



Chapter Leader Talking Points August 2014

Featured Program – Bond Street Theatre - \$41,125 grant – Creative Arts Prison Program, Afghanistan
Sustained Program – Reminder – *DFW does not fund sustained programs in the months of June, July or August. Many of our chapters do not meet in the summer months.*

Bond Street Theatre

- Women in Afghanistan are often arrested and prosecuted in tribal courts for violating social, behavioral, and religious norms, such as fleeing forced or abusive marriages or being a victim of rape. The children of the incarcerated women stay with them in the prison.
- After serving their sentences, formerly incarcerated women are often without a home. If they are allowed to return home at all, they risk brutal punishment or death at the hands of relatives. Women are often forced into prostitution or begging to survive. Under the current system, incarcerated women and girls lack the guidance to rebuild their self-esteem, find a voice and the confidence to express their views. They cannot develop the motivation to build a new life on their own in a deeply family-oriented society.
- Dining for Women's \$41,125 grant will help Bond Street Theatre's introduce effective theater-based programming into the rehabilitative process for incarcerated women in the Afghan justice system to encourage self-expression, build self-esteem, promote healing and provide life skills to ease reentry into society. The program will directly affect more than 500 women and girls.
- The women in the prison will be devising their own plays as part of the training process. The plays are designed for the audience to take an active role in developing solutions to the problems presented in the performance.
- Bond Street Theatre has worked in Afghanistan for more than ten years, bringing live theater to more than 16,000 women, including those isolated in prisons and shelters, or restricted from traveling outside their homes. Bond Street has trained several all-female theater groups in the country, which continue to help women use their voice and work for justice.

Key Points

- Worldwide, theater is recognized as an effective means to disseminate practical information, especially in illiterate or isolated communities, about essential issues such as health and civic rights. Theater-based training improves learning abilities, develops leadership and communication skills, encourages self-expression, boosts self-confidence, fosters teamwork, and stimulates creative thinking and problem solving. Theater gives voice to the voiceless and provides them with a safe environment and the creative tools to explore and address critical problems that can directly improve their lives and their community.
- "Theatre gives voice to the voiceless and provides them with a safe environment and the creative tools to explore and address critical problems that can directly improve their lives and their communities" – Joanna Sherman, co-founder, Bond Street Theatre
- To learn more about the theater arts in social development, see this month's [Food for Thought](#).

Meeting Ideas - Take it and make it your own – (Please share *YOUR* ideas through the [Online Meeting Evaluation Form](#) on each Program page. You can adapt any of these ideas to suit your chapter’s needs and interests.)

Some of our chapters have started book clubs, movie groups, and lending libraries to share books, films, and music that address issues faced by women and girls our donations support. Sometimes a story or film about a fictional woman will create a stronger connection than the realities we read about. This month’s recommendations include a book of contemporary, clandestine poetry by Afghan women, titled “I Am the Beggar of the World”.

"Eliza Griswold and Seamus Murphy have made a book that is necessary reading for anyone who has ever made assumptions from a distance about what a burka-wearing woman might be like, and for anyone who cannot fathom how poetry could get you killed. In other words, this book is a must-read for every U.S. citizen . . . Griswold's and Murphy's work might be a crucial turning point in the education of Americans about the real world—and the place of poetry in it."
—Daniel Bosch, *The Daily Beast*

One of this month’s music recommendations is by Quraishi, master of the *rubab*, an ancient instrument belonging to the short-necked lute family. You’ll hear his music played in the background of the program video. Some chapters like to purchase the music to enjoy during their meeting. We know of a chapter that has a drawing each month – the prize is a CD of the recommended music.

[Shop! Read! Watch! Listen!](#) - and learn more about Afghanistan.

We love to hear about your ideas, stories and discussions. Please share in the [Online Meeting Evaluation Form](#).

Check your Chapter Leader Newsletter
for upcoming Google Hangouts!

Please mail chapter donations within
five days of meeting.

Note: Grants are awarded after all donations for
the month have been received and processed
which takes 90-120 days.

Please remember to complete your Meeting Evaluation
Form. It doesn’t have to be completed by
the Chapter Leader. Each month’s Presenter can
complete the form.

Our Vision

*We envision a world where millions of people’s lives
have been transformed and extreme poverty has
been reduced because Dining for Women connected
people in creative, powerful ways that assure gender
equality.*

Our Mission

*Through collective giving, Dining for Women
inspires, educates, and engages people to invest in
programs that make a meaningful difference for
women and girls living in extreme poverty*

Our Culture

*In all we do, we model our deep belief in
collaboration, education, inspiration, and
transformation.*