



## Thunderbird for Good: Project Artemis, Afghanistan

### Thunderbird for Good

Created in 2005, the Office of Thunderbird for Good is the philanthropic arm of Thunderbird School of Global Management. Thunderbird for Good's mission is to "create prosperity through business education for all." To accomplish this, the initiative leverages the school's expertise in international business to provide learning experiences for non-traditional students who utilize business and management skills to fight poverty, secure peace, and improve living conditions in their communities. Many Thunderbird for Good programs focus on educating businesswomen in developing countries.

The purpose of Thunderbird for Good is best summarized in the words of Thunderbird's second president, William Schurz from 1950: "Borders frequented by trade seldom need soldiers." Thunderbird for Good initiatives have educated over 40,000 business professionals in diverse countries all over the globe including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Jordan, Peru, Malaysia, Indonesia. New programs in South America and Africa are currently underway which will continue to expand the global impact.

One of the signature programs within Thunderbird for Good is Project Artemis Afghanistan, a unique business-skills training program that aims to build the expertise of promising Afghan businesswomen. Since 2005, sixty-three women from Afghanistan have participated in Project Artemis. Up to fifteen more women entrepreneurs are expected to participate in the next program in January of 2013.

#### **During the two week program held at Thunderbird's Arizona campus, cohorts of 15-20 women experience:**

- ▶ Business courses taught by leading Thunderbird faculty.
- ▶ Mentorship by successful businesswomen from North America or Europe.
- ▶ Site visits to a variety of small and medium sized businesses in the U.S.
- ▶ Continual follow up support and business coaching online.

Thunderbird is uniquely positioned to provide the type of training that has made Project Artemis successful. As the world's top-ranked international business school, Thunderbird has the knowledge, the capacity, and the global network to provide business training in even the world's most challenging environments. Ranked #1 in international business for 16 years running by the US News & World Report as well as for 6 years running by the Financial Times, Thunderbird is unique in its commitment to producing global leaders who contribute to sustainable prosperity worldwide. In keeping with our mission, programs like Project Artemis prove that business and education can be powerful tools for building peace and prosperity in even the most challenging business environments.

Project Artemis is sustained by a combination of private donations and support from corporate, government, volunteer, and non-profit partners. Thunderbird for Good works with Goldman Sachs *10,000 Women*, as well as the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council, the Business Council for Peace (BPeace), and others to make Project Artemis a success.



*"It's often been said that the future of the entire Islamic world depends on Afghanistan, and the corollary to that is the future of Afghanistan depends on its women."*

—Barbara Barrett, Member, Thunderbird Board of Fellows and the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council

## PROJECT ARTEMIS SUCCESSES

Project Artemis graduates continually put their training into action in Afghanistan despite much adversity and personal risk. Many are successfully operating their businesses and creating lasting value for their families and their communities. Others are using their new business knowledge to succeed within civil society. The multiplying effect of Project Artemis can be seen in the jobs created, the knowledge shared, and the new examples set for future generations.

**Rangina Hamidi** has accomplished much since completing Project Artemis in 2005. She is the owner of a business in Kandahar with approximately 400 employees that exports products worldwide. Rangina has become quite active in speaking about the situation in Afghanistan, participating in conferences all over the world, including the 2010 Clinton Global Initiative.



“The other women and I dedicated to this project know that working is the only real alternative to insecurity,” says Rangina, whose business, Kandahar Treasures, makes embroidered shawls, pillows, and wall hangings. “We women have taken it upon ourselves to stitch the future of peace for our children. Embroidery is the skill we have, and love and patience is what we can give to our families and our country. We will work to help rebuild this war-torn nation.”



**Aziza Mohmand's** company, the Muska Leather and Ball Making Company, has been successful selling various leather products like soccer balls and backpacks domestically and internationally, employing over 200 people to make these products by hand. Project Artemis helped her overcome challenges with her finances, but more noticeably, she feels she learned the importance of developing relationships with employees, supporters, customers, and

even competitors. Aziza has recently partnered with two other leather working businesses in Afghanistan to market soccer balls in the U.S. under the “Muska” brand.

Aziza shares her knowledge and success freely with her employees and her community as a board member for the Afghan Women's Business Federation, stating “when I returned from Arizona, I gave workshops to over 1,000 people to teach them how to start a business.” She believes that “the more jobs people have, the less violence there is at home and in society.” Of the difference that an income makes to her female employees (over 75% of her workforce), she says “they can buy better clothes, better food, and also pay for school.” She encourages the women around her to “stand shoulder to shoulder with their brothers, husbands, and fathers, so that together we can rebuild Afghanistan.”

Afghan women are stepping out of the shadows to support their country's economic development and regain their personal freedoms. For more about Rangina, Aziza, and other Project Artemis success stories, please visit: [www.thunderbird.edu/projectartemis](http://www.thunderbird.edu/projectartemis).



*“My ability as a business-woman grew from earth to sky. What I learned about management, marketing, and leadership at Thunderbird had a profound impact on my business. It would be no exaggeration to say I brought a world of experiences back to Afghanistan with me.”*

—Zainularab Miri  
Ghazni Women's  
Beekeepers Association  
Project Artemis, 2008



*“Everyday we had a new teacher and they shared with us everything they knew. I saw how generous they are. They didn't hold anything back. When I saw this I promised myself that I will share myself and my knowledge like that with others.”*

—Nasima Payman,  
Project Artemis 2006

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