

# BOHAC'S

*Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society.*

Her previous employers will say she's ambitious and her drive ensures that for whom she works for delivers nothing but exceptional customer service and offer successful solutions. Kleyra thoroughly enjoys public speaking, power points, and is passionate about contributing to the community; therefore, what intrigues her is the relationships she builds. Meeting new people and building a bigger network of connections is absolutely important to her. Kleyra is always looking out for opportunities where she can assist and apply her skills; most importantly, grow and learn new ones. Currently, she is enrolled in the Public Relations program at Kwantlen Polytechnic University where she is expanding her knowledge in the Public Relation industry.

In support to her future goals, Kleyra has acquired a substantial expertise in customer service, leadership and community events. Big Brother & Big Sister, Right to Play, and High Five were all an organization where she developed and challenged her leadership skills. In addition, Kleyra had the ability to work for the City of Surrey where she was leading young kids and providing them with group activities. Kleyra also attended meetings where her voice was heard and took advantage of such an opportunity to attend further community events. While Kleyra was attending these events, she found herself applying her customer service skills, and networking.

At the same time, Kleyra was taking a computer business systems course where she had developed all kinds of computer skills. She was able to apply her PowerPoint, Microsoft word, Excel, and OneNote skills with her previous employers, such as the Lifesaving Society. The Lifesaving Society is a not-for-profit organization whose mandate is to reduce the water related injuries and deaths. Kleyra had the ability to present, design presentations, and communicate statistics within the organizations employees. Today she continues to engage and build relationships as she has the ability to interact with the public on a face to face basis, via emails, telephone, social media, and community events. When Kleyra has spare time you will find her in the gym, or exploring other hikes and new places as she enjoys the outdoors very much. However, if not doing either of those two she is spending quality time with her family and friends. Surrey has been Kleyra's home since she was born, and grew up in a small community called Bridgeview.

## *Kleyra's Times*

Kleyra loves living in the West Coast as she enjoys all seasons: fall, winter, spring, and summer. Her favourite season is winter because she loves Christmas and she travels up to Whistler, BC every year for the weekend to snowboard. As a high school graduate from Kwantlen Park Secondary, a former lifeguard, and former dancer, Kleyra is distinguished by her determination, ambition, enthusiasm, and approachable personality.

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“Delivers nothing but *exceptional* customer service and offer *successful* solutions.”



Created and operated by supporters of Afghan children in British Columbia, the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society (BOHACS) is a non-profit, non-political organization that has been operating since 2006 in the Vancouver and Lower Mainland area. The organization consists of five board members who all share the same core values that the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society carries within the organization itself. The organization was granted charitable status in 2009 by the Charities Directorate of the Canada Revenue Agency. The organization's vision and mission states, "we are changing lives, one Afghan child at a time... [Therefore], providing Afghan children access to [the] health and education [system] to help them overcome the challenges of living in poverty." (Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society, 2015). This is what they strongly believe in, and so you can find their mission and vision displayed in places such as their website.

## HEALTH

Granting the Afghanistan children access to the health system, the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society made it their mission to provide hospital supplies such as medicines, medical tools, equipment and anything that was needed in order to improve the health care system. It is important to note, Afghanistan is a third world country that contains a large population of people suffering from all types of illness with very little access to the health care system. The Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society has partnered with the Gandhi Children's Hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan where the organization has made a promise to provide them everything that is needed in order to succeed in regards to the organizations goals and believes. Although there were many hospitals to choose from, the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society thought it was best to partner with the Gandhi Children's Hospital due to the accessibility of the hospital and it being the best fit for the donations. The children's hospital portrays the efforts and reassurance that the society stands by what they believe in and most importantly, their missions, visions and core values. Furthermore, the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society can visit the hospital at any time to ensure supplies are being used in a suitable manner. The reason the society delivers supplies and not financial help is because the society finds it easier to manage and keep account of where the finances are being spent and on what supplies.

## EDUCATION

Ensuring education to the Afghan children is another concern that the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society focuses on improving. Although children in general are their targets, the society is trying their best to improve the education for young girls specifically. Due to the low population of education for young girls in Afghan, the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society is targeting young girls to increase the population. It is important to note, most parents do not send their young girls to school in fear of their daughters being abused by male professors. With that said, creating a safe learning environment is one of their

top priorities in approaching to increase numbers for the education for young girls and for all children in general.

In support of achieving their goals and increasing education, the Beacon of Hope Children's Society has taken the approach of sponsoring certain schools who they feel have higher needs. The society does this by looking at the enrolment number of students who come from a single parent family, the number of orphans, and the enrolment of students with low income. The Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society looks at these numbers specifically to ensure the support of the children's education is being increased in the right places. That is to say, providing the schools that are in need of the society's assistance and supplies.

Additionally, in 2006 the Beacon of Hope Children's Society assessed five different schools that could use the society's support. Such as, Behzadi elementary-middle school and Wazir Gule Shaheed elementary-middle school access to the Beacon of Hope Children's Society support in all areas. Today, the society continues to grant them with all school supplies needed such as pens, notebooks, papers, etc. along with winter coats, and shoes for those who are unable to purchase any of their own. Lastly, all donations today are continuously being passed onto these schools on behalf of the Beacon of Hope Children's Society.

## ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Ash has been mentioned, the Beacon of Hope Children's Society not only focuses on education and health for children, but also takes into consideration the families in Afghanistan. Again, being a large country there are many families in Afghanistan who are in need of support in all areas. Just like the schools, the society takes initiative in finding families who need the most support; the families will have active bank accounts in Kabul Bank to provide food for their children. The following criteria is what the society looks for when selecting families:

- A parent with a disability
- The household receives under \$3000 AFN
- Not a home owner
- A home contains a child under the age of 18 years.

With that said, the Beacon of Hope for Children's Society only asks for one requirement from the families in order to receive support. That requirement is to have the child attend one of the schools they sponsor and ensure that the child is attending school. The society also does frequent follow-ups with the families. From previous experiences the statistics have shown that students who have received the extra support from the society have excelled in all classes due to the opportunity given.

## WHY BEACON OF HOPE FOR AFGHAN CHILDREN'S SOCIETY?

There are many other organizations, so why the Beacon of Hope Afghan Children's Society? Five board members manage this organization. Although it may be a

small number, these five members have succeeded in providing and building a core foundation of who they are and what they believe in. In support, the board members travel to visit the families, schools and hospitals, as they strongly believe in creating a relationship. In addition, making visits to these places gives the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children's Society a very good idea of how finances are being distributed among the schools, families, and hospitals in regards to the supplies that are given. Therefore, The Beacon of Hope Afghan Children's Society prides themselves on managing their funds as an organization. Altogether, the Beacon of Hope Afghan Children's Society is making a difference and are making changes in Afghanistan.

### Travelling to Afghan: the real life experience.

As one of the board members for the Beacon of Hope for Afghan Children Society, I am pleased to mention we are a non-profit, non-political organization that has been operating since 2006 in the Vancouver, Lower Mainland. Being a board member has allowed me to help make a difference in the Afghanistan lives of young girls regarding access to an education system with security. Although the numbers are slowly increasing, it is nothing compared to the young girls in Afghanistan who do not have the opportunity to look upon this.

To begin with, I noticed on my visitation to Afghanistan, that being a third world country, there was a high volume of poverty. This is a big obstacle to the education of the girls in Afghanistan. I discovered this by interviewing the families around me: "When families have financial problems, they usually force the girls to work on farms, and that is like having a full time job so they cannot go to school. Most girls who drop out here do so because of their family's poverty." (Paper, 2011). It was proven from my interviews with those living in the Afghanistan that poverty seemed to be a big reason to why the young girls in Afghanistan were unable to look upon education. Therefore, the access to education has been denied by their very own families due to financial stability. However, as a board member of the Beacon of Hope for Afghanistan Children Society, our donations today are continuously being passed onto the schools that we are currently sponsoring. I assure everyone, that every donation and or voluntary help makes a difference in the lives of these young Afghan girls. Furthermore, we look after the families of the children we support, we do this because we like to ensure the young girls are doing well along with the family itself. Most importantly, that the girls are receiving the education that we are providing them with. Aside from visiting, Afghanistan research has shown the following statistics:

- 85% of women have no formal education and are illiterate.
- Female 3rd level students as a % of Total: 18.0%
- Almost 60% of girls are married by 16
- Only 40% of Afghan girls attend elementary school, and only one in 20 girls attend school beyond the sixth grade. (Life As An Afghanistan Women , n.d.)

Indeed it is unfortunate that this is occurring today in Afghanistan, however with your support and donations we are

ecstatic to announce that we are seeing small changes occurring. Moving forward, it was plain obvious to see the fear of the young girls and mothers as I discuss the opportunity that I can bring upon them of pursuing an education. I realized the lack of security the girls and mothers had was beyond what I had expected. It had come to my attention that the risk of kidnapping and rape has prompted many families to force their young daughters into marriage. I listened and stood there and came to a better understanding as to why mothers encourage the girls to get married at such a young age.

With this in mind, I also understood why families in Afghanistan permit their daughters to attend only all-girl schools. Heck, some families rather not take any risk that they starting thinking education is unnecessary for their young girls. It was found that "schools for girls have been burned down, hundreds of teachers educating girls have been threatened or killed, and girls and have been physically harmed while attending or walking to or from school" (Life As An Afghanistan Women , n.d.).

My heart goes out to the young girls and families, and I do believe in making a difference for a better future. As one of the representatives for the Beacon of Hope for Afghanistan Children Society I provide you with this inside source in hopes of raising awareness. As mentioned, every donation, support, and help we can get is gladly appreciated. For further information on the Beacon of Hope for Afghanistan Children Society, you can visit <http://www.beaconofhopesociety.org/beacon/about-us>. Let's make a difference together!

Kleyra, this piece needs a much closer proofreading. Many of the sentences are awkwardly written and confusing (it may be useful to work with a writing tutor from the Kwantlen learning centre). I would recommend using much simpler and more naturally phrased sentences. Did you proofread this by reading it out loud at least three times as recommended in class? In terms of other areas for improvement, I would recommend creating an outline before you even begin writing so that you have a clear understanding of your persuasive goal and how each paragraph contributes to helping to achieve it.



Photograph Credits to BOHAC's Board Member landing in Afghan.



### **Romelle Hughes: Volunteer.**

She describes herself as an optimistic, elective and self-sufficient young lady, who conquered a big move to a foreign country on her own and learned to be a strong independent woman. Furthermore, Romelle, learned to be responsible, self-collected, and emotionally balanced. Today, Romelle supports the Beacon of Hope Children's Society for Afghan Children where she is able to help the less unfortunates and is able to relate to these children from her own life experiences.

In support to Romelle's life experience's, Romelle had lived on her own and had once been homeless with no support from any family or friends. Although the situations with the Beacon of Hope Children's Society for Afghan Children may differ, she mentions she is able to relate in a sense where she had no one to turn to for support, was partially limited, and had gone a day or two with hardly any food. Moving forward with the interview, I questioned Romelle, "why the Beacon of Hope Children's Society for Afghan Children?" there are various of organizations and she had chosen this one specifically. As mentioned above, Romelle wants to help change lives of the less unfortunates and she found her life experiences related to this organization specifically. That being said, it is important to note that this as well is her first non--government organization she had chosen to take part in. In addition, Romelle has a future goal to work for a non-profit that caters to children and women in less fortunate situations.

Certainly, after being involved with the Beacon of Hope Children's Society for Afghan Children, Romelle has gained yet another life time experience. Romelle mentions with such a powerful tone how grateful she is to have touched the children's young lives and is carrying this inspirational feeling and drive to continue to reach out to others who are less fortunate as well. However, Romelle also mentioned the most challenging part was being unable to speak to all the children and found it outstandingly challenging to help everyone around her. Although, unable to touch everyones lives,

Romelle always look forward to impacting the lives of young children; as one life is being changed, one day at a time. Aside from traveling with the Beacon of Hope Children's Society for Afghan Children, Romelle encourages other's to donate to the organization as she also does this too.

After having the ability to sit down and interview Romelle, she notes at the end how grateful she is to have this experience that she will carry on for the rest of her life, and most importantly the relationships she had built throughout this journey. In conclusion, I had asked Romelle one last question, and that was "after being with the organization for a while now, how would they describe you?" and with a smile she says "[that I am] humanitarian, and [I am myself]."

“She is  
able to *help* the  
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#### **Contact Information:**

[http://www.beaconofhopesociety.org/  
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Facebook: Beacone of Hope for Afghan  
Children.

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