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STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY TAKE A WALK FOR THE WOMEN OF AFGHANISTAN

Bloomington, Ill.—A protest against human-rights violations targeted to women and girls in Afghanistan, planned by an Illinois Wesleyan University student group, is set for Sunday, March 28.

The Feminist Majority Leadership Alliance (FMLA) will take a stand—or rather, a walk—to raise public consciousness on this international issue, beginning at 2 p.m. at the Shirk Center parking lot, 302 E. Emerson, Bloomington.

An on-site donation of \$10 is requested. All proceeds will go to benefit the women and girls of Afghanistan.

The protest is aimed at mobilizing students and the community to take a “stand” against the dire situation faced by Afghan women and to raise funds earmarked to help those women, according to FMLA.

"Since the Taliban militia group seized control in September of 1996, women and girls in Afghanistan have been living under virtual house arrest," said Beth Raboin, president of FMLA at IWU. "They cannot work or go to school. They cannot even leave their house without wearing a "burqa" or being accompanied by a close male relative."

A burqu is a heavy head-to-toe garment with a small mesh opening to see and breathe through.

"It has not always been this way," Raboin continued. "Afghan women once enjoyed many of the same activities women in this country do. They were educated and employed, for example. Now, they have been silenced. It is now up to people like us to take action in our own communities and be the voice of protest for the 11.5 million women whose own voices have been silenced a half a world away."

Afghanistan is a southern Asia nation, located north and west of Pakistan and east of Iran. It is slightly smaller than Texas with a population of 24.8 million. **-30--**