

Afghan Coalition

Monthly Newsletter of the Afghan Community in Northern California

Empowering the Afghan community and building bridges to Afghanistan

Member organizations: Afghan Women's Association, International, Society of Afghan Professionals, Society of Afghan Engineers (NCA chapter), Afghan American Entertainer's Association, Virtual Nation, Afghan Student Union (Berkeley), Afghan Domestic Violence Prevention, San Francisco Friends of Afghanistan

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Editorial

The month of February is mostly acknowledged for its celebration of Valentine's Day on Feb. 14. Valentine's Day is neither an Islamic concept nor an Afghan one. Our position is that, instead of celebrating one day of love, which is very commercialized and expensive, we should practice love and affections 365 days a year. We should teach our young people how to respect and love, not only their fellow family members, but their fellow citizens as well. Most importantly, we should be teaching our youth the love of God, which will give them a sense of security, dignity and principles.



Farid Younos

News:

Jan 23: Alameda county historical society invited Dr. Younos from the Afghan Coalition to speak on the history of Afghans in Alameda County. The presentation, which focused on Afghan immigrants in the United States during the last 20, was well received by the attendees in light of the new development of Afghan-US relations. It is noteworthy to mention that this was the first presentation of Afghan history in California. This presentation will be published soon and we will keep you posted.

Jan 24: The Afghan Coalition staff and some board members participated in the second annual Indo-American Community Federation's Unity Dinner at the Fremont Marriott. Among the speakers were Senator Liz Figueroa, Assemblymen John Dutra and representatives of other federal and state elected officials. Rona Popal spoke about unity and collaboration with other communities and the role of the Afghan Coalition in bringing diverse communities together.

Jan 25: Rona Popal participated in a community wide cross-cultural dialogue with community leaders on how diverse communities in Fremont can work together to build a stronger community.

Feb 2: Afghan Women Association, International (AWAI) hosted 6 young women from Afghanistan who were sponsored by Friends of Afghanistan Reconstruction in Reno. This reception provided a forum to exchange different ideas for establishing small women owned businesses in Afghanistan. Women business owners here shared their experiences and advice to help these women achieve their goals in Afghanistan. These women were also referred to the micro lending program as a place to seek funds to begin their

businesses.

Feb 11: Society of Afghan professionals (SAP) elected new officers. We would like to congratulate Khalida Atta, President and Zemar Achikzai, Vice President. We wish them success for the 2003.

Feb 14: SAP sponsored a concert to raise funds for Paghmam school project in Afghanistan. They invited the most famous singer and composer of contemporary Afghan music, Wahid Qassemi from Toronto Canada. Wahid Qassemi is the grandson of Ustad Qassem Afghan, the founder of Afghan classical music, and he brings with him a legacy of 3 generations of musicians. His concert was wonderful and people left energized and amazed by his performance. Wahid was accompanied by his brother Abdullah Qassemi, who is considered by Afghans as a master of keyboard music. Around 600 people attended this concert.

Feb 18: AWAI held a woman's health meeting concerning issues of domestic abuse. Mona Afary and Parwin Taufiq lead this meeting and 12 women participated.

Feb 19: The Afghan Coalition, Partners for Democratic Change and the City of Fremont held a follow-up to the health dialogue of December. This meeting brought together Afghan and American health and development professionals to begin to address some of the problems and concerns that emerged from the community's exploration of the health and health care problems faced by Afghans locally. Representatives from the Afghan Elderly Association, Alameda public health and social services, Washington Hospital, BART and Bay area community services participated. Health care professionals offered their support to help us establish health workshops for the community.

Feb 24: The Afghan Student Association of UC Davis invited Dr. Younos to present on Islam in the contemporary world and present his new book, Gender and Equality in Islam.

Feb 24: The Afghan coalition met with Mr. Deen Mohammed Sofi, who was representing the National Coordination of Afghanistan Welfare (NCWA), a non-profit organization based in London. This main objective of NCAW in Afghanistan is to produce a civil society through the cooperation of all non-profit organization, inside and outside of Afghanistan. The Afghan Coalition is anxious to cooperate on this worthy project. NCWA also promotes the Afghan National Athletics Association so Afghanistan could once again in major international sporting events.

CONDOLENCES:

We were informed early this morning that 4 prominent Afghan professionals, who were active members of the Society of Afghan Engineers and who had devoted their post Sept 11 lives to the reconstruction of Afghanistan, were tragically killed in an airplane accident. Those who perished include: Engineer Juma Mohammed Mohammadi, Minister of Petroleum and Industries, Mr. Farhad Ahad, Economic/Investment advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Engineer Ratib Olumi and Engineer Popal. The Afghan Coalition and all its member organizations would like to extend their heartfelt condolences to both their families, friends and the government of Afghanistan. May Allah bless them in the Hereafter.

In addition, the staff of the Afghan Coalition wishes to express their condolences to Zemar Achitzai who lost his grandmother in Los Angeles. May Allah bless her in the hereafter.

Congratulations: Dr. Younos has been assigned new responsibilities for the Afghan Coalition. He is now director of public relations. This has been decided because of his vast experience with media, protocol and public relations.

We would like to wish Taiba Hosseini long life and health on her birthday. Also we wish Dr. Younos the best of health as he turned 51 on Feb 21st.

Book Drive: the Afghan Student Association of UC Berkeley and the Asian Foundation are sponsoring a book drive for Kabul University. Book bins will be available on the UC Berkeley campus. For more information contact Kaneshka Alamshahi at king_kaneshka@yahoo.com.

Radio Payam Afghan: Broadcasting from Los Angeles has made an arrangement with Dr. Younos for a live cultural program to be aired on the last Wednesday of the month at 8 PM. This program is in Dari. Dr.

Younos has been contributing to RPA for the last several months.

Funding Needs:

The Afghan Coalition is continuing to seek funding to bring modern COB housing to Afghanistan (see last month's newsletter). We need funding to send 2 COB experts to Afghanistan. Interested in donating or questions, call (510) 574-2183.

We need volunteers



Afghan Coalition needs volunteers for a variety of domestic and Afghanistan based programs. Need skills include computer competency and organizational skills.

Here is how to get in touch:

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