



**NEW YORK, NEW YORK
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Dear AHA Supporter:

We are pleased to present the AHA Foundation 2012 Annual Report. We are very proud of our accomplishments this year and delighted to discuss our ongoing initiatives with you.

As you will see from the following, the AHA Foundation has made significant progress in our struggle to defend women in the West from violence and oppression perpetrated in the name of religion and culture. Here are some highlights from our accomplishments this year:

- The AHA Foundation has educated numerous professionals on the issues of forced marriage and honor violence. Our second annual conference on honor violence and forced marriage was held this fall in New York City. The conference featured a distinguished panel of speakers and was widely attended by professionals likely to encounter victims of these crimes. Our comprehensive training curriculum provides law enforcement and service providers with “best practices” for identifying these cases and ensuring the safety of victims. Professionals from across the country took part in our web-based seminars this year. Participant feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- The AHA Foundation’s legislative outreach program has been a resounding success. Portions of our model FGM legislation were introduced in two key states, and the House of Representatives recently passed our proposed legislation directing the Justice Department to collect data on honor crimes. We continue our efforts to amend the federal domestic violence crime to include honor violence, and we’ve held productive meetings with several interested legislators on this topic.
- The research project we began last year with the John Jay College of Criminal Justice is progressing at an exciting pace. The John Jay research team has developed innovative methods for ascertaining the prevalence of honor violence and forced marriage in the United States, and their preliminary findings are both illuminating and disturbing. We look forward to receiving their final results next year, which will put us in a much stronger position to persuade government leaders to direct attention and resources to these issues.
- The AHA Foundation has laid the groundwork to develop a national forced marriage hotline and network in the United States. Drawing on our ever-increasing network of supportive NGOs and government agencies, the forced marriage hotline will provide crucial guidance and assistance to victims of forced marriage, many of whom are also at risk of honor violence.
- In 2012, thirty-four individuals sought help from the AHA Foundation in escaping forced marriages or situations of honor violence. We have had great success in referring them to appropriate services and helping them achieve safety.

The AHA Foundation has had a busy and productive year, and we are grateful to you for providing support for these important initiatives. We invite you to visit our website to see our ongoing initiatives and future endeavors (www.theahafoundation.org).

**SINCERELY,
THE AHA FOUNDATION**

GENERAL

MISSION STATEMENT

The AHA Foundation works to protect and defend the rights of women and girls in the West from violence and oppression justified in the name of religion and culture, such as: honor killings, honor violence, female genital mutilation, forced marriage and child marriage, and acceptance of Sharia law into Western legal systems.

PROGRAM UPDATES

The AHA Foundation is the only organization in the United States dedicated to understanding the scope and impact of honor violence, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGM), and organizing effective intervention, support, enforcement, legislation, public awareness, and diplomatic initiatives to protect the victims of these crimes.

The AHA Foundation has enjoyed much success this year in furthering our mission to protect the rights of women and girls in the West from oppression justified by religious and cultural traditions. We continue to divide our work into four categories: inform, investigate, influence and intervene.

1. Inform

Building from our accomplishments last year, we have in place a solid platform of initiatives to inform the public about crimes committed against women in the West in the name of religion and culture. In addition, we have developed a number of exciting new projects to better inform the public as well as stakeholders about our issues.

On October 4th, the AHA Foundation held its second annual conference on honor violence and forced marriage at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. The conference featured a distinguished panel of speakers addressing a room full of NYPD, FBI, criminal justice practitioners, domestic violence shelters and numerous other NGOs. Opening the conference, founder of the AHA Foundation and award-winning humanitarian, Ayaan Hirsi Ali spoke about the unique circumstances of women in honor-based cultures, drawing upon her own experiences growing up in Africa in the Middle East. Ayaan gave the attendees specific tips and best practices for handling cases of honor violence and forced marriage. Nazir Afzal OBE, Director of the UK's Crown Prosecution Service, spoke about honor crimes and forced marriage in the United Kingdom, and discussed the recent move to criminalize forced marriage in the U.K. Detective Chris Boughey, lead investigator in the Noor Almaleki honor killing, reviewed specifics of the Almaleki investigation, putting the details in context with typical investigations, and discussed the aftermath of the case as well as other honor violence cases he has worked on since. Heather Heiman, Senior Public Policy Attorney at the Tahirih Justice Center, spoke about Tahirih's forced marriage initiative, including the direct services they provide to victims and the national survey they conducted which found as many as 3,000 cases of forced marriage in the U.S. in the two years preceding the survey. Our final speaker this year was Ric Curtis, Professor and Chair of the Anthropology Department at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice, who is heading up the AHA Foundation studies on honor violence in the U.S. and forced marriage in New York City. To close the conference, our speakers were joined by Archana Pyati, Deputy Director of the Immigration Intervention Project at Sanctuary for Families, who discussed FGM in addition to our main topics of honor violence and forced marriage, in a panel discussion led by Professor Curtis.

As a new addition this year, we presented the first annual AHA Foundation Honour Award to Detective Chris Boughey for his leadership in teaching other law enforcement professionals best practices for handling cases of honor violence and for his guidance in helping the girls and women who come to the AHA Foundation seeking to escape honor violence and forced marriage.

Training law enforcement professionals, child protective services and other service providers has been a priority for the AHA Foundation this year. With that in mind, we developed the AHA Foundation Training Curriculum on Honor Violence and Forced Marriage as a tool for professionals who may have contact with victims of these crimes to effectively investigate cases and ensure the safety of victims. We conducted two live trainings for New York City's

Administration for Children's Services and held live web-based training sessions throughout the year for numerous agencies and guidance counselors across the U.S. These web-based training sessions have also been posted to the AHA Foundation website for professionals to view at their convenience. In addition, hard copies of our training materials were sent to all of the organizations listed in our Resource Directory, covering shelters in every single American state.

Through our annual conference, live trainings of child protective professions, online webinars, and the creation and publication of our online training manual, we reached a huge audience this year. By training those who will likely have contact with victims, we have directly contributed to helping keep girls and women in the U.S. safe from honor violence and forced marriage.

In addition to informing law enforcement, prosecutors and other professionals about the presence of our issues in the West, we have worked hard to inform the general public as well. This year, with the pro bono assistance of a public relations firm, our social media presence was completely overhauled to match the look and feel of the AHA Foundation website and brand. We have also worked with numerous social media experts to help us take our online communications in a more interactive direction. In the previous twelve months, our Facebook friends have increased by 23%, our Twitter followers have increased by 67% and our newsletter subscribers have increased by 18%. This increase demonstrates that our message is reaching a bigger audience than ever.

2. Influence

Some of our most exciting successes this year have come from our legislative outreach program. In February of 2012, New Jersey Senator Loretta Weinberg introduced model FGM legislation drafted by the AHA Foundation. This bill passed unanimously in the New Jersey state Senate and has been referred to the Assembly for consideration. More recently, in May of 2012, Governor Jindal signed into law a bill criminalizing FGM in the state of Louisiana. As a direct result of the efforts of our legislative team, this new law includes the AHA Foundation's model language that also makes it a crime to remove a girl from the state for the purpose of FGM; the law went into effect August 1, 2012.

Our voice is being heard, and our message is being taken seriously. The introduction of these bills and the passage of these laws will have a significant deterrent effect and sends a strong message that this conduct will not be tolerated in this country. We are confident that girls have been saved from the trauma and physical torture of FGM because of our work.

On the federal level, our legislative efforts have been focused on amending the federal domestic violence crime to make it applicable to cases of honor violence. In 2012, we held meetings with numerous congressional offices to discuss our proposal, and met with the House Subcommittee on Crime and with staff members from the following offices: Senator Feinstein, Representative Costa, Representative Poe, Representative Chu, Representative Quigly, Representative Adams, Representative Cohen, Representative Polis, and Representative Amodei. Representative Chu's office has expressed sustained interest in our proposal and we are continuing to speak with them about sponsoring and introducing the bill.

This year, we also helped draft language for the House Appropriations Bill that directs the Justice Department to begin collecting data on cases of honor violence. The bill was approved in the House in May and directs the Justice Department's Office on Violence Against Women and the National Institute of Justice to study the prevalence of honor violence and recommend best practices for law enforcement and service providers to prevent it.

3. Investigate

One of the most important aspects of our work is our investigation into the prevalence of honor violence, forced marriage and FGM in the U.S. Because we are the only organization in the U.S. dedicated to bringing these heinous human rights abuses to light, we have devoted significant resources to the research projects that we began last year

with the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Once completed, these projects will provide key data on the frequency of these crimes, which will aid the AHA Foundation as we work to convince legislators of the need to enact laws, or strengthen existing legislation. The data will also be a tool to show law enforcement, prosecutors, teachers, and other professionals the importance of taking these issues seriously.

The honor violence study is progressing at an exciting pace. John Jay has compiled data that compares the United States to other countries with high rates of honor violence. The team has also researched numerous instances of homicides in New York City, and has already turned up several cases of previously unidentified honor killings.

On the forced marriage study, the John Jay researchers have developed a creative and innovative approach to collecting data. Because forced marriage is very much a "hidden" problem, the John Jay team decided to use the student population at City University New York (CUNY) to build a knowledge base about (a) the communities affected by forced marriage; (b) the cultural/religious context in which forced marriages are taking place, and (c) the specific manner in which forced marriages are occurring in the United States.

To date, the John Jay team has interviewed over seventy CUNY students from targeted communities about their knowledge, understanding and experiences with forced marriage. These in-depth, qualitative interviews have provided the team with a deep understanding of the nuances and complexities of the problem, as well as insight into the specific neighborhoods and communities in New York City affected by forced marriage. The research team plans to conduct one hundred such interviews of CUNY students, which will provide a rich pool of preliminary data. We anticipate that the CUNY survey will provide the launching point for a more widespread, quantitative study into the nature and frequency of forced marriage in New York City and the nation as a whole.

The John Jay FGM study is scheduled to begin in 2013 once the honor violence and forced marriage studies have been completed.

In addition to the crimes we have mentioned, the AHA Foundation is also concerned about the adoption of dual legal systems to adjudicate family disputes in religious families and supports the separation of all religions and the State. Because of this, we have drafted a report on Sharia law, which identifies the underlying religious principles that legitimize the subordination of women. This report is currently pending a legal review prior to its release. We are also in the early stages of a review of published legal decisions in which U.S. courts were asked to consider Sharia law in determining the outcome of a case. Following this review, we will publish a corollary report discussing the current trends in U.S. jurisprudence regarding invocations of Sharia law and offering guidance to courts facing such issues in future cases.

4. Intervene

In partnership with other advocacy organizations and government agencies, the AHA Foundation is working to create the first ever national forced marriage hotline in the United States. We hope to launch a national forced marriage hotline to offer a crucial lifeline to girls facing the threat of or seeking to escape an involuntary marriage.

Through the AHA Foundation Forced Marriage Hotline, girls will be connected with appropriate law enforcement agencies, social service providers, legal counsel, and any other necessary services, such as emergency shelter. Widespread awareness is crucial to the success of the forced marriage hotline. For this reason, we intend to employ a comprehensive awareness campaign to educate the public, targeting on one hand actual and potential victims of forced marriage and on the other, individuals who will be in contact with victims, such as law enforcement, service providers, educators, and shelters.

We spent much of 2012 doing the research and groundwork necessary to launch a successful hotline, including talking to experts in the field from the UK and building a referral network in the US to support the hotline once it launches. We are currently in the midst of a fundraising campaign to raise the seed money for the pilot phase of the forced

marriage hotline.

We also continue to help girls who come directly to the foundation seeking assistance in fleeing situations of honor violence or forced marriage. In 2012, we had thirty-four individuals seek help from us and have had great success in referring them to appropriate services and helping them achieve safety. One of our latest cases came to us through a physician in Pennsylvania. She wrote to us about a patient: a pregnant 16-year-old American-born girl who was afraid her Egyptian father would kill her when he learned she was pregnant. The girl's mother disowned her and left the clinic upon hearing the news of her daughter's pregnancy but not without first telling her, "I can't protect you from your father." Child protective services would not take custody of the girl because there had been no previous instances of abuse or domestic violence in the family. At that point, the physician reached out to the AHA Foundation for support and we were able to quickly facilitate the girl's safe removal from the home. This case is ongoing, but the girl's doctor emailed us to thank us for "saving two lives" – that of the girl and her unborn baby.

PUBLICITY UPDATE

We have had multiple opportunities to promote the Foundation, our work and our issues in the media during the past year. We have enjoyed both international and national attention as Ayaan has had speaking engagements around the world, including speaking at the Bon Mot Club in Vancouver, receiving the Axel Springer Award "for her courage and commitment to freedom" in Germany and speaking at the Israeli Presidential Conference. On October 4th, she opened the AHA Foundation's annual conference on honor violence and forced marriage in New York City. In December, she drew attention to the Foundation while speaking at the Thomson Reuters Trust Women Conference, an international conference on human rights.

Ayaan garnered much attention from her *Time Magazine* cover story on the oppression of Christians in the Muslim world and from her *Newsweek* cover story discussing the importance of freedom of speech in relation to the uproar in the Middle East over a film critical of Islam. She also wrote several blog posts for the *Huffington Post* to discuss the terrorist firebombing of a French newspaper that published cartoon depictions of the Prophet Mohammad, and the tragic honor killings of three young Canadian sisters and their polygamous father's first wife.

To coincide with a CBS *48 Hours Mystery* special on the honor killing of Noor Almaleki, the Foundation was interviewed and highlighted by the CBS *Crimesider* blog. Upon the re-airing of the Noor Almaleki episode, CBS *Crimesider* came back to the Foundation to do another story, this time on our planned forced marriage hotline.

FINANCIALS

The AHA Foundation's latest Form 990 is publicly available. To review, please visit Guidestar: <http://www.guidestar.org>.

Thank you for your support of the AHA Foundation in 2012. We depend on the generosity of individual donors like you to do our life-saving work. We encourage you to visit our website to learn more about what we do and what you can do to help:

<http://www.theahafoundation.org>.