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Spring Greetings to all friends and supporters of StepForward!

We are happy to report several new clients as well as a new partner agency: Charlottesville's International Rescue Committee. We are also providing some updates on the continuing progress of our existing clients.

New Clients

We welcomed and joined the journeys of two different clients from Afghanistan, and one from Mexico. All have made significant progress toward adjusting to a new culture, making a living, and tackling the language, all at different stages of fluency.

One has demonstrated her motivation by mastering driving, improving typing and language skills, and completing Piedmont Virginia Community College's (PVCC) Certified Nurse Aid (CNA) Certification. Several jobs have led her to a long-term goal of working in Medical Coding as well as securing transportation to get to PVCC for required coursework, and to get to employment while caring for a family of 4.

Another has been employed since arrival but now is working toward his own goal of an Associate degree in Cloud Computing. On the way to that goal, he is trying for a different job with the same employer, with more responsibility but less stress. This would help successfully combine coursework and employment.

The third new client is from Mexico and is focused on language skills via private

tutoring as this is the main obstacle to her long-term goal: taking the coursework to complete PVCC's CNA Certification and finding employment in that field.

Progress of Existing Clients

Our first report from existing clients is one who has had many delays and obstacles: needing a special driver's license, no vehicle, no employment, etc. Now she has gotten around not one, but all of the above obstacles, that hard-won license, a job in a very reputable store, and making payments on a vehicle.

A second one is finishing another year of graduate coursework in Art Therapy at George Washington University, with graduation expected in spring of 2025. She relishes courses like Family and Marital Counseling, both professionally and personally. Meanwhile she continues her job at The Women's Initiative and as of this semester landed an Internship with ReadyKids in their Teen Counseling Program. Add to this, her therapeutic community art projects, specifically a mental health resilience mural series, painting along with High School students. See photos below.



Added a New Partner Agency

We are happy to have added the very impressive International Rescue Committee, led by Harriet Kuhr, as a new partner agency. We met with its 70+

staffers/case managers who learned the kind of clients StepForward is looking for: those very highly motivated to achieve a life goal while having to overcome obstacles. They oversee a large clientele of arriving immigrants. In the past year the number was capped at 275, but the total (over 1000) builds yearly since clients are supported for 3-6 months and tracked for 5 years, when they may attain citizenship.

Appreciating You

As always, we deeply appreciate your support and your donations. It is a beautiful thing to get to see steps taken, either one at a time or all the way to a goal. Thank you for your help.

With Warm Regards,

Achla Marathe, Lynda Fanning, and Dana Tornabene

I slept and dreamt that life was joy. I awoke and saw that life was service. I acted and behold, service was joy. -Rabindranath Tagore, philosopher, author, songwriter, painter, educator, composer, Nobel laureate (1861-1941)



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