



Who We Are: A Foundation of Hope

Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to improving the lives of women and children in Afghanistan through community-based education. Founded with the belief that education is key to positive, peaceful change for current and future generations, the foundation strives to provide opportunities to learn and grow in a safe, nurturing environment.

Razia's Ray of Hope is focused on establishing educational support and resources for girls and women in the Afghan village of Deh'Subz, located 30 miles northeast of Kabul in a larger district of the same name. Deh'Subz translates to "Green City," an apt name for a mountainous area vibrant with grape vineyards and apricot, peach, and almond orchards.

The district of Deh'Subz is comprised of a total of 46 villages, with approximately 100,000 residents including a large number of nomadic families.

Current Program The Zabuli Education Center for Women and Girls

Completed in spring 2008 on the outskirts of Kabul in Deh'Subz, Afghanistan, the Zabuli Education Center for Women and Girls is the cornerstone of Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation. Currently, this community-based education center hosts over 200 girls who attend classes during the day. While tackling a rich curriculum that includes math, English, and health care from kindergarten through grade six, the children receive uniforms and nutritional meals and are mentored by positive female

role models. All of this takes place within the safe, clean walls of the newly refurbished school building.

Students range in age from four to fifteen. The girls who attend school at the Zabuli Education Center are from poor families. Most have experienced extreme hardship compared to their counterparts in the developed world. They have many chores to do at home, caring for younger siblings and helping with the work of survival in a war-torn country. Some of their fathers had to be convinced to support—or at least tolerate—allowing their daughters to become educated.

Prior to enrollment, students take placement tests to assess their academic levels as girls of the same age can vary widely in grade level depending on how much informal learning they have been



exposed to. All students wear uniforms, which is a help to poor families that may have extremely limited resources for obtaining clothing and maintaining clean laundry.

Razia Jan, the school's founder, personally visits the Ministry of Women's Affairs to recruit teachers for the Zabuli Education Center. Razia administers tests to confirm the candidates' writing, reading, and math skills before making selections for the school staff.

Future Programs

Adult Education Center

The Zabuli Education Center is establishing a program to provide vocational training and literacy education to women during evenings and weekends. The adult education center is expecting 20 to 30 women, many of them widows with children, to come to learn a trade or how to start a business.

Medical Clinic and Commercial Development

Afghanistan has the third-highest infant mortality rate in the world. To combat that statistic, Razia's Ray of Hope has acquired land adjacent to the Zabuli Education Center for the site of a health care facility. The clinic will provide vital prenatal care to pregnant women, support for home-based labor and delivery, and neonatal care for infants. The project's scope also includes a cluster of businesses to support the district of Deh'Subz and surrounding communities.

Our History: A Collaboration of Change

In the wake of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the ensuing war, Afghan native Razia Jan sought a relevant project for the Rotary Club in her adopted hometown of Duxbury, Mass. Razia worked in Duxbury as a tailor and dry cleaner, but because of her passion and commitment the small shop had become a hub of aid to her homeland of Afghanistan.

When Razia learned of a historic former boys' school in the Afghan district of Deh'Subz that had been nearly destroyed, she began planning to rebuild the school and resuscitate its mission to provide

Afghan girls with a more promising future. Importantly, rather than foist a school onto a random town as a form of social engineering, the project would restore an institution that had been the gift of a revered Afghan king, Amir Amanullah Khan, in the 1930s and was once a center of the community. The school's restoration was important and culturally appropriate on many levels. But Razia needed steadfast logistical support in Afghanistan before she could turn her plans into reality.

While Razia dreamed of the school's restoration, Aziza Mohamad Dauod, who runs the Niazi Road and Building construction company in Kabul, was looking for a project that would aid Afghanistan's recovery. Aziza needed the right project, and she needed funding.

Razia and Aziza joined forces when Zinat Karzai, wife of Afghan president Hamid Karzai, introduced the two women. The team partnered with Frieda Madjid—or Fareeda Zabuli, as she is known in Afghanistan—the wife of Abdul Madjid

Zabuli, an Afghan patriot who shaped the modern Afghan state and founded the Zabuli Foundation. Together the three women decided to rebuild the beloved school and restore a symbol of hope for Deh'Subz.

With help from families in her small coastal town in Massachusetts, Razia began to raise funds to rebuild the school. She received a major financial boost from best-selling Afghan author Khaled Hosseini, who visited Duxbury twice to rally the community. Less than two years after the project was conceived, construction began.

Opened in March 2008, today the school is thriving with over 200 girls at work in classrooms each day. The town of Deh'Subz has embraced the trim cement building with the bold red door as a sign that their children deserve and will in fact have a better future.





Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation would not exist without the inspiration and tireless efforts of founder Razia Jan. Since the foundation's inception, Razia has come to rely on the expertise and guidance of many others, including executive director Patti Quigley and an active board of directors.

Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation has been shaped by the spirit and vision of Razia Jan, founder of the Zabuli Education Center. Razia has worked for many years to forge connections between Afghans and Americans.

She began by rallying her adopted New England community to send over 400 handmade blankets to rescue workers at Ground Zero after September 11. Her efforts expanded to include sending care packages to US troops in Afghanistan. Through her involvement in the military's Operation Shoe Fly, she coordinated the delivery of over 30,000 pairs of shoes to needy Afghan children. Her handmade quilts commemo-

“My focus is to really make life better for women and girls because they are suffering the most. By nature, Afghanistan’s women are very strong. If they put their mind to something, they can do anything. They can go through hell and come out and survive. They’ve lived through the Taliban—and if they can get through that, they have a chance.”

— R A Z I A J A N

rating September 11 have been exhibited at Madison Square Garden, the chapel at the Pentagon, and at fire stations in New York and Massachusetts.

Born in Afghanistan, Razia moved to

the United States in 1970. The proprietor of a small tailoring business in Duxbury, Mass., for 20 years, she served as president of the town's Rotary Club. A member of the Interfaith Council, the No Place for Hate committee, and Jordan Hospital's board of directors, Razia has received many awards for her humanitarian work, including the 2007 Woman of Excellence award from Germaine Lawrence Inc., multiple Rotary Club International Peace Awards, and certificates of appreciation from the Army Corps of Engineers and the American Legion. She has spoken on women and children's issues at many venues in New York, Massachusetts, Washington, DC, and Afghanistan.

In October 2008, Razia moved back to Kabul, where she is developing and managing aid projects for Afghan rug weavers and their families as the Country Program Director for the Chicago-based nonprofit Arzu Inc., in addition to her work with Razia's Ray of Hope.

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RAY OF HOPE
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