

Yuliya's Story

Originating Country: Ukraine

Originating City: Evpatoria

Immigrated to the U.S.: June 13, 2003

City: Northbrook

State: Illinois

My family decided to immigrate to the United States in 1991 after the collapse of Soviet Union. My parents were able to get good jobs and we became a prominent family in our Ukrainian coastal town of Evpatoria. In Ukraine my dad was an economist and my mom was a dentist. Even though my parents had well paying jobs they wanted to emigrate because they worried about my future and instability that existed throughout Ukraine. We were finally able to come to the United States in 2003.

My first impression of the United States was rather different from what I expected. I expected a large urban setting, but I moved into a quiet suburb. I came here when I was a teenager and it was hard for me to leave all of my friends behind. The first few months of adjusting to life in the United States were really hard. I had to start studying at a local high school almost immediately. My parents had to find jobs as fast as possible because we did not have a lot of funds available.

HIAS assisted me and my family when we just came to the United States by helping us to get green cards, and by providing information to us about resources and job opportunities. When I graduated from high school, HIAS helped me to receive a scholarship for my higher education.

I feel that by immigrating into the U.S. my parents sacrificed a lot, but it gave me an incredible opportunity to have a better life than they did. Today my

parents have to work very hard to maintain the lifestyle we had in Ukraine. My mom constantly studies and managed to preserve her job in the dental field.

I cherish the opportunity to get my Masters in Social work in order to give back to my community. All of this became possible due to the help that I received from HIAS, which is a very useful organization. I feel like immigrants should take advantage of the amazing scholarship opportunities that HIAS has to offer in order to get as much education as they can for them and their families to have a better future.