



**For Marin-Ites: Come join me and the World Affairs Council in Marin** this Thursday and learn about our most recent trip to Afghanistan- Details below;

**Where:** Dominican University, Caleruega Dining Hall, Creekside Room  
[map](#)

**When :** May 20th @ 7:50 pm

**Cost:** Council Members and Students: \$6.00  
Non Members: \$9.00

For reservations please visit World Affairs Councils website  
<http://www.itsyourworld.org>

On our most recent trip to Afganistan Nabi and I visited Farza, the village where Zohra's school for girls will be built this year. For information about Zohra's school [click here](#). In one classroom we asked the children what they were planning to be. Pictured below are their responses.

Who is planning to become a Teacher?



Doctor?



## Lawyer?



We made the same inquiry in several classrooms. By far, Afghan children prefer becoming a teacher, over all other professions. Doctor is their second choice and lawyer comes in dead last every time. It's not clear whether most of them know what a lawyer does. What do they do? What is their "added value". Be kind. I am one.

When given these same choices in schools where I've recently spoken, American children prefer becoming a doctor, lawyer, and teacher, in that order. Doctor and lawyer run fairly close while fewer than 10 % intend to teach.

We recognize how critical education and educators are, and yet very few of our children aspire to teach. Why? Is it economics, or a reflection of the values we project? Whatever the cause, teaching is

clearly the profession of choice in Afghanistan.

The boy pictured below raised a question that I have thought about several times since my return. We had just finished asking the career choice questions when he spoke. He said, "We don't have enough books. I can't take a book home to study. Some of us don't have pencils, pens, or notebooks. The classroom is crowded and dirty. What do you expect from us?" He was absolutely right. The conditions under which these children are expected to learn are deplorable. What's as shocking as the conditions themselves, is the cost of providing books and supplies. It's around \$3 a month per child.



This time next year Zohra's school will completely alter the conditions under which girls in Farza will be able to learn.

Jeffrey Sachs observed in his book *The End of Poverty*, "wealthy nations needn't give until the poor are wealthy. We need only help them reach the bottom rung of the ladder and they will pull themselves up from there". I'm paraphrasing and perhaps misquoting. If he didn't write it, someone did, and I'm too tired to "look it up". In any event, Zohra, and those who support TIE, are making it possible for these children to advance another rung. From what I've personally observed they will do everything possible to pull themselves up.

Budd

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