

PATHWAY TO POTENTIAL: Afghans in the U.S. Two Years On



Within the first year, the majority of Afghan households reported at least one adult was employed

\$16.94

Average wage per hour, equating to more than

\$70,000

in income in over two years

Afghan households with two full-time workers are projected to...

generate more than

\$100,000

in contributions to Social Security in 10 years



contribute more than

\$110,000

to the American economy through expenditures on goods & services in **two years**

More than  **67%** of OAW Afghans placed in jobs by IRC were **under the age of 35** -- crucial for meeting the needs of an aging US labor force



Afghan workers are filling critical jobs in diverse industries. Top industries include:

- 1** Accommodation & Food Service 
- 2** Retail Trade 
- 3** Transportation & Warehousing 



ALEXANDRIA, VA | Nazila

Nazila arrived from Afghanistan in the U.S. in September 2021 through Operation Allies Welcome. After several months of processing at a U.S. Safe Haven, she moved to Northern Virginia and began working full-time to support herself. In September 2022, Nazila reached out to the IRC's Supporting Access to Financial Empowerment (SAFE) project with the goal of becoming financially independent. She wanted to learn how to manage her finances better to pursue her goal of owning a property management business and help support her family back home in Afghanistan. Her immediate need was to purchase a car to help her commute to work, which she was able to do with access to IRC's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) reduced-rate auto-loan product. Following her car loan, Nazila continued to meet with her coach, developing a savings plan to assist with start-up costs for her business, and opened a secure credit card to build her credit further. In the last few weeks, Nazila met with her coach to discuss the home buying process, including first-time home buyers programs, and attended SAFE's home purchase class.

After eight months in the program, Nazila's credit is in the good-excellent range, and she's saved 75% of what she will need for a down payment on her first investment property.

She has started looking at homes to purchase and was referred to a business counselor to develop her business plan. She aims to buy her first investment property by September 2023, one year after joining the SAFE.

"Thanks to the support of the IRC program and my dedicated financial coach, I am now able to see a better route to financial stability and business ownership. I continue to use the IRC program to provide support and guidance to other Afghan refugees in my community, helping them navigate the challenges of starting anew in a foreign land. My story is a testament to the power of community and the importance of seeking out resources and support when pursuing your dreams."

PHOENIX, AZ | Noor

Back in Afghanistan, Noor was a pilot. When the Afghan government collapsed in August 2021, he had no choice but to leave his family and flee his country. Shortly after, Noor was resettled in Phoenix, Arizona. With the help of the IRC's employment services, he secured a job at Panera Bread as a cashier. Noor knew that this job was only the first step and continued searching for additional ways to earn income.

With this in mind, Noor connected with an IRC financial coach. With the help of his financial coach, he accessed a loan from the IRC's Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) to purchase his first car, a 2018 Toyota Corolla, that will allow him to work as an Uber and Lyft driver. He worked closely with his coach to budget his money and build credit. Noor was eager to learn about other IRC in Phoenix programs, including a matched savings program and Small Business Development programming.



Noor's experience with the IRC in Phoenix was so positive that his involvement didn't end there. He encouraged over 100 newly arrived Afghans in his community to seek the same services. He believes so strongly in the importance of these services that he went above and beyond to support the financial coach in coordinating and scheduling appointments to serve his community. Noor has been such an essential part of the IRC in Phoenix office that he was hired as a full-time employee. Noor was just granted asylum and he now hopes to apply for his whole family to come to the U.S. as soon as possible.