



اتحادیه ملی تجارتي زنان افغان

Afghan Women's Business Union

Welcome to AWBA's Newsletter

March 2007



AWBA Star of the Month

Homaira Aimaq is AWBA's star of the month. Homaira is a widow of war. She has a daughter, Hassina Aimaq who is going to high school. Homaira worked at WOMAN NGO and AWBA for the past four years as a security guard. During the four years, Homaira learned from other women in training whether it was in tailoring or English or business development. She and her daughter took advantage of all the opportunities at WOMAN and AWBA to build their capacity.

Today, Homaira and Hassina have been able to organize 37 women for literacy classes, 17 women in English classes, 10 in tailoring and 20 in crochet and needle work. The name of their small association is "Education and Cultural Association of Hassina Aimaq".

Mother and daughter borrowed 3,000 Afghanis (\$60) from a close friend which is their initial investment. After paying off their friend, they borrowed again 10,000 Afghanis (\$200). At the moment she has an inventory of 60,000 Afghanis (\$1,200). Homaira and Hassina are working from one room with six different shifts. Homaira is seeking funding to be able to continue and support this small organization that she and her daughter started.

Homaira's hard work and courage is admirable. AWBA is honored to have members like Homaira. She has done an excellent job. AWBA would like to congratulate this exceptional mother and daughter team.

AWBA Jalalabad - Eastern Region

Women's Day Celebration

The International Women's Day was celebrated on March 8, 2007 in Jalalabad. H.E. Gul Agha Sherzay, the Governor of Jalalabad welcomed the celebration and it was an honor to have him.

By having this exhibition centers in Jalalabad, it has encouraged more women to set up their small businesses and to find a good market for their produced products with a reasonable price.



Many women, teachers, students, NGOs and a lot of men joined and celebrated the Women Day. AWBA and other organization those who are working in the handicraft associations brought their stalls in the exhibition of businesswomen to display their products to find a market.

AWBA has been operating and is very active to promote the Afghan businesswomen products. Its aim is to develop Afghan products with quality so they will be recognized. AWBA encourages them to prepare their products with quality so it can also find a market. AWBA's members prepared their products and AWBA office exhibited their products

AWBA at the exhibition centre. The exhibition was a success. Women's products had a very good market. The most interesting was that purchases were by men and women.

AWBA Exhibition

- Registering over 100 small women's businesses
- Training 50 women farmers in districts of Behsoud, Sorkhrod and Kaghiaie plus in villages of Sawati, Kalitek and Naghrak
- Invited fifty women for a three day training in marketing and later two groups of twelve women were introduced to Parwaz Micro Financing for small loans
- 30 women met with the AWBA Office Manager, Rona Inayat, and AWBA gave information about AWBA business programs
- Talking to different approaches with women and dealing with their problems

The training was performed by Miss Shukria Ghaznawi, a seasoned trainer and member of AWBA from Kabul. The training was for four days for women from the eastern province of Jalalabad to increase their knowledge and skills in business. Many women participated in this training period and showed tremendous interest. The program ended successfully.

The AWBA training was for literate and illiterate women held in Jalalabad which included 55 women. The group was a mixture of literate and illiterate women. Both groups were interested in business. Miss Ghaznawi taught theories and used pictures for both groups. Jalalabad women received certificates at the end of the fourth day.

Women asked questions continuously about the business curriculum so they could become self-sufficient and be able to support themselves. Jalalabad women demanded more workshops and training.

AWBA Trainer in Japan



Khadija Hussani is a member of Afghan Women Business Association. She started her own business with the help of AWBA and the guidance of Mrs. Mina Sherzoy, President. She achieved success in her business through various trainings and capacity building program. One of her achievements of Khadija is her recent trip to Japan for three months. She visited 18 galleries in different cities of Japan. Khadija did well in training Japanese women in carpet weaving and introducing the Afghan rugs. The Japanese women did well and Khadija got a good experience in learning about the Japanese market.

International Exhibition



Second Exhibition of Afghan Handicrafts in, New Delhi, India

Participants: Bakht Nazir, board member of AWBA and Hanifa, a member of AWBA.

This international exhibition was launched in New Delhi in November 2006 to make a showcase for the Afghan handicrafts by the support of DAI/ALP/USAID and AWBA members.

The exhibition was very successful similar to the previous year. It is a major accomplishment by Afghan women participating in the international markets.

This proves the ability of Afghan women that they can exhibit their products successfully in an international market.

Asian Economical Conference, New Delhi, India

Participants:

Guljan Zmaray - President of Afghan Woman Agriculture Association
Shahla Dashti - Deputy, Board member of AWBA
Laila Arab - President of Nilab Ltd Company

November 18, 2006, the first Economical Conference was held at Taj Mahal Hotel with the participation of eight Asian countries with the cooperation of Indian government.

In this conference President Karzai, high ranking government officials and approximately 179 national and international businesswomen and businessmen attended.

One of the main points of this conference was the participation of Afghan women. Afghan women play a major role in the economy of Afghanistan, international markets and in partnership with other businesswomen around the world.



International Training



Arthemis 2006 Report

In November 2006, a group of business women including AWBA board members attended the Arthemis training program in Glendale, Arizona, in the United States. The training involved business, administration and finance training. Thunderbird University is one of the top Universities in the world. Thunderbird University has branches in US, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Russia, Central and South America and China.

The Arthemis program was designed and created by Mina Sherzoy, AWBA President/Founder and Barbara Barrett who is a respectable and well-known political leader in the US.

Engineer Habiba Amin Ibrahim board member of AWBA, Cultural and Educational authority of AWBA and President of Afghan Women Engineers Association attended the Arthemis 2006.

According to Engineer Habiba the results of Arthemis was as following:

- Arthemis was a great trip and full of good memories
- Arthemis was a positive step towards self improvement
- Arthemis was an educational trip in business with international standards
- Arthemis has created a good network for women who aim peace and cooperation between women around the world.
- Arthemis was an introduction to Arizona's good people and visited one of the most incredible places in the world "The Grand Canyon".

I heard about Arthemis from last year's group. It was my dream to attend this program. It was more than I imagined.

Arthemis introduced to us American women who have important roles in democracy in US. We eagerly watched that America is a country made of immigrants. We also visited successful business-women which was an eye opener.

We appreciate H.E. Sayed Tayeb Jawad, Afghan Ambassador, and his respectable wife Mrs. Shamim Jawad for taking the time to come to the Arthemis certification ceremony which was more encouraging towards success. We are hopeful that the Arthemis program will continue so more Afghan women would take advantage of this fabulous program.



Mrs. Aziza Momand, member of AWBA board and Manager/Owner of Meska Leather Company attended the Arthemis program. Arthemis was a great program with very good curriculum, accommodations, food and the hospitality of the American people was great! The professors taught us very important subjects. Of course, the help of the two interpreters, Mrs. Fawzia from Afghanistan and Mrs. Farah from Iran helped us reach our goals during the training in a short time.

The training was professionally organized. The training material had been selected before according to the need of each business woman. I wish we had more time.

Thanks to everyone at Thunderbird who helped in the Arthemis program. We will always cherish the

good memories of Arizona.



Sara Rahmani, member of AWBA, designer at www.awwsom.com. Arthemis taught me more advanced ways of doing business through technology. It came at a perfect time because we are building www.awwsom.com which means Afghanistan World Wide Shopping Online Mall. The importance of internet and technology was discussed in most of the classes.

The professors were excellent. The people of Arizona were very generous and warm. The mentorship in this program is significant. I appreciate the mentors taking their time to guide us. I thank Thunderbird University for helping the deprived business women of Afghanistan to learn and do better financially with their lives.

Habiba Rafat, member of AWBA, owner of a day care, RanginKaman, in Kabul. Habiba loved the program. She says it was an excellent curriculum which has helped in her work since she has returned. Habiba did not know how to use the computer. Now she has a laptop. Artemis program taught her how to use the computer plus how to run her finances. She is running her administrative tasks through the computer by herself which has changed her life tremendously. She is very thankful to all the people who worked on putting together this program. H.E. Ambassador Jawad's visit and his respectable wife really made her happy. Her mentor has helped her as well because they are always in touch. She is a big help to Habiba.

AWBA'S New Office Coming Up!

Helmand Women Business Association

Helmand is located in south of Afghanistan an insecure area where Taliban unrest still exists. Fifteen women came from Helmand province to AWBA office. These brave women were asking for guidance to register and establish their provincial business association by the help of Humaira Nassery and Mina Sherzoy. Their business association was registered at the Ministry of Justice by the help of Guljan Zmaray, AWBA member.

AWBA was honored to help them register their business association. The security issue was brought up but women of Helmand resisted the idea of insecurity. They just wanted to go on to improve their lives like the rest of the women in the globe.

AWBA congratulates these brave women of Helmand and all the power to them. Wishing the courageous women of Helmand all the protection and victory in the world!





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