

The Werner Otto Scholarships

A Cooperation between the Jewish-Arab Center and
the Association of the German Friends of the University of Haifa

Generously Funded by the Robert Bosch Foundation

The Werner Otto Scholarship Program was initiated by the German Friends Association 16 years ago as a reaction to the lack of support provided for Arab women studying towards Master's and PhD degrees. Taking into consideration the women's involvement in academic, professional and family matters it became clear that scholarships were strongly needed. Enabling talented Arab female students to pursue their academic careers, our scholarships serve as an important tool for empowerment. Consequently, the program's purpose is to not only overcome the obstacle of resistance that some of the scholars are still facing in their traditional environment, but to promote Arab women within the Israeli society as a whole.



The Jewish-Arab Center, an interdisciplinary institute for scientific research at the University of Haifa, is cooperating with us to achieve this goal. This unique institution has gained great recognition for its efforts in fostering Jewish-Arab cooperation. Together with the German Friends it chooses the best applicants and offers assistance to our scholars in dealing with any academic or personal issue.

Since the initiation of the program over 160 women have received a scholarship and I am very pleased to see that over the last few years the bonds between current scholars and alumnae have also grown stronger. The WO-Network and the WO-Conferences provide excellent opportunities for the women to exchange ideas, expectations and experiences as well as to support each other. This is beneficial for them in both personal and academic terms.

Meeting these impressive women in person is always one of my personal highlights when I visit the university. This summer, again, their diverse work in academia and their commitment to society amazed me. I am excited to see what they will achieve in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonja Lahnstein-Kandel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. h. c. Sonja Lahnstein-Kandel

Chairwoman

German Friends Association of the University of Haifa

The Werner Otto Scholarship program is a highly influential project for Arab Women in the University. The program is a joint sponsorship of the German Friends of the University of Haifa and the Jewish-Arab Center. Through the program, scholarships have been awarded to more than 164 Arab women from diverse academic fields and professions, who were pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Haifa.



Werner Otto scholarship alumnae can be found in academic institutions in Israel and abroad, in the public service and in the private sector. It is particularly encouraging to see so many women challenge themselves and pursue PhD studies while also advancing in their careers and raising families. The Werner Otto scholarship recipients also contribute to their communities and to society. In my vision I see a bright future for the alumnae network. Since I started my role as the head of the Jewish- Arab center I worked in order to strengthen the Network and skills of the Werner Otto scholarship Recipients, I initiated activities like an English workshop, conferences that focused on the research work of the alumnae, published a booklet with their researches and abstracts, and encourage them to write researches, all in the purpose of empowering and strengthening the Arab women in the academia. We are very proud of the accomplishments of all of the program alumnae, and believe in the empowerment of Arab women and see them as a wonderful example to young Arab women, to Arab society in particular, and to Israeli society at large.

We are very grateful to Ms. Sonja Lahnstein, Chairperson of the German Friends Association, for making this program possible and for her contribution to its continued development, and to the Robert Bosch Foundation, which is funding the Werner Otto scholarships for its support in the program in this academic year. We hope this cooperation will continue and expand, and more Arab woman can pursue academic degrees and contribute to upgrade the social change in the academic and social society.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rassem Khamaisi'.

Prof. Rassem Khamaisi
Head of the Jewish-Arab Center

2017 Scholarship Recipients

Esraa Saadi

PhD, Department Of Human Biology

Esraa Saadi is 28 years old; she lives in the city of Akko. She has three sisters and one brother. She has a B.Ed. degree in biology and chemistry, from the Arab Academic College for Education in Israel – Haifa. Afterwards, she did supplementary courses in Biology in order to be accepted to the master studies Program at the University of Haifa, Human Biology Department.

Currently, she's working on her Ph.D. at Dr. Liza Barki-Harrington Laboratory at the Human Biology Department. Her research is about limited proteolysis of COX-2 protein and at the end of May 2017, she will submit the paper, in high journal.

She always tries to be involved in social activities as much as she can, and she always believes in co-existence between the two sides, Jewish and Arab. After high school, she did National Service at The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel. She learned to be a tour guide and then they recruited her in schools to be mentor for students. During her studies, she participated in Perah mentoring project and Sahlav project as a supervisor. She also participated in the “Computer for every child” project, in Jewish schools.

Esraa is very dedicated to this country and to the society, she has many plans to come. One of them is to do her post doc studies abroad and gain experience that might help her society in the future.



Fareeda Abu Rass

PhD, Department of Community Mental Health

Fareeda has a B.A. degree in Behavioral Studies (Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology) from Ben-Gurion University. She, immediately, studied for her second B.A. degree in Social Work. Later, she finished her M.A. in Haifa University in the Department of Community Mental Health with excellence (Dean's Honor) and received a scholarship for excellence in studies and another one for completion of thesis and accelerated M.A. program. Nowadays, Fareeda is a third



degree student in the Department of Community Mental Health in Haifa University. Her research is about Health related Quality of Life among young and older Arab-Israelis dealing with depression: Examining an integrative model that incorporates Self-Regulatory model, Self-Stigma model, and self-esteem. This study is the first to explore the relation between perspectives about one's illness (i.e., illness representations) and oneself (e.g., self-stigma and self-esteem), and health-related quality of life among people with depression in general and among Arab-Israelis in specific.

Fareeda's research interests are: Mental illnesses, psychiatric rehabilitation and recovery within minorities groups, Mental health and Culture, Health related Quality of Life, Depression, Self-Regulatory model, Self-stigma, Mental health and Political violence.

Fareeda lives in Jatt, in the Triangle area of Haifa District, and she is a mother of two girls. For about three years Fareeda has been teaching some courses in Psychology and Social Work in the Al-Ahliyaa College, a branch of the Open University. She volunteers in several organizations for promoting young Arab students, and in some mental health centers.

Hend Lahoud

PhD, Psychology Department

Hend's research will be among the few studies to examine eye movements patterns when skilled adult readers read texts in Arabic, and will focus on the psycholinguistic and neurolinguistic nature of reading. She will compare reading Arabic with reading Hebrew, a language that shares with it many characteristics (such as reading direction and morphology), while also comparing both languages with English, a writing system which is different on many aspects. She will examine how reading is affected by two factors: reader's proficiency and the orthographic characteristics. By using the eye-tracking reader's strategies and cognitive processes during text reading in Arabic compared to other languages, will be characterized.

Finally, her hope is to translate these findings into vital practical methods in the process of teaching the language, and to provide novel research-based approaches to make Arabic more accessible to its own native speakers.



Khawla loubani-Hawaita,

PhD, Department of Occupational Therapy

Khawla is from Nazareth, currently a PhD student for occupational therapy in Haifa University. Khawla has 14 years of clinical experience as an occupational therapist in rehabilitation of people with physical and upper extremity disabilities, in Clalit Health Services - Haifa and Western Galilee which is the biggest health service in Israel. For the last few years and immediately following her MA studies in the year 2013 she has been combining part time clinical experience, teaching and sharing her expertise as part of the occupational therapy department at the University of Haifa. Her PhD doctoral thesis, which is a continuation of her MA studies, aims to deepen the theoretical and clinical knowledge on the needs of women with breast cancer, by developing and examining a conceptual model which describes the factors that relate to breast cancer survivors' participation in daily activities, in addition to developing an intervention for improving their participation and performance in daily activities. The MA study was presented in many conferences in Israel and internationally and published in an article. Additional results of the current PhD study will be published soon.



Leena Taha-Salaime

PhD, Department of Evolutionary & Environmental Biology

Leena Taha-Salaime is doing her doctoral studies at the University of Haifa in the Department of Evolutionary and Environmental Biology. She received her *B.Sc.* degree at the Plant Sciences, Genetics Improvement and Biotechnology Sciences and *M.Sc.* degree at the Institute of Agroecology and Plant Health from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, The Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment. Her PhD research focuses on major cosmopolitan pests (*Bemisia tabaci* and *Spodoptera littoralis*) of many crops imposing a major threat to yield quality and quantity. Currently, insects are controlled mainly by insecticides including fumigants phosphine and methyl bromide and organophosphorus insecticides. The Plant genus *Ajuga* contain two major secondary metabolites, Phytoecdysteroids are



analogues of steroid hormones that control moulting and are responsible for the metamorphoses in arthropod while clerodanes are exhibiting anti-feedant activities. The discovery of the same molecules (Phytoecdysteroids) in several plant species displayed a wide array of rather beneficial agricultural impact. Many representatives of the genus *Ajuga* plants contain Phytoecdysteroids with a 5β -7-ene-6-one system exhibiting physiological activities in insects. The main objective of her research is to identify the Phytoecdysteroids and clerodanes in *Ajuga* and evaluate their efficiency in reducing the damage of these two major pests; hence developing an alternative, environmentally-friendly pest control strategy to help reducing the risks to human health and the environment from pesticide.

Leena was born on October 28, 1986, in Dabburyah village. Now she lives in Nazareth with her husband (Qais, he is an advocate), her son and her daughter. Both of her parents were born in Dabboryah village, her father is a taskmaster, her mother is a director of association for the advancement of women.

Areej Khoury

M.Sc., Department of Computer Science

Areej Khoury, 29 years old born and raised in Haifa city. She studied for her Bachelors in Computer Science at the University of Haifa and graduated Summa Cum Laude. She was the first undergraduate student to be teaching assistant in the Department of Computer Science, and over the years she taught several courses, including Discrete Mathematics, Probabilistic Methods, and Introduction to logic.

She is currently a third-year student in the Computer Science M.Sc. program, working under the supervision of Prof. Ilan Newman and Dr. Yuri Rabinovich. Her interest lies in the field of Theory of Computer Science, particularly in Algorithms and Complexity. Areej thesis for the M.Sc. focuses on Property Testing, which is concerned with the analysis of global features of objects while inspecting relatively small portions of the object.



Areen Zbedat

**MA, Department of Arabic Language & Literature,
Faculty of Humanities**

Areen is an Arab Israeli student living with her parents in Sakhnin city in the Galil, north Israel. Today, she is working towards her master Degree in Arabic language and literature after finishing her first Degree in Arabic and Hebrew language in Haifa University. Her study focuses about Arabic and Maltese popular proverbs.



Fadwa Aftema

MA, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Fadwa lives in Baqa al-Gharbya city and she is a mother of three children. She works as a coordinator of graduate studies in Al-Qasemi Academic College of Education. In addition, she's a research assistant in a research titled "Shared Workspaces" that is sponsored by the Israeli Institute of Democracy and managed by Prof. Asaf Darr from the University of Haifa. She completed her undergraduate studies (B.A) with honors at the Open University in the Faculty of Social Sciences in the Dual-Department of Management and Education, and she is currently studying for an M.A degree at the University of Haifa, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Program of applied organizational sociology. The title of her thesis is: "Relations between Jewish and Arabs Workers in Arab-owned Organizations in Israel". The thesis is supervised by Prof. Asaf Darr. The study will help to understand the nature of the relations between Jews and Arabs during interactions that take place in Arab-owned workplaces, and in various situations that are influenced by the external socio-political arena surrounding the organization. The work environment plays a significant role in the lives of most people. Therefore, the workplace has a potential to improve relationships not only for the benefit of the employer, but more generally, for the benefit of society as a whole.



Investigating relations in Arab-owned workplaces, a different cultural and geopolitical space for Jewish workers who are used to being a majority group, will help generate insights and recommendations that will contribute to further understanding of Jewish-Arab relations in Arab-owned workplaces and of relations between majority and

minority groups in other labor organizations around the world. The findings of the study may contribute to the formulation of policies and intra-organizational strategies, which will improve relations between different ethno-national groups of workers.

Fadwa's plans until the end of 2018 are to finish writing the thesis no later than August 2017, continue to a doctoral program and to register in October 2017, write an article based on her M.A. thesis and publish it in one of the suitable journal during 2018, and apply for teaching academic courses in the fields of management, organizational behavior, introductions to sociology, and academic literacy.

Haneen Kayal

MA, Department of Neurobiology

Haneen is currently pursuing her second degree in Neurobiology at Haifa University; she is investing lots of effort so she could finish her studies with the highest grades; for now everything is going as good as she hoped it would be. She has joined Prof. Kobi Rosenblum's lab, the laboratory for research of molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying learning and memory. The work at the lab is very fulfilling. She finds it really interesting and motivating, hence she decided, along with Prof. Kobi that she will continue to work as a Ph.D. student in the laboratory. She is aware of the fact that she is very privileged to be working at that specific lab, and with the great team that we have over there.



Maram Tarabeih- Ghanayim

MA, Department of Communication Disorders

Maram Tarabeih- Ghanayim is 25 years old and lives in Sakhnin, Galilee, Israel. She is a 3rd year Master Student of audiology in cognitive hearing program- speech and language therapy department of Haifa University. Maram works as a speech therapist in the education and treatment center of children with hearing loss at Tiberius. In addition, she works in the Family Health Center in Bedouin villages. As a speech therapist Maram gives training for young mothers about speech and language development and how they can improve their children language. Maram's field of interest is auditory learning and speech perception



of time compressed speech. Her thesis examines the contribution of talker variability during training to the perceptual learning of verbal information (time compressed speech) and its generalization to new sentences and/or a new talker.

Moreover, she graduated from the Arab-Jewish School 10 years ago and still volunteers in many activities that occur in the school.

Nagham Ghantous

MA, Department of Psychology

Nagham is an MA student in Social Psychology at Haifa University, and also a BSc graduate in Psychology and Biology, at Haifa University.

Currently she is working on her thesis in the field of collective emotions and emotions in conflicts. Her Thesis comes to examine what effects experiences of humiliaton have on the readiness to self-sacrifice for a

cause, and is conducted on Palestinian society. Nagham believes science is an integral part of our daily lives, and research is a tool of actively understanding, learning and affecting.



Orjowan Shehade

MA, Department of Community Mental Health

Orjowan was born in Nazareth in the year 1983. She received her B.A degree in Behavioral Sciences-Criminology, Graduate Studies Program in 2009. In 2011 she got a Certificate from the program of "Training of professionals in the field of drugs and alcohol". Between 2010 and 2013 she worked as a coordinator of groups of "Youth at Risk" sponsored by the Nazareth Municipality's Welfare

Department and as a facilitator of workshops for teens and parents in the field of substance abuse in schools. From 2010 until now she has been working as a rehabilitation counselor at the Amanina Center - a day care center for the mentally ill in Nazareth. Today, Orjowan is studying for a master's degree in the Department of Community Mental Health- a thesis track at the University of Haifa.

The purpose of her thesis is to examine the association between internal displacement and current mental and physical health and life-satisfaction of Arabs living in Israel,



who were internally displaced during the 1948 war. Indeed, in future plans, she has decided to continue her research in the field of mental health, starting with the first generation that was experienced and exposed to the process of displacement, and so on to continue to study the generations that followed children and grandchildren.

Razan Silawi,

MA, Department of Learning Disabilities

Razan is 26 years old, her BA is in psychology and education which she has received from the Hebrew university of Jerusalem three years ago. Currently, she is an MA student in learning disabilities and she's writing her thesis supervised by Dr. Anat Prior and Dr. Yasmine Awwad-Shalhoub, where she is focusing on calibration of comprehension among undergraduates. Particularly, Razan is interested in the question; whether calibration of comprehension is a meta-cognitive ability that is a cross-language and beyond specific language proficiency. Moreover, in her research, she is interested to assess the development of calibration of reading comprehension throughout the academic years of Arabic native speakers in Arabic (L1), Hebrew (L2), and English (L3), by comparing first and third.



Shorok Osman

MA, Department of Occupational Therapy

Shorok is 31 years old from Sakhnin city; in 2009 she graduated from Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where she finished her bachelor degree in Occupational Therapy. Since then Shorok works as an occupational therapist at the Institute of Child Development, in addition to working at the Physical and Neurological Injuries Center that belongs to "Clalit Health Services".



In 2014, Shorok started her master's degree at Haifa University, in the Department of Occupational Therapy. These days, Shorok is working on her MA thesis about "Validating the Short Version of the Weekly Calendar Planning Activity (WCPA) for People with Stroke Compared to Controls". She believes that the findings of her research will support using the short version of the WCPA during occupational therapy intervention to assess Executive Functions in people with stroke.

Social Activities in the Network- Werner Otto Scholarship Recipients

This year we had a wide range of activities in the WO network that strengthen the network bonds and the scholarship recipients, and exposed them to a variety of academic activities.

The Third Annual Werner Otto Scholars' Conference

"A Window on Arab Female Researchers"

The third annual WO conference "A Window on Arab Female Researchers" was held on the 5 of March, 2017. This event was part of the Werner Otto network activities performed to expose the scholars to more stages in the academia and to connect them to fellow scholars. The lecturers and participants of the conference were the WO scholarship holders. On this platform, the WO scholars presented their studies in various fields such as language, health and history.

The event started with an opening statement from the head of the Jewish Arab Center Prof. Rassem Khamaisi, followed by three sessions. The first session dealt with the female gender and experience: the lectures in this session talked about gender reading (a lecture by Dr. Hana Salman), the challenges of Arab women in the Arab community in Israel (a lecture by Dr. Rabab Sarhan) and about the experience of Arab women with a reading of poems for Women's Day (a lecture by Manal Badarne). The second session dealt with female researchers, health, infrastructure and history. The scholars lectured on the campaign to raise awareness of Brucellosis disease in the Arab community (a lecture by Dr. Samira Aobir), about the decision-making process for optimal planning of sewage systems (a lecture by Miriam Aghbariyya) and about mercenaries from the Aegean Sea in acre in the Persian period (a lecture by Amani Abu Hamid). The third and last session raised the subject of education and teaching. The topics of the lectures were: "I am a literal man"- the skills required for 21st century (a lecture by Dr. Rauia Borbarh) and the implementation of Visual TeachingTools (a lecture by Dr. Rima Barnesi). The conference ended with a discussion alongside questions from the audience and concluding remarks.

This main event was covered by the press via television and an Arab newspaper and as a result many scholars who took part in the conference received calls and offers to participate in interviews for different shows. 50 participants attended the conference (scholarship holders, students from the University, and staff).



Dr. Rabab Sarhan , Dr. Rima Barnesi , Dr. Rauia Borbarh



Some of the participants at the conference

Network Meetings

In addition to the conference, we had ten WO network meetings, with the WO scholarship recipients. The meetings were set to strengthen the bonds and enable the scholars to cooperate together in the academia. Moreover, it was a forum for the scholars to build activities, like the conference mentioned and raise ideas for the future. In each meeting there were at least fifteen scholars that participated and contributed to the meeting.

An English Workshop

The English language is a very central and important language in the academia. During this academic year, we opened an English workshop for the WO scholarship holders. The goal of the workshop was to provide the students with skill and tools in the English language and reinforce the skills they have, so that they will be able to integrate easily in the worldwide academia.

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