Dear Friends,

I am very proud of all that the Afghan Institute of Learning achieved in 2019. During the year, under my supervision, the staff worked to expand the reach of AIL’s programming to: an additional five Learning Centers, a new outreach health clinic at a fifth Learning Center, workshops in new provinces and by creating programs for both Radio Meraj and, the soon to be broadcasting, TV Meraj. I am particularly proud of the broad range of our work which reached 11 provinces. We held many workshops during the year and major conferences for 780 people. Thousands more Afghans are being helped, receiving education and healthcare and gaining more opportunities in life.

The Afghan people continue to inspire me with their enthusiasm and commitment to education which is the key to improving lives and communities. They strive to improve their health and educate their families about good health habits.

Thank you to all our supporters, donors and grantors who make our work possible.

Sakena

Dr. S. L. Yacoobi
Founder and CEO, Afghan Institute of Learning
Afghan Institute of Learning
Annual Report 2019

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AWARDS AND SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Dr. Yacoobi was honored to be presented with the International Sensation Award in September 2019, honoring “the extraordinary achievement of a South Asian on a global scale”. This award was presented at the 2019 Darpan Magazine Extraordinary Achievement Awards ceremony in Vancouver, Canada. Celebrating their 10th anniversary, the event drew hundreds of attendees including influential community, political, and business leaders from around the world. In October 2019, Dr. Yacoobi received the Global Peacemaker Award presented by the Center for Peace and Conflict Studies, Wayne State University, at the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

International Sensation Award, Darpan

Dr. Yacoobi works in Afghanistan as CEO of AIL but she also travels the world to speak at conferences and other events. In 2019, she attended major events in 3 countries on 2 continents. She had the opportunity to speak at the Women’s Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) 4th global Women’s Peace Network Session in Seoul, South Korea on “Education for Women’s Dignity”.

She also attended Loma Linda University in California speaking on “Inspiring Women to Create Change in their Communities” Her speeches at other events included: ConnectHer in Texas on education, orphanages, girls’ education, Peace in the Streets Conference in Windsor, ON, on peace, education, and women, Mohonk Consultations Conference on women, education and peace, and the Asbar World Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Media in the Future. Dr. Yacoobi is a respected leader and valued speaker in the fields of education, health, leadership, human rights, women’s empowerment, culture revival, innovation, community involvement and refugees.
EDUCATION

AIL’s Learning Center (LC) Program provides quality education to women, children and men. In 2019, the 46 LCs in Afghanistan taught 28,447 students (19,535 female, 69%). Five new centers were opened in the Herat area, following requests from communities. Afghanistan Nawin LC and Mashaal Hedeyat LC are typical of new centers offering Arabic, sewing and literacy classes. SOAC LC is more income generating skills focused, with classes in sewing, computers and beautician. The fifth center, Javana Motahed has the popular literacy, Arabic, sewing classes as well as English classes.

Classes offered at centers cover a wide range of subjects from academic and preschool to job training skills. In Herat, the most popular classes are literacy, tailoring, Arabic, English, and math. Computer classes continue to be a growth area with a lot of interest from both female and male students.

All students at centers receive lessons in basic accounting, business management, health, human rights, democracy, leadership, and core values such as respect, responsibility, trust and peace. From a young age children are taught about core values such as peace and respect. Whenever possible messages on health, self-care, nutrition and reproductive health are provided so girls grow up knowing how to stay healthy. Education is the key to reducing both early marriage, damaging early pregnancy and maternal mortality rates in Afghanistan. The function of the centers has evolved over time and they now act as women’s networking places being safe, social environments where friendships are formed, troubles shared and group problem-solving takes place.

Access to literary material is limited in many poor communities in Afghanistan. AIL publishes a magazine twice a year which is widely distributed. AIL also supports a library at the Citadel complex in Herat and has its own substantial libraries in the two offices in Herat and Kabul. The Kabul office has 3,000 books and Herat has 2,500. In addition, most Learning Centers maintain their own libraries. The largest of these has 2,000 books and the smallest
The Yacoobi private schools also have libraries. Students and staff benefit from having access to varied reading matter and the libraries are also quiet places for study.

A library user had this to say, "My name is Zabihullah. I am studying Computer Science at Ghalib University and I am an employee of AIL. During the first two weeks of my first semester the teacher assigned me a project. I searched the internet but did not find enough information so I was concerned. One of my colleagues suggested AIL's library. I went to the library and searched for books related to my project. There were many books related to every field of education. I invited my classmates and we were able to prepare our projects. AIL has a good library where it is easier to focus on my studies. In my free time, I go to the library and study, not only books about my field but other subjects too. I want I become a successful IT manager and I think I will achieve that."

**Literacy** is a life changing skill for many women enabling them to gain greater independence in household management such as shopping and a larger role in community affairs. At centers there are 7 levels of literacy class and mobile literacy in addition to these. In any given month, there are 3,796 students (72% female) studying literacy.

![Learning to read is life changing](image)

The 4 month long **Mobile Literacy Class** for women and older girls continues to be popular with long waiting lists. This class is unique, teaching literacy through texting on mobile phones, which are provided to students. The students communicate by texting back and forth with the teacher and each other or in groups. AIL developed its own teacher’s guide and curriculum for this course, with over 2,000 messages on a wide variety of subjects.
The students learn life skills, health and other educational messages through the texting subject matter. The phones also provide a means for social activity between the women which helps reduce isolation and they are also a means to maintain family relationships. This class is an effective, fast literacy acquisition tool but it is also the type of class that encourages ambition in students; they are proud to own a phone and be able to text. The students continue to send messages even after the class is finished and they seek out knowledge and news wanting to continue their education even if they have left the classroom environment.

There were 12 mobile literacy classes in 2019 for 430 female students. 171 students started the course with no understanding of letters, 131 were reading at a first grade level with the other 128 somewhere in between. The classes have been increasing in their effectiveness through the years and at the end of this year’s courses, 86% of students were reading at 4th grade level and 14% at 3rd grade level. Since 2013, there have been 2,721 students with 74% of them reaching the 4th grade level and 26% reaching 3rd grade level.

One mobile literacy student said, “I was an illiterate woman and my husband had died three years ago. Before I came to this Mobile Literacy Class, I was not familiar with mobile phones and I could not even dial a number. I used to go to the shops near my home to call my children, which was a big problem for me. My neighbor told me about the mobile literacy class at the Mohtaker Learning Center. During the class I have learned how to use a mobile phone, how to text and dial and the Dari and English alphabets. I now know how to write a sentence in Dari. My problem has been solved as I am able to write messages and make calls to my children!”
Tailoring is a popular class at the 29 centers that offer this course. It is often the first class women take. It is a gateway class, as once they complete it, women feel empowered, realize their capacity to learn and seek to take literacy or other subjects. Women want to learn how to make clothes for their families but they also want business, communication and accounting skills so they can become small business entrepreneurs. In a typical month, there are 1,666 students studying tailoring and 70% of tailoring graduates go on to open small businesses for themselves or to work for tailoring companies.

Tailoring – an income generating skill

Roqia, a graduate student of the tailoring class at Jabraeel Learning Center has this to say, “When I started the class I did not know anything about sewing and could hardly make dresses. I had financial problems, too. I was wondering what I could do to solve my problems. A friend suggested taking a sewing class at the AIL center. I have learned how to sew clothes professionally. At first, I wasn’t good at sewing, but gradually I built up my confidence and skill.

After I graduated, I decided to open my own tailoring business. A friend of mine helps me run the store. I had few customers at the beginning but people liked my dresses and that’s how I attracted more and more customers. Then I was able to work for 12 hours every day! I am fortunate because now my financial situation is good. I make around 15,000 to 30,000 Afghanis a month. I decided I could help other women and teach them what I learned through my business. So now I teach sewing at a couple of local centers here in Jabraeel. I help other women by teaching dressmaking skills and I earn a salary from teaching. I have more than 30 students in each class. A great number of my students are successful with more than 30 of them starting their own businesses! That makes me happy!”

Computing is another highly marketable job skill with many students getting work after taking the course. 16 centers have computing classes and Kabul has one computing only center with 113 students. There are also combined computing and English courses offered at some centers. In any one month, there are approximately 508 (61% female) students studying computing.
Graduation from the Mir Bacha Kot Computer Class

A computer class student from Nijat Learning Center had this to say, “I graduated from school three years ago and I was poor and taking a private computer class. My neighbor suggested the AIL center which is free. My teacher was so kind and dedicated and my computer skills improved every day. After I graduated I got a job at the center teaching computing and the salary I receive supports my family.”

Girls learning computer skills

The acquisition of English language skills is highly valued for both studying and in the workplace. AIL recently opened a center purely for the teaching of English. The Yacoobi English Language Center has 342 students, 134 female and 208 male. 172 of the students are at the primary level and 170 at intermediate. Farhad said, “I did not get to talk in the other English
classes I attended as I do in this class, which is great. I like to talk about what I have learned and to express myself in English. Taking this class has helped me gain more confidence.”

Preschool education is another area of innovation by AIL. AIL developed its own curriculum and was one of the first organizations to provide preschool education. There are 11 sites providing preschools with some classes being part of Learning Centers and 3 sites in Kabul which are preschool only. These very young children learn traditional subjects such as alphabets, colors and numbers but also English letters and topics such as peace, respect, trust, sharing and love and forgiveness. In 2019, there were 874 students, 440 female.
Culture Revival has been at the core of AIL’s goals for a long time. The aim is to help Afghans recover their culture, sense of history and its historic traditions as a peaceful society. AIL offers classes in traditional Afghan arts and crafts such as carpet weaving, embroidery, tile making, glass work, calligraphy, and miniature painting. AIL has one center in Herat’s historic complex, the Citadel, which focuses solely on traditional arts and crafts. AIL also promotes Afghan poetry at its Love and Forgiveness Conferences and poetry is incorporated into learning at centers and in schools.

Carpet weaving at a Learning Center

Miniature painting at The Citadel

Education is important as it gives knowledge and increases people’s capacity, but as important is the change in mindset that occurs through education. Women in particular come to see they have capacity and can contribute more to the functioning of family and society. The men in the family come to see women as more able and they become more open to their ideas.
The women, who have been educated, see the life changing impact education has and ensure their daughters are educated. After the initial experience of education women seek to expand their skill base and ask for more sophisticated learning such as leadership workshops so education begets more learning.

HEALTHCARE

Health Clinics

Our health program provided 247,714 health treatments in the year. There are six main clinics, two in Kabul and two in Herat and a clinic at an orphanage and one at disabled center. From the main clinics, there are now outreach clinics at 5 AIL Learning Centers and 14 Community Health Worker (CHW) posts. Each clinic provides medical treatment, reproductive health services, nutrition care, preventive care and health education. AIL has always combined its high quality healthcare with health education so all clinic patients and their families receive health education at every visit.

Shirin said, "I live with my husband’s family and work a lot in the house. I became pregnant but several days before the due date I went to a doctor and they found my baby had died. I was so sad, it is hard for a mother to lose her baby. When I got pregnant the next time, I went to Jagharta clinic for a check-up. When the doctor started scanning, they realized that I had twins and both are boys! I attended the reproductive health workshop so I know what to expect and what to do to be healthy and safe."

Female Doctor at a clinic

In the health program there is an emphasis on vaccinations with 63,201 vaccinations given in the year. Some patients are reached via mobile vaccinators who go out to villages on
foot or bicycle. There is also assessment of child nutritional status with 30,960 children assessed and 2,489 found to be malnourished during the year. The clinics run intensive nutrition programs, teaching mothers about proper nutrition, giving cooking demonstrations and feeding the children on site. Mothers go home with food and returnee attendance is high as the meals are provided at each visit. Most children recover in one month with the maximum time of treatment being two months.

The Herat area Community Health Worker program continues to be supported by AIL clinics at Jaghartan and Maladan. There are CHW posts in 14 villages. These CHWs are the frontline in medical care in villages and deal with basic care, preventive care and pregnancy care and refer patients to the two main Herat clinics as needed. The CHWs are local people, trained by AIL and are known, trusted and have good relationships with people. During the year, CHWs made 37,912 visits to families.

In 2016, AIL initiated an outreach health program for its Learning Centers and the Professor Sakena Yacoobi Private Schools. Medical staff and health educators now give complete checkups and vaccinations to all students twice a year.

HEALTH EDUCATION

AIL has always combined its high quality health care with health education so all clinic patients and their families receive health education at every visit. Staff take the opportunity to advise people of unrelated health topics when they treat a patient to expand understanding and help people better take care of themselves. Popular topics include, breast feeding, nutrition, colds and flu, contraception and vaccinations with all aspects of reproductive health being emphasized.

Waiting for a clinic health education session
Health Workshops

The workshop program is another effective means of expanding health knowledge. AIL runs intensive multi-day health workshops and mini 3 hour workshops on single health topics for women and girls. In 2019, there were 14 five day Reproductive Health Workshops for 489 women and 5 mini workshops on the first thousand days of life for 270 women.

Reproductive Health Workshop

“I am Sohaila, an illiterate woman. I have some health problems and I am always afraid when I get pregnant because I face many difficulties. At this workshop I learned a lot. I did not know about the importance of child spacing and that I should prevent pregnancy for at least 3 years to allow for the recovery of the mother and care of the baby. I have learned about ways to prevent pregnancy like natural calendar method, condoms, the pill and the IUD.”

Interactive health workshop education
AIL also provides Expectant Mother Workshops (EM) and in 2019 there were 12 workshops for 100 pregnant women and 100 caregivers. In one afternoon, these workshops provide pregnant women and their caregivers with pregnancy and delivery education and information on the care of infants. Since the start of the EM program, 99.8% of women (who reported a birth) chose a safer clinic/hospital site with no maternal deaths or stillbirths reported. This goes against the traditional home birth. The women pass on the knowledge they gain to friends and family, thus extending the influence of the workshops far beyond the 2,451 pregnant or helper women who have attended since 2010.

“I have 3 children and one of my children is very thin. We went to the doctor a number of times but unfortunately he could not gain his health. I went to this workshop and learned interesting things about the first thousand days of life, nutrition, hygiene and healthy food menus. I realized that my children had malnutrition. After the workshop I planned to give healthy food to my child to combat his malnutrition. I hope this kind of seminar is held again in our province.”

TRAINING

Teacher Training

AIL has always had teacher training at the core of its programming. Quality teaching underpins a quality education system. AIL provides teacher training and ensures any teachers its trains get continuing education in modern methodology and other topics. In 2017, AIL was one of only 14 organizations in Herat Province licensed by the Ministry of Education to provide teacher training over a 5 year period.

In 2019, AIL trained 577 teachers (287 female) in teaching technique seminars. Teachers were also participants in a number of workshops on a diverse range of topics such as: leadership, love and forgiveness, democracy, good citizenship and the role of women in peace. In total, 979 teachers (579 females) improved their knowledge and teaching skills in an AIL workshop. They pass on what they have learned through their teaching methods and by incorporating information on other topics into their lesson plans.
Teacher training

Moshtari said, “I graduated from the English Department of the Education University. I used to teach English to female classes at a high school. Last year, the principal of my school asked me to teach the male students of the first grade. I had no idea of how difficult it would be. I applied the methods I used in the high school but I did not achieve the desired results as I could not control the class very well. The students did not concentrate on the lessons and were noisy. I started to hate my class because I felt that the students did not like me and that was why they did not learn the lessons.

I had the opportunity to participate in this AIL seminar. I thought it would be the same as other seminars but I found I was wrong. The facilitator explained child psychology and how this topic related to the classroom situation. Each age group of students has its own characteristics, features and needs. We should teach according to the age group to help them improve. The facilitator mentioned books on psychology for primary aged students. I downloaded two of them and started to learn about the physical and mental characteristics of my children. Now I am eager to restart my teaching after a few days off. I feel strongly that I can bring positive changes as I understand my students better than before. I am able to make my students interested in class by using different techniques, which I have learned about, such as games, role playing and group work.”

Capacity Building Training

Leadership

AIL continues its work empowering women to be leaders and also includes men in leadership training. AIL held 14 workshops in 2019 specifically on leadership for 485 people (405 female).
Leadership education

Here is information from one of the workshops. It was held at the Balkh Province Directorate of Women Affairs and was for 46 people (38 female, 8 male). The aims of leadership workshops include: promoting social connections for women, empowering women to take a more proactive role, building self-confidence and leadership skills, promoting fair and equitable behavior between men and women, promoting listening, trust, respect for all opinions, consulting all parties and sharing understanding and raising standards of learning in community in work and home settings. This workshop focused on leadership, public speaking, democracy, time management, peace, human rights, difference between administration and leadership, social justice, community implementation and communication.

“My name is Halemah and I work in the Department of Law. When I got my job I was happy because I thought that there was no need to improve my leadership abilities as I now had a permanent job. After this five-day workshop, I have changed my mind. I realize that I should continue my education and always study because being up to date is key to being a good leader.”
**Leadership skills learning**

AIL takes a broad approach to the subject of leadership and provides workshops on tangential subjects such as good governance, love and forgiveness, peace in society, good citizenship, and democracy. In all, the leadership capacity building program reached 2,133 people (1,641 women and 298 of them adolescent (ages 10-19).

**Conferences**

During the year, AIL held four major conferences for 780 people (562 female). The conferences were: Women’s Role in the Future of Afghanistan for 210 people (136 female), Good Governance for 200 people (179 female), Love and Forgiveness for 220 people (166 female) and Love and Forgiveness for 150 people (81 female).

The Women’s Role in the Future of Afghanistan Conference was attended by people aged 19 to 65. They were from many backgrounds including teachers, lawyers, high school and university students and managers. The aim was to help women find the role and respect that they deserve. The conference agenda stressed that women have an important role in the development of all communities. People listened to speakers, had time to reflect and to write letters of appreciation to the Women’s Association.

The Good Governance Conference brought together people aged 19 to 65. They were from many backgrounds including, housewives, teachers, doctors, high school and university students and managers. The aim was to give youth the encouragement and ideas to take part in turning Afghanistan into a peaceful country and for people to continue to pave the way for youth to develop their understanding of good governance and the role they can play. One participant said, “I learned that everything depends on our behavior. If we don’t reform our behavior, we won’t be able to do something. We won’t be able to make a difference.”
The first Love and Forgiveness Conference was attended by people aged 19 to 72. They were from diverse backgrounds such as high school and university students, teachers, lawyers, doctors and managers. The aim was to encourage people from different races to come together to choose forgiveness over hate, anger and war. Furthermore, the goal was to make it possible for people to have the chance to speak about love and forgiveness in a friendly atmosphere. Participants had the opportunity to listen to speeches on many topics, including national unity, women’s rights, security and friendship.

The second Love and Forgiveness Conference was attended by people aged 18 to 50. Many backgrounds were represented such as university students, administrative employees, teachers, activists, managers and doctors. These conferences emphasize the importance of changing the mentality of people from negative ideas. One participant said, “I learned that the world with love is interesting and forgiveness makes our lives prosperous. There is nothing better than love and forgiveness.”

**WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT GROUP**

Since its founding in 1995, one of AIL’s major goals has been to empower women by providing education and training and to increase their leadership capacity. There are more and more Afghan women, some trained by AIL, who have gone on to earn masters and doctoral degrees at universities. AIL realized that many of these women needed a greater understanding of how leadership works and to develop leadership skills so they could continue to achieve and rise to positions of higher authority and responsibility. These women lack female role models at their level and lack experience of working together with other women at the same level.

All the women in this program are highly educated and are currently working in various positions in Herat Province. All the women come to the group with goals and objectives they
have set for themselves. The roles they aspire to include becoming a member of parliament, governor, city director and district director.

The WEG course lasts for a year and the aim of the program is to assist the women to become better and more capable leaders so they can have more influence in their community and the country. They are equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to be on a par with men doing the same jobs with the same level of authority. They also learn how to work together as women, for common goals, supporting each other. The program produces high quality candidates which improves the source pool of candidates for jobs thus helping the government of Afghanistan.

The first class graduated in 2018 and some of the women have become members of parliament, governors and district or city office holders. In 2019, a second class of 83 women studied together. Throughout the year, the women discussed many topics, including peace, democracy, service to community and how to run as a politician and ways to support the country. They also covered major topics such as women’s unity, education, culture, the environment, fertility, children’s rights, and many others. The women also learned about office management, business, how to defend an opinion, interview skills and presentation of self and their ideas. They communicate with each other discussing the topics via Telegram and in-person meetings. They hold discussions and debates and question and answer session as well as have guest speakers at meetings.

*LEGAL AID CLINIC FOR WOMEN*

The legal clinic provides poor women with legal advice and representation in Herat and surrounding areas. Women, who are poor, are represented for free. The legal clinic also provides legal advice to women and men concerning violence issues and these pay as they are able. The clinic, which opened in 2015, is based in the AIL Herat office, and staffed by a team
of five experienced female lawyers. The clinic assists women introduced through the Ministry of Women Affairs and the Human Rights Commission, as well as women who hear about the project through Radio Meraj.

In 2019, the legal clinic dealt with 120 cases. The majority are concluded within a month. The cases included issues such as, murder, robbery, divorce, kidnapping, violence against women, traffic accidents, business, inheritance, child abuse, alimony, early marriage and drug trafficking. The lawyers participate regularly on a legal show on Radio Meraj. They inform women and men of their rights, educate people on the laws of the country and respond to call-in questions. Topics covered in radio broadcasts include: Islamic law, election law, women’s rights and business issues.

“Rya is a 35-year-old housewife. Her claim was that she had inheritance from her grandfather but her uncle refused to pay her. Her uncle said, “I am not in debt, I paid what I owed.” Rya did not know how to figure out what was her property and what process she ought to follow in order to gain her rights. After the consultation, she wrote a petition to the relevant administration and explained all the details and asked for what was hers by right. So after the completion of the process there is going to be a court hearing to adjudicate this case. Rya is very glad to have had our help.”

PUBLICATIONS

Magazine

AIL publishes a magazine called Neda-e-Talim every 6 months. The content is educational and news orientated, emphasizing literacy and health. The most recent edition included articles on: literacy for a better life, Touchstone English language learning system, women and leadership skills, discriminatory language, health, peace, private school football, women’s rights, poetry and literature, discipline in schools and children’s literature. The magazine also gives updates on AIL’s work, information on AIL’s Learning Centers and Dr. Yacoobi’s private radio station, Radio Meraj. Copies of the magazine are widely distributed and available at all AIL facilities such as offices, libraries, centers and clinics. Magazines are also available at all official government offices and ministries in Kabul and Herat and the offices of various NGOs.
Books

AIL publishes books and teaching manuals to support its educational programs. Books published by AIL recently include: Mobile Literacy Messages: a book supporting the literacy classes; Leadership Skills: supporting leadership development; Teacher Training; Healthcare Messages for AIL Clinics; Teaching Mobile Literacy Classes; and the ZMQ Mobile App Pregnancy Monitoring Program which AIL was a part of. Another important book published by AIL is Peace Education; this book is very important as peace education is promoted at centers, preschools and in workshops. The Women’s Empowerment book includes topics on women’s solidarity, culture, the environment, skills for the workplace, effective communication, creativity, law, marriage and public speaking. Other books published include: School Policy and its Uses; Poetry and Song Book for Kindergarten; English for Kindergarten; How to improve Communication; and How to make Lesson Plans for Teachers.
SUPPORT FOR RADIO MERAJ

Radio Meraj is a private station set up to reach people with education, news and information programming and to expand the reach of AIL’s message. The station is housed in AIL Herat’s office and AIL staff provide assistance with programming. Programs are broadcast 18 hours a day from 6am to midnight. It is estimated that the station broadcasts to an area with 2 million residents in 7 of 8 districts of Herat Province. There are 13 live and 17 pre-recorded programs. There are opportunities for listener feedback and call in questions and the station averages at least 175 calls, text messages or emails each day. The station was opened in 2015 and is considered one of the top two radio stations in Herat.

Each week Radio Meraj has guest speakers who are experts in various fields from academic and educational to governmental, health, security and legal. It has also become a resource for people to use to address local concerns and get access to the appropriate authorities. It continues to be a service dedicated to aiding Afghans to take a greater role in society and advocate for themselves in their communities.

Here is the story of a Meraj listener: Elyas said, "There was a bird seller who was involved in the illegal trade in birds. He captured rare bird species in the country and exported them abroad. I called Radio Meraj and explained the situation to your guest speaker from the police department. Then the environmental administration section launched an operation to free the captured birds and legally close down the bird store. Your follow up procedures worked! Thank you Meraj radio for your excellent programs."

In each year of its operation Radio Meraj has won awards. In 2019, the station was again honored with awards for its excellence in broadcasting. Radio Meraj staff received awards for best news package, best news announcer and top photographer at the Selahuddin Saljoqi Media Awards Herat 2019. A Radio Meraj reporter, received the award for Photojournalist 2018 from Free Media Support Institute of Afghanistan (NAI).
SUPPORT FOR THE YACOOGI PRIVATE SCHOOLS

AIL also provides technical assistance such as teacher training, curriculum development, leadership training, student health exams and other staff assistance to Dr. Yacoobi’s private high schools. The high quality of the school programs has resulted in the schools receiving excellence awards from the Ministry of Education.

AIL supports computing and coding classes and the intensive 2 year Student Leadership Course. The latter has 30 students, 15 female and 15 male. They learn about all manner of leadership topics as well as other subjects such as English, politics, democracy and community projects. They do course work, reading, presentations and engage in field trips such as visiting an AIL Learning Center, community clean-ups and visiting Radio Meraj.

Computer class at a Yacoobi Private School
“We take the children on field trips to give them awareness of the official environment, increase their understanding and give them new experiences. Field trips have helped them be familiar with historic places, increased their leadership awareness from national role models and helped with their self-confidence, especially with those who are shy. Students get motivation from well known, respected people of our country, get introduced to the ways of working of successful people and familiar with governmental offices and their functions. These trips include, research, information gathering and analysis and science and are entertaining. In October, the youth leaders went on a trip to the historic Ekhtiar-iddin Castle”.

At the end of 2018, the Professor Sakena Yacoobi High School, Herat won an International School Award from the British Council. The awards go to schools that demonstrate a commitment to developing global citizens. The Director of the British Council, Afghanistan said: “This globally recognized accreditation helps enrich learning and improve teaching by guiding international learning activities, from introducing international education into the curriculum to embedding it within school culture.”

International School Award presentation

EMERGENCY AID

AIL provides emergency food aid when it is needed. Natural disasters can strike at any time such as drought, floods and extreme cold weather. These present challenges for the poor whose ability to get by is already running on a day by day basis. AIL is able to help with supplies such as oil, beans, rice, meat and bread. Recipients are identified by the leaders in the local communities where AIL works. In 2019, more than 520 families received food parcels mainly because of weather related hardship or at the time of Ramadan. AIL also responded with aid to devastating flooding in early April, which affected 7 provinces of Afghanistan including Herat.
PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

AIL is continuing to work on its new projects, opening a Women’s University and broadcasting through a new station TV Meraj in Herat.

AIL Women’s University

The women’s university is not yet open as we await government approval and permissions. In the meantime, AIL staff have been creative setting up classes under our status as an institute which permits us to provide higher education courses. The year-long Women’s Empowerment Group is one such class. The women who participate will ultimately gain a certificate which can be used towards a degree.

We are also running leadership classes and English classes which are higher education level and will count towards a degree. The Yacoobi English Language Learning Center is both a center and provides instruction for students who wish to attend university. The language instruction is very intensive and we cater to a variety of ages; some students are young and very smart while others are older and preparing for university entrance.

TV Meraj

TV Meraj is ready to start broadcasting but awaiting governmental approval and the assignment of a digital frequency. The station’s programs will have similar content to Radio Meraj focusing on AIL’s educational programming and news reporting as well as cultural
content such as Afghan poetry and music. TV equipment has been purchased and the physical facility in the AIL Herat office building is ready.

Two staff members are creating an archive of programs for use when the station starts broadcasting. One month’s work included filming Mother’s Day celebrations and the British Council International Schools Award. The TV film crew visited the school as part of their film making. During the month, staff conducted training of a photographer. They visited AIL’s health clinics and Learning Centers as they prepared programs. The film crew also followed Dr. Yacoobi’s trip to Panjsher Province in July.

The station will enable AIL educational programming to be broadcast to many thousands of women who are unable to attend an AIL center because of household responsibilities or problems of accessibility or security. We are excited to open this new chapter in AIL’s education for women, children and men.

**Afghan Institute of Learning**

Kabul and Herat, Afghanistan

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www.afghaninstituteoflearning.org
### Afghan Institute of Learning
### Financial Statement for the year
### January to December 2019

#### Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>$661,724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs</td>
<td>$16,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>$-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$918,810</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials &amp; Supplies</td>
<td>$91,512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing &amp; Duplicating</td>
<td>$5,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>$16,827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Rental</td>
<td>$30,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site Utilities</td>
<td>$26,194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large &amp; Small Equipment</td>
<td>$36,823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>$14,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Charges</td>
<td>$5,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Stipends</td>
<td>$21,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>$7,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$55,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$42,936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Salaries &amp; Benefits</td>
<td>$772,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fees/Conference Membership</td>
<td>$1,072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expense</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,128,257</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Net Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>$ (209,447)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***Includes all AIL income received in US for the fiscal year only

*Uses all income for AIL from US and AFG including individual donors and GG 10%