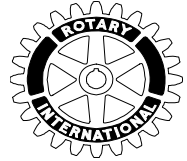


# ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 5340



## President, La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Foundation

April 30, 2010

**Stephen R. Brown**  
14918 Rancho Nuevo  
Del Mar, CA 92014  
StephenRBrown@att.net  
[www.SteveBrownRotary.com](http://www.SteveBrownRotary.com)

Office (858) 720-6343  
OFAX (858) 720-6306  
Home (858) 481-6464  
HFAX (206) 339-4131  
**Cell (858) 692-3310**

**Preferred**

**Cell**

Ms. Anna Mussman  
Via e-mail

**RE: S-ECAPY-09-GR-115 (SJ)**

Dear Anna,

Attached are two narrative reports for the above mentioned grant. One report is prepared by our in-county Director Abdul Qaum "Almas". The second report is prepared by our U.S. coordinator Cynthia Villis. I have previously submitted our quarterly financial report for the period ending March 31, 2010 and concurrently therewith requested a no-cost budget amendment.

I have intentionally submitted the report of our in-country director in his own words. Although the English is a bit clumsy at times, I believe reading his report unfiltered provides a stronger sense of what is taking place on the ground in GCEP in Afghanistan.

Our year end report will be more comprehensive and will add some information gleaned by a total of three site visits by U.S. team members. If more information is needed at this time, please advise.

Also in the award letter we received for this grant we are instructed on page 4 to also submit the first page of the "Performance Report Form (SF-PPR)" and advised this can be accessed at:

[http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/rewrite/grants/approved\\_forms/sf-ppr.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/rewrite/grants/approved_forms/sf-ppr.pdf)

However, the form is not available at that site and instead a page shows up advising that the Obama administration has made some changes. A copy of that advice page is also enclosed. If another form is to be filled out by us, please advise how it can be located.

Finally I am sending a copy of this report to [reportseca@state.gov](mailto:reportseca@state.gov) as advised in our award letter.

Please confirm that we are in compliance with our April 30 reporting requirements. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stephen R. Brown".

Stephen R. Brown  
President  
La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club Foundation  
cc: [reportseca@state.gov](mailto:reportseca@state.gov)

**Global Connection and Exchange (GCE) Program  
Afghan and American Pre-College Institute  
Moini International Consulting**

**Reporting Person:** Abdul Qaum Almas  
GCE Program Director, Afghanistan

**Reporting Period:** September 2009 – March 31, 2010

**Past Seven Months Accomplishments:**

The Global Connection and Exchange Program new students received 28 days computer and internet basic training to enable them to communicate effectively with US students under GCE program objectives. The program provides computer and internet access to students in Jalalabad to work on collaborative projects with the US students.

GCE Project students actively take part in Face book, Ning and other educational and social networks and internet site discussions. GCE students communication is based on the monthly topics they receive from the US GCE team. All students who have been participating in GCE



Program attend first 28 days training (pre course), meanwhile they receive comprehensive training and learning materials to become fully acquainted with office software programs. After the students learn basic computer programs they then become acquainted with educational and social online networks, and later further training is provided by GCE IT trainers to fully acquaint them with ICT technology.

The GCE program has been very successful in the following

locations:

- College of Education Training Center(CETC)
- Rotary High School
- Bi Bi Zainab Girls High School
- Bi Bi Aisha Girls High School
- Bi Bi Mariam Girls High School
- Wazer Mohmmud Gul Khan boys & Girls High School
- Abdul Wakil High School
- Mia Omer High School

With the coordination of Nangarhar Education Directorate and Education Faculty of Nangarhar University, the internet connection speed in GCE high school sites has been

upgraded to 512 Kbps except for the Bi Bi Maryam High school; GCE has secured funding sources to update the current GCE sites internet speed to 1 MBPS.

In total 1669 (979 male students and 680 female students) from 13 high schools (including multiple schools using the CETC main computer lab) participated in GCEP program since August 2008 in Jalalabad Nangarhar. Many of these students actively interact with students in the US using the internet.



*GCE IT Trainers during the lecture*

**College of Education Training Center (CETC):** 21 computers are connected with 2 Mbps bandwidth internet connection speed. 15 girl students from Tajrobawi Girls High School, 03 girl students from Nangarhar University Education Faculty, 3 girls from Nazo Anna girls high school, 3 girls from Bi Bi Hawa girls high school, 9 boys from Chicknawri High School, 22 boy students from Tajrobawi Boys High School, 3 boy students from Shahid Muhammad Arif School and 48 male students from Education Faculty of Nangarhar University participated in GCE Program in 8 sessions, from 8:00 Am-5:00 Pm, Saturday through Thursday. In total 103 students were enrolled in GCE program in this reporting period in CETC computer lab:

1. Bi Bi Hawa Girls High School
2. Nazo Anna Girls High School
3. Tajrobawee Girls High School
4. Checknowri Boys High School
5. Tajrobawee Boys High School
6. Shaheed Mohammad Arif Boys High School
7. Education Faculty Female Students
8. Education Faculty Male Students



### CETC computer lab

- **Rotary High School:** 8 computers are connected via Wi-Max with 512 kbps bandwidth speed, 72 Boys and 30 girl students joined the GCE program in seven sessions, 4 classes for boys and 3 classes for girls. They attend classes from 08:00 Am- 4:00 PM, Saturday through Thursday. In total 102 students participated from Rotary School in GCE program in this reporting period.
- **Bi Bi Zainab Girls High School:** 20 computers are connected by Wi MAX device now upgraded to 512 Kbps bandwidth speed, In total 41 girls from Bi Bi Zainab girls High School are enrolled in GCE program in 7 sessions through March. They attend classes from 8:30 Am-04:00PM, Saturday through Thursday.
- **Mia Omar High School:** 10 computers are connected via Wi MAX device with 512 Kbps bandwidth speed, 56 male students joined the GCE program in 7 sessions. They attend classes from 8:30 Am- 4:30 PM, Saturday through Thursday. In total 56 students participated from Mia Omar high School in GCE program through March.
- **Bi Bi Aysha Girls High School:** 15 computers are connected via Wi MAX device with 512 Kbps bandwidth speed, 71 girls' students joined the GCE program in 8 sessions, they attend classes from 7:00 Am- 4:00 PM, Saturday through Thursday. In total of 71--56 students participated from Bi Bi Aysha girls high School and 15 from Alaie girls high school in GCE program through the reporting month.
- **Abdul Wakil High School:** 10 computers are connected via Wi MAX device with 512 Kbps bandwidth speed, 69 male students joined the GCE program in 7 sessions. They attend classes from 8:00 AM- 4:00 PM, Saturday through Thursday. In total 69 students participated from Abdul Wakil School in GCE program in the reporting month.
- **Bi Bi Maryam Girls High School:** GCE opened 7<sup>th</sup> lab with 8 computers, one projector along screen, one scanner, one printer including other necessary equipments in Darwanta, Jalalabad on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. 40 girl students joining GCE program in 04 sessions. The classes are open from 12:00 PM- 4:30 PM, Saturday through Thursday, in total 40 students participated from Bi Bi Maryam High School during the reporting period. The lab will be connected with internet in very near future. 28 days office curriculum is provided presently. Classes are taught by one of the English teachers who came to San Diego in the summer of 2009 under the GCE Program.



- Wazeer Muhammad Gull Khan Girls & Boys High School:** GCEP opened its 8<sup>th</sup> lab in Jalalabad on December 19, 2009. This facility had remained closed for almost 3 or 4 years but was equipped with 20 new desktop Pentium 4 computers including two printers and other necessary equipments. 40 girl students joined the GCE program in 4 sessions from 08:30 AM to 12:30 PM, and 40 male students joined GCE program in 4 sessions from 01:00 PM to 4:30 PM Saturday through Thursday. In total 80 students participated in GCE program from WMGK School in the reporting period. The lab was reopened in presence of Fary Moini and Miss Khalida who received GCEP training in the Bi Bi Ayesha Girls high school. The 28 day office curriculum is in underway in both shifts in mornings and afternoons.



### GCEP 7th computer lab connected via Internet



On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2010, GCEP 7<sup>th</sup> School (Wazeer Muhammad Gull Khan boys & girls high school) computer lab connected with good internet speed, the students are working in Ning and Facebook sites.

Mr. Azizi, Education Director, students, teachers and principal thanked the GCE program.

**Table 01. Jalalabad GCEP lab sites and computers**

<b>GCEP site</b>	<b>High school</b>	<b>Number of computers</b>
01	Wazeer Mohmmad Gull Khan	20
02	Bi Bi Mariam	08
03	Bi Bi Aisha	15
04	Jalalabad Rotary	08
05	Mia Omar	10
06	CETC	21
07	Abdul Wakil	10
08	Bi Bi Zainab	20
<b>Total</b>		<b>112</b>

**Table 02. Afghan GCEP participants by school and by Gender**

<b>High school</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total N of students</b>
Wazeer Mohmmad Gull Khan	40	40	80
Bi Bi Mariam	38	0	38
Bi Bi Aisha	188	0	188
Jalalabad Rotary	76	202	278
Mia Omar	0	212	212
CETC	73	293	366
Abdul Wakil	0	232	232
Bi Bi Zainab	265	0	265
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>680</b>	<b>979</b>	<b>1669</b>

**Second Graduation Ceremony:**

The second students' graduation ceremony of the Global Connections and Exchange Program was held in Jalalabad on December 26th, 2009 in the CETC lab. Over 200 popular personalities were invited to the ceremony including Education Faculty Personnel, Nangarhar Education Directorate Personnel, Jalalabad Rotary Club Members, Nangarhar University lecturers, NGOs representatives, GCE team, High School principals, teachers and students. GCEP Country Program Director in Afghanistan Mr. Abdul Qaum Almas presented his speech in which he put light on the GCEP achievements and explained the program's future plan. He stated, "I am so pleased to be graduating 130 students (85 male & 45 female) again to the Afghan community who completed nine months program successfully with GCEP." In the first cycle, on August 16, 2009 GCE Afghanistan graduated 102 students

from nine high schools. Assistant Education Coordinator of the Nangarhar Education Directorate Mr. Meeya Ibrahim Meyakhil presented his speech and said, “Without computer technology education is incomplete, especially nowadays.” He added that science and computer technology is useful and well suited for Afghans and should be part of Afghan culture. Further he advised GCEP students to obtain required skills and knowledge to serve their homeland and their respected families. At the end he suggested to extend this capacity building project for youth.



### **Fary Moini received a Presidential Medal:**

Nangarhar Education Director Mr. Iqbal Azizi and the Governor of Nangarhar, Mr. Gul Agha Sherzai invited Fary Moini and Almas to the Nangarhar Governor House on December 26, 2009. Fary and Almas met Afghan President Advisor and Nangarhar Governor Mr. Gul Agha Sherzai. The Governor mentioned that he appreciated the La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club Foundation’s significant efforts in Afghanistan and presented the Ministry of Education Award on behalf of Afghanistan’s President Mr. Hamid Karzai to the La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club member Fary Moini for her efforts, dedication, hard work, and positive contributions to the Afghanistan education.





### **GCEP Sites Internet Connectivity:**

Due to connectivity interruptions and low bandwidth speed the previous ISP contract was terminated with RANA technologies and new contract was made on October 2009 with Afghan Telecom started with 512 Kbps and will soon be upgraded to 1 Mbps. From October 2009` these schools (Bi Bi Zainab girls' high school, Bi Bi Ayesha girls high school, Rotary high school, Abdul Wakil high school and the Mia Omar high school) are now connected with the new 512 Kbps internet connection. Right now they are getting benefit from 512 Kbps Afghan telecom internet connection and will be upgraded to 1 Mbps in very near future. CETC is using 2 Mbps bandwidth speed from the date cited above.

### **GCEP Participated in events:**

#### **GCEP Late Student Condolences:**

GCEP team organized an event in honor of Rotary High School GCEP late student Mr. Waheed Mohmand on September 28, 2009, from 9:00-10:00 AM at College of Education Training Center (CETC). They presented condolences of GCEP team to Mr. Waheed family members and friends and participated in joined in prayer.



#### **Thanksgiving Day:**

GCEP staff members and 12 GCEP students were invited for Thanksgiving Day on Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in Nangarhar Provincial Reconstruction team "PRT". The GCEP team had lunch with members of the PRT.





### **Scholarships for Afghan students:**

GCEP team attended a program about how Afghan students can find scholarship and financial aid for international studying in US universities and colleges on December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:00 AM on Thursday in Lincoln Center at Jalalabad city.



### **On-line Skype Conferences:**

On September 17, 2009 from 8:00 Am-9:00 Am, GCEP Staff members participated in the first online Skype discussion with Marla Federe and Cynthia Villis. The agenda was capacity building of the GCEP staff and to provide basic introductions about some aspects of GCEP group in the Facebook website.

On October 24, 2009 from 8:30--9:30 AM, the GCEP Afghanistan team participated in the second online Skype meeting with the USA GCE team members Marla Federe and Cynthia Villis. The agenda included capacity building for the GCEP staff and to learn all aspects of GCEP group in Facebook website.

On November 5, 2009 at 5:20 pm local time of Jalalabad Afghanistan. The first ever online Skype students conference of GCEP Afghanistan was held with 14 students of Beaver Country Day School located in Chestnut Hill, USA. Mr. Kader Adjout, a history teacher at Beaver Country Day School and Almas were facilitators for this online conference.

On November 12, 2009 at 5:30 pm local time in Jalalabad Afghanistan (8:00 AM Boston time) the second online video Skype conference with Afghanistan Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCEP) students was held with 13 students of Beaver Country Day School located in Chestnut Hill, USA. Mr. Kader Adjout and Almas were facilitators for this online conference again.

On November 19, 2009 at 6:30 PM local time in Jalalabad, Afghanistan (8:40 AM New Jersey, the USA time) the third online video Skype conference with Afghanistan Global Connections and Exchange Program (GCEP) students was held with Burlington County Institute of Technology, New Jersey. Ms. Sasha an English teacher at Burlington County Institute of Technology, New Jersey, and Almas were facilitators for this online conference.

On the above mentioned dates, Afghanistan Global Connections and Exchange Program students had online video conferences with Beaver Country Day School Students and Burlington County Institute of Technology, New Jersey. The agendas of the conferences focused on education, health, politics and social matters.

### **GCEP female' students had an online Skype conference call**

GCEP female students had first ever Skype online conference call on December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009. 23 GCE female students from BiBi Zainab Girls High School connected with young girls in San Diego for the first time. The videoconference was made possible through the coordination of La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club members, who arranged for the young women to sign on late in the evening their time, morning in Jalalabad.

There was no specific agenda. Different questions were asked by both the teams interchangeably. Such as: “What do you like to do in your spare time” (to the Afghans), “How do you dress for weddings” (to the San Diegans), “Do you have a part-time jobs” (to the Afghans), “What do you think is the meaning of life” (to the San Diegans), “What are your future plans, what are all the languages that you speak, what courses do you like in school” and more.



### **Student Small Grant Program:**

The student small grant program of \$150 was introduced by Fary Moini on 20<sup>th</sup>, December 2009 to the GCEP staff in CETC lab. Projects were encouraged involving social responsibility and development to give students the sense that they are self responsible and are not place the burden on the shoulders of others. The projects were completed in March 2010.

### **GCEP participated in the following gatherings:**

- **Environment Protection Day:**

The GCEP team participated in environment protection day on 3:20 PM, Thursday, June 04, 2009 at Jalalabad, Nangarhar Lincoln Center.

Aimal Ghoyor GCEP student in Mia Omar high school presented his speech and pointed to the responsibilities and roles of youth on the environment protection. Abdul Aziz Shuja, GCEP student in Abdul Wakil High School, discussed the roles of individuals in the well being of the environment.

- **YES Program**

GCEP schools were targeted and introduced by GCEP team to the YES program and encouraged to participate. 45 GCEP students who were fit according to examination norms participated in YES program presentations (Youths Exchange and Study Program). This program which provides scholarships for the high school students all around the world is supported by government of the USA and takes place every year. The purpose of the program is to exchange ideas with people from different countries all round the world. This involves living with American host families and attending high school for a year.

### **GCEP students' 5th & 6th online Skype Conference**

**On January 06<sup>th</sup> 2010**, 13 GCEP students from Abdul Wakil High School and CETC main lab connected with 4 students of Tallwood High School, Global Studies and World Languages Academy for the first time. The Skype video conference call started with a very comfortable environment for the Afghan students which provided them much happiness. The videoconference was made possible through the facilitation of GCEP country program director and Gayle Hartigan, computer resource specialist, who organized this Skype video conference call. The agenda of the fifth video conference call was mainly focused on beauty. In addition to the agenda, some issues about Christmas were also discussed.

The next day Afghan students had another Skype conference video call on **January 7, 2010**. This time 14 GCEP students from Mia Omar High School, Abdul Wakil High Scholl and CETC lab participated in the 6th Skype online video conference call with 2 students of Burlington County Institute of Technology.

Almas and Sasha, an English teacher in the US, were the facilitators of the 6th Skype video conference call for Afghan students. The agenda of the sixth video conference call was focused on different issues such as about the holy religion Islam, the rights of women in Islam, hobbies, love marriage or arranged marriage, favorite colors, the role of adults in the society, friendships, and common friends or girl/boyfriends. Occupations, plans for the future, recreational activities, and behavior with a friend, were some of the favorite subjects. This has been an excellent source for Afghan students to improve their English linguistics skills. Afghan students wish to have these types of online conferences in future as well.



- **Seminar about Martin Luther King Jr.**

On January 11, 2010 at the Lincoln Center Jalalabad a seminar was opened by the recitation of some verses from the holy Quran by Sohil Ahmmad.

GCEP students took part in seminar from Abdul Wakil, Mia Omer and Tajrubawi high schools. The seminar covered the topic of Martin Luther King Jr. Lincoln Center coordinator Mr. Amrullah Omaid provided a welcome speech to the participants of this seminar. He elaborated on the importance and purpose of the gathering and he gave a presentation about the life and direction of Martin Luther King Jr.



Then Ziaurahman Samsoor, GCE IT trainer, gave his presentation. He recited excerpts from some speeches of Martin Luther King Jr (Darkness can not drive out darkness, only light can do that. Heat can't drive out the heat, only love can do that) and he encourage the participants to broadcast all these things that they learned in this seminar in their villages, schools and classes. GCE students presented their speeches about the march of Martin Luther King Jr. and at end of the seminar all participants decided to work to eliminate all discrimination in our society.

**Jalalabad High Schools Assessment:**

On January 21 the GCE country director conducted a Jalalabad high schools sites survey. He was advised there may be some interest to establish new computer labs at the remaining Jalalabad secondary schools. The overall activities of this assessment included: meetings with Education Director of Nangarhar, schools principals and teachers, taking an inventory of what is available at these centers for computer labs and what are the needs.

**GCE Afghan Students Participated in A Videoconference with Under Secretary McHale and Boston Students:**

On January 22, 2010 at 5:30 PM local time in Jalalabad an online video Skype conference with Afghanistan GCEP students was held with students of Beaver Country Day School. Mr. Kader Ajout, who is history teacher at Beaver Country Day School, and Almas were facilitators for this online conference. This was very special video conference for GCE Afghanistan and Boston students in which they had the opportunity to directly communicate with Under Secretary Judith McHale. This meaningful connection of student groups brought a lot of important issues to the table for discussion concerning Afghanistan and U.S mutual relationships. Many questions were exchanged and each question was responded in a very friendly manner by both student groups. The agenda of the Skype meeting focused on the situation of



Afghanistan and U.S involvement. Afghan and Boston students had a great discussion on the selected topic on this Blog: <http://politicalandsocialchanges.wordpress.com/> Mr. Kader introduced Under Secretary Judith McHale to his class and the Afghan student participants. After the students' discussion, Under Secretary Judith McHale came to the front of class and had direct interaction with GCE and Boston students. Afghan students warmly welcomed McHale by presenting a nice bouquet of colorful flowers. Under Secretary Judith McHale thanked the Afghan students for presenting the flowers and mentioned that she hoped that she could come to Afghanistan to meet the students and collect her flowers someday. GCE and Boston students had questions for Under Secretary Judith McHale. She provided full answers to the questions and expressed happiness for the opportunity to participate in the Skype conference. At the end the GCE students presented a nice bouquet of flowers to Mr. Kader and his students and thanked Kader for organizing this great discussion.



UNDER SECRETARY JUDITH MCHALE TALK TO JALALABAD HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

### **GCEP Afghanistan female students online video Skype conference with USA students:**

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2010 at 7:30- 8:45 Am, Afghanistan Global Connections and Exchange Program students had online video conference with the Rotary Interact students at Preuss High school. The agenda of the conference started with introductions of students one by one. Then questions followed regarding the Afghan and American cultures, favorite books, foods, favorite music, role models, and the most beautiful thing you have ever seen:

- Hasana said “that she has never experienced such conference before, that it was something incredible and first time I saw abroad people and I felt that we are face to face. I felt so independent and was extremely surprised!! I was shocked when I was able to talk with native English speakers. Before this conference, I was saying that I don’t know English because I know broken English but for the time I have faced guys abroad I could catch them completely and they could catch me on the spot when the word came out from my mouth. So I will always remember this heavy amazing and remarkable event.
- One of Bibi Aisha high school student *Madina* said:” the conference was really beneficial for me to learn about another culture and for improving my poor English language.”

- *Lina* said: “It was really most beautiful thing. I have never seen twins in my life time but as the result of the video conference I found two twin sisters.
- *Shafiqa* said with a smiley face “Oh! It was really interesting to me to talk with US students face by face I have never taught about it.”
- *Wagma* said: “as matter of fact GCEP has made such a huge facility for our male and female students thanks a lot from my bottom of my heart.”



#### **GCE team online video conference for \$150 small grant:**

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2010 GCE team had an online Skype video conference with Fary Moini about the \$150 small grants project. The GCE team asked many questions and they got their answers. The GCE team enjoyed this a lot and appreciated Fary’s constant cooperation. After the conference the GCE team started small grants projects in 10 schools and they completed their projects successfully:

- Bi Bi Aisha Girls High school:

#### **GCE Empowers Young Afghan Girls to Bring Drinking Water to Their School**

Surprised at the opportunity, students in Jalalabad involved with the Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) program were recently offered \$150 to create and implement a small project that would benefit their communities. Nagina Shafiqi and her team at the Bi Bi Aisha Girls High School were the first to complete their project. Nagina wrote that the girls decided to tackle the lack of drinking water at their school. "We spent all day without drinking water in school, although some students brought drinking water from their houses, but when they reached school, the water bottle was too hot so we thought that we have to solve this problem for the coming summer." When their application was accepted, they negotiated costs at the market and talked with masons to get the most reasonable prices. The girls and the school community watched the laborers build the water tank brick by brick and in just two weeks, they were able to fill the tank with water. Nagina described the project on the GCE website and received more than 150 responses! Sami Misbah wrote, "Congratulations to all Bi Bi Aisha high school students. We hope to remake our country - today we start

with our schools, and then we will remake our country, Inshallah." Mahreen Salih added, "As all of the people say that women are not active and they can't perform their duty successfully, but now women, especially young girls, showed their talent and how they are a success in society." When asked how she felt after the project was completed, Nagina wrote, "When I and my team discussed and searched and started the work till when it got finished, by the Grace of Allah, we knew that although we are females, we can do every thing if we dare... I now know that I am able to do such more work as this project and it will be my pleasure to serve my society and county's people so I advise to all people to be active and serve their country and struggle hard for reconstruction." This small grant project was facilitated by the La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club Foundation through a grant provided by the San Diego~Jalalabad Sister Cities Foundation.



- Tajrobawee Girls High School:

### **Jalalabad Students Present First Seminar about Domestic Violence**

On March 29, 2010, Ms. Shabnam Salih, a student participating in the Afghanistan Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) program, organized a seminar titled, "Ending Violence against Women." This Seminar was organized through the GCE Youth Leadership Small Grant Program. GCE schools prepared grant applications to get funds to deliver such extraordinary seminars and to implement projects in their schools and community.

The seminar started by recitation of some verses from the Holy Quran. Many girls and boys students of Jalalabad based schools participated in the seminar. In addition to the students, GCE team members Almas, Fary Moini, Steve Brown, Nangarhar Education Directorate staff and Mr. Farmanullah, the Dean of Nangarhar Education College, participated in the event.

Mr. Farmanullah said, "The small grant projects are really well designed. From one side it provides capacity building opportunities for students and from other side, it brings positive changes in many areas." He noted that the GCE small grant projects repaired chairs, planted trees, fixed an irrigation system and provided trash cans to schools.

Following Ms. Salih's presentation on domestic violence, there was an open discussion in which participants brought a lot of serious issues on the table that were previously ignored. The participants were asked to get together and end violence against women in Afghanistan and on the whole globe.

At the end of the seminar, Abdul Aziz presented his own written poem about the value of women in society. Then all the teachers and active students received awards and gifts for being active in GCE Program. This seminar was the first of its kind, organized by students and presented to students and faculty in the region

### **Tairobawee H.S female students project**

- Abdul Wakil High School:

The students decided that a sound environment is better for getting better education.

Before project they purchased the below tools and did their project in excellent way. The tools bought for different purposes were as follows:



- (1): Three Trashcans: for putting garbage and trash in a specific place.
- (2): one cart: for carrying heavy garbage from the environment of school.
- (3): Two shovels: for lifting garbage.
- (4): One pickaxe: for removing the hard trash and preparing the land.
- (5): Two buckets: For watering or irrigating the plants and saplings.
- (6): Two brushes, oil and two cans of color: for painting trashcans and buckets.
- (7): one bag of cement: for securing trashcans firmly in the land.
- (8): 12 meters of fabric: for preparing the flag of Afghanistan and the flag of education.

(2): Volunteer plantation process in Abdul Wakil high school.

The best way for keeping the environment clean, beautiful and safe is providing a plantation. So all GCEP students promised that they will bring one plant and plant it themselves for the plantation. First they made nice shapes from bricks for a nice looking plantation.

(3): Public awareness and two day's Seminar about keeping environment clean and safe.

The students know that keeping our environment clean is a part of our faith. So they must act to keep our environment safe and clean. Around 30 GCE students took part in a workshop named: "How to keep our environment clean and safe?" Lead by the IT trainer, the workshop continued for two days in GCE computer lab. Mr. Zia stimulated the students to keep their environment clean the workshop was very beneficial for the students to help in the protection section of school On the second day of the workshop Mr. Zia taught the students that the school is like our house and we have to keep it clean. No matter who threw the trash, it is important to pick it up. Also the principle of the Abdul Wakil high school, Ghulam Hider Khan gave a lecture to the students and persuaded them to continue their job and wished them good luck and also thanked GCE IT Trainer Mr.Zia for his hard work At the end of the workshop all the students along with IT trainer and vice principle of Abdul Wakil high school, Ghulam Hider Khan, did a campaign of trash picking up and cleaned the environment for the students to study in a clean and safe environment.

- Bi Bi Zainab Girls High School, Mia Omer High School and Rotary High School Female students all participated in small grant projects to protect the environment. They purchased trash cans for their schools and encouraged other students to keep their environment clean.
- Rotary High School Boys students had chairs repaired in their small grant project. They got help from their community leader and the team repaired 208 chairs.
- Tajrobawee High School Boys students had project for rebuilding a drinking water tank in their school.
- Wazer Mohammad Gull Khan High School Boys and Girls had project for building a new drinking water Tank in their school.

**CO.NX Webchat for Jalalabad GCE Young Girls on March 8:**

On March 08, 2010 GCE female students had web chat, in honor of International Women's Day; the CO.NX team hosted a chat with the Jalalabad GCE Girls only. The title of the chat was: "Jalalabad Young Women – What Do You Need and How Can Others Help?" Jennryn Wetzler was the responsible CO.NX program officer for the chat. The GCE students enjoyed this and they shared their questions.

State Department's CO.NX Team praised the Jalalabad high school girls participating in the Global Connections program for their participation in a webchat on March 8 in honor of International Women's Day.

**U.S embassy Kabul event:**

On March 23, 2010, GCE Afghanistan Program Director Almas attended an event at U.S embassy in Kabul. The purpose of the event was to introduce a new Diplomatic Officer of U.S embassy, Mr. Daviat. The new officer gave his comprehensive presentation about his experiences and future plans. The event provided an opportunity to meet key officials at the U.S embassy and meet some NGO's staff. Almas was warmly welcomed by Ms. Beverly. He was introduced to (L.Kirk Wolcott) press Attache, (Anaida Hass) Cultural Affairs Officer, (Dr. Petra Seidler) and many more new Afghan and American friends. Information was exchanged on various topics.

## Program Development and Outreach in the US GCEP Afghanistan Year Two

### Outreach to recruit US participants.

US Coordinator Dr Cynthia Villis presented to ten individual workshops in the day-long Southern California Interact symposium (300 participants; right), which resulted in five participants from Los Angeles schools. Cynthia's presentations with Ghulam Ishaq Hassan, a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar from Afghanistan, to one class at the Grauer School in Encinitas, and to three classes at Mount Carmel High School in Poway, yielded both Facebook participants, future Skype conference calls, and a possible placement for a high school exchange student from Afghanistan.



Cynthia and a panel of six USD Upward Bound students presented a session to high school students at the Southern California TRiO Leadership Conference (500 participants). Fary Moini presented to the Rotary Youth Leadership Academy (250 participants). At each presentation we show a powerpoint of GCEP photos, and distribute a GCEP flyer with photos, sample discussion topics, and instructions for participating in the Project. The ethnic diversity of US GCEP participants should be noted (see photos).

Students' initial enthusiasm to become part of the Project is usually greater than their sustained enthusiasm. At times it takes moderate one-on-one advising before a student is willing to jump in on the Facebook site, or into a Skype call. Students in classrooms have an easier time jumping into posting, but tend to stop their participation once the class has ended.

Currently the most active US participants – who have posted to Facebook, participated in Skype calls, met visitors from Afghanistan or the State Department -- are from Kearny High/USD Upward Bound and The Preuss School UCSD Interact Club. They are committed participants who form relationships with the Afghan students and write every day. They will receive certificates of participation at the end of the 2009-10 academic year, and already know that they will list this proudly as an activity on their college-going resumes.

There are also one to six participants each from Mount Carmel High School, Canyon Crest Academy, Grossmont High School, Scripps Ranch High School, Poway High School, High Tech High International, Glen A. Wilson High School, Claremont High School, Cathedral Catholic High School, Palo Verde High School, Mira Mesa Senior High, Helix High, Torrey Pines High School, Vista High, Holtville High, Mission Hills High, La Jolla High School, and Orange Glen High School.

**GCEP Facebook site.** The primary dissatisfaction for US GCEP students in Year 1 was difficulty in using the GCEP iEarn site. They reported an inability to locate replies to their posts, and becoming "lost" as they tried to navigate the site. At the end of AY2009, on student recommendation, GCEP Afghanistan created its own Facebook group as its primary participant platform. GCEP participants are asked only to establish a Facebook account for a log in; they need not populate it with information or photos. It is a private, screened group; each applicant is

screened for identity by the US or Jalalabad coordinator, as appropriate. About 99% of US participants already have a Facebook account, and are very familiar with Facebook functions.

The **GCEP Afghanistan: Afghan and American PreCollege Institute Facebook** group site was launched on September 3, 2009. On 3/8/2010, in preparation for this report, participants' use of the site was analyzed. In its first seven months of operation, there are:

- 370 members
- 4409 posts (3409 from Afghan participants; 1000 from US participants)
- 77% of posts from Afghan participants, 23% from US participants
- 64 distinct topics of discussion

Cynthia developed a few of the discussion topics, but the majority were developed by GCEP students themselves. They included

- Afghan and American culture (41 posts)
- Entertainment (219)
- Favorite books and games (152)
- Finals week (121)
- Haiti earthquake (56)
- How can you know the truth? (38)
- How to improve study habits (58)
- How was your day? (93)
- Pets and animals (214)
- Poetry corner (117)
- Steps to your future (89)
- Student chat: Phrases in Pashtu (548)
- The most beautiful thing I've seen (250)
- What do dreams mean? (60)
- What do you eat most of the time (139)
- What do you want to be (144)
- (What is a) positive instructional experience (56)

In the past seven weeks alone (March 8 to April 26, 2010), the GCEP Facebook site gained 122 new members and 35 new discussion topics.

Examination of the GCEP Facebook site discussions reveals sustained, recurrent conversations between small groups and dyads. One can see the building of online friendships, and the sharing of confidences and culture. Students are exchanging poems. A US girl mentions that she is home alone babysitting to earn her allowance. There are almost immediate replies to her post, a hundred replies within 48 hours: Afghan boys and girls wondering what the word "babysitting" means, what specific activities it entails, and how much money she earns. An Afghan boy admits that minding his younger siblings is (secretly) fun, but he would never let his peers know that.

A San Diego high school senior says that he is stressed between completing his high school requirements and waiting to hear about acceptances to colleges. His Jalalabad friend reassures him, telling him that he will certainly get into college, while confiding his own anxieties about upcoming final exams at his own school. These students could be next door neighbors, not half a world away from each other.



It is clear that Afghan students closely examine the culture expressed on individual US Facebook pages, and vice versa. Students in both countries join each other's groups, post to each other's walls. One Afghan student belongs to Gardenology, an Encinitas, California design store fan page (as does the US Coordinator). Students in each country regularly ask each other what something means on the other's Facebook page. US students were surprised to learn that Afghan students liked Michael Jackson.

There are almost four times more Afghan participants than US participants on the Facebook site. This statistic should be compared to US participation in other online programs – not against the Afghan participation in this same Project. It is helpful to examine the context of US students' participation in GCEP Afghanistan, compared to that of the Afghan students:

- The Project tends to enroll small, class-sized groups of US students at a time (vs entire school enrollments in Afghanistan);
- the Internet, and communicating with peers via the Internet, is no longer a novelty for US students;
- there are many co-curricular and extracurricular activities, and hobbies, competing for US students' attention that don't yet exist for Afghan students (eg, student government, sports practice, robotics teams, JROTC, video games)
- the majority of our US students have computers at school and at home, but do not dedicate a continuous one hour period each day to communicating on GCEP, and
- Facebook is still a novelty for Afghan students. It is not for the US students, but it (and texting) remains the medium that they are most likely to use in writing to their peers.



*December 2009 Skype call, Bibi Zainab and USD Upward Bound Girls*

**Skype conference calls** augment students' interaction on the social networking sites – it is one of the most exciting aspects of GCEP for our students. In the first few minutes of the call, there is a little silence and a lot of looking at each other, but quickly the questions and answers begin to flow. GCEP Afghanistan has facilitated seven Skype calls between US and Afghan participants in the past four months, with high satisfaction for all participants. Skype calls are as individual as the groups involved, from a question and answer session with Secretary McHale to questions about whether any immediate family members serve in the military. Songs are sung (including Happy Birthday in English, Spanish, and Mandarin), poetry is recited opinions and recipes and compliments exchanged. Jalalabad Coordinator Almas and US Coordinator Cynthia Willis coordinate the Skype calls with participating sites in their respective locations.

**Ning.** As of today the GCEP Afghanistan Ning site has 1092 members, 114 discussion topics on Education and 366 miscellaneous discussion topics, each with 50 to 100 posts. GCEP Program Officer Anna Mussman created the Ning site; her sustained and informed effort in posting topics, photos and replies has greatly improved the Afghan students' satisfaction with GCEP (at the end of Year 1, their primary dissatisfaction was not enough interaction via iEarn). GCEP Afghanistan Ning members are from GCEP schools in Jalalabad and the US (in Washington State, Colorado, and Virginia), and other Ning members worldwide. There are new topics and photos posted each day by Ms Mussman, Afghan and US students, and IT trainers.

**Facebook, Ning, and Skype.** GCEP staff and students value and enjoy all three media platforms. The Ning site seems to better lend itself to debating topics and responding to surveys, while Facebook seems to better facilitate sustained, specific interaction between student dyads. From student report, some Afghan-US student dyads are writing to each other through email apart from the GCEP sites. Afghan students loved to post comments and photos to Ning.

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