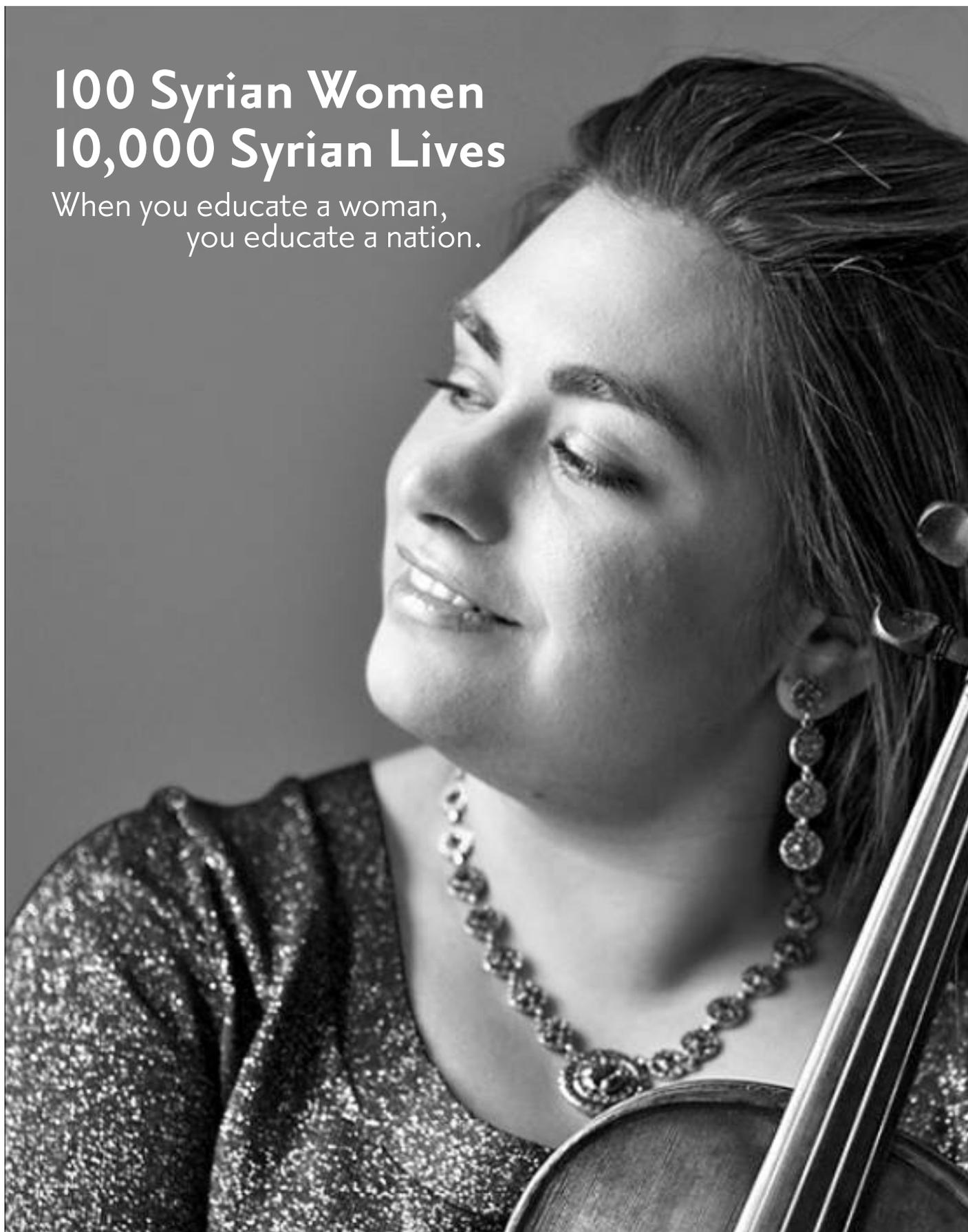


# 100 Syrian Women 10,000 Syrian Lives

When you educate a woman,  
you educate a nation.



## SETTING THE STAGE

Over half of Syria's university population has had to terminate their studies as a result of the ongoing crisis in Syria. The Institute of International Education (IIE) and the University of California, Davis estimate that between 100,000 and 200,000 university-age Syrian youth are currently displaced from higher education. In particular, the rate of participation by women, once more than 25% and equal to that of Syrian men, has reached the single digits. For example, in Turkey less than 2% of university-age Syrian women refugees were enrolled in higher education during the 2013-14 academic year.

This represents a deep tragedy for Syrian youth. These young men and women have worked their entire lives to make it to university and be successful in life, and suddenly they are stopped in their tracks. This also represents a deep risk to the future stability of Syria and the region; a lost generation will greatly extend the turmoil that Syria and the Arab world are facing. This represents a massive risk to the world, with undirected and frustrated youth becoming targets for recruitment into terrorist organizations.

There is an opportunity for universities and leaders in the United States to play an important role in creating hope and opportunity for these young people. Over 40 universities across the world have come together through the IIE Syria Consortium for Higher Education in Crisis to provide partial and full scholarships to over 150 Syrian students.

These students have thrived at their host universities and beyond, despite incredibly challenging circumstances - transferring halfway through their programs to entirely new academic systems, leaving their families behind in war-torn conditions, and working extensive hours each week to make ends meet. Despite having no relevant work experience when they began to look for internships and jobs, their achievements today are numerous and deeply impressive

- Landing jobs and internships at the world's top companies, including Goldman Sachs, Intel, Google, IBM, Apple, Nokia, ITW, Motorola, Deutsche Bank, JP Morgan Chase, Larson Engineering
- Selected as the Champion of Change for World of Refugee and honored at The White House
- Meeting President Clinton as a reward for becoming finalists in the 'Up to Us' competition
- Invited to deliver a TEDx talk on campus entitled "Drone Delivery - Closer Than You Think"
- Invited to deliver the student commencement address
- Winning numerous hackathons on campus
- Elected to student government office

These students took the little they were given and made extraordinary things happen. They will surely not only become Syria's future leaders but also some of the world's great leaders.

<sup>1</sup> "We Will Stop Here and Go No Further: Syrian University Student and Scholars in Turkey" by "Keith David Watenpaugh, Adrienne L. Fricke, and James R. King with Chris Gratien and Seçil Yılmaz .Institute of International Education and University of California, Davis; 2014.

Cover photo: Mariela Shaker was awarded a Jusoor scholarship to Monmouth College in 2013. She graduated in May 2015 and was selected as a Champion of Change for the World of Refugee. Mariela received an invitation to be honored at the White House on June 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 to talk about her work and the challenges and opportunities she has encountered.

## Our Goal

We are working to build momentum behind this effort, and in particular, support Syrian women in achieving a university education. Using a highly leveraged model, our goal is to bring 100 Syrian women to study at U.S. universities during the next two academic years.

We seek to raise \$5 million from foundations, governments, and philanthropists for this program, expecting to leverage at least \$5 million from our university partners. We believe our results will be exponential in impact; public and private investment will leverage an equal or greater amount of university support, resulting in 100 women leaders who will then go on to positively impact 10,000 Syrian lives.

“Women are the best drivers of growth, the best hope for reconciliation in a conflict and the best buffer against the radicalization of youth and the repetition of cycles of violence.”

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director

Despite gender parity at Syria's universities prior to the conflict, Syrian young women are approximately three times less likely to access higher education in exile than their male counterparts. The consequences of women losing access to education include vulnerability to economically strategic marriages, disempowerment within their communities, and loss of professional and economic opportunities.

When we realize our goal to provide women with education, these women will have the chance to be among the world's great leaders and will have profound impact in stabilizing Syria's future. Women must be empowered to be full participants in:

- Peace negotiations
- Recovery Programmes
- Monitoring & implementation of peace agreements
- Government & parliaments
- Security & Justice sectors
- Post-conflict planning
- Administration of public services
- Peacekeeping missions
- Transitional justice

## PROGRAM DETAILS

The scholarships will be administered as part of the IIE-led Syria Consortium and will work as follows

- Students who have received admission to any university providing at least a 50% scholarship on total cost of education will be invited to apply for additional funding as needed
- Recipients will be selected by a committee composed of the founding members of the Syria Consortium (IIE, Jusoor, Illinois Institute of Technology, and EducationUSA)

The maximum scholarship amount per student over the course of their education is \$50,000.

### Selection Criteria

Females will be selected according to the following criteria:

- Demonstration of exemplary service and leadership, academic excellence and civic responsibility
- Characteristics reflecting the importance of empathy, humility, courage and resilience.
- Achieved success in the face of extraordinary circumstances including poverty, violence, war, natural disaster, persecution or discrimination through exercising the pursuit of their dreams and vision for a better world
- Potential to serve as global leaders through collaborative engagement with a deep commitment to giving back to create and sustain the next generation of leaders
- Documented financial need
- Born and raised in Syria

### Professional and Career Development

- Each scholar will have access to a team of mentors to focus on immediate, mid-range and long-term professional and life planning
- Scholars will have primary consideration for internships, research, and applied learning/training initiatives at founding member institutions and organizations and their affiliates
- Through an extensive Advisory Board and their network, scholars will be introduced to outstanding volunteer, professional, and service opportunities at leading national and international NGOs and CBOs. They will also be connected with distinguished think tanks, institutions, governmental offices and media services relevant to advance a young woman's career

### Donors

We are seeking support from foundations, governments, and individual donors. In particular, we welcome public/private partnerships and a diverse group of donors who share our goal of empowering Syria's next generation of women leaders.

We seek:

- Foundation commitments of \$500,000 or above
- Government support of \$500,000 or above
- At least 25 individual donors at the \$100,000 commitment level or above.

### Impact

With donor investment totaling \$5 million we expect exponential impact. First, donor funds will be matched on at least a one-to-one basis by our university partners. Each participating university is expected to provide at least half of the resources required for the scholars to complete their education. Often, our university partners contribute more than the match, providing food and housing, enabling women to work on campus and providing access to community resources that strengthen and empower women leaders.

Second, we expect every woman who is provided a scholarship to positively impact at least 1,000 Syrians following her graduation. Our evidence and research has shown that educated Syrian women go on to help their families and communities in many different ways. For example, they help to educate younger siblings and family members, they provide income to their families, and they mentor and assist their fellow students and refugees. As a result of this exponential impact, we expect that improving the lives of 100 Syrian women will improve the lives of 10,000 Syrians.

“Protecting and empowering women during and after conflicts is one of the most important challenges of our time.”

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General

## SUCCESS STORIES

Our initiative to educate Syrian women is further heightened when we witness the successes that young Syrian women have achieved through education. From joining Goldman Sachs to invitations to the White House, we share the stories of these resilient young women through their own words.

### Education is the Most Powerful Weapon

"On September 1, 2012, I said goodbye to my family to take my flight to the US. It was my first flight ever. I was transferring to Illinois Institute of Technology from my beloved mother country, Syria.

Almost 19 months later, so much has happened! I interviewed and earned an internship at Goldman Sachs for Summer 2013; applied for and received a RISE (Research in Science and Engineering) fellowship in Germany; developed friendships with students from throughout Chicago and from all over the world – many of whom I know will be life-long friends and colleagues.

I have lived the international experience, and last but not least, I GRADUATED!

I cannot begin to describe how happy I am to be among one of the first four Syrians to graduate under the IIT-Jusoor scholarship with high academic achievements. I have definitely changed a lot during the last two years broadening and deepening my perspective of the world in all of its diversity, and complexity. I still have a great deal to learn and explore about myself and my place in this world – as well as my contributions and service – but it definitely feels awesome to have that BSc degree while doing that.

None of this would have been possible without the help of Illinois Tech and Jusoor. The way they cooperated is beyond inspiring. We will be forever thankful for IIT's effort to help students from countries of conflict, and Jusoor's effort to help Syrians of all ages to continue their education and build their dreams wherever they find themselves in the world.

What's going on in my country breaks my heart – every moment of everyday. I know that I cannot stop the conflict, but I'm going to join it with my own weapon: Education! Along with a fundamental belief in the contributions of research and applied service to one's community.

With so many Syrians losing their chance at education, it's our responsibility as Syrians to help each other as much as we can. Let's bring the smiles back to our Syria and guarantee a better future, one educated Syrian at a time." - *Nour Daoud*

Nour Daoud is currently a Technology Analyst at Goldman Sachs. She graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology in May 2014 with a bachelors in Electrical Engineering. Nour is now actively working on the #RunForSyria initiative, a marathon to raise funds for the education of Syrian refugee children.

### Women in Power

"If you want to destroy a country, start with the woman. She is half of the society and she raises the other half. Deprive her from education and keep her away from studying and learning and you will get an ignorant society." That was a quote I came across [...] and spent the whole day thinking about how true it is. [...] Unfortunately this is not what many women see. They underestimate themselves and don't believe in their ability to affect this world.

What we really need is a change in the way the woman is looked at. This change is not only from men's perspective but also from the perspective of the woman herself. I think our role is to raise awareness of how educating women is the key to a well-structured society that offers equal opportunities to its people regardless of their gender." - *Zeina Abdul Samad*

Zeina Abdul Samad was one of the first Syrian students who received a scholarship from Jusoor to attend Illinois Institute of Technology. She graduated in December 2014 with a Bachelors of Information Technology and Management degree and is now a Software Developer at Goldman Sachs.

### On the Cover Page

Mariela Shaker, born in 1990 in Aleppo, Syria, started playing the violin at the age of ten when she joined the Arabic Institute of Music in Aleppo. In 2013, Mariela received a scholarship from Jusoor to attend Monmouth College in Illinois to study Music Performance. She graduated in May 2015 and was selected as a Champion of Change for the World of Refugee. Mariela received an invitation to be honored at the White House on June 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 to talk about her work and the challenges and opportunities she has encountered.

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

– Nelson Mandela

