





2020
ANNUAL REPORT

ahafoundation

A MESSAGE TO OUR DONORS

Reflecting on 2020 reminds me of a hurricane: everything is chaotic around us, yet in the middle of it all, there's a certain calm.

Personally, as the pandemic progressed, I tried to limit my exposure to the constant news briefings that often felt overwhelming and at times debilitating. I felt that I had to focus on where I could make the biggest difference—my family, the work I do at AHA Foundation, and connections with friends and neighbors—online and socially distanced, as much as possible.

At AHA Foundation, we also had to focus on where we could do the most good. Thanks to support from our donors, our work protecting women and girls against harmful cultural practices and defending freedom of speech never ceased, despite many challenges.

The pandemic hit hard. The number of requests for help to our crisis text line tripled compared to the pre-COVID-19 period. The pandemic made it easier for perpetrators to continue their threats and abuse while girls are kept away from the watchful eyes of teachers, counselors and other professionals. Our staff worked hard to meet the needs of women and girls reaching out to us via our email helpline or through the crisis text line.

News of Congress unanimously passing the STOP FGM Act of 2020 in mid-December could not have come at a better, albeit surprising time. Despite growing fear that it would remain stuck in the Senate as the end of the lame-duck session drew near, Congress joined together in a bipartisan move to reaffirm the protection of women and girls throughout the U.S. The bill was officially signed into law by then president Donald Trump on January 5, 2021.

Meanwhile, we are equally thrilled with several legislative wins that we supported at the state level, some of which even happened during the lockdown! Five states—Vermont, Wyoming, Kentucky, Massachusetts and Idaho—passed laws to prevent female genital mutilation. On top of that, both Pennsylvania and Minnesota banned child marriage.

Early in the year, we also provided in-person training to frontline healthcare, education and legal professionals. We also managed to take our campus program, the Critical Thinking Unit, online with a virtual training and webinars.

The worst part of a hurricane is that you never know when or how it might leave its mark. Many of us have lost friends or



George Zarubin, Executive Director

comforted sick and worried relatives. The only mantra that I've been holding onto is: Keep calm, head down, and move forward.

Although we cannot be sure when this storm will stop, I do know that our work is necessary and we will strive to continue protecting women and girls, expanding the Critical Thinking Unit and organizing webinars to counter Islamism. I hope we come out of this storm stronger together and with a renewed sense of gratefulness and appreciation for each other.

It has been a devastating year for everyone. We appreciate the wonderful supporters who have continued to stand alongside us to make our important work possible. Thanks for your gifts. Thanks for your encouragement. Thank you for supporting the team at AHA Foundation.

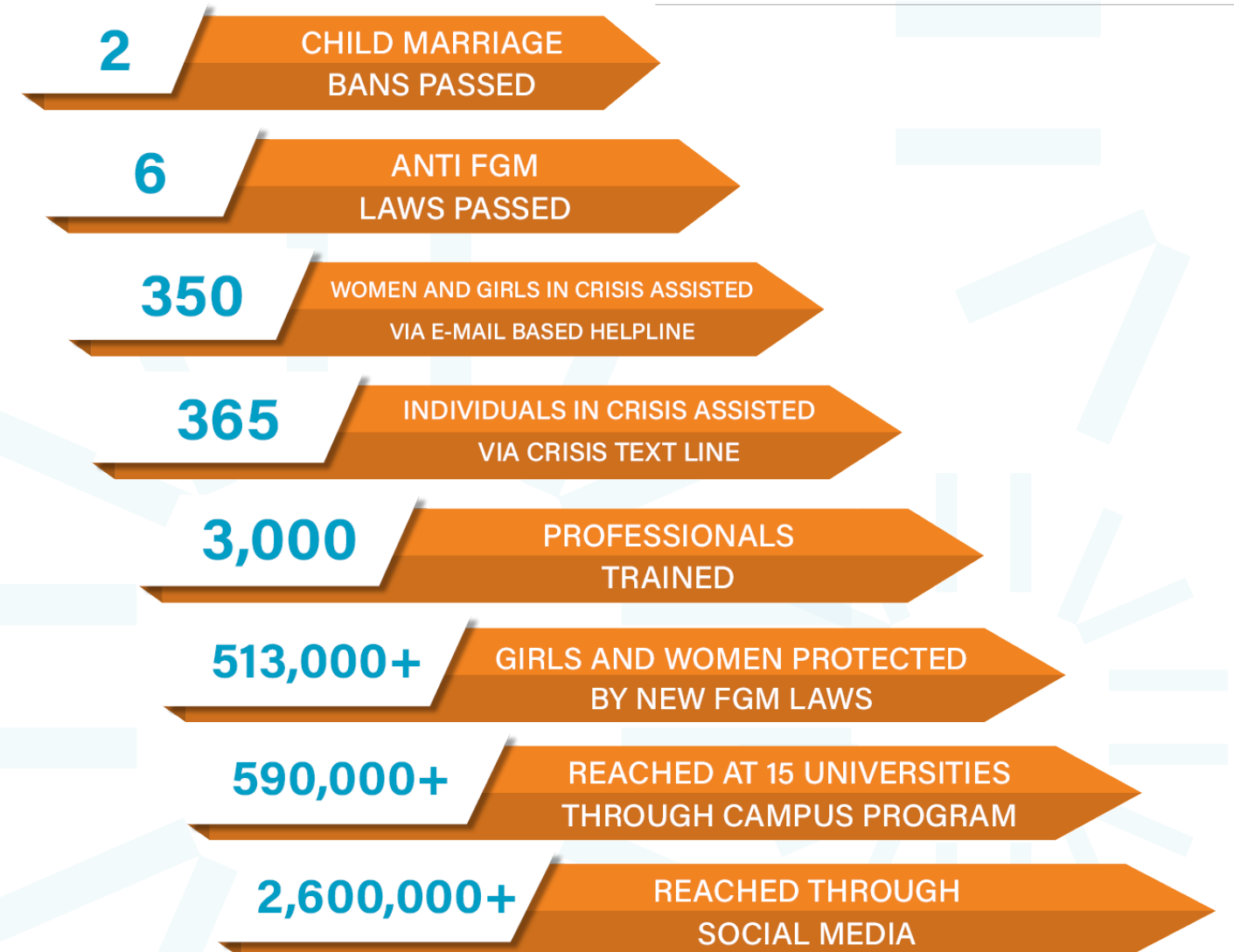
Sincerely,



George Zarubin
Executive Director

2020 HIGHLIGHTS

- ➔ Helped pass a federal anti-FGM ban through the House of Representatives and Senate through advocacy with survivors and other partners—the bill reaffirms the federal FGM ban that was found unconstitutional in 2018.
- ➔ Spearheaded the efforts that resulted in five more states enacting or strengthening anti-FGM legislation in 2020 due to our role as the national leader in anti-FGM advocacy.
- ➔ Conducted a webinar with Dr. Muhammad Fraser-Rahim, Executive Director of Quilliam North America, about his new book to further strengthen and amplify the voices and activism of ex-Muslims, Muslim reformers, scholars and religious leaders against Islamism.
- ➔ Aided state-level efforts that resulted in two states banning child marriage.
- ➔ Organized four events with fellows on 15 college campuses defending free speech and promoting critical thinking and women's rights around the country, connecting more than 590,000 people with our events and ideas.
- ➔ Published in internationally and nationally-renowned newspapers and magazines, our founder, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, defended free speech against cancel culture in seven articles, exposed the dangers of Islamism in six, and raised awareness for gender-based violence in two.
- ➔ Supported federal legislation that, if passed, would close visa loopholes that have enabled thousands of child marriages in the U.S.



"Safety is our number one priority, and this organization was built for women and girls, who struggle with issues that society has largely unattended to."

— Sheriece Hooks, Ph.D. candidate at Pepperdine University, former AHA Foundation's Helpline Manager

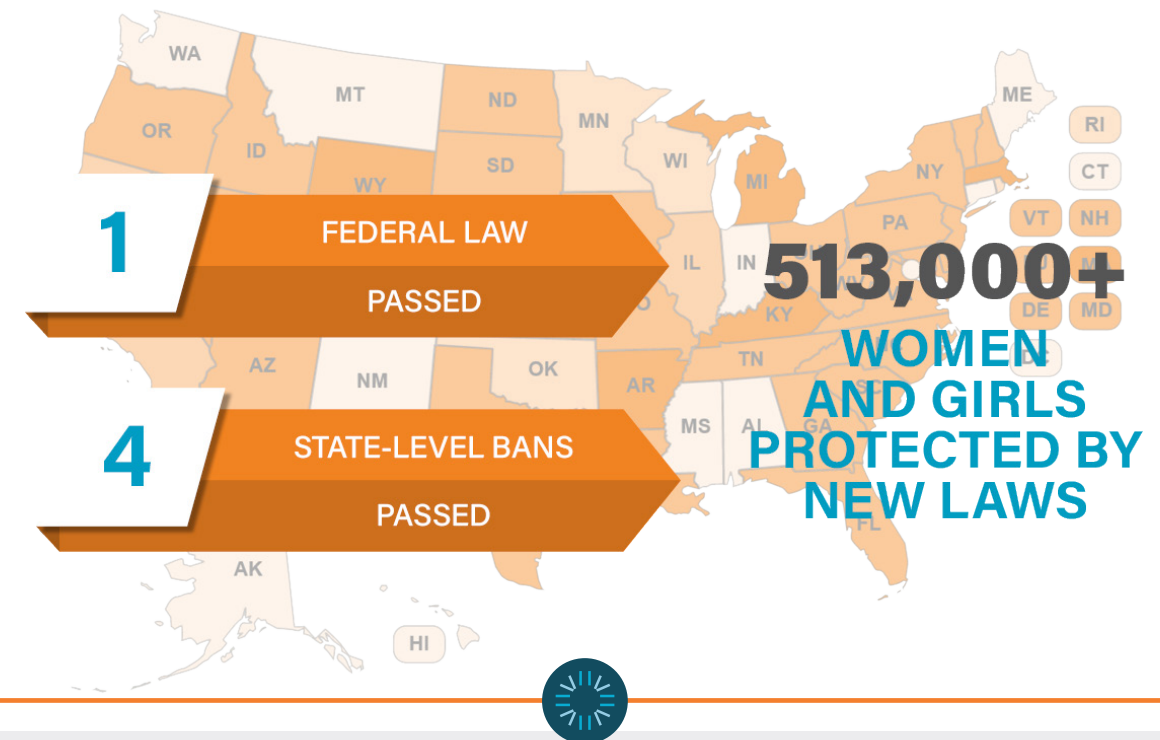
ENDING FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IN THE U.S.

ANTI-FGM EFFORTS AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

At the federal level, AHA Foundation:

Engaged in ongoing discussions with House Judiciary Committee staff, members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and political advocacy organizations to secure bipartisan support for the STOP FGM Act of 2020, a bill that upholds the constitutionality of the federal anti-FGM law.

Consulted with our pro bono attorney at White & Case, LLP regarding amendments needed to strengthen the federal anti-FGM law and offered recommendations to the House Judiciary Committee.



Against All Odds, an Incredible Victory: STOP FGM ACT OF 2020 PASSED

In 2018, we lost the ability to try perpetrators using the federal law meant to protect girls from the heinous crime of FGM after a judge ruled it unconstitutional. Since then, AHA Foundation has been on the frontline working with members of both parties in the Senate and House of Representatives to help reaffirm this ban. Thanks to our efforts and the work of our partners, the ban passed unanimously in the House of Representatives and in the Senate, and was signed by then-President Trump on January 5, 2021. This bill represents what can be accomplished through bipartisan efforts and reaffirms our commitment to ensure politics do not dictate the protection of women and girls throughout the U.S.



In a tweet on October 11th, the International Day of the Girl Child, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, founder of AHA Foundation, urged the U.S. Senate to pass a bill that would reaffirm the federal anti-FGM law.



In response to our call for advocacy on Twitter to pass the STOP FGM Act of 2020, the American College of Pediatricians announced their support of the bill and efforts to pass it.



In a December 12th tweet, Ayaan celebrated the momentous passage of the federal FGM bill in Congress, applauding Representative Jackson Lee and Senator Marsha Blackburn for their leadership.

FGM Survivors, Legislators and Advocates React to the News About Federal Ban Victory

Ayaan Hirsi Ali,
FGM survivor
and founder
of AHA
Foundation

"In an incredibly difficult year, the little girls in our country who are vulnerable to this painful practice were not forgotten. The STOP FGM Act is a strong bill that makes it clear that in this country, we do not tolerate this practice, and we will not stand idly by as girls are cut."

Joni Ernst,
Senator
from Iowa

"As we're wrapping up this Congress, it's certainly encouraging to see that we've made progress in eliminating the horrific practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). FGM is an uncomfortable issue to discuss, but we must continue calling attention to it and educating ourselves on the signs so that we are equipped to protect young girls from this excruciating practice."

Andrea G. Bottner,
Senior Advisor
to Independent
Women's Forum

"The STOP FGM Act of 2020 will finally offer young women and girls stronger protection from the horror of female genital mutilation. No girl should ever have to face this in her lifetime. The bipartisan nature of this legislation shows that when it comes to the safety of young girls, politics shouldn't matter."

Nevaeh Novak,
FGM survivor
from South
Carolina

"Oh my gosh. That is FABULOUS!!! Thank goodness people are listening and acting to protect us. I'm overjoyed!! Best Christmas gift!!!"

Marsha Blackburn,
Senator from
Tennessee

"I'm pleased that we've finally reached agreement on language to enhance penalties for female genital mutilation, a truly horrible practice. I introduced legislation on this subject last year, and I thank my colleagues in the House who worked with me on this issue. The law that passed will send a strong message that Congress condemns the violent and disgusting butchery of young girls and women in this country."

Jenny, FGM
survivor and
advocate from
Kentucky

"I was so thankful to hear that Congress has passed a federal law banning FGM/C. This will be life-changing for girls that are at risk in this country, and for moms wanting to protect girls from this practice within their communities but didn't have anything to help them in that fight to protect them. FGM/C can be life-changing for anyone that endures it and can negatively impact a victims life in so many ways, I am filled with so much joy for so many girls that will be saved because of this law."

ANTI-FGM EFFORTS AT THE STATE LEVEL

COVID-19 Pandemic Slows Our Plans to Ban FGM in All 50 States, But Does Not Deter Five States from Passing Anti-FGM Legislation

AHA again led the charge to enact anti-FGM legislation in all 50 states around the country. In the first few months of the year, we laid the groundwork to pass FGM bans in the remaining 15 states and the District of Columbia, which lacked a ban in the beginning of 2020.

Our ambitious goals were hampered when legislators' attentions were appropriately turned towards fighting the pandemic and racial justice issues. However, the advocacy momentum we cultivated in previous years, which accelerated in the first few months of this year, set the stage for success in 2020.

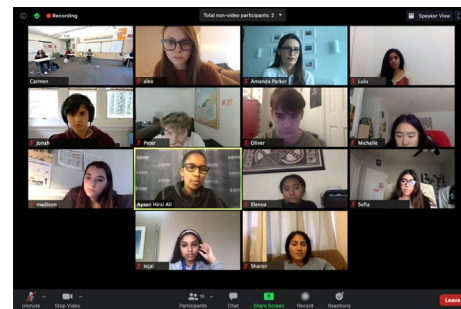
When the pandemic hit, we ceased our trips to legislators and reached out to them via emails and video conference calls, instead of advocating in person. While the means of communication had to change, we stayed consistent in our strategy to fight for and secure bipartisan support for FGM bans in each state. As a result, in five states, we galvanized political support and helped pass anti-FGM laws in the midst of the pandemic lockdown. Almost 18,000 girls are protected with these recently passed laws.



Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Amanda Parker, AHA Foundation's Senior Director, Speak at Menlo School's Ethnic Studies Class in California

Ayaan and Amanda led a moving and intimate discussion about the reality of female genital mutilation with a group of high school students enrolled in Menlo School's Ethnic Studies class. The group

learned about the reasons behind the practice, its prevalence globally and in the U.S. and actions they can take to end the practice and support peers impacted by FGM.



AHA Foundation's Founder and Senior Director discussed the issue of female genital mutilation with students at Menlo School's Ethnic Studies class in California.

Dear Amanda,
I just wanted to reach out and express my immense amount of appreciation for coming to speak to our class! I really admire your work and your mission to spread awareness on FGM. I learned so much from the videos you showed and the information you presented. I am definitely going to continue to spread the word to my family and friends. I am very interested in this topic, and I think this is super important!
Thanks again,
Louisa

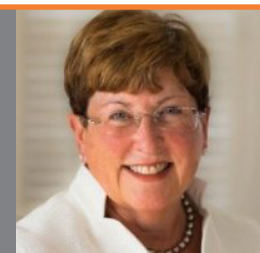
Dear Amanda,
Thank you so much for coming to speak to our class the other day. I learned a lot about FGM. I really felt so sick and devastated during that class and what is happening is just unimaginable. I told my friends about it and posted on Instagram about it because it is such a shame that it is so unheard of. Thank you for everything you are doing and coming to our class.
Best,
Peter

Some of the thank you notes Ayaan and Amanda received from Menlo School's Ethnic Studies class students.

Dear Ayaan,
Thank you so much for coming to speak to our class. I really appreciated how you left us with really great advice, you told us to always stand up for ourselves and fight for what we believe in and I took that to heart. I also am going to get in touch with my old middle school teachers who taught sex education and I am going to help them incorporate what they can about FGM. So again thank you so much for coming! - Madison

"While the passing of the bill [against female genital mutilation in Massachusetts] is a victory, the fact that a law like this is needed to end a practice that violates the human rights of girls is not cause for celebration"

— Deborah Benson, leader of Massachusetts Women's Bar Association's fight against FGM



At the state level, AHA Foundation:

VERMONT

More than 600* girls protected

→ Kicking off the year, Vermont was able to continue the wave from 2019 and become the 36th state with anti-FGM legislation, right before the pandemic struck.

KENTUCKY ("Jenny's Law")

More than 1,800* girls protected

- The work to pass an anti-FGM bill in Kentucky was tireless. Countless in-person meetings were held with key Kentucky legislators and with Jenny, a local survivor who testified alongside us before the 2020 legislative session even started, and paved the way for comprehensive legislation to pass early this year.
- When Jenny approached AHA Foundation to share her story, she had one major goal: ban FGM in Kentucky and ensure that a strong law was put in place so no one ever had to endure the pain she did.
- Touched by Jenny's testimony, legislators were awakened to the very real problem of FGM in the commonwealth, prompting them to stay in the statehouse until they passed the bill through committee—even though parts of the statehouse were already closed on the day of Jenny's testimony due to the COVID-19 lockdown in March.
- Based on our research and experience with anti-FGM bills in other states, we advised Kentucky legislators on how to develop a bill that not only criminalizes FGM in the commonwealth, but also empowers survivors to stand up for themselves in a court of law and provides education and outreach programs. We are privileged to work with Jenny and other survivors to make a difference for women and girls.

WYOMING

More than 400* girls protected

→ In February of this year, Wyoming unanimously passed an anti-FGM bill into legislation. This process began at the 46th American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) annual

meeting in August of 2019 when we met Representative Laursen and alerted him about the urgent need to ban FGM in his state.

→ Rep. Laursen set the tone for the passage of the bill when he insisted on a bipartisan team, seeking out co-sponsors from the other side of the aisle from the very start. AHA Foundation supported his efforts by providing draft bill text, strategizing together on how to avoid potential hurdles, and acting as a sounding board as questions arose.

MASSACHUSETTS

More than 14,000* girls protected

- Deborah Benson of the Massachusetts Women's Bar Association and AHA Foundation, alongside survivors and other advocates, have been hard at work on this state's FGM ban for more than seven years. Most of the work over the years was focused on raising awareness among legislators about FGM taking place in the U.S., to make sure they know that Massachusetts is not an exception.
- Together, we pressured Massachusetts legislators by making them aware of the states that had passed anti-FGM bills, some even during the pandemic, and reminding them that at the time they did not have a federal law to lean on and use as an excuse to avoid the passage of a state law. Finally, in September of this year, the state legislature unanimously passed a comprehensive bill outlawing FGM.

IDAHO

More than 500* girls protected

→ Idaho strengthened their existing anti-FGM ban to make it illegal to take a girl outside the state for the procedure or for a guardian to give consent for a minor to undergo FGM. We consulted with the bill sponsor on her planned changes and opposed a separate bill that would have gutted the existing anti-FGM ban.

*Source: Population Reference Bureau

ELEVEN STATES, AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, STILL DO NOT HAVE LAWS PROTECTING GIRLS FROM FGM WITHIN THE UNITED STATES and risk becoming trafficking destinations for FGM. Comprehensive state legislation is the best way to ensure the safety of women and girls, despite the recently reestablished federal FGM ban.

State bans give prosecutors the tools and resources to bring perpetrators to justice at the state level, where investigations and charges are more likely to be brought. They can also fill gaps in the federal legislation, for example by providing education for communities and professionals likely to encounter girls at risk of FGM. This is why AHA Foundation continues to fight for FGM bans in every state.

ENDING CHILD MARRIAGE IN THE U.S.

FEDERAL CHILD MARRIAGE EFFORTS

Throughout 2020, we have supported legislation introduced by Senator Ron Johnson that, if passed, would close a dangerous loophole in federal law we identified and warned about in 2017. This loophole allows for a minor of any age to sponsor a spousal visa or to come to the U.S. on a marriage-

based petition. An investigative report released in 2019 by the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee showed that 8,686 petitions for marriage-based visas involving minors were approved, and, 95% of the time, girls were the younger party involved.

STATE-LEVEL CHILD MARRIAGE EFFORTS

An Uphill Battle Filled with Unease

The U.S. still has a long way to go in the fight to ban child marriage. Before this year, only two states, Delaware and New Jersey, banned all marriages under the age of 18 or the age of majority. However, despite the difficulties of the pandemic, two more states took a stand against this abuse and completely outlawed child marriage.

A Warning About the Possible Exploitation of Girls in the U.S. Due to Online Marriage Certificates

Due to challenges imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, many states around the country passed bills allowing for marriage certificates to be issued online. In states that had not banned marriage below the age of majority, these bills, however, allowed for the possible exploitation of girls in the form of child marriages.

In order to spread awareness on the issue, we spoke with three survivors of child marriage and shared their testimonies across social media, in our newsletter and on our website to alert the public about children at high risk of forced marriage.

PENNSYLVANIA

▶ When the COVID-19 pandemic took hold of the nation, state legislators began to rightfully turn their attention towards providing aid to their communities. Despite this hurdle, AHA assisted state Representative Jesse Topper's efforts to push through a ban on child marriage as part of a COVID-19 relief bill that was passed in May. Bill sponsors' commitment to protect women and girls in their state, their ingenuity during this difficult time and the groundwork we had laid, together with fellow advocates, enabled the passage of the child marriage ban during days when the only legislation allowed to progress was related to the pandemic.

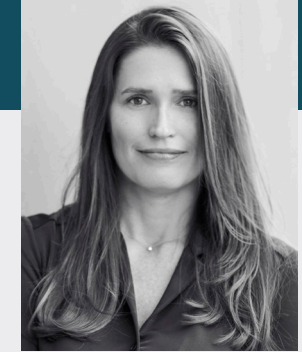
MINNESOTA

▶ Only a few days after Pennsylvania's initiative, Minnesota followed suit to become the fourth state in the U.S. to outright ban child marriage.

Appealing to the U.S. Government to Preserve Asylum Protections for Vulnerable Women and Girls

In the summer of 2020, together with Concerned Women for America, and Independent Women's Forum, we urged the U.S. government to amend planned changes to asylum rules that would end gender-based asylum.

We warned that women and girls persecuted for their gender, unable to live safely in their own countries, will be turned away from asylum in the United States if a rule proposed by the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security is enacted. The changes, finalized by the Trump administration in December of 2020, were temporarily halted by a federal judge in January of 2021, just days prior to it going into effect.



"Closing our doors to individuals fleeing gender-based persecution—including honor violence, forced and child marriage, and female genital mutilation—would be a mistake with grave consequences."

— Amanda Parker,
Senior Director at AHA Foundation

ENVISIONING LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY BEYOND 2020

During the last half of 2020, we took steps to ensure that next year sees increased progress on both the state and federal level. While we work to identify bill sponsors in states that lack FGM or child marriage bans, we have asked our supporters who have relationships with legislators to help our efforts by making

connections. Through this approach, we've identified new bill sponsors in Nebraska, Indiana and New Mexico, with other states in discussion.

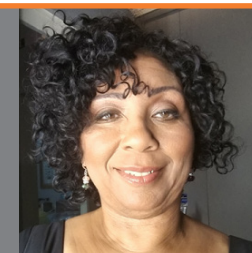
Our bipartisan approach to passing legislation to protect women and girls has been at the center of our legislative

strategy and even though it poses challenges in some states, we believe that a bipartisan approach to defending the rights of the most vulnerable is the only way forward.



"I've always felt the sense of urgency to pass this legislation because the lives of children were at stake. I truly see this [child marriage ban] as a child protective measure."

— State Representative Jesse Topper on child marriage ban in Pennsylvania



"If you are aware of child marriages and don't do anything as a legislator then you are just as guilty as the perpetrator."

— Sherry Johnson, child marriage survivor from Florida

CRITICAL THINKING UNIT

BREAKING THE BARRIERS TO FREE SPEECH AND CRITICAL THINKING ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

Our campus fellowship program, Critical Thinking Unit (CTU), defends freedom of speech, and promotes Enlightenment values and women's rights in colleges and in public debate. This is achieved through the efforts of our CTU fellows who continue to break the barriers to open dialogue, free speech, and critical thinking at 14 universities, including schools like Stanford, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania and Notre Dame. Despite the upheaval in school environments and the switch to virtual learning, the CTU made a seamless transition to digital events in 2020, reaching more than 590,000 people.

CTU Summer Training Program

To strengthen collaboration among the fellows, the CTU holds an annual in-person summer training where the fellows meet and discuss the ideas, issues, and principles that brought them all together. This year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this event took place virtually, and despite various challenges, was once again a success. The fellows not only had the valuable opportunity to speak and bond amongst themselves, but also to hear from experts—guest speakers, survivors and advocates such as co-founder of the Muslim Reform Movement and political commentator, Dr. Zuhdi Jasser, former Wall Street Journal writer Asra Nomani, forced marriage survivor Yasmine Mohammad, and our Senior Director Amanda Parker.



Screenshot of the summer training with fellows, staff and activists.

"I like how CTU is virtual more, so we can all see it [the events] without having to be at a specific university. I especially liked the debate about cancel culture from a month ago and to learn and be cautious about it more...It is great [Ayaan] stands up for critical thinking with regards to Islam and religion as well."

— Edward, AHA Supporter

2020 CTU Campus Events

Harvard University

Harvard University: Make America Dinner Again (MADA) Roundtable Discussion – February 22, 2020

University of Pennsylvania

Film Screening at The University of Pennsylvania: Islam and the Future of Tolerance – February 26, 2020

North Carolina State University

Surviving Child Marriage in the United States: Yes, it happens here too. Legally. – October 7, 2020

American University

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: How One Woman Turned Her Pain into Advocacy – November 5, 2020

4

EVENTS

15

CAMPUSES

15

FELLOWS

590,000+

REACHED

IMPACT IN THE WORDS OF CTU FELLOWS

Autumn Biggie, North Carolina State University, Fellow 2020 - Present

If I could talk directly to a donor who is funding the CTU program, I would tell them how deeply impacted the audience was by the event I held for my campus. The problem is not that people are apathetic, it's that people don't know that FGM, child marriage, and honor violence all happen in their country, in their community. Support from donors is so important so that college students can access the information they need to become passionate about these issues and make a difference. Thank you CTU donors for making this possible!



Serena, Columbia University, Fellow 2018 - Present

CTU has helped amplify my voice by granting me resources and funding to put together great events on my campus that otherwise would not have been possible. From selecting event speakers and curating topics, to moderating a discussion, I have developed a sense of pride in bringing important conversations to a greater audience.



Tenzing Sonam Tsering, American University, Fellow 2020 - Present

Being part of an event that raises awareness about FGM, child marriage and other human rights violations and empowers survivors to share their story and be heard is one of the most inspiring aspects of being a fellow. I would recommend the CTU program to other students because it empowers passionate students to engage in activism on their campus and community and make a change.



Noam, York University, Fellow 2018 - Present

In 2019, The Critical Thinking Unit at the AHA Foundation has given me the unique opportunity to excel as a student leader and bring awareness to human rights on campus. By far, my favourite elements of the CTU program are the education, resources and network it cultivates. Each year, fellows like myself are taught about not only the importance of advocacy for enlightenment values, but how that advocacy can translate into physical change through anything from mobilization to legislative reform.



Mohamed, University of Rochester, Fellow 2018 - 2020

One thing I really love about CTU is the ability to meet activists as well as passionate students from all over the country. It makes me feel like I am not alone in advocating for issues of human rights and free speech...I would like each donor to know that there is a dedicated group of students across North America working to help end harmful cultural practices, promoting civil dialogue and confronting extremism.



"A university education should teach students how to think critically—not what to think, uncritically."

— Ayaan Hirsi Ali, *Philanthropy Roundtable*



UNITING AND AMPLIFYING ACTIVISM AGAINST ISLAMISM

IN LIGHT OF RECENT terrorist attacks in Paris and Vienna, the conversations about the need for and urgency of combating the dangerous ideology of Islamism have been resurrected in the media. For AHA Foundation, our activism around combating Islamism has continued strong throughout the pandemic. Inspired by our founder's vision, we unite and amplify voices, ideas and actions of Muslim reformers, ex-Muslims, scholars, activists and students working together toward a common goal. This year we continued to expand and strengthen this network through digital events and conference calls.

America's Other Muslims: A Conversation Between Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Dr. Muhammad Fraser-Rahim

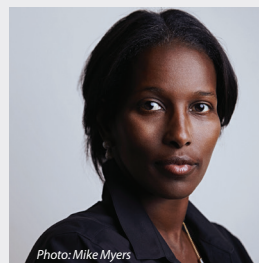
Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a former Muslim, advocate for a reformation of Islam and AHA Foundation founder, spoke in a webinar with Muhammad Fraser-Rahim, an American Muslim who has helped push back against radical Islam for the U.S. government and now Quilliam International.

In the webinar, the two discussed Fraser-Rahim's newest book, "America's Other Muslims: Imam W.D. Mohammed, Islamic Reform, and the Making of American Islam." While about the book, the discussion, which featured questions from our CTU fellows, centered around the impact of W.D. Mohammed on Islamic reformation in communities that follow his teachings and the future of Islamic reform within the U.S.



"Islamism is a cancer and it must be rooted out at its core. Many of my American and overseas Muslims are uncomfortable with this language, and us confronting this head-on... Ignoring it will see us be confronted with issues like the beheading in France or the rise of Islamist extremism on the continent of Africa."

— Muhammad Fraser-Rahim,
Executive Director of
North America for Quilliam
International



"I don't think the problem [terrorist attacks] is over. I think the Islamists we have in the United States are a touch more sophisticated than the ones in Europe and right now, [the] Muslim Brotherhood and other organized Islamists are playing along, trying to work their way through the establishment, and are quiet for the moment, but I would not be so complacent as to say this is a European problem and we have no problem in America. That would be really, really naive."

— Ayaan Hirsi Ali, on radical Islam,
The Megyn Kelly Show

IMPACT THROUGH MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Our founder, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, fiercely defended freedom of speech in the media in 2020. She gave interviews on *BBC*, *Fox News*, *The Spectator*, podcasts such as *The Megyn Kelly Show*, debated on *Intelligence Squared* and wrote for *The Wall Street Journal*, and *Philanthropy Roundtable*. Ayaan alerted the public about the spread of dangerous ideologies such as cancel culture and identity politics, and how tolerance of these poses a threat to freedom of expression and our democracy.

This year, Ayaan and AHA Foundation were featured by a number of outlets including:

- ➔ **Intelligence Squared Debate** | Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Julie Bindel, an English radical feminist writer, argued for the motion that cancel culture is destroying our freedoms. Kehinde Andrews, a Professor of Black Studies in the School of Social Sciences at Birmingham City University, and Billy Bragg, an English singer-songwriter and political campaigner argued against the motion.
- ➔ **BBC Newsnight** | In this interview, Ayaan raised the alarm against cancel culture while encouraging acceptance of others and tolerance of different viewpoints.
- ➔ **Philanthropy Roundtable** | Ayaan's article "America's Identity Crisis" was featured in the Fall 2020 edition and it focused on universities and identity politics. She called on society to embrace critical thinking and honest conversations to battle this ideology.
- ➔ **The Observer – Notre Dame Student Newspaper** | Critical Thinking Unit fellow Krista Akiki penned an op-ed about the reality of honor-based violence in the United States. She points out the failures of Western feminism, and how various shortcomings of the feminist movement leave out the plight of thousands of women and girls.
- ➔ **The Wall Street Journal** | Ms. Hirsi Ali wrote an op-ed titled "What Islamists and 'Wokeists' Have in Common" connecting her experiences with being canceled in modern day Western society with tactics extreme Islamists use to radicalize youth.
- ➔ **The Spectator** | In response to the beheading of Samuel Paty in France by an Islamist, Ayaan wrote an article titled "Can Macron stem the tide of Islamism in France?" She also contributed to a video interview with Andrew Neil about Islamism in France.
- ➔ **The Megyn Kelly Show** | Ayaan spoke with journalist Megyn Kelly about her life growing up in Somalia and the differences between her family's interpretations of Islam and the Muslim Brotherhood, the organization she later joined in her teenage years. They touched on her journey of becoming a politician in Holland before settling in the United States, and her experience with being canceled. Throughout the podcast, Ayaan advocated for Western Enlightenment thought and traditionally liberal values.
- ➔ **Hoover Capital Conversations** | Ms. Hirsi Ali joined Assita Kanko, a Member of the European Parliament, FGM survivor, human rights activist and published author, to discuss European values versus Islamism in this podcast. Ayaan and Assita are immigrants from Somalia and Burkina Faso, respectively, and have turned their past experiences with Islamism and FGM into activism via politics and writing.

DIRECT SERVICES, TRAININGS, AND OUTREACH

Before the pandemic began, hundreds of thousands of girls were at risk of gender-based violence. As COVID-19 intensified, lockdowns only heightened those dangers. During the month of May, our crisis textline received 7 times as many requests for help compared to the months leading up to the pandemic. Overall, since the onset of the pandemic until the end of 2020, messages to our crisis text line have tripled compared to the pre-pandemic levels.

Although in-person trainings have been suspended for now, we have adapted them to work as online videoconferencing-based sessions. Through Zoom Webinars, we have the capability to host the same training sessions and presentations but with an audience that can attend from anywhere in the country.

The San Diego Conference:

In September, a conference where AHA Foundation typically leads a presentation each year in San Diego was held online instead. This was the sixth consecutive year AHA Foundation presented, with this year's attendees comprised of social service professionals including counselors, social workers, and healthcare providers and outlined the information they need to support populations at risk of FGM.

Boise Training:

Just prior to shelter at home orders going into effect, a team from AHA Foundation piloted a training of trainers program in Boise, Idaho. The program highlighted cooperation between frontline service providers as a critical strategy to prevent and address FGM within the community. Approximately 20 healthcare providers and other professionals likely to encounter individuals impacted by FGM attended the training.

Future Training Plans:

AHA Foundation has explored partnerships with professional associations such as the American Medical Association, the American Bar Association, and the American Public Health Association to scale up online trainings for the future. We hope to work with professional associations to provide easily-accessible, accredited trainings on addressing the problem of FGM.

LOOKING AHEAD



"The vision we pursue and the programs we promote are not partisan. The COVID-19 crisis has not deterred us...we have seized many opportunities during 2020 and we are even better prepared to increase our work and expand our programs in 2021. Join us!"

— George Zarubin, AHA Foundation Executive Director

2020 has been a hurricane of a year that I suspect will go down as a pivotal point in history. This hurricane will carry over into the beginning of 2021, and regrettably, there will be more hardships as a result. But we have learned many valuable lessons.

At AHA Foundation, we have found that we can work effectively with state legislators sponsoring bills to end FGM and child marriage without always traveling there to testify and educate politicians. We have learned that we can expand our campus program, the Critical Thinking Unit, through online trainings and that our webinars can reach even more students than our previous on-campus events. We have learned that we can build a large network of committed activists online, not only in person.

These discoveries have opened new frontiers for our work. In 2021, we will take all these lessons and apply them. Eleven states and the District of Columbia still need laws to ban FGM. We will work to get those laws passed. Laws to end child marriage still need to be passed in 46 states, the District of Columbia and in our federal visa criteria. But laws are only the first step.

Training medical providers and other professionals about how to identify these abuses, work towards their prevention,

and respond appropriately are our next undertakings. We will continue to raise awareness and call for action on social media and we will be hosting webinars on FGM for the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association.

The Critical Thinking Unit Fellowship Program is growing faster despite the pandemic, and in 2021, we hope to double the number of fellows and exceed 1,000,000 views on social media platforms.

The vision we pursue and the programs we promote are not partisan. The COVID-19 crisis has not deterred us! The word for 'crisis' when written in Chinese is made up of two characters: danger and opportunity. AHA Foundation understands the danger in this crisis. Many more girls are at heightened risk! Debates on college campuses have been put on hold. The tragedies in Paris and Vienna demonstrate that extremists won't stop during a pandemic.

But, we have seized many opportunities during 2020 and we are even better prepared to increase our work and expand our programs in 2021. Join with us by sharing your resources, writing to your legislators, sharing our vision and programmatic content online and by word of mouth! And thanks again for your support!

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Rarely is there a book that truly changes one's world view. 'Infidel' was one of those books for me.

In 2014, I read Ayaan Hirsi Ali's book and proceeded to buy three copies for my family as well as touting her amazing journey and intellect to anyone who would listen. Her strength, perseverance and advocacy for women's and children's rights is truly inspirational.

— Nicole Vanderheiden, New Hampshire



I am so very grateful for having found your organization and learning about the incredible work you all do. I never thought I would share the story of my life with anyone, much less publicly, but through my communication with you I felt safe to do so.

I couldn't be more thankful for meeting such beautiful, caring and supportive people throughout this difficult year. AHA and the wonderful people behind this organization are truly a blessing to women and girls all over the world. Thank you and bless you all.

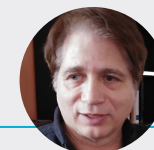
— Nevaeh Novak, South Carolina



Ayaan Hirsi Ali has been my hero for many years. Thank you for all you do. I have encouraged both of my two oldest granddaughters to read 'Infidel.'

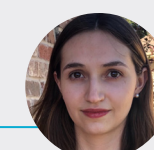
Hopefully, when I am gone and can't share your message, they will share your message. Even better, I hope and pray, they will live in a world where FGM, forced marriage and honor killings are eradicated. What a wonderful world that would be.

— Beth Powers, pictured with her granddaughter, Indiana



Her [Ayaan's] story and strength resonated with me and motivated me to do more about gender-based violence... We must stop putting women and girls at risk of these practices for the sake of political correctness. The overarching concern should be consent, and the victims are too young to consent to their victimization. Imagine being a child and being forced to marry a much older man!

— Michael Cavallo, Massachusetts



I remember talking to my family about FGM prevalence in the U.S. and my aunt guided me towards Ayaan. I watched her interview on Fox News where she was talking about FGM...It was probably then when I became adamant about helping to stop it. Thankfully, Ayaan and AHA Foundation do the hard work and really all I have to do is spread the word and help contribute financially.

— Jaclyn Soneff, Colorado



ESTABLISHED BY AYAAN HIRSI ALI

to put the ideas she writes about into practice, AHA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works to protect women from honor violence, forced marriage and genital mutilation. Our programs advocate for freedom of speech on campuses and in public debate, and amplify the voices of Muslim reformers.

Learn about AHA Foundation's work at TheAHAFoundation.org, stay in touch with the movement by signing up for our newsletter updates, and join our conversations about issues related to gender-based violence and oppression on Facebook and Twitter at [@AHAFoundation](https://twitter.com/AHAFoundation). Please encourage your friends and family to follow us as well.

Together, we can put an end to FGM, child and forced marriage, and other horrifying practices that are hurting women and girls behind closed doors in American communities. Together we can relegate dangerous ideologies that are often used to justify these abuses to the past.

JOIN US.

SUPPORT OUR WORK.
GIVE A GIFT TODAY.

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