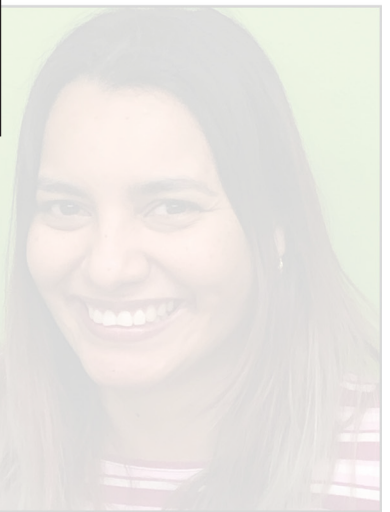
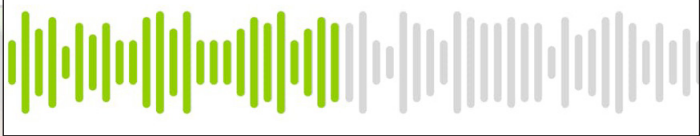
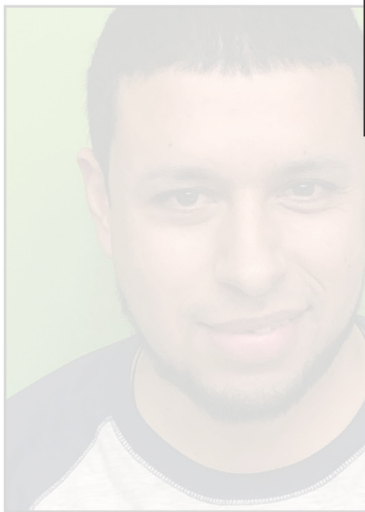




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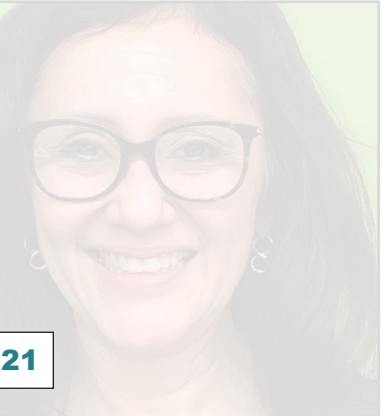
IMMIGRANT VOICES

Our journeys.
Our struggles.
Our successes.
Our stories.

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IMMIGRANT VOICES

Episode 13
YENNY from
Venezuela

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Episode 14
GERALDO
from Brazil

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OUR JOURNEYS • OUR VOICES • OUR STRUGGLES • OUR SUCCESSES



**EPISODE #13 — YENNY
FROM VENEZUELA**

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**EPISODE #14 — GERALDO
FROM BRAZIL**

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**EPISODE #15 — SARAH
FROM IRAN**

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS

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EPISODE #13— YENNY FROM VENEZUELA

POLITICAL ASYLUM/05:25

YENNY:

Exactly. Because my immigrant situation is applicant for political asylum. I am waiting for an interview to definitely know if the United States accepts me and my children and my family to live here.

DEBORAH:

Is the interview setup yet?

YENNY:

No. Right now the process is, maybe three years and a half exactly. Waiting for this interview.

DEBORAH:

It's nerve wracking. It makes you probably nervous to not know when you're going to have that interview and what your status is for your children.

YENNY:

And during this three and a half year or four years living here we are learning a lot. We are working and I'm waiting and praying for our situation because we don't want to go back to Venezuela.

DEBORAH:

Your life is in danger if you do.

YENNY:

I wish to have my documents also to go to a near country maybe to meet with my mother in Colombia. It's a good place. It's a good country. I can meet with my mother.

DEBORAH:

Is she well enough to journey to a place like that to meet you?

YENNY:

Yes. She would need to travel to Colombia. My mother can't travel to the United States because she doesn't have a visa and this is very difficult. However, during the time we are learning, being helped by a lot of people here, a lot of institutions like the Gardner Pilot Academy. When I came to the United States, really I didn't know what will happen here. My life in Venezuela was a good life with possibilities. Economic possibilities. I could have my own home. I had a good job. I had even some luxuries.

origin but I feel right now that the United States is my country. The final straw came when my children were threatened and persecuted. The communist party is known for punishing dissenters, particularly protesting university students. When my two college-age children noticed that they were being followed, the family made plans to leave. My daughter was the first to think about leaving Venezuela. To be here means an opportunity to be free. Coming here our lives were saved. Literally.

DEBORAH:

How soon did you leave after you decided to leave? How fast did you make it happen?

YENNY:

The situation in Venezuela is worse every day. And if I go back to my country, I can be attacked.

DEBORAH:

That was definitely life-threatening for you and your children.

YENNY:

Exactly.

DEBORAH:

Did anybody come to harm, actual physical harm?

YENNY:

Yes. Because my name is registered national list to control people who were employees for the government and left from the country to the United States.

DEBORAH:

I see.

YENNY:

They consider we are their enemies.

DEBORAH:

Wow. I know you said you miss your mother. She's still there, right?

YENNY:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

And then your brother had a terrible accident and you couldn't go.

GUEST INTRO/00:39

In their search for political asylum, Yenny and her children escaped Venezuela in 2015 to make their way to the United States. Unable to speak or understand English but with a determination to master the language, Yenny approached the task with the same vigor she had called on to earn her university accounting degree and to fulfill her commitments as an academic tutor to adults while in Venezuela. Language acquisition became her major goal while at the same time pursuing all channels to earn a living. During the pandemic she pooled her talents, including her musical abilities, to create instructional videos to teach Spanish online to children. As you listen to her story, you will be amazed at how much English she has acquired in such a short time. I caught up with Yenny by phone after the pandemic was well underway. At that time, resilient as ever, she was already teaching online and delivering packages for Amazon. The music you're hearing at the start of this introduction is a tiny sampling of Yenny's playing as she joined in a family celebration.

ESCAPING VENEZUELA/02:25

DEBORAH:

Could you tell us a story about what was going on for you and why you decided to leave Venezuela?

YENNY:

Of course. I came to this country because I worked for the Venezuelan government and I was persecuted for thinking differently from the autocratic regime that has dominated for more than 20 years and led to the worst social, moral, and economic situation in the history of my country. I want to say of Venezuela, Venezuela is my country of

DEBORAH:

Right.

LEAVING EVERYTHING/08:12

YENNY:

But with the regime, I left everything because my life and then my children's life was and is the most important for me.

DEBORAH:

That must have taken a lot of courage.

YENNY:

Yes it is.

DEBORAH:

How did you get to the States? Did you fly from Venezuela to Mexico or someplace in between?

YENNY:

We came flying with visa. Really when we came, our situation was better than the situation for a lot of people I have known here. I meant to tell you about my career.

SO MANY TALENTS/09:04

DEBORAH:

Okay. Yes. I'm so impressed with your resume.

YENNY:

About my career and my abilities. I want to say that my mother was a teacher was an educator and she promoted my abilities, my love for studying and she supported my interests, different interests.

DEBORAH:

You have so many interests.

YENNY:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

I like that.

YENNY:

My interests, as specifically, are numbers. I love numbers. For that I studied in account-ability. And music and I can play several instruments like guitar, electronic organ.

DEBORAH:

Yeah. What is that instrument you said you brought with you? The guitar and a C U A D R O. Cuadro?

YENNY:

Is smaller than a guitar and has four strings.

DEBORAH:

Oh, hence the name "four."

YENNY:

Exactly. Four in Spanish is *cuadro*. About numbers, but the instrument name, names cuadro too. And my job in Venezuela was in a government office tax collection manager. And at the same time I was a teacher too. I have two jobs for a long time teaching and a full-time working for the government.

DEBORAH:

Wow. That's a heavy schedule with children too.

YENNY:

Yes. I wish to apply my number abilities here in the United States, but at the same time, I think when I was working in Venezuela, I left to enjoy my musical hobbies. For example, I enjoyed it less than I wanted to enjoy.

DEBORAH:

Are you saying that in Venezuela you didn't have enough time to pursue your hobbies?

TEACHING ONLINE/11:28

YENNY:

Exactly. Here I work with music teaching and doing activities that I love and right now my priority is to advance learning English. Right now I am thinking a lot about what is my way what is my vocation? Because I have different interests, but I want to find what to do now and in the future. This is a question that I have still. When I came here, my first job was in a beauty salon. Working with cosmetology. This is a hobby for me doing this activity eventually. But I have more and more opportunities teaching Spanish, working with music. Right now I special satisfaction because in this situation because of the Covid-19, I am working online.

DEBORAH:

I saw the video of you. You look very, very excited about the work you were doing, where you were moving and speaking.

YENNY:

This is the first time I am teaching children online. I worked a lot in Venezuela with adults because I helped with theses before the grade. I don't know how to say this very well, but I worked about methodology, investigation.

DEBORAH:

And sounds like you were an academic tutor.

YENNY:

Exactly. Like tutor like mentor. This is an investigation previous the grade, previous the graduation. That was required to becoming a professional. Maybe here it's the same. I don't know. I worked with adults for a long time but right now I'm working with children.

DEBORAH:

How old are the children that you're working with?

YENNY:

I am working with children from toddlers to fifth grade.

DEBORAH:

Toddlers to the fifth grade.

YENNY:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

That's a wide range.

YENNY:

The most of the groups are toddlers, kinder, pre-school. But I have two groups. One of them are second grade and fifth grade. And it's special to work for them.

COMBINING TALENTS/14:43

DEBORAH:

Do you feel like when you're teaching that way using music and language and your body moving everything that you're using all of your interests in one place?

YENNY:

Exactly. I feel very well because I can speak Spanish. I can do that I love and that I do well. And I need my English when I am teaching inside. They have helped me with my English when they say something in front of me. I learn pronunciation. I learned expressions in English. We are teaching each other.

DEBORAH:

Sounds like a very satisfying career right now.

YENNY:

And right now for my age I think the best idea is to have my own business. And I

continue working with cosmetology, but right now I am opening my mind about to build something I don't know very well. What is a good idea for me. But something in relation with teaching, with mentoring, with tutoring, with education.

DEBORAH:

Yes. You mentioned life coaching. You've done some of that.

YENNY:

And I studied coaching and neuro-linguistic programming and some areas in relation with this field of education because I love this activity. Like a job, like a hobby, like a profession. And I think right now I need to focus my efforts on my main goals. And my main goals are first work. Of course, I need to work a lot. Because I have responsibilities here and in Venezuela my mom is my responsibility for example, and spend time to improve my English. When I think what I would change before to come to the United States, the answer it is my English. Because if I can communicate better, I can express at least part that I know or that I have experienced. I can move. I can be productive. I can feel confident or more confident in this country.

PERFECTING ENGLISH/18:08

DEBORAH:

Well, I think you're doing well with English and as your former ESOL teacher, your writing is extremely good.

YENNY:

Thank you.

DEBORAH:

You express yourself in English, written English, not only is your handwriting beautiful, but you write very well. Maybe finding a conversation partner would be good for you in terms of working on your English.

YENNY:

I know and I want to find a way to practice more. And really I have the best opportunity at home because I live with American people. But we're speaking a Spanish almost all the time. And this is some comfortable to me but I need to do more effort in this in this aspect. Maybe speaking like this call or in this way. This can help me because I have different topics in my mind. I try to be calm, but I am thinking frequently for example,

about my mom, about my assets in Venezuela, about our situation here. About my children, about money, and I prefer to go to work. And after that I am tired and I don't want to study. And I don't know.

DEBORAH:

In English you would say you're burnt out at the end of the workday. It's called burnout when it's like you've used up your energy for the day after your work and you just don't want to use your brain anymore. It's very normal when you're working hard.

PANDEMIC DAYS/20:21

YENNY:

These days during the quarantine, I have been extremely anxious to go to work, to have money, to send money to my mom, to solve different situations. And I am afraid to because I want to be healthy.

DEBORAH:

Are you able to get enough work just doing the remote teaching, doing the videos?

YENNY:

I want more hours to teach. This is a new idea. This is my new project. We are receiving people who is interested in the classes, in the online classes. And I have some hours. In addition, I work with Amazon.

DEBORAH:

Amazon.

YENNY:

Amazon. And I want to leave to work with them but I need to be careful.

DEBORAH:

What kind of work do you do for them?

YENNY:

I deliver packages for Amazon.

DEBORAH:

Are you wearing a face mask?

YENNY:

Yes. I have gloves. I have alcohol. I have everything that I can use to protect myself. I am afraid.

DEBORAH:

Sure. This is a very unusual situation around the world. I'm used to working at home and being alone and living alone. So in some ways my life is absolutely the way it always

is. But then when I go outside and everything's closed and I get frightened then. I feel like the world has turned upside down.

YENNY:

Right now I have a thought maybe this is an opportunity to discover different ways to communicate, for example, this way. And to think work more from home and I want to know about options to work more from home. I am doing my classes with love and with all my effort, but I need to be more productive.

DEBORAH:

You need more work. Tell me. How do you do your videos? What are you using? What is the technology that you're using to create your videos?

YENNY:

Starting using my tablet, my computer really. I am doing my first medias. And when I have classes we use the Zoom platform. We are teaching through Zoom. And for now it works. But I don't like the clarity or the sound. Maybe we need to improve this technology. I don't know.

DEBORAH:

With so many people working at home and using Zoom and things like it there's going to be more improvement. But before that happens, I think there's going to be a sort of traffic jam on the internet because before the epidemic, before the pandemic two million people used Zoom and then afterwards 200 million people are using zoom. I've been using Zoom for over four years. I taught creative writing in China for four years through Zoom. I was just curious when you're dancing and using your body to express words. Do you have a tripod set up where you have your phone or do you have a camera or are you using your tablet to record yourself?

YENNY:

My tablet only. Most of the time my tablet because like the image resolution more than my computer for example. Sometimes I can use my cell phone too. It works. It works, but I don't know. I feel comfortable with my tablet.

DEBORAH:

And are you recording an iMovie?

YENNY:

I record in my tablet. After I save in Google drive for the program.

DEBORAH:

So are your videos on YouTube?

YENNY:

These videos are private, uniquely for example for Our Ladies Academy. I teach there in Waltham or for Regis College in Waban. One for TLC in Wayland or for this is exclusive service to these schools. I was thinking about a YouTube channel on different topics in education, music. Something like different arts or I don't know, something like that. More general.

STAYING CALM/26:26

DEBORAH:

It sounds like you could create a platform and then every week have a different topic. Not just narrow it down to music or maybe one week, it's an art project, and one week it's a math project, and one week—it's to use all your talents.

Tell me, Yenny, what do you do to calm down when you're feeling nervous and frightened either by this pandemic or just in general with your situation in life? What do you do to stay calm?

YENNY:

Sincerely? I am eating. Eating more than normal.

DEBORAH:

Me too!

YENNY:

But also I love to play my cuadro and I am writing some music to play in my class and practice my classes. This is good for me. I miss my children a lot.

DEBORAH:

Where are your children now?

YENNY:

My children live near to me but they have their own apartments.

DEBORAH:

Oh. I see.

YENNY:

My daughter is married. She lives in her apartment with her husband, her daughter, her mother and father-in-law too. My son

lives near me with his girlfriend and his two roommates. And we have a lot of good people here. We meet frequently for dinner.

DEBORAH:

But what about now? Are you able to get together?

YENNY:

Eventually like we usually meet. For example yesterday was my granddaughter's birthday and we have a big plan to celebrate in a nice party only I couldn't spend a lot of time all day with my daughter with my granddaughter but I had more than twenty days without to see them. It is difficult. Weekends.

DEBORAH:

So did you get together online in Zoom?

YENNY:

Sometimes. Sometimes because my daughter continues working. She's a manager in a restaurant in South Boston and they continue on in "to go" and still normally. But almost normally already. It is not normal.

DEBORAH:

Nothing's normal anymore. Well, this was great talking with you, Yenny. Given everything you've been through, you're a very resilient person. You have a lot of strengths. You have so many interests and so much talent that you pull yourself up and you should feel proud of yourself.

CAREER FOCUS/30:34

YENNY:

Yes. I have different interests. It is good but it is bad too. I talk with you about that because it is confusing. Sometimes I think it is a better idea to do for example teaching and I continue working and thinking about cosmetology but I feel it is more better money, more solid the field of education. I don't know. Maybe in the future I can combine education with some service in cosmetology. For now I am teaching online with ABC Spanish in Motion and I am very very grateful because I have the opportunity to work. And I live to deliver packages for Amazon and this is excellent because the tips have been very very good.

DEBORAH:

People appreciate what you're doing. You're risking a lot by being out and about.

YENNY:

Yes, it is a risk but sometimes I want to work more. To complete my income and to be able to attend my responsibilities especially with my mother in Venezuela.

DEBORAH:

You have a lot of pressure.

VENEZUELA TODAY/32:16

YENNY:

The situation is really, really critical in Venezuela right now.

DEBORAH:

I've seen in the news. Terrible.

YENNY:

Critical, critical. And my mother is 87 years old. It's not easy. But I feel well because through the time I'm more focused more in calm and I know that I'm going a step by step. Step by a step. When I came here I didn't know English.

DEBORAH:

You didn't know English in 2015?

YENNY:

No.

DEBORAH:

Wow. You've done very well.

YENNY:

I couldn't understand the people, eh, but I had I really had loki?

DEBORAH:

You were lucky?

YENNY:

Exactly. I were lucky because I known a lot of Latin people, Hispanic people and could work with Hispanic people. I received a lot of help to learn little by little English. And sometimes I could study sometimes not all, but I have learned.

MAKING PROGRESS/33:50

DEBORAH:

You're making progress.

YENNY:

I want to learn more grammar, more more pronunciation, more more in general. And I have resources really. I have resources. I need to concentrate more on English and I am achieving little by little.

DEBORAH:

Have you ever heard the poem, “Yard by yard, life is hard. Inch by inch, it’s a cinch.”? Have you ever heard that before?

YENNY:

No.

DEBORAH:

If you know, a yard is three feet. So yard by yard, life is hard. But inch by inch it’s a cinch. Essentially means it’s easy.

YENNY:

Okay. Okay.

DEBORAH:

You’re doing it inch by inch and patience is good and you sound like you’re in a good place. Thank you so much for chatting with me and sharing your experience.

YENNY:

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you and thank you for let me feel that I am speaking well or better each time.

YENNY’S ADVICE/35:14

DEBORAH:

Oh, you are. I just want to ask you one more question. What advice would you give to somebody thinking about coming to this country? Maybe something you’ve learned or some advice you would give to somebody?

YENNY:

Sincerely, please to learn English. If you are willing to come here, you know that you will work. You will learn a lot of things about a new life. And this process is better is easier, if we can speak in English. For me, these are the first: if I can understand earlier, like kind of speak slowly, but I can speak. And with this for me a knowledge about English. I can live. I can live. And I know if I improve my English, I can be better every day. Communicating is their base. Obviously we need first to have a good health and there were a health emotionally, physically that. But English is so very important to learn before coming.

DEBORAH:

Thank you, Yenny. Thank you so much. Thank you. Take care.

YENNY:

Bye bye.

WRAPPING UP/37:04

Yenny combines humility, intelligence, resilience, determination and stamina. Her adoption of the English language and her gratitude for being safe here have cemented her desire to contribute her talents and expertise in a way that is surely making a difference in the lives of her students and her new friends in this country. Yenny is the perfect example of a lifetime learner as she continues to immerse herself in English and audio visual technology with the attitude that no job or challenge is beneath her.



EPISODE #14— GERALDO FROM BRAZIL

GUEST INTRODUCTION/00:39

Out of economic need and a desire to improve his family's lifestyle, Geraldo and his wife arrived in the United States with their youngest son and a ten-year visa. Despite his college education in law and experience in banking, Geraldo rolled up his sleeves to clean houses and restaurants. As the years passed, learning English became a driving force for Geraldo. When the visa expired, they risked uncertain immigrant status to continue their lives in the U.S. Thanks to today's technology, Geraldo and his wife connect with family members they left behind in Brazil. Still, it's a connection that can never replace the too-long delayed joy of hugging the grandchildren he has never met. Determined to expand his world beyond the local Brazilian community, Geraldo founded a home maintenance, cleaning, and handyman LLC business. An established entrepreneur, Geraldo boasts over 25 clients, continually expanding his offerings while ever mindful to keep his work life and family life in balance.

COMING TO THE STATES/02:15

DEBORAH:

My next guest is Geraldo from Brazil who came to the United States in 1999. And, Geraldo, tell me what was it that brought you here? Why did you come to the United States?

GERALDO:

I came to the United States because the economic situation in my country. Okay. In spite of having a good job, the salary did not meet a comfortable living standards.

DEBORAH:

How big was your family at that point?

GERALDO:

I have three sons living in Brazil right now and one son lives with me and my wife over here. But my family that's very very big Brazilian family, a third world family in some ways big family.

DEBORAH:

Have you been in touch with them recently about the coronavirus? I know they're having a terrible epidemic there.

GERALDO:

Yes. We are in touch every day. We have to talk with them and I see them on Facetime calls and I talk to them as much as possible.

DEBORAH:

So let's go back to 1999. Was it easy to come here? You decided for economic reasons that you wanted to come to the United States.

GERALDO:

Yeah, because I had a nice job over there. A good job. I get a visa.

DEBORAH:

You said you had a nice job in Brazil. What kind of work did you do?

GERALDO:

I work in banking and in a supervising role.

DEBORAH:

Okay.

GERALDO:

Yeah, it's a good wage, but not enough to have a good, I don't know how to say that.

DEBORAH:

Lifestyle.

GERALDO:

And I can't afford my sons' tuition and everything and I have to come to the United States.

DEBORAH:

Did you know anybody here in the United States?

GERALDO:

I had friends who received me over here. I come to their house and they gave me support.

DEBORAH:

So how long did it take you to get to the United States once you decided you wanted to come here? What did you have to do to come? Did you just how many months or years happened?

GERALDO:

Once I decided to come, I sold my belongings and get some money to support me here for a while. And I came in a six months. Plenty income. Not too far, not too long.

DEBORAH:

Did you fly here?

GERALDO:

I fly straight to Boston.

DEBORAH:

Oh, straight to Boston. Okay.

GERALDO:

Yeah.

DEBORAH:

Did you have any problems with immigration or anything like that?

GERALDO:

No, no, no. I have a visa for 10 years and at that time. Now it's expired. But I had no problem to pass through.

LEAVING FAMILY/04:59

DEBORAH:

And how many of your children did you bring with you?

GERALDO:

I didn't bring my son and my family at the same time that I came. They stayed in Brazil for a while about 6 months and then after six months they came. My wife and my youngest.

DEBORAH:

I see. So you left the other sons in Brazil?

GERALDO:

Yeah.

DEBORAH:

Was that a hard decision?

GERALDO:

It's always a hard decision. Oh, I feel

sick for that, but I'm here about 20 years and I didn't see them anymore. Only by FaceTime.

DEBORAH:

Wow. That must be difficult.

GERALDO:

Now I have grandkids, like 6 grandkids I have in Brazil and I never embraced them. I never hugged them. I never kissed them. I don't know how they smell.

DEBORAH:

That's one thing you can't smell things through the internet.

GERALDO:

It's tough.

ENGLISH AS OBSTACLE/06:05

DEBORAH:

So what were some of the struggles that you had after you got here to adjust or to find a job? What kinds of obstacles did you encounter?

GERALDO:

The obstacles was the language. I knew a couple of words but to link the words to make a sentence was too hard for me because the verbs. But not to work and the Brazilian community is very big here and you can find a job with them. You can work without talking.

DEBORAH:

What happened that made you decide you wanted to learn English?

GERALDO:

Oh, once you live here, you'll have to learn how to communicate.

DEBORAH:

You do a good job, but I've encountered immigrants who've been here for 15 years, who never decided to learn English. So why was it different for you since you were already in a Brazilian community?

GERALDO:

Yeah, I know people who came before me but they still don't speak in English. They know about something. They understand, but they cannot communicate. It's depends. Every person is different.

DEBORAH:

Well, tell me how you were different than

that you decided. Was there a particular day when you said, "Okay, I'm going to do it!" Or what happened that made you decide?

GERALDO:

Because I had a good education, a college degree and it's easier to learn. Some people, they live here some Brazilians or South Americans or Central Americans, they have no education. They are not educated. They went to the school until the second grade only. So, it's very difficult for them to learn.

DEBORAH:

So you had a degree from Brazil—from university. What was your degree in?

GERALDO:

I went to the law school

DEBORAH:

To law school?

GERALDO:

Yeah.

DEBORAH:

Did you become a lawyer?

GERALDO:

I didn't graduate, but I have a law school.

DEBORAH:

Wow.

GERALDO:

And my goal was to be a biochemistry, but I couldn't go to the school because it was too far from my city. And then I went to law school.

DEBORAH:

Wow. And that somehow led to the banking career?

GERALDO:

No, I start to work in the bank before I get graduation.

FINDING WORK/08:44

DEBORAH:

What were some of the other obstacles?

I mean, here you were—you are a professional in Brazil and now you come here. You have to work. What kinds of work could you find?

GERALDO:

Once I could speak the language I had to work as a cleaner in a restaurant. I worked

as a prep chef, and cleaning. Yeah, food prep and cleaning. Very hard.

DEBORAH:

And what about your wife? Was it hard for her to adjust?

GERALDO:

Yes. Very hard. Because you know, it's tough when you have to leave your family or your friends the comfortable you have in the country. So once the change is very tough to adjust.

MISSING FAMILY/09:43

DEBORAH:

Do you have regrets?

GERALDO:

No, no regrets. I have no regrets, but I miss my country. I miss my family and friends.

DEBORAH:

What's the most difficult obstacle you've had right from 1999 to today. Does something stand out as one of the toughest moments for you?

GERALDO:

The tougher moments is to be with my family. They grow up and they get some of them passing away and I couldn't stay with them. No, that's difficult.

DEBORAH:

That must be very, very hard.

GERALDO:

Yes.

GROWING A BUSINESS/10:24

DEBORAH:

So when did you decide to start your own business?

GERALDO:

Once my wife came here she started to work as a housekeeping or housecleaning. We decided to open a company and try to grow up as an entrepreneur because everybody likes to know everybody wants to get a better life.

DEBORAH:

What year was it that you started your own company?

GERALDO:

It's about seven years ago.

DEBORAH:

Seven years ago.

GERALDO:

It was my wife's company. I was working as a cook in a nursing home so I quit my job and started to help her. And we opened the sole propriety and now I have an LCC company.

A GOOD CUSTOMER/11:15

DEBORAH:

What kind of spinoff company? If you were going to define a good customer, how would you define a good customer? How does somebody get to be a good customer or one of your favorite customers?

GERALDO:

The favorite customers are the ones who never complain about the things you did good. They try to say you're not good. I have no complaints because my customers are very good. They give us freedom to work. They give us the key. We have a good relationship with them.

DEBORAH:

How many customers do you have?

GERALDO:

I had, oh, let me see. It's about a 20, 24, 25 customers.

DEBORAH:

And during this COVID 19 pandemic what's happening?

GERALDO:

They are good customers. They still pay up. Send us a check and we're expecting that situation will get better to meet again.

DEBORAH:

So you're, you're able to shelter at home right now. Oh, that's good. That's good.

GERALDO:

Yeah.

PANDEMIC P.O.V./12:24

DEBORAH:

So, what do you hope might change in the world after this experience of this pandemic? You think it's going to get back to normal? What do you hope will change in a good way?

GERALDO:

I think a lot of things are going to be changed.

DEBORAH:

Like what?

GERALDO:

People have to think more about the environment. About the way they treat other people. How they share their lives with their families. A lot of things are going to be different. I hope. Because everybody is always challenging for money, money, money. Life does not resume on money. You have to love more each other. It makes you think about that.

DEBORAH:

So did you ever bring anything with you from Brazil that you still have? Some object or something that you always keep with you?

GERALDO:

No. Just, the only things I bring is my clothes in my back and a little brief case. Nothing else.

DEBORAH:

No personal item.

GERALDO:

No.

ADVICE FROM LIVING/13:40

DEBORAH:

What would you tell somebody who wants to come to this country? What kind of advice would you give them? If you could do it over again. If I had known this, I would've done that, or some advice for them?

GERALDO:

The only thing I can tell them is come with focus to work hard and don't expect to be rich because life is very, very hard over here, not easy like you think.

DEBORAH:

It's not the American dream.

GERALDO:

It's still a dream for us because our country is more difficult to live than here. To survive. To have things materials. But it's not a dream over there. It's like a fantasy. No, the reality is very different from when you you're there. Before you come, your dream is so big, but when you come here, the life is not that easy as like you think, but I tell them, yeah, you will work hard when

you be here. Your dreams come true.

DEBORAH:

How did you find out about the Gardner Pilot Academy Adult Education Program? How long have you been coming to that?

GERALDO:

About four or five years.

DEBORAH:

And how'd you find out about them?

GERALDO:

My friends they told me about this school and I applied to the school and that helped me a lot. Give me confidence. Give me strength.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/15:29

DEBORAH:

What are you the most proud of in your life?

GERALDO:

I don't ever think about proud. I'm proud about my.

DEBORAH:

Maybe the happiest moments. What are some of the happiest moments? Where you've experienced success either financially or emotionally or some way?

GERALDO:

I think emotionally because I'm not addicted to the money. I think money is to spend, but I'm so happy to have my family in a good way. Healthy and other things is gone. Working. Good.

FUTURE DREAMS/16:11

DEBORAH:

What are some of your dreams about the future? Assuming that we pull out of this pandemic that's going on right now? What are some of your personal hopes and dreams?

GERALDO:

I'm so simple. Today my dream there to continue living my life and enjoy the journey. That's all. But in a commercial issue I also plan to grow my business. So my family will provide for. This way we can have a easier life.

DEBORAH:

Okay. So like right now, how many people

you have working for you?

GERALDO:

Oh, it's me, my wife. And about two more people.

DEBORAH:

So are you thinking about more people you want to have?

GERALDO:

Yeah. I would like to have but we have a bad situation in the country. People are trying to save money and it's not easy to grow the company but we are trying to grow it.

DEBORAH:

Right. Well, you have happy customers. That's for sure.

GERALDO:

Yeah.

MY SON, THE DREAMER/17:17

DEBORAH:

So is your son, considered a "dreamer"?

GERALDO:

Yeah, he has his own dream.

DEBORAH:

No, but I mean is he considered like one of the dreamers?

GERALDO:

He stay in the DACA.

DEBORAH:

Oh yes. That's what I meant.

GERALDO:

He is a DACA guy and expecting through the government to legalize them.

DEBORAH:

So is he trying to become a citizen?

GERALDO:

There's no law about that at this time, but they still renew? No, the DACA law.

DEBORAH:

When you brought him here how old was he in 1999?

GERALDO:

He was four years old.

DEBORAH:

So he has no memory of Brazil?

GERALDO:

No, no. He don't remember anything in there.

DEBORAH:

How's his Portuguese?

GERALDO:

He's good in Portuguese and he speaks four languages.

DEBORAH:

What are some of the other languages he speaks?

GERALDO:

He speaks Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and English.

DEBORAH:

Wow! You're going to bring him into the business or does he have other plans?

GERALDO:

Oh he has other plans. Political science, international relations. And he has a job. He works on the vote computer things.

DEBORAH:

Oh, right. Well, he's building a website for you. Is that done?

GERALDO:

Yeah. Because the virus now that because he's still working there.

DRIVING LICENSE/18:40

DEBORAH:

Oh, he's working at home. So Geraldo, I'm just curious, I know you've been frustrated about not being able to have a driver's license.

GERALDO:

Yeah.

DEBORAH:

Is that like one of the biggest obstacles for you still?

GERALDO:

Yeah, because once you have a drive license and you drive more confident no threat to be stopped.

DEBORAH:

Have you ever been stopped?

GERALDO:

No. No, never, but I used to have a driver's

license over here. Because when I came, we could take a driver's license and renew once to 2015. But now has another law. You have to have an American ID to renew. So around here around Massachusetts and New York and another account another state you can go there and renew.

DEBORAH:

But you can't in Massachusetts.

GERALDO:

Not yet. There's a law in the House to be voted on.

DEBORAH:

Oh, when are they going to vote on that?

GERALDO:

Yeah. Well, I'm waiting for that.

CITIZENSHIP PATH/19:49

DEBORAH:

Do you have any plans to become a citizen?

GERALDO:

I would like to become a citizen to go in my country to see my in my relatives, but you know it's tough, the government, they don't think about us. I miss him. Bush. Bush was a good guy, gave a people through opportunity to become a citizen. But after the 2001, the seven eleven is after.

DEBORAH:

Nine-Eleven. Yeah.

GERALDO:

And Nine-Eleven. They never give us the chance to become a citizen anymore. At least you got the wrong away. It's like no it's right too.

DEBORAH:

Because you pay taxes, right?

GERALDO:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

But then you were saying when I talked to you the other day that you don't get any social security, you don't get any benefits.

GERALDO:

No. Even now when the government is helping people. A couple of dollars. I had no grants to receive.

FUTURE HOPES/21:05

DEBORAH:

So anything else that you want to tell me or any experience that you had?

GERALDO:

No. I do like to talk about my dreams.

DEBORAH:

Tell me some more about that.

GERALDO:

Yeah. I would like to say about my dream. Two. One is coming to here to a dream to this is the land of opportunity. And we are able to push you, uh, dreams. It's up to us to work hard for what we have here, but this is a place that provides the possibility to change your life for the better. That's why we are here to work hard and get the dreams become true.

DEBORAH:

Absolutely. Well, I have a dream for you, which is that somehow you're going to be able to see your grandchildren and hold them and see the sons you left behind and their families. I hope everyone stays healthy down there in Brazil.

GERALDO:

Thank you very much for that. And I will be the happiest man in the world when that happens.

DEBORAH:

I bet. I bet. Thank you so much, Geraldo.

GERALDO:

Okay.

DEBORAH:

Take care. Okay.

GERALDO:

Thank you so much. Thanks so much.

DEBORAH:

Okay. Thanks. Bye.

WRAPPING UP/22:22

Although he came to the States to better his economic life, Geraldo has never lost sight of the importance of family and the need for people to care for one another. Always on the lookout for ways to expand and grow his business, he has the resilient and courageous spirit of an entrepreneur. Pursuing money for its own sake has never been a driving force for Geraldo. His story documents the hard work it takes to bring the American Dream out of the clouds of fantasy into the real world.



EPISODE #15— SARAH FROM IRAN

GUEST INTRODUCTION/00:45

Ever since receiving her green card hours before the travel ban in 2017, Sarah has been able to navigate between two worlds. With her residency card and on a path for citizenship, she can still visit family left behind in Iran while residing in the U.S. Working as a pediatrician in Iran for over 25 years, Sarah witnessed the cultural/religious revolution that set her beloved country back 1000 years. She dons the hajib when she arrives in Iran and then sheds it once she puts her feet back on U.S. soil. A lifetime learner, Sarah has reached a fluency in English that is remarkable. Even though she considers herself retired from the work world, her thirst for knowledge never stops. During the pandemic, she enrolled in various online courses in everything from English to yoga. Libraries, community centers, whatever is available to learn more, Sarah steps up to the task. A lover of music, she hopes to learn how to play the santur, the Iranian instrument you hear in the background of this introduction.

COMING TO THE U.S./02:09

DEBORAH:

My next guest is Sarah from Iran. Sarah, welcome. Thank you so much for coming for this interview today. Could you tell me a little bit about your experience coming to the States?

SARAH:

Yes, hello Deborah. Thank you very much. About my career. I am a pediatrician. I used to work in a public hospital in the capital of my country as a pediatrician for twenty-five years. Also, I had my private office for many years. Since I came to the U.S., I'm jobless. Actually, I didn't try to find and start a serious career because I'm not an American

citizen yet and I go back home a few months a year. Besides, I'm not permitted to practice in the U.S. For practicing in the U.S. I have to pass very difficult tests to get permission for practicing.

DEBORAH:

What brought you to the United States in the first place, Sarah?

SARAH:

First, my son moved to Boston for continuing education in American universities and then my daughter married an Iranian guy who had American citizenship so my daughter got her citizenship and she applied for us, I mean my husband and I. That's why I tried to get my citizenship because my children who are living in the United States.

CULTURAL DIFFERENCE/03:48

DEBORAH:

Did you experience any kind of culture shock when you got to the United States? Anything that was a struggle or an obstacle, or seemed so different from your home country?

SARAH:

Actually, there are a lot of differences between my country and here. Here is the land of opportunity and land of freedom. We have many forbidden problems like wearing hijab in my country and following some religious rules that we don't have to do here. Truly it is the third world and the United States is the first world. There are many differences between my country and the United States.

DEBORAH:

Well, that sounds like a big difference in terms of even what you need to wear.

SARAH:

Yes. There are many rules for wearing and there are a lot of serious punishments for eating during the month of fasting outside. And there are many religious rules that we have after the religious revolution in my country that we didn't have before that. In the time of the kingdom of Iran. I didn't have so many problems. I didn't have serious problems in my country. I thank God that my family doesn't have any kind of

economic or political religion. Some kinds of these problems. And I moved here mostly because of my children. My son came to the U.S. for a better educational situation and my daughter and her husband migrated here for a better life.

DEBORAH:

What are some of the things that you actually miss about Iran?

GREEN CARD/05:51

SARAH:

Fortunately, I have American permanent residency card and I'm able to visit my country, my family and my friends at least a few months a year. That's why I don't miss too much these past lives. I am lucky about that. That I have a green card.

DEBORAH:

When did you get that?

SARAH:

I got it in 2017. It was the last hours before the travel ban.

DEBORAH:

Oh.

SARAH:

Yes. Well, fortunately we could arrive in America in the last hours before travel ban laws implementation.

DEBORAH:

Wow, that must have been a relief that you were able to do that.

SARAH:

Yes, some of my close families could not get their green card. That's why they are not able to visit their close relatives for many years.

TWO WORLDS/06:50

DEBORAH:

That's sad. When you go to Iran, when you are able to visit, do you have to adopt the clothing restrictions and do you have to follow all of that?

SARAH:

Yes, that's terrible because especially in the summer, it's very difficult to wear all of

these hijabs and it's very difficult for me. For example, I don't like to exercise outside because of the warm weather and hijab and we are very limited.

DEBORAH:

So you like to exercise.

SARAH:

Oh yes.

DEBORAH:

Tell me about that. What do you like to do?

SARAH:

I used to do pilates, yoga, Zoomba. Some kinds of these exercises. It was my hobby in my country. And also, my other hobby was spending time with my relatives and friends. But now my hobby is learning English, browsing the Internet, watching live shows and movies, listening to music, and chatting with my family and friends via social media.

IMPACT OF COVID-19/08:05

DEBORAH:

How has your life been impacted by the COVID-19 and the pandemic in terms of all kinds of things?

SARAH:

I'm a patient person. That's why I tolerate the situation. But I entertain myself with all of these kinds of hobbies that I told before. And I think it's not just for me. It's a period of time and it asks us and we should tolerate it and follow the rules. But sometimes I can't tolerate not visiting my friends, my classmates who live in Boston. I just wanted to invite some of my family and friends here but I can't do that. It's just very special period of life for everyone.

DEBORAH:

You've been continuing your classes from the Gardner online. How's that been for you?

SARAH:

That's great. I like the class at Gardner because most of the classes around my house are intermediate, and I was happy that I was able to find an advanced class and my teacher Erica is a great teacher. I learned a lot from her.

DEBORAH:

Yeah she's great. She's very passionate, very dedicated to her teaching that's for

sure. Have you been able to do any kind of exercise on through Zoom classes? They have some yoga and Pilates and everything online now?

SARAH:

I received an email from the American Heart Association that introduced the gym classes online and I tried to do. I like the live classes that's why I tried to exercise with the online classes.

DEBORAH:

And how was that?

SARAH:

That's great. That's about a half an hour. They have classes for workout and they have yoga classes in the afternoon. And they have good instructors.

DEBORAH:

So you've been able to maintain some kind of exercise during this time.

SARAH:

Yes. I try to do.

NEW CAREER STEPS/10:39

DEBORAH:

Do you miss your work as a pediatrician?

SARAH:

Sure. Actually my age, I'm retired. I think I cannot work as well as before, for example, sometimes there were 36 hours. Day shifts and night shifts. It's very difficult for me now, but I wish I could find some kind of research position in some of these hospitals or universities and something relationship in my education.

DEBORAH:

Yeah, that would be great. Can you do that without taking all the tests and doing all of the training that they're requiring?

SARAH:

They don't need passing the test but I must get my citizenship and then try to find a serious job.

DEBORAH:

What's your timeline for the citizenship since you have the green card? Is it certainly making it a little bit easier?

SARAH:

I'm not sure about it being easier. But it

should be five years after getting the green card. And for this five years we should have been in the United States for at least 30 months. We have two years left.

DEBORAH:

So you're getting closer.

SARAH:

Almost. It's close. Yes.

DREAMS/12:19

DEBORAH:

So aside from the American dream or the kind of freedom and so forth that you talked about, what sort of personal dreams do you have for yourself right now?

SARAH:

My American dream is the same one in the brains of most of the young around the world. I wish I could have studied in the United States but now I wish I had improved my English language skills and were able to speak more fluently. Once I was talking to one of the teachers at the public library I told him I want to speak English as well as my native language. He told me it might never happen. My eloquence is not perfect but I am not disappointed and try my best. Maybe it happens one day.

DEBORAH:

I think you express yourself very well.

MUSIC EVERYWHERE/13:19

SARAH:

Thank you very much. And my secondary wish if I had learned how to play an instrument, it could help me to enjoy myself, especially in this stay-at-home era. It works.

DEBORAH:

What instrument?

SARAH:

I have about seven instruments in my house.

DEBORAH:

Really?

SARAH:

Yes. My daughter used to play piano and I have many friends but I like piano, but it's not portable. That's why I'm thinking about an Iranian instrument by the name of santur. It's not as difficult as violin. And it's

portable, and it has a very charming voice. Maybe I try. Yes. Maybe I tried that.

DEBORAH:

And do you have one here in the states?

SARAH:

No, I don't have maybe next time if I learn a little, I bring it with me and try to continue learning.

DEBORAH:

Lifetime learning is important. I've heard it said that learning to play a musical instrument or learning a new language is the best thing for our brain cells and preventing any kind of dementia.

SARAH:

Yes. It's a good kind of prevention of Alzheimer's all kind of dementia. Yes.

DEBORAH:

Even if you can't play the instrument well, just practicing and learning how to read music or whatever is so good for the brain that, that it's the action of it. That's the most important thing.

SARAH:

Great day. Yes.

DEBORAH:

Do you listen to much music?

SARAH:

I like most kinds of music. I love music. I was talking about my regret why I didn't study in the United States, but when I think about my life, it was very difficult. It was not possible for me to come to the United States for studying because my country was mired in a war and I was studying medicine, and married at 23, and while I was doing my internship, soon I had two children. That's why I couldn't come to the United States and study here.

DEBORAH:

And would you have studied medicine here?

SARAH:

Yes. I loved to come here and study here, as I told you. It was not possible. Coming to America and studying in America was not possible for me.

DEBORAH:

Right?

SARAH:

Yes.

THE REVOLUTION/16:17

DEBORAH:

So you basically lived through the revolution and saw all of these changes happen. How old were you when this was going on?

SARAH:

I was 21. I was studying medicine and we had eight years of war. After that all of the problems we had we had any kind of problems in my country and it continued up to now.

DEBORAH:

How about the role of women and the ability for them to have a lot more freedom before the revolution, right?

SARAH:

Yes. When we see the pictures before the revolution. If you see the pictures before the revolution, you cannot believe that how was my country how was our dresses. People were really fashionable, and it was completely different. It is seldom that countries go back to history. We were going back to 1400 years ago.

DEBORAH:

To live through that. Must've been really, really challenging.

SARAH:

Yes. That's very that's a very difficult situation in the history of my country.

DEBORAH:

The culture is so rich, some of the paintings and the architecture and the calligraphy is magnificent.

SARAH:

You know we had two thousand five hundred years of kingdom. One of the kings of the ancient time by the name of Cyrus. His name is in the Bible because he helped Jewish people to gather the pages of the Bible and he bought land for them and they were allowed to be together and to live together. His human rights are fantastic. Incredible. The women worked. Had holidays for their pregnancy. And they had insurance two thousand five hundred years ago.

DEBORAH:

Wow.

SARAH:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

It must be difficult as you said, to see the country regress historically.

SARAH:

Yes.

FAMILY PRIDE/18:45

DEBORAH:

Tell me Sarah, some things that you're the most proud of in your life. I hope you're proud of your English because I think it's very accomplished.

SARAH:

Oh thank you very much. You encourage me. I'm proud of my husband who is educated. He is smart and futuristic which I'm not as much as him. I'm proud of my daughter who is beautiful and smart and is getting her Ph.D in human rights at NYU.

DEBORAH:

What is she getting it in?

SARAH:

Her PhD in human rights.

DEBORAH:

Oh in human rights. Okay.

SARAH:

Yes. I'm proud of my son who was educated at Stanford. I'm proud of my four-year-old, beautiful, smart granddaughter. I'm proud of my son who has graduated from Northeastern and MIT. I'm proud of my education and my success with my classmates, and finally, I'm proud of my family because of their educational background. I believe that the only thing that anyone anywhere in the world cannot get from you is your education.

DEBORAH:

Do you mean no one can *take* it from you?

SARAH:

No one can take it from you. Education helps you develop your character and talents and allows you to buy what you want. Education allows you to better understand what you need to live a better quality of life as evidenced by the many benefits you can get from your education that money cannot buy.

FUTURE WISHES/20:30

DEBORAH:

Did you have some other things written down that you haven't touched on yet?

SARAH:

I just wanted to say about my wish that I wish I can travel more, I can travel around the world if possible.

DEBORAH:

Where would you like to go?

SARAH:

I've already gone to about 15 countries, and I visited east coast and west coast of America, but I like to visit more European countries, Canada, Australia, and other states of America before I get disabled and my eyes can see the beauties, my ear can hear the wonderful sounds of nature, my feet can walk and I don't have pain. That's my wish. And for the future I wish it can come true.

DEBORAH:

Did you bring any object with you that maybe carry in your pocket or your pocket book or some personal little trinket or something, or good luck charm or something that you always keep with you no matter where you are?

SARAH:

Every time I come to the U. S., I bring some kind of handcrafts like, you know, home handmade carpets, or woodcarving or enamel works or something like this. But I had a ring from my mother that's always with me. I love it. I take it everywhere I go.

DEBORAH:

Maybe you could send me a picture of it and I would love to have a picture of that instrument. Did you call it a santur?

SARAH:

Yes, that's name is santur.

DEBORAH:

Does anyone in your family play it?

SARAH:

Yes. My brother used to play santur. I have five brothers that all of them love music. One of my brothers plays guitar. One of them play synthesizer. One of them plays organ, and one of them is a good singer. We all love music.

FAMILY MEMBERS AROUND THE WORLD/22:54

DEBORAH:

Are they still in Iran?

SARAH:

One of my brothers lives in Turkey. He used to live in San Francisco for 40 years.

DEBORAH:

40 years. Four zero.

SARAH:

But to now he has moved to Turkey. One of my brothers lives in Germany and my youngest brother lives in San Francisco for more than thirty years.

DEBORAH:

Oh, wow!

SARAH:

I have many family and relatives close and far relatives in the United States.

DEBORAH:

Do you have more relatives in the United States than Iran now?

SARAH:

My sister has a citizenship of Canada. She is half of the year in Iran and in Canada. Two of my brothers live in Iran. But I have some cousins in New Jersey and New York. Most of them are in San Francisco, San Diego. Yes many different states.

DEBORAH:

What has been the biggest challenge for you overall spending most of your time in the United States, or some obstacle that you encountered that you've succeeded in overcoming?

SARAH:

I love America. I like it here. I like especially Boston. I think Boston, Massachusetts is the state of education. I have a few libraries around me. I love all of these classes, community centers, libraries, and I think I haven't been living in different states, but I think maybe it's not available everywhere like here. And because of social media and WhatsApp and FaceTime and all of these I actually don't miss many things in my country. Because my parents have passed away and my children live here and when I'm here, close to them, I'm more happy and

the main reason I don't miss too much my country and my relatives is because I have green card and I am able to visit my country and my relatives and family.

A LIFETIME LEARNER/25:23

DEBORAH:

Right. So you, you can come and go or at least you've been able to so far, and you're on a path for citizenship it sounds like for sure. Do you consider yourself a lifetime learner?

SARAH:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

Tell me in what ways that would define you.

SARAH:

When I was four years old, I wanted to go to the school. After my older sister. I wanted to go with her to school. But when I went to school they told me, "You should wait. It's not the time for you. You should wait for six years old." I love learning. Any kind of learning in any aspect. And I'm happy that I have these opportunities here to activate my brain and learn. I have a very full schedule. About sometimes six days a week I go to different classes. In libraries, in coming to centers like this. Now that it's shut down of classes, I try to join Boston Public Library online classes and they have four classes a week. Two classes for GPA and I fill my time with all of these classes and all of this homeworks and try to listen to the news in English. In my spare time I try cooking. I have to cook a lot, especially now.

DEBORAH:

Especially now,

SARAH:

Especially now. Yes.

DEBORAH:

So out of all those classes, I know that some of them are about perfecting your English, but what are some of the other subjects that you've done, that you've taken classes in?

SARAH:

I took the class of computer Tech Goes Home and there was a gathering of book readers in the library that they chose a book and you should read it. And there was talking about the book I used to go there and also I used to go to the citizenship class.

DEBORAH:

Oh. Okay.

SARAH:

Yes. Citizenship classes. History of America. Sometimes when the teacher allowed me I tried to talk about the history of America or teach students.

DEBORAH:

So you have, have you done some teaching too?

SARAH:

Yeah, sometimes there, the teacher allowed me to teach.

DEBORAH:

Well, you have a very full life.

SARAH:

Ha Ha. Thank you.

DEBORAH:

That's great. Two children or three children? Two children because you said one was at Stanford and then MIT.

SARAH:

No, my son-in-law studied in Stanford, my son studied in Northeastern and MIT and he graduated on Saturday online. Online graduation. And my daughter is still studying in her Ph.D. in human rights in NYU.

DEBORAH:

Wow. Is she doing everything online also?

SARAH:

She just finished her classes and she is preparing for Ph.D. exam.

A DARK MOMENT/29:35

DEBORAH:

Wow. Very accomplished. I can see why you're so proud of your children. It's been excellent talking with you. Is there anything else that you would like to mention or say something about?

SARAH:

Oh. I wanted to say that I am a lucky person. I had my dreams. My dreams came true. But I had some dark periods in my life, for example as a pediatrician, I was looking to having a grandchild and helping my daughter during her pregnancy and her childbirth. She had a very difficult pregnancy with *hyperemesis gravidarum* means severe symptoms of pregnancy such as

vomiting and nausea, but unfortunately I couldn't get the visa or coming and visiting and being beside my daughter. And it was a very difficult time for me and certainly for my daughter. The second problem we have in my country we have because of the sanction we have many economical problems in my country and also, because of not having embassy in my country, we have to go to different countries to get the U.S. visa. And because of the travel ban, some of my family members and friends are not able to visit their close relatives. We were very lucky that we were able to arrive in America in the last hours of entrance permission.

DEBORAH:

Well, I'm glad you made it.

SARAH:

Yes.

DEBORAH:

Well, thank you so much Sarah.

SARAH:

Thank you, Deborah.

WRAPPING UP/31:38

Mindful of the cultural differences between Iran and the U.S., Sarah's patience and acceptance of the constraints of each country allow her to balance the best of both worlds. She brings Iran's ancient tradition of the pursuit of knowledge, education, and human rights with her to the U.S.— a tradition that has distinguished her life and the lives of her adult children. Sarah is a very dear member of the GPA community and we are so happy that she is a part of it.