

Dear Friends,

Hello, my name is Nadine Nashef and I am 23 years old. Some of you may have met me during the last AGM and other visits to the village, and some of you I hope to meet in the near future.

I recently finished my B.F.A in photography, at Bezalel, and currently I am studying towards a certificate of Translation and Revision from Tel Aviv University. At Wahat al-Salem ~ Neve Shalom I have worked part-time in the communications department and have also represented the village in a delegation to the UK. Now I am very excited and proud to say that, since the beginning of December, I was elected as the new director of the youth club in our village, the Nadi.



My family and I moved to Wahat al-Salam ~ Neve Shalom a little over 14 years ago, in the year 2000, from East Jerusalem. My mother, Reem Nashef, teaches at the WASNS primary school, and my father Yousef Nashef works as a psychologist. We moved to this village because my parents wanted us to grow up in a safe place, and because they wanted us to grow up in a peaceful environment as equals with our Jewish-Israeli peers. They did not want us to live our lives segregated from “the other side” until adulthood, like they did. Having spent most of my life in this village, and graduating from the bi-lingual, bi-national primary school, I can say it is the best decision they made in my life.

The Nadi, as we know it today, started when I was in eighth grade by three women village members as a place for the youth of the village to meet, especially after they finished primary school and moved on to different high schools.

During my teenage years, the Nadi played a central part in my life, it gave me and my friends a place to hang out and meet, and a place for cultural and political activities relating to us as teenagers growing up in Israel-Palestine. In addition to that, the Nadi provided a framework for children of all ages from the village to connect to each other. When I was in tenth grade, my friend and I decided to volunteer in the Nadi as youth counsellors. For two years we would meet with the children in the 1st- 3rd grade once a week and do a social or art activity with them. These two years were some of my most memorable at the Nadi, and I think it made a great connection between the younger children and the older youth in the Nadi. It created a sense of responsibility towards each other, kind of like an older brother or sister.

Today these same children make up what we call the big Nadi, they are all between the ages of junior-high and high-school. Yes, that is one of the reasons I decided to start working in the Nadi once again. But the other reason was that I could see the effect this place had, both on me and on the younger children I used to mentor. This generation of children grew up to

be active, interested and involved in the Nadi, be it with the help of the adults or independently. They see the Nadi as their own place and care for it accordingly.

This year I am interested in bringing this circle of responsibility back to the Nadi. Indeed this month (January) some of the tenth graders started working with the younger children as mentors. In order to give them the skills and tools to do more meaningful work, we are planning on organizing another Youth Leaders course this spring.

I feel we have an exciting year in the Nadi ahead, reviving old traditions and creating new ones. This year we plan on renovating both the Big Nadi and the Small Nadi to make them safer and more inviting. We have interesting programs in the making, especially during the summer. I am also happy to inform you all that this year the Nadi will be responsible for running the Palestinian Summer Camp.

I am interested in making the Nadi not only a meeting point for the youth of the village, but also a place that will offer the children and youth extracurricular activities, be it in arts, music or theatre, and a vessel that will connect them with youth around the country. I believe the makeup of the youth in this village is unique; as individuals, and as a group, they have a powerful and refreshing voice, especially in times like these. That is why I see it as my job to help them make their voice heard amongst their peers and elsewhere.

Best wishes,

Nadine Nashef

Director of the Nadi