



1st ANNIVERSARY ACHIEVEMENTS

COMMUNITY LED: Exceptional success implementing programs requested by the Afghan refugee/immigrant community & accomplished through grassroots support, thousands of volunteer hours, & a modest budget. 83% of AA+ leadership & staff are Afghan women. Grant awards, private donations, fundraiser.

EXPONENTIAL PROGRAM GROWTH: 10-fold increase in Pods Literacy enrollment. 143 students enrolled Winter 2024, up from 15 students in Fall 2023. High student achievement, 86% ave. final test score. Field trips, orientations, graduations.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: Successful community events on Whidbey Island, & w/ WA State Parks & Friends of Lake Sammamish Park to celebrate transportation independence & promote healthy recreation. Partnered w/ King County Libraries to increase technology access for low literacy/pre-literate Afghan women & girls.

ADVOCACY: Multigenerational group of Afghan women & girls met with community groups & city/state government officials in WA advocating for specialized literacy/life skills/education programs for the thousands of Afghan women & girls impacted by systemic gender discrimination. AA+ programs fill this gap in services.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Cascade Leadership philosophy adopted across AA+, 1on1, peer to peer, teacher/student, intergenerational mentoring. Transportation independence for 400+ women in Driving Scholarship program, AA+/Undaunted Women partnership. Compass Connection enrichment pods for youth.

CAPACITY BUILDING: Invited to join World Education Services (WES) as a member of their Global Talent Leadership Network. WES provides free professional development, networking opportunities, & resources.

AFGHAN ADVANTAGE TIMELINE

JANUARY 2023: Afghan Advantage incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit, after 4 yrs. mutual aid volunteering.

FEBRUARY 2023: Fieldtrip for 45 Afghan newcomers to the Seattle Opera world premiere of Khaled Hosseini's A Thousand Splendid Suns as guests of composer Sheila Silver.

MARCH-JUNE 2023: Community needs survey. Volunteer led ESL class w/ English teacher & Afghan translator. Driving lessons w/ volunteers. Creation of AA+ YouTube channel, website, & logo/branding.

JULY 2023: Viets4Afghans development grant for a pilot ESL program.

AUGUST 2023: Invited to be a service provider for USCIS Afghan Support Center event in SeaTac, WA.

SEPTEMBER 2023: Partnered with Bridging Cultural Gaps & Tukwila School District for Facebook Live/YouTube seminar in Dari/Pashto for Afghan families navigating the US school system. Began the Driving Scholarship Program partnering w/ Undaunted Women. Created AA+ social media & LinkedIn accounts.

OCTOBER 2023: 1st Pods English session with 3 site-specific cohorts, 1 volunteer native English teacher & 3 paid native Dari/Pashto teachers.



DECEMBER 2023: Joined Evacuate Our Allies Advocacy Days w/ CWS Global & Human Rights First. Met with US Congress members about the Afghan Adjustment Act.

JANUARY 2024: Pods Literacy curriculum expansion. Winter session w/ 2 volunteer English teachers & 5 paid Dari teachers. Joined Refugee Advocacy Days with OneAmerica in Olympia, WA. Conducted community needs surveys.



FEBRUARY 2024: City of Kent Opportunity Fund Commission interview & grant award.

MARCH 2024: Expanded AA+ Board of Directors. Presented at Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council. Established Mercy Housing, Samara & Village Green Apartments partnerships for Pods.

APRIL 2024: Spring Pods Literacy session w/ 3 volunteer English teachers, 7 paid Dari/Pashto teachers. Whidbey Island fundraiser @ Music for the Eyes- guests to WICA "Justice" musical- news stories in the Whidbey Weekly & South Whidbey Record. Eastside Human Services Forum panelist.

MAY 2024: Awarded Seattle Foundation N2N grant. Tukwila School District Afghan Parent's Night.

JUNE-JULY 2024: Program update, logos & branding for Pods Literacy, Cascade Leadership, & Compass Connection. Islamic Center of the Eastside reopening ceremony. LDS Charities & WES interviews. AA+ internal audit & 2023/2024 budget finalized.

AUGUST 2024: WA State Parks & Friends of Lake Sammamish State Park collaboration on "Celebrating Success" event for driving scholarship students. WA State Representative Vandana Slatter community meeting w/ AA+ Pods Literacy students & teachers.

SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER 2024: Fall session Pods Literacy (Foundations, Springboard, Runway, Wings), 4 paid English teachers & 8 paid Dari/Pashto teachers, 8 Pods. Joined World Education Services/Global Talent Leadership Network. N2N cohort workshops with Seattle Foundation.



Awarded King County/ VSHSL multi-year & Ellis Foundation grants.

Attended One America Assembly. Onboard 1st Cascade Leadership Intern. AA+ Board votes in new president. WA Representative Julio Cortes & Speaker Laurie Jinkins meetings w/ Afghan community members. 1st Compass Connection Pod for young Afghan women exploring education/career paths.

DECEMBER 2024: Enhanced accounting & database systems implemented. Registered 143 Pods Literacy students for Winter session, 10 teachers & 10 Pods, in 3 counties.

PARTNERS: City of Kent, King County-VSHSL & KCARC, Seattle Foundation, Ellis Foundation, Washington State Parks, World Education Services/Global Leadership Talent Network, Mercy Housing, Tukwila School District, USCIS Afghan Support Center, Undaunted Women, Friends of Lake Sammamish State Park, Music for the Eyes/ City of Langley, Bridging Cultural Gaps, King County Library System, Hopelink, Viets4Afghans.

