

Fruit Seller's Son Graduates With 5 Other Alumni of The Citizens Foundation from Top University

Education non-profit helps dreams come true for families living in Pakistan's underprivileged communities

HOUSTON, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, August 23, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Like many parents from Pakistan's impoverished communities, fruit seller Muhammad Ahmad had to drop out of school early to help support his family.

Selling mangoes and other fruit from his handcart on the streets of Karachi, he could never hope to raise enough money to send his own children through school and on to higher education.



TCF alumni and university graduate Asad Raza with his proud father

But with the help of an education non-profit, [The Citizens Foundation \(TCF\)](#), Ahmad is now celebrating the graduation of his oldest son, Asad Raza, from Pakistan's prestigious Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI) with a degree in Electrical Engineering.

“

I had to drop out of school at a young age to support my family. It is my dream to educate all my children and TCF is making it possible.”

*Fruit seller Muhammad
Ahmad*

Two of Asad's younger siblings, Saad and Sadia, are currently first-year students at TCF College while his two other sisters, Haadiya and Tooba are studying in Classes 9 and 7 at a TCF school in their community, the urban slum of Khuda ki Basti in Karachi.

“With my earnings, it would not have been possible for me to put Asad through a good school,

college, and university,” said Ahmad. “I had to drop out of school at a young age to support my family. It is my dream to educate all my children and TCF is making it possible.”

[Asad, who attended TCF school and college](#), added: “In our community, boys are expected to take up full-time jobs at a young age, but Baba (father) encouraged me to focus on my education. When I was leaving for university, he handed me some money for my living expenses which he had been saving to get our roof fixed. When I hesitated, he told me: “The repairing of our home can wait, but this opportunity might not come again.”

Asad is one of the six TCF alumni who were recently awarded degrees at the Convocation of Ghulam Ishaq Khan Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology (GIKI), a renowned university in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Each alum has a unique story of struggle and perseverance to overcome extraordinary odds on their path to education, reminding us that every child holds the potential to succeed when given an opportunity to shine.

Syed Ali Hamza, who graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, said: “A few years ago, a TCF teacher came to my home during a community visit and convinced my parents to enroll me at the school. At TCF, I not only built a strong foundation in academics but also developed a system of values that have guided me throughout my journey.”

Shahzaib Hayat, who earned a BS in Computer Science, said: “My parents would tell me that



TCF alumni GIKI graduates - (L to R) Qais Sultani, Shahzaib Hayat, Syed Ali Hamza, Asad Raza, Hamas Khalid, Rizwan Ali



Fruit seller's son and GIKI graduate Asad Raza

despite surviving with very little means, my education was never a compromise. Thank you to TCF for supporting my educational journey and preparing me for this moment. I wanted to acknowledge TCF's kindness and so, as soon as I secured a job, I pledged to educate a child in need."

The other graduates were Qais Sultani, Hamas Khalid, and Rizwan Ali.

These successes are being celebrated as TCF revealed that a total of 883 alumni have secured higher education admissions this year, a significant increase from 681 the previous year. Many of these students from underprivileged backgrounds share stories very similar to Asad's, with families who received advice, support, and most importantly, funding to help make their education dreams come true.

THE CITIZENS FOUNDATION

The Citizens Foundation (TCF) is a leading Pakistani education non-profit, founded in 1995. It operates a network of 1,833 schools (including 383 adopted public schools) in a professionally managed system of K-10 formal schools for boys and girls from underprivileged families. TCF's teaching faculty and school principals are all women. This helps with the enrolment and retention of girls in its schools. TCF strives to maintain a balanced gender ratio in its schools.

The Economist calls TCF, 'perhaps the largest network of independently-run schools in the world.'

TCF is the largest private employer of women in Pakistan. In addition to the 13,000 women teachers and principals, hundreds of women are employed in other departments at TCF such as curriculum planning, academics, monitoring and evaluation of teachers and schools, marketing, donor management, and strategic planning.

The TCF-USA staff work tirelessly to support the programs in Pakistan by coordinating marketing and [fundraising in the major metropolitan chapters](#) in Seattle, Washington DC, Houston, Chicago, San Francisco / Silicon Valley, New York, Boston, and about 30 other regions. TCF-USA is a tax-exempt non-profit which makes it attractive for supporters to take advantage of tax-deductible contributions.

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