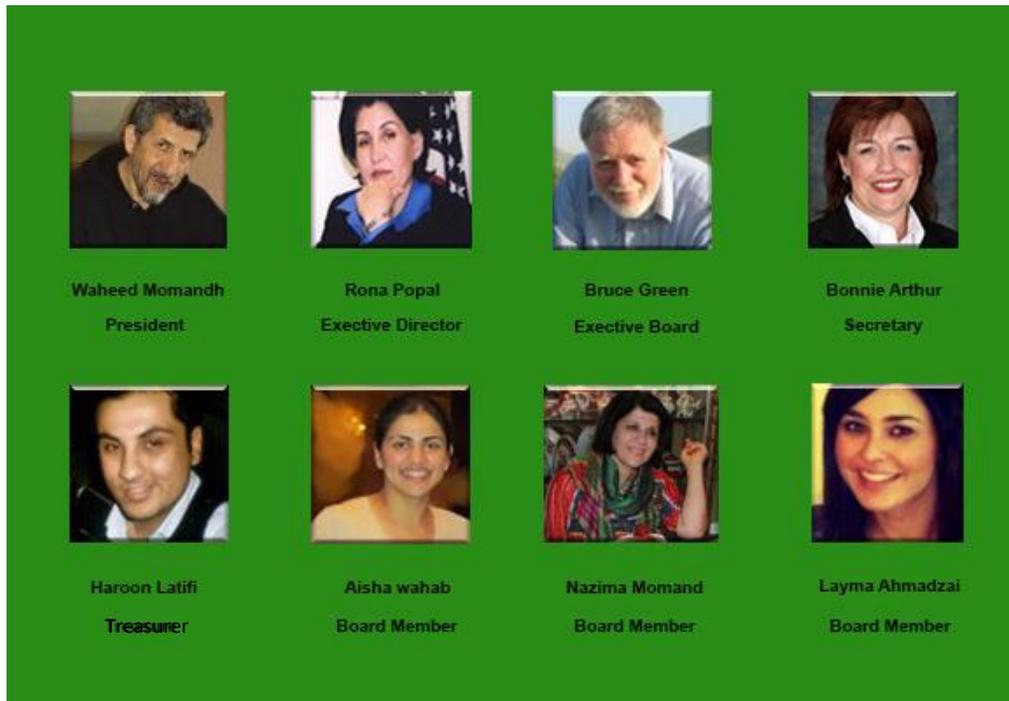


# Afghan Coalition



*All artworks by Abdul Shokoor Khusrawy*

# Afghan Coalition's Board



Dear Supporters,

The Afghan Coalition has made a lot of progress in this past year. We are thankful that we were able to not only grow during the economic downturn but also provide wonderful programs to our community. It is important to acknowledge the fact that we can't do it alone. We do so much more together.

During the 2012 fiscal year, we made great strides in our mental health program, breast health program and some slow steps of progress in economic empowerment and civic engagement programs. We are in the process of expanding our programs to focus on directly aiding our youth which will open new horizons serving our younger generation and also looking forward in starting the domestic violence program that is of critical importance for the community, due to several high profile incidents. We believe that these programs allow our community to continue moving forward and address the critical needs of the community. The economic downturn has caused many great non-profits to crumble, but with a great team and wonderful support from you, we not only survived the hardships, but also were able to strengthen our projects and our commitments toward a stronger community.

Even though we have faced a lot of uncertainty and obstacles over the years, we feel that with a fresh burst of energy arising from our love and commitment to our community, we were able to meet those challenges with new ambitious goals and programs.

We will continue to do what is right for the community, and every year we believe we make a difference in the lives of many members of the community. We do this together. Thank you for the support.

–Waheed Momand, President of Afghan Coalition Board of Directors



# Afghan Coalition

Founded in 1996, the Afghan Coalition is a non-profit that works to aid Afghan immigrants and refugees in the California Bay Area. The Bay Area Afghan community is the largest outside of Afghanistan and has many needs due to the challenges of emigrating from a war-torn country. The Coalition is located in the Fremont Resource Center, where bilingual/bicultural liaisons bridge the language and cultural gap between our clients and social service providers, giving Afghan families unprecedented access to community resources. The AC provides clients with direct social services including case management, counseling, crisis intervention, domestic violence prevention, advocacy on behalf of the Afghan Community, women's support groups, translation, and information and referrals for housing, health and other social services. The AC also organizes and participates in community events that feature Afghan culture, as well as, mainstream American traditions to assist the immigrant population transition to American life.

Although the Afghan Coalition's primary service population is the Afghan community, the agency's multilingual capacity makes it



possible to serve Pakistani, Arab, Indian and Iranian immigrants as well. In 2012-13 the AC served over 500 clients through one-on-one services and over 1000 community members through workshops and events.

*Photo: Clients with their children*

# Afghan Coalition Programs

The Afghan community faces a unique set of challenges in negotiating acculturation into their new society; gaining access to community resources including family healthcare and education; and moving towards self-sufficiency. Four major Public Health Issues facing Afghan Refugees are: mental health, domestic violence, the language barrier, and not knowing “The System”. Research finds that: 36% of Afghans in the Bay Area speak little or no English; more than 40% read and write little or no English; and that the language barrier prevents many from gaining direct access to services, causing many Afghan refugees to be linguistically and culturally isolated. The Afghan Coalition works to help the Afghan community with these issues, providing workshops, trainings, events, and one-on-one cultural counseling, to help them become more self-sufficient, learn how to navigate the system, and integrate into their new society.

## **AC - Program Services and Activities:**

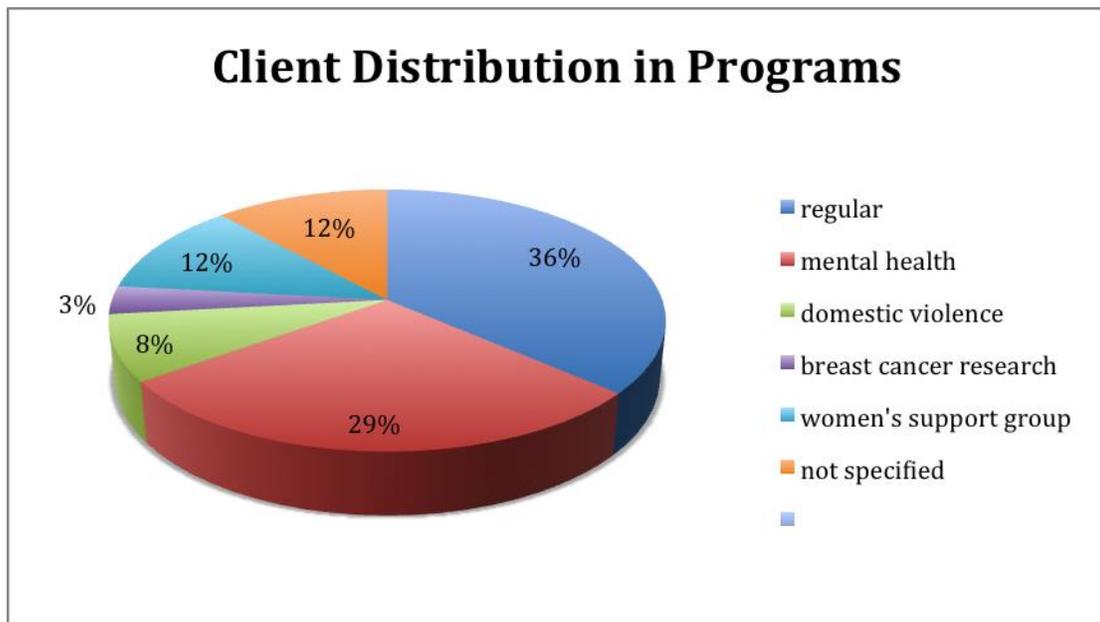
Delivering programs and services to over 1,000 community members per year, particularly immigrant women and youth, the Afghan Coalition provides services identified in the following table.

<b>Afghan Health Partnership Program</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health Leadership Consortium</li> <li>▪ Empowering community</li> <li>▪ Community needs assessments and research support</li> </ul>	<b>Women’s Support Group</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Microenterprise development</li> <li>▪ Classes and field trips</li> </ul>
<b>Individual case management and health and social service advocacy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Health workshops</li> <li>▪ Interpretation services/I&amp;R</li> <li>▪ Domestic Violence/Crisis Services</li> <li>▪ Case management (Daily Needs)</li> </ul>	<b>Community education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parenting workshops</li> <li>▪ Youth leadership development</li> <li>▪ Youth health</li> <li>▪ Cultural Counseling</li> <li>▪ English classes</li> </ul>
<b>Community building</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cross-cultural celebrations</li> <li>▪ Community-building events and programs</li> </ul>	<b>Community Leadership and Organizing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Civic Engagement</li> <li>▪ Get Out the Vote</li> <li>▪ Census 2010</li> </ul>

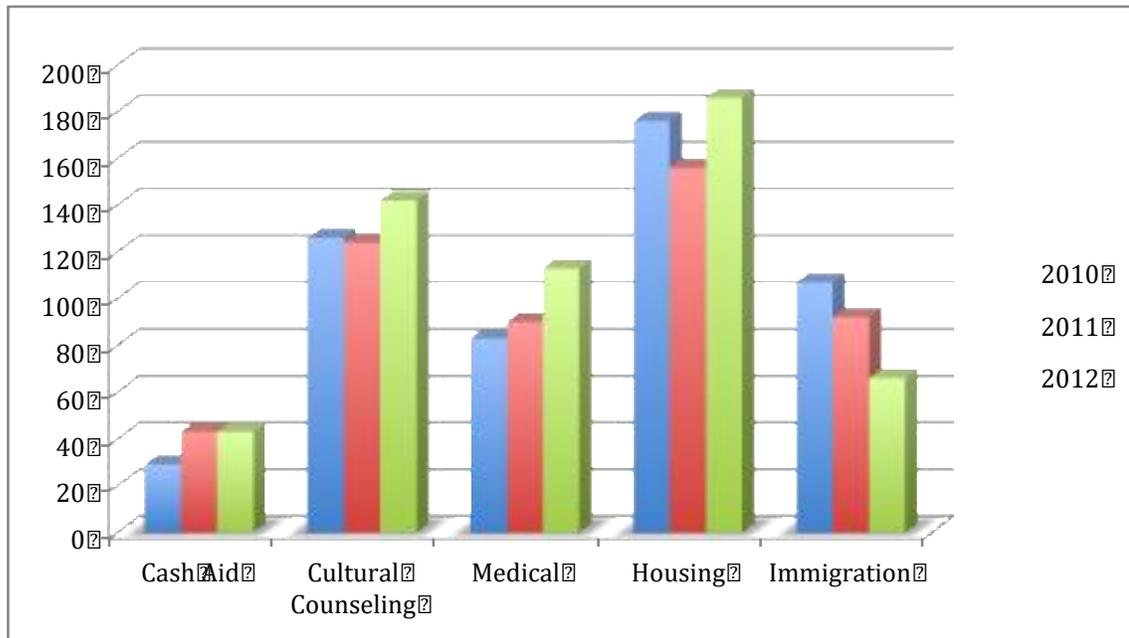
# Clients



*Photo: Afghan Coalition Clients in a class*



# Client Needs



A sampling of vital client needs over a three-year period.



*Photo: Strategic Planning Committee of Afghan Coalition*



## AFGHAN MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

The Afghan Mental Health Project is designed to provide culturally sensitive prevention and early intervention mental health services and increase access to mental health

treatment for Afghans living in Alameda County. The program design is informed by direct services the agency has delivered since 1996, including the interaction and case management of 400-500 unduplicated individuals per year (most of whom are Afghan); recent research, both quantitative and qualitative conducted in the Afghan community; culturally appropriate strategies recommended by local community groups and leaders and public agency leaders; quarterly meetings of the Afghan Health Partnership Program convened over the last two years; and strong roots in the community.



The purpose of the Afghan Mental Health Project is to engage community members of all ages in activities and interventions that will reduce stigma and discrimination for individuals and families seeking help due to the prevention activities in natural community settings where we will educate residents on the impact of social and family problems on emotional health; create stronger and more active cooperative arrangement with community and professional programs currently serving the Afghan community; provide education of risk factors through self-help and other prevention strategies resulting in greater pride and resiliency within the Afghan community; prevent the development of serious mental illness or serious emotional disturbances including outreach, education, home visits and prevention interactions at schools and other community sites where Afghans gather and/or seek services. The program will reduce risk factors and stressors, help participants build protective factors and skills and increase their help-seeking behaviors. For the youth served by this project, prevention activities will promote positive cognitive, social and emotional development and help youth build resiliency needed to cope with stressors and the tools they need to undergo change and face challenging circumstances.

Cultural Wellness Practices will promote early intervention and may consist of referrals to outside agencies or a brief intervention from peer mentors, trained and trusted community members or the project's Mental Health Specialist. Cultural Wellness Practices will include support groups, in-home individual and family visits, and culturally appropriate workshops that teach self-care and healing practices.

This project is made possible with the leadership of Gail Steel (former Alameda County Board of Supervisors), Suzanne Shenfil (City of Fremont) and Tracy Hazelton (ACBHCS) and the collaboration from Alameda County Health Care Services, Afghan Senior Association Bay Area, Afghan Professional Network, East Bay Agency for Children, Afghan Cultural Center, and Lemar TV.

## The Afghan Women's Breast Health Project

*"Early detection and treatment of breast cancer can save lives"*

"The Afghan women's Breast Health Project" is a continuation of a collaborative partnership between the Afghan Coalition and the University of California, Berkeley and is lead by Aida Shirazi Ph.D Program Director. Aida Shirazi has worked with Coalition for many years and she has been instrumental in the implementation and success of this program.

Afghan women are among those at the highest risk for health problems due to lack of access to health services, lack of

education, and language barriers. The available literature also suggests that Afghan women are



diagnosed at a later stage with breast cancer when treatment options are more limited and outcomes poorer, and that they may be diagnosed at a younger age. The purpose of this project is to increase breast health awareness, knowledge, and early detection behaviors among immigrant Afghan women in our community by designing an innovative and culturally sensitive breast health education program to promote breast health and screening among first generation Afghan women who are 40 years or older, with no history of breast cancer. One of the unique aspects of the Afghan Breast Health Project is that it involves much more than just a Farsi /Dari and Pashto translation of materials and messages. Rather, it consists of collective strategies that are culturally

tailored for appropriateness and competency. The educational information is provided by both female and male Community Health Advisors of similar ethnicity and cultural background. The AWBHP recently completed its second year. To date we have accomplished the following goals; 1) development of culturally tailored training manuals for health advisors and community navigators; 2) implementation of comprehensive training program for health advisors and community navigators from the community to promote capacity building within the Afghan community; 3) concepts of prevention that stress importance of seeking and teaching knowledge for both men and women, community collaboration, disease prevention and individual responsibility in health matters; 4) design of educational material that fits the needs of Afghan women with limited literacy; 5) a resource guide was developed by the community navigators of all the resources in the area with special emphasis for existence of female and bilingual staff, to be provided to local agencies who work with the Afghan community; 6) 230 women and 50 men have been enrolled in the program and we are in the process of analyzing the data gathered by our trained interviewers.

At the end of the intervention, we will apply for additional funding to sustain our breast health program and to develop a reminder system for women to get their mammograms. In order to reach the broader Afghan community and other Muslim women, the Afghan Coalition and research partners will also develop a breast health education video to broadcast on the Afghan TV stations.

Some Statistics from the Pilot Study:

- 37.7% had a first degree relative who had breast cancer
- 28.3% had a clinical breast exam in the past 2 years; 30.2% more than 2 years ago and 41% never had one
- 65.9% had a mammogram, but over one-half had it 2+ years ago; 34% never had one

Author; Aida Shirazi Ph.D. Program Director



Afghan Womens  
Breast Health



**MICROENTERPRISE  
Afghan Coalition  
Microenterprise  
Program:**

The Afghan Coalition is dedicated to helping

immigrant and refugee women create economic opportunities for themselves and their families. Since 2007, the Afghan Coalition’s emerging microenterprise program has offered training in handicrafts, business training and English classes to women who have been underserved by the existing entrepreneurship training programs. In

response to a formal strategic planning process in the summer of 2009, microenterprise development and women’s empowerment was identified as a strategic direction for the Afghan Coalition. To this end, the Coalition is working to further develop this program to promote economic self-sufficiency for underserved and very low-income Afghan women, many of whom rely on government assistance

and suffer from multiple hardships. Many Afghan immigrants and refugees often lack the certifications, licenses or language skills required to find jobs for which they may be qualified in the United States. Therefore, microenterprise training in conjunction with English classes (also offered by the Afghan Coalition) and other supports offer Afghan women a viable means for developing self-sufficiency. Developing an income source based on their individual talents and experience gives them the chance to build an income and find fulfillment that is rarely possible with the few options available



for low-wage employment.

**Through the Microenterprise Program the Afghan Coalition Offers the Following Classes:**

- English Classes for Men and Women
- Business Literacy Classes
- Handicrafts
- Computer Classes for Men and Women

*Photos:  
ESL class (top);  
Participants receiving Course  
Certificates (middle);  
Jewelry Making (bottom)*





## Afghan Community Co-Op Kitchen

The mission of the Afghan Community Co-op Kitchen is to promote food entrepreneurs to begin and build their business by providing affordable commercial kitchen space, marketing assistance and business knowledge. The Afghan Community Co-Op Kitchen provides a place for motivated entrepreneurs to refine their skills and form their culinary dream.

*Photos:  
Afghan pastries (above);  
Opening of Community Kitchen  
(to the right)*



## Domestic Violence

Afghan women and men often suffer silently from sexual assault and domestic violence. They are often made to feel trapped and told that resources do not exist to assist them. Common information that is communicated to them in the Afghan culture from their perpetrators is that they will have no where to live, have little to no financial support, they will be sent back to Afghanistan, no one will believe them or that the court will think they are crazy and take away their children.

Our trained domestic violence advocates work with survivors to:

Find shelter; Locate legal assistance to obtain restraining orders, file for divorce, re-obtain green cards and other legal documentation lost during their transition; enroll in support groups; seek medical attention, provide court accompaniment, provide translation and interpretation services, career planning, application support for financial aid, English classes, computer classes, case management and follow-up. The Afghan Coalition works closely with multiple shelters such as the Emergency Shelter Program in Hayward, Non-Profit Islamic Shelter, etc. and other providers such as Narika, Asian Pacific Island Legal Outreach, etc. to provide overall services.

## ADVOCACY and CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The Afghan Coalition is not a political organization but it does believe in encouraging the Afghan community to participate in the political process as well as bringing a voice to our community among local, state and federal government entities.

During election seasons we train staff and volunteers to help register voters, as well as produce a variety of multi-media materials, including voter's guides in Farsi/Dari and Pashto. We also host town-hall meetings to allow community members to speak with their representatives or get to know and question candidates.

We have met with various politicians to discuss issues that affect the Afghan community.



*Photo: Civic Event*

## HEALTH CONSORTIUM

With the leadership of Valerie Smith and support from the San Francisco Foundation, the California Endowment, the Afghan Coalition and CSU East Bay facilitate Health Leadership Consortium meetings. 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 brokers 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.

## Interfaith Bridge Building

The Afghan Coalition works with Rev. Bruce Green to build bridges between different faith communities by:

- Showcasing powerful stories of individuals bringing people of different faiths together, and give impetus to these endeavors
- Encouraging greater understanding of the positive role religion can play in the lives of so many people in the world today
- Spreading these stories around the world to be an inspiration to others
- Furthering the vision of the Coexist Foundation to promote understanding and respect between Jews, Christians and Muslims, and between these religions and others, through education, dialogue and research

# Achievements

## Afghan Population Survey

The Afghan Coalition worked with Dr. Carl Stempel and other groups to conduct a survey on the Bay Area Afghan population. This information is extremely important to our community, as there is very little statistical data available on our community. The survey results can be viewed on our website at: <http://www.afghancoalition.org/afghan-survey/>

## Lemar TV

Lemar TV is one of the first Afghan-American television community programs; it was established with the Afghan Coalition to educate and bring awareness in the community. This program successfully continues and airs once a week on public television. Currently the Afghan Coalition collaborates with Mr. Habib Zargi for the Afghan Mental Health Project.



## Awards

Mizgon Darby and Dr. Khalil Rahmany were awarded by Alameda County as mental health professionals who exceed their job descriptions by going above and beyond the call of duty.

Rona Popal, Executive Director of the Afghan Coalition was profiled by local ABC news for their program "Profiles on Excellence" on November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010. To view this video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lc9Cp-jPVTM>

*Photos: Mizgon Darby and Dr. Khalil Rahmany receiving their awards (above); Rona Popal receiving her award from ABC news (to the right)*



# ACHIEVEMENTS

## Domestic Violence PSA

The Afghan Coalition helped create a Domestic Violence Public Service Announcement in Dari with the collaboration of Alameda County District Attorney Office, Alameda County Human Relation Commission and other active Afghan community members. This announcement was created to bring awareness of domestic violence to our community.



*Photos:  
Volunteer  
receiving award  
for work on the  
2010 census*

## 2010 Census

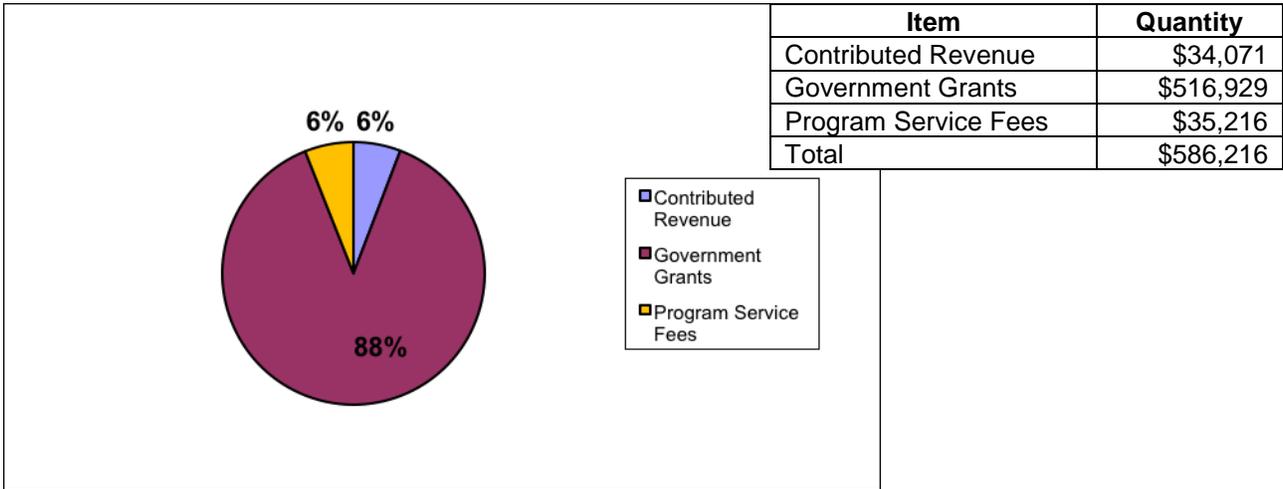
The Afghan Coalition encouraged the community to participate in the 2010 Census through an awareness video and by helping clients fill the forms out, which resulted in an increase in Afghan participation and understanding of the importance of civic engagement.

## Soccer Team

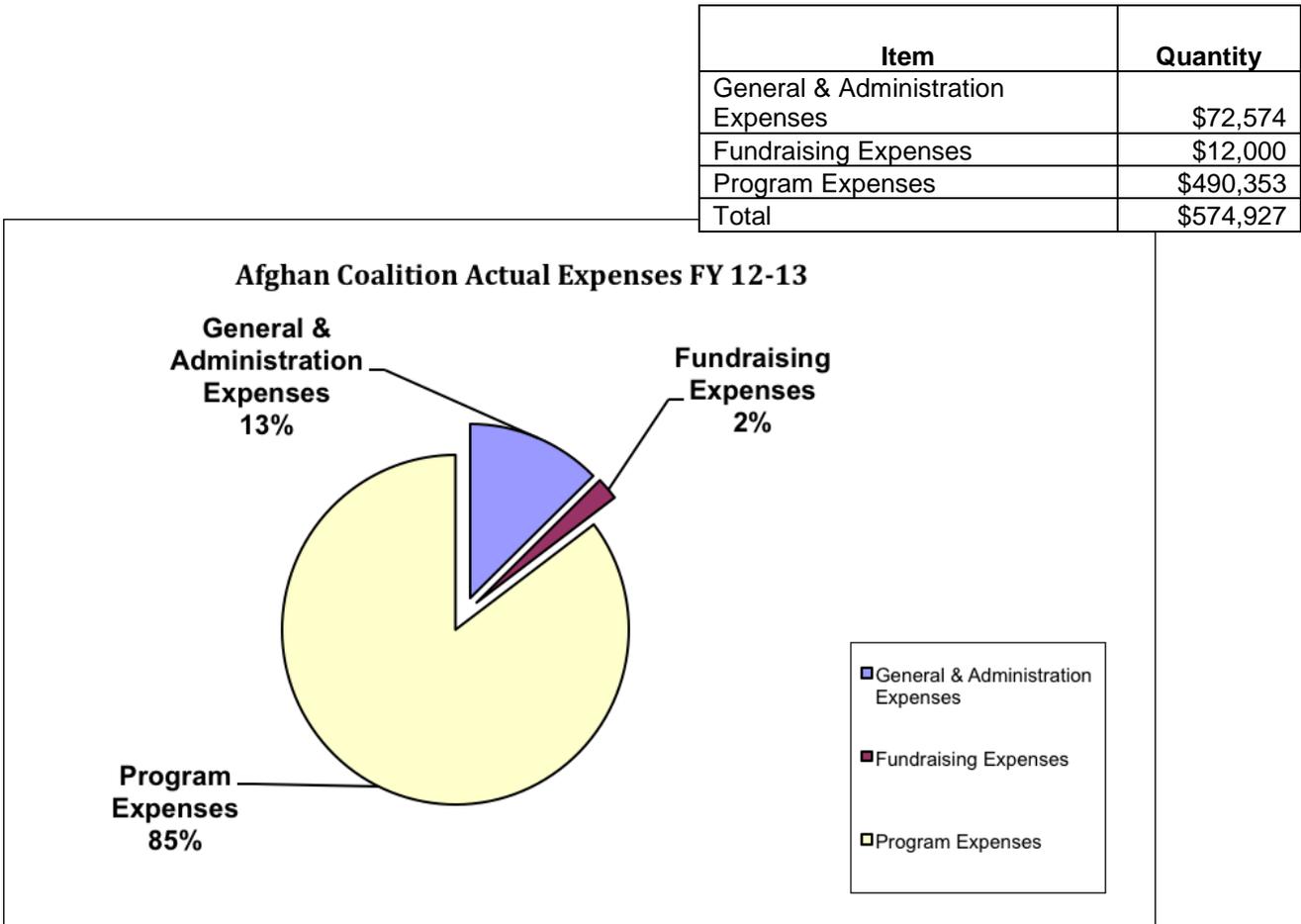
Due to the needs of the community the Afghan Coalition started an Afghan soccer team to help the youth in the Afghan community to participate in extracurricular activities. This team was expanded by the very talented and active Coach Wais Omar into the Afghan Soccer Club and serves almost 200 children in the community.



# Financial Information



The above graph shows the sources of Afghan Coalition's revenues, and the below graph shows where the expenses are spent.



# Collaborators

- **Afghan Elderly Association**
- **Afghan Senior Association of Bay Area**
- **Afghan Cultural Center**
- **Afghan Professional Network**
- **Lemar TV**
- **EBAC**
- **Family Resource Center**
- **City of Fremont**
- **Asian American Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy (AAPIP)**
- **AMEMSA (Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim, South Asian) group**
- **Alameda County District Attorney Office**
- **Self Help Elderly (TEAM [Telecommunications Education and Assistance in Multiple-languages] project)**
- **Alameda County Human Commission**
- **Asian Law Caucus**
- **Omid Advocates**
- **Congregations Organizing for Renewal (COR)**
- **Women Intercultural Network (WIN)**
- **Arab Cultural Center**
- **Dr. Farid Younos Professor in Cal State East Bay**
- **Dr. Carl Stemple (Sociologist at CSUEB)**
- **Dr. Valerie Smith (Cal State East Bay communications)**
- **Rahima Foundation**
- **Bridge Building**
- **Alameda County Clinics**
- **Dr. Rahmani**
- **SEMAH**
- **CAIR**
- **League of Women Voters**
- **Dr. Joan Bloom (Professor at UC Berkeley)**



# Thank you

## We appreciate Your Continued Support.

The Afghan community has been working hard to survive thirty years of war. The Afghan Coalition was formed to serve the community where it sees the most need. Each year the Coalition grows stronger and it wouldn't be possible without your support. We ask for your continued support and faith that we can do even more together.

Thank you to our sponsors and volunteers. Without our volunteers that come in every day and support each project, the Afghan Coalition would not be able to reach the areas it can. Thanks to the foundations that have provided for the Afghan people time and time again. A special thanks to the City of Fremont, Alameda County BHCS, National Institutes of Health (NIH), San Francisco Foundation, California Endowment, California Utility Commission, East Bay Agency for Children, One Nation, Asian American/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, California Wellness, and the Muslim Women Grant Committee for always being supportive throughout our projects.

We hope to continue our work, continue improving, and bring more and better services to our community. We can't do this without your help. Please continue your support.

If you would like to volunteer with the Afghan Coalition please visit our website ([afghancoalition.org](http://afghancoalition.org)) or contact us at 39155 Liberty Street D-460, Fremont CA, 94538 and 510-745-1680

