

# PCRF Announces New Leadership

Vivian Khalaf First Woman  
Elected Chairperson of the Board

Courtesy of



Amputee children in Gaza enjoy the annual "Camp Ability" sponsored by PCRF.

**T**he board of directors of the Palestine Children's Relief Fund (PCRF) elected a new leadership slate at its October 2022 meeting. Vivian Khalaf, a private

attorney based in Chicago, Illinois, was elected chairperson, Oussama Abughazaleh elected vice chair, and Dr. Aziza Nassar was re-elected as secretary. Fawaz Saad will continue to serve as treasurer, and serving as directors at large are Dr. Khaled Abughazaleh, Marwan Elmasri, Tania Nasir, Fatma Abughazaleh, Ashraf Abuissa, Said Shehadeh, and Dr. Walid Masoud. Steve Sosebee continues in his role as president. Outgoing CEO Imad Nassereddin officially ended his two-year term on December 31, 2022, but he continues to serve during the transition period to the new CEO, whose name will be announced early in 2023.



The Red Nose Clowns of Palestine entertain children being treated for cancer in the Huda Al Masri Pediatric Cancer Department in Beit Jala Hospital, opened by PCRF in 2013 as Palestine's first public cancer hospital for children.

Khalaf previously served a three-year term as a director at large and is the first woman to be elected chairperson in the organization's 30-year history. "Being the first is great," she says, "but my commitment will not be the last. I'm proud to be a part of this executive board and to work beside my colleagues collaboratively and passionately. I'm fortunate to be working with amazing people, including our staff, volunteers, doctors, and other stakeholders, all of whom I deeply respect and admire."

She feels that PCRF has made a concerted effort to effect change in the organization, in alignment with its growth and increasing impact on the Palestinian health sector. "Along with our stakeholders, we will continue to review and refine our place in the world of NGOs that operate primarily in Palestine (as PCRF also engages in Jordan and Lebanon) and scrutinize and enhance our responsibilities within this work on every level," she asserts. Further commenting on the growth and challenges facing PCRF,

she assures, "We have identified where we need to shift. We are working tirelessly to address how best to safely navigate the challenges of the worsening political climate and the continuing need for quality health care in the region. These are continued efforts that require our utmost commitment to long-term solutions."

Steve Sosebee added, "PCRF's success over our 30 years is due to the leadership of strong and capable women, beginning with my first wife, Huda Al-Masri (may God rest her soul in peace). With Vivian assuming the role of chairperson during this critical time in our organizational development and growth, I am increasingly confident that our impact and service to Palestine will be stronger than ever. I look forward to working closely with her as chairperson to continue our mission of saving the lives of Arab children throughout the Middle East while strengthening the public health sector in Palestine."



One of the children being tutored through PCRF sponsorship so that they don't fall behind in their studies during their long inpatient treatment in the Huda Al Masri Pediatric Cancer Department.

The PCRF was founded in 1992 by Steve Sosebee with the support of concerned citizens and with the aim of bringing injured and sick children to the United States for free medical care that they could not receive locally. Since then, PCRF has provided life-saving medical assistance to thousands of ill and injured children and sponsored hundreds of volunteer medical teams that have come from all over the world to treat children in local hospitals. PCRF also has built two pediatric cancer departments in Palestine and will soon be opening a state-of-the-art Pediatric Cardiac Surgery Department at the Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah. Numerous other major programs and projects are currently under way to help support the development of a sustainable health care system in Palestine.

Khalaf is particularly proud of the work PCRF has done with its Amputee Program in Gaza, which began in 2019 and continues to support the care of children in Gaza who suffer from congenital or traumatic limb amputations due to injuries sustained during bombings or because of gunshot wounds. She affirms, "As long as the suffering of the Palestinian people continues, PCRF will continue working in pursuit of its 30-year mission."

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PCRF is the main NGO bringing hundreds of volunteer doctors and nurses from all over the world to treat thousands of children and train local personnel in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

