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### Mom's View of Education

“In America people have it so easy to get an education, but in Iraq it is a privilege,” my mother replied when I asked her for some background on her education. My mother was born in a small town in Northern Iraq and in an early age, she had quit school to support her family. I talked to my mother about her views of education were since she encourages me to achieve a high level of an education that she could only dream about.

I sat with my mother on our kitchen table in our empty house on a Saturday night. I talked to my mother about her highest level of education. To her embarrassment she replied that her highest level of education was tenth grade. I asked her why she stopped, she thought a little, and replied that her parents death caused money shortage and she need to work like her sisters and brothers to support the entire family. I could see her eyes were getting watery. I quickly changed the subject to why education is an important key to success. Wiping the tears from her face, she explained that education is a key to success because “it helps you with you future job and you will learn strategies that will move you along to the pathway of success.” I noticed that my mother became more comfortable with me asking her questions and I noticed she was looking into my eyes-- a gesture not usually seen by my mother.

I asked my mother if she wanted her kids to get an education. She replied with excitement, “Yes, that’s the most important thing in my life.” She went on: “Education will make you an important person and people will say what a good job I did raising up my children and I will feel important.” I started to laugh because my mom wants her dreams to come true by my success. I walked to the refrigerator to grab us some cold popsicles to cool us down on that warm night. After some laughs and after we had finished the popsicles, I asked my mother what she would change if she could go back in time. She explained on how she would finish her education and how education would make her successful in life.

We came to the last question of my interview. I asked my mother what would have been different if she had gone to college. My mother thought a little and replied that she would have a degree and become a doctor, that she would have a job to support her family and my older brothers would have finished school rather than working to support the family like she did. As my mother finished answering, I sensed that she was not in the room anymore but in an imaginary world where all her dreams and goals came true. It made her happy.

Talking to my mother made me realize how much education is important to her and what it would mean to her if she sees me graduate from college with a diploma in my hand. And that I would become important to our society and be respected by many people. The last thing my mother told me on that Saturday night was, “I will die happy only when I know you became the successful person I’d imagined you would be.”