



**Welcome to our first issue!**

Almas  
Jalalabad Visit

Staff Profile: Abdul Qaum

Student Spotlight: Catherine Quirk

Institute



*Desks are delivered to GCEP computer lab at Nangarhar University College of Education  
Women's Residence Hall*

**Visit to Jalalabad: Steve Brown and Fary Moini**

In October 2008, US GCEP staff Steve Brown and Fary Moini visited Jalalabad to see the project's progress, and to meet with the Nangarhar Provincial office. They visited the Nangarhar University College of Education, and met GCEP in-country director Almas for many briefings. They also met with Mr. Azizi, who directs Nangarhar Province's Department of Education, and who confirmed his full support of the program. He appreciates the PreCollege Institute building bridges of friendship between students and teachers of the two nations.

The Jalalabad students and teachers, like their peers in San Diego, are excited to begin the project. The highlights of Steve and Fary's trip:

## GCEP: Afghan and American PreCollege Institute

- Visits to BiBi Aysha, BiBi Zainab and BiBi Maryam girls' schools, and to Mia Omar and Abdul Wakil boys' schools, to meet with the students, teachers, and principals, and to establish GCEP computer centers.



*Students at Jalalabad's Bibi Zainab High School with Fary Moini*

- Interviews with 10 high school English teachers who are interested in training in San Diego. Mohibullah Israr was also one of the interviewers. Israr -- a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar and an English professor at Nangarhar University -- is completing his master's degree at Central Michigan State University. Five teachers and an alternate were selected for one month's intensive training in Summer 2009.
- A one day workshop introducing the GCEP Afghan and American PreCollege Institute to principals and teachers of the project's schools. The workshop was held at the NU College of Education Computer Center, which is the main hub for the project in Jalalabad. This computer center serves students from three schools: men and women college students from Nangarhar University, boys and girls from Tajrobawi High School, and boys from Checknawri High School.
- A visit to the Jalalabad Rotary School's computer center, about 12 kilometers outside the city's center. This school has a special meaning: It was built in 2004 by the La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club, of which they and San Diego GCE coordinator Dr. Cynthia Villis are members. Steve and Fary met with students, the principal, and the project instructor.



## GCEP Staff Profile: Abdul Quam Almas



I am Abdul Qaum Almas. I was born in Herat Province, but I am originally from the Nangarhar Province. After living in Jalalabad for 16 years, I completed my secondary school, high school and higher education in Jalalabad and have attended many seminars, workshops, and trainings in education. I had a study tour to Bangladesh early this year and started my work as a computer and English teacher many years ago. I served as a trainer, master trainer, and then regional manager for BRAC Afghanistan Education Program and have had the opportunity to watch education programs grow from infancy to the mature entity that it is now moving in Afghanistan.

For many people in Afghanistan-- especially during the Taliban regime-- education was something unnecessary and meaningless. Parents sent their children to be trained vocationally rather than sending them to schools. People sought the short term benefit, and were not thinking about the long-term benefits of a worthwhile education. As time went on, people better understood the significance of education. We are proud of our accomplishments; we are certain that there are many more to come. It has not been easy and we faced formidable challenges, but we have come a long way.

I joined the Global Connections and Exchange Program for Afghanistan in August 2008. Some of the GCEP highlights for me have been assessing Jalalabad's 16 high schools for potential computer training centers: to create an inventory of what is available, what the centers need, and the principals' support. Another highlight has been beginning the International Education and Resource Network (IEARN) program to collaborate with US students.

## Afghan and American PreCollege Institute Calendar

December                      Next GCEP Newsletter  
Students begin iEarn

February 28                  Expanding Your Horizons  
Conference (for girls in  
San Diego)

March                          Month of Science  
San Diego Botball Tournamen

And more to follow!

## Student Spotlight



**Name:** Catherine Quirk

**Age:** 18

**School:** University of San Diego

**Major:** Communication

**Favorite things:**

Animals, the beach!





---

The Afghan and American PreCollege Institute, [www.jaasd.org](http://www.jaasd.org) . Funded by the US Department of State.