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## Day of Solidarity: A Blog Post

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## Day of Solidarity Blog

Rae Peter

In early 2022, [Amnesty International](#), an international human rights organization, released a report detailing their findings of human rights violations in Israel: “We found that Israel’s cruel policies of segregation, dispossession and exclusion across all territories under its control clearly amount to apartheid.” The report, [Israel’s Apartheid against Palestinians: Cruel System of Domination and Crime Against Humanity](#), “sets out how massive seizures of Palestinian land and property, unlawful killings, forcible transfer, drastic movement restrictions, and the denial of nationality and citizenship to Palestinians are all components of a system which amounts to apartheid under international law.”

The WSU Students for Palestinian Liberation club was started in 2018 by Alexis Salem. This year for my field experience and activist application in Women’s Gender and Sexuality studies minor, I led the club.

Angela Davis’s *Freedom is a Constant Struggle* was an important book that aided my campus work. Over the course of the book, Davis discusses the connection between the civil rights movement here in the United States global liberation struggles, and the liberation movement in Palestine. Davis quotes Nelson Mandela as connecting struggles to end apartheid in South Africa and Palestine: “We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians” (53). In her book, Davis talks about the importance of organizing and fighting for change. As she points out, change “doesn’t happen by itself. It doesn’t happen automatically. You have to intervene. You have to make a conscious intervention” (28). This motivated the club to create an educational solidarity event on campus.

On April 11<sup>th</sup>, the WSU Students for Palestinian Liberation hosted a Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people. This day of education was in celebration of World Keffiyeh Day, which falls on May 11<sup>th</sup> in 2022. Organizing this event gave me a deeper understanding of the practical application of knowledge within my community.



Photo in the Indigenous Learning Garden of WSU alums and current students involved in WSU Students for Palestinian Liberation

We partnered with the WGSS department and the Coulee Region Coalition for Palestinian Rights (CRCPR) to bring this educational event to the campus community. We got to hear from two incredible speakers, Alexis Salem and Daoud Nassar.

Alexis Salem, a WSU WGSS alum and former president of the club, talked with the community about their experience starting the club and what it is like to be a Palestinian student on campus.

We also invited [Palestine Partners](#) to bring goods from the [Women in Hebron](#). Palestine Partners is a Wisconsin based group that “formed in 2020 during Covid to provide opportunities for people in the U.S. to connect with and support human rights projects in the West Bank.” Palestine Partners has programs to support the Youth of Sumud and the Women in Hebron, a fair trade craft collective led by women in Palestine that sells hand made goods. Women in Hebron promotes women’s art and connects their stories to others around the world.

The Winona community also got to have a zoom conference with Daoud Nassar from the Tent of Nations. The [Tent of Nations](#) is a peace and education center located on the Nassar’s 100-acre farm near Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank of Palestine. With a mission to build bridges between people, and the people and the land, they invite visitors to the farm to come and learn and then go tell their story of

“Faith, Love, and Hope.” Daoud spoke with the group about the importance of environmental justice, and the impact that the Israeli occupation has had on their farm.

Planning this event was a powerful experience for me and the club. The goods from the Women in Hebron were set up outside at the Gazebo all day. When people stopped to visit our table, they got to enter into conversation with us about the Women in Hebron and Palestine. Our final action of the year is to provide children’s books on Palestine for the local schools in order to continue our educational outreach into the larger community.



Photo of Palestine Partners booth by McKenna Scherer