

Afghan Coalition

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2013-2014



Art Work By: Abdul Shokoor Khusrawy

Letter from the Board of Directors & Executive Director

Dear Supporters,

August 31, 2014

The Afghan Coalition are thankful to our funders, partners, and supporters for enabling our services to the community. We can't succeed alone; we need and appreciate all of you.

During this fiscal year we made great strides in all our programs. Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services has funded our Mental Health Project for the last 4 years, which has resulted in a successful, growing program that is making progress in educating the community and removing the shame associated with mental illness. The City of Fremont has supported us through the years allowing us to serve our community through social services and microenterprise. The Microenterprise Project also successfully trained a group of enthusiastic community members to start new businesses and gain self-sufficiency with AnewAmerica. We believe that such programs enable our community to continue moving forward to address our critical needs.

We will continue to serve our community by following our strategic plan yet still be responsive to crisis situations like the current surge of Afghan SIV immigrants (those who served as translators for US military). Our goals for the future include facilitating a hospitality center to welcome the new SIV immigrants, encouraging and supporting youth leadership programs, community advocacy for issues like low-income housing, Alameda County's StopWaste program and green initiatives, and supportive social service programs through Alameda County Social Services with CalFresh and Medi-Cal enrollment.

Thank you for supporting the Afghan Coalition.



Top Row (Left to Right): Aisha Wahab, Haji Razmi, Waheed Momand, Bruce Green
Bottom Row (Left to Right): Nazema Momand, Rona Popal, Bonnie Author)

Overview of Fiscal Year 2013-2014

Mission Statement: The Afghan Coalition is a non-profit community-based umbrella organization that seeks to empower refugee families, women, and youth, and to champion their cause to government agencies and society. The mission is accomplished through the provision of community services, supporting member organizations' community-based programs and fostering understanding, reconciliation, reconstruction and mutual relations between the people of Afghanistan and people of the United States.



The Afghan Coalition has had a busy year providing services and events for the community. We meet our goals and mission by providing free access to cultural counseling, translation, information referral and connection, case management for social services, client advocacy, health, ESL, business education, community advocacy, as well as our specialized programs: Afghan Mental Health Project, Microenterprise Project, and Afghan Women's Breast Health Project.

In 2013/2014 the Afghan Coalition directly served 492 adult clients through case management. We indirectly served 1732 individuals through events, classes, and workshops. We provided 2074 direct services to our clients; including information referral, cultural counseling and social services case management. We provided 158 workshops, classes, and events: 96 ESL classes, 20 business classes, 19 health workshops, 11 microenterprise sales, and 12 community events. Every year we also conduct a survey of the community to determine the current needs and issues that need to be addressed.

Our services cover a broad variety of needs, but there are some common areas that many client needs fall under: cultural services, health care, employment assistance, housing provision, social services, and domestic violence care and counseling. These services are described in more detail in the graphs section.

One of the great challenges faced this year was responding to the surge of new arrivals from Afghanistan, the translators and helpers of the US military and State Department. They were granted Special Immigration Visas (SIV) and provided a little one-time financial help by our government, but they are overwhelming the agencies that normally handle new immigrants. Many of these SIV arrivals come to the Afghan Coalition as a last resort, facing culture shock and homelessness. Responding to this crisis has been above-and-beyond our normal programs which are funded by various grants. We are responding with compassion and creativity and appealing for hospitality and financial help to meet this crisis. We need to anticipate many more SIV arrivals projected for 2015.

Client Stories:

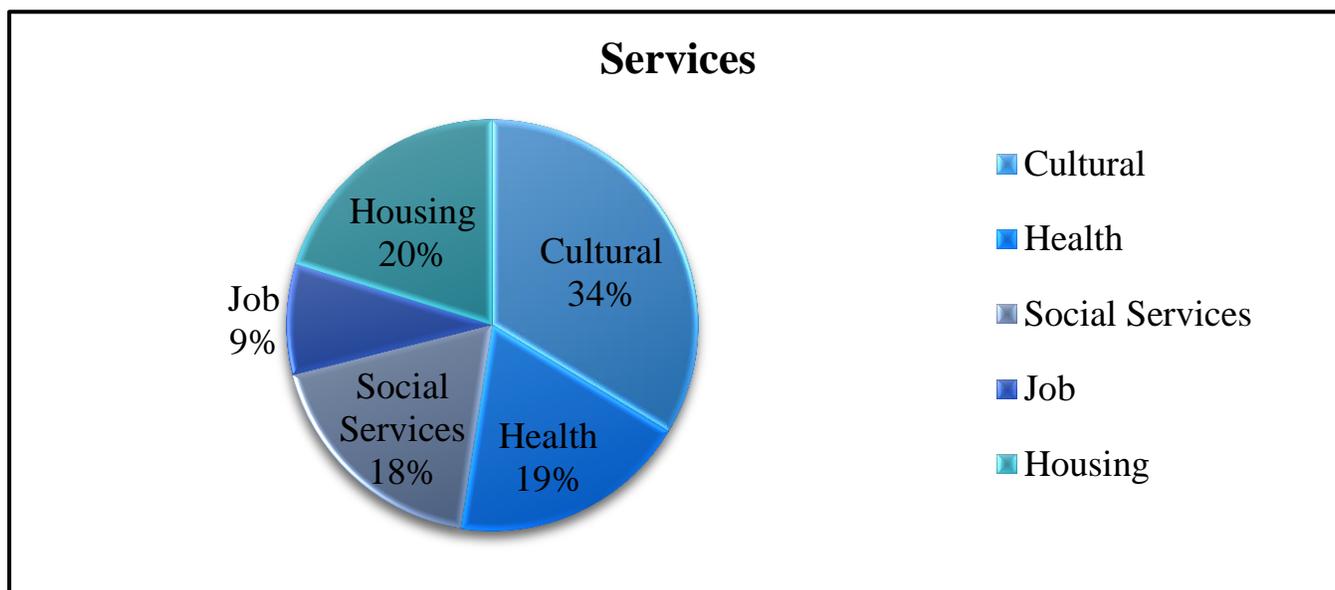
Domestic Violence: A DV client who was imprisoned in her husband's home was rescued and referred to our agency. As we started helping her we discovered that she had been denied all benefits because of a translation error. We had to work extensively with social services to explain the situation as her husband was her visa sponsor and was required to sign all of her paperwork, obviously this would have been dangerous for the client and we needed to find a way to bring her autonomy. After several meetings with her caseworkers we were able to get her general assistance benefits. We found her shelter with NISA and eventually helped place her with a job in a nursing home in Dublin. She also participated in the business class and gained a lot of self-confidence.

Asylum: Another client came from Germany with her 3 kids seeking asylum and spent all her money on lawyers and as a result became destitute. She came to our office seeking help, we contacted City Serve and procured backpacks, school supplies, sneakers, clothes and food. We applied with Zakah so that she can receive their benefits. Referred to Rahimah Foundation so she could get halal food. We also applied and enrolled her in CalFresh. The client was so thankful when she received the Zakah benefits she cried tears of joy. We are working with her now to get her a job with an airline, as that is where she has professional experience.

AMHP Prevention: This year the AMHP tutoring program had a seventh grader that would attend tutoring, he was always behind on his homework, had a hard time keeping up and listening to the tutor. After spending some time with the tutor we were able to identify some reasons as to why he was having so much trouble keeping up. He was having a hard time understanding due to some learning disabilities that his parents were not aware of. After close interaction with the parents we were able to get them connected to the right resources to have the student tested and assisted the parents in getting the appropriate help for their child.

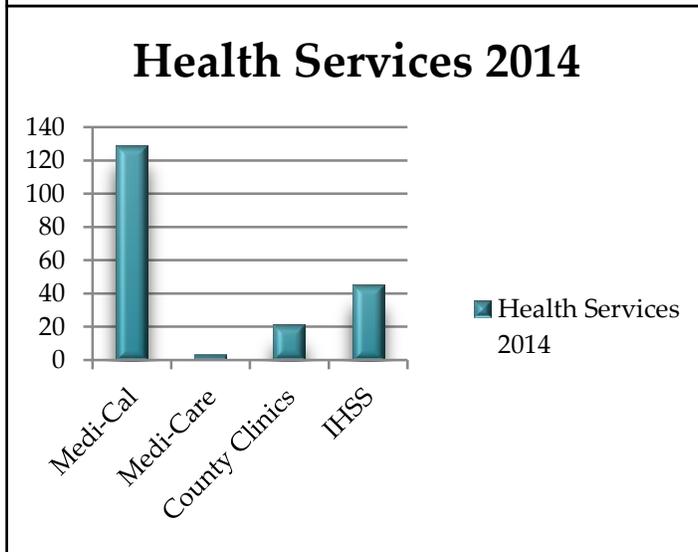
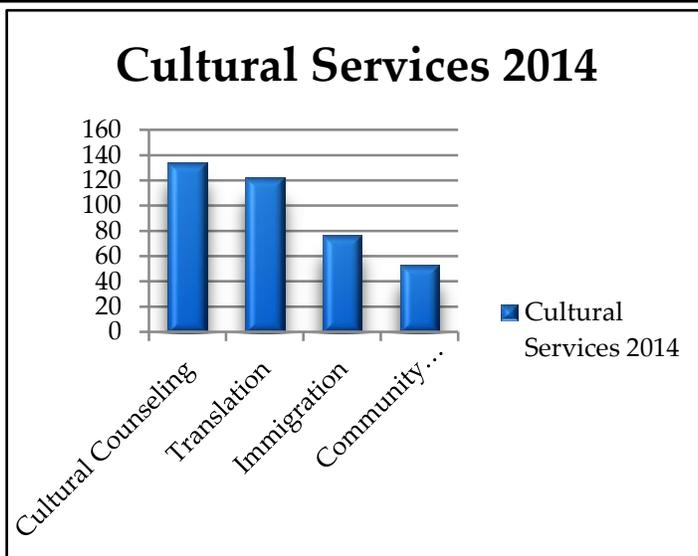
AMHP Prevention/Early Intervention: AMHP provided services to a client who had been a domestic violence victim; she had a toddler and was living in a shelter when she sought our services. During her first interaction with our navigator she was very reserved and reluctant to disclose any information. She kept the meeting very simple and only revealed what she felt was necessary, that she needed a place to live. After only 2-3 interactions with the AMHP navigator she felt comfortable enough to open up and disclose what she had gone through and the affect it had on her. She had lost the hope for a good life for herself and a safe place for herself and her child. She had completely lost confidence in herself and her abilities. During her year with AMHP, the staff helped her get connected to many different resources including a psychologist, whom she has been seeing on a weekly basis since the introduction. At the end of her time with the project, this client had secured a job, a safe place to live and regained her confidence. She felt accomplished, stronger, and confident in her ability to take care of herself and her child.

FY 2013/2014 Stats and Data

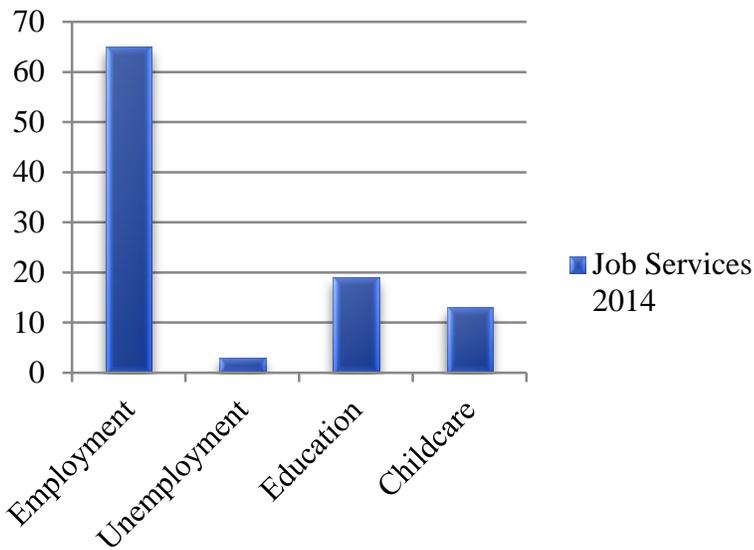


Cultural Services: Cultural services involve services that require expertise in the Afghan community as well as the greater Muslim, Middle Eastern and South Asian communities. It involves cultural counseling, in which we explain the nuances of American society and Afghan society and help clients navigate the systems they are exposed to here. For example, a client may not want their child to expose themselves to boys in a required swim class for school, we can work with the client to effectively handle the school system so that they and their child will feel comfortable while maintaining a good relationship with the school. We provided 134 cultural counseling services. We also provided 122 translation services, 76 immigration services (primarily referrals to agencies that have lingual capacity and/or offer pro bono services), and 53 community resource services to connect clients with those in both the Afghan and larger Fremont community that can help with a variety of needs, such as transportation, general assistance, elder care and many others.

Health Services: We provided 215 health services including 129 Medi-Cal services and 47 IHSS services.

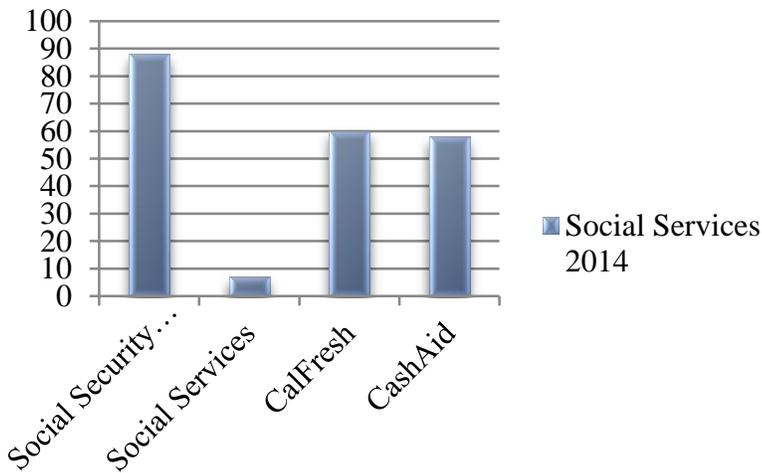


Job Services 2014



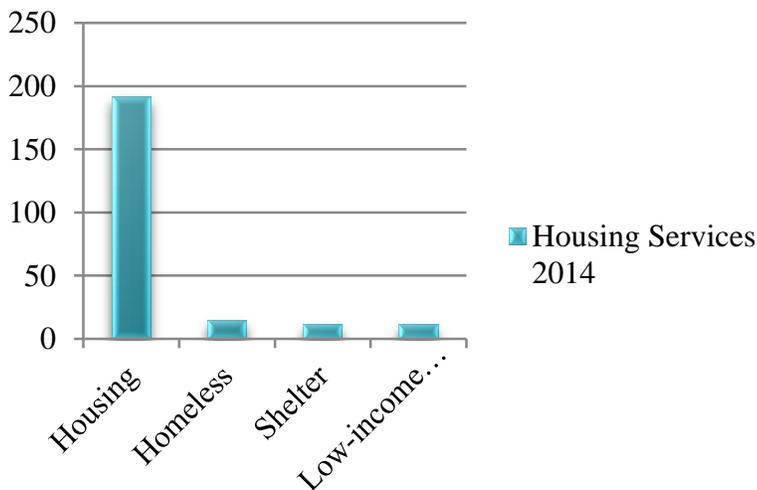
Job Services: We provided 100 employment services including 65 employment services such as job hunting and applications, 19 education services such as school recommendations and applications, and 13 childcare services as many women need help finding childcare in order to work. Since we have contacts within the community we are able to connect our clients to employers who speak their language and are able to use their cultural knowledge, for example Afghan cooking.

Social Services 2014



Social Services: We provided 213 social services including 88 social security insurance services, 60 CalFresh/food stamp services and 58 Cash Aid services.

Housing Services 2014



Housing Services: We provided 231 housing services including 192 housing services such as housing inquiries and notifications of opening opportunities, 15 homeless and 12 shelter inquiries and placements for those in need, particularly domestic violence victims. We had 12 low-income housing applications approved. Because of the vast community need on housing, we started working with Congregations Organizing for Renewal to advocate for low-income housing, this also has been teaching the community how to collaborate with other groups and advocate for their needs.

Programs: Mental Health

The Afghan Mental Health Project has grown in many aspects this year. We have had great success in client services as well as program development. We have used this year to help bring understanding about mental health not only to our clients, but also to the Afghan community as a whole.

Early Intervention: The program encourages clients toward holistic and long-term preventive measures such as participating in community groups to help reduce isolation. The manner in which the staff interacts with clients has made them feel like they have a safe place to seek help. The staffs' ability to provide a trusting and supportive environment empowers clients; they feel motivated and build confidence as they seek services. In the past year AMHP increased its early intervention services to families because their youth were having academic, behavioral, and socio-emotional difficulties. This has been a great success for the program because in the past families have been hesitant to seek help. Working with such clients has given us great insight into the kinds of services needed by parents and youth.



Prevention: Working with parents and students has helped us develop one of our biggest prevention activities this year: the AMHP after school tutoring sessions. In a very short time our tutoring program grew from 4 students to 22 students. Parents were very receptive to the academic support for their children but also loved that their children had a mentor who understood their culture and spoke their language. Other successes in prevention this year have been our workshops for the Afghan Soccer Club, our weekly presentations for the Afghan Coalition Women's support group and ASABA- Afghan Senior Association of the Bay Area. For the Afghan Soccer Club the AMHP was invited on a monthly basis to provide workshops and basic psycho-education to their teams. Each workshop had 20-25 participants that ranged in ages 8-17. Some of the topics we covered this year were bullying, identity formation as a bicultural individual and the impact of exercise on emotional wellbeing.

This was the first year in which AMHP was able to provide structured, ongoing and interactive presentation to the Afghan Coalition Women's support group and ASABA. Some of the topics included effective communication between older and younger generations, depression in women, and chronic stress.

AMHP has been invited to many community events this year in which the project and its services were introduced. The project used these events not only as project promotion opportunities but also as interactions with the community to bring awareness to mental health issues concerning Afghans. These events provided great opportunities for us to and build a good rapport with community leaders and encourage community members to come seek services when needed.

Goals for 2015: The AMHP goals for the upcoming year are to utilize the platforms provided by community groups such as: Afghan Cultural Society, Afghan Professionals Network, Afghan Seniors Association of the Bay Area and the Afghan Soccer Club to reach as many Afghans as possible. The project would like to establish a stronger relationship with other providers, especially those that provide mental health services to youth, such as Ohlone College. The project has been in contact with staff at Ohlone College and they have expressed interest in working together to serve Afghan students, to help their staff provide culturally sensitive counseling services. The program is working closely with East Bay Agency for Children to secure a location at a local elementary school or middle school where the program can provide early intervention services to families and youth.

Programs: Microenterprise



Business Classes: This year, Microenterprise has had a lot of successful programming. We began our partnership with AnewAmerica and successfully completed our first cycle of classes this spring. Due to its success, we will begin our second class this fall. The business class went over the basics of starting a business and making it successful. It covered certificates and licenses, business plans, marketing, etc. We had 15 participants complete the course, 4 people receive loans, and 2 participants trained to be trainers. The loans that AnewAmerica enabled access to will be the beginning of access to capital for our participants. By taking on the loan our clients will become eligible for larger loans with AnewAmerica as they successfully pay off their first loan.

We had 23 participants in the Microenterprise program and attained 9 DUNS numbers (business identification numbers, similar to social security numbers) for those that were ready to move forward in the formalization process.

In the fall of 2013 we had 10 participants in SEED training by Narika. During the training, participants learned about business, credit, resume writing and other subjects. One client thanked the program manager for encouraging her to attend and convincing her to go to every class, even if she had an excuse to not attend, “the things I learned were so useful and I know they will help me to make my life better,” she said.

Letter from ESL Teachers: Since February of 2014 I have been working with the English class at the Afghan Coalition. The first semester we worked on various topics necessary to life in the United States. We finished the semester in July by having all students take an assessment test over the past topics. We used this information to break the class into two groups: level 1 and level 2. Level 1 students are working on things such as the alphabet, numbers, and colors. Level 2 students started a new curriculum using the Farsi-English Oxford Picture Dictionary, 2nd edition. I have seen marked improvement in all students' reading and speaking. We are planning once a month visits to the Fremont Public Library to increase students' excitement and engagement in reading English books. We will have another assessment test in January to see improvement from the new curriculum.

Lillian Medhus
English teacher, Afghan Coalition
Registered Nurse, Stanford Hospital



Programs: Breast Health

The largest Afghan refugee population in the US resides in Southern Alameda County, California. Many have been in the US for 30 years. Our preliminary work showed that many women did not have a concept of preventive health, had low levels of screening (over 50% never had been screened), and many had a family history of breast cancer (35%). Following community based participatory



research (CBPR), our Community Advisory Board (CAB) played a major role in the design of the intervention. A two-hour educational intervention was designed and conducted by lay health educators. Educational groups for male heads of household focused on their role to care for the family's health and were designed to educate men regarding cancer and other chronic health problems. Community members were trained as community navigators and facilitated appointment making/keeping and transportation as necessary. A

total of 230 women were recruited and participated in this program. Recruitment targeted women who never had a mammogram or had their last mammogram more than three years ago. The intervention was very successful in increasing knowledge of breast cancer and use of mammography. This suggests that the use of community navigators who helped participants make appointments, arranged transportation as needed, and provided social support was a necessary condition for getting a mammogram. We are planning to disseminate this program as an evidenced based breast cancer education program for the entire community.

The Afghan Women's Breast Health study was supported by grants funded from the Alameda County Network Program to Reduce Cancer Disparities, The National Cancer Institute's Center for Research on Cancer Health Disparities.

Our Team: Professor Joan Bloom University of Berkeley California; Dr. Mehra Shirazi and Dr. Aida Shirazi, Rona Popal and many thanks and gratitude to our Breast Health Community Advisory Board member, and our team of health advisors, health navigators, interviewers and recruiters for their time and dedication to this project. We could not have succeeded without you.

Programs: Advocacy and TEAM



Advocacy: Through funding from One Nation Bay Area, the AC partnered with Congregations Organizing for Renewal (COR) to provide advocacy training to Afghans and improve housing and living conditions for low-income Fremont residents. We have participated in several meetings with Fremont elected officials and gave testimony to the Fremont Planning Commission. Already we have received a positive response from Fremont's government and we hope to see improvements in housing and economic opportunities for low-income residents in the near future. There is still much work to be done to reach this goal and we encourage anyone who has experienced housing difficulties to advocate for better opportunities by joining us and COR.

Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple-languages:

Through funding from the California Public Utilities Commission the AC is able to provide services to the Afghan community around resolving telephone company abuses. It is well documented that telephone companies take advantage of non-English speaking communities to charge them hidden fees and excessive rates because they cannot understand their phone bills. This project gives us training and allows us to dedicate time to call phone companies on behalf of clients and reduce their rates as much as possible.



Events and Activities: Memorial & Make a Difference Day



Memorial: On October 12, 2013 the AC worked with The Children of War, AAMO and other local Afghan organizations, to hold a memorial for those lost during the Soviet invasion in 1978-79. A few weeks prior to the event The Hague released a list of 5,000 names of those missing and confirmed dead during the Communist control of Afghanistan. While there are still many who have yet to hear the status of their lost loved ones, the AC wanted to provide space for the community to grieve and support for those who had lost loved ones. We would like to thank Mr. Ghani Mogaddedi of AAMO and Mr. Tarin Bayan of Children of War for their collaboration, Aisha Wahab for organizing and hosting, and Mr. Qari Safiullah for leading the prayer, as well as the dozens of volunteers.



Make a Difference Day: On October 26th 2013 the AC held a blanket and clothing drive to support local shelters NISSA and SAVE. Our One Nation Bay Area project included promoting volunteerism and community engagement. We raised over \$1300 in donations, which will help domestic violence victims and homeless women and children.



Events and Activities: Supporting the Community



Assemblyman Bill Quirk recognized community activist, Rahima Haya for her contributions to women in the community.



Abode Services to train volunteers to be able to work in an office environment and work towards self-sufficiency.



The White House: Afghan American Leaders Roundtable

The Afghan Coalition is proud to have its Executive Director Rona Popal and Board Member Aisha Wahab be selected to attend the White House's Afghan American Leaders Roundtable Discussion in Washington D.C..

Little Kabul
• stories

June 7, 2014
2PM to 5PM
39155 Liberty Street
Fremont, CA 94538

Questions contact:
Aisha Wahab
littlekabulstories.org
@littlekabul

***With Special Guests**
*** Free Admission**
***Refreshments provided**

Come Join Us!

This oral history project documents & celebrates the unique experiences of San Francisco Bay Area's Afghan American community.

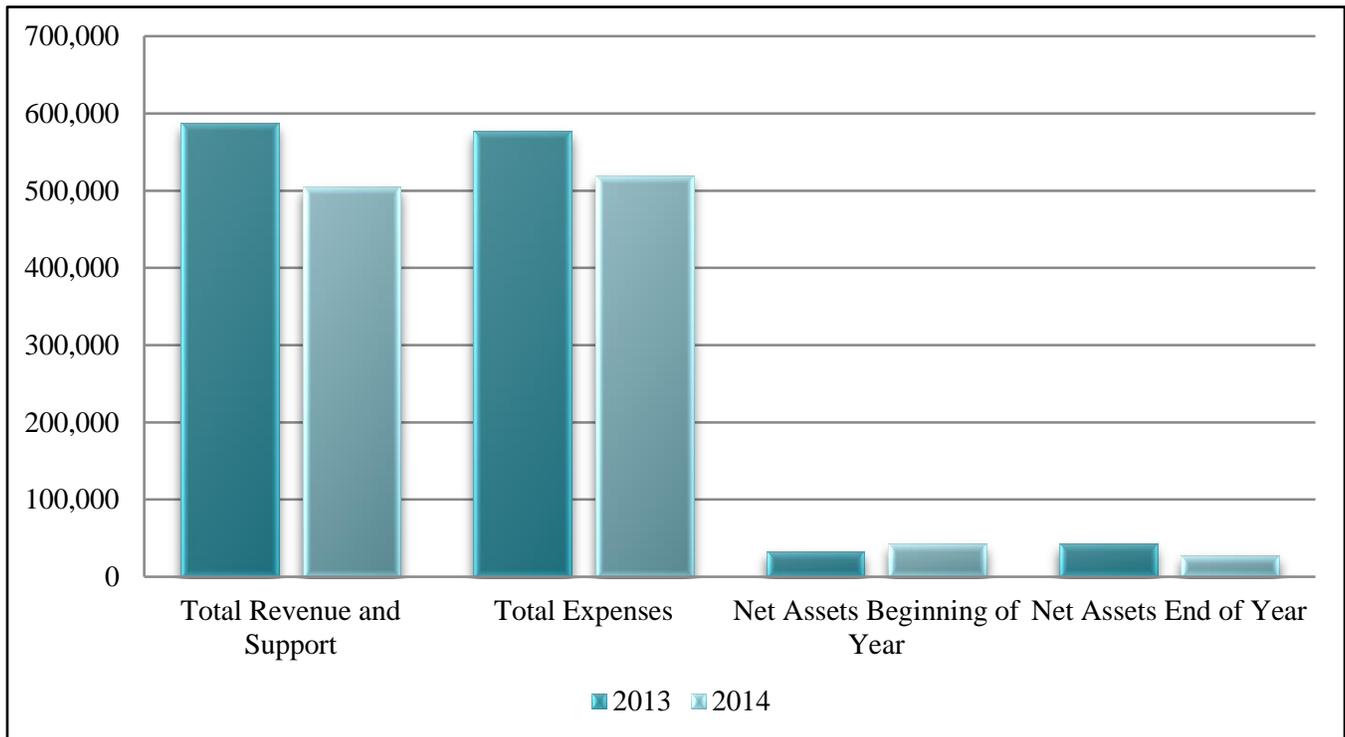
Little Kabul Stories: The Afghan Coalition would like to congratulate Aisha Wahab and Aya Okawa, for creating a beautiful video series documenting the stories of Afghan's and their journey to the United States. Their work helps to preserve Afghan history.

Check it out at littlekabulstories.org

Be a voice for Domestic Violence Victims: Participating in Alameda County District Attorney Annual Memorial for Domestic Violence Victims. The Afghan Coalition continues to advocate for and provide services to victims; we hope to be able to increase our services in the future.



Financial Information



Total Revenue and Support: \$587,056 (2013); \$504,920 (2014)

Total Expenses: \$577,810 (2013); \$519,757 (2014)

Net Assets Beginning of Year: \$33,360 (2013); \$42,606 (2014)

Net Assets End of Year: \$42,606 (2013); \$27,769 (2014)

This year we have seen a 14% decrease in revenue that has resulted in a decrease in spending. We continue to leverage our resources to provide as many services as possible to the community.

We have received our Annual Audit and continue to prioritize fiscal responsibility. For further information and details on the budget, please contact the Afghan Coalition.

*Many thanks to our accountants at **At Your Non-Profit's Service**, they have helped us achieve great things for the community and enabled us to continue our services through the years.*

Thanks To Our Funders & Partners

FUNDERS

Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services
AnewAmerica
City of Fremont
City of Fremont-CDBG
National Institute for Health
One Nation Bay Area
Self Help for the Elderly
University of California-Berkeley



PARTNERS

Afghan Business Network
Afghan Elderly Association
Afghan International Refugee Support
Services
Afghan American Muslim Outreach
Afghan Professional Network
Afghan Senior Association of the Bay Area
Afghan Soccer Club
AMEMSA (Arab, African, Middle Eastern,
Muslim, South Asian) Group
Asian American Pacific Islanders in
Philanthropy
Bridge Building
California State University, East Bay
City of Fremont
City of Fremont Police Department
The Children of War
CityServe's Compassion Network
Congregations Organizing for Renewal
Crossroads Church
Danish Cultural Society

East Bay Agency for Children
Fremont Chamber of Commerce
Fremont Family Resource Center
Fremont Main Library
Fremont School District
International Institute of East Bay
International Rescue Committee
Lemar-TV
NISA (North-American Islamic Shelter for the
Abused)
Omid Advocates
SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments)
San Francisco Foundation
SEMAH (Safety, Education, Mutual Respect,
Awareness, Hope)
Ta'leef Collective
Tri City Health Center
Winton Wellness Clinic-Hayward and Newark
Locations
University of California, Berkeley

Thanks To Our Volunteers

Thank you to all our volunteers, & a special thanks to:

Tim Avila

Nurges Gheyzada

Shala Hassanzada

Layma Murtaza

Lillian Medhus

Lida Noori

Rick Sample

Aisha Wahab

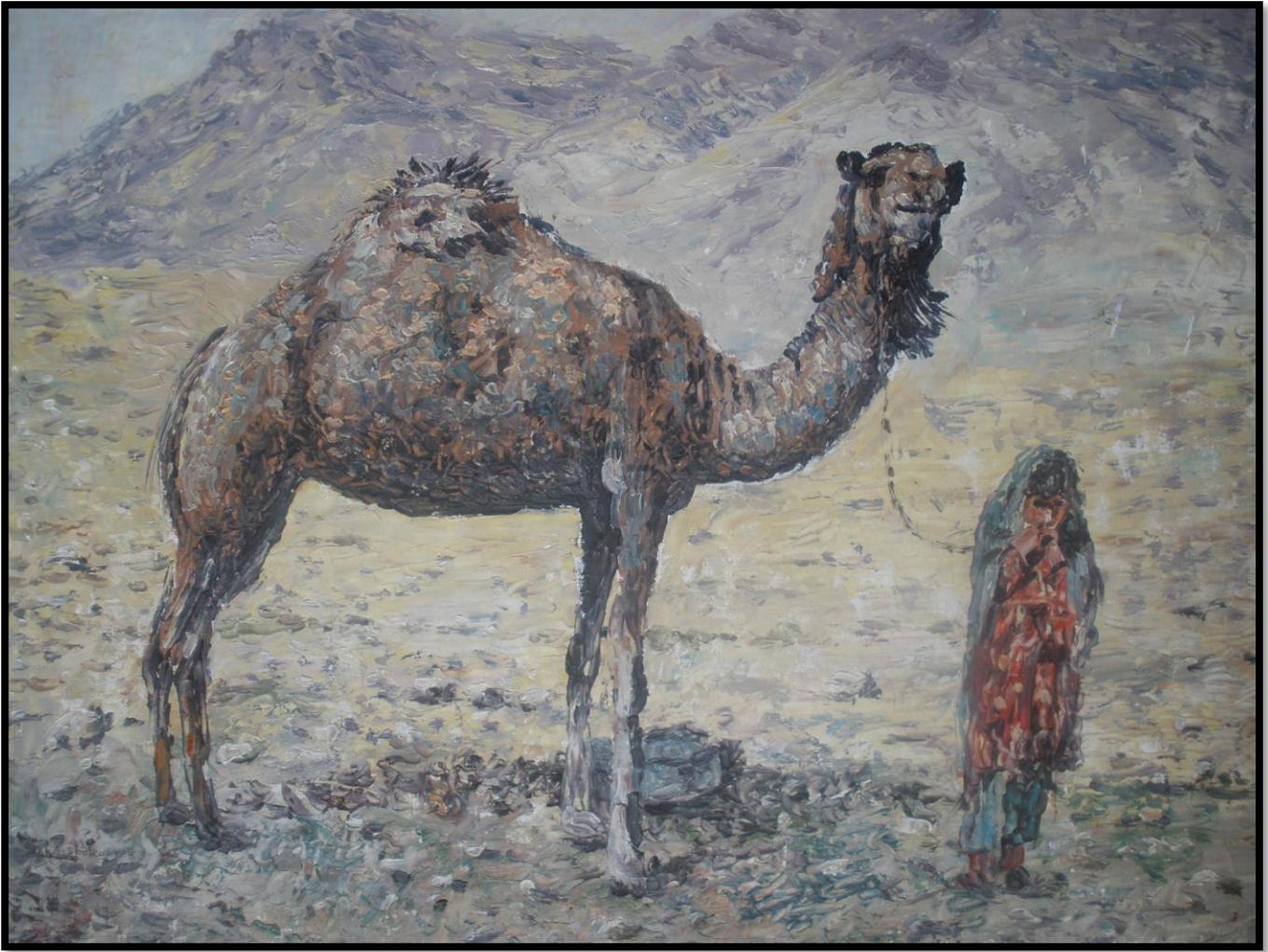
Mariam Wahab

Sayed Wasi

Ricky Wegner

We Need Volunteers: The Afghan Coalition always needs help from the community. If you are interested in volunteering please contact us!





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