

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**FIVE PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS AWARD GRANTS TOTTALLING \$750,000 TO WOMEN FOR AFGHAN WOMEN**

***Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and The David and Lucile Packard Foundation invest in expanding WAW's work.***

(New York, NY) February 23, 2017 – Women for Afghan Women (WAW) is honored to announce that it has received funding commitments for general operating support totaling \$750,000 in 2017 from five new funders committed to building WAW's capacity and infrastructure. The five-foundation consortium includes [Carnegie Corporation of New York](#), the [Ford Foundation](#), the [John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation](#), [The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation](#), and [The David and Lucile Packard Foundation](#). By the end of 2016, WAW's New York Community Center (NYCC) also received increased support through various new and renewed funding. This funding has allowed WAW to fill two new key leadership positions: a Deputy Executive Director, Kevin Schumacher, to manage overall operations; and a Director of Advancement, Kimberly Otis, to lead the organization's external development, communications, and advocacy programs.

The five-member consortium stems from an introduction by a WAW supporter that led to a meeting between Vartan Gregorian, President of Carnegie Corporation of New York, and WAW's Executive Director, Manizha Naderi. As a result, Dr. Gregorian facilitated efforts to coordinate support for the nonprofit among like-minded foundations.

The consortium's \$750,000 commitment comes in response to general support proposals submitted to each funder that also detailed WAW's five-year strategic plan designed to strengthen operations, expand programming, and diversify WAW's funding portfolio. The new strategic plan aims to build WAW's sustainability while expanding its visibility, reach, and impact.

From this consortium, Carnegie Corporation of New York has already granted WAW \$100,000, the Ford Foundation \$200,000, and the Hewlett Foundation \$150,000. WAW now expects to receive grants of \$200,000 from the MacArthur Foundation and of \$100,000 from the Packard Foundation.

Since 2001, WAW has provided direct services to over 25,479 clients, and human rights training to over 304,550 people in New York and Afghanistan. In 2016 alone, WAW served 4,470 new clients, with 26,829 family members benefitting from its work, in addition to training for 45,500 people. WAW intends to be the go-to organization serving and advocating for Afghan women, children, and families everywhere. Moreover, WAW's human rights training and empowerment programs are fostering self-sufficiency and peacebuilding as a model for war-torn countries. With this general support, and its experience, partnerships, and strong ties to the communities it serves, WAW plans to move this ambitious vision forward and meet increasing demand for its services.

WAW remains the only organization dedicated to serving Afghans in New York and the largest organization in Afghanistan operating facilities and providing services to women and children. In Queens, New York, and in 13 of the 34 provinces in Afghanistan, the organization has become a lifeline

and, often, the only safe haven for Afghan women and children. Without WAW, clients may be forced to remain silent and endure abusive, often life-threatening, situations.

WAW expects 2017 to be a significant year—one that positions WAW to leverage this unprecedented funding for heightened impact and substantial programmatic growth. As WAW’s Board Chair, Sunita Viswanath, remarks, “It is truly remarkable for foundation leaders to make such a generous commitment in WAW’s potential to save more lives and bring dignity to Afghan women, families, and communities. We invite more donors to support WAW during these challenging times.”

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**For Press Related Inquiries Contact: Kimberly Otis**  
Women for Afghan Women **Director of Advancement**  
2200 Pennsylvania Avenue | Suite 4066, Washington, DC 20037  
Tel: 202-255-9960 | E-mail [kim@womenforafghanwomen.org](mailto:kim@womenforafghanwomen.org)

*[Women for Afghan Women](#) (WAW) is a grassroots, non-profit organization dedicated to securing and protecting the rights of disenfranchised Afghan women and girls in Afghanistan and New York, particularly their rights to develop their individual potential, to self-determination, and to be represented in all areas of life: political, social, cultural, and economic. WAW advocates for women's rights and challenges the norms that underpin gender-based violence wherever opportunities arise to influence attitudes and bring about change.*

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