

Former female Afghan soldiers find home in Blacksburg and tell their story

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Three Afghan refugees and former soldiers of the [Female Tactical Platoon \(FTP\)](#) visited Virginia Tech to share experiences they described as “the hardest day of [our] lives.”

After living as soldiers in war zones and completing raids alongside the United States Army, these women fled Afghanistan to escape the [Taliban when it infiltrated Kabul](#).

With help from the [Blacksburg Refugee Partnership](#), they can get an education, housing and a new beginning in the United States.

Dr. Scott Bailey, president of the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership, worked with [The Secular Society](#) to bring these heroes to Southwestern Virginia.

“The leader of [the Secular Society] called and said “There’s going to be a lot of women coming who are going to lose their education. If you can get some of them here, I’ll fund you to continue their education,” recalls Bailey. After several months, they successfully brought the women to Blacksburg.

BRP helps refugee families become adapted to living in the United States. “We help get them a home and get them a job . . . a lot of helping them is [learning] English,” explains Bailey.

It wasn’t easy for the soldiers to leave Afghanistan - Soraiya Nazari, one of the speakers, says that fleeing was the hardest day of her life.

“All the people escape. Everyone want to escape . . . it was so hard. When we tried to get to airport, it was so busy. I lost my sister for six hours,” Nazari says.

But she and her colleagues feel lucky to be in Blacksburg.

“I’m happy because I’m safe here. I can study and do a job, and also have a lot of friends and appreciate everyone at the BRP. They support all of us.”

And their heroic efforts are remembered. Rebekah Edmondson, an army veteran who worked with the FTP in Afghanistan, says, “It’s a tremendous privilege to have been able to work with these women.”

“They’re resilient human beings,” Edmondson adds. “They took a whole lot of hard knocks and just kept getting back up and continuing.”

TAGS: #FTP #Soldiers #BRP #Afghanistan #Refugees