



“Her Resilience Knows No Bounds”

Hinna Amari

Uplift Charity’s meeting with Hinna was by chance. She was working with an immigration lawyer to continue to process her residency status when two Uplift case managers walked into the same office for unrelated business. Uplift and Hinna started talking in the lobby and we quickly learned that we were in conversation with a very resilient woman; one who had experienced difficulty in her past but also one who could envision her future. She was not to be paralyzed by her current and past difficult experiences.

Hinna’s lawyer recognized the Uplift name, and given his knowledge of Hinna’s current situation, requested that Uplift stay in contact with her. We knew she would need a little guidance and assistance and we believe she’d make it big eventually.

Hinna is originally from Iraq but lived in the UAE after she got married. There, she worked full time as a banker. She was the sole provider for her family of two. Despite many job opportunities and encouragement from his friends, Hinna’s husband did not show interest in working. Instead, he spent his days playing video games, ordering food, and hosting his friends on weekday afternoons while discouraging Hinna from working hard. He eventually went on to verbally, emotionally, and physically abuse her.

While living in the UAE, Hinna and her husband were blessed with a young boy. Hinna knew she had an extra responsibility now and worked extra hard to impress her employers. Losing this job was not an option. When her six-month contract ended, her employers were glad to extend the contract for six more months, and yet again by another six months thereafter. Once she had run out of extensions, Hinna and her family decided to move to the United States to pursue other professional and educational opportunities.

She carefully budgeted her hard-earned savings to get legal advice on immigration, secure a modest apartment to live in, purchase an old car and purchase basic needs in the initial months. Hinna declined Uplift’s offer to provide her with donated furniture for her apartment. She didn’t see anything wrong with eating, sleeping and entertaining on the carpeted floor. All she requested was help with gaining asylum status, a work permit, and job leads: anything that would lead her to self-sufficiency.

Uplift case managers were humbled by Hinna’s attitude and impressed by her relentless efforts to succeed. Together we worked out a plan of action, which Hinna followed diligently. Together we made alterations to the plans as the needs arose. She was willing to learn from those around her. Uplift pointed her to workshops to polish her skillset, brush up on her English and acclimate to the workforce in her new home country.

Soon Hinna accepted a job as a recruiter for a property management company where she started as a low-level, part-time employee. She quickly proved herself worthy of managing a team and moving up the ranks.

Her private life was falling apart though. The emotional abuse continued, and the physical abuse increased. Hinna’s husband declined all job-leads but had no problem regularly asking Hinna for pocket money. He did not realize that he was now in a land that has laws against abuse and provides support to victims of abuse. After seeking advice from spiritual leaders, Hinna chose to separate from her husband. She was ultimately granted a divorce and was rewarded custody of her child. Hinna was motivated to work even harder and provide for her young toddler – she was now playing mother and father to her baby.

Hinna had mentioned that she was here to build a career but also educate herself. She meant what she said. Today Dr. Hinna holds a PhD. Despite the many challenges, Hinna kept to her goal.

Her lawyer later called us to express what he had learned about Uplift through Hinna’s experience. He was “blown away by Uplift’s professionalism with an underlying spirit of Islam.” He was impressed that “while Uplift conducts case management meticulously and is serious about its service plans, the compassion by which it interacts with its clients is top notch.”