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November 23, 2020

Women of the World
Samira Harnish
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Dear Women of the World,

I came to the University of Utah because I wanted to study both Business Management and Cellular Biology based on my various career interests. I was able to finish my Management degree in August and with the help of the 2019 Women of the World Displaced Women's Scholarship, I am currently finishing the last semester of my Biology degree. In December of 2020, I will finally graduate and start my Master's program in January 2021. I was able to gain skills that currently help me and that will enhance my future career projects. I have decided to pursue Finance for my Master's because of how impacted others and myself were during this viral pandemic. I realized my capabilities to help others are beginning to thrive and in order to become stronger and more capable, I must continue my education. I would like to after obtaining my Master's then start working on the fundamentals and structure of the Non-Profit I want to create while also starting my Ph.D., where I will have an international focus whether it be economy or educationally based. My Non-Profit will deal with creating easier international trade exchanges with items like medical equipment, nutrients, and school supplies. It will in counterpart also be focused on the growth of education within 3rd world countries, especially areas with a history of war and low levels of female students.

This scholarship was the gift that helped me stay afloat during the turmoil of Covid19. When the pandemic hit I was forced to stop working for about a month and a half resulting in my finances being exhausted. Yet, the hope that kept me determined and resilient was knowing that my tuition for my last semester was paid for due to FAFSA and WoW. I was able to keep my courage and apply for job after job. I was lucky to have a great mentor in my Career Coach, Marcella Kirshbaum, who helped me land an internship and a part-time job for the summer getting me back into financial stability. I worked at the Utah Department of Health throughout the summer as a Health Surveyor. My ethics-based internship was at Hearsay Systems where I worked in the Customer Advocate Team while also working with the HR department to learn about the ethical practices of the company and implement my own creative material with my team. I was able to basically double my income during that summer which helped me pay for overdue bills that had accumulated and also some credit card debt when my finances were strapped at the beginning of the pandemic. I am now looking for full-time jobs in hopes to move forward in my career and be stable no matter what type of crisis may occur in the future.

I also decided that it was time for me to give back to my community on a larger platform. I had received a lot of knowledge from my finance and accounting classes that helped me understand the mistakes I made at the beginning of Covid. From my previous work as a Teller, I also had a knowledge and understanding of personal finance in regards to vocabulary, computational abilities, and understanding of financial products that most people did not have an in-depth comprehension of. I started my own program called Universal Finance Academy that is aired on BaharTV, a Middle Eastern channel that is broadcasted outside of California. It is completely voluntary and is meant to be informative to refugees and immigrants who come from a Persian or Middle Eastern Background primarily, especially the youth who have parents that do not understand the system in the US. In order to make it a show that would be comfortable for displaced or newly migrated women of different backgrounds, I made it always a point to have strong female guests from different socioeconomic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.

My show focuses on teaching the basics of finance such as important vocabulary, simple equations to understand payment and interest and have guest speakers. My guests' speakers talk about their education, the costs associated, the opportunities they had, their work experience, job opportunities, and lastly a message of hope or advice to the viewers watching. I have seen the significance of what happens when women come together or influence each other to stand tall. It results in the stability of home life, increased financial independence, and foundational comprehension of rights and responsibilities that many women who come as refugees or immigrants were unable to get in their motherlands. They will then share that power and knowledge with their children's who will live with brighter futures and opportunities.

Now that I am finishing up my Bachelor's in Biology, I have decided to start a show about the fundamentals of biology as well. It is called The Complexities of DNA and is shared on Bahar Production, with a primary audience of English, Persian, and Pushto listeners. I am focusing on DNA as the main topic so that I can easily talk about the origins of many scientific discoveries and in the future expand on more complex ideas. I want to discuss vocabulary, theories, scientists, experiments, and discoveries in a simple and efficient manner so that those without educational resources can gain free scientific knowledge. Hopefully, my shows will also make lots of young girls and women become passionate about both business and science in the way that I was able to.

I want to once again voice my gratefulness to Women of the World, those who support the organization, and those who helped fund the 2019 Women of the World Displaced Women's Scholarship. Without it, I would have been in a dire situation without the ability to get funds in other manners due to job loss and the fact that I was above a 270 credit limit while in my undergraduate. I will forever be thankful and hope with my continued education to help others with my consultation and advice, by continuing my free program lessons and working towards my ultimate goal of starting my own Non-Profit one day.

Sincerely

