

## **The Stories of US: The Storyteller's Journey**

There's power in sharing your story, and advocates often emphasize getting personal when doing the work of building support around a cause. The personal is compelling, while facts often fall flat. Having the opportunity to share your story can drive change and be liberating. And it can also take a lot of emotional and mental energy, particularly when the part of your story you're being asked to retell may be rooted in trauma, or hardships.



**Basma Alawee:** Born and raised in Baghdad, Iraq, Basma came to the U.S. with her husband as a refugee in 2010, leaving behind her career as an engineer with the Ministry of Oil within the Government of Iraq. As a refugee and activist, her stories and activism have been featured in the media. Most recently, she was nominated to be one of the Athena40 women in the world who are leading change, was the recipient of the 2019 OneJax Humanitarian Award and the 2020 Eve's award. She was also elected the Florida delegate for the Refugee Congress and is a board member of many other nonprofits. Currently, she is the State Refugee Organizer

with the Florida Immigrant Coalition and resides in Jacksonville also Basma is the Executive Director and Co-founder of WeaveTales.



**Camila Rojas:** Born in Caracas, Venezuela, Camila immigrated to the United States in 2013 at the age of 14, seeking asylum with her family from Venezuela's food shortages and violence. Through the Florida Immigrant Coalition, she joined organizing efforts in her community as a high school volunteer in 2016 in response to the hateful rhetoric towards immigrants. For the past four years, she has advocated in her community for immigrant rights, reproductive rights, and other social justice initiatives, working with organizations such as United We Dream, National Latina Institute for Reproductive

Health and Black Lives Matter Alliance Broward. She is committed to uplifting the voices of marginalized communities and empowering young immigrants and people of color to become organizers and leaders themselves. Through her work, she strives to be a supportive leader, energize the community and build relationships rooted in radical love and people power.



**Ekaterina:** Ekaterina E was born in Soviet Central Asia, and came to the US at age 16 on a passport from the Soviet Union - a country which no longer exists. She has been living in the US as a stateless person for nearly two decades. In 2017 Ekaterina co-founded United Stateless - the first and only U.S.- based human rights advocacy organisation led by stateless persons dedicated to solving statelessness in the United States. Ekaterina is an artist currently based out of San Francisco, CA.



**Mustafa Nuur:** Mustafa is a former Somali refugee living in Lancaster PA and the *Executive Director of BRIDGE and Human Rights Commissioner for the City of Lancaster*. Mustafa and his family of Nine moved to Lancaster a year and half ago. He was thirteen years old when he and his family fled their home country of Somalia. Spending nearly a decade in the Dadaab refugee camp and Nairobi Kenya, Mustafa learned English from Mennonite missionaries.

He is currently serving as a Human Relations Commissioner within the City of Lancaster. He is also a spokesman/ Deputy chairman for the Somali community of

Lancaster. Mustafa has been a community advocate for refugees, Starting from his neighborhood he has been raising awareness about refugees and promoting community integrations. Mustafa Nuur founded Bridge, a social enterprise platform that lets people book cross-cultural experiences with refugees from around the world locally.