



“Dreams Come True”

Ahmad Durani

The Uplift Team would like you to “meet” this delightful family of four from Afghanistan.

Ahmad Durani, his wife and their young daughter moved to Anaheim, CA to take refuge from their own family and “tribe” in their home city of Kandahar. They were being harassed and threatened with their lives after being labeled as traitors for working with the US government.

The then family of three came to America with little savings, little English skills and big dreams. *“All my friends told me that in America I will become rich and when I have a big house, they will come to visit me. Hopefully my house will be close to the sea, they said. They don’t know that it’s very difficult to be successful in America – it takes a lot of work. But they also don’t know that when you work hard, anybody can become anything here.”*

Ahmad was initially introduced to Uplift Charity for guidance on how to “survive life in America.” When we met, they had just enough money to pay one more month of rent, but without a job and without a plan, they were on a path to disaster. They had frequent visits to the doctor for their child; but got into a car accident during one of those visits, adding more stress to their situation.

Ahmad’s case manager quickly recognized that the family needed to generate money; unfortunately, their idea that things are affordable in America and making money is easy was met with disappointment and shock. After understanding Ahmad’s long-term plan, the case manager helped him find a job to begin generating income. He also set Ahmad up with the temporary government services that he qualified for. Ahmad wanted to make sure he provides for his family on his own – without handouts. The most important decision the case manager made was to ensure that these temporary steps do not hinder Ahmad’s long-term goal.

Ahmad was starting school to become a pharmacy technician. He also began to attend the ESL classes that Uplift connected him to. School combined with full-time work and ESL kept Ahmad busy; he often looked tired, but he always had his chin up because he knew the hard work would soon pay off, and he believed there’s dignity in working hard. When he started his rotations for practical work experience, Uplift provided additional support to ensure he could pay his bills, and we helped him with a car that was donated to us by a generous donor so that he could drive to the various locations for his rotations and continue to make the necessary doctor’s visits.

With lots of guidance, encouragement and financial relief from Uplift, and with support from his wife, Ahmad recently graduated from technical school. Uplift proudly attended his graduation over the weekend – he was so happy and proud that day. Ahmed often sends us messages of how much he’s enjoying work, and he sometimes recounts the abundance of hard work and coffee that went into his accomplishment.

Ahmad is now working full time as a technician, and comes to Uplift events to volunteer, and to support other families who are struggling like he first did. His family recently welcomed a son, who keeps them quite busy. We are proud of Ahmad’s accomplishments, and cite his story to encourage other families to work hard toward their goals.