

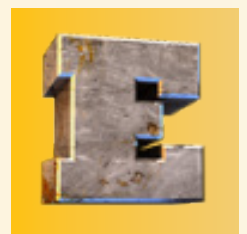
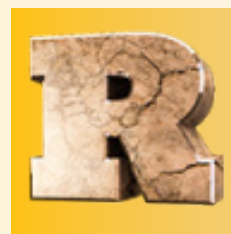
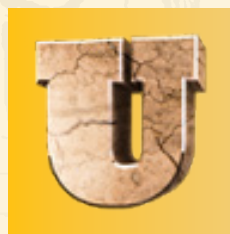
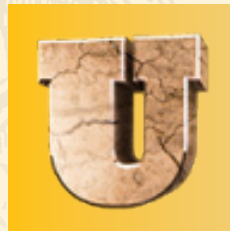
BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY

Volume 28 - Issue No. 2, 2020-2021

In the Holy Land



Towards a Sustainable



In this issue:

- Palestinian Environment: Threats and Opportunities
- Faculty Members Reflect on New Methods of Teaching
- Promoting Governance and Citizenship in Palestine



A Message from the Vice Chancellor Towards a Sustainable Future

People here are getting used to me asking: “Is there a better way?” I ask this about anything that is being done here at Bethlehem University. My answer is always “YES!” Since October 2020, Bethlehem University has embarked on a project entitled *Bethlehem University: Towards a Sustainable Future*. With funding from Porticus International Foundation, two consultants have been engaged to help Bethlehem University to “develop a mode of operation that will enable the University, over time, to deliver its vision and mission and the objectives set out in its strategic plan, effectively and sustainably.”

In the Lasallian tradition, there is always an urgency to continually look for fresh ways of thinking about education. We are constantly looking for better ways to provide an education for our students which is relevant for the world in which they live and enriching for them.

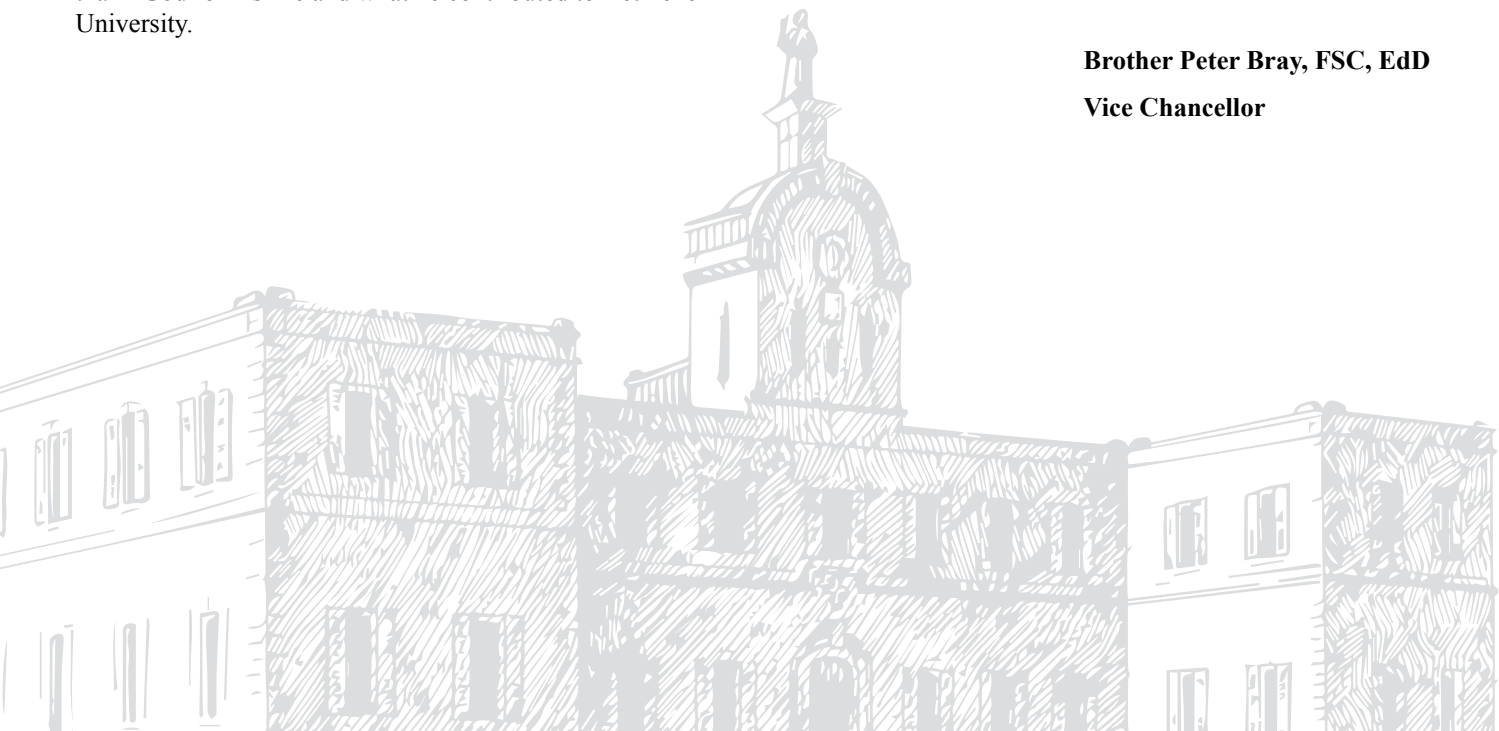
Following in the footsteps of Saint John Baptist De La Salle, Brother Joseph Loewenstein, the first Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University who passed away in February 2021, touched the hearts of many people through his efforts to find better ways to help build Bethlehem University. We thank God for his life and what he contributed to Bethlehem University.

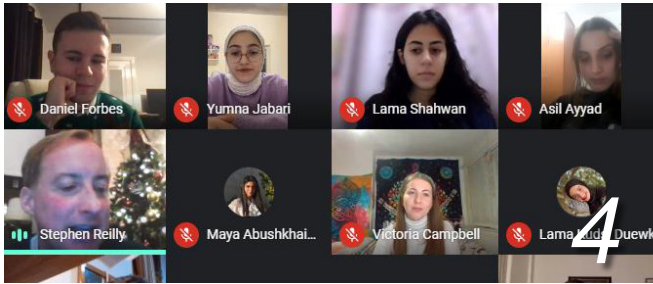
This issue of our University magazine highlights some of the ways our students, faculty, and staff are adopting to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic while continuing to engage in our mission to provide quality higher education. We feature some of our faculty members who have developed better ways of teaching to overcome the challenges of virtual learning.

We also highlight the Bethlehem University's Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS) which partnered with the Palestinian Environment Quality Authority to protect the environment in Palestine. The PIBS is working on the 6th national report and will work on the new National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

I thank you on behalf of the entire Bethlehem University community for generously supporting our educational work here, in the midst of a challenging environment. The economic outlook appears bleak with high unemployment and few pilgrims, as well as the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, despite these realities, I am convinced that Bethlehem University will continue to find effective ways to respond to the needs of our students. Please keep us in your prayers.

Brother Peter Bray, FSC, EdD
Vice Chancellor





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New Master's Program in Governance and Administration



Bethlehem University is proud to announce the new Master's program in Governance and Administration in the Public Sector (MGAPS) which has been accredited by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission in the Palestinian Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

Dean of the Faculty Dr. Fadi Kattan said "Based on our belief at the Faculty of Business Administration of the importance of adding an educational program in the field of Public Administration, and of the value we can create in Palestine through the knowledge and experiences we intend to bring into the classroom, we decided to offer a sample of the courses to administrators in the public sector."

The main partners in this master's program are the University of Pavia and the University of Florence in Italy. The program will be offered in August 2021.

New Program in Computer Simulations



The Faculty of Science at Bethlehem University announced that it has obtained a new accreditation from the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission in the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research for the program "Computer Simulations in Science and Engineering".

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Muna Mattar said "Bethlehem University is proud to be a pioneer in presenting this new academic program; the first in Palestine to grant a Bachelor's degree in terms of using computer applications in sciences and engineering."

This program will be offered in the new academic year 2021-2022.



Virtual Online Tours and Meetings

The Guest Relations Office at Bethlehem University held virtual tours and meetings with friends of Bethlehem University who could not make it to Bethlehem due to the pandemic.

Guest Relations Officer Ms. Amjaad Musleh arranged several virtual tours and meetings for student ambassadors in order to share with visitors their experiences at this time of the pandemic. The virtual meetings have been helpful for the ambassadors to express the dire effect of the virus on Palestinian students and the challenges they have faced in following their studies virtually.

During the virtual meetings, the visitors expressed their admiration of the resilience of the students in this trying moment and communicated their interest in supporting the cause of Bethlehem University and the Palestinian community.

We, at Bethlehem University, hope this pandemic will end soon so that we see our friends from all over the world back on campus.

SMOTJ Group Visit in 2019



Bringing the Holy Land to SMOTJ Scholarship Donors

Three video calls were held over Zoom in November 2020 with the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (SMOTJ) members who visit Bethlehem University annually in December as part of their pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

A total of sixteen students who study at the Tarek Juffali Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences and receive scholarships from the SMOTJ joined the calls. The students met their sponsors and were given the space to introduce themselves, talk about the reason they chose to study nursing or physiotherapy, and their future plans.

Dame Shahinda Nassar BU '05, member of the Preceptory of the Holy Land and Development Officer at Bethlehem University, talked briefly about the University and the Nursing program explaining how the University is handling teaching during the pandemic.

SMOTJ members of the various priorities joined the calls and were very much interested and excited to meet students of Bethlehem University.

BU Alumni Committee

The Alumni Relations Office established the Bethlehem University Alumni Committee (BUAC) which includes six alumni and six representatives from each Faculty.

The committee aims to engage alumni in holding activities that foster mutual relations, build loyalty towards their alma mater, and to promote a sense of cohesiveness.

BUAC's first meeting was held in April and they plan to meet quarterly to discuss the best practices for alumni engagement and activities headed by the Alumni Relations Officer.



Learn more about BUAC:

www.bethlehem.edu/alumni





Research and Creativity Colloquia

The Office of the Dean of Research and the Research Council organized a series of Research and Creativity colloquia for the 2020-2021 academic year. The fourteen colloquia series were held virtually via Google Meet and were attended by several faculty and staff.

The Dean of Research, Prof. Jamil Khader, said, “This series of colloquia aims to showcase faculty research, introduce its sources of funding, encourage critical and constructive exchanges about research, and provide opportunities for researchers to network and form interdisciplinary research clusters.”



Biogas Unit Constructed by PIBS Volunteers

Volunteers at Bethlehem University built a Biogas Unit at the Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS). The PIBS and its EU-funded Biodiversity Center continue to develop usable modules for education and for saving our environment.

In this case, organic waste is digested by anaerobic bacteria which then produce methane gas that can be used for cooking. The byproduct is also used as garden fertilizer in the botanic garden.



Hotel Management Students Receive Training

The Institute of Hotel Management and Tourism held a training program for seven of its senior students during the spring semester.

The aim was to build the students' practical and physical capabilities through the use of body language in communicating with customers and tourists and to increase their ability to communicate and deal with various job interviews.

The program was sponsored by the Joint Services Council for Tourism Development in Bethlehem Governorate and in cooperation with Al-Hara Theatre.

In Memory

Brother Joseph Loewenstein, FSC

Bethlehem University mourns the death of Brother Joseph Loewenstein, FSC (affectionately known as Brother Joe) the first Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University. Brother Joe passed away peacefully at the age of 95 on 18 February 2021 at the De La Salle Hall Nursing Home for the Brothers in Eastern North America. Brother Joe was a permanent fixture at Bethlehem University for most of its existence – educating thousands of teachers, civil society and business leaders, parents, nurses, scientists, and Church workers. He has been recognized by many for his devoted work in Palestine, particularly with those living in Palestinian refugee camps as he spent over 35 years in Bethlehem.

Dr. Nancy Elias

With great sorrow, Bethlehem University mourns the death of Dr. Nancy Elias, a faculty member at the Faculty of Education since 1997. Dr. Nancy passed away on 12 January 2021 at the age of 50. She served as the Dean of the Faculty of Education from 2005 until 2007.

Brother Peter Henderson, FSC

Bethlehem University mourns the death of Brother Peter Henderson, FSC who passed away on 27 February 2021 at the age of 89. Brother Henderson taught physics when he was here at Bethlehem University from September 1989 until July 1992 when he returned to Manhattan College.



Chairman Mr. Paul Donnelly

FoBU-GB Appoints New Chairman and Treasurer

The Friends of Bethlehem University, Great Britain Charity has appointed a new Chairman Mr. Paul Donnelly, and a new Treasurer Mr. Brian Aitken.

Mr. Donnelly said “In taking on the role of Chair this year, I give due recognition to Dr. David Smith, my predecessor. We are grateful for all his hard work in reinstating FoBU-GB.”

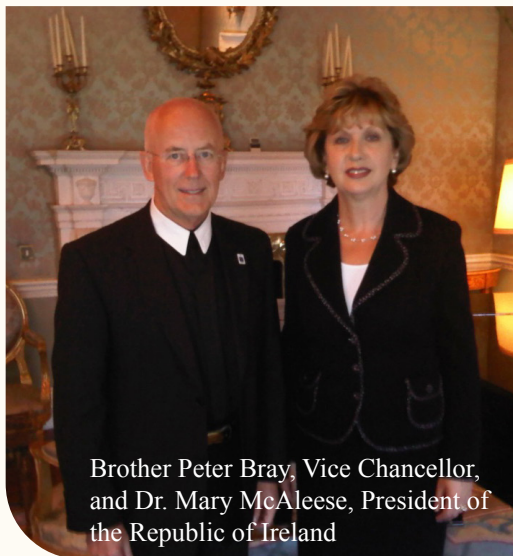
“We hope that over the next three years the number of Friends and their donations will continue to grow to assist Bethlehem University in fulfilling its mission to the people of Palestine,” he added.

The total donations including Gift Aid sent by FoBU-GB to Bethlehem University from its re-founding in June 2018 up to February 2021, amount to an impressive £321,622 from 113 sources – individuals, groups and organizations. This has been a great support to Bethlehem University. Some of these donations have been given for specific purposes such as founding scholarships, funding scholarships and also supporting the Palestine Museum of Natural History.



If you wish to donate to Bethlehem University through FoBU-GB, please visit www.bethlehem.edu/fobu-gb/fobugb-donate

FoBU-GB is a registered Charity No. 1178996



Brother Peter Bray, Vice Chancellor, and Dr. Mary McAleese, President of the Republic of Ireland

FBUI Supports Students with Disabilities

The Friends of Bethlehem University in Ireland (FBUI) was very pleased to be able to make a contribution of €40,000 for the support of students with disabilities and for their scholarship needs at Bethlehem University.

The FBUI was able to raise this sum during its Christmas 2020 Appeal which was inspired by an article on “Empowering Students with Disabilities during COVID-19” in the previous issue of the Bethlehem University magazine.

The FBUI is an Irish Charity, established some thirty years ago by a number of Irish university academics and leading Irish politicians. The FBUI was, and still is, essentially an academic body, who’s membership and supporters have as their mission to be available at all times to assist Bethlehem University.



If you wish to donate to Bethlehem University through FBUI, please visit www.fbui.ie/how-to-make-a-contribution





Prof. Dr. Heinrich Koller
President of ABU
Member of International
Board of Regents

Support During COVID-19

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board of the Association Bethlehem University (ABU) held a large awareness and fundraising campaign in order to support Bethlehem University during these challenging times.

ABU reached out to parishes, dioceses, and several foundations in Switzerland. The ABU also published its campaign in the monthly magazine of the Swiss Students Association. Thanks to the huge support from all over Switzerland, ABU was able to raise over 100,000 Swiss Francs (about 110,000 USD).

Supporting the Oncology and Palliative Care Master's Program

ABU also supported the Oncology and Palliative Care Master's Program at the Tarek Juffali Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences which was launched this spring semester.

The admitted students, who were selected in August 2020, are taking two courses to overview the theoretical and practical aspects of the topic. Dr. Med. h. c. Hans Ruedi Stoll, an expert on cancer nursing and member of the board of ABU, has recently given a workshop online. He shared his experience of over 30 years working in oncology care with the students.

The ABU Switzerland is more than proud to support creating this most important Oncology and Palliative Care Master's Program.

Since 1976, the Swiss "Association Bethlehem University" (ABU) has supported the outstanding work of Bethlehem University in the Holy Land and is committed to raise awareness for Bethlehem University in Switzerland.



Dr. Med. Hans Ruedi Stoll



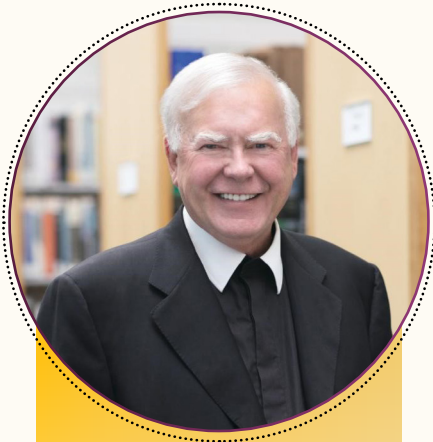
Left to right: Development Officer Shahinda Nassar, Managing Director of ABU Oliver Schneitter Ashton, and BU Students



If you wish to donate to Bethlehem University through ABU, please visit

www.unibethlehem.org





Brother Ronald Gallagher, FSC

Foundation Hires New Executive Director

Bethlehem University Foundation is pleased to announce the appointment of Brother Ronald Gallagher, FSC, Ph.D. as Executive Director. Brother Ron's appointment was effective on 12 February 2021.

As a Christian Brother, teacher, and administrator for over 50 years, Brother Ron brings years of invaluable experience and expertise to the Foundation. He has held a variety of leadership and teaching positions in the Lasallian world, most notably: Vice Chancellor of Bethlehem University from 1993-1997 and Secretary General of the Christian Brothers in Rome from 1997-2000.

Reflecting on Brother Ron's appointment Sister Irene O'Neill, Chair of the Board of Directors of Bethlehem University Foundation, said: "Please join me in welcoming Brother Ronald

Gallagher! Brother Ron brings a profound joy and deep understanding of Bethlehem University. He embodies the mission and appreciates that our Foundation plays a significant role in enabling Bethlehem University to thrive. With our far-reaching support and Brother Ron's tremendous leadership, Bethlehem University Foundation can enable the University to continue to thrive as a top university as well as offer that which the entire world seeks-an oasis of peace, and a beacon of hope."

Welcome Brother Ron to the Foundation! He can be reached at brotherron@bufusa.org.

To learn more about Brother Ron and the entire Foundation staff, visit the Foundation's website at

www.bufusa.org/staff



John Patrick Cardinal Foley

Foundation and Philadelphia Priest Spearhead Special Campaign for Cardinal Foley Hall

Last fall, Bethlehem University Foundation teamed up with Monsignor Francis X. Schmidt of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for a special campaign to help raise funds for the new home of the Tarek Juffali Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences at Bethlehem University: **John Patrick Cardinal Foley Hall**.

Cardinal Foley was a tireless advocate for peace and justice in the Holy Land. Bethlehem University held a special place in his heart and just seven months before his death the University awarded him an honorary doctorate in May of 2011 for his invaluable support and efforts in the Holy Land.

Msgr. Schmidt, a friend of Cardinal Foley from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, was inspired to create the "Philadelphia Campaign" with the Foundation to help honor his friend's legacy. To date, the Philadelphia campaign has raised \$21,918 and has brought in many new donors to the Foundation.

In addition to the Philadelphia campaign, the Foundation's Christmas campaign also raised \$127,000 for John Patrick Cardinal Foley Hall.

Palestinian Environment: Threats and Opportunities

The Palestinian environment suffers from some of the same challenges faced by environments in other countries but our situation is exacerbated by ongoing colonization.

Bethlehem University's Palestine Institute for Biodiversity and Sustainability (PIBS) partnered with the Environment Quality Authority (EQA) and a number of other organizations to protect the Palestine environment. We are working on the 6th and final national report in line with Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Starting in July 2021, PIBS will embark on the project to design the new National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) in a manner that reflects the country's vision for biodiversity and the broad policy and institutional measures that the country will take to fulfil the objectives of Convention on Biological Diversity, while the action plan comprises the concrete actions to achieve the strategy. The only and last NBSAP for Palestine was in 1999.

The EQA also contracted with a local team (including Prof. Qumsiyeh of PIBS-BU) to examine signed and unsigned international treaties and conventions and the local laws and regulation with a view to: a) make sure we align local laws with international treaties/conventions, b) make sure we benefit maximally from signed treaties but also that we fulfil our obligations, c) look at signing other treaties that could help the state of Palestine protect its environment and human health.

For the first time, such national projects engage local experts in leadership positions in close partnership with EQA. Through an EU funded project, PIBS-BU has set up a biodiversity center that is increasingly being used as a national, regional, and even international center for research, education, and conservation. In partnership with the Royal Society and the Natural History Museum in London, we also built the first molecular labs dealing with environmental DNA.

All these and many other projects are participatory and we urge everyone to get involved. Despite the challenges and obstacles faced including Israeli colonial activities, we are confident in our abilities to face and shape our future, respecting ourselves, respecting others, and respecting nature.



Vice Chancellor Brother Peter Bray and the Head of the Environment Quality Authority Mr. Jameel Mattor sign the MoU

Name Bethlehem University in Your Will & Create a Lasting Legacy in the Holy Land

Making a planned gift is a wonderful way to show your solidarity and support to Bethlehem University and its mission. Establishing an Endowed Scholarship is one of the many options you can choose from, to support the University and the needy students with your planned gift.

Ms. Najwa Sa'd recently named Bethlehem University in her will and asked that we continue to support a female student through the endowed scholarship, already established by her family, in memory of her grandmother.

“My Tata (grandma) was a power-house of determination and pride who triumphed over seemingly constant adversity in Jerusalem and Beirut but enjoyed her final years in Abu Dhabi and Virginia. She lived with my grandfather Asaad in West Jerusalem in a beautiful villa, part of which is still there but has been renovated by its new occupants. When the family fled Jerusalem in April 1948, she took her finer belongings and struggled to restart life in Beirut. Their bank accounts were frozen and real estate lost. She sold her valuables to secure a place for my father and uncle to attend a private school in Lebanon. My father used to tell us that she always told him “They can never take your education—Abadan*!” Margaret was always a proud woman whose gorgeous blue eyes and smile lit up the world. I know she would be very pleased about this scholarship fund for girls.”

Ms. Najwa Sa'd



The Late Margaret Sa'd

**Abadan an Arabic word that means Never in English.*



Rozaleen Odeh

3rd year Business Administration major student

“It is such an honor to receive this very special scholarship in memory of the late Margaret Sa'd, a great Palestinian Lady from Bethlehem who believed in the power of education and empowered her family with her love for life.

I live with my parents and two sisters in Beit Sahour. I have a twin sister who studies Software Engineering at Bethlehem University. My father used to work in an olive wood factory. He lost his job shortly after the beginning of the corona virus pandemic. My family has been struggling financially for more than a year now. I know for many students, the online learning is challenging but to me it has been a blessing. I can now work for longer hours and study at the same time since I do not have to physically attend the classes. I manage the marketing and social media operations for a shoe store in town. I enjoy working in this field as I get the chance to practice what I study in the text books. I believe that being young and active is a blessing that I need to seize despite all the challenges we face in an occupied country.”

Most Recent Annual Scholarship Established

Dr. Georg Gahn Junior and Senior Scholarship

“In 2019, I visited Bethlehem with my wife during my pilgrimage with the members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. I was impressed with the way Palestinians live together and get along despite the differences in religion. When I returned to Germany, I thought about a way to stay connected with the young Palestinians keeping in mind the mission of the EOHSJ of supporting Christians in the Holy Land. I work as a doctor in an academic hospital. We teach medical students, nurses and midwives in our hospital. My father was an obstetrician and gynaecologist so I thought supporting midwifery students at Bethlehem University would be a fruitful project. I appreciate the hard work of the midwives and I know how stressful their job is. They work in shifts and they have to deal with difficult and heart-breaking situations. I wish the midwifery students of Bethlehem University the best in serving the Palestinian community and I am happy to contribute towards their mission with this scholarship.”



Georg Gahn MD, PhD, MBA

**Prof. Dr. Georg and
Mrs. Christine Gahn**



Emilia Abufarha

1st year Midwifery major student

“When I finished high school, I wanted to study a medical major that allows me to work with women and newborn babies. I also enjoy witnessing the first moments of life at birth. So far, I know that I chose the right major for my personality and my ambition.

I have two brothers and one sister. We all manage to study online with one computer and two mobile phones. My father used to work in an olive wood factory but he became unemployed last year as a result of the breakdown of the tourism industry in Bethlehem. As a fresh student, I feel sad for not being able to experience the university life. I only know my teachers and my classmates through e-mails and virtual meetings. I have been to the university campus a few times only for my midterm exams. I ask you to join me in prayer to end this stressful period of our lives. I thank Dr. Georg Gahn for supporting me through the Dr. Georg Gahn Junior and Senior Scholarship and I am deeply grateful to the German Lieutenancy for standing in solidarity with the Christians of the Holy Land.”

To support BU students, please contact Shahinda Nassar (sfarha@bethlehem.edu).

Faculty Members Reflect on New Methods of Teaching

One year has passed since the first COVID-19 case was discovered in Bethlehem. Ever since, Bethlehem University has developed ways to deal with virtual education. New methods of teaching were incorporated to cope with post-COVID-19 pandemic higher education.

As students need some semblance of normalcy, Bethlehem University faculty members adopted new online teaching methods that were very enriching for both students and teachers.



Br. Alejandro Cerna

Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy

“Due to the pandemic related restrictions, the opportunities our students have to visit local schools for observation and practice teaching have been very limited. In an effort to make up for those limitations and turn the crisis into an opportunity, we have developed a series of online exchanges with educational experts from Mexico, Japan, Lebanon, and the Philippines who were willing to share with our students their expertise and wisdom.

Also, a team of our students worked on developing sessions as teachers for adult English learners who wish to improve their English conversation skills and who study at a Community Centre in Tijuana, on the Mexican-US Border. A second team taught their first online English Class to rural area students in Kirenge, Rwanda, in collaboration with the La Salle Centre there. Of course, our students will continue to attend and observe or practice in Palestinian Schools as much as the situation allows.”

Dr. Ghassan Handal

Assistant Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Biology

“Some practical courses were allowed to take place on campus, despite the lockdown, with enhanced health and safety precautions and procedures. Among these courses were the laboratory sessions of the two majors in Biology and Medical Laboratory Sciences.

The Biology Department used live streaming to connect with quarantined students during laboratory sessions. During class, on campus students were very cooperative and helped their classmates to join the sessions virtually through their mobile phones. This method proved to be very effective as quarantined students were able to follow up with their classmates and see the experiments held in the laboratory. They were also active in the discussions that went around in class and even asked questions whenever they missed a point.”





Natalie Hannouneh

Instructor in the Department of English

“In its essence, the Women in Literature is a course that aims to teach students how to find and use their voices. By letting my students create feminist podcasts, they were able to use their voices loud and clear. Unlike the traditional pedagogic strategies, podcasting gives way to new strategies for students to synthesize what they have learned into bite-sized audio segments.

The students were really excited about this project because as millennials they usually listen to podcasts while commuting, chilling, cleaning or exercising. It was something that they are familiar with, and now they had the ability to create from scratch!”

Paola Handal

Instructor in the Department of English

“With the switch to online learning, I had to rethink my assignments for my 4th year Education majors (SATE). I also had to take into consideration that this group in particular were always connected, communicating, and clicking so I had to rethink my assessments for this tech-savvy class.

In an age when one’s digital presence is of utmost importance – particularly in the educational world– ePortfolios seemed to me like a good way for these students to promote their skills and digital identities. That is when I decided, with the help of the Instructional Technology Unit and Ms. Tina Hazboun, to guide them to create their own ePortfolios on Google Sites.

The ePortfolio functioned as a record of their learning, evidence of what they have created over the course of their academic career. They showcased their CV, teaching philosophies, projects, lesson plans. This site would allow them to use it well beyond their graduation as they enter the professional world of teaching.”



Layth R. Awwad

Instructor in the Department of English

“I did not want the transition to virtual learning to compromise my direct interaction with the students, nor that in-person collaboration usually experienced within face-to-face classrooms. So I used breakout rooms to divide the students into smaller groups during class.

What I experienced was rather unexpected. There was not less, but more student interaction. The students were able to work together and form connections with each other. I forgot to log out after class once, and to my surprise, I found that the students were still in their breakout rooms merely chatting, and “hanging out”. That was the moment when I felt certain that the sense of community was not lost in the virtual classroom.”

Research and the Question of Sustainability

The initiative, “Bethlehem University: Towards a Sustainable Future,” promises a major face-lift to the mode of operation of this institution. This will have major implications for the sustainability of the university and its future as a leading higher education institution in Palestine.

These questions about Bethlehem University’s sustainability and the future will affect all aspects of the university, including research.

It should not come as a surprise that at a university that brands itself as “research-informed,” there should be a heavy emphasis on research, and rightly so. Research will be at the center of the teaching and learning process at Bethlehem University.

A transition, from scholarship to research as the production and the dissemination of new knowledge, is expected of every faculty member within the next few years. Research, after all, is not considered research until it has been disseminated in proper academic channels and venues.

Some of the ideas are still in an embryonic stage and there are many questions regarding vision, structure, and strategy that still need to be answered. First, a clearer vision for research should be articulated within the structure and language of sustainability.

Questions have been raised about the ways in which sustainability can be linked to research project management at the functional level. This requires identifying relevant sustainability variables that are germane to the context in which they are applied.

Moreover, the impact of sustainability on academic quality has been the subject of a heated debate in the literature. Different researchers contend that the monetization of research is sometimes at odds, to say the least, with the academic mission of many universities, especially regarding academic quality.

There are solutions out there to these tensions. Strategies related to “linked innovation,” research clusters and collaboration, and interdisciplinary research, can help balance the pressures of sustainability with academic quality. A systematic program of research training, in addition to a special studies program and a focus on community engagement that will culminate in publications, must also be in place.

We, at Bethlehem University, are discussing, debating, and hammering out these ideas to create bold solutions and help chart the new path forward for the University.



Promoting Governance and Citizenship in Palestine: “My Heritage! My Identity!”



The Institute for Community Partnership (ICP) at Bethlehem University was a partner in an EU-funded project entitled *My Heritage! My Identity!* that ran from January 2018 to December 2020. The project was implemented jointly with AFRAT Center (Association pour la Formation des Ruraux aux Activités du Tourisme) and Tétraktys, both in France, and the Palestinian Centre for Rapprochement between People in Palestine.

The project aimed to contribute in preserving and promoting heritage located along the Palestinian Heritage Trail, a community-based walking trail in Palestine, and to enhance Palestinian citizenship and identity.

ICP Director Moussa Rabadi said that one of the objectives of the project was to raise awareness about the Palestinian heritage through developing educational tools and activities, conducting international youth camps, and international symposiums on Palestinian identity and citizenship.

The ICP held capacity building training on heritage preservation and promotion, in addition to intercommunity workshops encouraging social cohesion and cooperation as part of the project.

Rabadi added that the project targeted five groups including populations in the rural areas, education sector, civil society, and cultural and institutional spheres.

The ICP participated in improving the Palestinians’ knowledge and appropriation of their history and cultural wealth, strengthening the capacities of the state and local authorities in terms of heritage conservation and valorization, stimulating the development of local stakeholders,

strengthening coordination mechanisms, and promoting intercultural dialogue.

Bethlehem University, the Palestinian Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, natural and cultural heritage protection societies, and numerous international cooperation partners have become highly involved in the structuring of the Palestinian Heritage Trail as a vehicle for local development.

Rabadi said they will promote the Palestinian Heritage Trail as a national program that aims to strengthen social cohesion, citizenship, and internal solidarity.

He added the aim is to invite tourists from all over the world to walk this Trail which will open a real gateway to the world for the inhabitants of the visited areas. It also helps to raise the awareness of the local people about the major historical sites and their diversity.

In December, an international symposium on Palestinian identity and citizenship was conducted as a closing event for the whole project. During a challenging global pandemic, the symposium was organized virtually through online multimedia platforms.

For more information follow the project’s website or Facebook page:

www.myheritage.ps



www.facebook.com/myheritagemyidentity





Ariane Slinger with Pope Francis

Ariane Slinger

Trustee of The Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Charitable Trust

Bethlehem University is delighted to thank the Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Charitable Trust for its generous support of our Tarek Juffali Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences and its new home, the John Patrick Cardinal Foley Hall.

The Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Trust's grant underwrites new furniture and state of the art equipment for the new John Patrick Cardinal Foley Hall, as well as helping to cover the operating cost of the Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences programs.

The Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Trust supports projects that initiate change with an enduring social and humanitarian impact, promoting Catholic values and messages of compassion, respect, dignity, tolerance and commitment to society's most vulnerable. The Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Trust has helped 40 other Catholic NGOs and congregations in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia, Pakistan, Angola, Ethiopia, Benin, Tanzania, Sudan, Uganda, South Africa, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Philippines, Taiwan and Europe.

It was through Mrs. Slinger's efforts as Trustee of the Caritas Pro Vitae Gradu Trust that this major grant was made to ensure that Bethlehem University could provide state-of-the-art nursing programs for our students, enhancing our status as the leading health education center in Palestine.

"We are grateful to be able to help such meaningful projects as Bethlehem University. Their Nursing programs will continue to provide high quality education to young adults preparing them to help cover the needs in the medical field in the region," Mrs. Slinger said.

Mrs. Slinger, a lawyer, CEO, and main shareholder of ACE International SA, a 25-member multi-family office, has specialized in Corporate, Commercial, Trust and International Law for over 30 years serving a world-wide corporate and private clientele. Ms. Slinger, an accomplished windsurfer, also collects vinyl records, a passion she inherited from her late father who in 1957 started the ARTONE/CBS vinyl records factory in Haarlem, the Netherlands.

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GRADUATE PROFILES



Sandy Khoury
BU '14

As a graduate of the Institute of Hotel Management, Sandy Khoury has always been creative. After the coronavirus outbreak, Sandy began her own business of making handmade soap in her own kitchen.

After working for seven years at a local theatre performing for kids, her initial audience was little children. She began making attractive soaps with toys inside to increase handwashing among kids especially during the COVID-19 context.

She launched this project and started selling her soap through social media. Last year, similar projects came to the surface as COVID-19 kept people away from public gathering spaces.

Therefore, Sandy created a Facebook group that served as an online space for community members to come together in an isolated world. The group members were able to introduce their projects and enabled them to support each other.

Sandy believes that her experience at Bethlehem University gave her the knowledge, skills, confidence, and experience to help make her world better.



Christine
Hazboun Saca
BU '00

“Bethlehem University helped me build a strong basis in the field of accounting. I was able to complete the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exams one year after graduating.

This opened up more opportunities for me, and helped me join corporate America in the finance sector, and later on, to pursue my MBA with concentration in finance.

I fondly remember the time I spent as a student at Bethlehem University. It was a great place to meet new people from different schools, villages, cities, and backgrounds. I truly appreciated the diversity there; I believe this helped me get ready for the real world.

Bethlehem University has provided me with a solid base to start and succeed in my higher education and career in both the United States of America and here in Bethlehem.”

Christine Hazboun Saca is the Director of Finance and a member of the Executive Committee at the Caritas Baby Hospital, the sole pediatric hospital in the West Bank. She holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree from Rutgers University in New Jersey.

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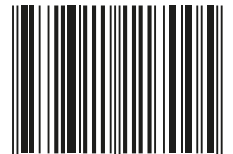


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