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California Gift Show to host influential Afghan social entrepreneur

By Home Accents Today Staff -- Home Accents Today, July 8, 2010

On July 16-19, the California Gift Show will play host to respected social entrepreneur and leader in the Afghan Fair Trade Industry Dr. Ghulam Ullah Muradi.

[One World Projects Inc.](#), a fair trade products importer and distributor based out of New York, invited Muradi to the show to participate in live demonstrations of the traditional Afghan craft of rug-making and to talk about Afghan artisans and their handmade goods with interested buyers and reporters.

An entrepreneur who works with Afghanistan's most under-served and remote ethnic minorities, Muradi is an individual who has chosen to return home to a country still torn by violence to provide Afghanistan's poorest citizens with an opportunity for an education and economic opportunity.

"We are very excited to introduce Dr. Muradi to the American market through a platform as massive and influential as the California Gift Show," said One World Projects founder Phil Smith. "Dr. Muradi's story is a powerful one, as is that of every artisan with whom he works."

Muradi has experienced the tragedy of Afghan violence first-hand. While still a child, Muradi and his family fled the escalating violence of the Soviet invasion for the safety of Pakistani refugee camps. Those camps, filled with women who had lost their husbands, sons and brothers had a lasting effect on Muradi. "When I was at 6 in Saranan Refugee Camp, I used to play with girls because my relatives had six to seven girls each and no more sons. Out of my entire extended family, only four boys were left."

In 2006, Muradi returned home to Afghanistan to create TWARA - the Turkmen's Women's Active Rights Association - an organization that provides training and life skills to the women in Turkmen minority groups who occupy the remote northern areas of Afghanistan. "These artisans are living in very disadvantaged circumstances," Muradi said. "The women with whom we work are not allowed to even see men and are not allowed to get out of their homes to either work or study. The income they receive from producing an order is the only income they have coming in to support their families."

Drawing from what he sees everyday on the ground in Afghanistan, Muradi will present attendees a human side to war-torn Afghanistan.

One World Projects is an established fair trade importer and distributor that has been operating since 1992 importing handmade crafts, household goods, jewelry and other items from more than 100 artisan groups in more than 25 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

Muradi will explain and participate in demonstrations of felt rug making for roughly 2.5 hours in the morning (the time needed to make one rug) and 2.5 hours in the afternoon every day of the fair. He will be located in Kentia Hall at the World Style, Fair Trade Section at the One World Project Booths 1004-1008.

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