



## **“Picking Up the Pieces”**

*Noureen Talha*

“Please. I need your help.” These are the first words we heard on the other end of the phone. She was soft-spoken yet frantic. There was strength in her voice but her voice was shaking. Noureen was reaching out to Uplift for help because after four months of trying to make it on her own, she felt like she had hit a dead end.

Noureen had lost her husband about four months ago, while she was pregnant. He left behind his memories in the form of their two year old son and an unborn daughter. That’s all Noureen had to hold on to. She was also suddenly responsible for solely providing for her children. She was new to America, spoke almost no English, didn’t have a driver’s license and hadn’t ever worked in the United States. For four months Noureen made ends meet with the little savings her late husband left behind, the little help she could gather from her friends and from a kind couple who let her move in with them at a minimal cost.

When Noureen learned about Uplift and called for help, she had already given birth to her daughter. But she was about to lose her place to stay since the couple was moving out of state. She was exhausted but was not willing to lose hope. She explained her circumstances and told us that she would need financial assistance and lots of guidance from Uplift until she learned how to make it on her own in a foreign country. Multiple case managers worked with Noureen to give her the support she needed to care for her children. To take some time to mourn her late husband. And to begin learning the skills she’d need to survive.

Noureen learned how to drive and was gifted a car. She practiced English every day. Noureen had learned classical Arabic and the intricacies of the *Qur’an* back in her country; she had also learned to teach Arabic and the *Qur’an*. So she used those very principles to learn and practice English. In several months’ time, Noureen was able to communicate in English without help from a translator. Her determination was apparent.

She found a part-time job as a *Qur’an* teacher, and still seeks employment. She would like to teach Arabic and the *Qur’an* by interfacing online.

Since the couple she was living with relocated out of state, Noureen found a small, affordable apartment where she could comfortably raise her children. The Uplift team is proud to be a part of Noureen’s story and to support her through each of her steps toward self-sufficiency. Her story is not over. She is slowly getting used to her new life, and can use the help and support of her SoCal community.

Please reach out to Uplift to become a part of Noureen’s story.