



**2018**  
**Annual Report**  
**The Asherah Foundation**

**The Asherah Foundation is a US 501(c)3 organization.  
Learn more at [www.AsherahFoundation.org](http://www.AsherahFoundation.org)**

## Letter from Executive Director Heather MacCleoud

March 8, 2019

Today, March 8, 2019, marks the three-year anniversary of the Asherah Foundation! This non-profit has come a long way since its origins in a handful of conversations among colleagues discussing increasing refugee crises around the world, and difficulties for so many in accessing higher education. These conversations turned into a coherent idea, from: “someone should do something about this” to: “what if we did something about this?” “Be the change you wish to see in the world” has been our informal mantra.

The Asherah Foundation was named after an ancient Mesopotamian goddess (Asherah), known as “she who treads on the sea.” This seemed fitting as many of the stories we were hearing involved treacherous sea voyages – many of which involved areas that were once part of Mesopotamia. Furthermore, many of the stories we were hearing involved women overcoming significant obstacles to obtain education, employment, and a better life for their families.

So, on March 8, 2016, we formed the Asherah Foundation. It has been global since its inception, with Executive Board members, scholarship applicants, Advisory Board members, and interns from countries all over the world. Many who have worked with us have overcome significant obstacles themselves. They are highlighted in the following pages.

In 2018, we had many reasons to celebrate. [Amani Jebriil](#), one of our first scholarship recipients completed her master’s degree in Water Science and Environment at Birzeit University and published a book based on her research: [Bio-energy in Palestine between Reality and Potential](#). Ms. Jebriil was also invited to consult on the evaluation and updating of two graduate programs at the university.

In 2018 we celebrated the progress of another amazing, and resilient woman. [Maryline Jabar](#), eldest of four, grew up in the heart of a civil war. She has been pursuing her Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Health Sciences at the Stella Maris Polytechnic University in Monrovia, Liberia. First awarded a scholarship in 2017, she made such outstanding progress that we were able to renew her scholarship for 2018.

In 2018 we also awarded a scholarship to Nour Awerah, studying banking and finance at Yildirim Beyazit University after being forcibly-displaced due to the ongoing conflicts in Syria. Finally, we awarded a scholarship to [Maklin Hussein Al-Ahmadi](#), a single mother who fled from the conflict in Yemen and is now finishing her doctoral thesis in Economics in Egypt.

The Asherah Foundation’s scholarships are supported entirely by donations. Our capacity to offer scholarships is limited only by the donations we receive. Support these inspiring and resilient women by [making a donation](#) today!

With gratitude for your ongoing support,



Heather MacCleoud  
Executive Director

## Our 2018 Scholarship Recipients

In 2018 we awarded Second Chance Scholarships to three inspiring women.



### **[Maryline Jabar - Stella Maris Polytechnic](#)**

Maryline, eldest of four, grew up in the heart of a civil war. Now studying towards a post-secondary education, Maryline hopes to empower her community, especially teenagers, women and disadvantaged community members, through community-based initiatives and advocacy as well as leading the development of schools, clinics and safe drinking water.

Read her story here: [My Story](#)



### **Nour Awerah - Yildirim Beyazit University**

Through innovation and creativity, Nour has risen from hardship after being forcibly displaced from Syria, towards a bright future with the hopes of starting a career in management following her academic studies in banking and finance.



### **Maklin Hussein Al-Ahmadi**

Maklin, a single mother has had to endure many obstacles to continue studying towards her education. Now continuing her doctoral thesis in Economics, she is hoping to provide aid to her home country following the completion of her studies.

Read her story here: [As A Woman from Yemen](#)

## Our People

Dedicated women and men from all over the world have helped the Asherah Foundation to support these amazing women.

### Executive & Advisory Board



**Heather MacCleoud**  
President, Executive Board  
Executive Director  
Founder  
[Linkedin](#)



**Sara Woodruff, PhD**  
Vice President & Chair- elect,  
Executive Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Dale Hill, MPA**  
Vice President & Chair, Finance  
Committee  
Treasurer, Executive Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Gaurav Chandra, MD, MBA**  
Vice President & Chair, Board  
Development Committee  
Secretary, Executive Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Stephanie Fenniri**  
Vice President & Chair, Youth  
Engagement Committee  
Executive Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Fadima Savadogo**  
Vice President & Chair, Constituent  
Engagement Committee  
Executive Board  
[Linkedin](#)



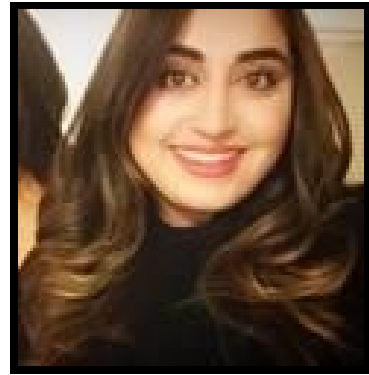
**Swapan Kumar**  
Vice President & Chair, Global  
Development Committee  
Executive Board

[Linkedin](#)



**DeAnna Alonso, BSSW**  
President & Chair of Advisory  
Board; Founding Member,  
Executive Board

[Linkedin](#)



**Arzo Kaderi**  
President & Chair,  
Junior Board

[Linkedin](#)



**Ozlem Ozyon, PhD**  
Founding Member, Executive  
Board

[Linkedin](#)



**Gabrielle Malfatti, EdD**  
Founding Officer, Executive Board;  
Advisory Board

[Linkedin](#)



**Kerstin Sorensen, Phd**  
Founding Officer, Executive Board

[Linkedin](#)



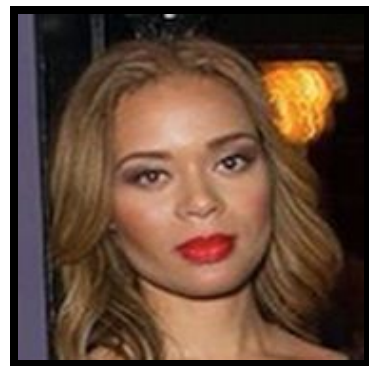
**Linda Lou O'Connor, PhD**  
Advisory Board

[Linkedin](#)



**Robert Definis, EdD**  
Vice President & Co-Chair,  
Development Committee (Former)

[Linkedin](#)



**Alexis Blakely**  
Vice President & Member-at-large  
Executive Board (former)

[Linkedin](#)



**Cynthia Bleu-Lainé**  
Advisory Board



**Aimana El Bahtity**  
Advisory Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Josephine Osea**  
Advisory Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Nyaradzo Mashayamombe**  
Advisory Board  
[Linkedin](#)



**Amani Jebril**  
Advisory Board  
[Linkedin](#)

**Support Second Chance Scholarships for  
Women around the World!  
Donate to the Asherah Foundation at  
[www.mightycause.com/story/Asherahfoundation](http://www.mightycause.com/story/Asherahfoundation)**



## 2018 Second Chance Scholarship Review Committee

### **Arzo Kaderi**

Ms. Kaderi is currently the President and Chair of the Junior Board for the Asherah Foundation. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her accomplishments!

### **Haley Carter**

Ms. Carter has studied at the University of Houston Law Center, the University of Liverpool, and the U.S. Naval Academy. She now works for Exterran Energy Solutions in Houston, Texas. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her accomplishments!

### **Sara Woodruff**

Ms. Woodruff has a PhD in Educational Psychology from The University of Georgia and is currently a Survey Researcher at Mathematica Policy Research in Washington, D.C. Learn more about her accomplishments on her [#LinkedIn](#) profile!

### **Shariq Khan**

Mr. Khan is the owner of Eskay BV, a UK Private Equity & Multi-Family Office. He has outstanding work experience in business development, product development, credit risk, loan sales and much more. Be sure to check out his [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about his accomplishments!

### **Swapan Kumar**

Mr. Kumar has attended The National Institute of Technology Rourkela and The University of Nevada-Reno. He is a Sustainability & EHS consultant, researcher, writer, and communications specialist. Check out his [#LinkedIn](#) to learn more about his accomplishments!

### **DeAnna Alonso**

Ms. Alonso is an experienced CEO with a history of working in the Non-Profit organization management industry. She currently works for the Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption Association. Be sure to check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her skills and experience!

### **Dale Hill**

Ms. Hill has an MPA from Princeton University and currently works as a consultant, treasurer, and advisor for multiple companies and non-profit organizations. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) to learn more about her outstanding work experience!

### **Amani Jebri**

Ms. Jebri was the recipient of our Second Chance Scholarship in 2016. She is now a Science Teacher in Palestine and is pursuing her master's degree in water and Environmental Engineering and Sciences from Birzeit Universtiy. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile!

### **Erica Lutes**

Ms. Lutes has attended Yale University, The University of Leuven, and Mount Holyoke College. She now works as the Executive Director for Fulbright Brussels. Be sure to check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her accomplishments!

## Josephine Osea

Ms. Osea has outstanding educational experience and currently works at The World Bank Group Headquarters by providing client support to the Climate Change Unit. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her many accomplishments!

A special thank you to **Mariam Khan** for facilitating the scholarship process for the second year in a row. Mariam received her BA in Women and Gender Studies and Sociology and will begin her Master of Public Administration next year. Check out her [#LinkedIn](#) profile to learn more about her!

### *Maklin's Story*

*When I put my daughter to sleep, I hug her and draw things with my finger on her back, and she guesses what they are, like a flower or a sun.*

*Once I drew the map of the world and asked her to guess what it was. But she did not know, so I said to her, "This is the world."*

*She asked, "Where are we?"*

*I pointed to a place next to her heart, and then she asked me, "Where is my country?"*

*I answered her, "It's very, very far."*

*She thought for a while and then asked me again, "Is there anyone in this big world that knows we exist?" At that moment I did not answer her.*

*After a short period of time, I found an announcement about a scholarship from the Asherah Foundation. I was very hesitant because I was full of despair, but the determination to complete the final stage of my degree prompted me to apply for this scholarship.*

*I do not know how to describe my feelings when I received an email informing me that I received the foundation's scholarship for this year. I cried out loud, hugged my daughter, and then cried. Joy meant a lot to me and it was much like the joy of a person who was sinking, and then found a ship before drowning.*

*Now I have found an answer to my daughter's question. Yes, there are those who feel and know that we are in this world. Thank you, Asherah Foundation. I do not think this essay is enough. Not all the words of thank you will suffice.*

*I am starting to feel like a human and I have the right to complete what I started and dreamed about...*

*-Maklin Al-Ahmadi*



## 2018 Interns

Thank you to our many hard-working and dedicated interns from around the world!

<b>Intern</b>	<b>Position</b>
Xiaoyu Chen	International Development
Trayona McKeithan	Global Communications
Caroline Hernandez	Management
Tosin Salau	International Development
Julia Arthur	International Development
Caroline O'Reilly	International Development
Adar Kalter	Senior Management
Mariam Khan	Management
Alex Tuai	Management
Wen Zhou	Management
Victor H. Aguirre	Management
Serigne Ndoye	International Development
Savannah Crozier	International Development
Tosin Salau	International Development

*Thank you also to our Spring 2019 Interns for helping to put together this report!*

*Adar Kalter, Senior Management*

*Serigne Ndoye, Management*

*Tosin Salau, Management*

*Elizabeth Le, International Development*

*Adeena Syed, International Development*

*Savannah Crozier, International Development*

*Caitlyn Gegen, International Development*

Learn more about our internships at [www.AsherahFoundation.org/Internships](http://www.AsherahFoundation.org/Internships)

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