

Norouz-e-Omid - The New Year of Hope

Community Screenings of *The Glass House*: March 2010

Thank you so much for your interest in hosting a movie night in support of **Omid-e-Mehr Center** in Tehran (Iran) as featured in ***The Glass House***. We hope these screening parties will generate support and awareness around Omid and its vital work in creating safe spaces for girls in Tehran, Iran.

Whether you are passionate about film and social issues or simply want to gather a group of friends for a screening, we are excited for you to join our community. Screening a documentary is one of the most powerful and creative ways to generate discussion and raise support for the issues you care about most. We look forward to working together towards the common goal of growing the center's reach and positive impact on young women.

In October 2009, we raised \$60,000 across an 11-city screening tour. With your active participation, we are confident that we will raise even more in March 2010.

Please join us as we contribute meaningfully to the lives of youth in Iran.

How to Get Involved

1. Purchase the Community Screening Kit and host a house party for friends and family to fundraise for Omid.
2. Attend a private house party in your local area by organizing with friends or family.
3. Attend a public screening in your local area by checking the Fictionville Studio website for public screenings: www.fictionvillestudio.com/norouz.html.
4. Suggest to Omid some organizations or individuals that would be interested in donating time, space, or funds.
5. Donate directly to Omid through www.omid-e-mehr.org/getinvolved.html. (Tax-deductible donations can be made).

Why Norouz?

Norouz, meaning "new day" is the traditional Persian New Year. It is a time to strengthen our relationships with family and friends as well as a time to think about our community as a whole. If you do celebrate this holiday, how do you feel when everyone is together, celebrating over the Haft-Sin? What is your favorite part of this holiday? If you do not celebrate this holiday, perhaps this is the best year to start! Whether you have celebrated for years or are new to Norouz, please consider Norouz-e-Omid as one of the many ways you will celebrate this year.

Norouz is a time to:

- Reflect and to give back
- Come together to make a difference
- Carve out time to contribute to the community
- Support organizations vital to the social health of youth in Iran

As a House Party Host, you become part of a group of international citizens who care deeply and are dedicated to women's rights, Iran, and social activism. We would like to welcome you by including limited edition cards of artwork created by the girls at Omid, as part of the Community Screening Kit.

We are here to make this fun, engaging, and smooth. Please feel free to contact us at any time to ask questions or seek advice on how to make your screening the best it can be: norouz@fictionvillestudio.com. **And remember, donations are tax-deductible for US and UK residents.**

Mission

To use the success of “The Glass House” (2009 Official Selection Sundance Film Festival) to raise awareness and funding for the Omid-e-Mehr Center in Tehran, featured in the film.

These house parties will present an opportunity to create meaningful dialogue and allow for you and your guests to make a lasting, direct contribution to young women in Iran.

Norouz-e-Omid Goals

1. Grow a community of 100 individuals who wish to host house parties for friends and family.
2. Raise funds for the vital work that Omid-e-Mehr contributes to the local Tehran and global Iranian community.
3. Share the experiences of young women in Tehran, Iran and how these stories connect to young women across the world.
4. Emphasize that no donation is too small. Barack Obama raised millions of dollars for his campaign from both a multitude of small donations and some large ones. Norouz-e-Omid will adopt a similar way of thinking in order to encourage action, no matter the size of the financial outcome.

How funds will be used

Omid currently operates a day care center that serves 100 young women and will be opening a smaller second center in 2010 that will eventually cater to an additional 80 girls.

Operational Costs:

- Current operating costs are approximately \$280,000 per year and are expected to increase to close to \$500,000 annually once the second center becomes fully operational
- Girls spend an average of two years at Omid, which means that that it costs Omid approximately \$5,500 to put one girl through the complete program.

Examples of how your donations can be put to use:

- **\$100** will cover the costs for one girl sitting for an IT examination and receive an accredited certification after passing the examination.
- **\$200** will cover the costs for one girls sitting for the English language IELTS examination and receive an accredited certification after passing the examination.
- **\$500** will cover the costs of purchasing one digital camera for the photography workshop.
- **\$900** will cover the costs of one new computer station (computer hardware and software, desk, chair, manuals, etc.).
- **\$1,500** will cover the costs for a two day field trip for 20 girls to the Caspian Sea
- **\$2,750** will cover the costs of one girl for one year.
- **\$5,500** will cover the costs of one girl for the duration of her entire two-year stay at Omid.
- **\$10,000** will cover the costs of all the replacement equipment (computer hardware, software and peripheral equipment, copy machine, kitchen appliances, etc.) that has to be purchased in 2010.
- **\$16,000** will cover the costs for running the English language classes for one year.
- **\$21,000** will cover the costs of running the IT classes for one year.

About *The Glass House* and Omid-e-Mehr

About the Film

“The Glass House” skillfully examines the mostly hidden lives of young women, teetering on the fringes of Iranian society in modern Tehran. Marginalized by their families, these women have found a saving grace in a day center formed by an Iranian expatriate.

Marjaneh Halati, a London-based social psychologist and psychotherapist, founded the center to give downtrodden young women a voice, thus empowering them with the life skills they need to succeed on their own. Many of these teens previously spent time in a jail, hospital, or state home because they had no other options.

Samira struggles to overcome forced drug addiction; Mitra harnesses abuse and abandonment into her creative writing; Sussan teeters on a dangerous ledge after years of sexual abuse; and Nazila burgeons out of her hatred with her blazing rap music.

The young women see Marjaneh as both a mother figure and a mentor and cherish her frequent visits from London. In superb cinema vérité style spanning 18 months, *The Glass House* deftly portrays a spirit of hopefulness. These former victims are given the chance to express themselves and transform their difficult circumstances into new beginnings.

About the Omid-e-Mehr Center

Omid-e-Mehr was established in 2004 in Iran to strengthen the social, emotional, and economic competencies of disadvantaged young women (aged from 15 to 25), and provide them with a sense of self-worth and with the opportunities to experience a full range of life options through self-empowerment, education and training.

Our clients have typically either been put into care from an early age, or run away from abusive homes, or live in extreme poverty. They often suffer from severe mental health and emotional difficulties, mostly stemming from their experiences of neglect, physical and sexual abuse, and exposure to drugs and violence. Despite their past difficulties, and the obstacles still facing them, our young clients have dreams. They yearn to participate in life, and to make meaningful contributions to the world around them. Omid's holistic approach provides these young clients with the opportunities to realize such dreams. They are offered the tools, structure and support to help them succeed.

Above all, we offer the girls a chance to be heard. The cornerstones of this approach are self-empowerment, education and training, supplemented by effective work placement, counseling and assistance. To learn more about Omid-e-Mehr click, visit omid-e-mehr.org