



Education is the Path to Peace

BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION | ANNUAL REPORT | FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021



TO OUR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS:

Your generosity has never been more important. Thank you.

Our work during this period of transition was possible because we built on a strong foundation.

We are grateful to our Board of Directors, our Patrons, The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and the staff of the Foundation. You have been critical to our continuing success.

We are especially grateful for the dedication of Brother Dominic Smith and Ron Hays. They stepped up in this time of change to keep things going.

And in this report, we celebrate all those who have been exceptional in their support of the University and the Foundation. Thank you.

The mission of the Foundation remains the same. We exist to fund the needs of Bethlehem University.

We will focus on short-term giving while we also pursue estate and legacy giving. We will continue to reach out to our Board members and Patrons. We will turn to you not only for your continued support but for your valued advice. Together, we will continue to spread the mission of Bethlehem University.

The University faces great challenges right now. But during these trying times, they continue to do important work. Their most pressing current needs are:

- Student scholarships
- Funding The Georgette Salameh Center (the student visitor center)
- The Palestine Museum of Natural History
- The School of Nursing and Health Sciences - Please consider supporting one of our Nursing Endowed Funds such as the Southeastern Lieutenancy Endowed Fund for Nursing and Health Sciences. (For a full list of our Nursing Endowed Funds, please visit our website at: www.bufusa.org/donate/established-endowed-funds/.)

We will continue to present these and other needs to our generous friends and supporters. You are building Bethlehem University as a first-class university in the Lasallian tradition.

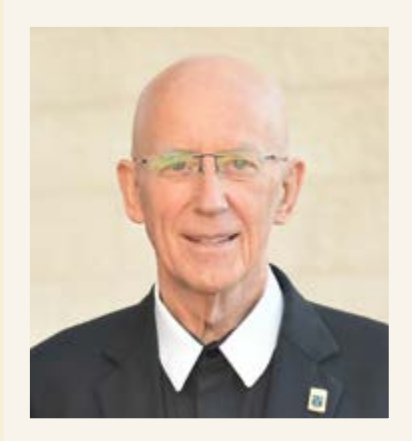
The pandemic and recent hostilities have made life more difficult. But they have also made us even more eager to help Bethlehem University, an oasis of peace in the place of Jesus' birth. Thank you for all you do, and please join us in praying for peace on Earth and goodwill to all.



Sister Irene O'Neill, CSJ, Ed.D.
CHAIR



Ernest Nedder
INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



You care for the people of the Holy Land

Bethlehem University Foundation supports and promotes Bethlehem University.

We believe education is critical to creating better lives. And the people of the Holy Land need the opportunity to build better, safer lives. We know the benefits of educated students ripple across the entire community. Education is the path to peace.

Your generous support for The Bethlehem University Foundation encourages educational excellence and success for the people in the Holy Land. Your investment in the Foundation is key to a better future for us all.

Thank you for your caring heart and your commitment to the people of the Holy Land.



"We talk about Bethlehem University as an oasis of peace. But the unpredictability of the future is something that's very real for our students. So when students come to campus, I want them to know that they are safe here. That nobody is going to interrogate them, and nobody is going to arrest them, and nobody is going to put a gun in their face here. They are safe."

~BROTHER PETER BRAY
VICE CHANCELLOR



Leadership you can trust.

The Bethlehem University Foundation is governed by a dedicated Board of Directors. They give of their time, wisdom, and talent to further the Foundation's mission of creating a brighter future for Bethlehem University.

Together, the Board ensures that the Foundation is worthy of your continuing trust, generosity, and commitment. The Board of Directors is charged with the governance of the Foundation and is committed to its fiduciary responsibility to you, our benefactors.

This past year, the Foundation welcomed several new members to the Board, each bringing unique experience and gifts to the Board of Directors. They will strengthen the work of the Foundation.

Please Welcome Bethlehem University Foundation's Newest Directors:

Mrs. Helena Christine, Esq.

Legal Counsel at the University of Alabama

Mrs. Ann S. Dickson

*Retired Program Budget Director
U.S. Department of Defense*

The Bethlehem University Foundation Board of Directors

as of August 2021

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Mr. Ghassan Salameh *Secretary*

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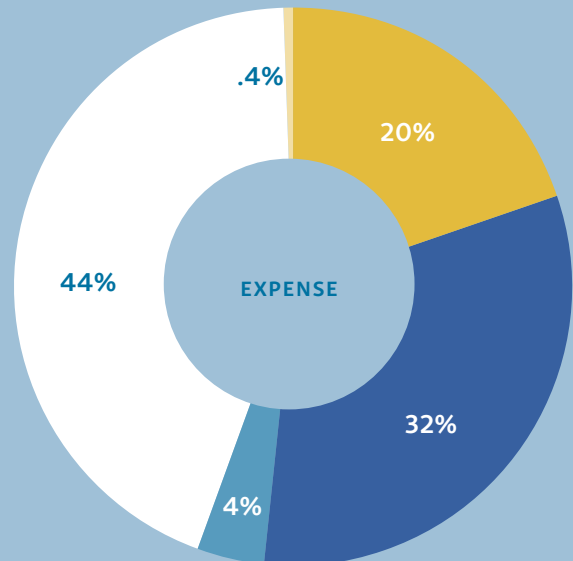
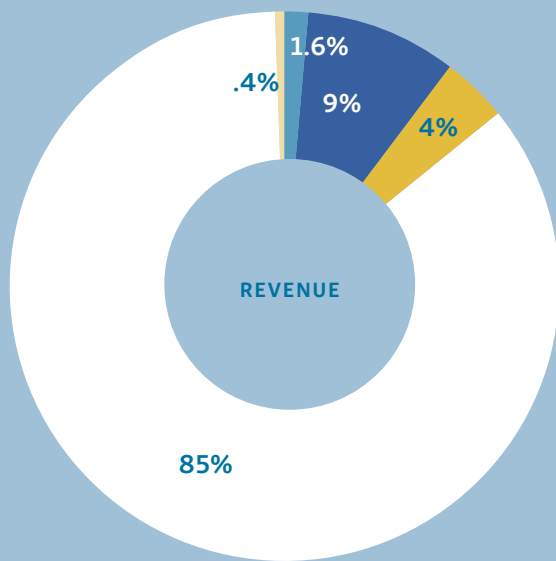
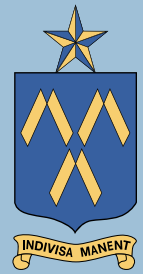
Dr. Samir Abu-Ghazaleh

Mr. John Steger†

The Reverend Monsignor Archimandrite
Robert L. Stern


† Deceased

THE BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW | FISCAL YEAR 2020-2021



■ BUF Annual Fund	112,673
■ Restricted to University Projects	705,384
■ Gifts to the Endowment	299,020
■ Investment Income	6,681,273
■ Other Revenue	27,728
TOTAL REVENUE	\$7,826,078

■ BUF Operations	532,448
■ Grants to Bethlehem University	848,778
■ Endowment Management Fees	106,522
■ Endowment Grants to Bethlehem University	1,166,854
■ Other Expense	12,593
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$2,667,195



"I'm very happy to be a Bethlehem graduate... I'm so proud of that."

-RAGHAD KHAMEES

RAGHAD KHAMEES | BETHLEHEM UNIVERSITY GRADUATE

Bethlehem University trained my heart in peace

After I enrolled at Bethlehem University, I was often asked, "Are you studying at a Catholic university? Are you in such a tight spot that you need to attend such a university?"

Now, I laugh and tell them not only did I study at a Catholic university, but I was born anew there. I still remember the moment when I learned I was accepted in the English major. I dreamed of studying at Bethlehem University. I was so thrilled. And my experience in this program taught me how to analyze, how to critique and how to question.

It was a great program. I still remember my sense of joy and wonder and being in this place where I was born anew. It has changed my life in so many ways. Here I've met people who were much more than an addition to my life.

They were a beautiful destiny and souls that will accompany me everywhere I go like my shadow. All I remember about myself is that I'm not the same girl I was.

When I came to Bethlehem University the whole world around me was painted in one color: my color. My horizons were narrower and shallow. Now that has changed. Bethlehem University opened me to so many different ideas and attitudes. It gave me all I needed to be who I want to be and more. It has trained my heart in peace.

At Bethlehem University, I was turned into a living conscience and now feel so responsible to learn about and improve this world. *Above everything else, Bethlehem University taught me what it is to be a human being.*

The Ibrahim and Jamileh Mughannam Endowed Scholarship

Ibrahim Hanna Mughannam's ancestors founded Ramallah in the 1550's—or so goes the folklore handed down to us from generation to generation. He was born in Ramallah in 1908 and grew up with several brothers and one sister. He lost his mother at an early age. His father remarried and he eventually gained another brother and three more sisters. He was a good student, attending the local Catholic schools. Ibrahim eventually became a teacher and taught in the Catholic schools in Palestine as well as Jordan. In Jordan he became the principal of the Patriarchate school in Amman during the 1950's.

He met Jamileh Zora Kaldany when he was sent to teach in Madaba, Jordan in the early 1930's. Jamileh's parents were both born in Alqush, Iraq, a small Chaldean village near Mosul. Because of political and economic difficulties they left their village in the 1890's and settled in Madaba, Jordan, which is where Jamileh was born.

Ibrahim and Jamileh married in Ramallah in 1934 and soon began their family. With the chaos of the war in 1948, they fled to Amman Jordan, where they lived as poor refugees until they had the chance to emigrate to America in 1957. By then they had eleven children. Starting a new life in America was more than a challenge. But Ibrahim and Jamileh were people of faith, and they led their family trusting that God would show them the way—*which He did*.

Trust in God and hard work were the most important legacies Ibrahim and Jamileh left their children. Even though they began a new life in America, they never forgot where they came from. As immigrants are likely to do, Ibrahim and Jamileh tried to keep their Arabic culture alive for their children in very simple ways. Now their children are all grandparents themselves, accomplished and responsible citizens, who have transmitted to their families the cultural values they learned from their parents Ibrahim and Jamileh.

Ibrahim highly valued education all his life. In Palestine and Jordan he was known as Ustaz Mughannam because he completely dedicated his life to the education of others. Most of the children of Ibrahim and Jamileh attended college, as well as all the grandchildren—several of whom have received advanced degrees in various fields.

This is the reason they are supporting Bethlehem University's efforts to help students get the education they

need in order to be able to navigate a complex world and change it to a more just and humane one for all. They want to thank and honor their parents by helping others in their beloved Palestine to get the tools they will need to make the world a better place for everyone.



Ibrahim and Jamileh Mughannam center front. Children: (top row left) Anis, Anne, Anton, In'am, Joseph, Therese, Louis, Wafa, (bottom left) Hanan, Rima, Wijdan.

If you would like more information about endowed scholarships, please contact the **Bethlehem University Foundation** at **240-241-4381**, or visit our website at www.bufusa.org/scholarships.



L to R: Brother Peter Bray,
Annette Aburdene, Sister Irene O'Neill,
Elias Aburdene

ANNETTE AND ELIAS ABURDENE

Education is a gift of hope for the Palestinian people

Elias' father Felix Aburdene left his hometown of Bethlehem, Palestine, in 1956. Felix was 35 years old, had served as deputy mayor of Bethlehem, and was determined to build a new life for his family in the United States. Felix' friend from their years at Terra Santa College High School in Jerusalem, Dr. Philip Gideon, happened to be the doctor at Somers Brass Company in Waterbury, Connecticut and he arranged for Felix to be interviewed there. Felix was hired as a milling machine operator, later advancing to night shift foreman of the annealing department at Somers Brass. He became a metallurgist without a formal degree.

Felix worked the 13 hour night shifts to save money to bring his family to Waterbury, first his wife Olga and Elias, the youngest, in 1957, then

the four older siblings in 1959.

The family had a great experience coming to Waterbury. They were warmly received by neighbors, classmates, co-workers, teachers, and the local Lebanese community. The family spoke Arabic at home, but quickly learned the language of their new land. The five children attended local schools, matriculated at the University of Connecticut (UConn), received higher degrees at UConn, Tufts, Johns Hopkins, and Georgetown Universities. Throughout the years, they stayed in close touch with family and friends in Bethlehem, Elias traveling there to study Arabic in the summer during his graduate program.

Education was always important to the family. Felix would say, "You can lose your country, but you cannot lose your education."



Felix and Olga Aburdene

The siblings feel proud of their heritage and feel blessed to have gotten a new start in life in Waterbury. Olga died in 1992, followed by Felix in 1999. That year the siblings decided to honor their parents by dedicating a room at Bethlehem University in their names.

Elias and his wife Annette, who hails from Germany, knew the difference education made to their lives. They decided to become involved with Bethlehem University. “We believe in its mission”, they say. Both Annette and Elias serve on the University Board of Regents. Elias also serves on the Bethlehem University Foundation Board.

“You can lose your country, but you cannot lose your education.”

~FELIX ABURDENE

“It’s a depressing situation in Bethlehem now. It’s hard to live under military occupation. But Brother Peter is a great leader. He is a champion for Palestinians and Bethlehem University.” In time, Elias and Annette decided to create an unrestricted endowment fund at the Foundation as well. “We count our blessings. Anything we can do to help, we want to do”, they said. “For what it would cost to send one student to college in the U.S., we can send many students to Bethlehem University.”

Elias and Annette have found Bethlehem University students to be smart and ambitious. The Aburdenes are proud of the excellent nursing program, the business school, the liberal arts, and tourism programs.

And they see the University as important to building peace. “Bethlehem University serves Palestinian Christians and Muslims—it is an Oasis of Peace.”

Elias says, “Every gift to the Bethlehem University Foundation provides needed hope for the people in Bethlehem.”



HELPING DETERMINED STUDENTS LEARN

Belanty Azzam

Belanty Azzam is a young woman from Gaza.

Six weeks before she was to finish her course work at Bethlehem University, she was stopped at a checkpoint because her I.D. had the word *Gaza* on it. They detained her for seven hours. Then they blindfolded and handcuffed her and dropped her back in Gaza in the middle of the night.

She wasn’t allowed to leave Gaza, even to finish her course work. And the Palestinian Authority doesn’t accept online learning. So, the University hired someone in Gaza and gave the tutor all the materials to complete the course. Belanty worked with her tutor, took her exams, and graduated.

In the following year, the University administration knew they had to do something for her. They decided to go to Gaza and have a graduation for this one student. The Apostolic Delegate (Archbishop Antonio Franco—the Chancellor of Bethlehem University) was visiting. On Sunday morning he said Mass for the Christians in Gaza. The idea was that Belanty would invite her family and friends and they would have a small ceremony. But at the Mass, the Apostolic Delegate invited everyone to attend.

The whole church came to her graduation. It was a wonderful moment for humanity. The people in Gaza realized they had not been forgotten!

An excellent education is the way to peace



Ghassan Salameh is passionate about the power of education, and its importance to individual prosperity and the development of civil society. Growing up in Lebanon, his elementary and secondary school education was provided by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), and his high school education by the Vatican sponsored Pontifical Mission for Palestine Refugees, like Bethlehem University.

He grew up grateful for what education did for him, and aware of how both institutions were foundational to his growth and success. “They gave me an excellent education and provided me and my family with hope” he says. Ghassan went on to study at universities in the U.S. earning a degree in Mechanical Engineering, and a master's degree in Business Administration, raised a family, and helped his family immigrate to the US to escape the civil war in Lebanon

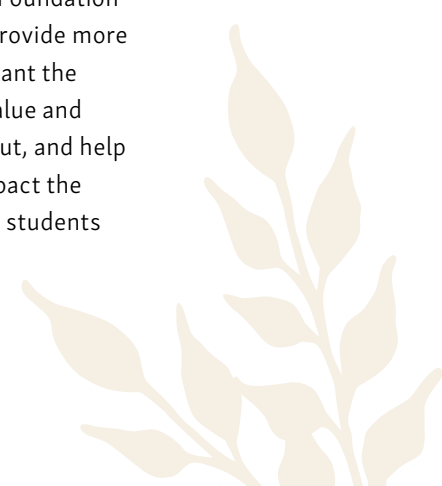
As his career blossomed, Ghassan dedicated more and more of his time and resources to helping others as he had been helped. He volunteered for work with several organizations, and four years ago, joined the Bethlehem University Foundation Board.

In 2018, Ghassan finally had an opportunity to visit Bethlehem for the first time. It was a very moving experience. He saw the amazing work of the brothers and faculty, their dedication, perseverance, and focus on providing high quality education in a peaceful and supportive environment. He saw how hard everyone has to work, and how determined the students are. He saw and heard about life challenges the students experience daily, their inability to move freely, their limited financial resources, and lack of employment opportunities. What he saw compelled him to want to do more.

“It is a very worthy cause, and an incredible institution to support. I’m very happy to be part of it, and I want to use my time and resources to help make it better. I want to use what I have learned over the years to give back in a meaningful way.”

~GHASSAN SALAMEH

Ghassan is eager to help the Foundation continue to grow, develop, and provide more support to the University. “We want the Foundation to continue to add value and financial support, get the word out, and help show the world the immense impact the University has on the lives of the students and the people of Palestine”.



BOOKS NOT WALLS

Open minds lead to peace and understanding

Ameera is from Hebron. At first, she was a flighty, unfocused young woman. But by the end of her second year, she became a Bethlehem University Student Ambassador, welcoming visitors. She wanted visitors to know students' stories here.

Ameera saw what happened when students listened to visitors and visitors listened to students. She wondered what would happen if students learned to really listen to one another.

So she began a group called **Books Not Walls**.

The group gathered students and gave them a book to read. Then they asked students what they thought about an aspect of the book. The point wasn't to debate each other, but to really *listen and learn*.

Now, there are two young women at Bethlehem University, one Christian and one Muslim. Spending time together, they began to appreciate each other. Then they became close friends.

They are no longer focused on their differences, but united by their shared experiences.



The Patrons of the Bethlehem University

Foundation are individuals or couples who make a qualifying gift to the Patrons Endowed Fund at the Bethlehem University Foundation. Their gift to the endowment is an investment into the future of Bethlehem University and the Bethlehem University Foundation. More than a giving society, Patrons are invested ambassadors of the Foundation and the community served by Bethlehem University.

With each Patron's "forever gift", the Foundation grows its endowment and thereby expands its ministry of perpetual support for the work of Bethlehem University.

Patron Levels:

- **Bronze Patron** for gifts totaling \$25,000 to the Patrons Endowed Fund over a 5-year period
- **Silver Patron** for \$50,000 in lifetime giving to the Patrons Endowed Fund
- **Gold Patron** for \$100,000 in lifetime giving to the Patrons Endowed Fund

If you would like more information about becoming a Patron, please contact the Bethlehem University Foundation at 240-241-4381, or visit our website at www.bufusa.org/patrons



ENDOWMENTS

Abu Dhabi Scholarship Endowed Fund
Annette and Elias Aburdene Endowed Fund
Brother Vincent Malham Faculty Recognition Award Endowed Fund
The Cardinal Basil Hume Chair of Religious Studies Endowed Fund
Cardinal De Furstenberg Endowed Fund
CNEWA Permanent Endowed Fund
The Friends of Bethlehem University Academic Scholarship in Honor of Brother Fergus McArdle Endowed Fund
General Scholarship Endowed Fund
The Patrons Endowed Fund
The Shucri Ibrahim Dabdoub Faculty of Business Administration Endowed Fund
University Vice Chancellor's General Endowed Fund
The Sir John McGuckin Mentoring & Internship Endowed Fund
The Saint Teresa of Calcutta Endowed Fund for the Faculty of Nursing and Health Sciences
The Frank and Julie Jungers Clinical Supervision of Nurse Trainees Endowed Fund
The Southeastern Lieutenancy Endowed Fund for Nursing and Health Sciences at Bethlehem University
The Reverend Jeremiah Spencer Nursing and Health Science Endowed Fund
The Keith and Ginger Myers Endowed Fund for Nursing and Health Sciences at Bethlehem University

For a complete list of Endowed Scholarships, please see the Foundation website at BUFUSA.ORG.

2020 Donor List

\$100,000 +

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Mrs. Therese Mughannam-Walrath
Mr. Ghassan and Dr. Suava Salameh
Dr. George L. Zarur*

\$50,000 +

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\$25,000 +

Mr. Elias and Mrs. Annette Aburdene
EOHSJ - Grand Magisterium
Mr. George and Mrs. Breda Shelton

\$10,000 +

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John E. Steger

Jack Steger, a past chairman for the Bethlehem University Foundation's Board of Directors, passed away on July 14 at the age of 95. Jack was an early and passionate backer of the Foundation, and brought his infectious enthusiasm to every conversation, board meeting and initiative he was part of.

While Jack was involved in a variety of Catholic organizations and charities, it was at the Bethlehem University Foundation that he may have found his true calling. He played a pivotal role in the early history of the Foundation, helping to establish much of the organizational infrastructure that still exists today, including its governance and bylaws, as well as its investment, finance, and audit committees.

Jack shared his sense of joy and community among his fellow board members, arranging social events prior to board meetings and encouraging open discussion among its members.

"Jack was innately joyful and interested in other people," recalls Sister Irene O'Neill, CSJ, Ed.D., who succeeded Jack as Board Chair. "He was engaging, smart and strategic, and brought out the best in other people. He just made you want to roll up your sleeves and pitch in."

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DEDICATED TO Brother Dominic

“I could not have planned a life with such enriching experiences.”

Brother Dominic Smith has been a Development Associate at Bethlehem University Foundation since 2008 and a De La Salle Christian Brother (of the District of Eastern North America) for over 60 years.

Prior to working for our Foundation, Brother Dominic served in Lasallian high schools and served as the Director of the Library at Bethlehem University.

He created the “Mr. Harold and Mrs. Anna Mary Smith Endowed Scholarship Fund” to honor his parents and support the university. He would add to the fund whenever he could. So to celebrate Brother Dominic’s 80th birthday, members of the board of the Bethlehem University Foundation made a generous contribution to this fund.

In 2007, Brother Dominic wrote to the Bethlehem University Community “Little did I think in 1997 that ten years later I would still be in Bethlehem. I leave a changed man as a result of my experience. It’s true that Bethlehem University has had a greater impact on me than I have had on the University. I leave with a sense of admiration for what is accomplished here on a daily basis.”

Brother Dominic often recalls the words of our Founder, St. John Baptist de La Salle from the Memoir on the Beginnings, “God who directs all things with wisdom and gentleness... led me imperceptibly and over a long period of time from one commitment to another in a way I did not foresee in the beginning.”

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HELPING DETERMINED STUDENTS LEARN

Lubna Alzaroo

Lubna Alzaroo decided she wanted to enroll at Bethlehem University. There is an entrance exam and she had to be on campus by 8:00 am to take it. She got up early and took a taxi from Hebron to Bethlehem. They had only traveled 10 minutes when they came across a flying checkpoint. The Israelis were stopping cars. Lubna sat in the taxi for 10 minutes... for 20 minutes... and then she thought, "I have an exam at the university!" So, she got out of the taxi and walked around the checkpoint. The soldiers started yelling at her, telling her to stop. But she just kept walking.

Then she got in a taxi on the other side and made it to the university.

Lubna is Muslim, but she said, "One of the things about being Palestinian is the mixture we have here. It's very important to preserve the Palestinian Christian community because it is an integral part of Palestine.

It is an integral part of what it means to be Palestinian."

A vital partnership continues



For centuries, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem has protected Christian sites and supported Christians in the Holy Land.

Today, its membership spans across forty countries with an estimated 30,000 members.

The Bethlehem University Foundation and the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem have partnered over the years to help in their unified mission of supporting Christians in the Holy Land. This partnership has played a vital role in the creation of many endowed funds at the Foundation (investments that create perpetual support for Bethlehem University and its students).

Some endowed scholarships created by lieutenancies at Bethlehem University Foundation include: The Southeastern Lieutenancy Endowed Fund for the School of Nursing and Health Sciences, The Keith and Ginger Myers Endowed Fund for Nursing and Health Sciences (created by the Southeastern Lieutenancy), The Sir John McGuckin Mentoring

“The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem has long protected the Christian sites and supported the Christian community in the Holy Land. A Papal Order, its members dedicate themselves to personal sanctification, fidelity to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and support of the Christian Community in the Holy Land.”

and Internship Program (created by the Northwestern Lieutenancy), and The Reverend Jeremiah Spencer Endowed Fund for the School of Nursing and Health Sciences (created by the Northern Lieutenancy).

The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem’s partnership with the Bethlehem University Foundation has been an invaluable relationship that has flourished over the years. This partnership has given so many opportunities to students at Bethlehem University and will continue to do so for years to come!

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