



StepForward

To Believe in Yourself and to Take a Step Forward

Newsletter, October 2021, Vol. 1, Issue 2

Dear Friends and Supporters of StepForward,

As of this month, StepForward is one year old. Since its inception, networking with other non-profits has been essential to our operation. We often rely on these like-minded organizations to identify and vet the new clients they refer to us. Such referrals often come with guidance for the needs and desires that are specific to each individual. Particularly, we would like to recognize Piedmont Virginia Community College's Financial Resource Center, and its coordinator Amanda Keys, who has referred multiple clients facing major obstacles on the path toward their goals, and who has been helpful with recommendations for services.

Meanwhile StepForward has been able to help our current clients with tuition, tutoring, childcare, information, resources, and transportation; three of them have reached their goals since our last newsletter. One has entered a selective apprenticeship program, which provides a full salary with benefits and four years of training. He is now a big step closer to his dream of being an electrician and has a guaranteed job prospect after successful completion of the training. Another one successfully completed her Associate degree, and with new confidence, she is contemplating completing her unfinished nursing program. Still another has finished training and a certification as a Health Coach and is currently working on setting up her own practice. A couple of our new clients are working on getting their Associate degrees toward becoming a dentist and a nurse respectively.

StepForward is especially proud to have enabled a seamstress from a refugee family to open a tailoring shop in Charlottesville. She had tailoring shops in Turkey and Iran before coming to the U.S. and was determined to open her own business again in Charlottesville. With partial financial support from StepForward along with other local contributors and funders, she was able to raise the funds required for taking on the business. As often happens, it took a village to help someone realize her dream, and we so appreciated the advocacy and cooperation of her reference, her English tutor in this case, to meet a time-pressured deadline.

In July 2021, StepForward was highlighted by the Prolyfyck Exhibition Series (<http://www.studioix.co/prolyfyck-exhibition-series>) which supports local artists who run (in partnership with Prolyfyck Run Crew) and also supports local organizations that work to uplift the community. On the first Friday of each month at Studio IX Gallery a new art exhibit opens, partnered with a Run event on the first Saturday. The exhibiting artist featured for July, Caroline Oldfield, chose StepForward as the local organization to receive a portion of the proceeds from

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the sale of artworks during the month as well as proceeds from the Run. We are grateful for the generous donation from this group and are glad to help spread the word about their good work.

You are welcome to join us to continue the work of StepForward with a tax-deductible donation and make a real difference in someone's life. 100% of your contributions go toward helping the clients, while all operational expenses are covered by the StepForward founders. You would be proud to see how your support has helped clients overcome obstacles and has propelled them forward toward their life goals, and we thank you.

*With Warm Regards,
Achla Marathe, Lynda Fanning and Sunny Choi,
Co-founders of StepForward*

We are under the umbrella of Open Hands. The donations you make to StepForward through Open Hands are tax deductible. Please look for us at <https://openhands.avenue.org/>

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