



# Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture

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## WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN TO RECEIVE BROOKLYN ETHICAL CULTURE'S 2009 PEACE SITE AWARD

*For immediate release, June 6th*

An “Afghan Women’s Bill of Rights” sounds about as durable as a snowball in the desert, given the harsh oppression, confinement and control of women under Taliban rule and within the very conservative traditional Afghan culture. Yet Afghan President Hamid Karzai was presented with such a document in 2003, drafted by 45



*Manizha Naderi, Women for Afghan Women executive director, cutting the ribbon at the February 19th, 2009 opening of WAW's third Family Guidance Center in Kapisa.*

Afghan women leaders and ensuring mandatory education for girls, equal representation in the *loya jirga* (“grand assembly”), criminalization of sexual harassment and domestic violence, and the right to marry and divorce according to Islamic law. **The Afghan Women’s Bill of Rights was the product of Women for Afghan Women (WAW), a New York-based organization founded six months after 9-11.** The group provides classes, counseling, safe harbor from domestic violence, and other forms of support for women in both Afghanistan and New York while tackling fundamental human rights issues. **On Sunday, June 21, Women for Afghan Women will receive the annual Peace Site Award of the Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture.**

**WAW’s Executive Director Manizha Naderi will accept the award.** Naderi has been a primary organizer for three historic Afghan women’s conferences, including the 2003 gathering in Kandahar that produced the Women’s Bill of

Rights. She speaks eloquently of the struggles of Afghan women for basic autonomy and livelihood. Among the grassroots projects for which WAW has gathered funding are literacy classes for girls and women all over Afghanistan, five primary schools in refugee camps, emergency aid for refugee families, and “Family Guidance Centers” in Kabul, Mazar and Kapisa, which helps women barred from public employment to form embroidery, sewing, weaving, and food-preparation collectives. Manizha Naderi — who is a brand-new mother of a baby girl and is now based in Kabul — will be introduced by Robina Niaz, a Soros Fellow who heads Turning Point for Women and Families, an organization addressing the needs of Muslim women and children. The event begins at 11 AM.

For more information about the 2009 Peace Site Award at BSEC’s landmark building on Prospect Park, contact Damal Edmond at 718.768-2972.