

Arab American National Museum Archives
13624 Michigan Ave., Dearborn, MI 48126



Title: Cambridge-Ramallah/El Bireh Sister City Collection
Creator: Lester Murad, Nora
Inclusive dates: 1989-1992
Extent: 1 linear foot
Accession number: 2015.09.00

Language: English
Acquisition: Donation from Nora Lester Murad, 2015.
Accruals: Additions to the collection not expected.
Access: No restrictions
Photographs: Box 2
A-V Material: None
Digital Materials: None
Copyright: Copyright has been transferred to the Arab American National Museum.
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Arrangement: By topic
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History

The Cambridge-Ramallah/El Bireh Sister City Campaign started in 1989 as grassroots initiative with the goal of redefining US foreign policy towards Palestine by developing ties between the American city of Cambridge and the Palestinian cities of Ramallah and El Bireh. The goal of the organization was to convince the city of Cambridge to designate official Sister City status to Ramallah and El Bireh and as a statement of protest against US foreign policy. To achieve this goal, the organization hosted educational events about Palestine and Israel and sent two delegations of members to Palestine to meet Palestinian families and see the current conditions first-hand. The delegates were then encouraged to follow up their trips by writing articles for publication and hosting events to support the cause. The organization disbanded in 1992 due to lack of funds and dedicated volunteers, as well as a diversion of resources to anti-war efforts after the US invasion of Iraq.

Scope and Content Note

The collection consists of materials from the Cambridge-Ramallah/El Bireh Sister City Campaign collected by Nora Lester Murad, a part-time employee of the organization. Materials include correspondence to and from the organization, meeting minutes, reports, event flyers and press clippings about the organization. A large part of the materials pertain to two "Linking Communities" trips taken by delegates of the organization to Palestine in an attempt to forge bonds between the proposed sister cities. These folders consist of itineraries, blank applications, orientation materials, photographs and reports of post-trip activities.

One additional folder in the collection contains materials about an Association of Arab American University Graduates (AAUG) Youth Trip to Palestine and Israel. Nora Lester Murad also worked for the AAUG and helped created a pre-trip orientation and post-trip follow up program to help participants prepare for and report on their trips. Of particular note in this folder is correspondence and reports concerning an incident involving an American participant and the Israeli police.

Subjects

Arab-Israeli conflict
Association of Arab-American University Graduates
Jewish-Arab relations
Middle East--Politics and government
Societies and Clubs

Genre terms

Correspondence
Newspaper clippings
Newsletters
Pamphlets
Photographs

Contents

Box 1

Folder 1: Sister City – General

Mission statement, general info, reports, event flyers

Folder 2: Sister City – Minutes

Folder 3: Sister City – Correspondence

Folder 4: Sister City – Clippings

Newspaper clippings about the Sister City campaign, about the SC trips, or by/about the participants

Folder 5: Other Sister Cities

Information about Sister Cities International and other Sister Cities in the US and Cambridge

Folder 6: Clippings – Boston

Boston-area newspaper clippings about the Israel/Palestine conflict, discrimination against Arab Americans and other related topics.

Folder 7: AAUG Youth Trip

AAUG Youth Trip orientation and follow up materials

Box 2

Folder 1: First Linking Communities Trip, December 1989-January 1990

Trip information, orientation and follow up materials

Folder 2: Second Linking Communities Trip, July 1990

Trip information, orientation and follow up materials

Folder 3: Photographs

Primarily photographs taken on Linking Communities trips

Binder: Trip Orientation Materials

Background information provided to delegates before trip