



Message from the Dorot Director

Dear Friends,

It gives me particular pleasure to send you this first issue of our revived monthly newsletter. The region we call home has too often been defined by conflict. But that is not the story of the Albright, and it is not the story I want to tell here. Each month, I want to share with our wider community the many achievements the Institute continues to make, as we grow our mission here in Jerusalem.

Indeed, the last few months have seen real momentum. This week we welcome an extraordinary gathering of scholars to campus for *The Eleventh Century CE: Archaeology and History*, a three-day international conference organized by our NEH Fellow Shulamit Miller that explores a pivotal, often-overlooked century in the history of the Levant, from Fatimid Tiberias to the eve of the Crusades. The following day, July 10, we mark Freedom250, a celebration made possible by our partnership with the US Department of State and the US Embassy in Jerusalem. Both events speak to something I value deeply about this Institute: its capacity to bring people together, in person, around ideas that matter.

We've also welcomed several new colleagues to the Albright family this spring, in philanthropy, finance, operations, conservation, and in our kitchen. Each of these new hires brings their own expertise and energy to the work we do. You'll find more about them below.

None of this work happens without you. Whether through a paving stone, a gift to our new kitchen campaign, or simply your continued interest in the Albright's story, your support carries us forward. As we move through our 126th year, I am grateful for every part of this extended community.

With warm wishes,

Jamie

James Fraser
Dorot Director
W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research

Upcoming Events

The Eleventh Century CE: Archaeology and History

An international conference at the Albright, July 7-9, bringing together Israeli, Palestinian and international scholars to explore a pivotal but understudied century in the Levant, from Fatimid Tiberias to the eve of the Crusades. In person only. Attendance is free; registration closed June 30, but email Jamie Fraser (jamesfraser@aiar.org) or NEH Fellow Shulamit Miller (shulamit.miller@mail.huji.ac.il).

Freedom250 Celebration

Join us from 1pm IDT on July 10 to mark this milestone under our US Department of State-funded initiative. Open to all, no charge, but registration is essential by July 4. [Register here](#) →

Centennial Celebrations: Save the Date

We are looking ahead to celebrating 100 years of the Albright in our iconic building in Jerusalem. Due to ongoing flight restrictions to the region, the Centennial Celebrations have been postponed to **June 27, 2027**. We look forward to gathering with friends and colleagues from around the world to mark this milestone together.

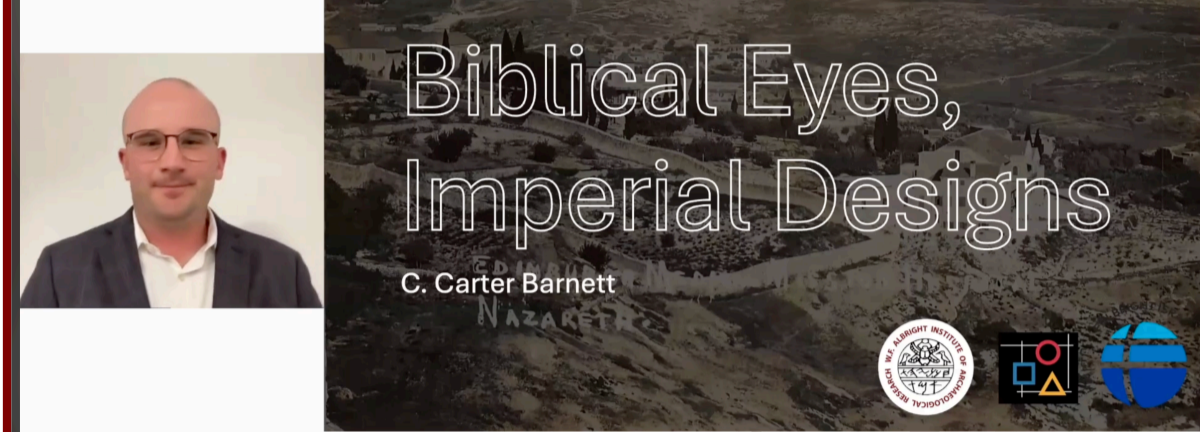
News to Celebrate

US Embassy & Department of State Grant

In November 2025, the Albright was awarded a two-year, \$1.6 million grant from the US Department of State, secured through the US Embassy in Jerusalem. It's a vote of confidence in the Institute's work, and a meaningful financial bridge during a period of transition. The grant supports three initiatives:

► Galilee Heritage Work

In partnership with the Israel Antiquities Authority, the grant supports preservation and presentation of early Judeo-Christian sites in the Galilee, including an ancient synagogue at Huqoq excavated by AIAR Trustee Prof. Jodi Magness.



The Huqoq Excavation Project uncovering the mosaic showing Samson carrying the gate of Gaza, Huqoq synagogue, Galilee. Photo credit: Jim Haberman.

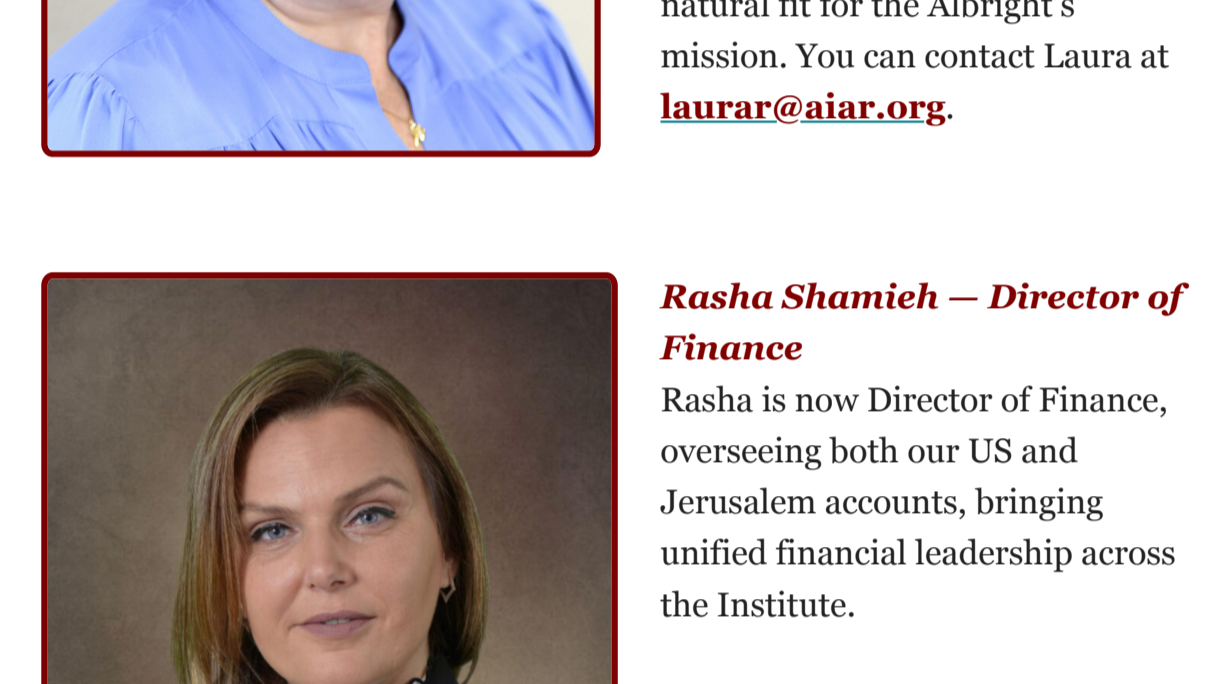
► Collections Conservation & Digitization

A dedicated Project Conservator is safeguarding and digitizing the Albright's archival and archaeological collections, including the recently acquired *Albright Family Archive*, ensuring these materials are preserved and accessible for generations of researchers to come.

► Albright100 & Freedom250 Celebration

The grant provides direct support for our centennial and Freedom250 programming, including the celebration we're hosting on July 10.

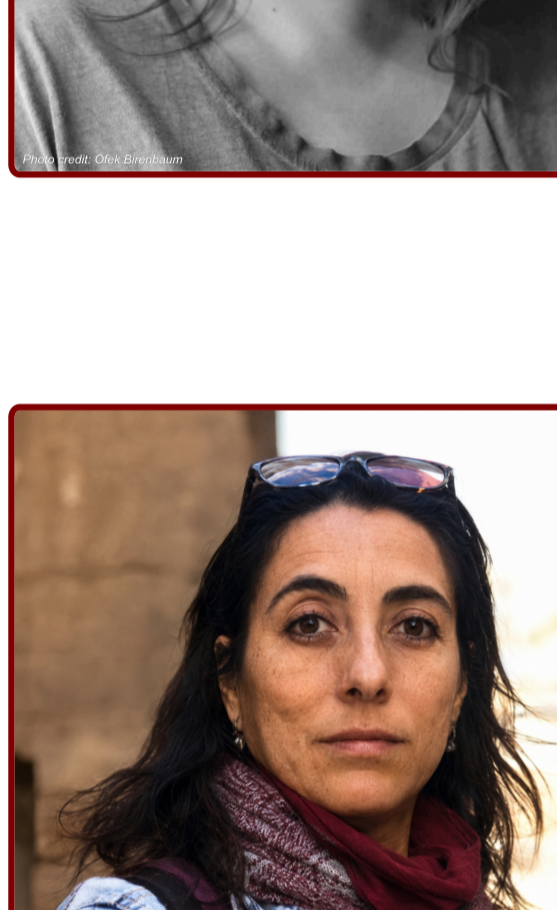
Albright Live



All of our lectures are streamed live and recordings are placed on our [Albright Live YouTube channel](#). See below the final lecture of our Spring program, presented by Fulbright Israel scholar Carter Barnett, titled *Biblical Eyes, Imperial Designs*, on the history of hospitals in Gaza from the Mamluk to Mandate periods.

We also congratulate Carter on recently receiving the 2026 Richard H. Shryock Medal from the American Association for the History of Medicine. Kudos! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbZ7gJy4Lw>

Staff News



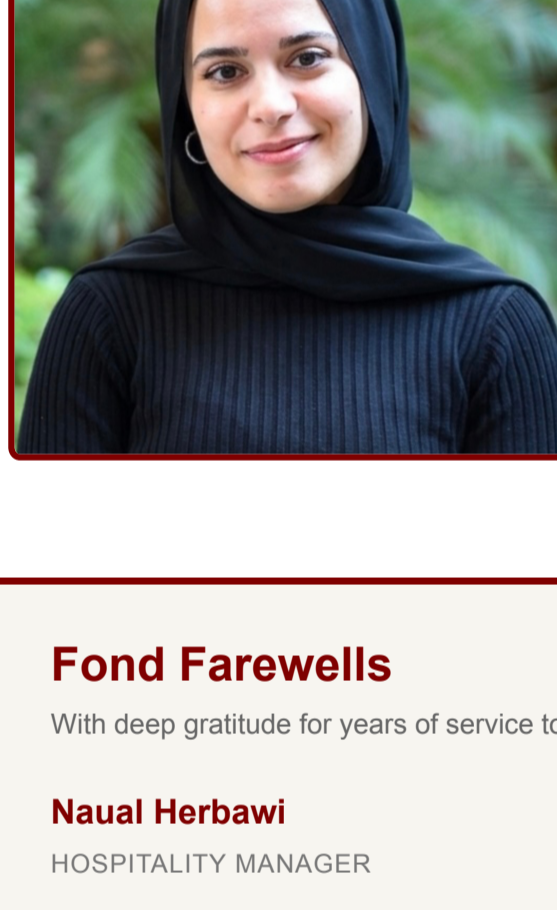
Laura Rheintgen – Director of Philanthropy

Laura joins the Albright as our new US Director of Philanthropy. She brings more than three decades of nonprofit fundraising experience, including past work with the American Research Center in Egypt, making her a natural fit for the Albright's mission. You can contact Laura at laurar@aiar.org.



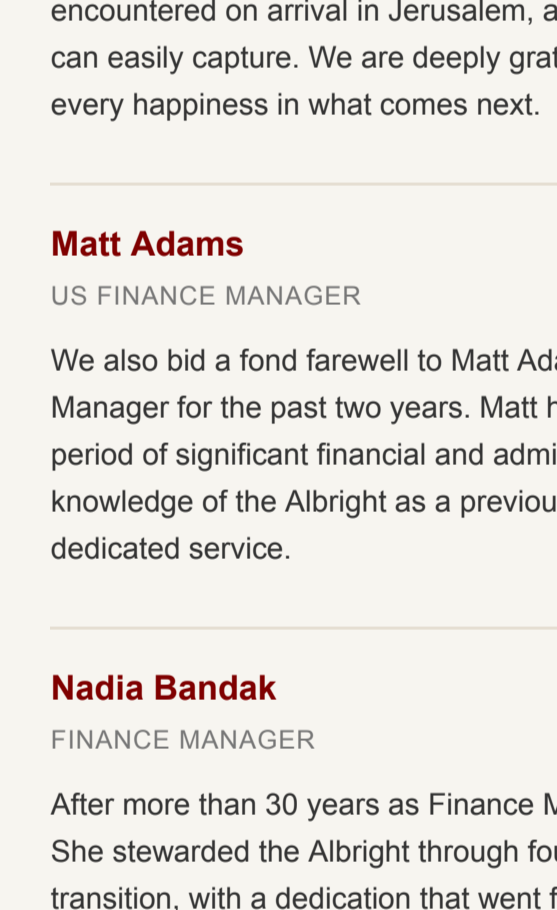
Rasha Shamieh – Director of Finance

Rasha is now Director of Finance, overseeing both our US and Jerusalem accounts, bringing unified financial leadership across the Institute.



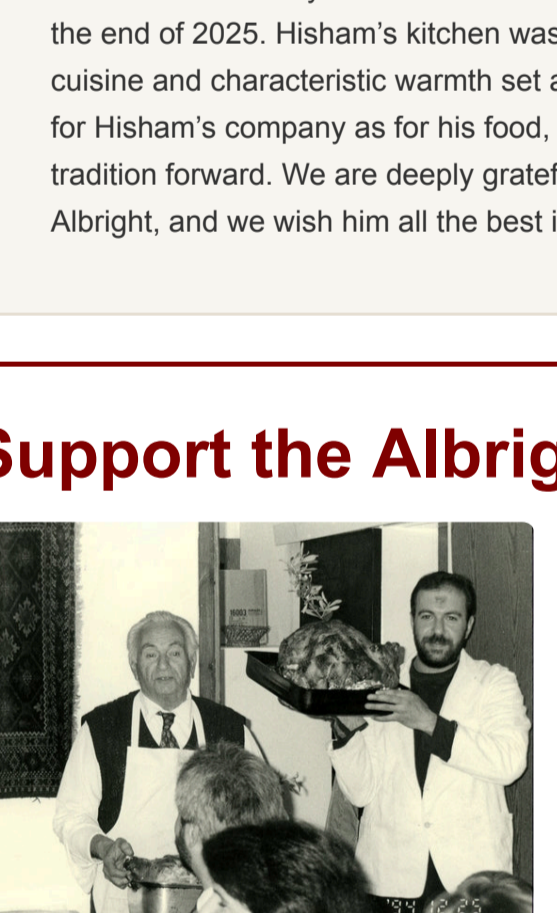
George Ghneim – Operations and Administration Manager

George joins us this month as our new Operations and Administration Manager. He brings a background in operations, marketing, and project management, and will manage the hostel and local financial tasks.



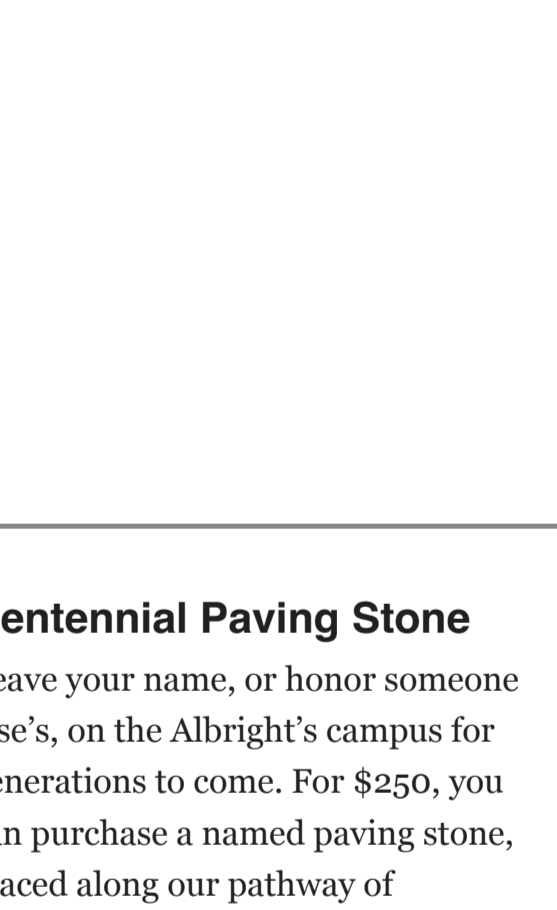
Yuli Gekht – Assistant Director

Yuli has joined the Albright as Assistant Director, stepping into the role while Dr. Shua Kisilevitz continues her secondment as Project Manager for the Galilee Heritage Project. Yuli holds a BA in Archaeology from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and brings extensive field experience, having directed excavations at Neshet-Ramla and participated in projects across Israel including Tel Dor, Tiberias, and Tel Shikmona.



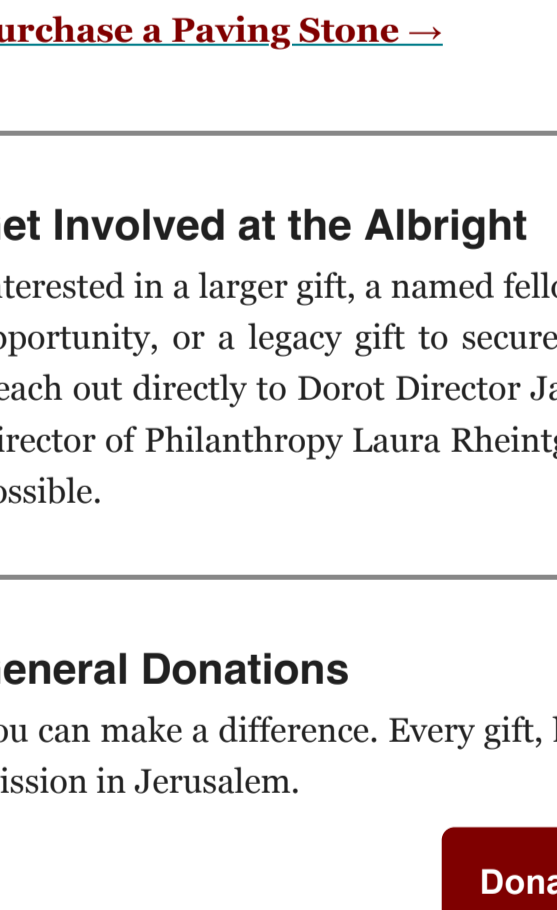
Alejandra Sanchez – Project Conservator

Alejandra joined our library team to safeguard and digitize the Albright's archival and archaeological collections, including the *Albright Family Archive*, as part of our US Embassy/State Dept Grant.



Daoud Jibreen – Assistant Chef

Daoud has stepped into the kitchen as Assistant Chef, continuing a family tradition of service to the Albright now in its third generation.



Ruba Shweiki – Head Librarian and Archivist

Ruba Shweiki joined the Albright in October 2025 as the Head Librarian and Archivist, previously working at the National Library of Israel. She works three days a week at the Albright (Tuesdays to Thursdays), and two days a week as Librarian at the Kenyon Institute.

Fond Farewells

With deep gratitude for years of service to the Albright community.

Nauval Herbawi

HOSPITALITY MANAGER

After nine years as our Hospitality Manager, Nauval has moved on from the Albright. For so many fellows and visitors, hers was the first warm smile they encountered on arrival in Jerusalem, a welcome that meant more than words can easily capture. We are deeply grateful for her dedication, and we wish her every happiness in what comes next.

Matt Adams

US FINANCE MANAGER

We also bid a fond farewell to Matt Adams, who served as US Finance Manager for the past two years. Matt helped steward the Institute through a period of significant financial and administrative transition, drawing on his deep knowledge of the Albright as a previous Dorot Director. We thank Matt for his dedicated service.

Nadia Bandak

FINANCE MANAGER

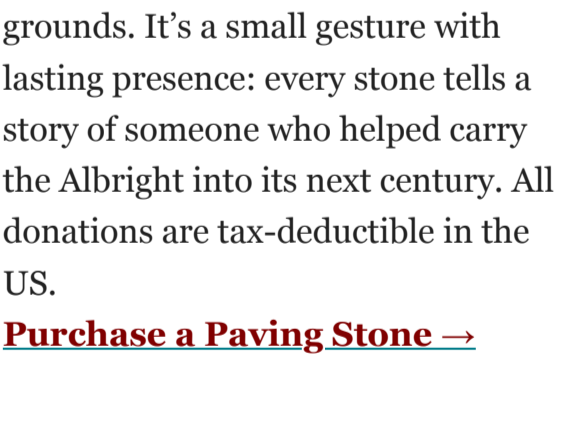
After more than 30 years as Finance Manager, Nadia retired at the end of 2025. She stewarded the Albright through four directorates and several periods of transition, with a dedication that went far beyond what any job description could ask. We are deeply grateful for her service, and we wish her every happiness in her retirement.

Hisham Jibreen

CHEF AND KITCHEN MANAGER

After more than 30 years as our Chef and Kitchen Manager, Hisham retired at the end of 2025. Hisham's kitchen was the heart of the Albright, where superb cuisine and characteristic warmth set a unique tone. Visitors returned as much for Hisham's company as for his food, and his son Daoud now carries that tradition forward. We are deeply grateful for everything Hisham gave to the Albright, and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

Support the Albright



The Omar and Hisham Jibreen Kitchen Campaign

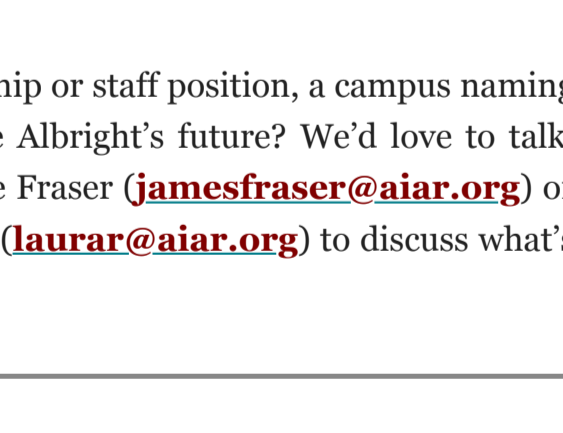
Two names, one kitchen, eight decades of service. We're honoring the extraordinary legacy of Omar and Hisham Jibreen, uncle and nephew, whose combined dedication shaped the Albright's kitchen and table for generations, by naming the kitchen in their memory. With Hisham's son Daoud now carrying the tradition into a third generation, this campaign is both a tribute and a continuation. To learn more about their legacy, view some photos, and to support the campaign, use the link below.

[Support the Campaign](#) →

Centennial Paving Stone

Leave your name, or honor someone else's, on the Albright's campus for generations to come. For \$250, you can purchase a named paving stone, placed along our pathway of supporters on the Institute's grounds. It's a small gesture with lasting presence: every stone tells a story of someone who helped carry the Albright into its next century. All donations are tax-deductible in the US.

[Purchase a Paving Stone](#) →



Get Involved at the Albright

Interested in a larger gift, a named fellowship or staff position, a campus naming opportunity, or a legacy gift to secure the Albright's future? We'd love to talk. Reach out directly to Dorot Director Jamie Fraser (jamesfraser@aiar.org) or Director of Philanthropy Laura Rheintgen (laurar@aiar.org) to discuss what's possible.

General Donations

You can make a difference. Every gift, large or small, helps sustain the Albright's mission in Jerusalem.

[Donate Here](#)

