



**Afghan Communicator**

**41 – 31 College Point Blvd. #2A, Flushing, NY 11355**

**www.AfghanCommunicator.com**

*Mission:* Afghan Communicator is a community based, grass-root organization dedicated to education, advocacy, community development and youth leadership. AC's main focus is the Afghan community and the Muslim communities in New York. We also serve the larger community in New York and the broader Afghan community.

**2004 Partial Events Calendar**

**YOUTH & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Feb 8**

**TOWN HALL FOR YOUNG AFGHANS**

**Empire State Bldg, NY**

Afghan Communicator invited young Afghan professionals to *Looking to the Future: A Town Hall for Young Afghan Professionals*. Over 40 young Afghan professional men and women attended this event to network and listen to peers, and discuss the issues facing them today. This Town Hall was an opportunity for a fragmented generation to reconvene, rejuvenate, and reestablish a sense of belonging to a common culture and community. As a follow up to the town hall, on April 18, over 20 young professionals organized an outdoor activity, in which Town Hall attendees brought their friends for networking opportunity. Plans to organize regular activities and form a social group is under works. Contact Afghan Communicator if you are interested in participating in future events.

**Ongoing. Spring, Fall**

**DARI CLASSES**

**NY**

Afghan Communicator offers Dari language classes in Manhattan and Queens to anyone interested in Afghan language and culture. Our students vary from young Afghans who cannot read or write Dari to non-Afghans who wish to learn a new language or brush up on their language skills.

**Annual**

**INTER AFGHAN YOUTH SUMMIT**

**United States & Canada**

At this event, young Afghan professionals gather from all over the US and Canada to speak about issues concerning the Afghan community. The Summit was originally founded by Afghan Communicator in 1999. Since then, it has been held in California, Virginia and Toronto and participants come from as far away as Afghanistan and Prague. In 2003, AC presented its first *Most Active Young Afghan Award* at the IAYS, intended to encourage leadership and participation in the community.

**AFGHAN WOMEN**

**Mar 8**

**AFGHAN WOMEN'S FUNDRAISER**

**NY**

This event brought together leaders in the movement for Afghan women's education, founders of new initiatives, authors and journalists, and leading elected officials in an effort to bring attention to the situation of women in post-Taliban Afghanistan and to support Afghan women's organizations. The night began with a cocktail hour followed by entertainment and a distinguished panel of guest speakers. Funds raised by AC was donated to PARWAZ, a micro lending organization based in Kabul. As a result of this event, PARWAZ was featured on Op-Ed Section of New York Times, shortly after the event. This event was co-sponsored by Women for Afghan Women.

**June – August**

**AFGHAN GIRLS SOCCER CAMP**

**MD, VA, NY, CT, OH**

In an effort to encourage mutual respect and understanding between the people of Afghanistan & the United States, and to provide opportunities for the Afghan women to raise their profile and self-esteem, Afghan Communicator with the coordination of Afghan Youth Sport Exchange, sponsored eight girls (ages 11 to 16) to come to the US from mid June to early August 2004. Afghan Communicator and Afghan Youth Sports Exchange developed this project and were looking for girl athletes. Afghan Center offered to recruit the girls from Aschiana Center and assist them with their visas. When in the US, with request and coordination of Afghan Communicator and Afghan Youth Sport Exchange, many members of the Afghan community greatly assisted in hosting and caring for the girls. For a month the girls were coached at a Connecticut camp, by the end of which the girls went to compete in soccer at the International Children's Games in Cleveland, Ohio. During their US visit the team met with President Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and other elected officials as well as members of the Afghan community from all over the US. For more details see our Sep 2004 Bulletin.

**AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION**

**April**

**KABUL OFFICE**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

AC's Kabul office opened in April 2004. Executive Director Rameen Moshref Javid travels to Kabul in November to officially open the office, hire staff, and oversee projects. The Kabul office is responsible for distributing aid coming from the West directly to charities of your choice. For example, you want to send \$1,000 to buy necessary supplies for a middle school. Contact AC and we will identify a school, if you do not have one in mind, and buy the necessary materials and deliver it to the school. In return for 5% commission, we will send you pictures and/or video tape of the delivery as a confirmation. Kabul office also offers a guest house. Contact AC for more information.

**2003-2004**

**AFGHAN SCHOOL FUNDRAISER**

**NJ**

AC is working with Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) in an Adopt-An-Institution (in Afghanistan) Program. AC assisted RVCC in raising over \$5,000 in funds for Amir Shir Ali Khan School throughout the 2003-2004 academic years. AC helped RVCC identify the Afghan school in need, provided contacts, provided Afghan artists and performers for a fundraiser on April 30, 2004, and assisted in all other advertising and logistical needs. Funds are distributed

through the AC office in Kabul. Regular reports, including pictures and video of the items bought and delivered to the school, was sent to RVCC.

## **ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION**

### **Ongoing**

### **CONFERENCES**

**NY**

Afghan Communicator takes part in, or organizes, many conferences, panels, teach ins, town hall meetings, and various speaking engagements throughout the year. Our conferences bring together Afghan intellectuals to better discuss the situation of Afghanistan or the Afghan community. One of our annual conferences this year, ASN (Association for Study of Nationalities) was held at Columbia University on April 15, in which AC screened two films. 1) *Dangerous Journey*, Produced by Sedika Mojadidi and Erica Soehngen; and 2) *A Vacation for Safawi*, Directed by Carl Larsson.

### **Ongoing**

### **VOTER REGISTRATION**

**NY, NJ, CA, VA, NM**

AC organized and led an eight city (New York, New Jersey, Washington DC, Maryland, Virginia, Los Angeles, Orange County, New Mexico) voter registration drive with the help of US-Afghan Reconstruction Council, American Society of Afghan Professionals, Afghan American Youth Council, Afghan Future Generation of University of California at Irvine, Afghan Student Association of University of California at Los Angeles, and other individuals. This is the first nationwide attempt by AC and the Afghan community to encourage the Afghan community to actively participate in the democratic process. In New York, it is a member of other voting coalitions such as Asian Pacific American Voters Alliance (APAVA) and the voting project of New York Immigration Coalition. AC is dedicated to voter education and voter registration for all Afghan-Americans.

### **October 23**

### **DISTRITCT 22 CANDIDATES FORUM**

**NY**

AC with the Northeast Queens Division of NAACP, the Long Island Division of Organization for Chinese Americans, Korean American League For Civic Action, Asian Americans For Equality, Latin American Integration Center, and South Asian American Voting Youth, held a *Candidates Forum* for the State Assembly Post of District 22. In this forum, all candidates had a chance to debate issues and state their agendas. The forum was open to the public and the audience had an opportunity to address the candidates directly and express the issues that mattered to them most.

### **Ongoing**

### **KNOW BOOKS**

**NY**

Firmly believing that education is the key to tolerance and mutual understanding, AC initiated the *Know Books* project, the aim of which is to provide local NY libraries with objective materials on Islam and Afghanistan. Afghan Communicator targets public libraries to help them build their collection of books, magazines, video and audio about Afghanistan and Islam. Authors or publishers who wish to donate their books in exchange for a review in our publications, should contact our office for more information.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Sep 25**

### **MOSQUE CLEANING**

**NY**

AC, Afghan Youth Sports Exchange and some other community members gathered for a day of volunteerism, cleaning the Sayeed Jamalludin al-Afghani Masjid, a local Flushing Afghan Mosque. The work entailed thoroughly cleaning the inside and outside areas of the Masjid. Through revitalizing the Masjid, young Afghan-Americans were given a chance to give back to their communities, help others and overall build a stronger community.

### **Sep 26**

### **AFGHAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

**CA**

AC helped form a coalition in Southern California of Afghan organizations and individuals. The purpose of the coalition is to pool resources to better organize and represent the Afghan community in Southern California. The name of the coalition is Afghan Community Foundation (ACF) and it welcomes other Afghan organizations to be part of this initiative. AC is its fiscal sponsor for the time being, until it gains its own 501c3 status from the IRS. ACF's Mission statement reads: *The Afghan Community Foundation is a coalition of concerned organizations and individuals committed to advancing the interests and improving the general well being of the Afghan community.*

## **ARTS & CULTURE**

### **Annual. March**

### **AFGHAN NEW YEAR (*NAW RUZ*)**

**NY**

Afghan Communicator joined hundreds of Iranians, Tajikistanis and fellow Afghans in New York City to commemorate *Naw Ruz* (New Year) holiday in a colorful Parade in Manhattan on Saturday March 27, 2004. Carrying banners and flags, Afghan Communicator along with other parade participants proceeded on Madison Avenue, from 41st Street to 27th Street. This parade, the first of its kind, was organized by the Iranian community, and included a variety of Iranian musical bands, horse drawn carriages and parade floats displaying Iranian historical heritage, dances, folk songs and live performances. Because celebration of *Naw Roz* and the Gul-e Surkh (Red Tulip) season is an important part of Afghan cultural and historical heritage, Afghan Communicator plans to engage a greater number of Afghans to celebrate this joyful cultural festivity among the Afghan Community next year.

### **Annual. August**

### **AFGHAN HERITAGE DAY**

**NY**

This annual cultural picnic was celebrated by 2000 Afghans this year on August 14. Entertainers, special guests, and vendors made it a spectacular success despite the inclement weather. Community leaders, elected officials, celebrities, and the non-profit community came to address the crowd. The program included cultural performances, fashion shows, kids program, as well as, voter education, voter registration and community survey among other things.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Afghan Communicator organizes and engages in a number of events annually, which we cannot describe in one page. For a full description of our activities please contact the office, or ask for our annual report by spring of the following year. For a free subscription to our newsletter (Community Bulletin) by mail, and/or Afghan Events Weekly email list, please contact our office.