



## I-House Alumni Spotlight:

**Dr. Zahwa Amad (IH 1982-86)**  
**Scientist, HIV/AIDS Specialist**

*December is HIV/AIDS Awareness Month*

Dr. Zahwa Amad was born and raised in Kuwait and is of Palestinian descent. She has always had ambition and zeal for academics.

In her words, "I had a plan since I turned 10 to come to the States. So I said, 'I'm gonna get straight A's, get a college scholarship, and I'm gonna travel on my own.'"

She went on to earn her Ph.D. in Infectious Diseases at UC Berkeley School of Public Health. She then carried out her pioneering doctorate research on HIV latency at UCSF. She has since led groundbreaking work in HIV vaccine development at Chiron Corporation (now Novartis).



*Zahwa in the 1983  
Resident directory*

During her stay at I-House, Zahwa presented to fellow residents a slide show about sites in Jerusalem that are considered sacred by Christians, Muslims, and Jews. "I was nervous about giving the presentation, but I was relieved that I had the support of then I-House Director Mr. Sheridan Warrick. I just wanted to share with other residents some of the cultural sites from back home. And these sites were important to many faiths."

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*Because of I-House, I did not feel homesick as I was with a network of supportive staff and friends. That allowed me to excel in academics and get my master's and Ph.D. at Cal. I made lifelong friends and (gained) a broad perspective of cross-cultural experience that I will forever cherish.*

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*I think finding community and commonality is really at the core of the I-House experience.*

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