

A CITIZEN DIPLOMAT IN AFGHANISTAN



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NOON
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Laura Dupuy

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With 56 percent of Americans believing we should leave Afghanistan now, what do we stand to lose if we depart prematurely from this increasingly dangerous and unpredictable region? What is the significance of the May 1, 2012 Strategic Partnership Agreement pledging U.S. support in Afghanistan through 2024? And why should you care?

Laura Dupuy, executive director of the Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy, spent time in Afghanistan earlier this year. Dupuy and five other community leaders traveled to Afghanistan at the invitation of Ambassador Ryan Crocker and the U.S. Department

of State. The delegation was invited to evaluate the situation for themselves, and were provided access to representatives from throughout Afghanistan, including meetings with President Hamid Karzai; General John Allen, ISAF Commander; and the Ministers of Public Health, Finance, Education, Agriculture, and Mining. She also met with many women whose lives have been shaped by the past two decades and who are fearful of their future as NATO forces withdraw in 2014. Dupuy will share her journey through photos and firsthand accounts of her meetings with nearly one hundred Afghans.