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Fall Greetings from StepForward

As StepForward celebrates its fifth year of helping clients move forward toward their goals and purpose, we are filled with gratitude for the partnerships and people who make our work possible.

Spotlight on Our Partner Agency: International Neighbors (IN)

This fall, we are proud to highlight our strong partnership with one of our partner agencies, [International Neighbors](#) (IN), and specifically Becky Bassett, whose commitment has made a remarkable difference to our work. Over the past year, she has vetted and referred 10 new clients to StepForward. Each client along with their family faced its own challenges, and together with IN, we have helped them overcome obstacles in housing, childcare, education, transportation and employment. Our partnership continues to grow and now there is more blending with IN. One of our team members (MaryLewis Meador) now leads IN's monthly yoga class, creating a welcoming space for connection and wellbeing.

Client Stories of Perseverance and Progress

Each of our clients has a unique journey, and we are honored to walk beside them:

- Some need a quick jumpstart, for example, a laptop, a phone, tutoring, a repaired car, or help practicing English.
- Others pursue long-term goals. Two clients have now completed all coursework required for dental school applications, a huge milestone toward

their long-term goal of becoming dentists. StepForward has helped them with the required courses not available locally and not covered by financial aid.

Another recently earned a Master's degree in Art Therapy from Georgetown University. She intends to use it toward her goal of supporting mental health in her Latine community. She is working full time at [The Women's Initiative](#) in Charlottesville as an Art Therapist and Resilience Program Coordinator. Grounded in decolonial, feminist, and relational-cultural perspectives, she strives to create a sacred space where participants can connect, express themselves freely, and explore self-discovery through art.



Still another client, a cardiac surgeon from Afghanistan, has achieved certification from the American Board of Surgical Assistants (ABSA), which is a major step toward resuming his surgical career here in the US. He continues to train for the United States Medical Licensing Exams (USMLE), which are standardized medical exams for medical licensure in the United States.

We have also supported clients with short-term needs, from securing Commercial Driver's Licenses to helping tailors purchase sewing machines or providing laptops for those working and learning from home.

Our Ongoing Commitment

We continue to follow and support our ongoing clients, celebrating their successes and helping others overcome new challenges. We also welcome opportunities to collaborate with new partner agencies who can vet and refer clients ready to take their next step forward.

Thank You for Your Support

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who donates, whether once or monthly. StepForward receives no grants so we operate on our own or through your

generosity. StepForward is a 501©(3) where every dollar goes directly to meeting our clients' needs.

Your kindness and continued belief in our mission make all of this possible. Together, we help individuals and families Step Forward toward brighter futures.

With Warm Regards,
Achla Marathe, Lynda Fanning and MaryLewis Meador

*Life is mostly froth and bubble, / Two things stand like stone, /
Kindness in another's trouble, /Courage in your own. -Adam
Lindsay Gordon, poet (19 Oct 1833-1870)*



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