

Kimia Nowbahar, 13 years old

## **My Family's Journey to America**

Imagine having to live in a country that does not support your religion, to such a degree that they would try to imprison you, burn your house down, or to limit your education. My parents were Bahai's and there is a lot of discrimination against Bahai's in Iran. In such a country full of prejudice, you and your kids will have no future. This is what my family had to face.

My parents were at young age, in their mid-20s when they immigrated from Iran to America. With my older sister to take care of and lack of resources, they had a harsh journey with many ups and downs. They didn't have enough money to fly from Iran to Turkey to America, this caused many hardships. When they flew to Turkey, they intended on staying for a couple of months but months turned into a year, and one year turned into nearly two years. That was around the time that the tragic disaster of 9/11 had happened which put immigration on pause for an entire year. They finally arrived in America with only 20 dollars in hand.

During these years, work, money, and taking care of my sister were just a few of many difficulties they had to encounter. The pressure and limitations that they faced in Iran pushed them to get to where they are now.

My mother went to medical school, while my father was juggling two jobs at a time. I am so proud of my family for being where they are now. They have proved that even if you are struggling at the moment, you should keep pushing to your limit to succeed. Today, I am here in a free country, can believe in any religion, and get higher education, because of them.