

Settlement Helps Afghanistan's First Private, Not-For-Profit University

News

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A Jenner & Block team secured a settlement for the American University of Afghanistan (AUAF), providing funds for AUAF to continue educating Afghanistan women at a critical time.

AUAF, founded in 2006, is Afghanistan's only private, liberal arts, not-for-profit, co-ed university whose mission is to provide world-class higher education opportunities that empower Afghan students with the knowledge, skills, and agency to define their own individual and collective futures. As a testament to the quality of its educational platform and to the accomplishments of its students, as of 2021, when Kabul fell and Fulbright ceased operations in Afghanistan, 11% of AUAF graduates had earned Fulbright Fellowships, the highest percentage of any university in the world. AUAF continues to operate for 1,100 students, 70% women, in an environment that forbids educating women after the sixth grade.

A benefactor who died in 2020 had named AUAF as a beneficiary in her will, however, the benefactor's trustee redirected those funds to a separate organization that was not named in the will. After filing a lawsuit against the trustee in federal court in 2024, the trustee settled.

Thanks in part to this critical settlement, AUAF is continuing to educate Afghan students who are otherwise shut out of university opportunities in their home country.

The team that worked on this case includes Associate Kristen Green, Partners Todd Toral and Zeb Zankel, and Associates Elizabeth Avunjian and Hallie Moor.

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