

# The House of Flowers and MEPO

End-of Summer Newsletter 2016

September 2016

## The House of Flowers, Stronger Than Ever

Despite the tragic and dire news often coming out of Afghanistan, the House of Flowers children and staff carry on in a spirit of joy and optimism.

Entering its 15<sup>th</sup> year of existence, the House of Flowers continues to pass through the cycles and benchmarks that come with the growing up of children and the passage of time in any family. In recent months, some important life events have occurred.

## Life Events

### Education

We are so happy to announce that Maryam, who joined the House at age 5, successfully passed her exams and has begun studying nursing at university! This is a huge and momentous step, and we are incredibly proud of her.



### Engagements

Our new teacher Basira, well-beloved by all, announced her engagement. It's been lovely also seeing her fiancé get involved with the House of Flowers, such as bringing treats and a cake so that everyone could celebrate Basira's birthday, and stopping by to visit with the children.



Another engagement took place, much to everyone's surprise: Shukria, the youngest of the three sisters who first joined the House in 2002, also became engaged. She has assured everyone that she will continue her education. She is on track of graduate high school this year, and will hopefully continue on to university.



### Work

Shukria's sister Razia (pictured above in purple, next to her sister Shukria at Shukria's engagement party) continues to be on staff at the House serving as a teacher, bringing her life and Montessori-based education full circle.

Ramin and Basir, below, who grew up in the House, stopped by to visit. Both have continued their educations and are working in Kabul.



## And Yet Another New Home for the House



Housing has continued to be a challenge in the difficult real estate climate of Kabul. Renters have no rights in Kabul, and so the staff has had to move the children to 3 different houses in the past year due to financial constraints in the face of increased rents. The last move they made was just last month, in August.

Fortunately, the house they found is for the same rent (\$1000 per month) and is in the Kolola Pushta neighborhood, much closer to the children's schools. Consequently, they didn't have to change schools and they have a much safer and shorter walk to school.

### Security

Despite the attacks and security issues in Kabul, everyone in the House of Flowers is safe and secure. There have been no security incidents, and the staff continues to take great precautions to protect the children and themselves.



## How Are the Children?

Every picture sent to us from the House shows a place of color and light and joy. The walls are covered with either the children's work and art, or educational displays such as maps or illustrations. The children sit on colorful rugs to work, and their supplies are placed neatly in tidy shelves. They have brand new sheets and pillows as well as new metal trunks to store their personal things.

New children have continued to arrive, coming from painful and difficult situations. Once in the House, they relax and know they are safe. They begin to learn and undertake fun projects. In the spring the children wanted to plant their own garden, and so they excitedly sowed their seeds, watered them through the summer, and in August began harvesting their 'crops.'



This summer when we spoke to the children on the phone and could hear their sweet greetings, we were once again reminded of the importance of this work. Abdrahman, eight years old, said it all when he proclaimed, "I was small, but now I've gotten big!"

That is our goal - for these children to become big-strong in themselves, and ready for what the world gives them and what they can give back to the world.



*If we are to reach real peace in this world, we must begin with the children.*

*-- Maria Montessori*

# Preparing for 2017 - Support Is Needed

## Thank You for 2016!

Thanks to the generous support of donors, especially the Canadian Women for Women of Afghanistan who offered support for the year, we have had a year of solid financial stability. The staff has done a fantastic job of living well within their budgetary means, continuing to meet all of the needs of the 30 children in their care.

**We are entering our fall fundraising campaign as we prepare to establish the funds for 2017. We anticipate a monthly budget of \$6300 (a 10% increase from 2016. We hope you will help!**

So please help if you can, and spread the word about the House of Flowers.

Donations can be made online via Paypal on our website [www.mepoonline.org](http://www.mepoonline.org)

Donations can also be made with a check made out to MEPO and sent to our volunteer headquarters in Ohio:

**MEPO**  
**8641 Porter Central Rd.**  
**Sunbury, OH 43074**

Website: [www.mepoonline.org](http://www.mepoonline.org) Email: [mepo.hope@gmail.com](mailto:mepo.hope@gmail.com) Facebook: [houseofflowers](https://www.facebook.com/houseofflowers)

## To make a tax deductible donation...

...donate to the organization **Lantern Projects** at [www.lanternprojects.org](http://www.lanternprojects.org). They will forward 100% of your earmarked donation to the House of Flowers while also giving you the tax deduction.

**Please note:** If you donate to us via Lantern Projects, they cannot give us your name or email address. Please let us hear from you directly so that we may be in touch and express our appreciation to you.



*All kids need is a little hope, a little help, and someone to believe in them.*

*-Magic Johnson*