



## Working for Gender Equality in Afghanistan

Noorjahan Akbar

Noorjahan was born in Kabul, Afghanistan in 1991. Her family moved to Peshawar after the Taliban entered Afghanistan. In 2001, they returned to Afghanistan and started an English language center for about 400 women in Kabul. In August 2005 Noorjahan enrolled at the International School of Kabul, which is the only American school in Afghanistan. She was awarded a work-study scholarship as a translator.

In 2008, Noorjahan attended the George School located in Pennsylvania to complete the two last years of high school and continue her education at Dickinson College, where she is a senior majoring in sociology.

At a very early age, Noorjahan started working with Radio Azadi (Radio Free Europe) as a writer of children's programs. Later, she became the executive assistant of Huma Media Group and assistant of Huma Monthly Publication, dedicated to broadcasting the voices of children and teenagers to promote action from the government and non-governmental organizations to provide for education, health care, and other basic needs of children.

In 2005, Noorjahan joined the Radio Television of Afghanistan, where she wrote scenarios for a children's TV show. In 2004 she worked with the Welfare Development for Afghan Women (WDAW), an Afghan independent nonprofit organization, as a translator and later as a project manager.

In 2006 and 2007, German Technical Cooperation - Basic Education Program for Afghanistan employed Noorjahan as a translator. She helped translate and distribute short stories for children in Afghanistan. This project later inspired another project called: Voices for Hope, which focused on assisting children to write and think creatively. Later, she worked with GTZ to collect three hundred couplets and songs from traditional women's music in Afghanistan.

During the summer of 2010, Noorjahan ran a creative writing program called Voices for hope for 30 children and youth with the assistance of another volunteer group, Youth in Action Association. This project inspired her to design a new project called *Stories to Heal*, which assisted a hundred Afghan orphans in creative writing.

Later, she created Young Women for Change, an organization dedicated to empowering Afghan women in April of 2011 and worked with the organization until it became self-sufficient in October 2012. Since then, she has been writing articles about women's issues for Safe World for Women International, UN Dispatch and several Afghan websites and newspapers.

## Dinner Arrangements October 24<sup>th</sup> Meeting

**Place:** Radisson Penn Harris Hotel  
**Rooms Governor A and B**  
Camp Hill Bypass & Erford Road  
Camp Hill, PA 17011

### NOTE NEW START TIMES

**Time:** **5:30 PM:** Social Hour (Cash Bar)  
**6:30 PM:** Sit Down Dinner  
**7:30 PM:** Presentation w/ Q & A

**Menu:** Caesar Salad, Beef Tips, Boston Cream Pie

*Those with special dietary needs may request a substitution when making a reservation. Remember, if you order a substitute meal to pick up a coded tag at the table and put it by your place. Alternate meals will be only chicken unless chicken is the main course – then fish will be the alternate or vegetarian, which will be Chef's choice (typically non-meat pasta).*

**Cost for FPA Members: \$22.00 We Welcome Non-members to attend dinners. The non-member cost is: \$25.00**

There is no charge for anyone to attend the program presentation only, beginning at 7:30 PM.

**For Reservations Contact:** Ron Pontius at:  
[ronpon@comcast.net](mailto:ronpon@comcast.net) or (717) 991-0899

You can also click on the reservations link on the FPA web site: [www.fpa-harrisburg.org](http://www.fpa-harrisburg.org)

**Notes: Reservations by telephone must be made by 10 PM on the Monday before the Thursday meeting; or if by e-mail, by 9 AM Tuesday before the meeting.**

When making or canceling a dinner reservation be sure to give your complete *name, address, and phone number*. We need that information to notify you if a meeting is canceled due to inclement weather or for other reasons. If you come for dinner as a "Walk-in" without a reservation, we cannot guarantee that the hotel will be able to provide you with a meal.

### NOTE:

The FPA must pay the Hotel for the number of dinners reserved. FPA will bill the no-shows for the standard dinner amount unless there are sufficient paying walk-ins to offset the number of persons who made reservations and did not attend. In unusual and exceptional circumstances (such as sudden illness) that are specifically brought to the attention of the Treasurer or Reservations Coordinator, the FPA may waive the billing. It will be the member's responsibility to notify FPA of any exceptional circumstance.