Christmas card for Church World Service and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
- painting a silk banner commissioned by St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Monona, Wisconsin
- participating in a handicrafts exhibition in Stockholm, Sweden, in cooperation with the Palestine International Trade Forum (PITF)



### 2006 Calendar of Gallery Exhibitions

January	The Dark Side of Citrus (Installation art & video) Larissa Sansour   Palestine/Denmark Additional works by students under artist's supervision
February	Reinterpreting the Middle East (Prints) Group Exhibition, May Aboutaam curator   International
March	A Kids' Game (Photography) Palestinian Children from Bourj Al-Shamali camp in Lebanon curated by Claudia Martinez Mansell   Spain/UK
April	Swedish Landscape in Watercolour Maria Ginzburg   Sweden  Illustrations of Human Rights (Gouache colours) Palestinian artists and art students, supervised by Paula Cox   UK
May	From the Memory (Oil and watercolours) Yousef Katalo   Palestine  Planet Soccer (Photography) Magnum Photos   International
June	Graduate Exhibition for Dar al-Kalima College Arts & Crafts Watercolour, Icons, Glass, Silk Painting  Deconstructing War: Visual Representations by Artists for Peace (Digital art, drawings & paintings, monotypes, small paintings, serigraphs, photography, solar etchings) Group Exhibition, curated by George Rivera   Americas  People, Land and Spirit: Icons of the First Peoples of the Americas (Prints) Fr. John Giuliani   USA

## The Al-Kahf Gallery

The ICB has several exhibition spaces, the two main spaces being the al-Kahf Gallery downstairs from the gift shop, and the main ICB lobby. Over the course of the year, the ICB hosted 19 different exhibitions, exceeding the 13 which had been originally planned for the year. Becoming an active station for touring exhibitions has been an important development for the artistic life of the ICB: this year we hosted 10 touring exhibitions, and served as a starting-off point for 4 of them.



Palestinians featured in 13 of the 19 exhibitions, five of them being solo exhibitions by renowned artists living in Palestine and the Diaspora. Many of the exhibitions were group exhibitions, featuring a collective of artists or students of various courses and workshops. Four of the visiting artists gave workshops at the ICB, and the artworks produced by the students of those workshops were subsequently displayed either at the ICB or, in the case of the "Secrets" workshop, at a cultural centre in the Deheishe refugee camp.



### The Al-Kahf Gift Shop at the ICB

Helping the ICB workshops to be self-sustaining, and giving our artisans a market for their wares, is our al-Kahf Gift Shop. Being part of the ICB complex in Bethlehem makes it convenient for guests and visitors to the center to peruse the variety of handmade pieces and take their selections home to their friends and congregations. This local business is supplemented by off-site sales at bazaars in places like Ramallah and Jerusalem, as well as on-line sales through our website, to countries like the US, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland, Scotland, Japan, and Canada.

Our new item for 2006 is the silver olive leaf jewellery, but our most popular item is still the stained glass angel. We currently have 6 styles of angel in the gift shop, though the original is still the most requested. Other popular items besides the stained glass angels are the silk banners, and the embroidered stoles and liturgical linens.

With the ongoing workshops and training sessions for artists here at the ICB, both the quality and productivity of the artists' work have increased markedly. Plans are in the making for a revamping of the display space in the gift shop, to accommodate and properly highlight the many exquisite works that our artisans produce.

July	///Selfportrait – A Show for Bethlehem (Video & digital prints) Group exhibition, curated by Agricola de Cologne   Germany
August	Violet Lodge (Installation & photography) Greta J. ZnojemSKY   Austria
September	Secrets (New media art: photography, digital, video, performance) Group exhibition by "6+", curated by Sherry Wiggins   USA
October	1000 Cards (Paper, ink) Peace Women Around the Globe   International
November	Hasan Everywhere (Painting, drawing) Hasan Hourani   Palestine
	The Bethlehem Room (Manipulated photos) John James Abrahams   USA/Ireland/UK
	Hiroshima Exhibition (Prints & video) Japanese Cultural Days   Japan
December	Dreams (Mixed media) Taleb Dweik   Palestine
	Living Peace in Palestine (Oils) Zaki Baboun   Palestine





## Bethlehem Media Center (BMC)

Out of all the accomplishments of the Bethlehem Media Center (BMC) this year, the most significant was undoubtedly furnishing the BMC Studio with state-of-the-art recording and editing equipment. With this newly outfitted studio space, our capabilities for producing professional-quality audio and visual programmes has been greatly enhanced.

Beginning in 2005 and continuing into 2006 was the “Youth a-LIVE: Empowering Youth Through Media” project, which was run by the ICB with funding from the USAID/Ruwad Youth Empowerment Project. This project brought together 20 young, unemployed men and women from the Bethlehem area, to give them the opportunity to acquire marketable skills in the field of media production and to gain experience in using media as a method of self-expression.

The five documentary films made by the Youth a-LIVE participants were screened in the Ad-Dar Hall on January 20th. Each film tells a different story and presents a critical analysis of issues which face Palestinians, from external as well as internal sources, including the Palestinian education system, unemployment, undervaluation of the arts and athletics, and youth immigration.



The outfitting of the BMC studio made it possible to produce the documentary “Roots: Shaping Communities in a Time of Crisis”, a film directed by Wafa Jamil and produced by Walid Atallah for the ICB.

The film explores the theme of “Land, Peoples and Identities” through the lenses of two participants at the November 2005 Intercultural Conference at the ICB: one, an Iraqi-American woman with Palestinian roots, and the other, a black South African male theologian. The film tells their stories and the “stories” of the conference, where important meetings and important discussions took place. The film is 30 minutes long and is available on DVD from the ICB.

In 2006, a new branch of media production was launched to produce short films for use with the religious education programme. This production team produced short clay-animation films to illustrate Bible stories, a series of 3-minute documentaries on Palestinian Christian heritage, traditions and holidays, and several 3-minute reports featuring participants in the Bright Stars programme.



## Bethlehem Star Music Programme

In the summer of 2006, the music program of the ICB was resurrected after a 3-year respite. Employed and sent by the Presbyterian Church (USA), our current Music Coordinator, Matthew Middleton, moved to Bethlehem to help revive the music programmes of the Lutheran Christmas Church, International Center of Bethlehem (ICB), and Dar al-Kalima College.

Music is designated into five areas under the umbrella of Bethlehem Star Music, a joint music program of the Church and ICB: the community/church chorus, the children's choir, the handbell quartet, the instrumental ensemble, and organ music.



Of these five, church music continued as it has for over a century on the historic pipe organ dating back to 1896. On 10 December 2006, the Bethlehem Star Chorus (made up of singers from Palestine, Germany, Austria, Norway, Sweden, England and the United States) made its debut performance to high acclaim at the Christmas Church, performing choral works written in Arabic, English, German and Swedish. The Bethlehem Star Choristers, making their debut on Christmas Day, is designed to select the best of young singers from 8-13 years of age and offer them the opportunity to participate in worship.

With the opening of Dar al-Kalima College in the fall, Dean Nuha Khoury and Matt Middleton created a music curriculum that guides students through a two-year diploma in performance and music education. Faculty members were approached and now include a small but highly motivated and talented team of instructors hailing from music conservatories in Amman, Jerusalem, Milan, and Vienna.



Bright Stars Summer Academy hosted nearly forty students in music classes for handbells, Oriental choir, and contemporary music appreciation.



## Authentic Tourism

From the beginning of 2006 until June, when the conflict between Israel and Lebanon discouraged travellers from visiting the West Bank, the ICB was delighted to welcome as part of its Authentic Tourism programme over 20 groups ranging in size from 8 people to 100, and journeying from the US, the UK, Germany, and as far away as Japan.

Each group's programme was tailored specifically to their needs and interests, whether they were a congregation, seminary students on a "J-term" endeavour, or volunteers, and ranged in length from a single day up to three weeks. Our Authentic Tourism programme allows visitors to see past the "sights," to get a more in-depth view of the history and current realities of the Holy Land, and experience living cultures.

2006 was filled with many memorable visits and events, among them being the "Seeking Peace, Pursuing Justice" gathering with delegates from eight US Methodist conferences, the educational event planned in conjunction with the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program, and the Japanese Cultural Days coordinated with the delegation from the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church.



The educational event planned for presbytery teams of the Presbyterian Church USA (PC(USA)) was held from April 25 – May 5, and sought to give the participants an opportunity to engage with a variety of narratives, meet Palestinian Christian brothers and sisters in Christ, hear from Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders, and see first-hand the situations and issues facing Palestinians and Israelis such as the Wall and the settlements which surround Bethlehem.



Bringing a unique intercultural exchange opportunity to Bethlehem was the delegation from the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, who coordinated the Japanese Cultural Days held at the ICB from November 21-29. An amazing array of activities, from workshops in Japanese calligraphy, paper-folding ("origami") and water painting, to a Kimono exhibition and demonstration, to an evening of authentic Japanese cuisine, delighted those who attended.



## Abu Gubran Guest House

Pilgrims and businesspeople alike will feel that our Abu Gubran Guest House caters to their needs. Located in the Old City of Bethlehem, within walking distance of the heart of the city, Manger Square, our modern yet comfortable facilities provide a home base for visitors who want the conveniences of in-room broadband Internet access and a full-service restaurant, the security of staying inside the Dar Annadwa complex beside the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church, and the atmosphere of the Old City marketplace. The Abu Gubran Guest House is an elegant accommodation solution for conferences hosted at our Ad-Dar Cultural and Conference Center.



The guest house reopened in 2004 after the renovations that followed the 2002 Israeli occupation of the premises, and occupancy rates peaked in 2005 at 47 percent. This dropped by half in 2006 due to the conflict between Israel and Lebanon, but we pray that in 2007 the situation will improve such that groups will return to Bethlehem and stay with us while they visit the sites in our area. Our Authentic Tourism programme encourages visitors to stay in the city and get to know the place that is Bethlehem today, and the people who are the life of our Little Town.

## IT & Communications

Adding to our IT and Communications capabilities this year was the addition of two NIIT courses, one on Microsoft servers and networks (MSCE), and one on Oracle database development. The courses were held specifically for heads of households who were injured during the second Intifada, in order to give them marketable skills which will help them provide for their families.

Students in the NIIT courses (of which there were 48 in 2006) received instruction to prepare them for their exams, but in order to provide a more comprehensive education in computers and IT, other modules were included:

- "English for IT"
- preparation for the International Computer Driving License exam
- the A+ Computer Maintenance Course
- computer networking

The goal of these courses is to improve employability through professional training, and the vertical consolidation of training and certifying computer professionals on-site enables rapid progression for motivated individuals. Through our programme, they can complete their exam online and receive an internationally recognised certificate without needing to travel further afield.





## Bright Stars and the Extra-Curricular Programme

2006 marked the beginning of a new Bright Stars cycle, with four clubs meeting weekly under the supervision of professionals and experts in the clubs' respective fields (swimming, karate, drawing and drama) and with occasional special sessions led by international artists and experts who were visiting the area.

The weekly Bright Stars clubs are open to children from all the Bethlehem area schools (towns, villages and refugee camps), boys and girls, Christians and Muslims. Participants in the Bright Stars clubs are grouped according to talent and interest, and then further grouped by age and ability, so that the groups can progress continuously at the appropriate level and pace.



The Extra-Curricular Programme (ECP) is run by the Bright Stars programme in conjunction with the Dar al-Kalima school, and operates as an extension of the normal school day, meeting four times per week. The ECP clubs, like the Bright Stars clubs, provide opportunities to students to choose enrichment activities based on their interests and talents, and to develop their gifts with the help of experts in the clubs' respective fields. The focus of the ECP activities is to encourage the students to think critically and analytically outside their intense academic curricula, express themselves, expand their creativity, and engage in self-based learning.



ECP Clubs and Participants

Club Name (Classes 1-5)	Number Of Students
Story Telling	53
Art and Craft	53
Swimming	82
Drawing	20

Club Name (Classes 6-11)	Number of Students
Swimming	25
Drama	13
Film Making	11
Football	51
Basketball	15
Volleyball	18
Computer	52
Table tennis	26
Drawing	6
Music	11
Gym	10
Art and Crafts	16
Environment	16
Electronic Magazine	10
Piano	3



Special events take place throughout the school year. In 2006, celebrations for Easter and Christmas delighted the students and their parents, the Bright Stars Day gave students a day to take part in a variety of activities, workshops, games and competitions, and the circus show (the first ever show by the first ever Palestinian circus group) brought joy and amazement to the students and their families in the packed Ad-Dar Hall.

## Bright Stars Summer Academy

An extension of the Bright Stars programme is the Bright Stars Summer Academy, which has grown to be one of the biggest and most popular summer activities in the Bethlehem area. The theme of this year's Summer Academy was "colour your life, achieve your dreams," the message of which is reflected in this year's logo. 350 children from the Bethlehem area participated in this year's Summer Academy, which ran from June 26 - July 30.

Like the Bright Stars clubs, the Summer Academy is open to children from all the Bethlehem area schools, regardless of gender or religious background. Especially important in the context of the stress and violence of the conflict between Israel and Lebanon, the 2006 Bright Stars Summer Academy provided a safe place for self-expression, exploration, creativity and growth.



The 40 clubs offered this year at the Summer Academy were grouped into five categories: arts and crafts, IT and communications, sports, performing arts and music, and other clubs such as chess, cooking, games, human rights, and environmental issues.



**Arts & Crafts:** glass mosaic, glass fusing, ceramics, drawing & painting, sculpture, bead jewellery-making, scientific arts, recycling arts

**IT & Communications:** MS Office, web design, Internet & email, graphic design, photography, video filming & editing, clay animation, journalism, creative writing

**Sports:** self-defence, swimming, volleyball, football/soccer, basketball, table tennis, sports games

**Performing Arts & Music:** Palestinian folk dance (dabke), breakdancing, Latin dancing, vocal training, theatre & drama, rap music, musical instruments, handbells, story-telling, expressive arts

Supervising and leading the Summer Academy were 7 organisers, 38 trainers, and 25 young volunteers, many of whom are Bright Stars alumni. Participating in the Bright Stars programme in a leadership capacity is not only an excellent opportunity for the volunteers themselves to gain experience and get involved, but it also provides outstanding role models for the younger Bright Stars.





## Dar Al-Kalima Health and Wellness Center

The most significant developments at the Dar Al-Kalima Health & Wellness Center were the opening of three new clinics in the health unit (endocrinology, nutrition and psychotherapy), the inauguration of a public health programme, and the AJYAL (“generations”) programme for community care for the elderly.

The Dar al-Kalima Health and Wellness Center (DAK HWC) celebrated its third anniversary in 2006, and continues to be a vibrant and essential part of the ministry of the Lutheran church in Bethlehem. Making up the HWC are the fitness unit and the health unit, with separate but complementary focuses and activities. Integration of services and programming is our goal, as we strive to support the people of Bethlehem and its environs in making healthy lifestyle choices for themselves and their families.



The fitness unit of the HWC features facilities and programming to support active and healthy lifestyles, including an indoor pool, a sauna, fitness machines, massage therapy, and a gym room with aerobics, pilates, yoga, karate and tai chi/chi gong classes. The HWC is open to men, women, families, and children who attend the Dar al-Kalima school or Bright Stars programme. Around 40 people on average use the HWC facilities every day, but our actual membership is in the hundreds, and even more if the large number of school children using the facilities are taken into account.

A new programme for 2006 is the Ajyal (“generations”) elderly community care programme, run by our experienced community care nurse, Raida Mansour. After a successful piloting phase, the programme has grown to include over 80 members. The programme offers home visits, weekly meetings, regular recreational gatherings, and events which combine a health awareness-raising component as well as a medical screening opportunity. Both the health and the wellness components of the Ajyal programme are integrated with the larger programmes of the HWC.



Special courses are often on offer, depending on interest and the availability of instructors. Two such courses this year were the swimming course for visually impaired children, in coordination with the Alshrouq School for Blind Children, and a series of yoga and relaxation courses for women’s groups, the Caritas nursing school students, and students from three local high schools.



## Dar Al-Kalima Health and Wellness Center

### Health Unit

Following the medical symposium on Metabolic Syndrome held at the ICB in October 2005, the metabolic clinic was inaugurated in 2006 and currently includes an endocrinologist and a nutritionist. We hope to have a cardiologist on staff by 2007.

Our nutrition clinic offers services that will help people to make healthier lifestyle choices (weight assessment, diet analysis and planning, nutrition counselling for weight management), while our endocrinologist deals with the diagnosis and management of diabetes and other endocrine disorders, tackling the biochemical aspect of metabolism and weight management.

The new Prevention & Awareness Programme will promote community health through local media, printed materials, educational workshops and activities highlighting healthy nutrition and active lifestyles.

In 2006 we sponsored a TV programme, hosted by our nutritionist, that ran during the month of Ramadan, promoting healthy nutrition and physical activity and also giving advice on how to fast healthily during the Muslim holy month.



The psychotherapy clinic was also launched in August 2006, run by German psychotherapist Beate Niedermeier, with support from DED (the German development agency).

A total of 21 clients were referred to the clinic through other DAK HWC programmes and through word of mouth, for treatment of mental and psychosomatic symptoms related to stress, emotional trauma, and family and marital problems.

Our audiology clinic continues to provide a much-needed and low-priced service for the community, providing screening services for newborns (in conjunction with Caritas Baby Hospital), children, adults and the elderly, as well as dizziness testing and fittings for hearing aids. In all, 3671 clients were served by our clinic, mostly through referrals from local primary care institutions.

Through a grant from Rafeed, a USAID-funded project, we were able to fit hearing aids for 138 children whose families would otherwise not have been able to afford them, giving these children the opportunity to learn language and lead lives similar to their peers with no hearing impairment.



The political events of 2006 had a profound negative impact on the financial situations of many families in Palestine and their ability to pay for medical services, but through emergency support for our clinics from Dar Annadwa resources, we were able to maintain pre-2006 levels of service provision for our patients.



## Dar Al-Kalima College

Great news abounds at the newly-opened and accredited Dar Al-Kalima College!

Beginning with our official accreditation by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education in February and continuing with the commencement of the teaching term in September, 2006 has been a banner year for us. The Dean of the College, Dr. Nuha Khoury, welcomed new faculty members, and our technological and teaching capacities continue to expand, particularly with our new library and online educational resources.



The Dar al-Kalima (DAK) College opened in September 2006, and is dedicated to providing quality education that meets the social, cultural and economic needs of Palestine. Through establishing an institution for higher learning, the DAK College is committed to building a culture of democracy and free expression, thus contributing to the strengthening of the civil society in Palestine. 2006 was a transition year that marked the transformation of the informal Vocational and Art Training programmes at the International Center of Bethlehem (ICB) into formal academic programmes carried out by the DAK College, which has been accredited by the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

The DAK College programmes of study fall into four fields (Arts, Multimedia, Communications, and Tourism Studies), and the College currently offers 2-year associate degrees in Glass & Ceramics and Contemporary Fine Art through the Arts department, and Documentary Filmmaking through the Multimedia department. The College has received accreditation for additional programmes as well, which will commence when the hilltop campus is completed, hopefully by August 2009. Consultation with the architects and engineers is in its final stages, and we are now in the process of fund-raising for the construction of the College building.



For the Fall 2006 semester, 14 students were enrolled in the Documentary Filmmaking programme and 8 in the Glass & Ceramics course, but these numbers increased to 16 and 14, respectively, for the second semester, and we expect enrolment only to increase as the College grows. Most of the students in the film programme are recent high school or university graduates, but the majority of the art students are adults seeking new careers.

Thank you for reading our 2006 Annual Report.

If you would like any more information about our programmes, visiting us in Bethlehem, sponsoring a Bright Stars or College student, or receiving regular updates from us, we would love to hear from you.

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