

**Welcome Wafaa Abuelula from Syria
To
Webster Groves and Webster University**



This fall, the Women of Emmanuel will join churches throughout the country in welcoming people fleeing from violence in Syria and hardships of refugee camps.

We are blessed to be invited to join a coalition of Webster churches to support Wafaa Abuelula a young Syrian Palestinian woman (photo above with self portrait) living in a refugee camp in Turkey. She has been sponsored by a group of women in New York to attend Webster University, and they have reached out to churches here to help.

Q: Which Webster Groves churches are involved?

A: Peace UCC and 1st Congregational have each pledged social support and \$2,000 per year for 4 years. Other churches are considering involvement. WOE has pledged 1,330 for this school year with the hope of continuing for 4 years.

Q: Where will the money come from?

A: The Belles of ?christmas is our fundraiser. We are looking at ways to make it even better and more productive than before including adding a small but quality silent auction. Come and bring friends!

Q: How did Emmanuel get involved?

A: A friend of Martie Metzler's in New York City was recruiting a Wafaa Support Group from Webster churches to provide hospitality and the smaller budget items such as book, medical insurance, and personal expenses.

Q: When and how will Wafaa arrive?

A: Women for Wafaa is organizing the travel to New York for 4 Syrian students traveling together. We will use Frequent flyer miles to fly her to St. Louis. There will be an air port greeting party with signs and balloons. Talk to Kristyn or Laurie to join in. Date TBA.

Q Where will she live?

A: She will live and take all her meals with the Sisters of Loretto on the Nerinex campus.

Q: What will we be doing with Wafaa after she arrives?

A: Depending on her time and energy, we might offer rides to shopping or medical appointments, tours of St. Louis, and provide transportation for her to visit her sister at Westminster College in Fulton. She will be invited to EEC and WOE functions, but with 3 churches involved and a busy college schedule, we will not make demands upon her time.

Q: How can I get involved?

A: Talk to Martie Metzler, or Co-chairs of WOE, Kristyn Brenner and Laurie Parker.

WOE has pledged \$1,300 book and supply money and social/logistical support for this year. This means we are counting on a great Belles of Christmas fundraiser, so put it on your calendar and plan to bring guests. We are also looking for frequent flyer miles toward her airfare to St. Louis. To learn more about Wafaa, her Webster support group, and how you can be involved, talk to Kristyn Brenner and Laurie Parker, or Martie Metzler, or go to emmanuelepiscopal.org and click on Mission, Syrian Student Project.

Prayer:

Gracious God, we pray for Wafaa, her family, and all those families who have sought refuge from the ravages of war and violence. May they find shelter and sustenance, but also a loving and supportive community in which to create a new beginning with dignity. Inspire and guide us to be good neighbors of all newcomers to our community. In the name of Jesus Christ, a refugee and lover of all. Amen.