



Iranian-American Scholarship Fund

Supporting Excellence

Philanthropy Beyond Just Words

When we all play our part in making our community vibrant...

In 2014, as an Iranian-American graduate student at the University of Southern California, I was among the many fortunate students who have benefited from The Iranian-American Scholarship Fund (IASF). IASF, as stated in their mission statement is a non-profit organization, which provides scholarships to full-time students of Iranian heritage attending undergraduate and graduate schools in the United States who exhibit academic excellence, as well as financial need and a commitment to community service. IASF, founded in 1997 by a small group of philanthropic-minded individuals in San Diego, provides scholarships throughout the nation to students of Iranian descent. To date, IASF has awarded 227 scholarships to incredibly bright and talented students nationwide.

As an Iranian-American student living in the U.S., I have faced increasing number of financial and socio-cultural challenges in the recent years which have become harder in the shadow of the geo-political issues surrounding two countries. Iranian-Americans are the most highly educated ethnic group in the United States according to the 2000 U.S. census data, but ironically they are not recipients of much grants or scholarships nationally. Nearly 7,000 students from Iran are currently studying at American universities. Over 80% of them study at the graduate level, the highest percentage of any other ethnicity. However, many students of Iranian origin have been most negatively affected by various political and legal issues, and are subject to prejudice, bias, and discriminatory laws. Nonetheless, Iranian students are highly motivated, study in critical fields, and wish to contribute to their communities. Overcoming these challenges is only possible with the help of the community, which both understand these difficulties, and will eventually benefit from the success of its younger generation.

Today, more and more students of Iranian heritage throughout the United States are turning to the Iranian-American communities for support. To help outstanding but financially constrained Iranian or Iranian-American students pursue higher education in the U.S., several Iranian-American philanthropists have set up scholarship funds in recent years. Organizations like IASF are making a difference in the lives of these amazing students, but evidently, as more and more students are turning up, the need for increased funding to continue this valuable work becomes inevitable. IASF scholarships are awarded on the basis of “academic excellence, financial need, and commitment to community



service”. Furthermore, these funds are guaranteed to be utilized in best possible way by being transferred directly to the educational institutions of the awardees.

Your help to IASF not only presents students like me with the financial assistance we need, it also improves our sense of identity as a community far from home, and gives us the pride of being part of a community that is united in helping and supporting its youth succeed in the goals and values they share. Supporting Iranian-American students will ensure the success of our community as we thrive in our new home, and will make the Iranian-Americans thrive as the vibrant community it is, and deserves to be.

As IASF declares on its website, “It is our hope that individuals, organizations, and companies throughout the country will join in this important endeavor to help us offer opportunities of scholarships to our young scholars, throughout the nation.” Thanks to the generosity of Iranian philanthropists, increasing numbers of talented students are being given the opportunity to pursue their academic goals.

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