



OUR STORY





A little back story on how the family found success and prosperity in the US. We inherited our mother's resilience and "never give up!" attitude.

1969

Mom came to US as Newlywed with no language or support. She found strength in Mama Maria (Italian Neighbor) and Father Carol (Priest in Fairview church)

Nuha Salem and her husband migrated from Palestine with very little. They came to America in hopes of a better future. Together, they worked endlessly to raise 6 kids in the Hudson/Bergen county area. Though they had extended family, there was no support. Our dad struggled to make ends meet with such a large family in a new country. Our mom was determined to help and not see her family fall. She went to trade school and worked at a hair salon (an unwomanly thing in our culture and community at her time). In return extended family and community members looked down on her. However she stayed determined and was only concerned with providing for her kids. Needless to say, She broke barriers.

1999

Our Transformation began from low-income govt asst family to self made middle class business owners. They wanted something that will give them an opportunity to give back to their community while honoring the woman that raised them with high moral values sacrificing everyday in every way to give her children the chance to live the "American Dream"

Two of her daughters, determined not to end up like the status quo of our community, opened a daycare center with the name Grandma's Place (to honor Mom). Suha and Lisa (both were the only ones from their extended family to graduate with college degrees which gave them the leverage in opening the center). Majors were in Education due to the emphasis placed on its importance by their mom. Suha Started as a Science Teacher and Lisa worked for the county agency to provide childcare for working moms prior to starting the daycare center. Another Barrier Broken.

2003

By 2003 Suha and Lisa managed to build an outstanding reputation for community service and quality care out of the center in the eyes of state, county, and local officials as well as the immediate community it served. It now serves as a community support up and provides high quality care.

At the same time Ray Hassan (graduated from a tech school in a community where education wasn't as manly as going out to work=another barrier broken) after working with cadillac for 15 years he started a auto repair facility in 2003 from scratch with 3 repair bays and now has an outstanding reputation and has expanded to 12 bays

2008

our mom helped steer us into giving back for what Allah (God) has given us. She guided us to start donating to local community organizations and third world projects for humanity. She gave to individuals from the community who were in need, local mosques, and charitable organizations. She also bought hospital equipment and helped build schools in third world countries.



2010

She was diagnosed with cancer and was given 6 months to a year to live...as the years went by she felt we needed to do more, because we were so blessed for living the American Dream(built ourselves from scratch and are fortunate enough to be able to help others)

10/3/2016

Mom wanted to open a school to help shape the young minds of our community and give them the foundation and love for learning. Ray started the non-profit paperwork to make it official. Our Mother came up with the name Ray of Sunshine because she said brother Ray was her hope. With assistance of his sisters, Ray of Sunshine was formed. Ray of Sunshine was started.....but she passed Jan. 2017 prior to completing the non-profit paperwork

1/18/2017

Passing of our beloved mom.

Mid 2017 Ray decided we need to finish what was started with mom.

We used what we were suppose to inherit as initial cash flow and began to navigate the world of nonprofit

We looked a for community support and found everyone just wanted the money and wasn't really in tuned with our plan. We gathered a few close friends and began to search ideas. A realtor friend brought us the teaneck property.

3/2018

Honor our mom and continue non-profit

5/31/2018

Ray of Sunshine approved non-profit. Ray decided to create a Sister nonprofit in honor of our mother, Al'Ummah Community Center (Al' Ummah means "the people" in arabic and derives from the root word "Um" which is the arabic word for mom) Was created

5/2018

Brokers found Teaneck property and Mohamad Salem our beloved cousin who we lost touch with for years came into the Project through the Grace of Allah(SWT). Ray ran into him after a meeting with the attorney and they discussed our intentions. Mohamad had also recently lost his mom and had a similar history. They connected and he has been a critical part of the organization since the day him and Ray spoke.

6/2018

First event at Reyco in Fairview to Introduce the organization and its mission to the community



7/2018

Summer festival to Connect with different organizations and community members at Reyco Auto in Fairview

8/6/2018

Five star Dinner where we Officially Introduced the Center and its mission. We were looking for partners and donors. Teaneck Officials were also in attendance

9/9/2018

AUCC Website Created

10/12/2018

Closed on Teaneck Property

10/14/2018

Meet and greet with neighbors-door to door to invite to refreshments, etc in honor of Mom's bday and miraculous acquisition of the center

11/2018

Informal meetings at Teaneck Property to review options for renovations/project
Town Officials said they "were happy we chose Teaneck" and town lawyer, John Shananian and his associate assured us "They would move heaven and earth to make our project work" THE ZONING OFFICIAL , Dan Malfi promised us a "road map to make it happen" on how to get this done. Highest town official said "all you need is our lawyer for formalities and \$1500 for processing, and one formal meeting it's a done deal."

11/2018

Issued demolish permits

2/2019

Met with town officials formally to unveil plan and get input. Dan Melfi said we must Keep prayer room ratio as is to maintain religious status. Change the name Al' Ummah because secludes general population and only attracts few

3/2019

Mass mailing to local community about who we are and what we want to do



4/2019

Dan Malfi met with our building Engineer(without our knowledge) to come up with a presumptive required parking calculation because the property was Zoned public property and religious entity so there were no limits!!

5/2019

Building Dept. denied our application and pushed us to zoning, despite changing plans to accommodate the request.

5/22/2019

Approved non profit AUCC

6/2019

Dan Malfi and Mark B. met with our attorney and engineer and refused to let us in the meeting(which we found out about by accident)

7/1/2019

Teaneck BOE reached out to AUCC for Preschool Services

8/3/2019

First Zoning meeting Teaneck Superintendent and Teaneck High School Swim Coach spoke in support of project and benefits for the town
Board meeting kept getting postponed , when we're did get our turn they allowed people to ramble on running the clock causing for continuations
Plans were changed numerous times to accommodate Zoning Board requests!

9/1/2019

Turned down Teaneck preschool program because of Building Department

9/9/2019

AUCC website created

10/2019

Building Depart. Finally issued Temp. CO just for Daycare portion of the building and was able to open private daycare

10/14/2019

Meet and greet at site (commemorating beloved mom on her would be birthday)
harassment from neighbors started immediately



10/31/2019

Fall fest for local Neighbors(pumpkin patch, art & Crafts, refreshments)
Volunteered a treat station at Bergen county Fall fest with supplies

1/2020

Contracted with Teaneck BOE and have been providing preschool services to present

3/2020

Teaneck Township went virtual and Our attorney was informed by Zoning official that we had to wait for in person Zoning meetings to continue our application

4/2020

AUCC was one of the few centers in the immediate area to apply, and get granted an Emergency License and opened doors to cater to First responders children

6/30/20

AUCC Youth volunteers created the Generation Z Youth Committee to amplify their voice and empower the youth through community service.

7/8/2020

AUCC Gen Z Volunteers create Art Care Packages for kids of struggling families to combat the mental health impact of quarantining on children.

7/29/2020

AUCC Food Drive, families in need and organizations from Teaneck and all of Bergen County are provided with food.

9/8/2020

AUCC Food Drive to continue serving families in need from Teaneck and Bergen County.

9/16/2020

Gen Z Volunteers collect and fundraise for school supplies for a hundred students whose families struggled financially, especially because of COVID.

10/2020

Our application was denied after numerous alterations in the plans to accommodate Zoning Board concerns and requests

2/10/21

AUCC Gen Z Youth wrote cards and made goodie bags for every pediatric patient at Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck to uplift them on Valentine's Day.



2/13/2021

AUCC Gen Z Youth Volunteers fundraised for and collected necessities for families in need from Teaneck; including diapers, towels and masks with a Teaneck domestic violence shelter called Never Alone Again.

Ray hassan is President, Suha Hassan vp, Lisa Hassan (Sister) Treasurer, Mohamad Salem, secretary, Ifraz Ilyas, and Dr. Eliot Koziel are board members

