



April 26, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Gennaro Bounocore, international organizational consultant, worked with PARSA, 501c3 non-profit in Kabul, Afghanistan for 10 days during April, 2006. He was originally assigned to work with our "Gift Shop" to assist us in establishing products that could be sold internationally as well as systems that supported these sales. Within 24 hours of his arrival it was clear that Gennaro was needed here on a broader scale organizationally, and I rearranged my schedule and the directors of PARSA as much as possible to take advantage of his skills.

Over the last year of directing PARSA as executive director, I have experienced quite a bit of international volunteer support and I had decided that the circumstances in Afghanistan because of the culture and because of the lack of infrastructure volunteers were not useful at this time. Gennaro was the exception. He approached his work with us with a unique lack of personal agenda or a preconceived position about what was needed in our organization. His personality is suited to working in this culture as well as his work style because he focused on establishing a relationship with the staff first and foremost. He was honest, funny, loving and became a part of us within three days of his arrival. He possesses compassion but is dedicated to having the difficult conversations that are necessary to promote organizational change. He really listened to people and formed his recommendations as he experienced the organization. It is very, very difficult to work with Afghan's in this stage of the reconstruction as they are so intelligent, and entrepreneurial but they can lack skills that westerners think are basic to an organization. A consultant can be continually caught off guard by our director's lack of understanding of how to organize and prioritize a day or make a "to do" list. Gennaro's unique gift is to experience an alien work environment such as PARSA in Afghanistan and to be absolutely without negative judgement about it. For me this is truly the mark of an excellent consultant as I believe that only with suspension of negative judgements can learning and change be accomplished.

As for myself, I was able to move from a sense of exhaustion by the continual short term survival based decision making that I was doing with PARSA to a new vision for the organization and a sense that we can develop this organization to be excellent and that I will be able to turn over the organization to the Afghan Directors in the future. Gennaro not only was our consultant but my mentor and believe me I am listening to him closely, and I have extensive experience in organizational development.

Finally, he left here with his own "to do" list. He was not only willing to consult with us but to get involved. He is working to arrange a fundraising trip for my Afghan directors to the US. He is willing to assist with fundraising for the trip and assist me in launching this new era for the organization as we continue to develop the capacity of these wonderful Afghan directors. And finally, our founder, Mary MacMakin needs assistance in turning over the finances and systems on the US side to a competent agency (which Gennaro suggested while he was here) and he is helping to facilitate this. Gennaro has been way more than a consultant for us. He has been our partner in a profoundly useful way. On behalf of the staff, and directors we thank him for this and look forward to his return to us.

Respectfully,

Marnie Gustavson  
Executive Director

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