Dear Friends,

Thank you for your interest in Roots-Judur-Shorashim, a unique grassroots organization established and run by local Palestinians and Israelis seeking to create a culture of nonviolence, understanding and transformation. We are strategically located in the Gush Etzion-Hebron area of the West Bank, a region that frequently experiences the pain of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. By working with people on both sides of the divide, we aim to create a new discourse from within these neighboring communities. We envision the creation of a political and social climate that honors the rights and connection of both peoples to the land, and provides freedom, dignity and civil rights for all its inhabitants.

The incredible moments and initiatives that we witness here on the ground — from the children speaking each other’s language, to the solidarity shown between neighbors across enemy lines — are all deeply indebted to the supportive partnerships we’ve developed. We invite you to join us on our path and thank you for believing in us, and we pray that the days ahead will bring the positive changes that all of us are yearning for.

With profound gratitude,

Khaled Abu Awad & Shaul Judelman
Roots co-directors

None of our work would be possible without the support of peacemakers who believe in our vision. Day by day you are helping us create a social reality that is founded on mutual dignity, trust and respect.

Please consider making a donation and becoming a peacemaker today!

Consider bringing Roots activists to your community, participating in Roots programs, and volunteering with Roots in the United States or on the ground in the region.

You can invest directly in our efforts by going to www.friendsofroots.net/donate and making a tax-deductible donation, or by sending a check to the address below:

Friends of Roots, c/o Dave Paller, Treasurer
4901 Libbit Ave., Encino, CA 91436

Together, we can move beyond the destructive discourse and take constructive actions towards a better future. Please join us in making this work possible.

For more information please feel free to contact us at: development@friendsofroots.net

A LOCAL PALESTINIAN-ISRAELI INITIATIVE for UNDERSTANDING, NON-VIOLENCE and TRANSFORMATION

At Roots our aim is to transform enemies into partners through direct human contact, deep listening and recognition of the other’s history and experience.

We promote:

• leadership instead of victimhood
• shared futures instead of hostile pasts
• equality instead of exclusivity
• paradigm shifts instead of status quo
• hope instead of despair
• standing with each other instead of against each other
Since our work began in 2014, Roots has become a center for grassroots work and partnerships, a platform for innovation, and a springboard for new discourse in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Our peace-building programs include:

- “Growing Roots” after-school program; young adult programs; photography workshops for kids; summer camps
- Solidarity visits to victims of violence; addressing extremist violence between communities
- Activists meetings; open houses; women’s group; lectures; language classes
- Spreading the message about Roots including hosting groups, pre-military academies workshops and visiting schools
- Jewish-Christian and Jewish-Muslim interfaith dialogue groups; joint Ramadan and Sukkot celebrations

When Muhamad, 16, from Bet Omar, first came to the Roots youth program, he felt really scared. Khaled, one of his classmates, was killed by the Israeli army shortly after the start of the program. Despite the family’s pleading, Khaled’s body was withheld by the IDF from burial. At the following Roots meeting, our staff chose to discuss the powerful emotions that arose after this tragedy. The entire Roots organization decided to apply pressure on the Israeli Defense Ministry to release Khaled’s body to his family for burial. Through broadcast protests and signed petitions, the pressure was sufficient to persuade Israel to finally return the body and allow the family to bury their son. Muhamad continued to attend our meetings and became one of the leaders of the program. Currently he is leading the new cohort of young adults, and is responsible for speaking with visiting groups about non-violence and social activism. He recently returned from shoulder surgery in Jordan, which was paid for through donations gathered by his Jewish friends.