Berkeley Law

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RE: CLASSROOMS WITHOUT WALLS

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to recommend a partnership with David Falconer and Classrooms Without Walls. CWW hosts an array of programs for learners displaced by war or other forms of internal conflict.

Most of my involvement as a volunteer instructor has been with the Teachers for Afghanistan Program (T4A). My mission for Afghan girls and women is to create a space to exercise skills in critical thinking, where they can feel free to speak about the constraints they are experiencing under an authoritarian, fundamentalist regime. How does on-line teaching change the status quo? What is the objective of a class like this in the context of the Taliban regime when so many opportunities have been curtailed and agency and identity repressed? I put these questions to some of my former Afghan law students who had returned to Afghanistan to teach in the law schools under the Islamic Republic and then had to flee when the Taliban took over again. Here are some of their comments:

> These women are (or may be) mothers, and they are sisters and daughters. If they are able to respect and teach the rest of the family (or their children) to respect each other's human rights, that in itself is enough to bring a change in society. Individuals constitute a family and a family is a crucial part of a society.
>
> Understanding human rights and the rule of law can also offer emotional resilience. If they're aware of their rights, these women and girls may feel less isolated and more connected to a global community of individuals who believe in, and fight for, those same rights. Having an awareness of global standards and rights can give them a glimmer of hope that change might someday come or that there are parts of the world where their rights are recognized.
>
> Societies change, and circumstances can shift. If these women ever find themselves in situations where their worlds expand, having a strong

> foundation in human rights and rule of law can prepare them to be leaders and advocates in their communities….When opportunities arise, either in Afghanistan or if they find themselves outside its borders, these women will be better equipped to advocate for change.

I hope that you will find a way to engage with Classrooms Without Walls in helping to continue the education of young people whose learning opportunities have been severely restricted or curtailed.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN A. ROSENBAUM
Frank C. Newman Lecturer