November 1, 2022

Dear AACI Supporters,

“Before coming to AACI was a terrible time, I was not stable mentally, physically, financially. I did not have a work permit, to go from place to another I needed a car, I didn’t have a license, I was having flashbacks...I had panic attacks, I didn’t have any solutions to solve any of my problems.”

– Safia, AACI refugee client

Refugees are people like you and me who have been forced by war, crisis, or persecution to flee their homes and leave their entire lives behind to find safety in another country. For Safia and Fatima—two Afghan women we worked with at AACI’s Center for Survivors of Torture—they had to flee their homes with little more than the clothes on their back, leaving behind their homes, their careers, and their loved ones.

The journey to safety can last for months and can be deeply traumatic, full of extreme stress, physical exhaustion, and poor living conditions. When refugees finally resettle in a new country, they must then adapt to a new culture and language, while facing uncertain futures.

Fatima reflected on her arrival by sharing,

“The way we fled Afghanistan, it was full of stress, and it was chaotic and when we came we were living in a camp for two months and then after that coming here in California and settling down it was really hard.”

This is where your support and AACI comes in.

AACI counselors are here to provide trauma-informed therapy, to teach coping strategies, and provide a safe space to process emotions.

But as we work with our refugee clients through the trauma they experienced, we also work with them to ensure that other essential needs are met, such as housing, food, childcare, clothing, or transportation. AACI connects these clients with resources within AACI and in the community to meet these needs so that they can focus on healing.
Even more than all these services and therapies, AACI staff are here to be a stabilizing support for clients, to help them heal from trauma and empower them to be confident and independent in a new country – to dream passionately and to hope again.

Since coming to AACI, Safia has regained her physical and mental health, and her self-confidence has flourished. Today, she has a stable job doing what she loves most: helping others.

“I got my life back. I came to AACI, and they helped me with everything. I was lost. But now I know that I am free and I have my own life.”

– Safia, AACI refugee client

Fatima and Safia were able to create connections to a new community thanks to YOU and AACI’s community of generous supporters. YOU helped to lift Safia’s spirits and rediscover her resiliency and passion for life. YOU gave Fatima a second family at AACI.

Your support changes people’s lives at AACI everyday! There are many more refugees, like Safia and Fatima, who are still escaping crisis and are in need of your help. Your gift helps refugees cope with trauma, depression and anxiety and make a new life here in our community.

Our friends at ServiceNow and Physicians Medical Group of San Jose have agreed to match all donations up to $10,000 by December 31st! We are thrilled to have this matching opportunity and ask YOU to help us get there.

Will you help a refugee find peace in our community today?

“In solidarity,

Sarita Kohli
President & CEO

P.S. Remember- YOUR gift by December 31st can be doubled!