



SAMS

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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



**When a Season of Giving
Blossoms into Lasting Impact**



Carrying Forward the Spirit of Ramadan into Dhul-Hijjah

As we transition from the blessed month of Ramadan into the sacred days of Dhul-Hijjah, we carry forward the spirit of reflection, generosity, and renewed purpose. The devotion cultivated during Ramadan does not end, it continues into one of the holiest periods in the Islamic calendar, a time that calls us to deepen our faith and expand our impact.

As the sacred month of Dhul-Hijjah approaches, it brings with it a powerful reminder of devotion, sacrifice, and compassion. Marked by the spiritual journey of Hajj and the celebration of Eid al-Adha, this season embodies generosity, gratitude, and care for others.

Dhul-Hijjah is also a time when good deeds are especially emphasized. Acts of charity, kindness, and service carry profound significance, offering an opportunity to reflect on how we can meaningfully support those in need. Among the most impactful of all deeds is the preservation of human life, an act rooted in mercy, responsibility, and shared humanity.

In moments where access to healthcare is limited and communities face hardship, the ability to provide medical care becomes not only a service, but a lifeline. Supporting initiatives that deliver treatment, emergency response, and essential health services is a powerful expression of this spirit of giving.

As we enter Dhul-Hijjah, we are reminded that every contribution, no matter the size, can help bring healing, restore dignity, and save lives. It is a time to carry forward the momentum of Ramadan, giving with intention, acting with purpose, and standing in solidarity with those who need it most.



SAMS Emergency Response in Lebanon

As the Middle East faces a profound escalation in conflict, neighboring countries like Lebanon are enduring heartbreaking levels of destruction and displacement.

Since March 2, the humanitarian situation in Lebanon has deteriorated sharply. More than 1,000 people have died and over 1,400 injured amid expanding violence across the region. Over 700,000 people have been forced from their homes, seeking shelter wherever they can in schools, public buildings, and even open spaces.

As hostilities continue to reverberate, the humanitarian crisis deepens: families are displaced for extended periods, access to basic necessities remains severely limited, and threats to civilian safety and critical healthcare services are growing.

In response, the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) has rapidly mobilized to deliver lifesaving support to affected communities. Building on its existing presence in the country, SAMS deployed mobile and community-based teams to reach vulnerable populations where they are.

SAMS launched a Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) in Jbeil to provide primary healthcare services directly within conflict-affected communities, helping reduce pressure on overwhelmed health facilities. These teams also conduct health awareness sessions to promote prevention and early care.

In the Beqaa region, SAMS deployed Protection Outreach Teams delivering mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), alongside protection

services for displaced and at-risk individuals. These efforts are integrated with SAMS' existing health and MHPSS centers, ensuring a coordinated and holistic response.

Through these interventions, SAMS is delivering essential healthcare, mental health support, and protection services to displaced families and underserved communities bringing dignity, compassion, and critical care during a time of crisis.

At the same time, SAMS has raised urgent concerns over attacks on healthcare workers and facilities, calling for the protection of medical personnel and the preservation of access to lifesaving services in accordance with international humanitarian law. As the crisis deepens, sustained support, protection of healthcare, and adherence to humanitarian principles are essential to ensuring displaced families receive the care, dignity, and stability they urgently need.

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Ramadan Giving in Action: SAMS' Texas Communities United for Impact

This Ramadan, the SAMS community across Texas came together for inspiring Iftar gatherings, uniting supporters in a shared mission: delivering life-saving medical care to those in need in Syria.

Houston Iftar: A Night of Connection and Generosity

In Houston, SAMS hosted a vibrant community gathering filled with warmth, connection, and generosity. Thanks to the support of attendees, the event raised over \$300,000, directly funding critical healthcare initiatives for families affected by conflict. Special appreciation goes to Dr. Molham and Dr. Fares for their leadership, as well as to the volunteers who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make the evening a success.



The Houston event highlighted the strength of the SAMS community, demonstrating how collective commitment and compassion can transform lives and sustain our mission on the ground in Syria.

Dallas Iftar: Faith, Reflection, and Life-Saving Support

Just a few days later in Dallas, the SAMS community gathered for a Ramadan Iftar dinner attended by Dr. Aref Rifai, President of SAMS, and Dr. Abdul Fatah Elshaar, Chairman of the Foundation, alongside local physicians and supporters. The evening featured presentations on SAMS' medical programs in Syria and a Ramadan reflection from Dr. Rifai on the virtues of giving:

“Let the one who has abundance spend from his abundance.”

Through this spirit of generosity, the Dallas gathering raised over \$200,000, supporting chemotherapy treatments and cardiac procedures for patients in Syria.

Together, the Houston and Dallas events exemplify the power of community and shared purpose. Across Texas, supporters raised over \$500,000 this Ramadan, ensuring that SAMS can continue delivering hope, healing, and life-saving care to families in need.



The Gift of Sound: Opening New Worlds for Syrian Children

In a heartwarming collaboration with My Right to Hear, SAMS recently supported five Syrian children in Jordan through medical exams, imaging, and preparation for cochlear implant surgeries, procedures that have the potential to transform their lives forever. For children living with severe hearing loss, this is more than surgery; it is the chance to experience the world of sound for the very first time, to hear the voice of a parent, laughter, music, and the everyday sounds that shape childhood.

Over the course of two days, the medical teams meticulously performed these surgeries, ensuring each child receives the best possible care. Cochlear implants are most successful when performed early in a child's life, as the first years are critical for hearing and language development. Unfortunately, many children in Syria and neighboring countries still face long waits for access to this life-changing intervention, making timely action crucial.

The impact extends far beyond the operating room. For these children, the implants open doors to language, learning, and communication, helping them thrive socially, academically, and emotionally. Families are given hope, children are given a voice, and communities are strengthened through the support and care of medical professionals.

We are deeply grateful to Dr. Hamzeh Alsaied Hasan and the skilled, compassionate medical team whose dedication made these miracles possible. Their expertise, paired with the support of our partner, *My Right to Hear* ensures that children who once lived in silence can now embrace a world full of sound, connection, and possibility.

Through initiatives like this, SAMS continues to bring life-changing healthcare to Syrian children, helping them overcome barriers, unlock their potential, and experience the joys of childhood that every child deserves.





For Mama Campaign Milestone: Expanding Maternal Care in Syria This Ramadan

This Ramadan, SAMS proudly celebrates a meaningful milestone achieved through the collective generosity of our donors and supporters around the world. Through our participation in the For Mama Challenge 2026, led by our partner Every Pregnancy, we witnessed an extraordinary outpouring of compassion that is now translating into real, lifesaving impact for mothers and newborns in Syria.

Thanks to your support, SAMS raised over \$6.9 million in direct contributions, along with more than \$749,000 in additional Boost funding. Together, this remarkable achievement will help expand access to critical maternal and newborn health services across some of the most underserved and fragile communities in Syria.

We are deeply grateful for the global community that came together this Ramadan. With the support of the \$9 million Boost Fund, made possible by DAMAC Foundation and KAYALI Cares, every contribution was multiplied, helping us extend our reach and strengthen our programs even further. Your generosity is enabling SAMS to provide safe deliveries, emergency obstetric care, neonatal support, and continuous care for mothers and babies across the full continuum, from pregnancy through early childhood. It also allows us to invest in training midwives, supporting residency programs in obstetrics and gynecology, and strengthening the frontline health workforce that makes this work possible every day.



Across hospitals, primary health centers, and mobile medical units, these funds help ensure that care reaches displaced and hard-to-reach families, bringing essential services closer to those who need them most.

This milestone is more than a fundraising achievement, it is a reflection of what can be accomplished when a global community unites around a shared purpose. Because of your support, more mothers can experience safer pregnancies, and more newborns have the chance to thrive.

From all of us at SAMS, thank you for standing with mothers and babies this Ramadan and for helping turn generosity into lasting impact.

Donate now:
sams-usa.net/for-mama





Creating Safe Spaces for Lebanon's Youth

Even in the face of ongoing challenges in Lebanon, SAMS Lebanon continues to stand steadfastly by communities through its Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) program, Helping Hand. In times of uncertainty and hardship, children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable, and providing spaces where they can feel safe, supported, and valued is more important than ever.



Through consistent engagement, SAMS helps youth build resilience, strengthen coping skills, and develop supportive peer networks. By fostering environments where children feel heard, valued, and safe, we are helping them navigate trauma, reduce stress, and gain confidence to face the challenges around them.

Your support makes this possible. Every activity, every session, and every interaction is powered by donors like you who believe that every child deserves safety, joy, and hope, even during crisis. With your help, SAMS can continue to reach more youth, provide psychosocial support, and strengthen families across Lebanon.

Donate today to help SAMS deliver life-saving care, psychosocial support, and opportunities for children and families to heal and thrive amid the ongoing crisis in Lebanon:



Recently, our Youth Club activity was filled with energy, laughter, and engagement. Adolescents participated in interactive games, balloon activities, and creative exercises that encouraged teamwork, self-expression, and connection. For many, these moments offer a rare opportunity to relax, play, and simply be themselves, away from the pressures and anxieties of their daily lives.

These sessions are far more than recreational, they are lifelines for mental and emotional wellbeing.

Hope in Every Visit: Supporting Displaced Families in Noor Al-Shams Camp

Amid the narrow streets and crowded shelters of Noor Al-Shams Camp, thousands of displaced families struggle to meet even their most basic needs. Here, access to consistent medical care can mean the difference between life and death. SAMS' mobile medical team in northern Gaza is working tirelessly to bridge that gap, bringing essential primary health care services directly to the community. From treating infections and chronic illnesses to providing maternal and child health care, the team ensures that even the most vulnerable have access to lifesaving medical attention.



Education is another cornerstone of the team's approach. By conducting interactive health education sessions, residents learn practical ways to prevent illness, manage chronic conditions, and care for their families in difficult circumstances. Topics include hygiene, nutrition, mental health awareness, and child development information that can empower families to take control of their own health.

Every visit of the SAMS mobile team is more than a medical check-up, it is a lifeline, offering care, guidance, and hope to a community that faces hardship every day. Through this integrated approach, SAMS continues to strengthen resilience, nurture wellness, and ensure that even in displacement, families are not left behind.



Recognizing that health extends beyond physical well-being, the team also provides psychosocial support, helping patients and families navigate the emotional and mental challenges caused by displacement, conflict, and loss. Through one-on-one counseling and group support sessions, individuals find space to heal, express themselves, and regain hope.



Strengthening Midwifery Capacity in Syria: SAMS Welcomes Swedish Delegation

SAMS was honored to host representatives from the Embassy of Sweden for a recent site visit, marking another important milestone in our ongoing collaboration to strengthen healthcare services in Syria. This visit not only reaffirmed our shared commitment to supporting vulnerable communities, but also highlighted the tangible progress being made through strong international partnerships.



We were also pleased to convene with partners and colleagues from the Ministry of Health for constructive discussions on the long-term impact of these efforts. Strengthening midwifery services is a critical step toward improving maternal and newborn health outcomes, particularly in underserved and conflict-affected areas where access to care remains limited.

A key focus of the visit was the continued collaboration between Sweden, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and SAMS to advance midwifery services nationwide. Together, we are working to address critical gaps in maternal and newborn care by investing in the training, infrastructure, and professional development needed to build a skilled and sustainable midwifery workforce.



During the visit, the delegation toured the Nursing and Health Professions Syndicate in both its Central and Damascus branches, which are currently undergoing rehabilitation as part of SAMS' 2025–2026 Annual Work Plan. These upgrades are designed to create modern, functional spaces that support high-quality education and professional standards for midwives and other healthcare providers.

This visit underscores the importance of sustained collaboration, shared expertise, and continued investment in local capacity. By working together, we are helping to build a more resilient healthcare system, one that is better equipped to meet the needs of communities across Syria today and into the future.

Frontline Ready: SAMS Trains Healthcare Workers in Mass Casualty Response

The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) recently supported healthcare workers in Dnipro, Ukraine with a specialized Mass Casualty Management (MCM) training aimed at strengthening hospital preparedness in regions near the frontline. This initiative is part of SAMS' ongoing efforts to equip medical staff with the skills and confidence to respond effectively to emergencies in high-pressure, conflict-affected settings.



Through immersive, hands-on simulations and team-based exercises, doctors and hospital staff practiced essential skills such as rapid triage, interdepartmental coordination, and structured emergency response. These exercises were designed to replicate real-life scenarios where large numbers of patients arrive simultaneously, enabling participants to refine their

decision-making and teamwork under pressure. The results were striking: 95.5% of participants reported a significant increase in their knowledge and preparedness following the training.

Participants praised the training for its practical and engaging approach:

“I have attended many trainings, but this one truly surprised me. The trainers created such an engaging environment that you don't even notice how time flies.”

— Olena K., Head of Emergency

“This is an incredibly useful experience that will be implemented in hospital practice, especially as specialists from different departments train together as one team.”

— Olena S., Head of the Department of Disaster Medicine

By providing targeted, high-quality training like this, SAMS continues to support frontline healthcare workers and strengthen emergency preparedness across Ukraine. Initiatives such as these not only enhance the skills of individual staff members but also contribute to more resilient hospital systems capable of saving lives during critical moments.



Lighting Joy in Gaza Healing Beyond Care This Ramadan

In the heart of the Gaza Strip, where daily life is shaped by uncertainty and hardship, moments of joy can feel rare yet they remain profoundly powerful. This Ramadan, the Primary Health Care – Nuseirat team set out to create such moments, launching a heartfelt initiative that reached beyond medical treatment to touch the emotional well-being of children in their care.



Recognizing that healing is not only physical but deeply emotional, the psychosocial support team organized a special distribution of Ramadan sweets and traditional lanterns. For many children, these small gifts carried immense meaning. As lanterns lit up their hands and smiles spread across their faces, the initiative transformed ordinary moments into memories of warmth, celebration, and belonging.



In a place where children are often surrounded by stress and instability, these gestures offered something essential: a reminder that they are seen, cared for, and not alone. The simple act of sharing sweets and light became a powerful expression of compassion, restoring a sense of childhood joy that conflict so often takes away.

This initiative reflects a broader commitment to holistic care, one that understands that true healing must care for both body and spirit. By integrating psychosocial support into primary health services, the team continues to foster resilience, dignity, and hope within the community.



SAMS Achieves ACCME Accreditation

The Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS) has been awarded Provisional Accreditation for two years by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®), marking a significant milestone in its commitment to advancing high-quality medical education worldwide.

This accreditation affirms that SAMS delivers continuing medical education (CME) that is relevant to clinicians' needs, evidence-based, rigorously evaluated, and independent of commercial influence, ensuring both the medical community and the public can trust the integrity of its programs.

“This accreditation marks an important step for SAMS and reflects our commitment to advancing high-quality, independent medical education,” said Dr. Nidal El-Wiher, SAMS CME Director.

“It strengthens our ability to support physicians across the United States and around the world, and highlights our responsibility to contribute to better healthcare both locally and globally.”

- Dr. Nidal El-Wiher, SAMS CME Director

“This achievement represents more than an application—it reflects 18 months of building systems, refining policies, and aligning every aspect of our work with ACCME standards,” said Ala’a ElShaar, SAMS CME Manager. “It’s incredibly meaningful to see that effort come to life.”



As an ACCME-accredited provider, SAMS is now authorized to design and deliver CME activities offering AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™, enabling the organization to expand its global educational programming. These efforts will support healthcare professionals in maintaining licensure, strengthening clinical knowledge, and improving patient outcomes.

SAMS' CME programs will focus on the most relevant and rapidly evolving areas of healthcare, delivering accessible, evidence-based education that reflects emerging best practices and meets the needs of diverse care settings.

With this achievement, SAMS will continue to expand its educational initiatives, foster international collaboration, and contribute to strengthening healthcare systems worldwide.

SAMS Hosts Young Professionals Retreat in Detroit

I'm excited to share the successful completion of the 2nd Annual SAMS Young Professionals Retreat in Detroit, Michigan.

As part of the continued work of the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS), this year's retreat brought together an inspiring group of 62 attendees, including students, residents, and physicians.

Throughout the day, I had the opportunity to engage with participants in meaningful discussions, collaborative sessions, and valuable networking opportunities designed to support both professional growth and collective impact.

One of the key highlights for me was the series of rotating discussion tables, which created a dynamic and interactive environment where attendees could exchange ideas across a range of topics. We also held focused sessions on committee structure and future initiatives, giving participants a chance to contribute directly to shaping the direction and priorities of the Young Professionals Committee. The energy, thoughtfulness, and commitment in each session truly reflected the passion this community brings to advancing SAMS' mission.

The success of this retreat would not have been possible without the dedication and contributions of many individuals. I'm sincerely grateful to our speakers, organizers, and every attendee who took the time to participate, share insights, and engage

with their peers. Your involvement continues to strengthen the foundation and momentum of the Young Professionals Committee.



As I reflect on this meaningful gathering, I'm encouraged by the connections that were built and the ideas that were sparked throughout the day. This retreat represents an important step forward in fostering leadership, collaboration, and long-term engagement among young professionals within SAMS.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to continue building on this momentum. Stay tuned for upcoming initiatives, next steps, and new opportunities to get involved as we expand the reach and impact of the Young Professionals Committee.

Mahmoud Kutmah is a third-year medical student in the 6-year BA/MD program at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and a SAMS Young Professionals Committee (YPC) organizer.



Celebrating a Growing Community: 1,500 Members Strong

We are proud to celebrate a meaningful milestone, our membership has now grown to 1,500 members.

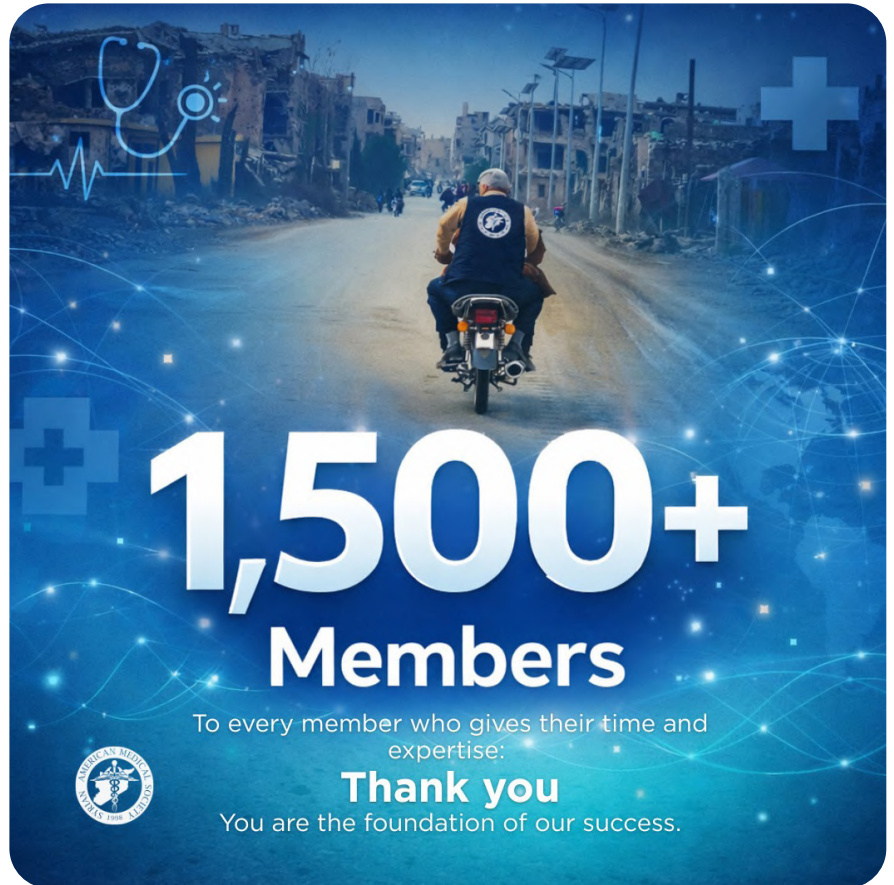
This achievement reflects the strength, unity, and shared purpose of a global community of physicians and healthcare professionals committed to service, excellence, and advancing healthcare where it is needed most. Each member brings valuable expertise, compassion, and dedication that continues to shape and strengthen our collective impact.

Through this expanding network, we are able to deepen and broaden our work by:

- Strengthening medical missions that deliver critical care to underserved communities
- Advancing high-quality, accessible medical education for healthcare professionals worldwide
- Supporting impactful healthcare initiatives that respond to urgent and evolving needs
- Mentoring and empowering the next generation of healthcare leaders
- Elevating standards of care across diverse and dynamic healthcare settings

As our community grows, so does our ability to collaborate, innovate, and create lasting change. We are especially excited to welcome more early-career professionals and trainees, whose energy and perspectives are vital to the future of our mission. Expanding engagement across programs, committees, and leadership pathways remains a key priority as we continue to build a more connected and active network.

To every member who contributes their time, expertise, and passion, thank you. Your commitment is the foundation of our success and the driving force behind everything we accomplish together.



**Learn more about SAMS Society and become a member at:
society.sams-usa.net**



2026 SAMS Builders of Tomorrow Award: Honoring Dr. Ammar Ghanem

We are proud to announce that the 2026 SAMS Mentorship Award has been presented to Dr. Ammar Ghanem. Dr. Ghanem has exemplified extraordinary dedication to mentoring and empowering students and trainees. Through his unwavering guidance and leadership, he has been a cornerstone in cultivating the next generation of physician leaders within the Syrian American Medical Society. His commitment to service has left an indelible mark, shaping both the future of our organization and the profession as a whole. Join us in celebrating Dr. Ghanem's remarkable contributions!



2026 SAMS Builders of Tomorrow Award



Dr. Ammar Ghanem

This award recognizes an individual who has demonstrated exceptional dedication to mentoring and empowering students and trainees, cultivating the next generation of physician leaders within the Syrian American Medical Society. Through guidance, leadership, and commitment to service, the recipient has made a lasting impact on the future of the organization and the profession.



A New Chapter in Medical Learning: SAMS Institute E-Learning Platform Launch

On the anniversary of the Syrian revolution, the message that has guided a journey of giving and knowledge is renewed. In this spirit, the SAMS Institute has launched a specialized e-learning platform, creating a dedicated space that brings together doctors and students in a continuous journey of learning and professional development.

The platform provides access to advanced medical educational content delivered by leading physicians from the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS). It includes Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Continuing Medical Education (CME) programs, offered through a range of lectures and courses across various medical specialties.

The platform also offers a fully integrated and interactive learning experience through:

- Easy access to lectures and courses anytime, anywhere.
- The ability to track learner progress and completed sessions.
- Assessments at the end of each lecture or course to evaluate understanding.

- A grading system that assigns scores to courses based on test performance under academic supervision.

This initiative reflects SAMS' ongoing commitment to advancing medical education, empowering doctors and students with access to up-to-date knowledge, and strengthening the quality of medical training.



Explore the platform and begin your learning journey:
bit.ly/samsinstitute-elearning



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MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Reflecting on this month's stories, from healing in Syria to hope in Gaza, it's clear that our united efforts are making a greater difference than ever.

But the work is far from over.

Whether you're a healthcare professional, advocate, or supporter, you have a role to play in advancing our mission of delivering dignified, high-quality care to communities in crisis.

Here's how you can stay engaged:



Donate to support emergency relief and medical care:
sams-usa.net/donate



Volunteer your time and expertise:
sams-usa.net/volunteer




Advocate by amplifying our message and engaging with policymakers


*Thank you for being part of the SAMS family.
Together, we are healing, rebuilding, and
inspiring hope.*

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