

# **The Afghan Coalition**

## **Fiscal Year July 2007 - June 2008**

### **Annual Report**



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## *Letter from the President and Executive Director*

December 2008

This past fiscal year was another rewarding year for the Afghan Coalition. Through new partnerships and a continuation of the **Afghan Health Partnership Project**, we improved and expanded our programs. We could not have made such great progress without the generous support of volunteers, in-kind support from partnering agencies, our dedicated staff, and funders. We are proud to share the accomplishments of *Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (July - June)* in the following pages.

With *Fiscal Year 2008-2009* now underway, the Afghan Coalition will continue to make new community connections and enhance its services. A few of those activities include:

- ◆ Afghan Youth Soccer Club - We are in the process of bringing on a new member project to promote access to sports, healthy lifestyle choices and leadership for youth, with an emphasis on low income youth who would not otherwise have such opportunities. The program began in September 2008 with recruiting and meeting with youth, families and coaches. In October and December the group put on its first youth soccer tournaments.
- ◆ Afghan Mental Health Council - As a member and coordinator of this Council, the Afghan Coalition is working with other Afghan and South Asian groups to build a strategy for implementing Alameda County Prevention and Early Intervention program objectives in our community. This funding will be made available by the state Mental Health Services Act, which is administered on the county level. For over a year, we have worked diligently with Alameda County to voice the needs of our community to ensure funds to support underserved Afghan and South Asian communities.
- ◆ Afghan Community Health Survey - In October 2008, the first phase of our collaboration with CSU East Bay culminated with the Afghan Refugee Health Summit, a presentation by Dr. Carl Stempel and Valerie Smith to Health Leadership Consortium participants, elected public officials and other policy makers, and local agency representatives on the results of the Afghan Community Health Survey. Elected officials attending included City of Fremont Mayor Bob Wasserman; State Senator Ellen Corbett; Alameda County Supervisor Gail Steele; and Alameda County Supervisor Scott Haggerty, as represented by Josh Thurman. Our partnership with CSU East Bay will continue into 2009 as we complete a youth survey and enter program planning and implementation to address the needs identified in the community health surveys. We are grateful to The California Endowment and Alameda County for their support of this project.
- ◆ Partnership with Alameda County Public Health Diabetes Program - With support from Kaiser Permanente's Community Benefit Program, we partnered with the City of Fremont and the County to present a series of workshops for Afghans coping with diabetes. The first seven-session class was a great success and the participants made positive changes for improved health.
- ◆ Get out the Vote - With support from the San Francisco Foundation's Social Justice Fund, the Afghan Coalition led a very successful voter mobilization campaign leading up to the historic November 2008 election.

In addition to these projects we will continue to focus on our core services to the community, directly supporting individuals and families who are most in need. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any comments or suggestions for programs and activities. We also welcome and greatly appreciate your support.

With respect and gratitude,

*Waheed Momand*

*Board President*

*and*

*Rona Popal*

*Executive Director*

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## History and Service Area of the Afghan Coalition

Formed in 1996, the Afghan Coalition is a 501(c)(3) non-profit community-based umbrella organization, and currently supports the following programs and organizations:

- ❖ Afghan Women's Association International
- ❖ Society of Afghan Professionals
- ❖ Institute of Afghan Studies
- ❖ Afghan Friends Network
- ❖ Lemar-TV
- ❖ Afghan Students' Association of UC Berkeley
- ❖ Afghan-American Entertainment Association
- ❖ Afghan Domestic Violence Prevention Program

The Afghan Coalition is located in the Fremont Family Resource Center in Southern Alameda County, California, where bilingual/bicultural workers bridge the language and cultural gap between community members and social service providers, giving Afghan families unprecedented access to community resources. We also provide a safe, non-political place for Afghans and other members of our multi-ethnic community to receive a variety of social, educational, cultural and other services. The majority of the Afghan Coalition's clients and participants are living in the East Bay cities of Fremont, Hayward, Union City, and Newark in Southern Alameda County.

The Afghan Coalition gained its 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in March 2003. Professional staff and a dedicated group of volunteers provide advocacy, support groups, translation, information and referral, youth leadership development, cultural celebrations, community events and educational programs to over 1,000 community members per year, particularly women and youth. The Coalition has been particularly successful in mobilizing Afghan women as volunteers, a significant accomplishment. Since 2001, the Afghan Coalition has raised support for its programs through grants, fee-for-service contracts and individual donors including The City of Fremont, NCCJ - National Conference for Community and Justice, The Christensen Fund, Women's Foundation, Tides Foundation, The California Endowment, San Francisco Foundation, East Bay Community Foundation, ATT Foundation, The California Wellness Foundation, University of California Breast Cancer Research Program, Y & H Soda Foundation, East Bay Agency for Children, Wells Fargo Foundation, Five Bridges Foundation, Kaiser Permanente's Community Benefit Program, The Center for Civic Partnerships, and Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, among other funding partners.

### Diversity

Although the Afghan Coalition's primary service population is the Afghan community, because of our multilingual capacity we also serve Pakistani, Arab, Indian and Iranian refugees and immigrants as well.

Community members of many races and ethnicities are involved in the work of the Coalition by organizing community events and activities, electing local Afghan representatives to national and international delegations, determining community priorities, and participating in meetings with public officials, among other activities.

## **Organizational Structure and Programs**

### **Leadership**

Ms. Rona Popal has led the Afghan Coalition as Executive Director since 2003. Ms. Popal has extensive experience in designing and organizing community service programs, as well as providing direct client service and advocacy. She has worked in social services for over 20 years as an employment counselor and social worker. She is a recognized community leader. On October 27, 2007 State Assembly Member Alberto Torrico honored her with the 20th District Unity Award. In October 2006, Ms. Popal presented a speech as oral testimony on behalf of the Coalition's Afghan Women's Association International to the California Commission on the Status of Women. She has represented the northern California Afghan community in international conferences and summits and had the honor of serving as the Northwest United States delegate to the Loya Jirga in Afghanistan. A tireless community organizer and outspoken proponent of civil liberties and human rights, Ms. Popal was voted International Woman of the Year by the Silicon Valley Women's Organization in 2002.

The Afghan Coalition's core programming focuses on health and social services, advocacy and education for underserved Afghan families living in Southern Alameda County. Through advocacy work of the Afghan Health Partnership Program and direct service work, the agency assists clients to access health care and insurance, including translation, scheduling appointments, completing paper work, and arranging transportation. Our staff provides information and referral, case management, counseling, crisis intervention, support groups, advocacy and education to over hundreds of clients per year (with over 1,000 client visits annually). Seventy-five percent (75%) of our clients are female with limited English-speaking ability. In addition, we provide orientation assistance and counseling to newly arrived refugees to the Bay Area including information and referrals for housing, health and other social services. We also co-lead quarterly health consortium meetings, which improve dialogue between the community and local health care providers. Beginning in 2007, the Afghan Coalition began its work in policy advocacy with local health systems and providers to provide culturally and linguistically competent services with support from The California Endowment.

### **Individual and Group Health Advocacy**

Health Advocates provide face-to-face assistance to clients with accessing culturally competent health services offered by local providers, including creating ongoing lines of communication between community members and providers. Through counseling, workshops, and outreach, Health Advocates link community members to existing health management, counseling and education efforts. Our Health Advocates are former or current health professionals with strong connections in their own community, and include individuals who speak both Dari and Pashto. Our program manager and lead health advocate (executive director), two health advocates, and on-call stipend-paid advocates allow us to offer services that are flexible, stable, and cost-effective.

Program staff are stationed at the Fremont Resource Center, where many vulnerable Afghan refugees, including new arrivals and elderly, receive services. Staff hold scheduled case management office hours 15 hours per week during and answer the main phone line to schedule intakes and appointments and provide information and referrals during standard

business hours. Callers oftentimes have questions about health insurance eligibility status and how to access services. In addition to coordinating regular office hours, health advocates schedule home visits and accompany clients to clinic visits when they are needed for translation and orientation. Health Advocates link clients to health services in many ways, including: facilitating appointments, coaching clients on how to communicate with health professionals, educating clients on western health care concepts, helping them to access transportation to and from appointments, advocating for specific services, helping service providers understand the needs of clients, resolving crisis situations, clarifying written instructions for medication use, explaining the importance of preventive and self-care, and assisting clients to make, change and cancel appointments. Health Advocates are also trained to make successful linkages to mental health services and domestic violence resources. Each Advocate is trained to (1) identify mental health issues that require intervention and make successful linkages to service providers (2) link clients who are socially isolated with community activities that will improve their health and mental health, and (3) identify domestic violence issues that require intervention and refer clients to our partners including Narika, Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach, and SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments).

Coalition staff are available to individuals and families in crisis and will assist other social service agencies requesting support for Afghan clients. These cases are extremely time intensive, and often involve obtaining food, shelter, clothing and financial assistance. In the case of women who have been referred or come forward due to domestic abuse, it also involves finding them a safe place to stay with little or no notice. Although we work with local shelters and domestic abuse services, it is usually the Coalition who locates temporary shelter for Afghan domestic violence victims.

### **The Afghan Health Partnership Program (AHPP)**

Under this program, the Afghan Coalition promotes access to direct health-related services for underserved Afghan women and their families for the purpose of health promotion and disease prevention. Our advocacy work involves intensive collaboration and networking with other agencies from around the Bay Area to enhance the delivery of services and access to culturally appropriate services. To this end, we co-lead the Health Leadership Consortium, bringing together representatives from major health and human service providers to improve and coordinate health services and leverage resources. We are also collaborating with California State University East Bay to complete an unprecedented community health survey.

#### *Health Leadership Consortium*

The Health Leadership Consortium brings together representatives from major health and human service providers in southern Alameda County and beyond, service organizations for underserved communities, and program staff to coordinate services and leverage resources. The Consortium leverages and broker resources to improve the accessibility and cultural responsiveness of health services, improves coordination of services to underserved communities, and improves communication between providers and the health advocates. Currently, the Consortium is facilitated by Valerie Smith of California State University East Bay's Department of Communication. Meetings are held quarterly. The City of Fremont's Human Services Department assists the Afghan Coalition in carrying out this project by assisting in ongoing communication with health providers.

Consortium participants include the Afghan Coalition staff, volunteers, and clients; East Bay Agency for Children; City of Fremont (Youth & Family Services, Human Services, Senior Services); Tri-City Health Center; Kaiser Permanente; SAVE (Shelter Against Violent Environments); Palo Alto Medical Foundation; CSU East Bay; SEMAH, Inc.; Tiburcio Vasquez Health Center Inc.; Narika; League of Women Voters; Family Violence Law Center; Tri Valley Haven; Alameda Health Consortium; Arab Cultural Community Center; Washington Hospital; Winton Wellness Clinic of Alameda County; Afghan Elderly Association; Alameda County Behavioral Healthcare Services; Fremont Unified School District; The Hume Center; and Afghan Care, among a growing group of agencies.

### *Health Survey Project*

Since fall 2006, the Afghan Coalition has been collaborating with the faculty and graduate students at California State University, East Bay (CSUEB), Department of Sociology and Social Sciences to develop and conduct an Afghan Community Health Survey (ACHS). The group interviewed Afghan Coalition clients and other Afghan community members living in Alameda County. The purpose of the survey is to document Afghan health practices and preferences based on culture, as well as experiences with current health providers-particularly issues related to language access and cultural competency-and included respondent input on solutions. With the survey results, the Afghan Coalition will be in a better position to advocate for resources to support the health challenges facing Afghans and other refugees.

### *Community Advocacy and Mobilization*

For close to two years, the Afghan Coalition has been building new advocacy skills, a significant new asset for building organizational capacity. Following a well crafted workplan and objectives with The California Endowment, we have diligently participated in opportunities to advocate for Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) funds and Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) funds (also known as "Proposition 63") for Afghan communities and to increase awareness among county health decision makers about language disparities and the community's mental health needs. Over the past year, the Afghan Coalition and collaborating agencies have met regularly with Alameda County Supervisor Gail Steele, who has made important introductions and convened gatherings, which have included the mayors of Fremont, Hayward and Union City and Dr. Marye Thomas, Director of Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services. The Afghan Coalition also participated in several community forums to promote health access at Washington Hospital, Hayward and Union City as well as an Alameda County Board of Supervisors forum. Our goal for these meetings is to educate decision makers on issues facing medically underserved Afghan immigrants and refugees with no health insurance. We also advocate that positive systems change must be powered by a grassroots effort at the local level

In addition to advocating for the health needs of Afghans, we have made other important connections that have elevated the visibility of the Afghan and multi-cultural communities in Southern Alameda County. To follow are examples from the past fiscal year.

- ❖ In September 2007, the U.S. Library of Congress sent Mr. Hiran Dinavari, a reference librarian for their Afghan, Central Asian and Iranian collections to California, to meet with Afghan and Iranian Diaspora communities. Mr. Dinavari visited the Afghan Coalition's offices on September 24. The Afghan Coalition hosted a meeting and

discussion focused on publications and productions of the Fremont-based Afghan community in light of the fact that the Library of Congress would like to begin collecting and archiving Afghan-American arts and cultural traditions in the United States.

- ❖ State Assembly Member Alberto Torrico honored Afghan Coalition Executive Director Rona Popal with the 20th District Unity Award during an October 25, 2007 ceremony. "Rona Popal is a strong advocate for women's rights and a great humanitarian," said Assembly Member Torrico. "Her drive and commitment have improved the lives of many in the Afghan community both here and abroad."

### **UC Berkeley Breast Cancer Research Project - *New Partnership***

In fall 2007, the Afghan Coalition began collaborating with researchers from the University of California at Berkeley to participate in a breast cancer survey project for Afghan women. The project began with a series of workshops in October 2007 to train interviewers for the project. After recruiting community participants, in February 2008 we began our first interviews. In separate events, the Afghan Coalition interviewed 50 immigrant and refugee women from different regions of Afghanistan. Survey leaders also provided participants with educational information about breast health and encouraged them to share the information with their families and friends in order to bring awareness.

### **Kaiser Permanente's Community Benefit Program - *New Partnership***

Through the Afghan Coalition's Health Leadership Consortium meetings, we built new relationships with Kaiser Permanente representatives, who have provided valuable resources and information to those meetings.

In January 2008 we applied for a Kaiser Community Benefit Program grant, and received an award to begin a community diabetes project. The purpose of this grant is to provide outreach and education for the prevention and management of diabetes and cardiovascular disease in the Afghan communities of Southern Alameda County. Heart disease and diabetes are prevalent health conditions reported by Afghan community members and by local physicians. Both of these conditions are exacerbated by a sedentary lifestyle, unhealthy eating habits in the U.S., and by the prevalence of depression, stress, and other mental health issues.

### **Women's Support Group**

This is an ongoing project that provides a safe space for women to meet and discuss the issues and problems they face in adapting to life in the US, bringing up children in an environment they are not familiar with, and coping with life after conflict. The women provide mutual social support and also sometimes undertake jewelry making, sewing and other craft projects. Many women also participate in our English classes.

### **Afghan Coalition Jewelry Making Program**

With the support of a seed grant from Wells Fargo, in spring of 2007 the Afghan Coalition established a successful jewelry making program to teach refugee and other immigrant women entrepreneurial skills with the objective of increasing self-sufficiency in a supportive environment. The Jewelry Making Program is an extension of the Afghan Coalition's ongoing support programs for women - safe arenas where women learn new skills, receive health education and provide mutual social support while working on jewelry making and other craft projects.

The Jewelry Making Program trains participants in a handicraft skill they can carry out in their own time - beading and jewelry making. Many participants come to the program with experience in beading and jewelry making from their time spent in Pakistan's refugee camps. Women who have been isolated have experienced opportunities to socialize with each other and share ideas and experience. The program involves a weekly three-hour workshop, which includes training in the handicraft skills as well as skills of money management, budgeting, marketing and other entrepreneurial skills. The Afghan Coalition's vision is to develop the program so that participants in turn become trainers who empower other members of the community.

### **Interfaith Program**

To counter prejudices against the Muslim community and to improve relations with our neighbors, the Afghan Coalition, in collaboration with the Bridge Building Project, continued to co-present interfaith meetings. These meetings have helped to educate the broader community in matters of tolerance and understanding of other religions.

### **Lemar-TV**

Lemar-TV is a community channel educating and promoting cross-cultural dialogue in the Bay Area. The programming is a mixture of entertainment, news and educational programming. As a member agency, Lemar-TV provides a valuable resource to the Coalition and our community.

### **Community Events and Celebrations**

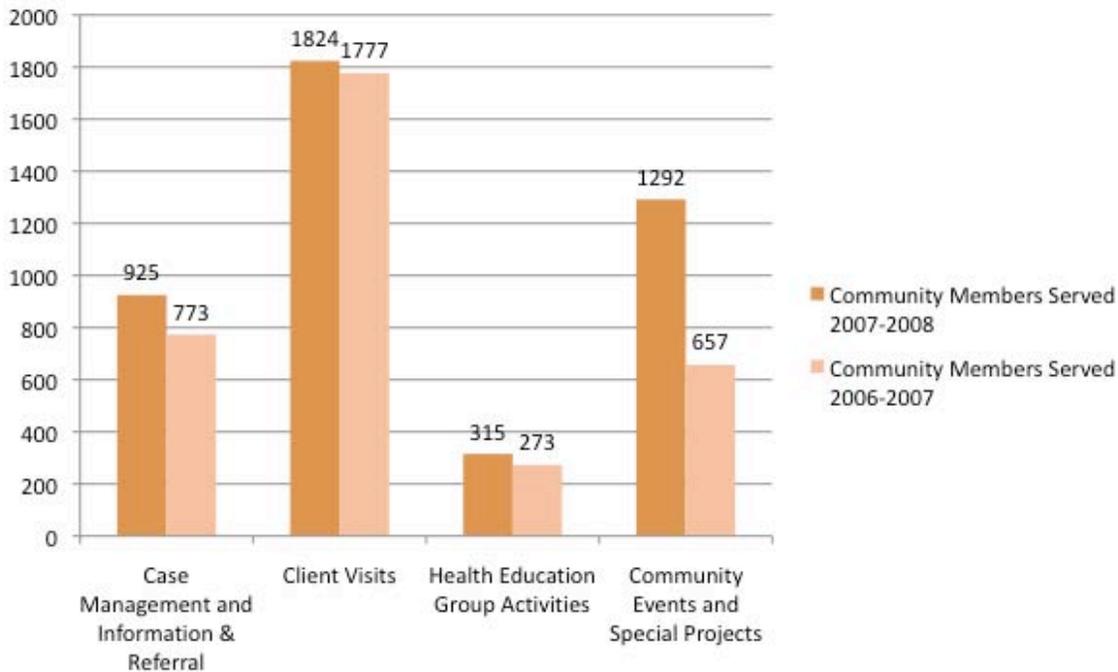
Throughout the year, the Afghan Coalition organizes or co-hosts cultural celebrations and events that bring the community together and celebrate our diverse cultural heritages. Community volunteer support is critical for the success of these events.

## Persons Served Fiscal Year 2007-2008 (July - June)

In fiscal year 2007-2008 the Afghan Coalition served **925** clients with Information and Referral in person and by telephone. Of those 925 clients, **749** received case management services. In total, we responded to **1,824** client visits and information and referral requests. Community members also participated in group workshops and events: **315** persons received health education and other group activities, and **1,292** community members attended cultural and educational events for the year. The table and charts to follow compare the number of community members served this year versus the last fiscal year.

**Afghan Coalition Activities FY 2008 compared to FY 2007**

Type of Activity	Community Members Served 2007-2008	Community Members Served 2006-2007
Case Management and Information & Referral	925	773
Client Visits	1824	1777
Health Education Group Activities	315	273
Community Events and Special Projects	1292	657



**Client Satisfaction**

For a one-month period between May 15, 2008 and June 15, 2008 the Afghan Coalition conducted a satisfaction survey with clients. One hundred and ten (110) participated in the survey. The survey yielded the following results:

<p><b>Gender of survey participants:</b>  <u>70</u> Female  <u>40</u> Male  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p>	<p><b>3) Did you learn about community resources in your area? (local health clinic, hospitals, domestic violence resources, and other social services)</b>  <u>60</u> Yes  <u>20</u> No  <u>30</u> No answer  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p>
<p><b>1) Did you attend a health workshop or women support group?</b>  <u>75</u> Yes  <u>35</u> No  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p>	<p><b>4) Did you meet with an Afghan Coalition health advocate?</b>  <u>110</u> Yes  <u>0</u> No  <u>0</u> No answer  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p> <p><b>If yes, how would you rate the services?</b>  <u>103</u> Very satisfied  <u>0</u> Satisfied  <u>7</u> Not satisfied  <u>0</u> No answer  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p>
<p><b>2) Did you learn something about your health?</b>  <u>75</u> Yes  <u>0</u> No  <u>35</u> No answer  <u>110</u> TOTAL</p>	<p><b>5) Do you have any comments or recommendations?</b>  Those who said they were “not satisfied” with the services of a health advocate said that they did not receive what they were expecting to receive. Four of the seven who were “not satisfied” said they were expecting to receive housing, and three of the seven were expecting monetary support. Other general comments included five who said they wanted transportation assistance, 10 who said they needed housing, and two wanted the Afghan Coalition to have more locations.</p>

## Afghan Coalition Workshops and Events

In FY 2008, the Afghan Coalition provided these workshops and events for our clients and the community.

**Date:** 7/9/07

**Participants:** 12

**Place:** FRC

**Topic:** Training

Afghan Coalition, City of Fremont with help of Kaiser Hospital started a training to train health translators. This program was for two days. 7/9 and 7/16.

**Date:** 7/24/07

**Participants:** 15

**Place:** Afghan Coalition office

**Topic:** Vitamin and Minerals

This workshop helped participants to understand how vitamin and minerals assist children in leading healthy lives.

**Date:** 7/25/07

**Participants:** 60

**Place:** Century House

**Topic:** Community meeting

In this program Afghan Coalition discussed with community members their annual report and their programs and other community issues.

**Date:** 7/25/07

**Participants:** 32

**Place:** FRC

**Topic:** Domestic violence

Afghan Coalition was invited by the SAVE program in Fremont to talk about the domestic violence issues in the Afghan community.

**Date:** 8/9/07

**Participants:** 24

**Place:** FRC

**Topic:** Depression

Instructor Dr. Sakhaiee

Participants in this workshop learned what the major causes of depression and how to detect the first signs of depression. They also learned about many type of depression and how to prevent it.

**Date:** 8/12/07

**Participants:** 14

**Place:** FRC

**Topic:** Breast Cancer

A Pakistani women's group requested the Afghan Coalition health navigators organize a workshop on breast cancer. Participants learned about diagnoses and stages of this cancer and how to cope with it. They also learned how to perform self-exams.

**Date:** 8/28/07

**Participants:** 27

**Place:** A/C

**Topic:** Home Safety and disaster planning

Participants gained an understanding of disaster planning and how to be safe.

**Date:** 9/4/07

**Place:** Afghan Coalition

**Participants:** 22

**Topic:** Celebration of Barat

On this day Afghan Coalition's clients celebrated Barat and discussed nutrition in preparation for fasting.

**Date:** 10/15/07

Time 11am to 2pm

**Place:** FRC

**Participants:** 28

**Topic:** Afghan Health Leadership Consortium Meeting

At this meeting, outreach to other community groups occurred, encouraging them to sign up to provide a health education workshop to the local Afghan community through workshops and television broadcasts. In addition, a guest speaker on domestic violence, Dr. Farid Younos, discussed the issue as it relates to the Afghan community, along with culturally relevant ways of approaching the problem.

**Date:** 10/24/07 and 10/26/07

**Participants:** 10

**Topic:** Training

Afghan Coalition and UC Berkeley started a training for 10 people interested in interviewing community members for a breast cancer research project.

**Date:** 11/13/07

**Time:** 11:30 am to 2pm

**Subject:** Stroke

**Participants:** 15

This workshop was held at Washington Hospital (Douglas Van Houten RN).

Achievement: Participants learned about the major causes, signs and symptom of stroke. They also learned the many types of stroke and how to prevent it through exercise and healthy food.

**Date:** 11/29/07

**Subject:** Blood Pressure

**Time:** 11:30 am to 2pm

**Participants:** 20

This workshop was held at Washington Hospital (Douglas Houten RN)

Achievement: In this workshops participants learned major causes of high blood pressure.

They also learned about the symptoms, the effects of high blood pressure on the person, and how to prevent it through exercise and diet. Blood pressure measurements were provided for all interested participants.

**Date:** 12/5/07

**Time:** 11 am to 2 pm

**Participants:** 24

**Subject:** Cancer

A representative from the Palo Alto Medical Center in Fremont presented this workshop.

Participants learned about the causes of cancer and how to look for symptoms. They also learned about treatment options and side effects of those options.

**Date:** 12/17/07

**Time:** 10 to 12pm

**Place:** Afghan Coalition

**Topic:** Employment opportunity

Afghan Coalition had a one-day recruiting for International Program Group INC. Over 100 community members came to learn about part-time employment opportunities for training US soldiers on Afghan culture and customs.

**Date:** 1/9/08

Time 11am to 2pm

**Place:** FRC

**Participants:** 28

**Topic:** Afghan Health Leadership Consortium Meeting

The topic of the January meeting was on social, cultural, legal, medical and psychological issues faced by Afghans seeking political asylum in the United States. The group watched a film called "Chasing Freedom" and engaged in interactive team exercises as facilitated by Valerie Smith to understand the barriers faced by an asylum seeker. In follow up to the film and discussion, Suzanne Shenfil of the City of Fremont planned to show the film to some of her staff and possibly the city's Human Relations Commission. Dave McKeown of SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments) planned to show the film to at SAVE's next all-staff meeting.

**Date:** 2/12/08

**Time:** 5pm to 9pm

**Participants:** 43

**Location:** Century House

Women in the Afghan community had a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Women's Affairs from Afghanistan. Also, immigration lawyer Nancy Hormachea educated attendees on immigration laws and how to file petitions for family members.

**Date:** 2/14/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 7

**Topic:** Breast Cancer Research

**Location:** Afghan Coalition

With UC Berkeley, the Afghan Coalition started a first session of the breast cancer research project by interviewing Afghan women over 40 who never had breast cancer. Clients were provided with information about breast health and encouraged to discuss this issue with their families and friends in order to bring awareness.

**Date:** 2/17/08

**Time:** 2pm to 10pm

**Participants:** 730

**Topic:** Afghan American Outreach program

**Location:** Flamingo

Afghan Coalition sponsored this important event to reach out and distribute information about Afghan Coalition services for the community.

**Date:** 2/28/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 17

**Location:** FRC

**Topic:** Health workshop (Take charge of your health)

Kimberly Green, R.N., of the Palo Alto Medical clinic gave a presentation on healthy living practices. She educated participants on how to prevent and look for a signs of important medical conditions. She also described how community members can find out about the hospitals and clinics that serve their communities and how file complaints. Lists of all Bay Area clinics, hospitals and information about 2-1-1 provided to clients were distributed.

**Date:** 3/8/08

**Time:** 12pm to 3pm

**Participants:** 42

**Topic:** International Women's Day

**Location:** Little Kabul Area (Peralta and Fremont Blvd)

Afghan Women's Association International organized a silent march on this day due to protest the lack of security and peace in Afghanistan. They also wanted to show their support and solidarity with the women of Afghanistan.

**Date:** 3/14/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 7

**Topic:** Breast Cancer Research

Afghan Coalition staff with UC Berkeley conducted research and interviewed 7 women who were originally from a specific province of Afghanistan. After the interviews, they provided information about breast cancer including prevention and symptoms.

**Date:** 3/20/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 7

**Topic:** Breast Cancer Research

Afghan Coalition staff with UC Berkeley conducted research and interviewed 7 women who were originally from a specific province of Afghanistan. After the interviews, they provided information about breast cancer including prevention and symptoms.

**Date:** 3/22/08

**Time:** 12pm to 5pm

**Participants:** 300

**Location:** Little Kabul Area Fremont (from Peralta to Parish Street)

**Topic:** Afghan New Year

Nawrooz (New Year) Celebration in Neighborhood, Saturday, March 22, 2008

Several Afghan-owned businesses in Fremont recognized our Nawrooz (New Year's) Celebration. Nawrooz always begins at the Spring Equinox (March 21), and this year the festivities took place over the weekend, especially on Saturday, March 22.

**Date:** 4/2/08

Time 11am to 2pm

**Place:** FRC

**Participants:** 26

**Topic:** Afghan Health Leadership Consortium Meeting

The topic of the April meeting was domestic violence. During this meeting Valerie Smith reviewed Dr. Farid Younos' talk on the causes of domestic violence as presented during the October 2007 meeting and introduced two guest speakers. The first guest speaker was Veronica Boutelle, Medical Sites Coordinator and Legal Advocate for the Family Violence Law Center. Ms. Boutelle has worked with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking in three different counties in the San Francisco Bay Area: Marin, Alameda, and Contra Costa. She provided an overview of the Family Violence Law Center ([www.fvlc.org](http://www.fvlc.org)) and described its services and history. Her main responsibility is to work closely with different medical sites around Alameda County to make sure that the clients they see are getting the services they need. The second guest speaker was Reshma Yunus, Founding Director of SEMAH, a domestic violence prevention agency. SEMAH stands for safety, education, mutual respect, awareness, and hope, was founded not only to eliminate domestic violence, but also to prevent it from happening to begin with ([www.semah.org](http://www.semah.org)).

**Date:** 4/15/08

**Time:** 11pm to 1pm

**Participants:** 29

**Topic:** How to prevent high cholesterol

**Location:** FRC

Dr. Afshin taught participants learned about cholesterol including the different types of cholesterol. They learned how low and high levels of good and bad cholesterol effects the body. High blood pressure issues were also discussed including ways to prevent it.

**Date:** 4/17/08

**Time:** 10am to 4pm

**Place:** Afghan Coalition office

**Topic:** Breast Cancer research

In collaboration with UC Berkeley, the Afghan Coalition interviewed 17 immigrant women from different regions of Afghanistan to continue the breast cancer research study.

**Date:** 4/17/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 7

Afghan Coalition staff with UC Berkeley conducted research and interviewed 7 women who were originally from a specific province of Afghanistan. After the interviews, they provided information about breast cancer including prevention and symptoms.

**Date:** 4/21/08

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Participants:** 7

Afghan Coalition staff with UC Berkeley conducted research and interviewed 7 women who were originally from a specific province of Afghanistan. After the interviews, they provided information about breast cancer including prevention and symptoms.

**Date:** 4/25/08

**Topic:** Public Meeting with Alameda County Behavioral Health

An Afghan Coalition representative along with other 6 representatives from different Afghan organizations participated at a public meeting to talk about the Mental Health Act (Prevention & Early Intervention). We expressed the needs of the community especially in mental health area.

**Date:** 5/22/08

**Place:** FRC

**Participants:** 24

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Topic:** Breast Cancer

An Afghan Coalition health advocate gave a training about breast cancer to a Pakistani women's group.

**Date:** 5/31/08

**Place:** Afghan Coalition office

**Time:** 11am to 2pm

**Topic:** Health workshop

An Afghan Coalition health advocate gave a workshop on arthritis including how to prevent it through diet and exercise.

**Date:** 6/11/08

Time 11am to 2pm

**Place:** FRC

**Topic:** Afghan Health Leadership Consortium Meeting

Many health providers such as Kaiser Permanente, Palo Alto Medical clinics in Fremont and other county clinics attended. The speakers were from Newark Health Clinic, Hayward Wellness Clinic and Healthy Start. They spoke about the Afghan community and their challenges in this society.

## **Sustainable Organizational Development**

With support from the California Endowment, the Afghan Coalition staff and board worked with a consultant with experience in business development and fundraising to develop new fund development strategies. As a result of the team effort and determination by Rona Popal, the Coalition now has a fee-for-service contract in place with the East Bay Agency for Children, an 18-month contract with the University of California at Berkeley to participate in a breast cancer survey project, and three years of core operating funding from the California Wellness Foundation (through 2010). Furthermore, the consultant has helped the Coalition identify areas of capacity building needed in order to ensure sustainable development. The Afghan Coalition greatly appreciates the support of The California Endowment, which has given us leverage for attracting new sources of funding. In addition, the Afghan Coalition contracts with Wilson Markle Stuckey Hardesty & Bott, a Certified Public Accountants firm, to undergo annual financial audits. This important investment also makes it possible for the Afghan Coalition to pursue additional funding sources and to advocate for greater funding from local agencies.

## **Benefits to the Community**

The value of Afghan Coalition programs and services to the community is tremendous and is evidenced by the overwhelming response to our services. The demand for services has necessitated a very large number of unpaid hours from staff and the need for many highly motivated volunteers. The Coalition has been an asset to the city and county agencies who want to serve the Afghan community but have difficulty because of language and cultural barriers. Agencies consistently consult with the Afghan Coalition as a resource for Afghan

clients and are able to contact the Coalition in almost any emergency situation and receive a response.

Although most members of the local Afghan community escaped Afghanistan during or soon after the 10-year war with the former Soviet Union and the ensuing civil wars, there has been a more recent wave of immigration into the East Bay over the last several years, before and after September 11, that includes many Afghans from rural areas who suffered from extreme hardship during years of civil war with the Soviets and then under the repressive Taliban regime. War, trauma, inadequate medical care, nutritional deprivation and economic instability have taken extreme toll on both the health and mental health of these newcomers. Many have come as widows with no education, no literacy skills, multiple health complaints, and children who have been malnourished and have not received regular health care. Older refugees experience high rates of social isolation, a lack of social support, health problems, and a lack of meaningful social roles and activities.

Afghan Coalition programs improve the health and well-being of members of the Fremont Afghan community and increase their ability to become self-sufficient contributing members of society by increasing access to public and private services and resources; improving the ability of women and girls to deal with critical family issues, access health services, support their children in school, and escape situations in which there is domestic abuse; improving the leadership skills, self-esteem, and cultural identity of Afghan youth; building a sense of community ownership and pride; and creating an interchange between the Afghan community and the greater Fremont community and society.

## Our Challenges and Wish List

The Afghan Coalition's greatest challenges are to fund and serve the community with critical core programs while also pursuing other projects that would benefit the health of the community. For example, we regularly receive requests for more youth programming. In addition, we are also frequently contacted by the public, especially from journalists and students, about Afghan culture and realize that we could serve as a clearinghouse and resource if we had the capacity to develop and fund this program. To find solutions to these issues, during this fiscal year the Afghan Coalition pursued opportunities that will help us build our capacity, develop formal plans for sustainability, and help us to reach our potential and meet the needs of the local community and beyond. To gain access to resources and people who will help us build capacity, we are applied for capacity building grant funds as well as service grant opportunities.

We welcome and greatly appreciate the community's contributions of volunteer support, in-kind services and financial support. Please visit our Web site to **contact** us about volunteer opportunities or to **donate** online. The Afghan Coalition is grateful for your tax-deductible donations, which are securely processed through Guidestar.org's *Network for Good* system.

[www.afghancoalition.org](http://www.afghancoalition.org)

**Revenue and Expenses 07/07 - 06/08**

Revenue

Individual Contributions	\$3,504
Private Foundations	\$142,000
Corporate Contributions	\$1,000
Government	\$24,986
Program Service Fees	\$96,238
Misc Income	\$3,170

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Total Revenue	\$270,898
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Expenses

Program Expenses	\$220,255
General and Administrative	\$64,525

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Total Expenses	\$284,780
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Net Assets, Beginning of the Fiscal Year	\$188,002
Net Assets, End of the Fiscal Year <sup>1</sup>	\$174,120

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Notes:

*1- Multi-year grant income through 2010*