



**MILWAUKEE**  
JEWISH FEDERATION

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Israeli, Palestinian Activists Share a Message of Understanding** *Creating a culture of non-violence*

MILWAUKEE, Wisconsin— A grassroots movement that fosters understanding, nonviolence, transformation and coexistence in Israel could help with similar struggles in Milwaukee and the nation.

Lead organizers of “Roots” will be making a public presentation at 7 p.m. on Nov. 1 at Plymouth Church, 2717 E. Hampshire St., along with a special student program at 9 a.m. on Nov. 2 at Rufus King International High School, 1801 W. Olive St.

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger, an Orthodox settler, and Khaled Abu Awwad, a leading Palestinian activist, will discuss their choice to see each other as the partners they need to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Based on a mutual recognition of each people’s connection to the land, they challenge assumptions that each community holds about the other, building trust and creating new discourse around the conflict in their respective societies. They will present a model for how to communicate across deep divides, how to listen to each other and how to humanize those with whom there is serious conflict.

Event organizers point out that this is the kind of conversation that we need to have in Milwaukee; as we consider our local and national challenges of segregation and conflict along racial, economic and political lines, we could learn much from these brave leaders. This program is not only for those who care about the specific Israeli-Palestinian conflict, but for all who struggle with ongoing local and national crises of segregation and intractable conflict.

The program at Rufus King International High School will include students from at least three local high schools, which will be moderated by Pardeep Kaleka from Serve2Unite, King English teacher Kelly O’Keefe Boettcher and other educators. It will focus on not only learning about the particular Israeli-Palestinian conflict and seeking to understand their experiences, but also considering the possible lessons for all lives: How do people enter and stay in relationships with people with whom they are in deep conflict? Media interested in covering the student program should directly contact O’Keefe Boettcher at [okeefeka@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:okeefeka@milwaukee.k12.wi.us).

This visit by Roots is organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council of Milwaukee Jewish Federation and Plymouth Church, and supported by several local co-sponsors.

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