



October 20, 2014

A-AWA HELD 5TH ANNUAL EVENT, AUGUST 28TH, 2014: A CELEBRATION OF AFGHAN WOMEN'S ACHIEVEMENT



More than 120 supporters celebrated A-AWA's 5th annual dinner in Pentagon City, Washington DC honoring Afghan women's achievements. Honorable Ms. Shinkai Karokhail, MP and champion of women's rights, joined the group as keynote speaker. US Congressman Jim Moran, Larry Sampler from US-AID and Ms. Suraya Sadeed, Human Rights Activist and Author, also brought their unique experience and perspective to honor Afghan women's accomplishments and support peace and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan.

A-AWA presented Humanitarian Awards in recognition of influential Afghan women. The recipients were Ms. Shinkai Karokhail for promoting women's rights and Ms. Suraya Sadeed for promoting children's rights to education. A-AWA is proud to recognize women who have put their lives at risk but haven't stopped their humanitarian efforts.

Three pieces of writing were recited from the Afghan Women's Writing Project sharing Afghan women and girls' hope, fear and pain. This was a great way to stay motivated and not to forget thousands of Afghan women in need of support and a better future. The audience couldn't stop smiling and clapping when A-AWA's Dari/Pashtu classes for kids presented two Afghan songs - A great example of how Afghan language and culture can be preserved by future generations growing up outside Afghanistan.

A-AWA's Board of Directors conveyed the vision to build a Community Center, which will serve as a permanent structural foundation where the Afghan community can benefit from coordinated services aimed at building a strong community and preserving Afghan culture and heritage. The event ended with a highly motivational message for Afghan community to become more involved. Ms. Shahla Ahmadi and Dr. Homaira Behsudi appreciated A-AWA volunteers and members. A-AWA's success is dependent on what each one of these dedicated individuals contribute throughout the year!

COAT DRIVE 2014



A-AWA has launched its Coat Drive for 2014 and has already obtained free shipment (October 10th to 30th). The goal is to help Afghan community to take their small part in helping Afghan children inside Afghanistan, as another cold winter is approaching. Donations in form of new or gently used winter coats, jackets, sweaters, jeans and boots can be dropped at:

1608 Spring Hill Road
Vienna, VA 22182

Also, you can sponsor a coat by donating \$20. Send check to A-AWA's P. O. Box address:

P.O. Box 2233
Fairfax, VA 22031

Special thanks to Ms. Shahla Ahmadi and Dr. Homaira Behsudi for coordinating this project. A-AWA remains grateful to other committed volunteers who have helped in past drives: Ms. Malal Nezam and Ms. Rohina Panah.

A-AWA'S EMERGENCY FUND:

A-AWA's volunteers have been working with a number of new refugee families. Recently, one family unfortunately lost their infant baby due to a terminal sickness. A-AWA was able to coordinate fundraising efforts to help family cover funeral cost. The family was in dire need of financial help. A-AWA would like to thank Ms. Raihana Noorzad (A-AMPA) and Mr. Raza (MakeSpace) who helped in raising donations for the family that was matched by the Makespace BOD. A number of A-AWA members helping with this case made donations - special thanks to Dr. Homaira Behsudi. The family received close to \$1400. Also, special thanks to Ms. Mariam Rusta for visiting and working with the family closely, and Ms. Nillab Pazhwak for coordinating this effort.

RESETTLEMENT SERVICES TO REFUGEES AND NEWCOMER FAMILIES:

A-AWA has arranged a support group for new refugee families in partnership with Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS/NCA) on October 19th (2 to 4 PM) at the Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area (LSS/NCA) 7401 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA 22043.



A-AWA is looking for volunteers who are interested to help these families as mentors. For more information and future events, please call 703-303-1435.

Special thanks to Ms. Nillab Pazhwak, Ms. Mariam Rusta and Ms. Claire Kozik of LSS/NCA for coordinating these support groups.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL AWARENESS CLASSES:

A-AWA continues to offer Dari/Pashtu language classes to children. Special thanks to Ms. Nooria Faryar for her leadership to coordinate this effort. A-AWA would like to thank all volunteer teachers and parents who have been critical in sustaining this valuable service to the community. The Fall 2014 session (October 12th to November 23rd, 10:30 to 12:30 PM) is in progress. Adult English and Dari classes are also available. For more information on current and future classes, please contact: 703-909-5853

A-AWA'S OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

Ms. Shahla Ahmadi has participated in a number of events in Washington DC and VA. She helped organize for A-AWA to have a table at the Afghan Cultural Festival in Arlington, October, 2014, organized by the Education for Better Tomorrow. A-AWA would like to thank her and Ms. Sadaf for their time and commitment. Ms. Shahla Ahmadi also represented A-AWA at USIP and USID during their Iftar Dinner Events in July 2014. Ms. Shahla Ahmadi volunteers a lot of her time to attend various community events representing A-AWA and trying to find new resources to strengthen the organization.



FACEBOOK AND WEBSITE:

A-AWA is attempting to improve its communication with members and supporters in community. This email update is part of this effort so A-AWA's valuable supporters like you, are aware of A-AWA's volunteers' efforts and accomplishments. Also, A-AWA's Facebook page is updated regularly - Thanks to Ms. Hannah Hopkins for her time and valuable input! A number of updates are underway in the web site - Thanks to Ms. Nillab Pazhwak for her time to prepare reports and Trivision for maintaining the Website!

Please visit our Facebook Page and click on "Like" button or request to become a "Friend" of this page to receive updates. Also, you can add yourself to our mailing list by emailing: hannahhopkins@me.com.

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/SupportAAWA>

Website: www.a-awa.org

A-AWA is dedicated to serving as a platform through which we can assist the Afghan community to reach their full potential, and become productive individuals within our culture and society.
