



Maha ABUHAFEETHA

Home Country
Palestine

Degree
PhD in Environmental
Design

Expertise
Environmental Design,
Project Management,
Architectural
Engineering

Research Focus
Green Building Design

Host University
University of Calgary,
Canada

Fellowship Awarded
2009

Maha AbuHafeetha grew up in Palestine, where her father and mother are both school teachers. She is married with one child.

Maha obtained her undergraduate degree in architectural engineering from An-Najah National University in Palestine in 2006. She earned her graduate degree from the Schulich School of Engineering and the Faculty of Environmental Design at the University of Calgary, Canada, where in 2009 she began working toward her PhD specializing in environmental design and energy conservation in building sustainability.

Because many conventional buildings are hard on the environment due to construction methods, air emissions, operations, ongoing maintenance and eventual deconstruction, Maha is focusing her doctoral research on designing green buildings that are environmentally friendly and can be designed to reduce direct and indirect environmental consequences. She is designing green buildings optimized for their intended use and for the local climate— buildings that use the natural environment to deliver maximum efficiency and comfort with lower overall lifecycle costs than conventional buildings.

Maha is also investigating the impact of indoor air quality in elementary schools on children's health, well-being and academic performance. Her study focuses on schools because children are actively growing and breathe higher volumes of air relative to their weights, which makes them more susceptible to environmental pollution. As well, studies have shown that many elementary schools have significant indoor environmental problems.

When Maha graduates from the University of Calgary she will be the first woman in the city of Tulkarem in Palestine to achieve a PhD in environmental design and engineering. She intends to teach at An-Najah National University in Palestine.