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## Greetings to all friends and supporters of StepForward!

Spring Greetings from StepForward as we celebrate our 4.5-year mark since our founding, and as we continue to welcome new clients referred by our partner agencies.

We also continue to update these partners about our client profile: someone with a very strong motivation to reach a goal or purpose but held back by obstacles on their path. That's where we come in—our job is to help remove those roadblocks so they can keep moving forward.

## Partner Agencies

Our partner agency **New Hill** has just built an incredible shared-use commercial kitchen in Charlottesville called **BEACON** for local entrepreneurs who need access to affordable state-of-the-art space, equipment, storage, etc.



It will serve as a launch-pad to those who want to provide services like food prep, catering, baking, and much more. StepForward is grateful to see such a resource close by to refer to any of our clients with these goals.

A new partner agency is **Fusion Therapists**; it delivers care to those unable to move forward toward their goal of healthy living due to disorders that require access to and help from special therapists/counselors. StepForward has been able to help two clients gain access to this important resource.



## New Clients

Many clients have reached their goals and moved on; others are still on their path, making ongoing progress. In fact, our very first client has at last surpassed her goal of becoming a registered nurse and is showing amazing progress despite a deluge of obstacles.

Another client from Mexico (raised in Charlottesville) has been pursuing a goal to be a licensed bilingual (Spanish/English) speech therapist and has even completed her master's degree. Her obstacle now is needing intense preparation to pass the licensing exam, requiring both the knowledge and the test-taking skills. StepForward has been able to purchase a study bundle of special classes, as-needed practice exams, and even tutoring. When she reaches the point of trying again, we will also be able to cover the cost of the licensing exam.

Yet another client, who arrived in Charlottesville from Iran via an international nursing program at the University of Virginia (UVA), had the multi-faceted goal of finding affordable housing, a work schedule (long shifts in UVA's Neurological Surgery Department) to accommodate her four-year-old daughter and daycare, and getting transportation to and from all the above without the massive time needed for bus service. So, after International Neighbors helped her apply to United Way for a car loan, StepForward was able to provide a down payment for the car.

A client from Afghanistan has a primary goal to complete the coursework required to pursue a career in Medical Coding. StepForward has assisted her with the application and registration process at the Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC), and is committed to covering her tuition as needed. She also needed help with transportation to go between her job and classes and to care for her two young sons. StepForward was able to provide a down payment on a used car.



Another client from Afghanistan, who happens to be a former national cyclist, set a professional goal of obtaining his Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to pursue better opportunities for employment in the US. StepForward was able to pay for his tuition at PVCC to get the CDL training. He has now completed the classes and received his license last month.

Similarly, another client from Afghanistan, referred by International Neighbors, who along with his wife were tailors for ten years there. To help him start his new journey here, StepForward was able to purchase for him a heavy-duty sewing machine, a computer, and an e-bike for transportation to his job. He also has a long-term goal of training in Mechanics at either PVCC or at Charlottesville Area Technical Education Center (CATEC).



Meanwhile we are grateful for your support and deeply appreciate all donations; StepForward is a 501©(3) charity with all donated funds going

directly to our clients' needs.

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

*Have a dream, make a plan, go for it. You'll get there, I promise. --  
Zoe Koplowitz, author and marathon runner with multiple sclerosis*



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