



UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH
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**FOUNDER OF AFGHAN LEARNING INSTITUTE TO SPEAK AT USJ
2014 McAuley Lecture Features Dr. Sakena Yacoobi**



WEST HARTFORD, Conn. (September 22, 2014) – The University of Saint Joseph will host Dr. Sakena Yacoobi, founder of the Afghan Institute of Learning, as the speaker for its annual McAuley Lecture. Yacoobi will speak on “Transforming Afghan Lives and Communities with the Afghan Institute of Learning” on Wednesday, October 1, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. The event will take place in the Crystal Room, Mercy Hall located on the University’s main campus at 1678 Asylum Avenue, West Hartford. The lecture is free and open to the public, but reservations are required. To register, contact Kelley Streeter at kstreeter@usj.edu or 860.231.5228.

Yacoobi, who received an honorary degree from the University in May, is the President and Executive Director of the Afghan Institute of Learning (AIL), an Afghan women-led NGO founded in 1995. The organization was established to provide teacher training to Afghan women, to support education for children, and to provide health education to women and children. Under Yacoobi’s leadership, AIL has established itself as a groundbreaking, visionary organization which helps women and communities find ways to bring education and health services to poor and disenfranchised Afghans. AIL was the first organization to offer human rights and leadership training to Afghan women. It supported 80 underground home schools for 3,000 girls in Afghanistan after the Taliban closed girls’ schools in the 1990s. AIL was the first organization that opened Learning Centers for Afghan women—a concept now copied by many organizations throughout Afghanistan.

Dr. Yacoobi's appearance is sponsored by Lori McGee, USJ Ambassador and Trustee at Renbrook School; The Ethel Walker School; Kingswood Oxford School; and Miss Porter's School

About the McAuley Lecture:

Established in 1951, the McAuley Lecture series features distinguished scholars and researchers who reflect the educational mission of the University of Saint Joseph and the compassionate service of the Sisters of Mercy. The lecture series is named in honor of Catherine McAuley who founded the Sisters of Mercy in the mid-19th century to serve and advocate on behalf of Ireland's poor citizens, with a special emphasis on women and children.

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The University of Saint Joseph (USJ) offers a wide range of graduate, undergraduate, and certificate programs that combine a professional and liberal arts education with a focus on service. Coeducational graduate master's and doctoral degree programs are taught on the University's two campuses in West Hartford and Hartford, Connecticut; at off-campus locations throughout the state; and online. Undergraduate programs for women and for coeducational adult students take place on our beautiful suburban campus and include more than 22 majors and six pre-professional programs, each of which provides personal attention in a caring environment. Founded in 1932 by the Sisters of Mercy, the University of Saint Joseph welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and religious traditions. To learn more, view our website at www.usj.edu.

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