



# TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL

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## New skills, bright futures

Vocational training equips refugee students in Lebanon

# Vocational Classes Equip Syrians for Resettlement

Classes in sewing, electrical skills, and technology renew hope for refugee families

A few years ago, Pastor Joseph Milan had four electrical tools, two sewing machines and three computers. He and his son Sayeed, co-founders of Warm Heart Lebanon, were using what they had to deliver vocational and technological training to Syrian refugee families in Bekaa Valley, but the work was under-resourced and the progress slow.

Since then, Tent Schools International (TSI) supporters have come together to help Warm Heart grow its vocational programs, with TSI sending laptops through a partnership with electronics refurbisher, Comprenew. Warm Heart now has electrical tools for 20 students, 13 sewing machines, and twice the number of computers.

"I thank God for TSI, for your [donors], for your love, care and support," Joseph said.

The sewing class is the most recent addition to the mobile school's offerings. Sewing students initially made throw pillows, but quickly wanted to take on more projects. "They were sleeping on the pillows, but they couldn't turn in the night because they are small and square," Joseph said. "They asked my wife, 'Can we make real pillows?'"

Joseph and Sayeed agree that relationship-building is the most important part of Warm Heart's work with refugees, and considering the sobering aspects of their students' lives, spending quality time together is a key part of reaching them.

"Hot meals we're sharing together, the way we appreciate them, the way we show respect - it gives them value and dignity," said Sayeed. "We take their opinions seriously. All of the life skills involved in our interactions with them while also providing academics is helping. We are making a difference. They are changing. This is definitely a positive result."

"It's not just the academics they are benefiting from. They are looking for opportunities. They are catching our vision for them."

- Sayeed Milan

The majority of refugee youth find work in the fields of local farmers to support their families, making school attendance a challenge. When they do come, "you can see their smiles in their eyes, without them saying anything," said Rawan Haddad, TSI's development director who is originally from Jordan. "We can see their joy when they are able to go to school."

Sayeed says without education, Syrian kids will lack opportunities. "Without school, they will be taken advantage of. It's not just the academics they are benefiting from. They are looking for opportunities. They want to develop. They are catching our vision for them." •

**Thank you for your support of this important work in Lebanon!**

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT:  
1. Students take an electrical class delivered by the mobile school. 2. Pastor Joseph works with a student one-on-one. 3. A Syrian student shows off her handiwork crafted in the mobile school's sewing class.



# Classes Continue Despite Missile Strikes

Ukrainian school prepares for 2023-2024 year

Academy of Wisdom in Bucha, Ukraine, is planning to launch a new school year after losing 110 students to displacement and no end in sight to the war with Russia.

"Russian news says that their army is more successful," said Alina Tolbas, the school's director, who has lived in Germany with her family since the invasion. "European news says Ukrainians are more successful. Every day we hear something different. This war will take time, and it's difficult to say when it will end."

Serge Kozhukh is a school employee still living in Bucha. He says he hears missiles land nearby several times a week. "We plan to start the school year with the 140 students who have returned. We need to open our school in person despite the dangers."

Tolbas visits the school when she can, and says her greatest joy is seeing students able to gather in person after displacement and virtual learning. She expressed gratitude for the support donors have sent for teachers. "It's not only financial support, it's



Sandbags cover school windows to protect students from injury in case of Russian missiles.



also hope for our school. Now we can continue our work. It's difficult to express my gratitude in words." •

Keep up-to-date on Ukraine at [www.tentschoolsint.org/newsroom](http://www.tentschoolsint.org/newsroom).

## JORDAN | UNIQUE NEEDS ARE MET IN A NEW CLASSROOM

A newly-outfitted classroom is almost ready at Good Shepherd Center, a Christian school serving displaced Iraqi students in Jordan. TSI donors recently funded this space for children with hearing and speech impairments, ADHD and autism. Funding covered floor mats, sensory materials, art supplies and an inclusive outdoor play area.

After fleeing ISIS, many students arrive from Iraq with the effects of trauma while others were born with a particular condition. Now, staff will have the ability to use Montessori tools and customized plans for each child as teachers work with students one-on-one. Each day will be divided between mornings in the new classroom and afternoons with the other students.

Principal Dawlat Hijazeen says the afternoon integration is important.

"We want them to be part of the community and learn how to be in the outside world," she said. "We want them to understand they are not weird or strange, and the other kids can learn to accept them - they can be with them like normal. We want the mainstream kids to know how to deal with their friends in their situations."

Four students will immediately transfer to the new classroom; five families are waiting to be admitted when the classroom is ready next month. •

Learn more about our partner in Jordan at [www.tentschoolsint.org](http://www.tentschoolsint.org).

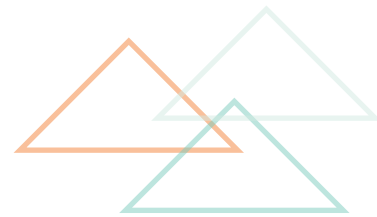
Christian (at right), is a student with hearing impairment who is now thriving at school.





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**DELIVERING** *bright futures*

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## EXTENDING GRATITUDE.

Your support gets refugee kids back in school. For them, this represents a return to safety, normalcy, and the chance for a bright future. Thank you!

**BUILDING OUR BOARD:** Contact us about joining our Board of Directors!

@TentSchoolsInt   



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### OUR MISSION

TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL demonstrates the love of Jesus for displaced children through safe, compassionate schools.

TENT SCHOOLS INTERNATIONAL is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and a proud member of the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA.org).

