

OUR MISSION

To promote mutual knowledge and understanding between the people of the Middle East and the United States



OUR VISION

A world of peace and prosperity where the people of the Middle East and the United States value our shared humanity

OUR METHOD

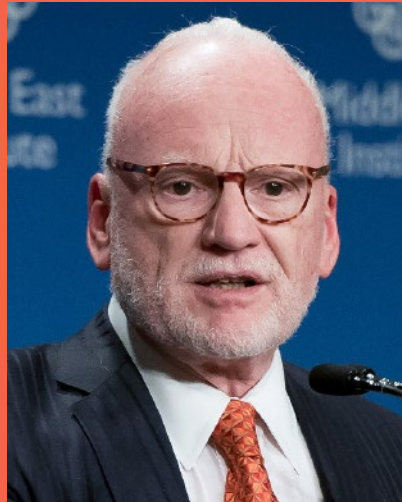
Engaging experts and policy makers from the region and the United States; teaching the region's languages and history; and promoting arts and cultural exchanges in both directions



"Family Men" by Mohammad Shafai, MEI Photo Contest First Prize Winner.

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Since my time as Chair began in 2012, I have seen this organization go through an unprecedented period of growth. This was due in large part to the exceptional leadership of former MEI president Wendy Chamberlin and her staff, but also to the passion for and firm belief in our mission by our many members and supporters around the world. In 2019, MEI's mission continues under the leadership of our new president, Paul Salem, and the institute's growing body of experts and staff.

At the outset, MEI's founders identified the region as of critical future importance to the United States when it was still relatively unfamiliar to most Americans. In the years since our founding in 1946, the role and presence of the Middle East on the world's stage has grown exponentially. MEI has always been dedicated to understanding the region in full—not just through a political lens, but through the languages, art, culture, and customs of its many and varied peoples.

MEI strives to be a destination

for all things Middle East: a place that represents the voices of the region in our research and panel discussions; a place that trains the next generation of leaders through our internships and language and regional studies programs; a place that showcases the stunning diversity of artistic creation, and serves as a gathering point for anyone interested in the future of this important, dynamic and rapidly changing part of the world.

The Middle East is a complex region, but one that is essential to understand. I spent much of my career involved with the region, and know how important it is to have institutions like MEI as honest brokers of information free from spin and political bias. In the end, facts matter.

We look forward to an exciting and productive 2019, especially as MEI moves into its newly renovated headquarters on N Street.

Richard A. Clarke
CHAIRMAN



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was honored and humbled in October 2018 to be appointed as President of The Middle East Institute (MEI). I follow in the footsteps of the many fine leaders who have built this remarkable organization since its founding in 1946. I am particularly indebted to Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin, MEI's president from 2006 to 2018, whose deft leadership and clear vision for the future built the institution that we know today.

I have three goals in mind as I take on the stewardship of MEI.

The first is to build up our policy center to work toward a more peaceful, prosperous and well-governed Middle East. We are proud to report that MEI was recently ranked the number one Middle East-specific think tank in the United States. Our policy work will include programs on defusing regional conflict, ending civil wars, boosting humanitarian response, countering terrorism, and improving U.S.-Middle East relations. We also aim to add programs on climate change, cybersecurity, and

future trend analysis.

Secondly, we seek to build up the educational arm of MEI to reach global audiences. We are well known for our language classes in Arabic, Hebrew, Kurdish, Turkish, and Farsi as well as classes on the politics and history of the region; we want to take those classes online, reaching younger and more global audiences. We will continue to invest in our world renowned Middle East Journal and our Oman Library—home to the second largest collection of Middle East manuscripts and books in Washington, DC, after the Library of Congress.

Third, we're excited to dramatically expand the breadth and impact of MEI's new Center for Arts and Culture. Artists are the antennae of the human race, and arts and culture can overcome barriers of language and politics. Our renovated headquarters on N Street will include a beautiful art gallery to highlight the work of artists from all over the Middle East.

MEI has never been just a think tank. It is these three pillars—Policy,

Education, and Culture—that make our mission unique.

As we prepare to embark upon our newest and greatest venture yet, the opening of our expanded and renovated offices, I want to thank everyone who has contributed to MEI's journey. Our Board of Governors, led by Richard Clarke, our dedicated staff, and our many supporters – foundations, corporations, embassies, individuals, governments, members, and friends – who continue to believe and invest in MEI. We truly could not do our work without you.

I look forward to a challenging and successful 2019.

Paul Salem
PRESIDENT

Policy, Education, and Art. MEI has never been just a think tank. It is these three pillars that make our mission unique.

HOW WE WORK

OBJECTIVE RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

The bedrock of MEI is the production of fact-based research and policy analysis.

Our experts and contributors draw on deep ties and decades of experience in the region to build a better understanding of the Middle East, sharing their insights with the public, the media, and the policy community.

Our original Middle East analysis appears in articles, interviews, Congressional testimony, and more, and is featured in print and online. Our experts are cited on a regular basis by major media outlets around the world.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

We bring together all who are interested in the Middle East – its past, present, and future – in public events throughout the year that engage policymakers, diplomats, analysts, corporate executives, journalists, and students. Most importantly, we highlight voices from the region across all of our programs to encourage informed and inclusive dialogue.

Our work is amplified through extensive communications outreach. Events are live-streamed or recorded and available online. Weekly podcasts address ongoing regional developments, and our social media engages people throughout the world.

GLOBAL POLICY IMPACT

We put our research and analysis into action by actively engaging policymakers and influencers through testimony before Congress and briefings to government agencies and departments, the White House, foreign governments, and international NGOs.

BUILDING NEW LEADERS

Through language and regional studies courses, academic publishing, media outreach, and a rigorous internship program, we educate students and mid-career professionals as well as the general public.

INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

Putting research and policy expertise into practice is part of MEI's goal to be a place where new ideas are generated and tested.

From our international Track II diplomacy efforts to our working groups on Syria, Yemen, cybersecurity, and more, MEI convenes the leading diplomats, experts, and changemakers working today to address problems in real time.

75
INTERNS

155
EVENTS

241
BRIEFINGS

450
PIECES OF ORIGINAL POLICY ANALYSIS

525
STUDENTS IN LANGUAGE AND REGIONAL STUDIES CLASSES

2018 BY THE NUMBERS

1,500
MEDIA CITATIONS

3,834
HOURS OF PRIVATE TUTORING

4,600
EVENT ATTENDEES

30,000
SUBSCRIBERS

67,000
TWITTER FOLLOWERS

CENTER FOR POLICY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

Working for a peaceful, prosperous, and well-governed Middle East, and for better relations between the U.S. and its regional partners



MEI was ranked the #1 Middle East-focused think tank in the United States by the University of Pennsylvania Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program's Annual Global Go-To Think Tank Index.

OUR PROGRAMS

AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN

CONFLICT RESOLUTION & TRACK II DIALOGUES

COUNTERING TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM

The Center for Policy Analysis & Research convenes regional and international leaders to find solutions to the region's most challenging issues. The Center's 12 resident and 42 non-resident experts produce hundreds of pieces of original analysis every year that advance understanding of the complexities of the Middle East and regional policy. Our established programs cover broad themes as well as individual countries and delve deeply into regional dynamics.

DEFENSE AND SECURITY

EGYPT PROGRAM

GULF AFFAIRS

IRAN OBSERVED

MIDDLE EAST-ASIA PROJECT

TURKISH STUDIES

WORKING TO END THE REGION'S CIVIL WARS AND PROXY CONFLICTS

Civil wars are among the most pressing issues facing the Middle East, and MEI brings together policy experts and key decision-makers to develop solutions.

MEI's ongoing working groups on Yemen and Syria provided a regular forum for scholars and stakeholders to discuss current issues. Public events advanced the debate in Washington addressing the region's crises.

MEI's conference "Yemen's Path Forward" featured Yemen's ambassador to the U.S., Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak, the State Department's deputy assistant secretary of state for Arabian Gulf Affairs, Timothy Lenderking, and others assessing priorities for ending the conflict and scenarios for moving forward.

Events like "What's Next for Syria" brought experts together with practitioners such as Salman

Shaikh of the Shaikh Group and Hadi al-Bahra of the Syrian Negotiations Commission to discuss the lessons learned from years of Track II efforts, the U.S. strategy, and

prospects for political progress.

Throughout the year, MEI scholars and contributors produced dozens of articles, papers, and podcasts on the region's civil wars.



The upcoming book, *Civil Wars in the Middle East: Toward Ending the Conflicts*, will provide context, history and actionable policy recommendations.

BUILDING A STABLE AND INCLUSIVE REGIONAL ORDER

By highlighting the drivers of instability and engaging with leaders in Washington and the region to find solutions, MEI is working toward building a stable and inclusive regional order.

In 2018, our scholars regularly briefed political, military, and

diplomatic officials and participated in global events like the Halifax International Security Forum. We convened experts and stakeholders to discuss key security issues like the risk of interstate wars and how to manage rising regional tensions.

Among the many notable events, State Department Bureau of Political-Military Affairs senior advisor Lee Litzenberger keynoted a panel on the challenges facing U.S. security assistance to the Middle East, and PLO Ambassador Dr. Husam Zomlot led a public conversation on the potential regional and global impact of President Trump's decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem.

(Top left) "Yemen's Path Forward" at the National Press Club, October 4, 2018. Senior Fellow Will Wechsler (Bottom right) and president Paul Salem record a podcast on terrorism in western Europe and the future of the fight against ISIS. Ambassador (ret.) Gerald Feierstein (Bottom left) and Yemen's ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak, discuss the country's internal and security challenges.

Egypt Program

MEI's newest scholar, Mirette Mabrouk, spearheads a program that seeks to analyze Egypt's security, economic, and political developments, as well as its domestic environment and regional role. She has an extensive background in research, communications, and journalism in both the US and Egypt, and joins MEI after five years as Director of Research and Programs at the Atlantic Council's Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East.



COUNTERING EXTREMISM AND TERRORISM

MEI prioritizes the use of local knowledge and expertise to provide a deeper and more holistic understanding of extremism, terrorism, and insurgency.

In 2018, MEI scholars provided regular briefings to help keep policymakers up to speed on the latest developments in the region. Our experts met with National Security Council staff to discuss counterterrorism and Syria. MEI scholars participated in high-profile external events throughout the year as well, with Charles Lister giving a speech at the World Summit of the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism in Israel, and Gerald Feierstein joining an Oxford Union debate on the War on Terror, among others.

Public events included a roundtable on the nexus between bad governance and violent extremism in North Africa; a discussion on ancient and modern patterns of



violent extremism; a conference in Dubai co-hosted with the Orient Research Centre; and a panel entitled “How America’s partners help and hinder the War on Terror.”

We also published a series

of policy papers on transnational violent movements by world-renowned scholars based in the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, and the U.S. that will be compiled into an upcoming book.

(Top left) Senior Fellow and Director of the Countering Terrorism and Extremism Program Charles Lister joins Senior Fellow Robert Ford in briefing the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa, outlining policy recommendations for stabilization and reconstruction in Syria. (Top right) Jihad Azour answers an audience question during a panel on regional economies at MEI’s 73rd Annual Conference, flanked by Dina Sherif, CEO and co-founder of Ahead of the Curve; Ferid Belhaj, vice president for the Middle East and North Africa at the World Bank Group; Christopher Schroeder, co-founder of Next Billion Ventures; and Nahed Taher, group president for the Middle East and director of Islamic finance at National Standard Bank. (Bottom left) Charles Lister participates in a panel at the International Institute for Counter-Terrorism’s 2018 World Summit in Israel.

ATTENDING TO URGENT HUMANITARIAN AND RELIEF NEEDS

Improving conditions for refugees and internally displaced persons as well as human security more broadly is an integral part of our work.

MEI’s conference “Landmines, IEDs, and other Explosive Hazards in the Middle East: Addressing a Growing Threat” was the first event

in Washington to bring together policymakers and practitioners to discuss landmine removal, the role played by internally displaced persons, and stabilization efforts.

The conference featured keynote addresses from Lise Grande, UNDP representative for Yemen, and HRH Prince Mired bin Ra’ad al-Husseini, special envoy of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and chairman of Jordan’s National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation.

The Middle East-Asia Project

A global online community of hundreds of experts, the Middle East-Asia Project provides in depth and current research about the growing ties between the Middle East and Asia, especially the four main Asian economic powers – China, Japan, Korea, and India. Helmed by MEI’s longest-serving scholar, Dr. John Calabrese, the innovative program fosters collaborative research through institutional partnerships and publishes regularly online.

We prioritize local expertise to provide a more holistic understanding of extremism.





(Left) MEI's 9th Annual Conference on Turkey included a panel on "The Future of Turkey's Youth in a Time of Turmoil," featuring the Honorable Serpil Midyatli, member of Germany's State Parliament, and her translator; Felix Schmidt, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung's representative to Turkey; Berkin Şafak Şener, international consultant on employment at the United Nations Development Programme; Semuhi Sinanoğlu, PhD student at the University of Toronto; and Max Hoffman, associate director of National Security and International Policy at the Center for American Progress.

The region's humanitarian crises were a major focus over the year as well. As such, MEI hosted roundtables with UN deputy special coordinator for the Middle East peace process Jamie McGoldrick on Gaza, and Philippe Lazzarini, UN deputy special coordinator for Lebanon, on the humanitarian and security challenges facing Lebanon.

FOCUS ON JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

MEI works with private and public sector partners to help promote economic opportunity in the region.

In 2018, our weekly podcasts explored major economic issues, including "Economic Prospects for the Middle East" featuring Jihad Azour, director of the Middle East and Central Asia department at

the IMF, and "Turkey's Economic Crisis and Political Fallout" featuring Gonul Tol, director of MEI's Turkey program, and Omer Taspinar, professor at the National War College.

Over 400 people attended our Annual Conference, which featured a panel on economic growth through innovation, inclusion, and resilience.

Other 2018 highlights included a discussion of the social and economic drivers of protests in North Africa, and "Agriculture in Syria: Building resilience amid conflict," a panel co-hosted with Global Communities, on the centrality of agricultural development to resilience and reconstruction.

We are currently completing a multi-study research project on "The Political Economy of Civil War Countries in the Arab World, and Lessons for Designing Reconstruction Approaches."

EMPOWERING WOMEN AND YOUTH

With nearly two-thirds of the region's population under 30 and women taking on growing roles in public spaces, MEI is focusing on youth leadership and women's empowerment.

This year, we hosted PSB Research's CEO Curtis Freet, Burson-Marsteller's CEO Don Baer, USAID's Maria Longi, and UAE Ambassador Yousef al-Otaiba to discuss the results of the Asda'a Burson-Marsteller Arab Youth Survey.

HRH Princess Reema bint Bandar al-Saud came to MEI to discuss the role of women in Saudi Vision 2030, the kingdom's long-term economic development plan. In cooperation with the Institute for War and Peace Reporting, MEI hosted Syrian delegates for a roundtable on the role of women in Syria.

We are focusing on youth empowerment and women's leadership.

SPOTLIGHT ON TRACK II DIPLOMACY

Track II diplomacy has become a critical conflict prevention and management tool in the international political landscape and an important component of peacemaking strategies.



Our Conflict Resolution and Track II Dialogues Program engages leading experts and current and former officials in problem-solving dialogues on political and security trends in the region and conflict de-escalation and resolution.

THE MIDDLE EAST DIALOGUE

The Middle East Dialogue (MED) monitors evolving political and security dynamics and provides a forum for discussion among a group of former officials and senior policy experts from Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, and Lebanon, as well as the United States, China, Russia, and Europe. While initially focused on the regional and international aspects of the Syrian crisis, the dialogue agenda soon expanded to include proposals for conflict de-escalation in Syria, Iraq, and Yemen, as well as possible new cooperative frameworks.

Since its launch, MED has laid the groundwork for a

series of official decisions and agreements. While no Track II process can claim sole authorship of ideas since different processes are always working simultaneously, MED was one of the first to lay the groundwork for U.S.-Russia official dialogue on the Syrian conflict starting in 2012, leading to the U.S.-Russia May 2013 agreement. Dialogue discussions on conflict resolution in Syria contributed ideas to the Vienna II 2015 Declaration of Principles for a solution in Syria. Over a series of sessions, the MED group also negotiated principles for a framework for regional cooperation, which were adopted in the Declaration of Good Neighborhood Principles in the Middle East at their December 2017 meeting in Baghdad.



CENTER FOR EDUCATION

Shaping the leaders of tomorrow and promoting mutual understanding

The Middle East Institute has made education a core tenet of our mission since our founding. In 2017 we took a major step forward, consolidating our diverse educational programs into a newly-established Center for Education. This center is now home to our Languages, Regional Studies, and Leadership Development Programs, as well as the Middle East Journal and the Oman Library. Through these, we equip the next generation of leaders with the skills necessary for international careers.

EDUCATION

UNDERSTANDING THE REGION

Language Courses

MEI offers courses and private tutoring in Arabic, Dari, Hebrew, Kurdish, Pashto, Persian, Turkish, and Urdu. Through the support of its experienced instructors, MEI teaches students from a variety of academic and professional backgrounds.

Regional Studies

Our Regional Studies classes feature Middle East experts sharing their knowledge and experience with students, both online and in-person, in small “masterclass” formats. Popular with journalists, embassy officials, and other mid-career professionals, these classes cover topics like the struggle for governance in Afghanistan and the political economy of war. The lecturers are uniquely qualified to speak on their chosen subjects; for example, Gerald Feirstein, who retired as U.S. ambassador to Yemen in 2013, lectured on the events and conditions that

led to the Gulf state’s protracted civil war.

PREPARING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

MEI offers an immersive professional development experience

through its internship program. The program is competitive: MEI receives hundreds of applications each term for fewer than 30 positions. Interns work directly alongside MEI experts and professional staff conducting research, writing and editing, producing video and podcasts, fundraising, and more.



Professional development workshops on resume writing and interviewing as well as visits to federal agencies, think tanks, and press offices complete the experience.

THE MIDDLE EAST JOURNAL

The Middle East Journal is our flagship quarterly and the oldest peer-re-

viewed publication dedicated solely to the study of the Middle East. Each issue includes articles written by renowned scholars, foreign policy analysts, and area experts; a chronology, organized by subject and country, maintained continuously since 1947; and book reviews that are among the most respected, comprehensive, and up-to-date in the field of Middle East studies. In

2018, the Journal was downloaded once every 52 seconds and cited in a record 528 academic articles.

A REPOSITORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Our Oman Library holds thousands of images, maps, and artifacts, plus over 20,000 volumes in seven languages about and from the Middle East, including 300 rare books dating as far as back as the early 18th century. We are actively digitizing and sharing our collection with libraries and institutions around the world. The library will reopen to the public in September 2019 alongside the launch of MEI’s newly renovated offices.

INTERVIEW WITH: TINA LUU

Senior Program Assistant, Center for Applied Conflict Transformation
United States Institute of Peace
Spring 2016 Programs and Communications Intern



MEI has a very supportive team. I really valued the community that you get to build here while you’re in school, or transitioning between undergraduate and graduate studies. The events I helped plan at MEI related closely to my graduate studies; I wrote a paper on how arts and culture contribute to peacebuilding shortly after we had an evening at Busboys and Poets dedi-

cated to a Saudi artist and a Kuwaiti rap group. Seeing what young people are doing in the Gulf was refreshing at a time when we are so focused on conflict in the Middle East. I took my experience here directly into a position at USIP, where I recently helped coordinate an internal arts and culture exchange looking specifically at USIP’s work in arts and peacebuilding.

(Center) MEI intern class, Summer 2018.

(Bottom) Research assistants study on the upper floor of the Oman Library. (Top Right) A language instructor teaches a class of Arabic students.



INTERVIEW WITH:
**ZAHRAA
 ALNAJJAR**
 ARABIC INSTRUCTOR

I came to the U.S. from Syria in 2011 through an exchange program to teach at American University, but when the war broke out I sought asylum. I have taught at MEI since 2013. I was a professor with a PhD in Arabic, but MEI was the first place I was able to achieve my goals.

I was a poet even before I specialized in Arabic. I had learned

engineering and Islamic Studies, but when I entered the school of Arabic literature, I didn't study; most things came just because I loved it.

In my classes, I start with culture. I try to find good commentary, a video, something to give the whole story. I think 75 percent of the language comes from history, geography, art—and if I explain

that, the students will love Arabic.

MEI is my second home. When the war began in Syria, no one else in my family had work authorization here. Everything we had was gone, but I didn't feel homesick at MEI. I'm always optimistic now. I focus on the future—this is my opportunity to stand on firm ground.



INTERVIEW WITH:
**MAYA
 ALFAISAL**
 ARABIC INSTRUCTOR

I teach Introduction to Arabic and Beginner I Arabic at MEI, along with private lessons in Levantine Arabic. I like to include a lot of culture in my classes. Language is not just about words; it's about understanding the traditions and the body language too.

I'm a linguist and have been learning languages all my life. I

did my BA in foreign languages at the University of Jordan. Later, I completed my masters in linguistics at the University of Valencia, and after that, I taught cross-cultural competence and linguistics at Liaoning University in China.

I have family on my mom's side in DC so I moved here after teaching in China. I wanted to use

my linguistics abilities in the U.S. I started teaching at MEI a year ago and I love it. The atmosphere has been welcoming since day one, and I feel really fortunate to be able to bring everything I've learned through my study of languages to my students here at MEI.



CENTER FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

Building bridges through artistic and cultural exchange

The Middle East Institute's Center for Arts and Culture presents unique programs that introduce audiences to the Middle East's vibrant arts scene and to the pressing social and political issues being addressed by the region's artists, writers, filmmakers, musicians, and others. By amplifying the voices of the region's artists, the Center serves as a much-needed platform for dialogue and exchange about the important role of the arts in society.

ARTS & CULTURE

THE MEI ART GALLERY

Opening in 2019, MEI's newly renovated headquarters will feature an art gallery dedicated to the exhibition of contemporary and modern art from the Middle East and North Africa. Free and open to the public, the MEI Art Gallery will be a cultural destination in the U.S. capital, providing audiences a rare opportunity to engage with the region through the lens of the arts and the voices of its visiting artists.

CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

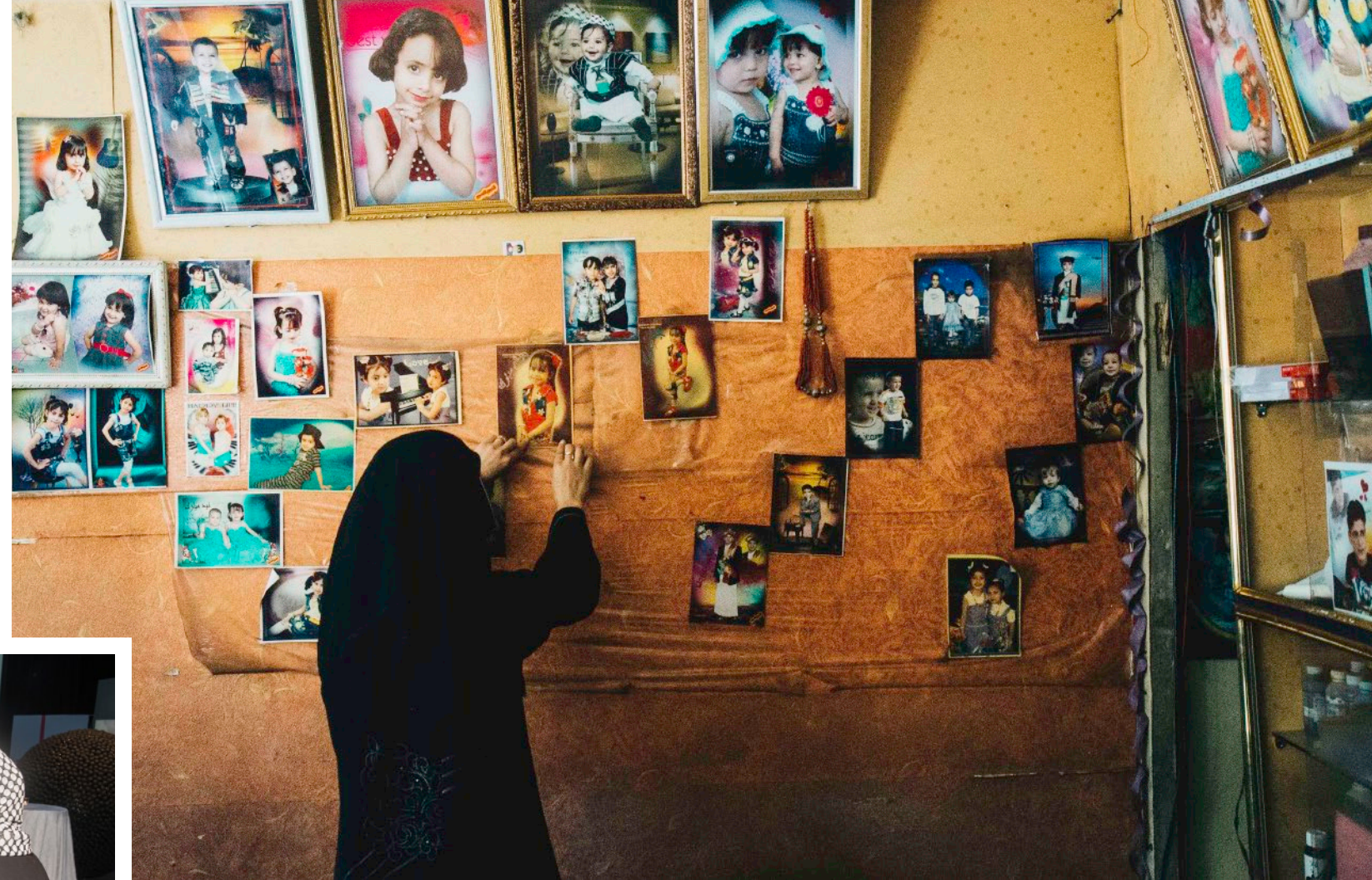
MEI's rich programming promotes the work of the region's cultural producers through talks, panels, film screenings, and the perform-

ing arts and is working to provide educational programming for high school and university students. The Center also works to connect the region's artists with their American counterparts through cultural exchanges, roundtable discussions, and networking opportunities that help build invaluable connections between the creative communities in the U.S. and the region.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH THE ARTS

Since the program's inception in 2014, MEI has hosted dozens of panel conversations, book talks, poetry readings, performances, film screenings, and exhibitions. We have organized many of these in partnership with prominent universities and cultural institutions

such as the Kennedy Center, the National Museum of Women in the Arts, American University's Katzen Arts Center, Georgetown University, and others, in the belief that fostering partnerships is key to the Center's success.



(Center) A woman adds the finishing touches to a traditional mural, and (Left) a guest converses with the oud player during an event at the Kennedy Center celebrating contemporary Saudi art. (Top and bottom right) "Untitled" by Thana Farooq and "Palestinian Refugee from the 1948 Nakba" by Andrew Courtney, MEI Photo Contest Honorable Mentions.

LENS ON PALESTINE: WOMEN AND RESILIENCE

MEI and FilmLab Palestine hosted four documentary screenings, highlighting the voices of Palestinian women in the face of loss and dispossession.

The Judge (dir. Erika Cohn) - The Judge chronicles the struggle of Kholoud Al-Faqih, who became the first woman judge to be appointed to the Middle East's Shari'a courts.

Speed Sisters (dir. Amber Fares) - This documentary follows the first all-female Palestinian car racing

team and explores the social issues surrounding their career.

Emwas (dir. Dima Abu Ghoush) - The film follows the director's journey as she rebuilds her demolished hometown, Emwas, through memories of family and friends who still yearn for their return.

Stitching Palestine (dir. Carol Mansour) - Twelve resilient, determined, and articulate Palestinian women speak about their lives, memories, and identities before their exile. Their narratives are connected by the enduring thread of the Palestinian tradition of embroidery.



ART AND DESIGN DELEGATION TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



MEI organized a delegation to the UAE for 13 U.S.-based art and design influencers. The five-day trip was focused on introducing participants to key art- and design-focused institutions, events, and leaders in the Emirates, including the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Art Foundation, and Dubai Design Week. The trip also provided social and historical context for the growth of the country's arts and design sectors. The aim was to build connections, foster relationships, and facilitate a deeper understanding of the UAE's cultural sector.



MEI'S NEW HOME

A Middle East hub in the heart of DC



For most of its history, MEI has been headquartered in a 19th century brownstone in Washington, DC's historic Dupont Circle neighborhood. Close to embassies, think tanks, universities, and other key institutions, our central location has contributed to our success. But our growth necessitated additional space and facilities, and instead of moving to another office building, we chose to renovate and expand in place.

MEI's newly renovated home

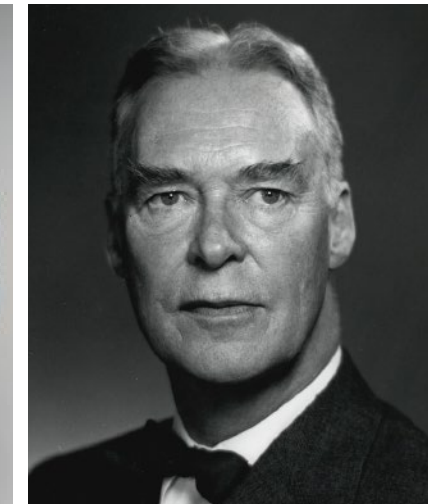
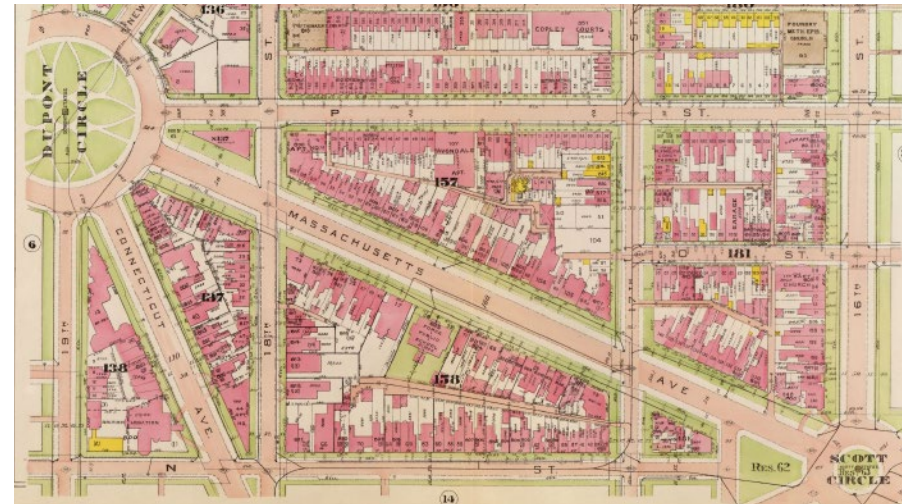
will more than double its previous size and feature additional office space, a 140-seat conference room, an art gallery, classrooms equipped with modern audio-visual capabilities for distance learning, a broadcast studio, and exterior courtyard, garden, and fountain. The original historic façade keeps with the character of the neighborhood, while the rest of the building is state-of-the-art and energy efficient.

With this renovation and expansion,

MEI seeks to become the hub in the nation's capital for Middle East policy, culture, and education—not only a platform for public events and policy-focused programs, but a meeting place for officials and dignitaries, a center of innovation for working groups, a destination for lovers of art and culture, a resource for students, researchers, and professionals, and a gathering place for the Middle Eastern community in the metropolitan area.



HISTORY



For more than 70 years, The Middle East Institute (MEI) has operated as Washington, DC's preeminent center for research, dialogue, and inquiry about the Middle East.

The Institute was founded in 1946 by George Camp Keiser, an architect by training and a devoted student of Islamic art and architecture. Keiser had served as a first lieutenant in the US Army Signal Corps in World War II and traveled extensively in the region. Upon returning to Washington, he assembled a group of scholars and statesmen, including Christian A. Herter, a congressman from Massachusetts who would go on to become Dwight Eisenhower's secretary of state. Like Keiser, these associates recognized the need for accurate, rigorous scholarship about the Middle East in a rapidly changing post-war environment. At the time, Ameri-

ca's attention was focused on the emerging Cold War and the new balance of power after WWII. Keiser and his associates recognized that the Middle East would become a region of critical importance for the United States, and that understanding its people, cultures, languages, history, and politics was essential.

They established MEI with an enduring mission: "to promote knowledge of the Middle East in America and strengthen understanding of the United States by the peoples and governments of the region."

Public interest in the Middle East has grown, and so has the United States' involvement in the region. MEI has maintained its commitment to objectivity, intellectual rigor, and public service, striving to provide both policymakers and their constituents with knowledge of and firsthand conversations with the peoples

of the Middle East. From an informal gathering of like-minded colleagues, the Institute has evolved into a highly-regarded international forum for dialogue, one where a wide range of opinions can be presented and challenged. Points of view underrepresented in American media find voice through MEI's publications and events, ensuring that a balanced, nuanced, and sophisticated understanding of the issues is widely available.

Today, MEI's role as an unbiased source of knowledge on the Middle East is more important than ever.

With a sole focus on the Middle East for over 70 years, MEI has built a deep reservoir of experts, extensive contacts and collaborations with regional leaders and institutions, and a growing worldwide base of supporters including foundations, governments, embassies, corporations, and individuals whose continued generosity makes our work possible. With the opening of our newly renovated, expanded offices in 2019, we reflect proudly on what we have achieved and look forward to what we can become.



(CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) MEI founder George Camp Keiser. 1761 N Street NW as it appeared in the 1950s. Map of Dupont Circle in the early 20th century. Ceramic bowl depicting MEI's original logo. MEI co-founder and Secretary of State Christian Herter. Former President Bill Clinton and MEI Honorary Chairman Anthony Zinni. A 1970 photo depicting Yemeni children, part of the MEI Colbert Held Archive. Wendy Chamberlin presents the Cairo Declaration, signed by ten key regional Ministers of Antiquities, which announced an action plan to stop terrorist financing through cultural racketeering. Ambassador Wendy Chamberlin celebrates her retirement after 12 years as president of MEI. Board members attend groundbreaking of new headquarters. Architect's rendering of expanded MEI headquarters.



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FINANCIALS

Year Ending December 31, 2017 and 2018

	2018	2017	
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 488,083	\$ 942,791	
Accounts receivable	138,351	94,772	
Grants and contributions receivable	663,716	703,036	
Prepaid expenses	195,376	615,943	
Total Current Assets	1,485,526	2,356,542	
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT, NET	9,242,791	3,732,177	
OTHER ASSETS			
Investments in board designated account	16,455,503	22,724,405	
Investments for endowment	3,156,624	3,354,286	
Investments in beneficial interest in perpetual trust	1,177,232	1,267,537	
Total Other Assets	20,789,359	27,346,228	
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 31,517,676	\$ 33,434,947	
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable	\$ 821,898	\$ 624,735	
Accrued expenses	72,788	183,750	
Deferred revenue	495,509	158,504	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,390,195	966,989	
NET ASSETS			
Without donor restrictions:			
Undesignated	9,338,122	4,703,347	
Board designated	16,455,503	22,724,405	
Total without donor restrictions	25,793,625	27,427,752	
With donor restrictions	4,333,856	5,040,206	
TOTAL NET ASSETS	30,127,481	32,467,958	
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 31,517,676	\$ 33,434,947	
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
REVENUE AND SUPPORT			
Contributions	\$ 2,302,606	\$ -	\$ 2,302,606
Grants	342,677	57,527	400,204
Membership dues	29,885	-	29,885
Center for Policy Studies	557,727	-	557,727
Center for Education	313,786	-	313,786
Interest and dividends, net	423,198	102,921	526,119
Rental and other income	39,847	-	39,847
Net assets released from restrictions	507,910	(507,910)	-
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	4,517,636	(347,462)	4,170,174
EXPENSES			
Program services:			
Center for Policy Studies	2,972,191	-	2,972,191
Center for Arts and Culture	545,476	-	545,476
Center for Education	400,962	-	400,962
Communications	362,991	-	362,991
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	4,281,620	-	4,281,620
Support services:			
Fundraising	516,771	-	516,771
General and administrative	645,485	-	645,485
Total Support Services	1,162,256	-	1,162,256
TOTAL EXPENSES	5,443,876	-	5,443,876
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS FROM OPERATIONS	(926,240)	(347,462)	(1,273,702)
OTHER CHANGES			
Net depreciation in fair value of board designated investments	(707,887)	-	(707,887)
Net depreciation in fair value of endowment investments	-	(277,492)	(277,492)
Net depreciation in beneficial interest in perpetual trust	-	(81,396)	(81,396)
TOTAL OTHER CHANGES	(707,887)	(358,888)	(1,066,775)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(1,634,127)	(706,350)	(2,340,477)
NET ASSETS, beginning of year	27,427,752	5,040,206	32,467,958
NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR	\$ 25,793,625	\$ 4,333,856	\$ 30,127,481