



STAFF PHOTO D. HANLEY

Oumeima El Khalil (l) and Palestinian poet Marwan Makhoul.

PLO Ambassador Maen Rashid Areikat presented an award to the Aburish brothers—Khalil, Hilmi, Salah and Samih—who immigrated from Palestine in the early '60s and launched what became the largest limousine service in the District. The brothers contribute to the diaspora Palestinian community as well as youth clubs and scholarships for kids in Palestine.

Next came posthumous community recognition of Khalil Karjawally (see Aug./Sept. 2016 *Washington Report*, p. 80), who touched the lives of many by funding scholarships and helping those in need. That award was presented to his widow, Dr. Najat Arafat Khelil, chairperson of the National Arab American Women's Association. —Delinda C. Hanley

### Jawdat R. Haydar: The Voice From Baalbek

The Worldwide Alumni Association of American University of Beirut (WAAAUB)'s Greater Washington, DC chapter joined up with the International College Alumnis' Washington, DC chapter for a cultural event commemorating Lebanese poet Jawdat R. Haydar. With the help of the Lebanese Embassy, his granddaughter Dima Osseiran screened a documentary and exhibit entitled "Reflections on Jawdat Haydar's Poetry Within and Beyond Borders" at her Potomac, MD home on Oct. 16. Carla Jazzar, Lebanon's charg  d'affaires, welcomed the

alumni, who filled every room. Haydar's daughter, Shahina Osseiran, and Dima visited the *Washington Report* to provide more information on the famous poet.

Haydar was born in the Beka'a Valley in 1905, when the Ottomans were occupying what is now Lebanon and Syria, and died in Baalbek in 2006. In his political views and writings he did not assert his sectarian identity, but sought to rise above such divisive issues, believing in Lebanese nationalism, according to his biographer Prof. John Munro. A former professor of English



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Jawdat Haydar's daughter Shahina Osseiran stands near his books in her daughter Dima's home.

literature at AUB, Munro's recently published *Jawdat R. Haydar: The Voice From Baalbek* is available from Middle East Books and More. Munro writes, "Though strongly patriotic, he followed no political leader and was never an active member of any political party. If pressed, he might admit to being a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, because he was a man of peace."

A unique, a universal man, Haydar believed in the oneness of mankind, and advocated for peace through constructive dialogue. He started college at AUB but transferred to North Texas State University, graduating in 1927. His first published poem, written in his student days, was printed in a newspaper then known as the *Dallas News*. After graduation, Haydar became the principal of a school in Aley, Lebanon, and later in Nablus, in the West Bank. He spent 25 years working for the Iraq Petroleum Co. as a recruitment executive. After he retired in 1960, Haydar worked in the plastics industry and then went into farming. He also unsuccessfully ran as a candidate for the Lebanese parliament. At the age of 101 Haydar published a collection of his poetry, *101 Selected Poems*, also available from Middle East Books and More.

Haydar's poems focus on injustice, war, peace, life, death and man's interaction with the natural world. He urges mankind to stop polluting nature and destroying the world with wars. Haydar's plea to Arab politicians and leaders during Lebanon's civil war could apply to present-day America. Haydar reminds them that the real fear resides not in the "other," but rather in the division of the nation against itself.

—Delinda C. Hanley

### "Unheard Voices" Exhibit Captures Refugees' Suffering

One of the most popular exhibits at the newly open Armenian Arts gallery in Glendale, CA was "Unheard Voices" by Zepure Jerahian. The Armenian-Syrian-American artist was born and grew up in Aleppo, Syria, and moved to the U.S. in 1988.

