



## Report to Donors

January 2021

Dear Seraj Friends:

Wow! 2020 was a year like no other! We thank you for your continuing generosity and commitment to The Seraj Library Project. You can read about Seraj's mission, libraries & projects on our website (including 2020 newsletters) at [www.serajlibraries.org](http://www.serajlibraries.org). To date, we have established Seraj Libraries in ten West Bank communities and sent more than **\$783,600** to Palestine for Libraries and Programs.

At each calendar year-end we provide a brief financial overview of how we are managing your generous gifts.

### Another Strong Fiscal Year - 2020 (July 2019 through June 2020 )

**Donations & Benefit Net - \$273,131** An all time high, includes a \$100,000 bequest!

- 260 persons and organizations contributed to this total.
- Including 79 new donors who had not given in previous years.
- Organizational expense was a remarkable 2%; we have no paid US staff. Almost all of your gifts to Seraj go directly to our libraries and programs!

### First 2 Quarters, Fiscal 2021 (July through December 2020)

- ◆ Our **Virtual Benefit, A Week with Seraj**, began on October 4, 2020. Over the course of the next 5 days, we distributed 4,500 emails, each containing a video and description of our work. The videos were viewed 1,087 times. See all the newsletters and videos, and the Benefit report at: [www.serajlibraries.org](http://www.serajlibraries.org). We appreciate the generous participation of so many; our donations and pledges combined to **\$60,618**, an all time Benefit high.
- ◆ We are delighted to report a FOURTH grant from the **Bishop Robert Paddock Foundation**. The Foundation has committed to a \$30,000 match over 3 years to establish a new library (likely in Birzeit old city).
- ◆ **Emphases for fiscal year 2021**. Seraj has found itself with two incredible opportunities.
  1. Our on-going development of a **Palestinian Storytelling Center** is now located in a cultural renewal area of Kufor Aqab. We are rehabbing two 125+ year old homes for a library and the storytelling center.
  2. At the same time, we have been invited to participate in the renewal of old city Birzeit with a **Cultural Center**. The old city is remarkable, and we have been asked to develop an enclosed courtyard and the 6 surrounding apartments. We are hoping for a library, an arts center, a music center, a cafe and more. Both projects will enhance the work of all our libraries and establish Seraj as a cultural force in Palestine.

We are delighted to be in partnership with you. There is much more to be done!

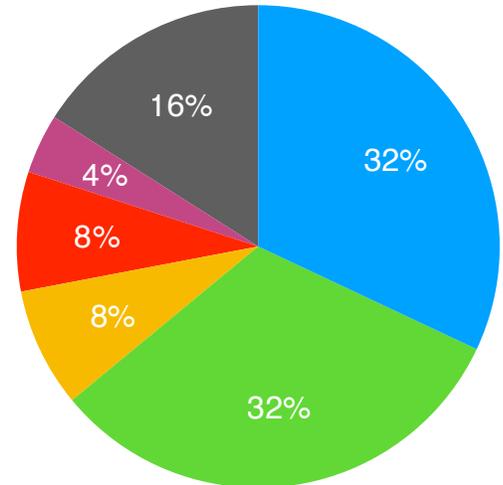
**John Cassel**, Board Chair & Treasurer, [johnjcassel@gmail.com](mailto:johnjcassel@gmail.com)

*See more financial reporting on the reverse.*

## 2021 Budget - Palestine

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Nat. Storytelling Center	\$80,000
New Birzeit Library	\$80,000
Library Upgrades/maintenance	\$20,000
Library Programs	\$20,000
Fellows Scholarship Program	\$10,000
Support (inc rent & accounting)	\$40,000
<b>2021 Palestine Budget Total</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

## Seraj in Palestine Budget July 2020 - June 2021



The most valuable asset in Seraj's work is the presence on the ground of **Estephan & Laurie Salameh** initiating and overseeing our work in the West Bank. It's difficult and complex work, requiring patience and wisdom. Yet, even in the face of Occupation and COVID, we are able to accomplish remarkable things for the good of Palestinian communities and children. Our Palestinian Library Coordinator and master storyteller, **Fida'a Ataya**, recently completed a year of graduate study in New Hampshire further preparing herself for this work. Her contribution of deep knowledge and creativity is invaluable. *Seraj Library Projects are created by Palestinians, on behalf of Palestinians.*

### **Board Leadership - US & Palestine**

Since its inception in 2009, Seraj US has been led by a diverse Board of committed supporters. With no paid staff, Seraj Board members have also carried the day-to-day responsibilities for the work. In recent years the Board has participated in a Board development effort, and has solidified its ability to provide wise guidance to the organization.

Recently, Seraj Palestine has established itself as a recognized NGO under the Palestinian Authority and has also recruited a governing Board to provide direction and vision. The two Boards participated in a joint Zoom meeting this past November.



**Thanks for your generous support!**